

**Legislative Council Panel on
Commerce, Industry, Innovation and Technology**

**2025 Policy Address
Policy Initiatives of
Commerce and Economic Development Bureau**

Overview

Underpinned by the advantages of a highly international city, Hong Kong continues to play an important role in international trade. In 2024, Hong Kong was the world's seventh largest merchandise trading economy and ranked third in foreign direct investment internationally. According to the Economic Freedom of the World 2025 Annual Report released by the Fraser Institute, Hong Kong was the freest economy in the world, topping the ranking in "freedom to trade internationally". As indicated in the World Competitiveness Yearbook 2025, Hong Kong's overall ranking rose two spots from the previous year to become the world's top three most competitive economies, with both "business legislation" and "tax policy" ranking first in the world.

2. Notwithstanding the persistent uncertainties in global economy and trade stemming from the wavering trade policies of the United States (US) and its unilateral imposition of unreasonable tariffs, Hong Kong's total exports of goods saw significantly accelerated year-on-year growth of 12.1% in real terms in the third quarter of 2025, as supported by sustained, moderate growth of the global economy in the near term,

coupled with recent easing China-US trade tensions. Looking ahead, taking into account the actual outturn of 3.3% in the first three quarters of 2025 and the near-term outlook, the real Gross Domestic Product growth forecast for 2025 as a whole is revised up to 3.2%.

2025 Policy Address

3. The 2025 Policy Address puts forward an array of measures to proactively leverage Hong Kong's unique advantages under "One Country, Two Systems", capitalising on its strong ties with the Chinese Mainland and global connectivity. Apart from consolidating traditional pillar industries, we will actively explore new economic growth areas to enhance Hong Kong's competitiveness and international influence, strengthening our roles as "super connector" and "super value-adder". Meanwhile, we will continue to fully participate in and facilitate the national development strategies such as the Guangdong-Hong Kong Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) development and the Belt & Road (B&R) Initiative, actively consolidating Hong Kong's position as an international trade centre and regional intellectual property trading centre under the National 14th Five-Year Plan.

4. This note introduces to Members the initiatives relating to the **Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (CEDB)** and this Panel as set out in the 2025 Policy Address. The relevant indicators are listed at **Annex**.

I. International Trade Centre

5. The Fourth Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) deliberated and adopted the Recommendations of the CPC Central Committee for Formulating the 15th Five Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development (the “Recommendations for Formulating the 15th Five-Year Plan”) in last October, which has specifically proposed to support Hong Kong in better integrating into and serving the overall national development, strengthening its economic and trade relations with the Chinese Mainland, leveraging its unique advantages and important role of having strong support from the Motherland and close connection with the world, and consolidating and enhancing its status as an international trade centre. The HKSAR Government will continue to attract enterprises and investment with a more proactive, systematic and comprehensive strategy, aligning with the National 15th Five-Year Plan to promote Hong Kong’s deeper integration into and service of the overall national development.

6. In 2024, Hong Kong’s total merchandise trade value reached \$9,464.5 billion, which was the seventh highest in the world. In the face of the new international trade landscape and order, Hong Kong must devise appropriate strategies guided by the principles of consolidating advantages, seizing opportunities, as well as preventing and mitigating risks. To cope with these challenges, the HKSAR Government is actively implementing various measures to consolidate and enhance Hong Kong’s status as an international trade centre. Under “One

Country, Two Systems”, Hong Kong plays the unique role of connecting with both the Chinese Mainland and the rest of the world. We need to grasp the opportunities, by adopting the strategy of forging closer partnerships with the GBA and opening up more overseas markets, to identify new areas for economic growth for promoting sustainable economic development amidst the complex and competitive international landscape.

Supporting Mainland Enterprises in Going Global

7. In view that the global trade landscape and geopolitics are rapidly changing, with parts of the supply chains shifting to the Global South and B&R countries, more Mainland enterprises are planning to go global to diversify commercial risks and expand businesses. To better support Mainland enterprises in going global in an orderly manner, 2025 Policy Address announced the establishment of a one-stop platform by mobilising Hong Kong offices abroad, including those under Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK) and Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC), as well as Hong Kong offices in the Chinese Mainland, and set up the cross-bureau, cross-department and cross agency Task Force on Supporting Mainland Enterprises in Going Global (GoGlobal Task Force) to encourage Mainland enterprises to use Hong Kong as a platform to go global. InvestHK is responsible for coordinating the interface between the GoGlobal Task Force and Mainland small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Through collaboration with HKTDC and other agencies in providing cross-sectoral professional services support, InvestHK will also promote to target Mainland enterprises Hong Kong’s advantages as a “go

global” platform by various channels and provide enterprises with comprehensive and customised support services based on their needs.

8. The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development steers the work of the GoGlobal Task Force and co-ordinates various bureaux, departments and agencies in formulating diverse proposals for enterprises looking to go global. Since the establishment of the GoGlobal Task Force on 6 October 2025, the Steering Committee has convened two meetings to discuss the work and promotion plans of the GoGlobal Task Force. In addition, the first large-scale promotional event, namely, “Hong Kong - The Ideal Platform for Mainland Enterprises in Going Global” Promotion Conference was held in Shanghai on 6 November 2025. The event promoted Hong Kong as a “go global” platform for Mainland enterprises to explore overseas markets and encouraged them to go global via Hong Kong. Leaders from the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office and the Ministry of Commerce attended the event, along with over 500 representatives from Mainland enterprises and trade.

9. The GoGlobal Task Force will progressively commence various tasks, including continuing to organise promotional events in various provinces and cities in the Chinese Mainland to attract Mainland enterprises seeking to go global to establish their presence in Hong Kong. It will also provide matching services between Hong Kong professional services providers and “go global” enterprises through a cross-sectoral professional services platform to be set up under the GoGlobal Task Force.

Attracting Investment and Industries

10. The current-term Government attaches great importance to attracting enterprises and investment. From 2023 to 2025, InvestHK assisted a total of 1 481 Mainland and overseas enterprises to set up or expand businesses in Hong Kong. They are expected to bring in direct investment of over HK\$198 billion and create over 21 700 job opportunities. InvestHK has completed in advance the key performance indicator (KPI)¹ as set out in 2022 Policy Address.

11. InvestHK is proactively implementing its new KPI, which is to attract at least a total of 1 200 Mainland or overseas enterprises to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong in 2026 and 2027, thereby bringing in direct investment of at least HK\$120 billion and creating at least 12 000 job opportunities.

12. The 2025 Policy Address also announced that the Financial Secretary (FS) to, through setting up the Steering Committee on Preferential Policies for Attracting Industries and Investment, lead relevant policy bureaux, departments, and public organisations in formulating packages of preferential policies including land grants, land premiums, financial subsidies, and tax incentives, to attract high value-added industries and high-potential enterprises to set up in Hong Kong, thereby promoting high-quality development. Being an important player of the HKSAR Government's investment promotion regime,

¹ The KPI in 2022 Policy Address requires attracting at least a total of 1 130 enterprises to set up or expand their operations in Hong Kong from 2023 to 2025, thereby bringing in direct investment of at least HK\$77 billion and creating at least 15 250 job opportunities.

InvestHK can flexibly use the policy packages during negotiations with enterprises on settlement details.

13. Apart from the usual investment promotion work, InvestHK will proactively attract high value-added industries and high potential enterprises to establish presence in Hong Kong so as to promote high-quality development of Hong Kong's economy. In the meantime, to tie in with the long-term planning of the Northern Metropolis (NM) development, InvestHK will also step up efforts in attracting strategic industries and enterprises to establish a foothold in the NM.

Expanding International Economic and Trade Networks

14. To further expand Hong Kong's "circle of friends" in trade and promote long-term economic development of Hong Kong, we have been actively seeking to cooperate with trading partners, including economies with strong economic and trade connections with Hong Kong as well as markets with development potential or at strategic locations, to deepen Hong Kong's international economic and trade networks through setting up offices in and forging free trade agreements (FTAs) as well as investment agreements (IAs) with these economies.

15. Since assuming office in 2022, the Chief Executive (CE) has led high-level business delegations on two visits to the Middle East and three visits to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), exploring business opportunities for Hong Kong and strengthening relations with these economies. Other principal officials of the HKSAR Government

also continue to conduct overseas visits to strengthen the economic and trade network of Hong Kong.

Expand ETO Network

16. The HKSAR Government is committed to expanding international economic and trade network. The Economic and Trade Offices (ETOs) play an important role in deepening international exchanges and cooperation for Hong Kong. Currently, the HKSAR Government has 16 offices/liaison units on the Chinese Mainland and 15 overseas ETOs. Together with the offices of InvestHK and HKTDC worldwide, Hong Kong has set up offices in 68 cities around the world, covering 129 countries. Among others, following the CE's announcement in the 2025 Policy Address, the Kuala Lumpur ETO was established on 10 December 2025 and has commenced phased operation, with a view to further deepening Hong Kong's economic and trade connections with ASEAN and neighbouring Asian countries. We will consult and seek the Panel's support for the staffing proposal for the Kuala Lumpur ETO in good time.

17. In addition, we will continue to follow up actively with the Government of Saudi Arabia on our plan of establishing an ETO in Riyadh. We will also continue to expand the ETO network to other emerging markets with development potential, such as Central Asia region, with a view to strengthening Hong Kong's economic and trade ties with these markets and exploring more business opportunities for Hong Kong enterprises.

18. Besides, InvestHK has set up consultant offices in Cairo, Egypt, and Izmir, Türkiye within 2024-25 according to the 2023 Policy Address, for attracting capital and enterprises from high-potential emerging countries in the Middle East and North Africa. These are the third and the fourth consultant offices set up by the current-term Government since it took office, after the ones established in Nairobi, Kenya and Almaty, Kazakhstan. HKTDC has established a consultant office in Cambodia in 2025 to support the HKSAR Government's effort to expand Hong Kong's economic and trade network.

Free Trade Agreements and Investment Agreements

19. Besides, Hong Kong has, all along, been proactively seeking early accession to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). The HKSAR Government has, upon the coming into force of RCEP on 1 January 2022, promptly submitted Hong Kong's formal request to join RCEP. We welcome the adoption of the Terms of Reference of the Accession Working Group at the RCEP Ministerial Meeting in September 2025. We will proactively work with RCEP regarding the accession of new members, and continue to maintain close liaison with RCEP members to strive for Hong Kong's early accession to RCEP.

20. Apart from RCEP, so far Hong Kong has signed nine FTAs with 21 economies². Hong Kong has also signed 24 IAs with 33 overseas economies³. The HKSAR Government will soon sign an IA with Qatar, while good progress has been made for the IA negotiations with Peru. Meanwhile, we are exploring the signing of new IAs with Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia and Egypt respectively.

21. As for the Middle East, we have signed IAs with the UAE, Kuwait and Bahrain. Going forward, apart from taking forward the aforementioned IA with Saudi Arabia and signing the IA with Qatar as soon as possible, we will continue to proactively explore the possibility of FTAs with economies with potential.

Work Related to World Trade Organization (WTO)

22. As a founding Member of the WTO, Hong Kong has consistently supported the rules-based multilateral trading system with WTO at its core. The 14th WTO Ministerial Conference will be conducted in Cameroon in March this year. Hong Kong, China will continue to actively participate in relevant discussions and work closely with other WTO members, with the aim of promoting global multilateral trade more effectively through the established mechanisms of the WTO,

² The economies are the Chinese Mainland, New Zealand, the Member States of the European Free Trade Association (i.e. Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland), Chile, Macao SAR, the ten ASEAN Member States (i.e. Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam), Georgia, Australia and Peru. Except for the FTA signed with Peru, all FTAs have entered into force.

³ The economies are the ten ASEAN Member States, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the United Kingdom. Except for the IA signed with Türkiye, all IAs have entered into force

so as to safeguard the multilateral trading system.

Work Related to Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

23. In addition, since joining APEC in 1991, we have been actively participating in the affairs of APEC in order to reinforce Hong Kong's status as an international trade and financial centre. Last year, the Hong Kong delegation attended various APEC meetings in South Korea, including the CE at the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting held in Gyeongju at the end of October, making full use of the APEC platform to step up our efforts in deepening international exchanges and co-operation. With China playing host of APEC 2026, the Finance Ministers' Meeting will be held in Hong Kong under the arrangements and organisation of Hong Kong. We will continue to participate more actively in the work of APEC and deepen cooperation with other member economies on economic and trade issues in the region, so as to demonstrate to international trading partners our strong commitment to upholding free trade and promoting regional economic integration, and to tell the good stories of Hong Kong.

Deepening the Trade and Economic Co-operation with the Chinese Mainland

24. The Ministry of Commerce and the HKSAR Government

signed a new agreement⁴ on 9 October 2024 under the framework of the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) to further amend the CEPA Agreement on Trade in Services. The new agreement introduces further liberalisation measures on trade in services in a number of sectors which Hong Kong enjoys competitive advantages, while at the same time brings along institutional innovation and collaboration enhancements, including the addition of “allowing Hong Kong-invested enterprises to adopt Hong Kong law” and “allowing Hong Kong-invested enterprises to choose for arbitration to be seated in Hong Kong” as facilitation measures for Hong Kong investors, as well as removal of the period requirement on Hong Kong service suppliers to engage in substantive business operations in Hong Kong for three years in most services sectors. The new agreement has been implemented since 1 March 2025, creating more favourable conditions for Hong Kong enterprises and professionals to explore the Mainland market, allowing them to better tap into the business opportunities brought about by the rapid development of the country as well as the national and international dual circulation strategy, while at the same time attracting more start-ups, overseas enterprises and talents to establish their presence in Hong Kong to tap into the Mainland market. The HKSAR Government will continue the promotional work, deepen the implementation of the outcomes of the new agreement and assist the trade in making good use of the CEPA measures, and will continue to seek to enrich the contents of CEPA, strive for more opportunities for Hong Kong enterprises to enter the Mainland market, actively dovetail with the National 15th Five-Year

⁴ The new agreement is the Second Agreement Concerning Amendment to the Agreement on Trade in Services of the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (the Amendment Agreement II).

Plan, so as to leverage Hong Kong's strengths to contribute to the needs of the country.

Advancing the effort on Belt and Road (B&R) Initiative

25. We are committed to consolidating Hong Kong's role as a functional platform for the B&R, giving full play to our function as a "super connector" and "super value-adder", actively complementing the latest national strategy on the B&R Initiative, better aligning with our country's B&R work focuses, thereby integrating into and serving national development. The Belt and Road Summit (Summit) has been recognised by our country and is Hong Kong's flagship event in promoting the B&R Initiative. The tenth Summit was held on 10-11 September 2025, with the theme of "Collaborate for Change • Shape a Shared Future". It attracted around 6 200 participants, including more than 90 government and business speakers, as well as over 100 delegations and senior representatives from 40 state-owned enterprises from the Chinese Mainland. 45 memorandums of understanding (MOUs) were witnessed at the Summit, including nine government and 36 business MOUs, highlighting Hong Kong's role as the functional platform for the B&R Initiative.

Strengthening Promotion of Hong Kong Professional Services

26. In June and December 2025, the Commissioner for Belt and Road led delegations to visit Indonesia and Malaysia as well as Vietnam respectively to promote Hong Kong's professional services related to

infrastructure, construction and green development, with a view to exploring opportunities for co-operation. The delegation met with local government officials, business leaders and representatives of professional organisations and enterprises, attended presentations of signature projects, and witnessed 26 MOUs and business agreements. We will continue to organise outbound missions to explore the B&R markets, and will organise roadshows of the “Belt and Road Cross-professional Forum” to facilitate Hong Kong enterprises and professional services to further expand opportunities for co-operation. We will proactively reach out to agencies in charge of projects in B&R countries and regions to introduce more B&R project matching opportunities for Hong Kong enterprises and professional services through multilateral collaboration.

27. The Belt and Road Office will coordinate public bodies and institutes in Hong Kong to provide training for personnel in B&R countries to enhance Hong Kong’s soft power branding, showcase Hong Kong to overseas and the Chinese Mainland as a partner in cross-professional and cross-regional “soft connectivity” of rules and standards, and expand horizon on the opportunities for development along the B&R brought by relevant co-operation.

Enhancing Support for SMEs

28. The Dedicated Fund on Branding, Upgrading and Domestic Sales (BUD Fund) provides funding to encourage SMEs to implement projects on brand building and enhancement of enterprise competitiveness, thereby developing more diversified markets and

expanding businesses. Its funding scope covers 40 economies with which Hong Kong has signed FTAs and/or IAs. As at end December 2025, around \$7.8 billion funding has been approved under the BUD Fund, benefitting around 8 200 enterprises and around 79 000 employees. To further support SMEs to cope with geopolitical challenges and diversify away from traditional markets, the CE announced in the 2025 Policy Address the injection of \$1.43 billion into the BUD Fund, as well as the expansion of the BUD Fund's geographical scope to cover eight more economies, including B&R countries. At the same time, as the SME Export Marketing Fund will be consolidated into the BUD Fund starting from July 2026, we will enhance promotion and facilitate the participation of companies in exhibitions and export promotion activities through "Easy BUD", thereby developing more diversified markets. Apart from the BUD Fund, we will continue to implement the Trade and Industrial Organisation Support Fund to help SMEs enhance competitiveness.

29. In addition, the Government has enhanced the services of "SME ReachOut" since October 2023 by stepping up the support for SMEs to apply for government funding, as well as providing capacity-building services, including holding one-on-one consultation meetings for SMEs and organising large-scale events that focus on areas such as technology transformation, digitalisation and cyber security. As at end December 2025, "SME ReachOut" has organised 71 seminars/webinars, more than 320 outreach activities and handled over 36 500 enquiries. Besides, the "SME ReachOut: FUND Fair plus Tech Sourcing 2025" was held from 16 to 17 October, with a view to strengthening promotion and assisting

SMEs in applying for government funding schemes, thereby enhancing their competitiveness. The Fair attracted a total of around 2 800 participants, and over 3 300 enquiries were handled.

30. On the issue of cash flow, the Government has been providing loan guarantees through the SME Financing Guarantee Scheme (SFGS) since 2012 to help SMEs obtain commercial loans, and kept on introducing enhancement measures to meet the financing needs of SMEs during economic downturn. The SFGS has been well-received by the business sector. As at end December 2025, a total of over \$302.2 billion of loans has been approved, benefitting over 68 200 enterprises and 852 100 employees.

31. Considering that the global economy remains unstable and the recovery pace of individual industries varies, coupled with new challenges facing SMEs arising from the changing consumption pattern of residents and inbound visitors in recent years, it was announced in the 2025 Policy Address that the application period for the 80% Guarantee Product under the SFGS would be extended for two years and the principal moratorium arrangement would be extended for one year, so as to provide more room for SMEs to seize the opportunities brought about by economic recovery. We will, in accordance with the established mechanism, seek the Legislative Council's approval for increasing the total government loan guarantee commitment for the scheme by \$20 billion, i.e. from currently \$290 billion to \$310 billion.

“Economic and Trade Express”

32. As a measure announced in the 2025 Policy Address, we have set up the “Economic and Trade Express” to strengthen trio-coordination among overseas ETOs, InvestHK and HKTDC, capitalising on their complementary advantages to jointly promote Hong Kong’s trade and investment abroad. The “Economic and Trade Express” focuses on supporting SMEs and start-ups by proactively organising overseas business missions for relevant enterprises with one stop supporting services (including arrangement of business matching and other activities) to assist Hong Kong enterprises in exploring business opportunities in overseas markets. We will organise outbound business missions starting from the first quarter of this year. Among them, during the participation of the Hong Kong tech delegation led by the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTP) in the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, US, in January 2026, the San Francisco ETO, in collaboration with InvestHK, HKTDC and HKSTP, hosted a series of events under the framework of “Economic and Trade Express” to provide Hong Kong startups with opportunities for exchange, networking and exploring collaboration. In addition to supporting local enterprises in expanding their business overseas, InvestHK will identify overseas enterprises to connect with Hong Kong’s business sectors, facilitating more enterprises to invest and establish operations in Hong Kong, thereby promoting two-way flow of enterprises and investments.

Strengthening communication with local enterprises

33. Given the complex and ever-changing international trade landscape, coupling with new developments and various trade measures

in overseas markets from time to time, the Trade and Industry Department (TID) has established a regular mechanism to disseminate the latest international and Mainland economic and trade information more effectively to enterprises, particularly SMEs, assisting them in planning their business operations in a more effective and timely manner.

Tapping into the Mainland Domestic Market and Developing Electronic Commerce (E-commerce) Business

34. The “Recommendations for Formulating the 15th Five-Year Plan” clearly sets out the objective of building a robust domestic market and fostering a new pattern of development, guided by the strategy of expanding domestic demand. The HKSAR Government will continue to actively assist Hong Kong enterprises in tapping into the Mainland domestic market, including promoting Hong Kong’s quality products and services through large-scale exhibitions and platforms on the Chinese Mainland (such as China International Import Expo), so as to strengthen Hong Kong’s role as an important channel connecting our nation and the world, with a view to better integrating into the overall development of our nation and seizing the enormous business opportunities on the Chinese Mainland.

35. In addition, various policies and measures have been implemented to encourage enterprises to leverage business opportunities and develop e-commerce business since the Government’s establishment of the inter-departmental E-commerce Development Task Force in 2024. Among others, we launched “E-commerce Easy” under the BUD Fund in

July 2024 to encourage enterprises to implement e-commerce projects. In March 2025, we have expanded the geographical scope of “E-commerce Easy” to the 10 ASEAN countries. As at end December 2025, 117 applications were approved under “E-commerce Easy”, involving a total funding amount of around \$65 million. In 2025-26, HKTDC has launched the “E-Commerce Express” to provide a series of thematic training seminars and research sharing sessions for enterprises, and implemented a series of brand promotion measures to pave the way for Hong Kong brands to develop business through e-commerce platforms. Moreover, the Mentorship Programme (Branding and E-commerce Development) under the TID was launched in August 2025 to assist enterprises in developing brands and expanding the sales network of e-commerce. The Support and Consultation Centre for SMEs under TID will also continue to take lead and co-operate with the other three SME centres (i.e. the “SME Centre” under HKTDC, the “SME One” under the Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC) , and the “TecONE” under the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation) to strengthen the provision of information to SMEs on conducting e-commerce in the Mainland and ASEAN markets and enhance enterprises’ capabilities in expanding the sales network of e-commerce.

36. It was announced in the 2025 Policy Address a number of measures to promote cross-border e-commerce development. On cross-border e-commerce logistics, the Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) launched in December 2024 a pilot scheme entitled the Cross-boundary Express Cargo Clearance Facilitation Arrangement (CEFA), under which C&ED provides, on a pilot basis, express cargo

clearance at the warehouse of a logistics provider. To enhance the efficiency of e-commerce shipment, we will recruit a logistics provider as an additional pilot participant of CEFA. Moreover, we organised through HKTDC the second edition of the Hong Kong Shopping Festival (HKSF) on Mainland e-commerce platforms in August 2025. The event has attracted the participation of around 260 brands, enabling SMEs to leverage the extensive visitor traffic and diverse customer base of these platforms to raise brand awareness and develop businesses in the Mainland market. Having regard to the experience of the two editions of HKSF, HKTDC will continue to organise HKSF in the Mainland and ASEAN markets over the next three years (i.e. 2026 to 2028) to promote Hong Kong brands.

37. We notice that Hong Kong enterprises generally lack avenues to connect with local and non-local e-commerce service providers. At the same time, in view of the enormous potential of “goods economy”, HKTDC and SME ReachOut, which is operated by HKPC, will implement the “Creativity • E-commerce – Beyond Limits” programme in 2026 to assist enterprises in collaborating with brands and developing cross-border e-commerce business. HKTDC will also provide one-stop business matching and referral services to strengthen the interface between enterprises and e-commerce service providers, facilitate more business matching and enhance those brands’ competitiveness on cross-border e-commerce platforms.

Support market expansion of export industry

38. To support Hong Kong exporters (in particular SMEs) in coping with the challenges posed by unstable global trade environment, following the launch of the three support measures⁵ in April 2025 by the Hong Kong Export Credit Insurance Corporation (ECIC), the 2025 Policy Address announced that ECIC would collaborate with financial institutions to enhance financing support for Hong Kong e-commerce businesses using different e-commerce platforms⁶. Furthermore, ECIC has also extended the geographical coverage of its 20 free buyer credit checking service from the Chinese Mainland, the Middle East and ASEAN to all insured markets of ECIC, helping Hong Kong businesses develop diversified export markets. ECIC will continue to closely monitor the needs and development of export market, and introduce appropriate measures to facilitate Hong Kong exporters in expanding markets.

II. Regional Intellectual Property (IP) Trading Centre

39. Hong Kong's IP regime is highly regarded internationally. According to the World Competitiveness Yearbook 2025 published by the International Institute for Management Development in Lausanne, Switzerland, Hong Kong ranks sixth globally on the criterion for "intellectual property rights", an improvement of six places since the

⁵ Including (a) extending the free-pre-shipment cover for holders of "Small Business Policy" to 30 June 2026; (b) offering a 50% discount on pre-shipment risks cover premiums for each non-"Small Business Policy" holders; and (c) reducing premiums for emerging markets in line with those for traditional major markets which can help exporters mitigate costs and expand into emerging markets.

⁶ Apart from the e-commerce platforms already covered (i.e. Amazon and eBay), the newly added platforms since the 2025 Policy Address include Pingduoduo (拼多多), Douyin (抖音), JD (京東), Taofenxiao (淘分銷), Tmall (天貓) and Dewu (得物).

current-term Government took office, outperforming many developed economies.

40. IP is a legally protected intangible asset and the cornerstone of encouraging innovation and technology (I&T) development and creativity. The HKSAR Government will push forward measures in IP financing, valuation and protection, and strengthen external promotion to boost IP trading.

41. As announced in the 2025 Policy Address, the HKSAR Government will roll out the following measures to promote IP financing and trading with a view to building the pertinent ecosystem:

- (a) CEDB and the Intellectual Property Department (IPD) collaborated with the Hong Kong Monetary Authority to launch an IP financing sandbox in December 2025 to assist pilot sectors (particularly the technology sector) in leveraging IPs for financing with the support of the banking, insurance, valuation, legal and other professions.
- (b) The Hong Kong Technology and Innovation Support Centre commenced full operation in December 2025. The HKSAR Government will support the centre in providing local small and medium I&T enterprises with patent evaluation based on national standards, and roll out a two-year pilot programme, which is expected to be launched no later than the third quarter of 2026, to subsidise patent valuation as a reference for credit

financing.

- (c) The IPD has also collaborated with banking industry organisation to provide training for banking practitioners in July and November 2025 respectively, covering IP categories, protection, financing, etc. to enhance the industry's understanding of IP financing.
- (d) CEDB is also reviewing the tax deduction arrangements for capital expenditure incurred by enterprises for purchasing IP or the rights to use IP, with a view to suitably broadening the scope of relevant profits tax deductions to enhance the promotion of development of IP trading.⁷

42. On strengthening IP protection, following the completion of the public consultation on enhancement of the Copyright Ordinance regarding the protection for AI technology development in September 2024, the HKSAR Government will formulate a code of practice in respect of relevant legal principles and prepare a legislative proposal. We also briefed the LegCo Panel on Commerce, Industry, Innovation and Technology in June 2025 on the progress of review of the local registered designs regime and the various important issues to be examined, and launched a three-month public consultation in December 2025 to collect views from various sectors.

⁷ The 2025-26 Budget announced that the Government will review the tax deduction arrangements incurred by enterprises on purchase of IP or the rights to use IP, so as to accelerate the development of IP-intensive industries and promote the development of IP trading in Hong Kong.

43. To strengthen external promotion, the HKSAR Government and the HKTDC has actively promoted IP financing in the Business of IP Asia Forum 2025. The Forum attracted over 3 300 in-person participants from 38 countries and regions. It also featured the inaugural “IP Go Global Business Matching Session” where lawyers with relevant IP experience from various local professional services bodies provided one-on-one expert consultation to Mainland enterprises, supporting their expansion into international markets. The IPD will also nominate local enterprises to compete for the China Patent Award jointly organised by the China National Intellectual Property Administration and the World Intellectual Property Organization.

III. Digitalisation of Trade Documents

44. We have been pressing ahead with the development of the Trade Single Window (TSW) in three phases to provide a one-stop electronic platform for the trade to lodge “Business-to-Government” trade documents for trade declaration and cargo clearance. Phase 1 and Phase 2 are in full operation, covering 42 types of trade documents in total. They have been operating smoothly and are well received by the trade. We are developing the information technology system for Phase 3 at full steam. Our target is to roll out the services by batches from middle of this year onwards. We signed the Cooperation Arrangement on Single Window in May 2025 with the General Administration of Customs of the People’s Republic of China and convened an Expert Group meeting in October 2025 to enhance system connectivity between the two places. Following the rollout of TSW Phase 3, the coverage of the existing

“Single Submission for Dual Declaration” Scheme will be expanded progressively to other trade documents and transport modes to further benefit the trade. We are also actively exploring with ASEAN to take forward a pilot project on exchanging electronic Certificates of Origin through single window collaboration to enhance trade and customs clearance efficiency, thereby strengthening trade ties between Hong Kong and ASEAN.

45. In addition, with reference to the Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records advocated by the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, the HKSAR Government published a consultation paper on the proposed legislative amendments to facilitate digitalisation of “Business-to-Business” trade documents in December 2025. The consultation seeks industry feedbacks on several key aspects including the scope of application, assessment of reliability and operational requirements. We will consider the views received, with the aim of introducing the legislative proposal within this year to empower the industry to develop technical solutions that suit their actual needs.

Closing Remarks

46. The HKSAR Government will proactively align its work with the 15th Five-Year Plan. In the face of uncertainties stemming from the global trade landscape and geopolitics, we will consolidate Hong Kong’s status as our country’s south gate, continue to leverage our unique advantages in connecting with both our country and the world, and further

deepen international exchanges and cooperation, with a view to turning crises into opportunities amidst the complex and ever-changing global trade landscape. We will capitalise on our pivotal role as a dual platform connecting our country and the world to attract more Mainland and overseas enterprises to set up operations in Hong Kong. Meanwhile, we will assist Hong Kong enterprises to explore business opportunities in the Mainland and overseas markets to provide impetus for Hong Kong's economic growth.

Other Proposals

47. The 2025 Policy Address also sets out in detail other job portfolios of CEDB, including numerous other proposals on telecommunications and broadcasting. CEDB will brief the LegCo Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting on the proposals. We will not repeat such proposals here.

Commerce and Economic Development Bureau
January 2026

**Relevant Indicators for the
Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (CEDB)**

Indicators for Specified Tasks in 2025 Policy Address

(I) New Indicators

“Bringing in and Going Global”: Hong Kong as a Platform for Overseas Expansion

1. Discuss strategies and work plan of the Task Force on Supporting Mainland Enterprises in Going Global, and organise the first large-scale promotion event **by end-2025**.
2. Attract at least **1 200** Mainland or overseas enterprises to set up or expand businesses in Hong Kong **between 2026 and 2027**, thereby bringing in direct investment of at least **HK\$120 billion** and creating at least **12 000** job opportunities

International Trade Centre

3. Promote Digital Trade:
 - Start rolling out in batches the Phase 3 services of the Trade Single Window **in 2026**; and
 - Put forward a legislative proposal **within 2026** to facilitate the digitalisation of business-to-business trade documents with reference to the Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records.

Regional Intellectual Property Trading Centre

4. Bolster intellectual property (IP) financing:

- Announce the arrangements for the IP financing sandbox pilot scheme in collaboration with the Hong Kong Monetary Authority **within 2025**;
- Launch a pilot programme **within 2026** to subsidise small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to conduct patent valuation; and
- Organise at least **two** IP training courses for practitioners in the banking sector **in 2025-26**.

Support the Local Economy

5. Enhance support for SMEs:

- Expand the geographical scope of the BUD Fund to cover **eight** more economies, including B&R countries **within 2026**.

(II) On-going and Valid Indicators for Specified Tasks Introduced in the 2024 Policy Address ¹

Deepen International Exchanges and Co-operation

6. Continue to promote Hong Kong as the functional platform for the B&R Initiative **in 2026:**

- Organise promotional programmes and networking sessions to be attended by no less than **7 500** persons in total;
- Reach out to no less than **560** professional and business associations, chambers and community groups; and
- Organise business missions to five B&R countries with about **120** participants in total.

¹ Some of the ongoing and valid indicators introduced in 2024 have been updated or enhanced in light of the latest situation.

International Trade Centre

7. Seek early accession to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) by holding or participating in **70** related events to liaise with RCEP members and stakeholders **within 2026**.

Regional Intellectual Property Trading Centre

8. Continue to work towards the goal of acquiring institutional autonomy in conducting substantive patent examination **in 2030** to foster the development of the patent system in Hong Kong.
9. Continue to forge ahead with the preparatory work for implementing the Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks in Hong Kong **in 2026**.
10. Promote IP public education, human resources training and professional services within the five years from **2022 to 2027** through the following measures:
 - Promote the awareness of respecting and protecting IP rights among **200 000** students; and
 - Attract about **10 000** local, Mainland and overseas participants to attend the annual Business of IP Asia Forum.

Progress of Indicators for Specified Tasks in 2024 Policy Address

(I) New Indicators

Indicator No.	Indicators for Specified Tasks	Progress
14	The Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK) and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) to commence work by end-2024 for setting up a mechanism and enhancing the interface for attracting Mainland enterprises to establish international or regional offshore trading and supply chain management headquarters in Hong Kong. One stop diversified professional advisory services will also be provided to the enterprises in Hong Kong. (CEDB)	Task completed. The InvestHK and the HKTDC established the high value-added supply chain services mechanism in December 2024 to provide one-stop advisory services for Mainland enterprises wishing to go global.
15	Expand the geographical coverage of “E-commerce Easy” to the 10 ASEAN countries within 2025 to help enterprises tap into the ASEAN e-commerce market. (CEDB)	Task completed. The geographical coverage of “E-commerce Easy” has been expanded to the 10 ASEAN countries starting from 14 March 2025.

Indicator No.	Indicators for Specified Tasks	Progress
25	<p>Enhance the intellectual property (IP) legal framework within 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set out the way forward for further enhancement to the Copyright Ordinance regarding the protection for artificial intelligence (AI) technology development;	<p>Task completed. The Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (CEDB) consulted the LegCo Panel on Commerce, Industry, Innovation and Technology in February 2025 regarding the proposed amendments to the Copyright Ordinance, and received the Panel's support.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enact subsidiary legislation under the Copyright Ordinance to specify libraries, museums and archives eligible for certain permitted acts and prescribe the conditions, and to designate non-government-owned libraries, museums or archives that can be exempted from certain criminal liabilities;	<p>Task completed. The two pieces of subsidiary legislation were tabled before the LegCo in May and July 2025 respectively, and the negative vetting procedures have been completed. They came into operation in July 2025 and January 2026 respectively.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Launch a consultation on updating the registered designs regime; and	<p>Task completed. The public consultation on the review of the registered designs regime was launched in December 2025.</p>

Indicator No.	Indicators for Specified Tasks	Progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enact subsidiary legislation to streamline IP litigation processes. (CEDB) 	Task completed. The relevant subsidiary legislation was tabled before the LegCo in May 2025 and the negative vetting procedure has been completed. It came into operation in October 2025.
26	<p>Strengthen capacity building of IP talents within 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop practical training materials on IP that can be widely deployed across 23 different industries; and 	Task completed. The practical training materials on IP were launched in December 2025 for adoption by various industries.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a survey on Hong Kong's IP-related professional and business services. (CEDB) 	Task completed. The survey findings were announced in December 2025.
27	Launch a new AI-assisted trademark image search service within 2025. (CEDB)	Task completed. The relevant service was launched in December 2025.

Indicator No.	Indicators for Specified Tasks	Progress
28	<p>Promote the development of digital economy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the procedures relevant to cross-border e-commerce logistics within 2025 to enhance the efficiency of cross-border distribution of goods. (CEDB)	<p>Task on track. To facilitate shipment of cross-border e-commerce goods, the Customs and Excise Department will recruit a logistic provider as an additional pilot participant of the Cross-boundary Express Cargo Clearance Facilitation Arrangement (CEFA), thereby enhancing the efficiency of e-commerce shipment.</p>

(II) On-going and Valid Indicators for Specified Tasks Introduced in the 2023 Policy Address

Indicator No.	Indicators for Specified Tasks	Progress
12	Increase inward investment by attracting at least 1 130 companies to set up or expand their operations in Hong Kong from 2023 to 2025, an increase of 16% over the annual average number in 2020 and 2021, thereby bringing in direct investment of at least \$77 billion and creating at least 15 250 job opportunities. (CEDB)	Target completed in advance. During the period from 2023 to August 2025, the InvestHK attracted a total of 1 365 Mainland and overseas companies to set up or expand their operations in Hong Kong, bringing in direct investment of around \$175.4 billion and creating around 19 900 job opportunities.
22	The InvestHK and the HKTDC to further set up consultant offices along the Belt and Road (B&R) within 2024-25. (CEDB)	Task completed. The InvestHK's two new consultant offices in Cairo, Egypt and Izmir, Türkiye commenced operation in July 2024 and January 2025 respectively as planned. The HKTDC also established a consultant office in Cambodia in early 2025.
23	Seek early accession to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) by holding or participating in 70 related events to liaise with RCEP	Task completed. The Trade and Industry Department and the overseas Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices held over 70 events in 2025, and will continue to

Indicator No.	Indicators for Specified Tasks	Progress
	members and stakeholders within 2025. (CEDB)	proactively liaise with RCEP members and stakeholders so as to rally support from all parties and sectors for Hong Kong's early accession to the RCEP.
24	<p>Continue to promote Hong Kong as the functional platform for the B&R Initiative in 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organise promotional programmes and networking sessions to be attended by no less than 7 500 persons in total;• Reach out to no less than 560 professional and business associations, chambers and community groups; and• Organise business missions to five B&R countries with about 120 participants in total. (CEDB)	Task completed. The CEDB has organised and initiated preparation for a number of relevant promotional programmes and networking sessions. Efforts have been made to reach out to various professional and business associations, chambers and community groups. Business missions have also been organised.

Indicator No.	Indicators for Specified Tasks	Progress
27	<p>Foster the development of the patent system in Hong Kong:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to discuss with the patent agent sector and stakeholders in 2025 to plan for the establishment of regulatory arrangements for local patent agent services; and 	<p>Task on track. The Intellectual Property Department (IPD) will continue to conduct more extensive consultation on the establishment of regulatory arrangements for local patent agent services, with a view to deciding on the way forward.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work towards the goal of acquiring institutional autonomy in conducting substantive patent examination in 2030. (CEDB) 	<p>Task in progress. The IPD will, having regard to the additional resources acquired, continue to enhance the substantive examination capability of patent examiners under the original grant patent system, with the target of progressively acquiring institutional autonomy in conducting substantive examination for patent applications in major technology areas by 2030.</p>

Indicator No.	Indicators for Specified Tasks	Progress
28	Continue to forge ahead with the preparatory work for implementing the Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks in Hong Kong in 2025. (CEDB)	Task on track. The CEDB and the IPD will continue to forge ahead with the preparatory work for implementing the Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks in Hong Kong.
29	<p>Promote IP public education, capacity building and professional services within the five years from 2022 to 2027 through the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the awareness of respecting and protecting IP rights among 200 000 students; 	Task on track. The IPD has already reached out to over 180 000 students to promote the awareness of respecting and protecting IP rights, and encourage them to actively explore and innovate.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide IP training to 5 000 personnel across different industries; and 	Target completed in advance. The IPD provided IP training for over 5 200 personnel across different industries within the first three years of the current term of the Government, achieving the relevant target as set out in the 2022 Policy Address ahead of schedule.

Indicator No.	Indicators for Specified Tasks	Progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attract about 10 000 local, Mainland and overseas participants to attend the annual Business of IP Asia Forum. (CEDB)	Task on track. The 2025 Business of IP Asia Forum attracted the attendance of more than 3 300 local, Mainland and overseas participants. CEDB and HKTDC will continue to co-organise the 2026 Business of IP Asia Forum.