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Market and Trade Profile: Hong Kong

March 2021

Overview

- **‘Chapter 1: Inbound market statistics’** provides insights on key statistics about Hong Kong travellers, where they are going, and who they are. It also takes a look at Britain as a destination and its competitive set.
- **‘Chapter 2: Experiences and perceptions’** features details about what visitors from Hong Kong are likely to do in the UK, how they felt during their visit to the UK, and whether they would recommend a stay there to their acquaintances. Perceptions of Britain held by Hong Kongers in general are also highlighted.
- **‘Chapter 3: Understanding the market’** takes a close look at consumer trends in Hong Kong, both pre and post COVID-19, and the booking, planning and further travel behaviour of this source market. Some details on how to best reach Hong Kong consumers are indicated, too.
- **‘Chapter 4: Access and travel trade’** shows how people from Hong Kong travel to the UK, how to best cater for their needs and wants during their stay, and gives insights into the Hong Kong travel trade. Further ways of working with VisitBritain and other useful research resources are pointed out in the appendix.

Please note that the majority of this report refers to the market conditions for travel from Hong Kong to the UK prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, and gives some insight on changes which have resulted from the crisis. An [international recovery sentiment tracking survey](#) is available.

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Executive Summary

1: Inbound market statistics

Chapter summary

- The Hongkongese outbound market is valuable: it ranked 12th for international tourism expenditure in 2019 globally. From 2017-2019, the average holidaymaker from Hong Kong to the UK spent £1,348, significantly higher than the all-market average (£765).
- Looking at the wider picture, it is worth noting that a large share of outbound visits for a night or more from Hong Kong were within Asia: 77% of their overnight visits were to China or Macao in 2019.
- Visits from Hong Kong to the UK were on a steady rise from 2009 to 2019, with a 141% growth in visits and 254% growth in spend seen in that time. However, the COVID-19 outbreak in early 2020 severely impacted inbound travel, with Oxford Economics estimating that 18% of the volume of visits seen in 2019 were retained in 2020. A similar rate of decline was seen across the Northeast Asia region.
- Hong Kongers are most likely to come to the UK for a holiday trip (52%), and volume of holiday visitors has steadily increased since 2009. However, 26% of Hong Kong visitors come to the UK to visit friends and family; the highest proportion within Northeast Asia.
- London is the leading destination for a trip to the UK. 47% of nights from Hong Kong visitors were spent in London in 2019, however, 43% were spent in the rest of England. The most popular regions are the South East and North West.

£1,348
average spend per visit
from Hong Kong
holidaymakers from 2017-
2019

2: Experiences and perceptions

Chapter summary

- Dining in restaurants, going shopping, sightseeing and visiting museums or art galleries are the most common activities featuring in visits from Hong Kong to the UK.
- Hong Kong visitors over-index on dining in restaurants, going shopping and visiting parks and gardens when compared to the all-market average. In contrast, they are less likely than the all-market average to socialise with the locals or go to the pub.
- 98% of visitors from Hong Kong felt welcome in the Britain during their stay, and 95% would recommend Britain for a holiday trip.

Over 9 in 10 Hong Kongers would be 'extremely' or 'very' likely to recommend a trip to the UK

3: Understanding the market

Chapter summary

- Hong Kong was retroceded to China in 1997. Today it still has some independence from Beijing due to its status as a Special Administrative Region.
- In June 2019, large protests erupted in Hong Kong in response to a proposed extradition amendment bill. These protests were ongoing throughout 2019 and into 2020, and had a significant impact on Hong Kong's economy and inbound tourism.
- Strong links with the UK remain, and this is exemplified by the new British National Overseas (BNO) visa system, in place from January 2021, allowing Hong Kong citizens to stay in the UK for five year periods and apply for British citizenship. 300,000 Hong Kongers are currently BNO passport holders, and 72% of residents may be eligible. This will have a significant impact on Hong Kong, UK and Chinese relations, and its full effects remain to be seen.
- 4-in-10 Hong Kongers were born elsewhere, which influences the Hongkongese culture; a mix between Chinese and Western elements.
- Hong Kong has the longest life expectancy in the world (85 years old compared to the global average of 70). A range of possible explanations for this include strong infrastructure, green spaces, healthcare provision, and healthy diets. Society itself is changing as the population ages; Hong Kongers look for healthier lifestyles, and many retired people travel to reward themselves, while others travel to pursue outdoor activities and relax outside of their urban routine.
- The number one influence on Hong Kongers' choice of travel destination is celebrities and influencers, with social media coming in second. This demonstrates the importance of digital means to reach these potential visitors.

The average Hong Konger will be aged 51 by 2040

4: Access and travel trade

Chapter summary

- Air connectivity is key for this market. The vast majority of visitors from Hong Kong came by plane to the UK (96% in 2019).
- In 2019, there were 68 direct flights between Hong Kong and the UK weekly.
- While most of this capacity was to London (91% of all direct seat capacity from Hong Kong to the UK), Cathay Pacific's flights to Manchester helped to increase regional spread of arrival.
- Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, seat capacity from Hong Kong to the UK dropped by 89% in April and May 2020 compared to the same months in 2019, with seats at 35% of 2019 levels on average through the year (slightly more seats were retained in 2020 than the average across Northeast Asia). Departures are planned to stay at a very low level in the first half of 2021.
- Airlines play a role in the travel trade as the main players now do not only offer ticketing, but also packages. Main consumer trends have a direct impact on the proposed tours and packages.
- The travel trade structure in Hong Kong may seem complex, with over 1,700 travel agents being members of the Travel Industry Council. However, as tourism in general, and inbound tourism in particular, is an important sector for the Hongkongese economy, it is regulated and well organised. In the last few years, traditional players have moved online as OTAs gained market shares.

Cathay Pacific is responsible for 67% of direct seat capacity between Hong Kong and the UK (2019)



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Inbound market statistics

Chapter 1

1.1 Key statistics

Key insights

- In 2019 Hong Kong was the 12th biggest spender on outbound tourism globally, and the UK was once more its most visited destination for overnight trips to Europe.
- Most visits from Hong Kong to the UK are made for holidays and to visit friends and relatives (52% and 26% of all 2019 visits from Hong Kong respectively), while only 17% were for a business trip.
- VFR visitors from Hong Kong tend to stay longer than the all-market average, with an average stay of 12 nights in 2019. Linked to this, 24% of all nights in the UK by Hong Kongers were spent as a free guest with friends or relatives.
- Overall, 4-7 night stays in Britain have become more popular among Hong Kong visitors in the last few years, with the summer months (July-September) still their favourite time to visit, and London the leading destination.
- Hong Kong visitors are more likely than the all-market average to go to the British countryside or villages, and to the coast or beaches. This behaviour is particularly likely among those visiting friends and family.

53%
of Hong Kong visitors
have been to the UK
before; the highest
proportion in Northeast
Asia

1.1 Key statistics: global context and 10 year trend

Global context

Measure	2019
International tourism expenditure (US\$bn)	26.9
Global rank for international tourism expenditure	12
Number of outbound overnight visits (m)	35.1
Number of outbound overnight visits excl. China and Macao (m)	8.0
Most visited destination	China
Most visited destination (excl. China and Macao)	Japan
Most visited destination in Europe	UK

Inbound travel to the UK overview

Measure	Visits (000s)	Nights (000s)	Spend (£m)
10-year trend	+141%	+75%	+254%
2009	169	2,046	158
2010	169	1,932	173
2011	192	2,574	232
2012	191	1,825	257
2013	229	2,536	340
2014	239	2,504	391
2015	277	3,000	353
2016	334	3,595	377
2017	400	4,422	513
2018	403	4,284	486
2019	409	3,571	560
Share of UK total in 2019	1.0%	1.2%	2.0%

Source: International Passenger Survey by ONS, UNWTO, Oxford Economics

1.1 Key statistics: volume and value

Inbound volume and value

Measure	2019	Change vs. 2018	Rank out of UK top markets
Visits (000s)	409	+2%	22
Nights (000s)	3,571	-17%	19
Spend (£m)	560	+15%	15

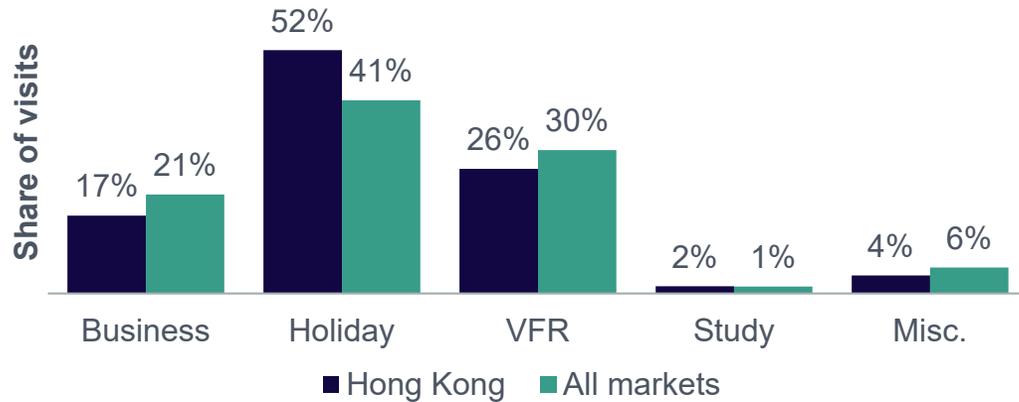
Due to the Covid-19 outbreak in Q1 2020, visits from Hong Kong to the UK decreased by 43% in the first three months of 2020 compared to those months in 2019, down to to 40,000*

Key metrics by journey purpose (2017-2019)

Averages by journey purpose	Nights per visit	Spend per night	Spend per visit
Holiday	8	£164	£1,348
Business	6	£242	£1,498
Visiting Friends/ Relatives	12	£81	£984
Study**	70	£51	£3,568
Misc.**	12	£72	£867
All visits	10	£127	£1,286

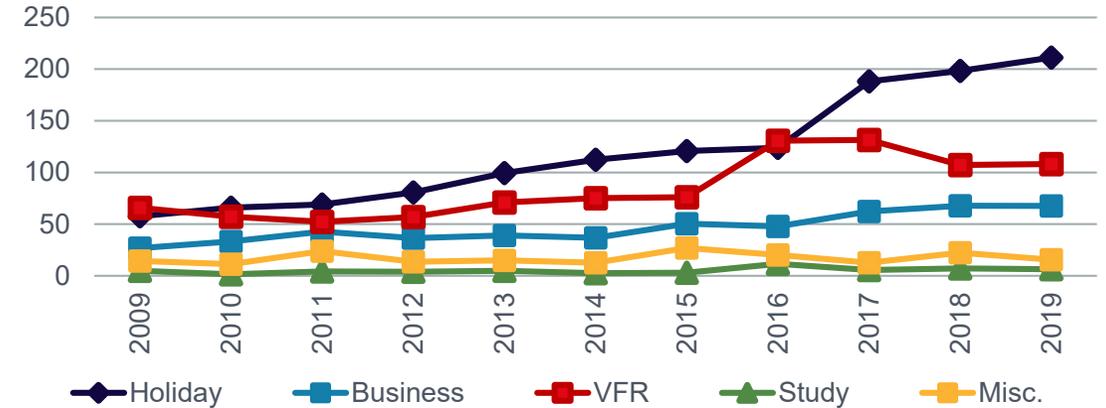
1.1 Key statistics: journey purpose

Journey purpose 2019



- Most visits from Hong Kong to the UK are made for leisure: in 2019, 52% were made for holidays, higher than the all-market average of 41%.
- Hong Kongers under-index on all other journey purposes apart from study visits. 2% of Hong Kong visitors in 2019 came for study, compared to 1% of all global visitors.
- Among journey purposes, the highest spend per night came from Business visitors from 2017- 2019, at £242. The highest spend per visit came from Study visitors, due to a particularly high average length of stay, at 70 nights per visit*.

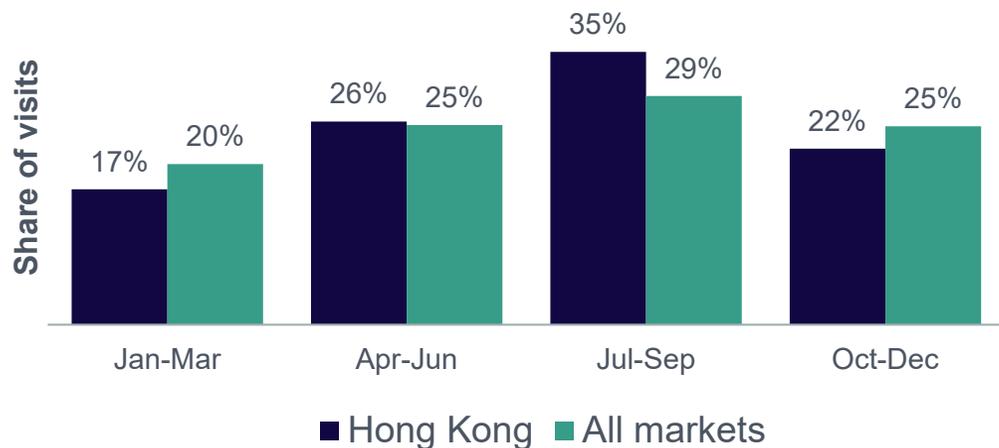
Journey purpose trends (visits 000s)



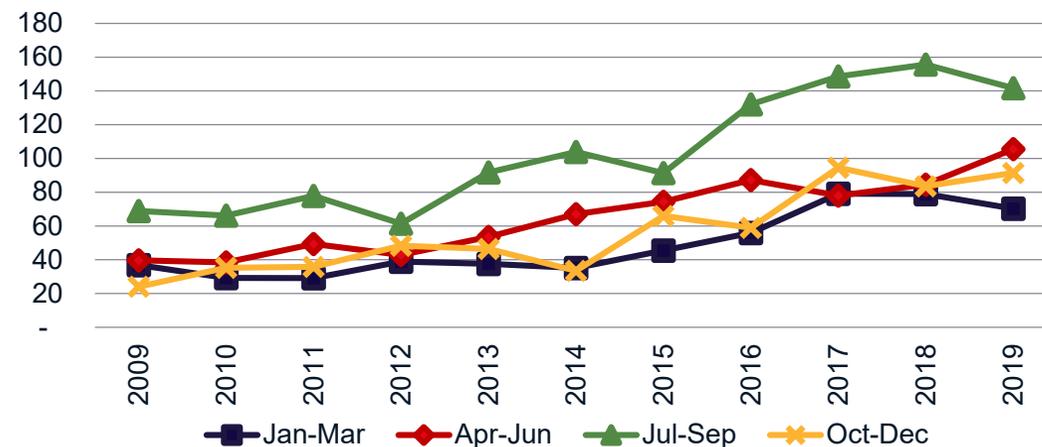
- In 2009, VFR visitors accounted for the highest proportion of visitors from Hong Kong to the UK. However, after that year, Holiday visitors have consistently been the most prominent.
- Both the volume of Holiday visitors, and their share among all Hong Kong visitors, has steadily increased in this time, with a sharp increase in volume from 2016 to 2017, which has been maintained and surpassed each year since.
- In contrast, volumes of VFR visitors have dipped since 2016, with a reduction in share of visits from 39% to 26% in this time.

1.1 Key statistics: seasonality

Seasonality 2019



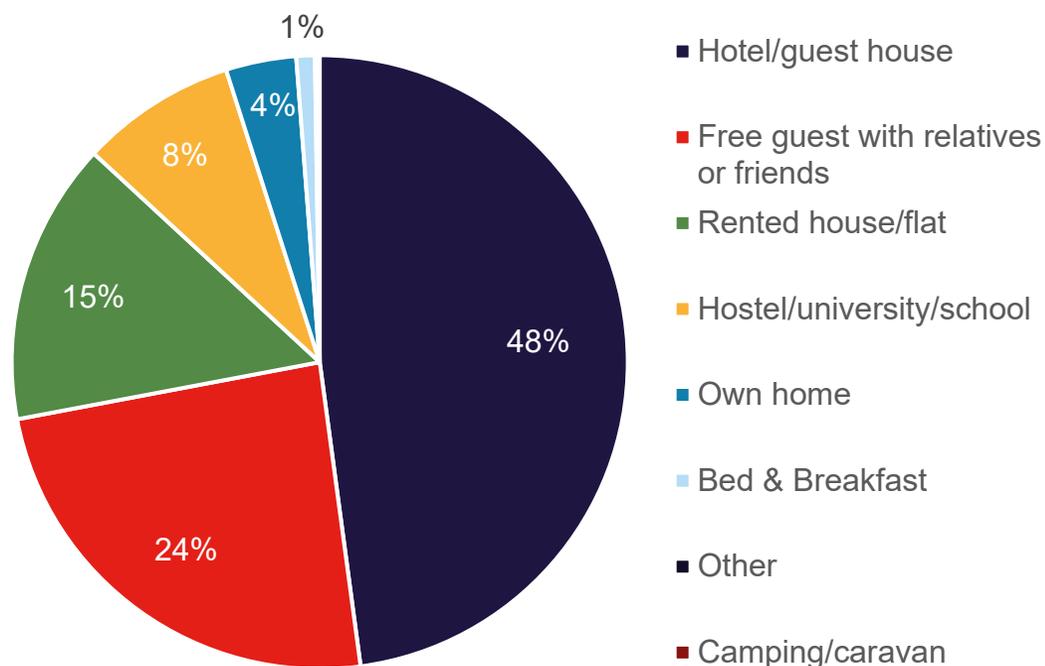
Seasonality trend (visits 000s)



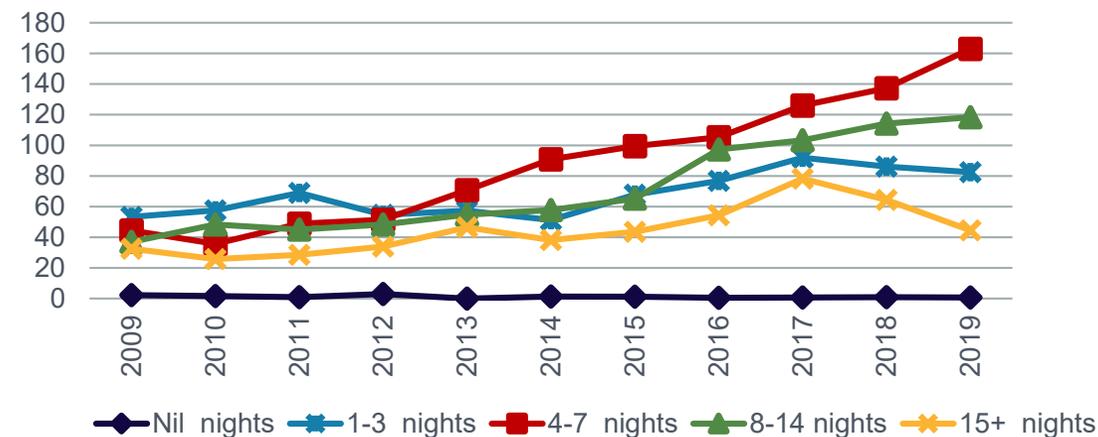
- Visitors from Hong Kong tend to come the UK in the summer months: in 2019, 35% of visits from Hong Kong were made between July and September, which is significantly higher than the global average of 29%.
- April-June is the second-most popular time to visit the UK for visitors from Hong Kong (26% of visits in 2019), followed by October-December (22%) and January-March (17%).
- Since 2009, July-September has been consistently the most popular quarter for visits from Hong Kong, with April-June only being surpassed by October-December in 2012 and 2017.

1.1 Key statistics: length of stay and accommodation

Accommodation stayed in, in 2019 (nights, %share)



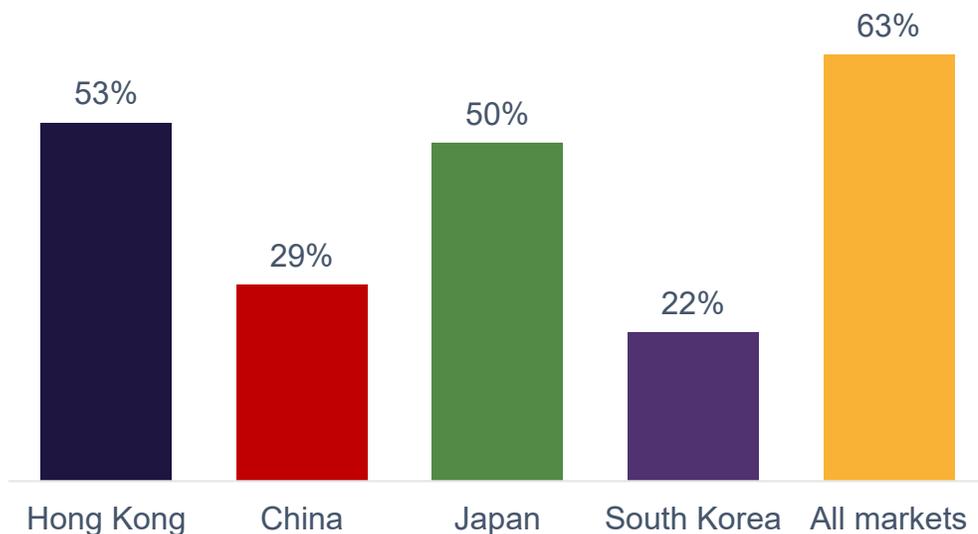
Duration of stay trend (visits 000s)



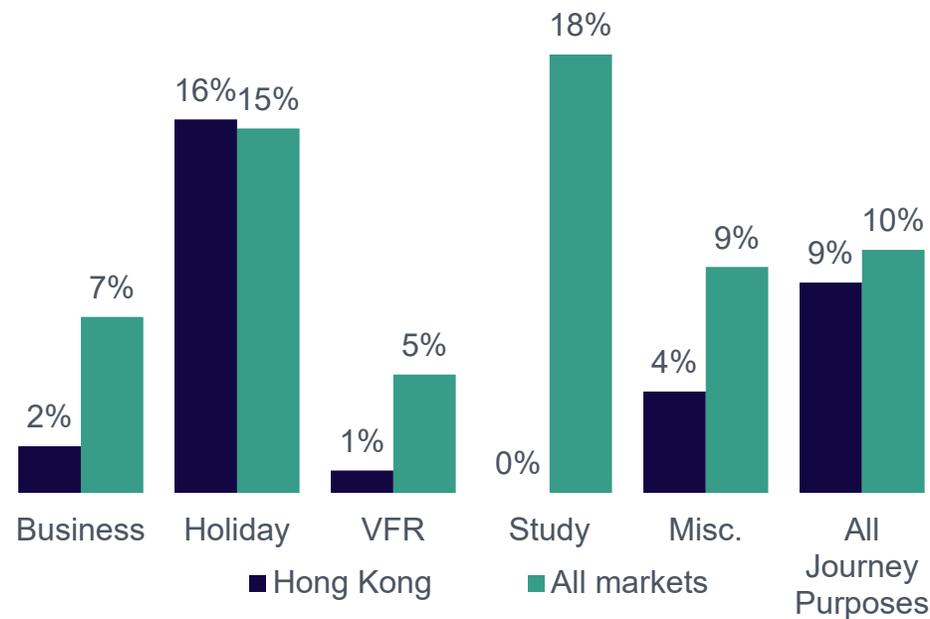
- Stays of 4 to 7 nights are the most popular among Hong Kongese visitors on a UK trip, and numbers of visitors staying for this duration have steadily increased since 2012.
- Stays of 8-14 nights were close behind in 2016, but their volumes have remained significantly lower than that of 4-7 night stays since that year. Volumes of stays lasting 15+ nights have been declining since 2017.
- In 2019, 48% of the nights Hong Kongers spent in the UK were spent in hotels or guest houses, and 24% as a free guest with relatives or friends. These are by far the most popular accommodation options in this market.

1.1 Key statistics: repeat visits and package tours

Proportion of overnight holiday visitors to the UK who have been to the UK before*



Proportion of visits that are bought as part of a package or all-inclusive tour in 2019**



- Within Northeast Asia, Hong Kong is the market where visitors know the UK best. 53% of Holiday visitors from Hong Kong in 2015 were repeat visitors; slightly above Japan at 50%, and significantly above China and South Korea at 29% and 22% respectively. However, these rates are still below the all-market average of 63%.
- The proportion of Holiday visitors from Hong Kong as part of a package tour in 2019 are similar to the all-market average, at 16%. Hong Kong visitors from all other journey purposes are significantly less likely to be travelling as part of a package tour.

International Passenger Survey by ONS. *2015, excluding British nationals;

**See definition of a package holiday [in appendix](#)

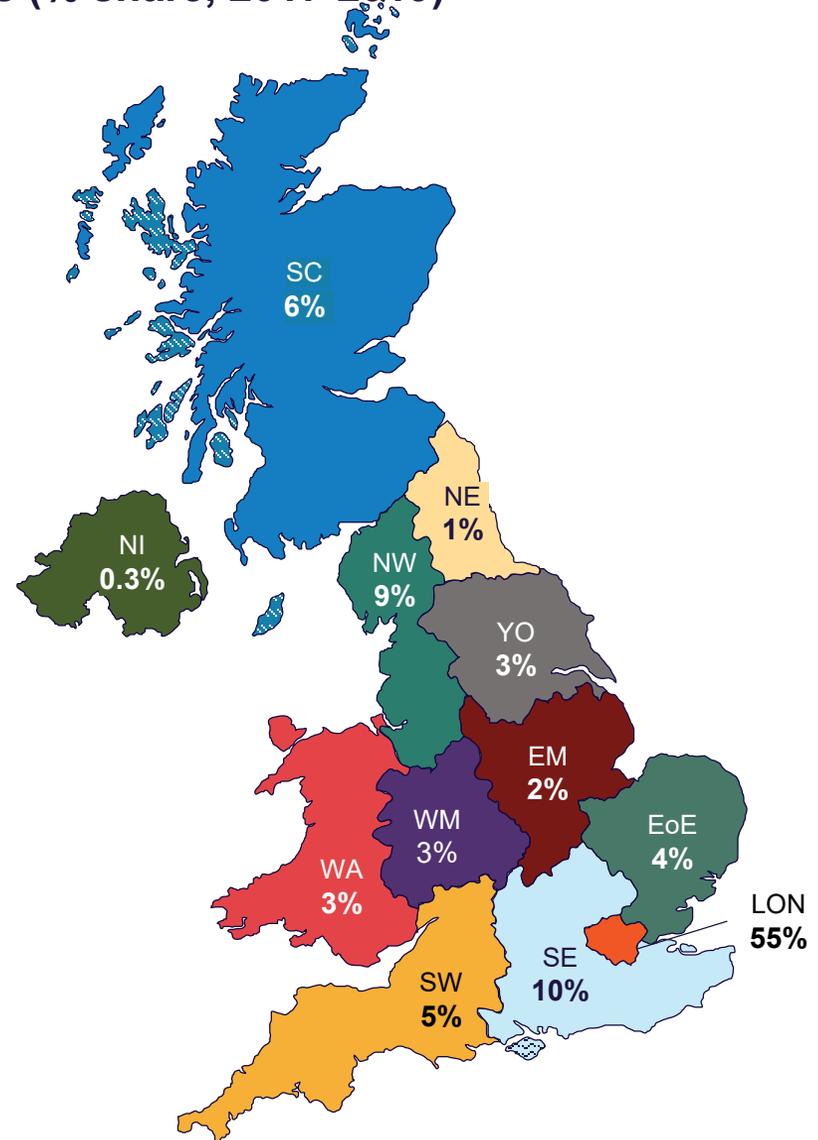
1.2 Getting around Britain



Annual visits to the UK (2017-2019 yearly average)

Region	Nights stayed (000)	Visits (000)	Spend (£m)
Total	4,091	403	518
Scotland (SC)	265	36	22
Wales (WA)	105	12	9
Northern Ireland (NI)	12	2	1
London (LDN)	2266	282	345
North East (NE)	32	5	3
North West (NW)	370	38	29
Yorkshire (YO)	110	13	10
West Midlands (WM)	132	21	15
East Midlands (EM)	63	11	7
East of England (EoE)	146	24	16
South West (SW)	193	29	24
South East (SE)	389	58	36
Nil nights (Nil)	N/A	1	1

Nights (% share, 2017-2019)



Source: International Passenger Survey by ONS

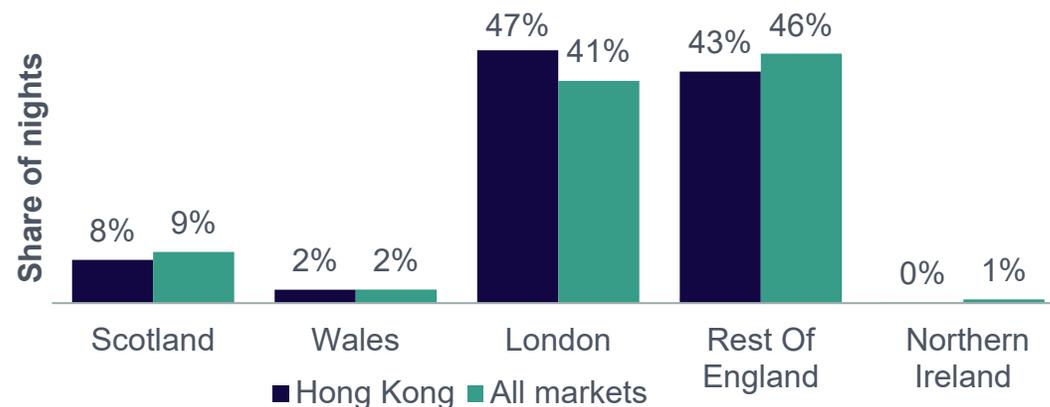
1.2 Getting around Britain: regional spread and top towns/cities

Top towns and cities visited (2014-2019)

Town	Average yearly overnight visits (000s)
London	237
Edinburgh	22
Manchester	21
Oxford	14
Birmingham	9

- London is the leading destination for a trip to Britain from Hong Kong. 47% of nights spent in the UK by visitors from Hong Kong in 2019 were in London, compared to 43% in the rest of England in the same year.
- Visitors from Hong Kong spend significantly more nights in Scotland than in Wales, 8% and 2% respectively of all their nights spent in the UK in 2019, which compares to 9% and 2% on average across all markets.

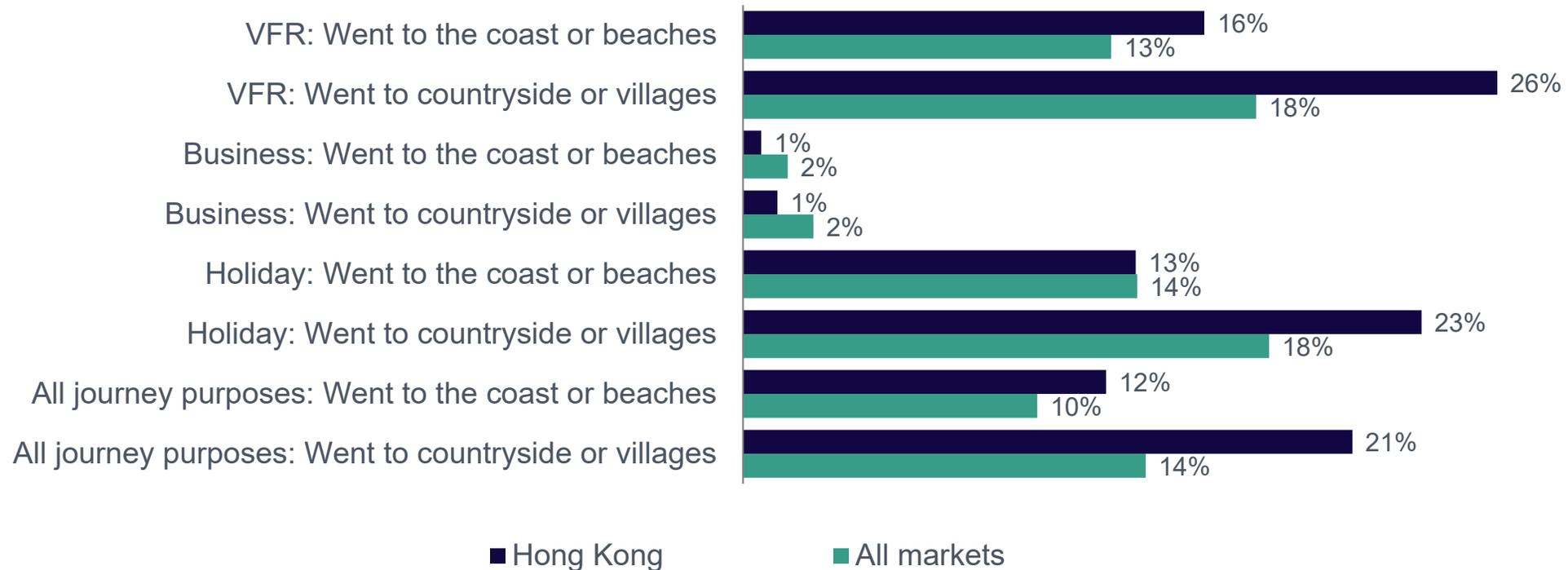
Regional spread 2019



Source: International Passenger Survey by ONS

1.2 Getting around Britain: visits to coast, countryside and villages

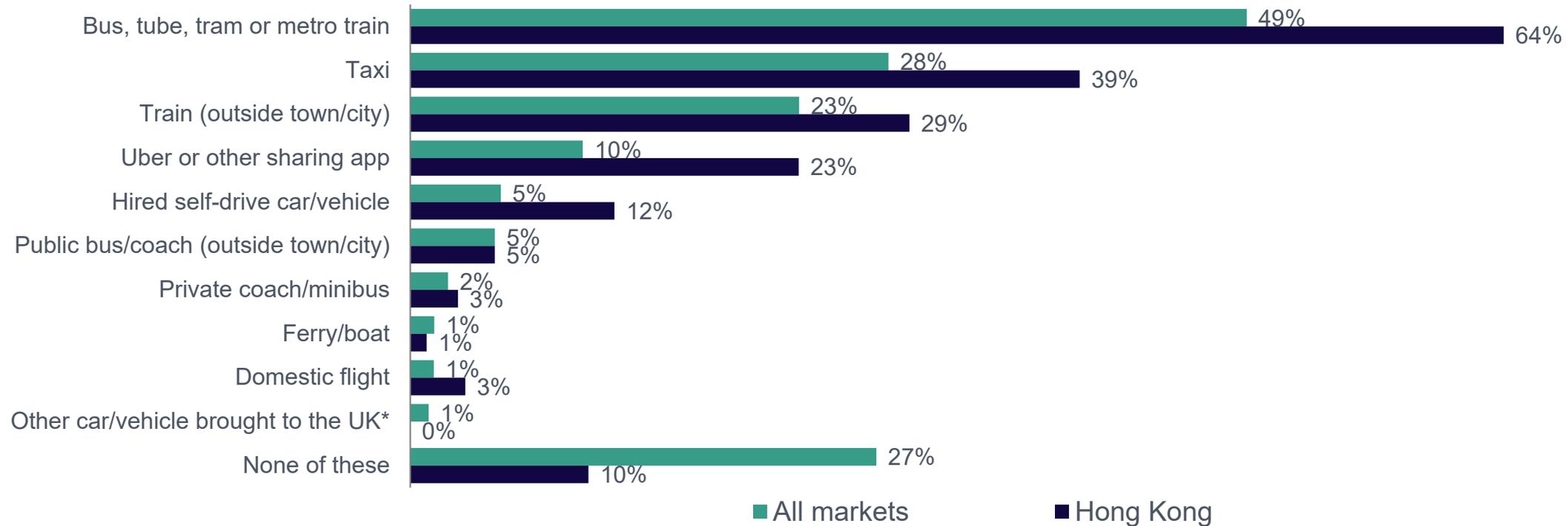
Propensity to visit coast, countryside and villages



Hong Kong visitors are overall more likely than the all-market average to go to the British countryside or villages, and to the coast or beaches. Also, Hong Kongers visiting friends or family in the UK are more likely to do so than those on holiday.

1.2 Getting around Britain: use of internal modes of transport

Propensity to use internal modes of transport



Visitors from Hong Kong are more likely than the all-market average to use all types of public transport during their stay in the UK apart from a ferry or boat. The most popular forms of transport used during stays in the UK are buses, tubes, trams or metro trains.

Source: International Passenger Survey by ONS 2018; most lorry drivers were not asked this question, and as a consequence, are not taken into account in the results for 'car/vehicle you/group brought to the UK'

1.3 Visitor demographics

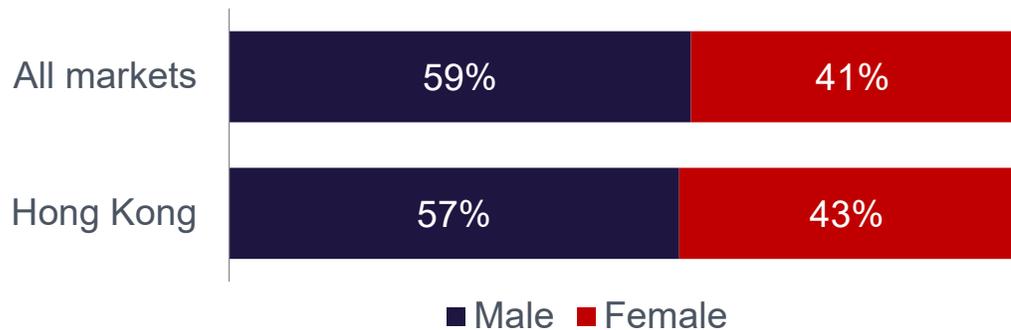
Visitor characteristics

- 57% of visitors from Hong Kong were male in 2019, and male visitors are particularly prominent within the business and VFR purposes.
- 67% of Hong Kong visitors are aged between 25-54 (2019) and this has remained the most prominent age band in the last decade.
- However, the 55+ age band has seen the most growth in inbound visitors within that time, reflecting an ageing population who are interested in international travel.
- Due to the high number of migrants living in Hong Kong, only 63% of visits from this market are Hong Kong nationals. 16% of visitors are UK expats, and 11% are Chinese (2017-2019).
- Hong Kongers are most likely to travel to the UK solo, or with a spouse or partner.

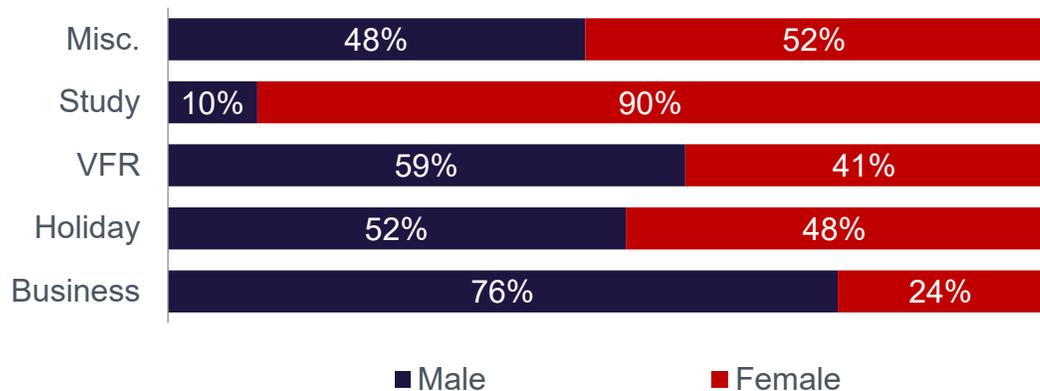
Visits from Hong Kongers aged over 55 have increased by **3x** in the last decade

1.3 Visitor demographics: gender and age groups

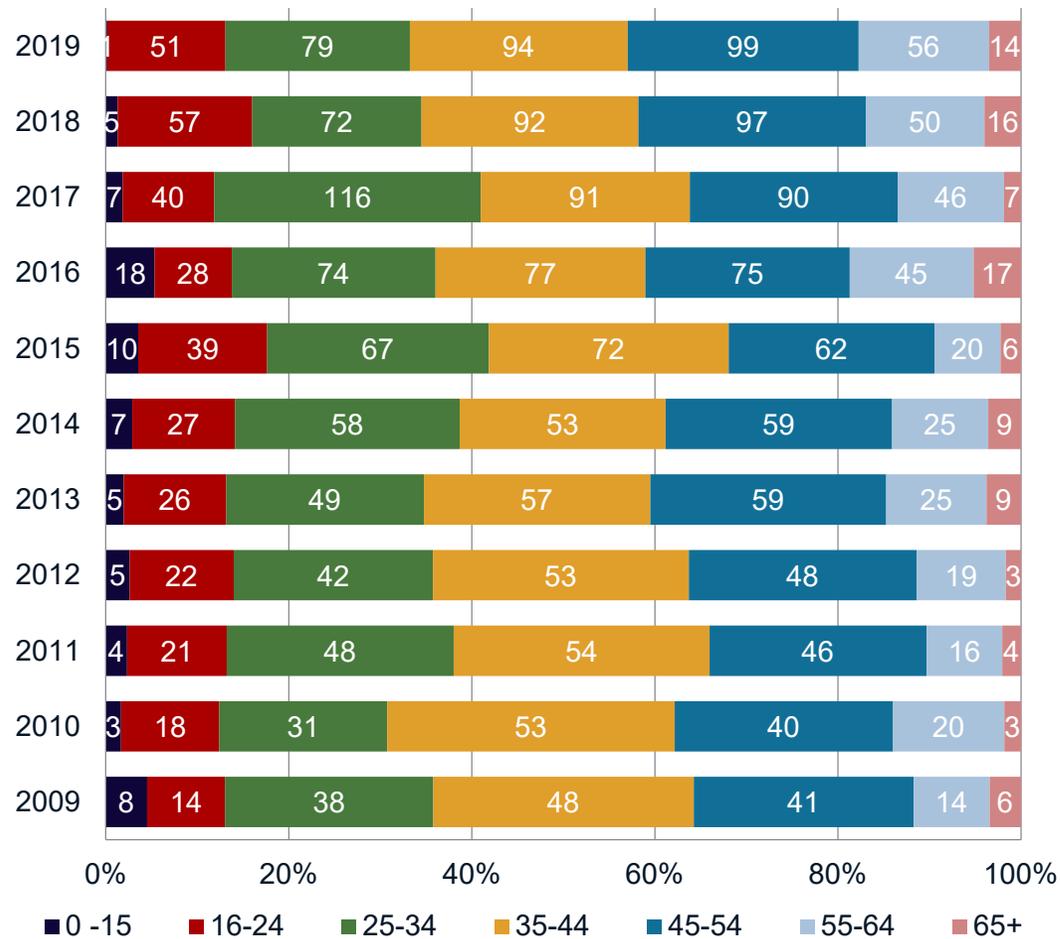
Gender ratio of visits (2019):



Gender ratio of visits from Hong Kong by journey purpose (2019):



Age group trend (visits in 000s)



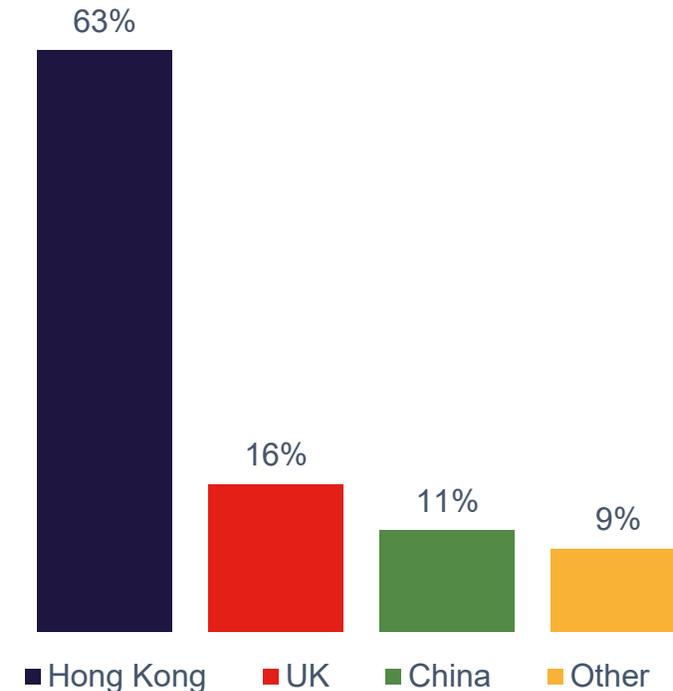
Source: International Passenger Survey by ONS

1.3 Visitor demographics: origin

- 63% of visits from Hong Kong to the UK were made by Hong Kong nationals in 2017-2019.
- However, significant proportions are also UK nationals (16%) and Chinese nationals (11%).
- Other nationalities featuring in visits to the UK from Hong Kong include the USA (2%), Australia, Canada, India, and Italy (1% each).
- The composition of the Hong Kong population partially explains the visitors' nationality split: international migrants represent over 40% of the population in Hong Kong, while the world's average is around 4%.

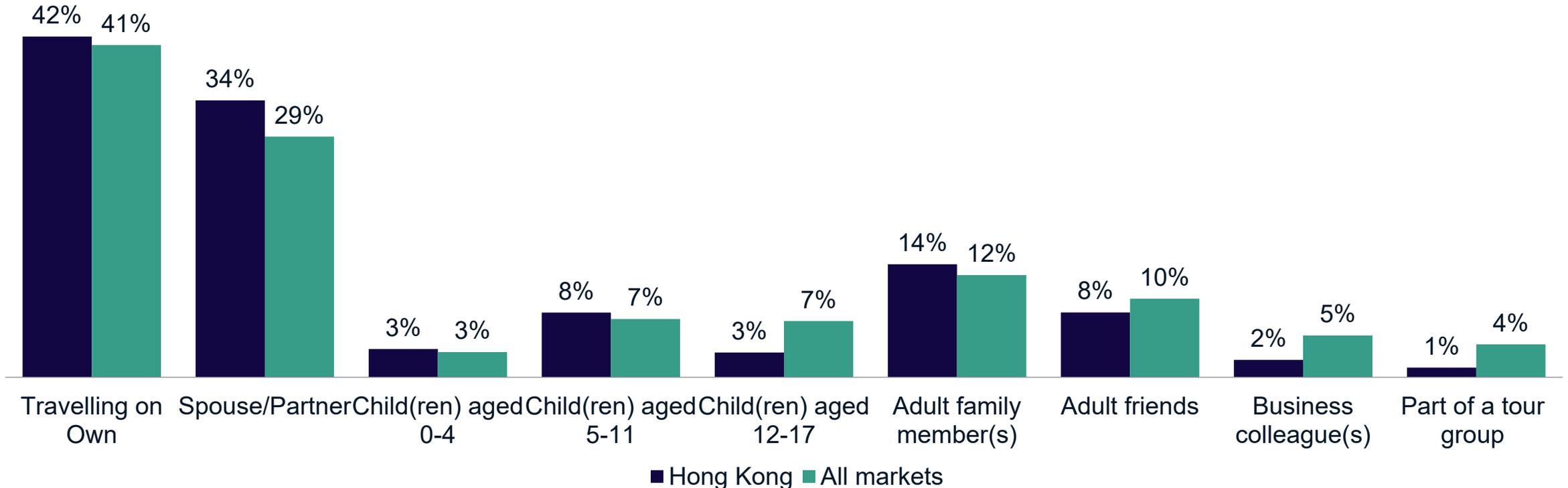
Visitor nationalities

(2017-2019 average proportion of visits)



1.3 Visitor demographics: travel companions

Who have Hong Kong visitors to the UK travelled with?



Similar to the all-market average, visitors from Hong Kong are most likely to travel to the UK solo. However, they particularly over-index on holidays with a spouse/partner. If travelling with children, those are most likely to be aged 5-11.

1.4 The UK and its competitors (1)

Market size, share and growth potential

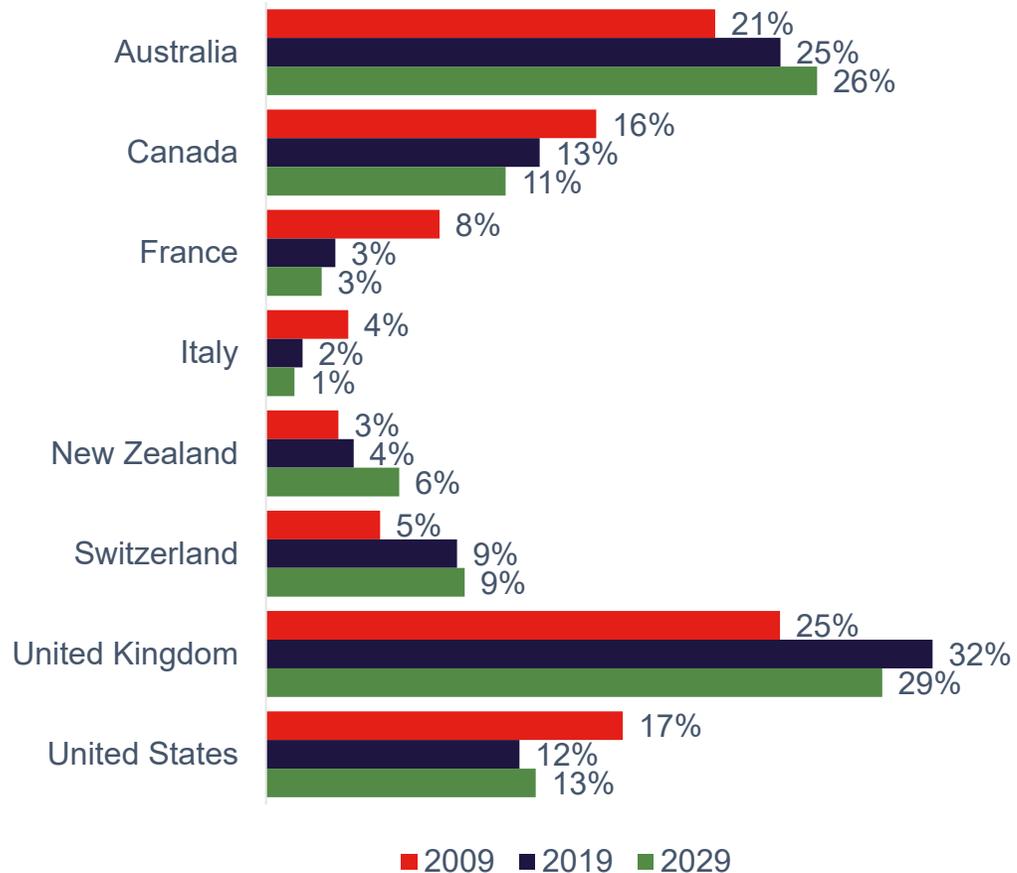
- The UK was the 8th most visited destination overall from Hong Kong travellers in 2019, and the 1st outside Asia.
- Most overnight visits from Hong Kong are made within North East Asia: visits outside neighbouring China and Macao only represented 23% of the overall Hongkongese outbound market in 2019.
- Overnight visits to the UK from this market have grown steadily over the last decade; however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, visits declined by 82% in 2020 compared to 2019. Hong Kong is currently forecast to recover to 2019 levels of visits by 2025.
- In 2025, the UK is forecast to retain its position leading Europe in terms of preference from Hong Kong travellers.
- Within our competitor set of destinations (see chart on slide 26), the UK saw the largest increase in market share between 2009 and 2019, with a growth of 7 percentage points. However, looking further ahead, both Australia and New Zealand are forecast to gain the most share from 2019 to 2029, at 2 percentage points each, while the UK is forecast to lose 2 percentage points in the same period.

The UK ranks
1st

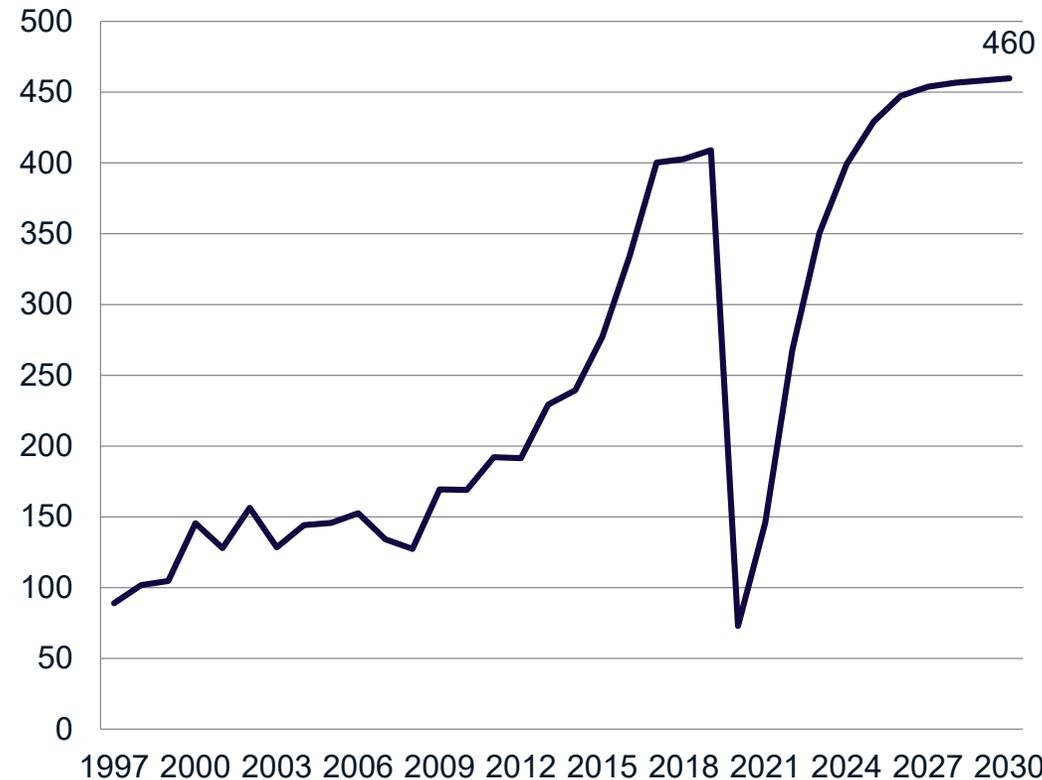
most visited destination in
Europe from Hong Kong

1.4 The UK and its competitors (2)

The UK's market share of Hongkongese visits among competitor set



Historic and potential visits to the UK (000s)



Source: Oxford Economics for competitor set based on overnight visits, 'Historic and potential visits' displays total visits based on International Passenger Survey historic data and Oxford Economics forecasts with VisitBritain adaptations



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Experiences and perceptions

Chapter 2

2.1 Inbound activities: summary

- Among Hong Kong visitors, dining in restaurants is the most popular activity, followed by shopping and sightseeing famous monuments/buildings. Visiting museums or art galleries and parks and gardens also often feature in visits from Hong Kong to the UK.
- Overall, Hong Kongese visitors are more likely than the all-market average to dine in restaurants, go shopping (when shopping they are most likely to buy clothes/shoes), and visit parks or gardens.
- In contrast, when compared to the all-market average, visitors from Hong Kong are less likely to socialise with the locals, and go to the pub.
- Hong Kongese visitors are more likely to watch a live football match than any other sports.

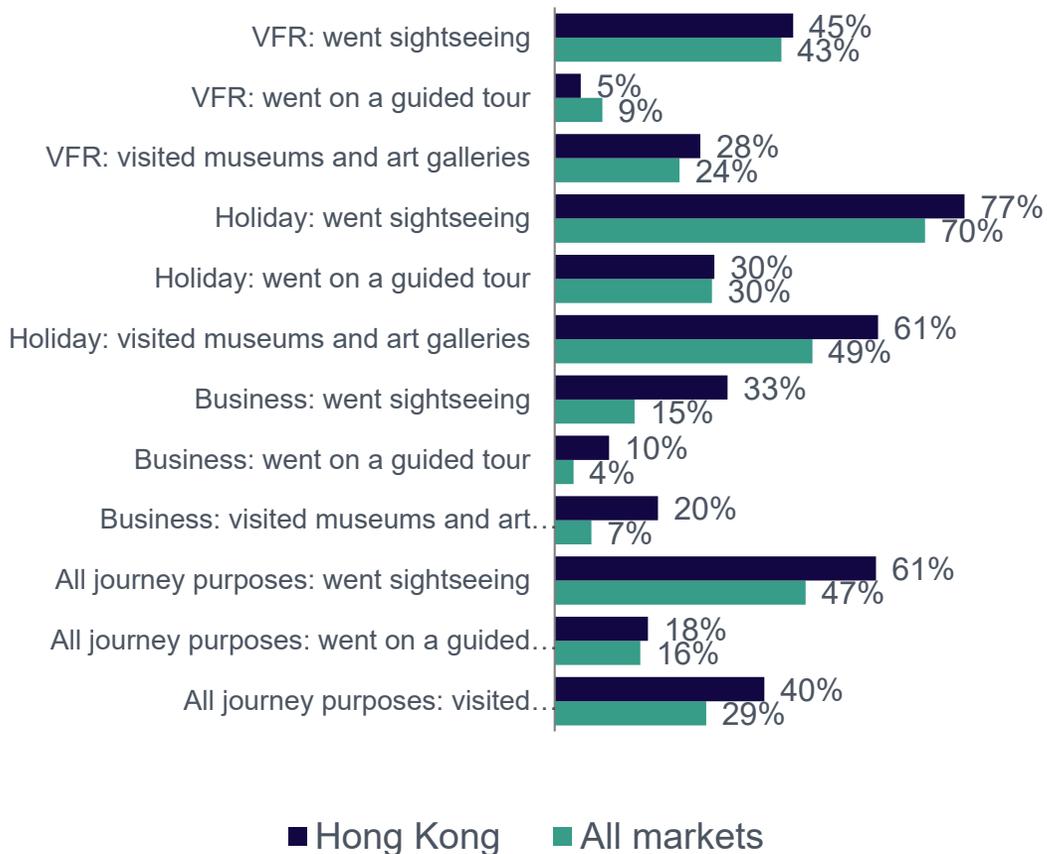
Top 10 activities for Hong Kong visitors during their visit to the UK

-  1. Dining in restaurants
-  2. Going shopping
-  3. Sightseeing famous monuments/ buildings
-  4. Visiting museums or art galleries
-  5. Visiting parks or gardens
-  6. Walking in the countryside
-  7. Going to the pub
-  8. Socialising with the locals
-  9. Having a traditional afternoon tea
-  10. Visiting religious buildings

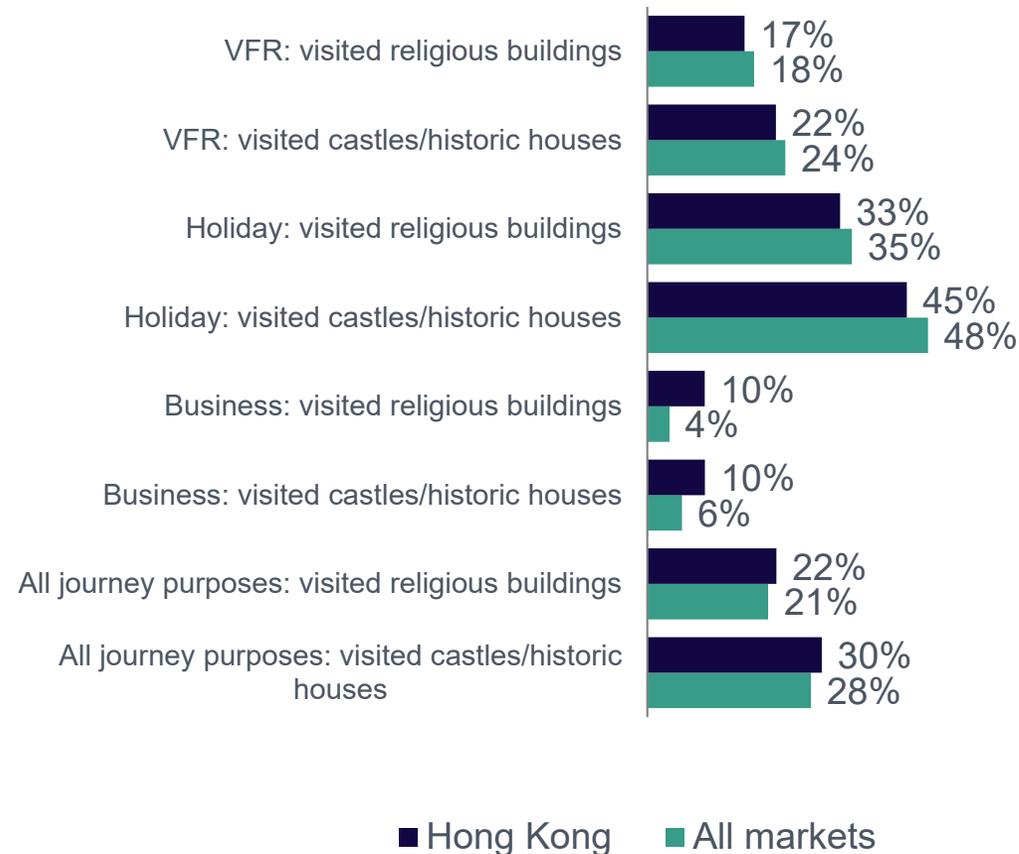
For more information on activities, please visit our webpage of [activities undertaken in Britain](#)

2.1 Inbound activities: tourism and heritage

Propensity to visit museums and galleries

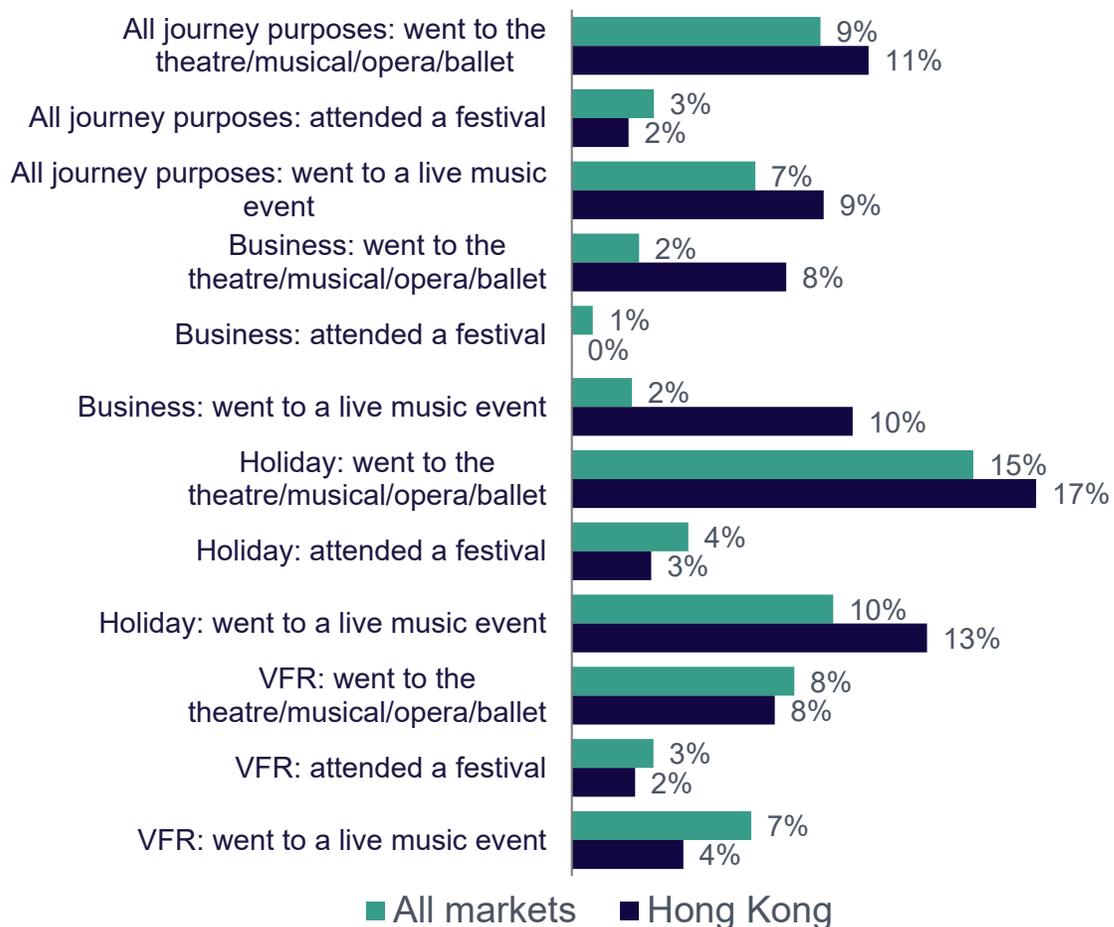


Propensity to visit built heritage sites

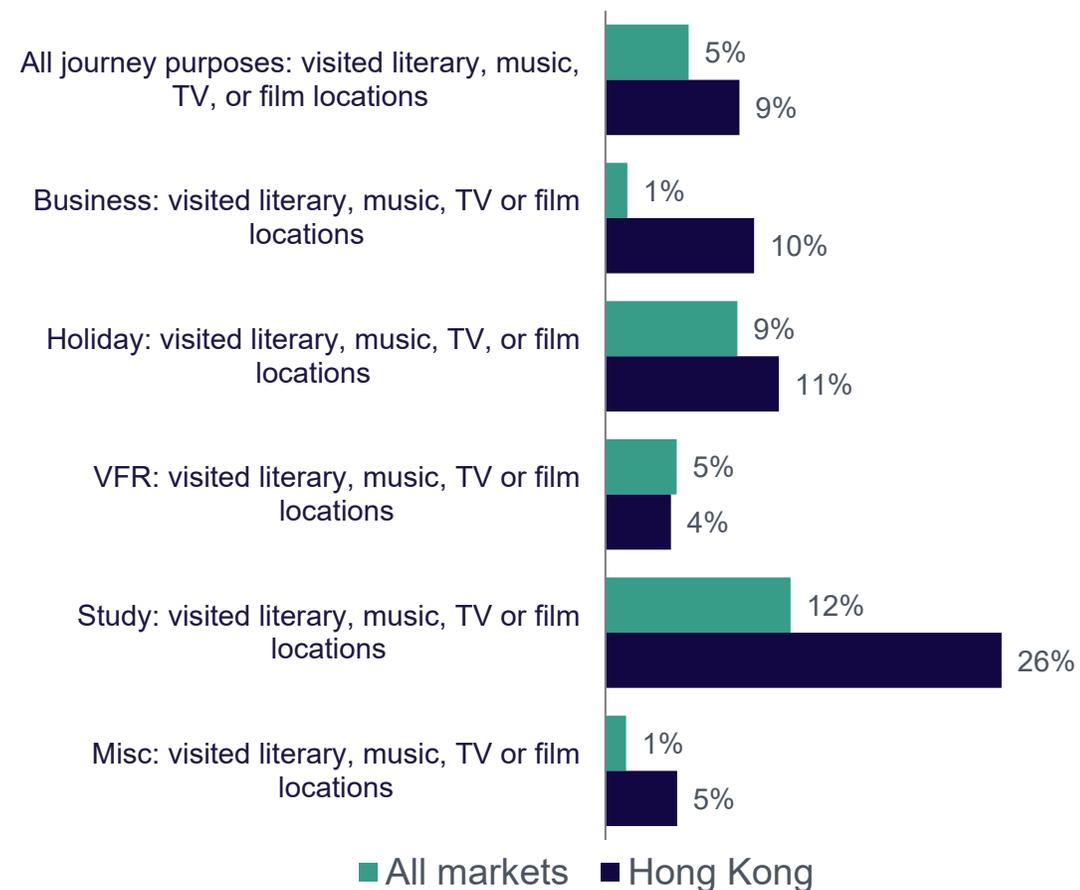


2.1 Inbound activities: culture

Propensity to attend the performing arts

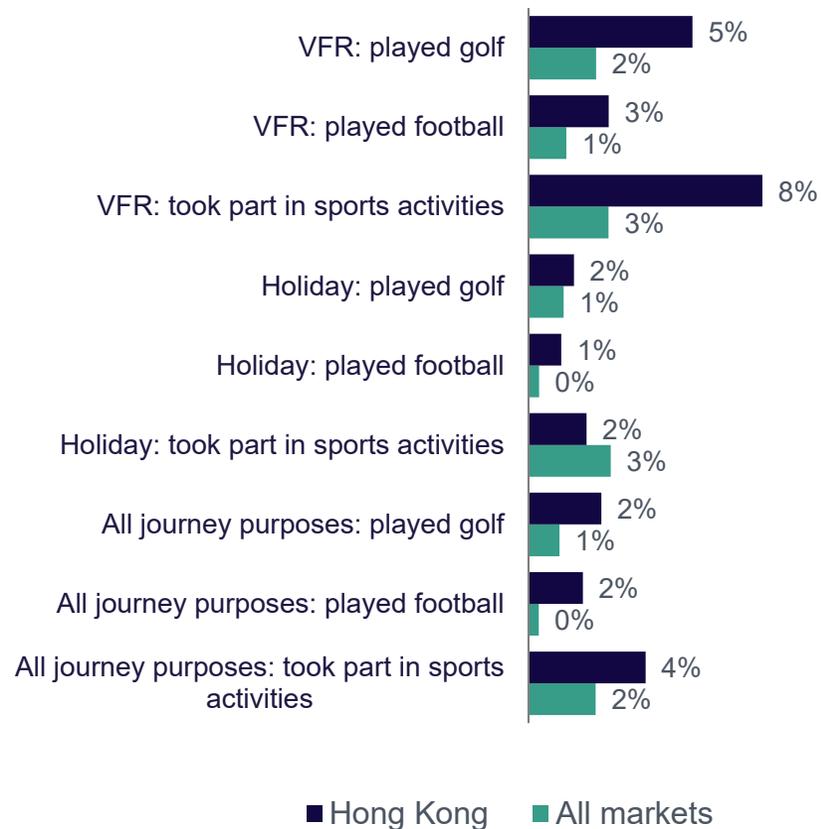


Propensity to participate into other culture-related activities

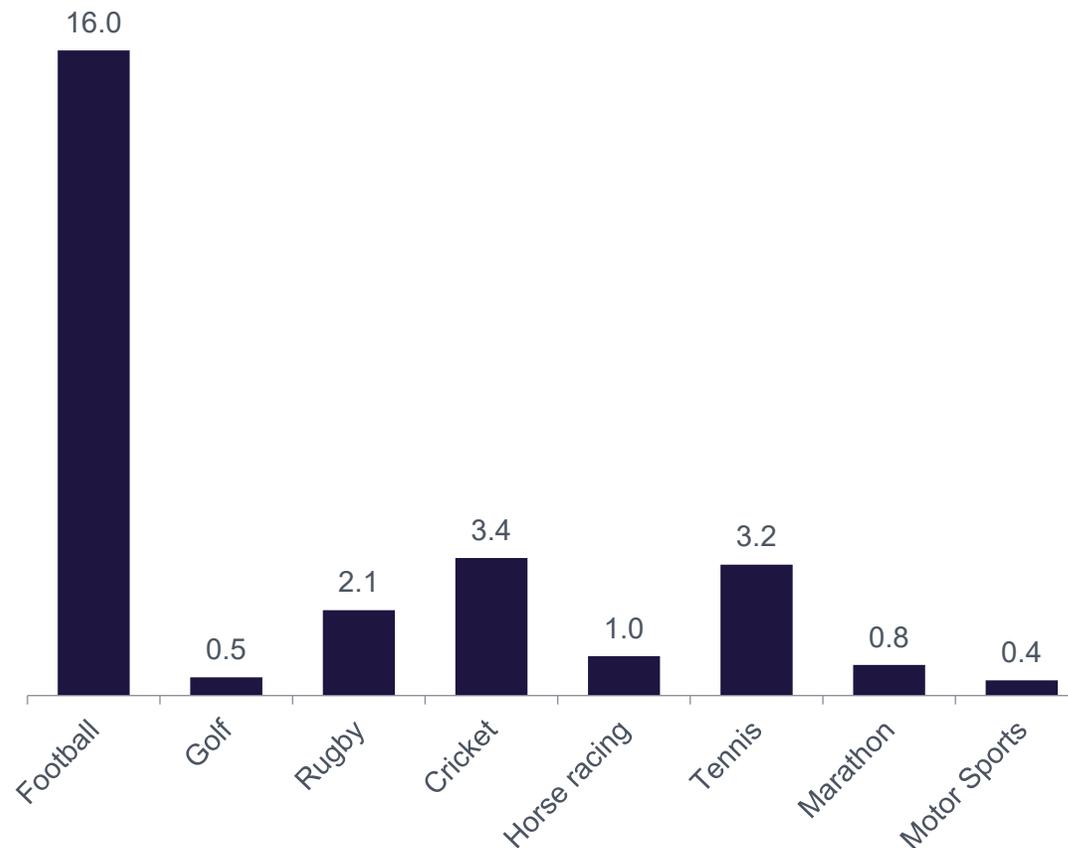


2.1 Inbound activities: sports

Propensity to partake in sports-related activities

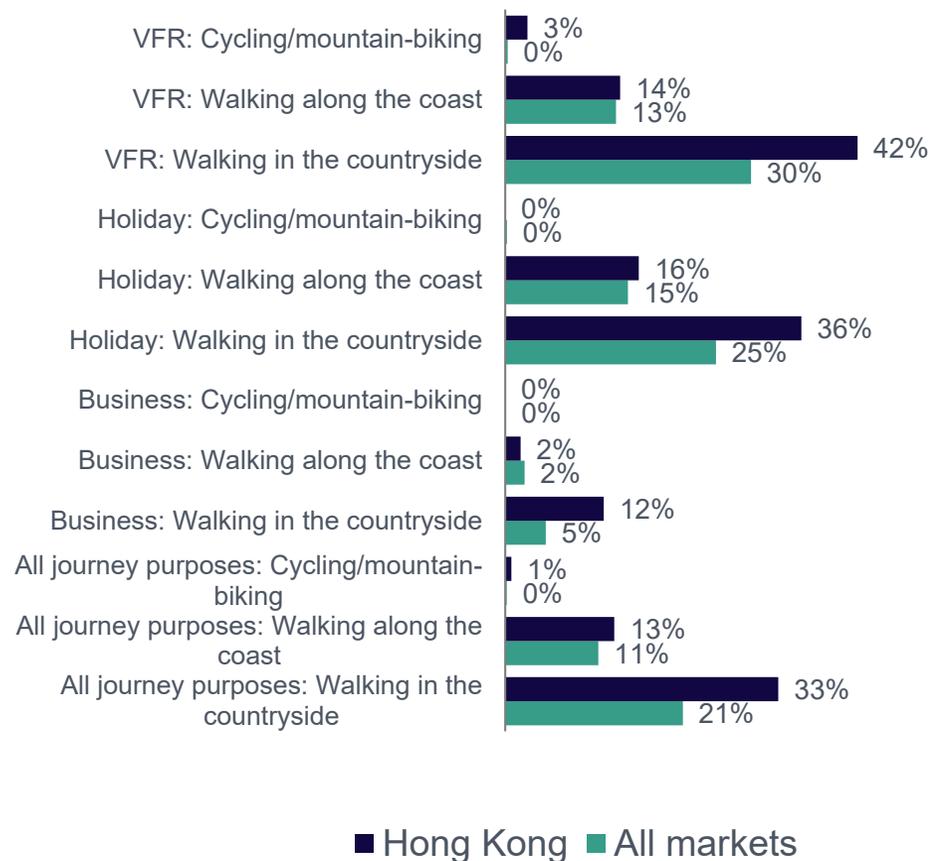


Number who watched sports live during trip (000s)

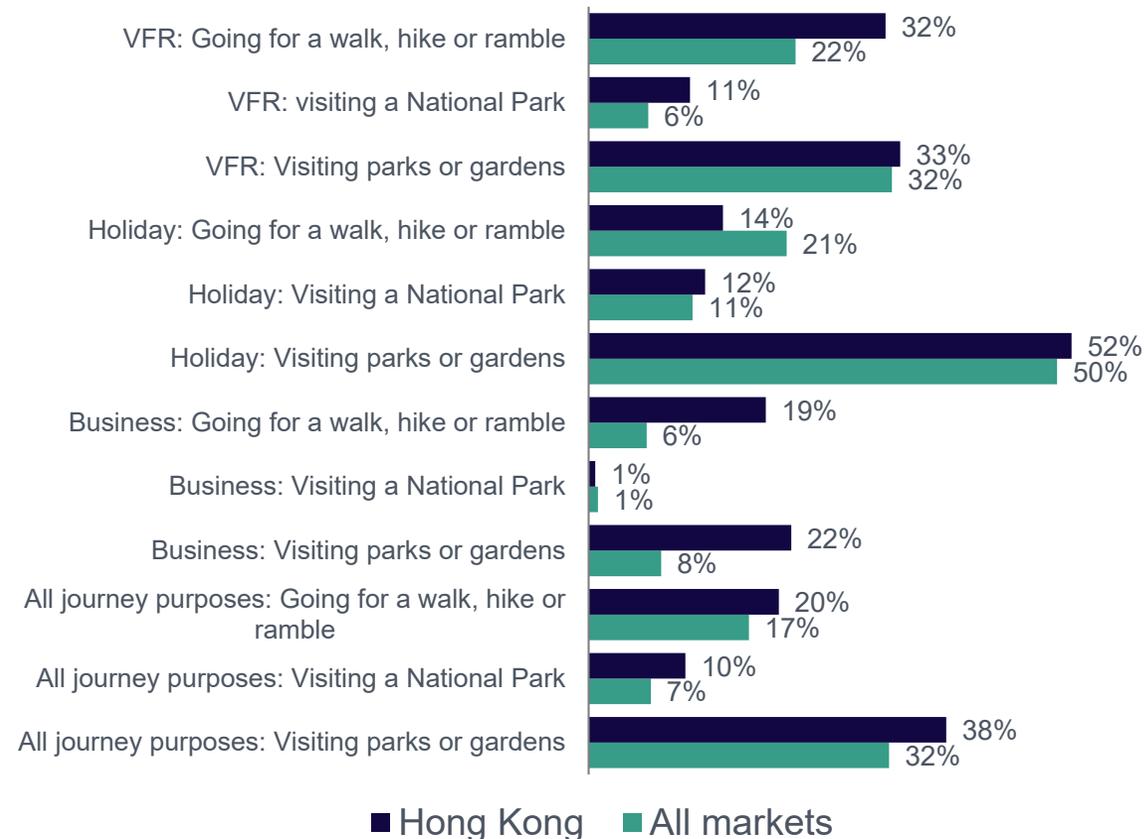


2.1 Inbound activities: outdoors

Propensity to go for a walk or cycle

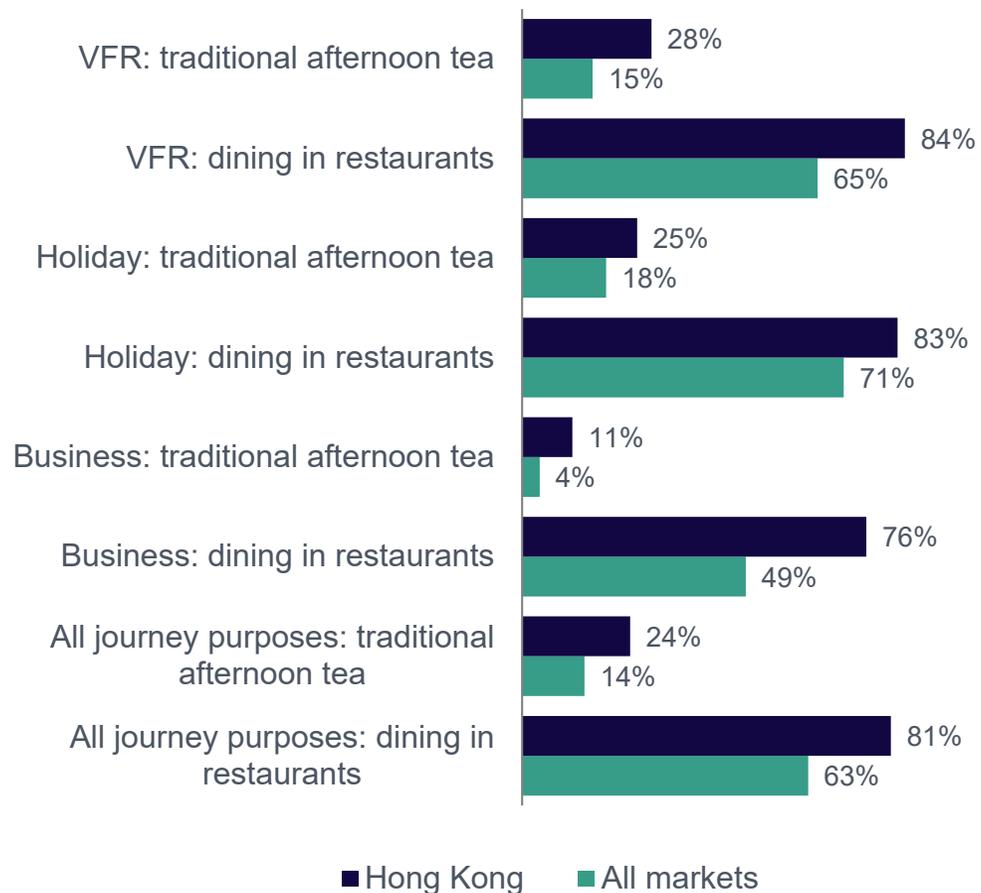


Propensity to enjoy the outdoors

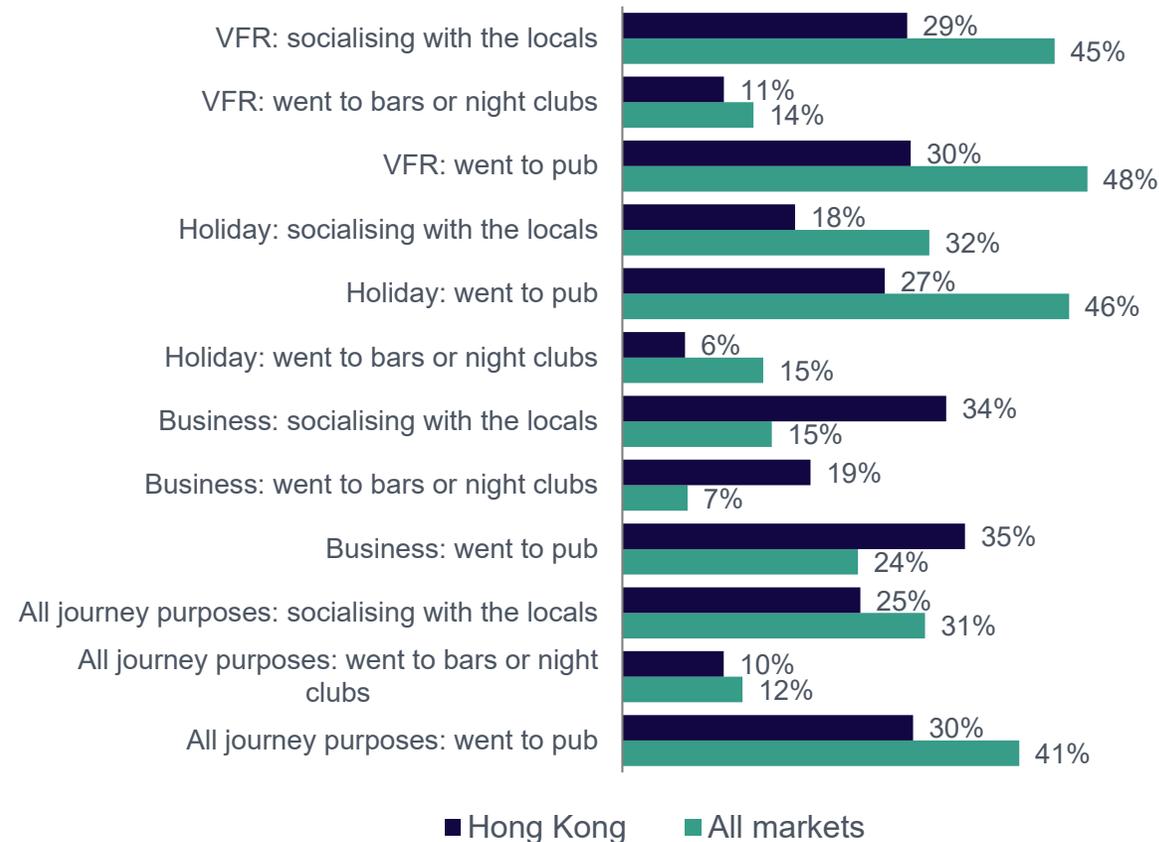


2.1 Inbound activities: going out

Propensity to go to restaurants, or to have a traditional afternoon tea

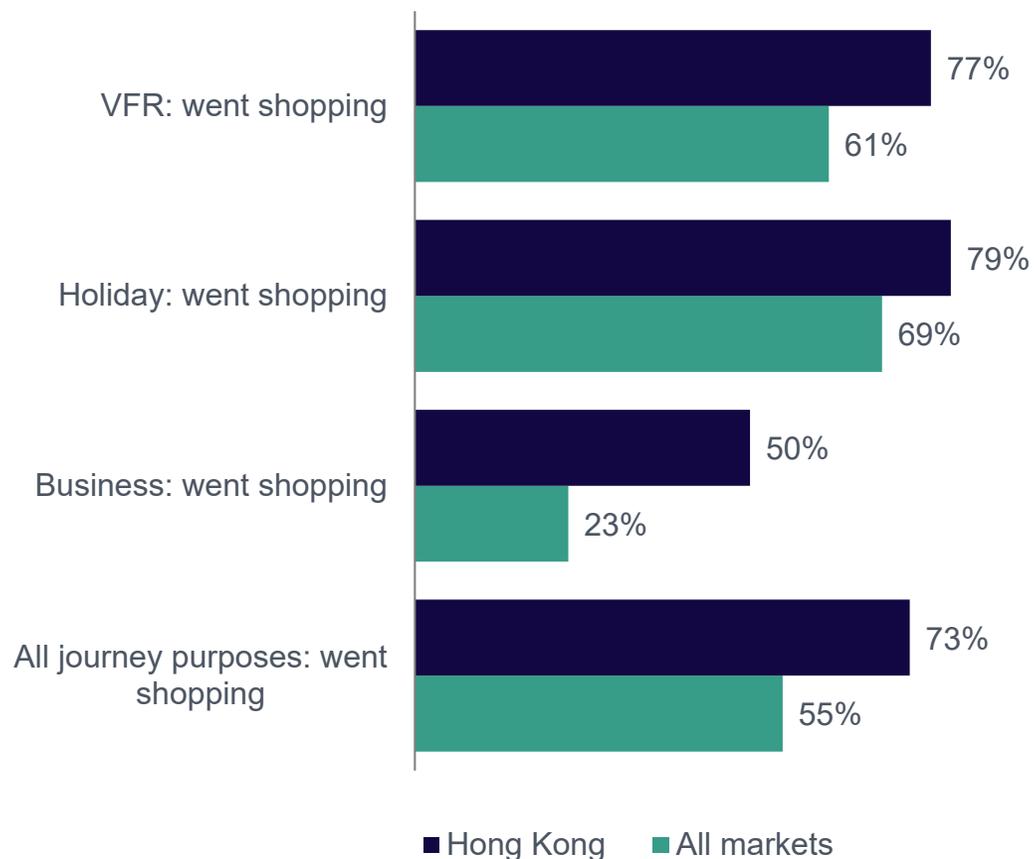


Propensity to go to the pub or bars and night clubs, or to socialise with locals

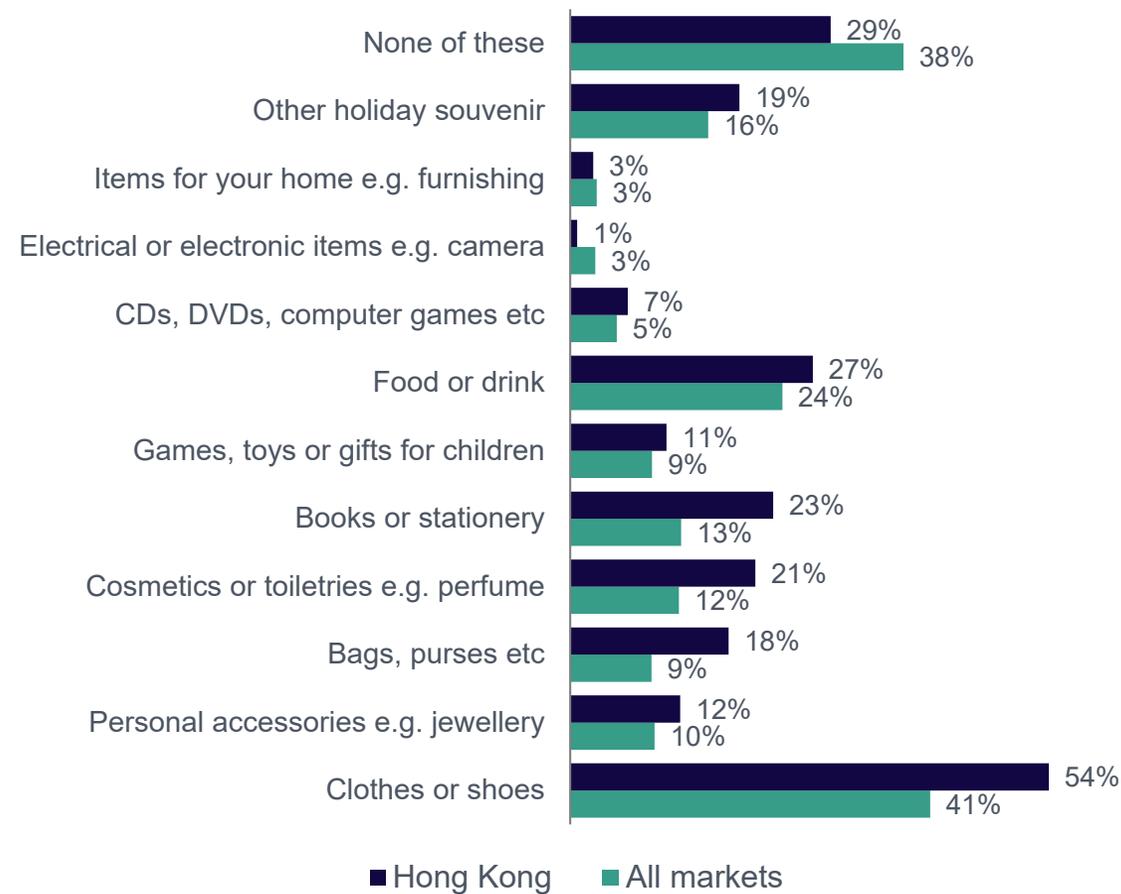


2.1 Inbound activities: shopping

Propensity to go to shopping



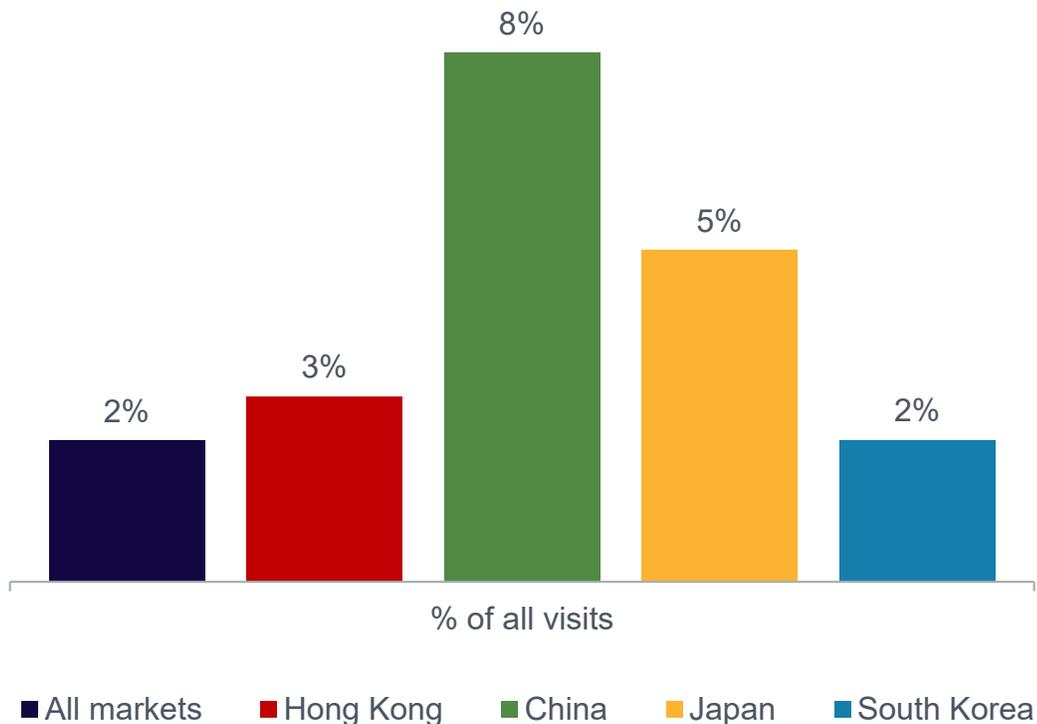
Propensity to purchase selected items



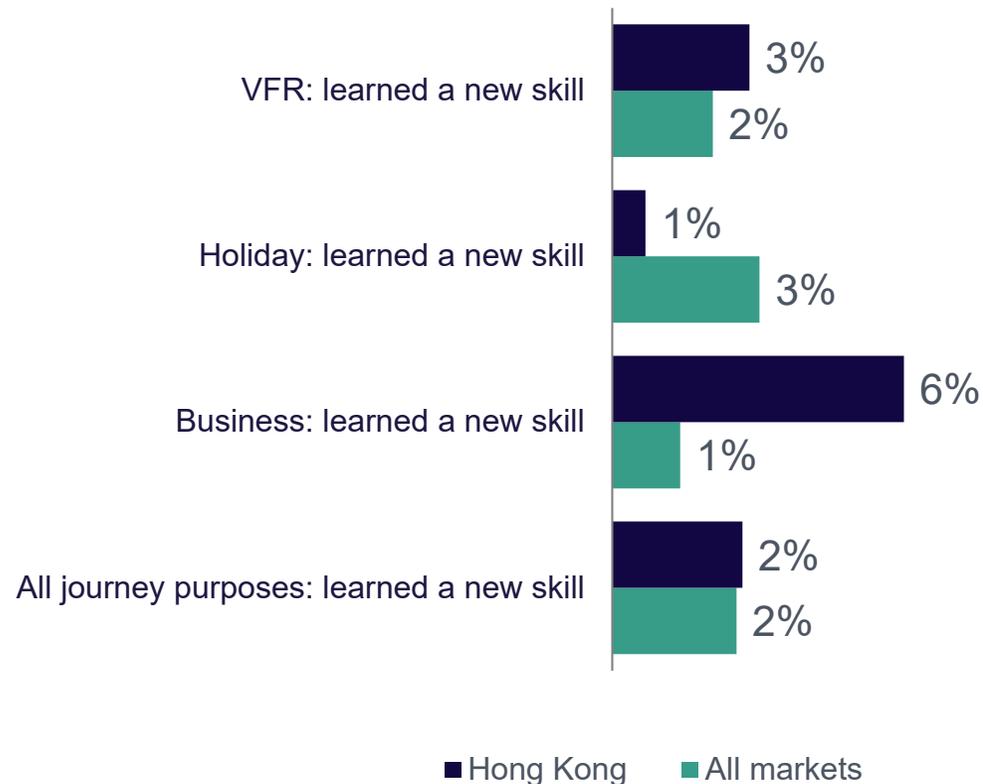
Source: International Passenger Survey by ONS, 2017 (shopping) and 2013 (purchase of selected items) – please note that the data about purchased items not yet updated given the revision of the 2009-2018 IPS data in May 2020

2.1 Inbound activities: learning

Propensity to participate in an English language course during a visit to the UK



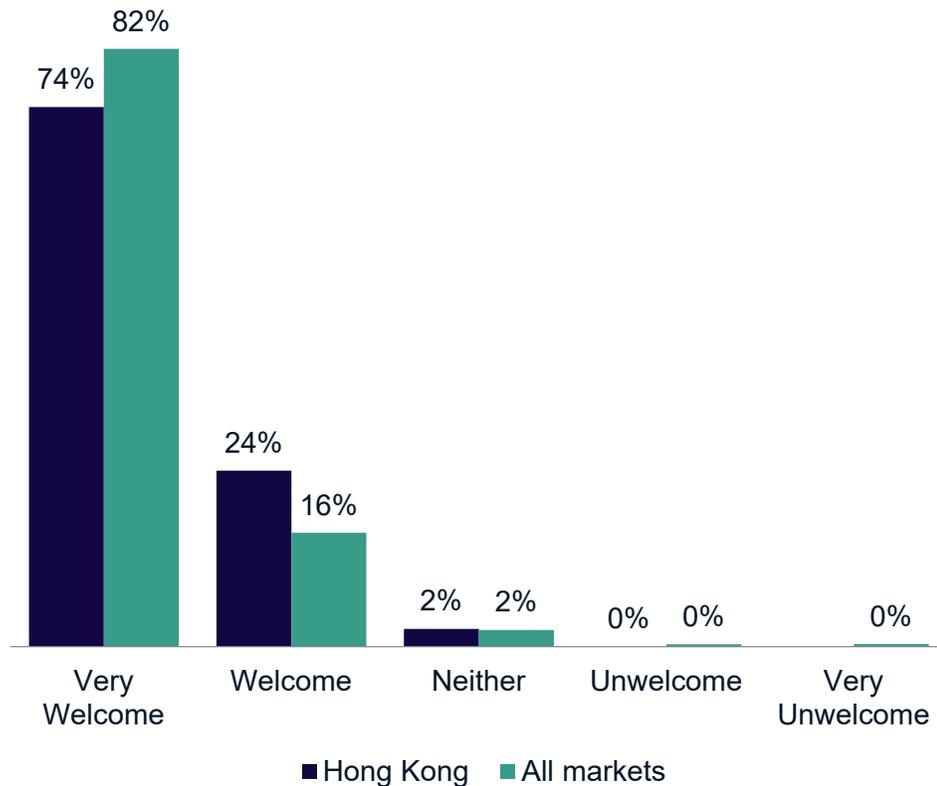
Propensity to learn a new skill or craft



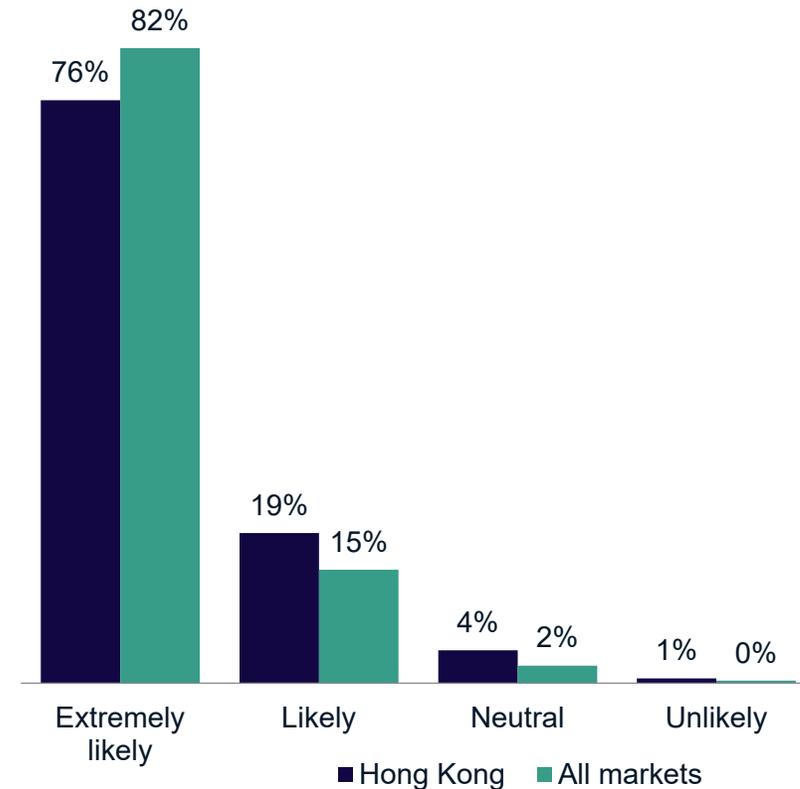
Source: International Passenger Survey by ONS (2018 & 2019) Did you go on any English language courses during this visit? Displayed as % of all visits in this market, visits incl. participation in an English language course might be based on a small sample.

2.2 Welcome and recommending Britain

Feeling of 'welcome' in Britain



Likelihood to recommend Britain





VisitBritain



VisitEngland

Understanding the market

Chapter 3

3.1 Structural drivers

- Hong Kong was a British territory until 1997, when it was retroceded to China under an agreement that makes it a Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China. The Hong Kong SAR is partly administrated by a presidential limited democracy.
- With over 7 million inhabitants on a 1,108 km² territory (about a third smaller than Greater London), it is one of the most densely populated countries in the world, with all inhabitants living in urban areas.
- Hong Kong has an ageing population. As of 2019, Hong Kong had the highest life expectancy in the world, at 85 years. It also ranks low in terms of fertility rate, with only 1.33 children born per woman in 2020. As a consequence, the percentage of seniors among Hong Kongers will continue to increase.
- Immigrants account for 4-in-10 Hongkongers: this has a big influence on culture, as well as travel habits among residents.
- Full-time workers are entitled to between 7 and 14 days of paid annual leave a year, depending on seniority (7 days for 1 or 2 consecutive years to 14 days for people working for 9 consecutive years or more). In addition to these, there are 12 national statutory holidays.

44.8

Median age in 2020,
one of the world's
highest

3.1 Structural drivers: demographic and social indicators

Population dynamics

Measure	2020 estimate
Total population (m)	7.5
Population growth (2015-2020)	4.3%
Percentage of international migrants in population	40%

Indicator	2010	2020	2030	2040
Fertility rate (live births per woman, over 5 years ending in year shown)	1.04	1.33	1.48	1.58
Median age (in years)	41.2	44.8	47.9	51.3

- The Hong Kong population is ageing. In 1980, Hong Kongers' median age was 26 years old; it was 41 years old in 2010 and will be over 50 by 2040.
- Hong Kong has the world's longest life expectancy at birth (85 years old in 2019, compared to 70 years old for the world's average life expectancy). There are a range of possible explanations for this including strong infrastructure, green spaces, healthcare provision, and healthy diets. Hong Kong also has one of the lowest global fertility rates (1.33 children per woman, compared to a global average of 2.47).
- In 2019 about 4-in-10 Hong Kong residents were born elsewhere, constituting 2.9 million residents. In 2017 there were 2.3 million migrants from China alone living in Hong Kong, one of the largest migration groups within a single country.
- As a city state, all residents of Hong Kong live in an urban area, which makes them confident navigating in a busy city but also increases their need to escape their vibrant city lives to quieter environments, especially when on holiday.

3.1 Structural drivers: economic indicators

- As a Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong is still quite dependent on mainland's China economy, as a large part of its GDP is based on export activities to mainland China. Hong Kong is one of two Special Administrative Regions alongside nine cities who form the Greater Bay Area.
- The Greater Bay Area plan will develop technology and innovation by increasing links between the cluster of cities. Hong Kong's role will be to fully leverage its strengths as an international transportation, trade and aviation centre.
- Before 2019, Hong Kong's economic growth rates were above average for advanced economies.
- But 2019 was a difficult year for Hong Kong's economy, due to a combination of the US-China trade war, China's economic slowdown and political turmoil in the form of months of protests. This led the economy into a recession due to plunging tourism and retail numbers.

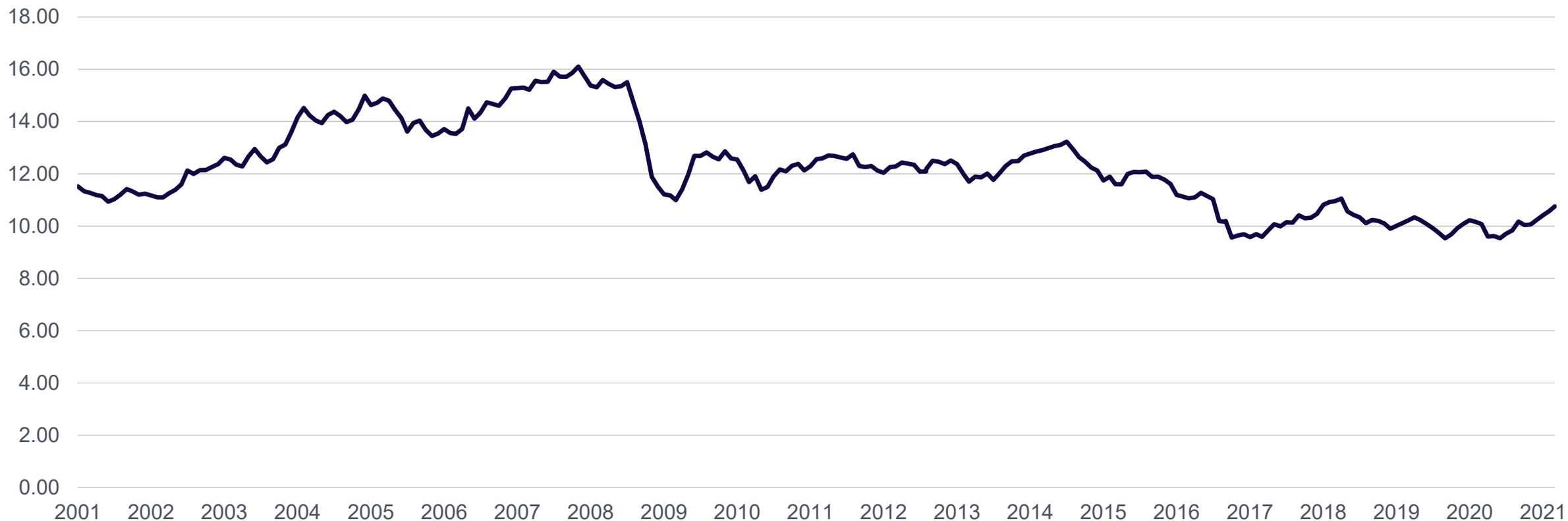
Economic indicators (% growth unless stated)

Indicator	2019	2020	2021	2022
Real GDP	-1.2	-7.6	5.0	3.6
Real consumer spending	-1.1	-11.5	7.5	4.2
Unemployment rate (%)	3.0	6.1	6.4	4.8

- The global pandemic in early 2020 further worsened the economic outlook.
- Entering 2021, Hong Kong continues to battle against waves of local COVID-19 outbreaks, with stringent containment measures restraining economic recovery.
- However, a domestic rebound is expected in H2 2021 as vaccine programmes reduce the need for social distancing, while external demand should continue to revive as the global economy recovers. Growth is estimated to rebound to 5% this year.

3.1 Structural drivers: exchange rate trends

Exchange rate trends (cost of GBP in HK\$)



Please find the most up-to-date exchange rate trend based on monthly averages [on our website](#).

3.2 Consumer trends

- The share of Hong Kongers aged 65+ is set to increase from 15% in 2014 to 21% in 2024. With growing life expectancy, Hong Kongers have started to place more importance on quality of life, and show more and more interest in leisure activities and in wellbeing and health.
- The government itself is investing more and more in solutions that allow people to live better, especially for the elderly. The leisure, entertainment and travel and tourism sectors are increasing advertising spend, as more people take an interest in these sectors. However, inbound tourism to Hong Kong was severely affected by political unrest in the second half of 2019, and subsequently, COVID-19 in early 2020.
- Many retired people enjoy travelling to learn new things, and reward themselves after long years of hard work by experiencing the world. Others try to escape their busy city life and pursue activities they cannot do in Hong Kong itself. Relaxation on a spa holiday, a cruise, or even learning new skills in cooking, photography or other interests are also common motivations to travel.
- Many Hong Kong children are sent abroad to study quite young: more and more parents travel to find a suitable school, and then to visit their children.
- Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, visits from Hong Kong to the UK decreased by 43% in the first three months of 2020 compared to those months in 2019*, and Oxford Economics estimates that total visits were down by 82% throughout the year. Vaccines will be a key driver to restart international travel from this market. Over a fifth of Hong Kongers plan to take more frequent holidays post pandemic, and 71% are willing to spend more than usual on their next trip.

Beach destinations

were emerging as popular among Hong Kong travellers in 2019

3.2 Consumer trends: travel trends pre COVID-19

Most popular destinations (2019)

Tapei, Taiwan

Seoul, South Korea

Bangkok, Thailand

Osaka, Japan

Top emerging destinations (2019)

Phu Quoc, Vietnam

Krabi, Thailand

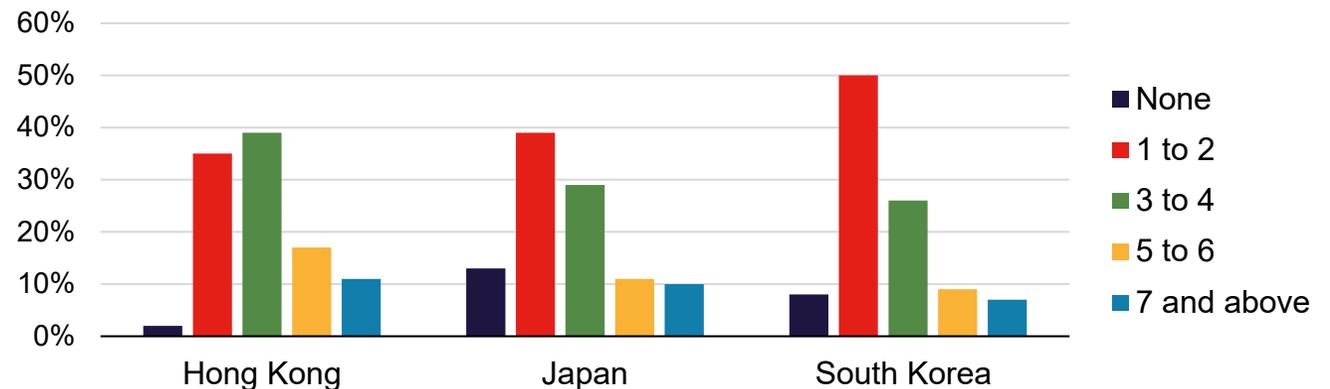
Jeju, South Korea

Okayama, Japan

Istanbul, Turkey

- As of 2019, Hong Kong travellers still favoured longer getaways, but were interested in off-the-beaten-path destinations, as social media inspired trips declined in interest by 45%.
- Hong Kong's top five emerging destinations showed a growing interest in beach experiences like Phu Quoc and Krabi. Local gastronomy trips were becoming even more popular with Hong Kongers visiting other Asian cities like Jeju and Okayama for food experiences. There was also a growing trend of Hong Kongers booking Slow Travel trips to Istanbul (average of 11 days or more), and taking their time to explore the vastly rich culture. These trends reflect the need to escape the stress of crowded city life and its fast paced environment.
- Hong Kongers are most likely to take between 1 and 4 international trips per year, and below 5% have not travelled internationally in the last year.

Number of international travel trips over the past 12 months (2018)



3.2 Consumer trends: changing society between traditions and modernity

- Hong Kong's culture is a fusion between Eastern and Western culture. Traditional Mah-jong, Cantonese opera, and martial arts (tai chi, kung fu) are popular among Hong Kongers. Gambling on mah-jong games, or sports games is also quite common. However, as Hong Kong grew as a city, it also grew as a destination on its own, and became particularly appealing for a shopping trip from mainland China. Hong Kongers are used to having a large range of shopping options, including luxury brands, and so like going shopping at home, but also during their trips abroad.
- Hong Kong people live longer than before and have a relatively high purchasing power on average. This has encouraged them to question their culture of long working hours, and more and more time has been dedicated to leisure lately.
- Given that Hong Kong is a city-state, most activities will be indoors as there are few outdoor facilities for sports or other outdoor activities. Travelling is often seen as a way to escape the stress and of a crowded city life and its fast-paced environment. Most can afford to and like to travel, and many pursue their interests while doing so: special themed tours and packages have multiplied, such as photography tours, luxury sports car self-driven tours, cycling packages, Formula 1 packages or film-specific tours. It is even more easy for Hong Kongers as 94 destinations offer them free-visa or visa-on-arrival visit options.
- In terms of motivations, some like to pursue outdoor activities, while others are looking for relaxation and diversion from everyday life in places like Thailand, Bali, Vietnam, and beyond. With a Hong Kong cruise terminal built in 2013, interest in cruises grew, in particular for multi-generational, family holidays or for high-end consumers. Food is also an important part of the travel experience. 26% of Hong Kongers eat out at least once a day (2.6 times the Asian average), and Hong Kong is renowned for its food options all over Asia so they have particular interest for food.
- Hong Kong parents spend more on children's education than most: US\$132,161, about three times the global average. Many parents send their children to study overseas after the first 3 years of secondary school, and available data suggests that the top destination is the UK, followed by mainland China, Australia, Taiwan, the US and Canada. Parents are increasingly travelling to identify appropriate schools or to visit them in advance.

3.2 Consumer trends: living longer and better

Wellbeing and health

- The pursuit of better living is booming in Hong Kong. People want to maintain both their mental and their physical health as wellbeing becomes an increasingly important part of their longevity. 8-in-10 people aged 50-64 say staying fit and healthy is one of their key priorities.
- In response to long working hours, the government is taking more and more actions to enhance wellbeing. The 2019/2020 Hong Kong budget revealed that HK\$10 billion was set aside as a Public Healthcare Stabilisation fund to ensure a steady stream of funding for these services. This complemented an additional HK\$5 billion for upgrading and acquiring medical equipment.
- Hong Kong residents' consumption of leisure products has increased. Going to beauty centres, health and fitness (yoga) clubs, or spas, but also travelling for spa treatments or other relaxing experiences are quite frequent. With on average 6,880 steps made per day, Stanford University found out that people in Hong Kong were the most active in the world.
- Environmental and ecological concerns are becoming mainstream amongst Hong Kong consumers. Eating well is also a growing concern. Health products and supplements are some of the most heavily advertised products in Asia, and many Hong Kongers look for organic and macrobiotic products and supplements. They also pay attention to the provenance of their food as environmental awareness grows.

Ageing population

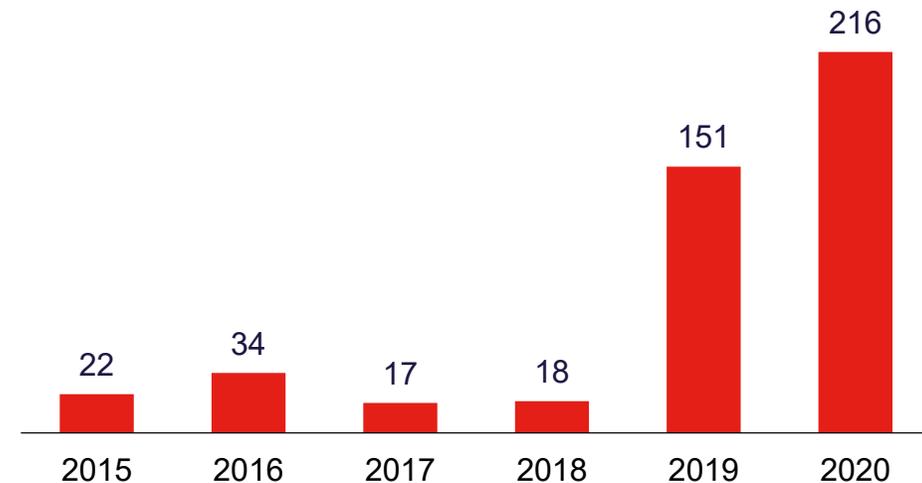
- The government also increasingly recognises the growing needs of older consumers, or 'greying' consumers, aged 60 years old and over. According to Oxford Economics data, the share of Hong Kongers aged 65+ is set to increase from 15% in 2014 to 21% in 2024.
- The 2019/2020 Hong Kong Budget provides one additional month of old age allowance and old age living allowance, in addition to a one off additional HK\$1,000 worth of elderly health care vouchers to eligible elderly persons.
- This has a large impact on the health care system, but also telecommunications services and even the travel market. These people usually spent their whole lives working and are now interested in experiencing the world.

3.2 Consumer trends: impact of COVID-19 and BNO immigration route

- Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, visits from Hong Kong to the UK decreased by 43% in the first three months of 2020 compared to those months in 2019*, and Oxford Economics estimates that total visits were down by 82% throughout the year. However, a new visa policy announced in 2020 and brought into force in 2021 may constitute one opportunity for recovery.
- British National Overseas (BNO citizenship) is a type of British nationality created in 1985 to allow Hong Kong citizens to retain a link with the UK. It has enabled visitors from Hong Kong to stay in the UK for 6 months without a visa.
- However, a new system, in place from 31st January 2021, allows BNO citizens and their close family to apply for two periods of five years to live and work in the UK. After one year of this status, individual are able to apply for British citizenship. The new system was put in place to react to China's security law enacted in June 2020.
- The British government estimates that 5.4 million Hong Kong residents are eligible for the scheme (72% of the population), and 300,000 people are expected to take up the offer in the first five years. It is important to note that the scheme has the potential to negatively impact the relationship between the UK and China.

- Anecdotal evidence from the Hong Kong travel trade suggests that some parents are already looking to take advantage of the new BNO immigration policy; searching for a university for their children and considering investing in UK property so that students can stay in the country after graduation. Product development linked to regions with top universities has already begun.

BNO passports approved for Hong Kong residents (000s)



3.2 Consumer trends: post COVID-19 travel sentiment

- Hongkongers love to travel, with 78% of respondents to a recent survey by Expedia saying they had less joy in their lives because of the inability to travel in 2020. As an alternative to jet-setting, 44% spent their time cooking, 38% focused on exercising, and 40% enjoyed playing online games. In comparison, 26% of the 300 Hong Kong participants said they just spent their time whiling away the day and reminiscing about past travel.
- Three in every four Hong Kong respondents said that they cancelled their trips due to the ongoing health crisis and a fifth of the respondents said they had spent their last vacation on a staycation.
- Market indicators show that there is still a high level of wanderlust among Hongkongers. 42% of respondents said they anticipate taking at least the same number of vacations as previous years, with 21% intending to take more and 71% planning on spending more on a bucket list vacation in 2021. Meanwhile, 19% of Hong Kong respondents say that they have already booked in holidays for the year ahead.
- 47% percent of Hong Kong respondents stated that they now value vacations where they are immersed in discovery, aspirations, and growth. Others are looking forward to itinerary-based holidays with activities like sightseeing attractions, museums, and monuments, while others are considering country experiences where they can try local cuisines.
- Almost half of the survey participants said they would wait for vaccines before they hop on a plane, while others will delay travel plans to the later part of the year.

Most popular post COVID-19 destinations

Tokyo

Tokyo is known as a key destination for Hong Kong's foodies, and can be regarded as something of a second home

Bangkok

Hong Kongers tend to lead a fast paced life, so want to enjoy a slower paced life on Thailand's beaches

Taipei

Taipei is only an hour away from Hong Kong, and provides an abundance of green spaces, waterfalls and rock formations

3.3 Booking and planning

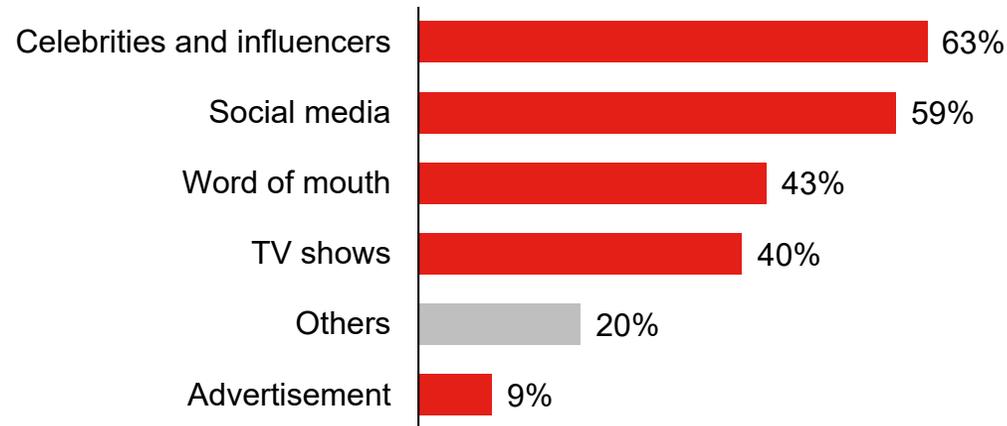
- Hong Kongers are usually seasoned travellers, taking 3 to 4 international trips per year.
- Hong Kong travellers are more likely than those across the APAC region to use a desktop to book travel – with an even 50% split between desktop and mobile. They commonly search for travel information and inspiration at home, in bed late at night before going sleep, however 56% do access this content at the office.
- Hong Kongers are highly influenced by celebrities and social media influencers when deciding on a holiday destination. 63% cite celebrities and influencers as impacting their plans, vs. 5% of Japanese and 3% of South Koreans.
- The most prominent motivation for travel is for rest and relaxation, with 83% of Hong Kongers choosing this.
- Most Hong Kongers plan a visit to the UK on its own, and not as part of a multi-country trip; this is below the all-market average (69% compared to 87%).

63%

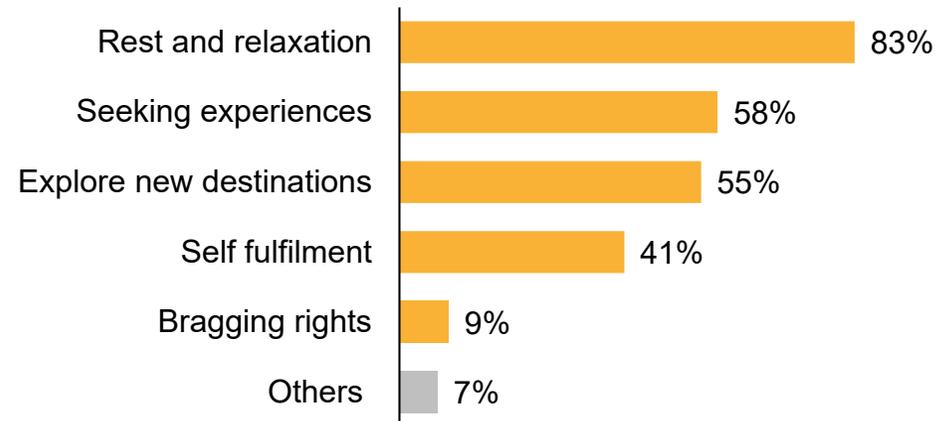
of Hong Kongers are influenced by celebrities and influencers when it comes to travel destinations

3.3 Booking and planning: drivers and influences

Influences for choice of travel destination



Motivations for travelling

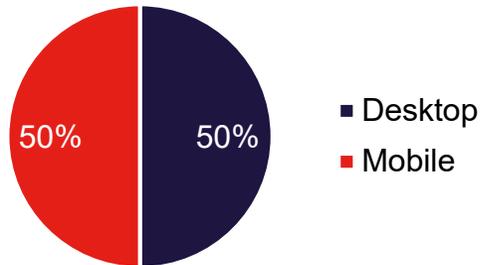


- Hong Kongers are particularly influenced by celebrities and influencers when it comes to their choice of travel destination, whereas the importance of these sources has been waning across the NE Asia region in recent years. For example, only 5% of Japanese travellers are influenced by celebrities and influencers, and 3% of South Korean travellers.
- Social media is the second most importance influencer at 59%, followed by word of mouth at 43%.

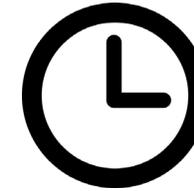
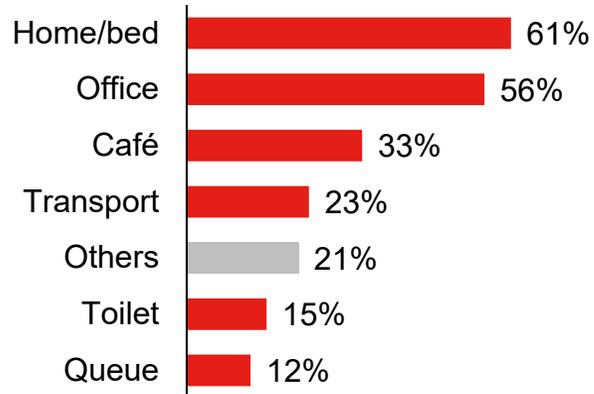
- When travelling, Hong Kongers are most likely to be seeking rest and relaxation, with 83% choosing this motivation. Next, they are similarly likely to travel in order to seek experiences (58%) and explore new destinations (55%). They are least likely to choose to travel for bragging rights (9%).
- Within the region, this is similar to Japanese and South Korean travellers, who are also most likely to seek rest and relaxation.

3.3 Booking and planning: location, timing and devices

Device preferences (2018)*



Location of travel research (2018)



Peak time of app usage
11pm – 1am

- Data from Skyscanner reveals that the majority of Hong Kong travel searching on the app takes place between 11pm and 1am, matching typical bedtimes. This suggests that searching for inspiration is a part of evening routines.
- Linked to this is the fact that 61% of travel research happens at home, in bed. The second most popular location for travel inspiration is at the office at 56%. Hong Kong residents are least likely to search for travel inspiration while queuing, although 12% still do this.
- These behaviours are relatively similar across other North East Asian markets. The most popular location for travel research for Japanese residents is also at home in bed, at 91%, and for South Koreans at 50%.
- However, Hong Kong is unique in the fact that market share for using a desktop for travel research remains relatively high at 50%, compared with Japan where it falls to 32%, and 34% in South Korea. When it comes to booking their trip, 40% of Hong Kong travellers used their mobile phone.

3.4 Reaching the consumer

- Hong Kongers are well connected, and most use social media regularly, with the majority accessing these platforms on mobile devices. Thus, optimising content for social media sharing and mobile connection is critical.
- Online shopping is also popular; an average Hong Kong consumer spends more than 6 hours per day on the internet, and 70% have purchased a product online in the past month. The travel e-commerce category grew by 8.5% between 2018 and 2019.
- Hong Kong is home to one of the largest film industries in Asia. When it comes to TV, 4 commercial terrestrial TV networks each manage multiple stations.
- Newspapers and magazines are still important in Hong Kong. There is a large array of both English- and Chinese-language titles. Most of them also have an online version, as news are more and more read online. Some news websites, such as HK01 in Chinese or Hong Kong Free Press in English, have become more prominent for their perceived independence.

78%

of Hong Kongers are active social media users, and these users have an average of 9 social media accounts each

3.4 Reaching the consumer: print media landscape

- Print media are still very relevant in Hong Kong: the territory has long been a major centre for print journalism.
- Hong Kong's Basic Law secures freedom of speech and of the press. 30% of Hong Kongers stated they trusted news media most of the time in 2020, which is about on par with UK respondents (28%), and the US (29%). To make sure they read independent news, Hong Kongers are increasingly turning to news websites (HK01 in Chinese, Hong Kong Free Press in English, or Stand News for example).
- There are both Chinese-language dailies and a handful of English-language titles. Most local papers have known political alignments. The print media landscape can appear quite fragmented with large choice of titles. Major print media groups expanded vertically and now offer online versions, adding video content and webcasts to their printed versions.
- Some of the main Chinese corporations can own some of the most important papers in Hong Kong: the South China Morning post, an English-language paper, is owned by Alibaba for example.
- Some weekly magazines have tags on pages for mobile phones to scan and then open websites to download special promotions and offers.

Newspapers	Other information
The Standard (English), Headline Daily, AM730, Sky Post, Metro Daily	Free, daily newspapers
South China Morning Post (English)	Daily newspapers
Oriental Daily News, The Sun	Owned by Oriental Press Group Limited
Ming Pao	Daily owned by Media Chinese International Limited, 2 Canadian editions (Toronto, Vancouver)
Sing Tao Daily	Widely read newspaper owned by Sing Tao News Corporation Limited, many bureaus overseas
Sing Pao Daily News	Oldest Chinese-language newspaper in Hong Kong
Ta Kung Pao, Wen Wei Po	Leading newspapers, strong links with mainland China
Hong Kong Commercial Daily, Hong Kong Economic Journal, Hong Kong Economic Times, Wall Street Journal	Daily business newspapers
Apple Daily	Tabloid-style, Hong-Kong based newspaper owned by Next Media Limited
Sunday Examiner (English), Kung Kao Po	Weekly newspapers owned by the Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong
Hong Kong Post (Japanese)	One of few weekly newspapers in Japanese in Hong Kong

3.4 Reaching the consumer: broadcast media landscape

TV

- Hong Kong is home to one of the largest film industries in Asia. International and pan-Asian broadcasters are based in Hong Kong, including News Corp's STAR TV. There are more than a dozen free-to-air TV channels, and hundreds more networks available via multichannel and pay-TV platforms.
- 4 commercial terrestrial TV networks each manage multiple stations; multi-channel satellite and cable TV systems are also available.
- The private Television Broadcasts (TVB) dominates the free-to-air TV market. Another key player is Public Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK), which was established under British rule in 1928 and operates as a government department.

Main TV companies

Radio-TV Hong Kong (RTHK) – government funded, terrestrial
Television Broadcasts (TVB) – private, terrestrial, including TVB Jade and TVB Pearl
Phoenix TV – private, multi-channel satellite TV
Sun TV – private, via satellite
STAR TV – pan-Asia satellite broadcaster, owned by News Corp.
Cable TV (or CTVHK)
STAR TV (satellite and cable)
NowTV (paid TV)

Radio

- There are 3 licensed broadcasters of terrestrial radio, one of which is government funded, and operate about 12 radio stations.
- Digital radio demand is quite weak, and so all digital radio services were terminated in September 2017.
- BBC World Service can be listened to overnight on RTHK's Radio 4 FM network. RTHK ended a 24-hour relay in 2017 and a Chinese state radio network replaced it.

Main radio channels

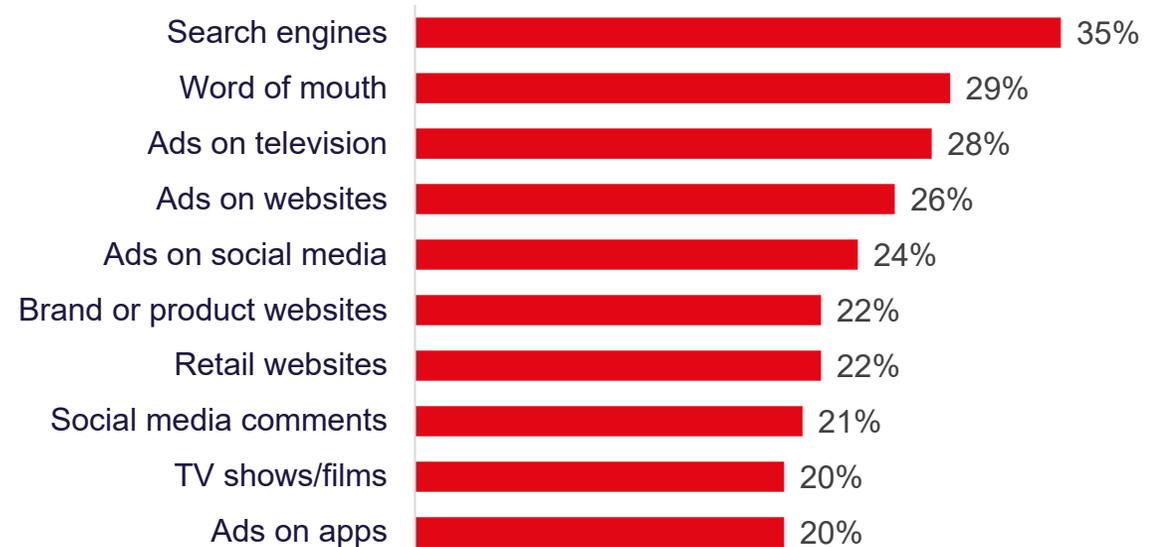
Radio-TV Hong Kong (RTHK) – government funded operating 7 networks in English, Cantonese and Mandarin
Metro Broadcast – operates Metro Showbiz, Metro Finance and English-language Metro Plus
Commercial Radio – operates CR1, CR2 networks in Cantonese and mediumwave (AM) station AM 864

3.4 Reaching the consumer: internet and social media

- Internet penetration is very high among Hong Kongers, at 91%. Hong Kong internet users aged 16-64 use the internet for over 6 hours per day; the highest across Northeast Asia.
- Hong Kongers are most likely to spend their time online watching online videos and streaming music.
- When it comes to social media, Hong Kong finds itself in a unique position, as residents enjoy greater internet freedom than those in mainland China. Social media penetration was at 78% in early 2020, and usage grew by 4% from 2019 to 2020. Internet users have 9 social media accounts on average.

Most used social media platforms	Mobile app rankings
Facebook	WhatsApp Messenger
YouTube	Facebook
WhatsApp	Wechat
Instagram	Facebook messenger
Wechat	App 1933
FB Messenger	Instagram
LINE	MyObservatory
Twitter	Taobao
LinkedIn	Openrice
Skype	Apple Daily

Sources of new brand discovery





VisitBritain™



VisitEngland™

Access and travel trade

Chapter 4

4.1 Access: key facts

- 96% of Hong Kong visitors come to the UK by plane.
- In 2019, non-stopping, direct flights linked Hong Kong International airport to London Heathrow, London Gatwick and Manchester.
- Three airlines serve these routes: Cathay Pacific Airways, British Airways and Virgin Atlantic Airways. The local carrier, Cathay Pacific, represented about two thirds of the direct, non-stopping seat capacity from Hong Kong to Britain in 2019. It is the only airline serving routes to London Gatwick (since 2016) and Manchester (since 2014).
- Seat capacity declined significantly between 2007 and 2013; in 2012, Qantas stopped operating flights to the UK via Hong Kong and Air New Zealand did the same from 2013 onwards, which partly explains the decrease, alongside local companies stopping their Hong Kong-UK routes.
- There has been stable growth in the last few years, and in 2019 direct seat capacity was equivalent to that in 2009. Cathay Pacific is responsible for most of the recent growth.

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, seat capacity from Hong Kong to the UK dropped by 89% in April and May 2020 compared the same months in 2019, with seats at 35% of 2019 levels on average through the year. Departures are planned to stay at a very low level for at least the first half of 2021.

Source: Apex 2019, non-stop flights only

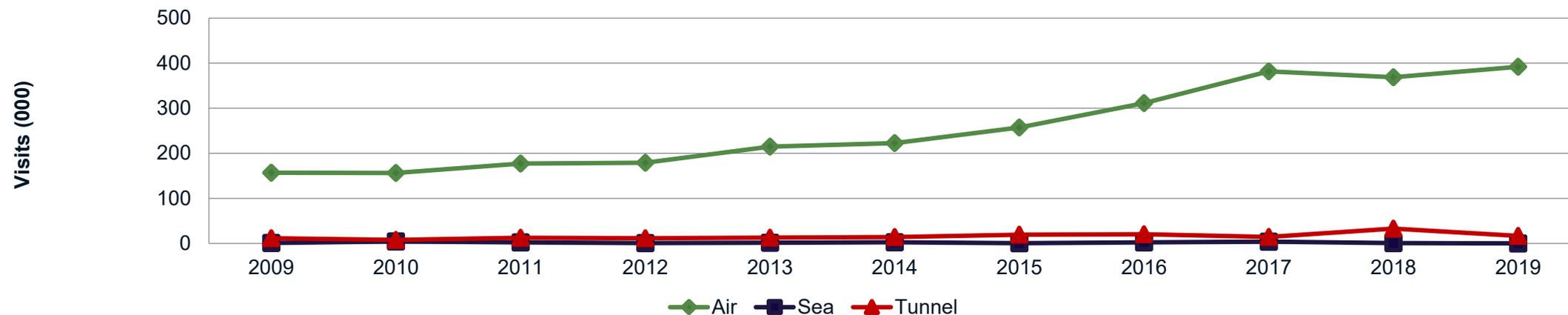


Access to Britain

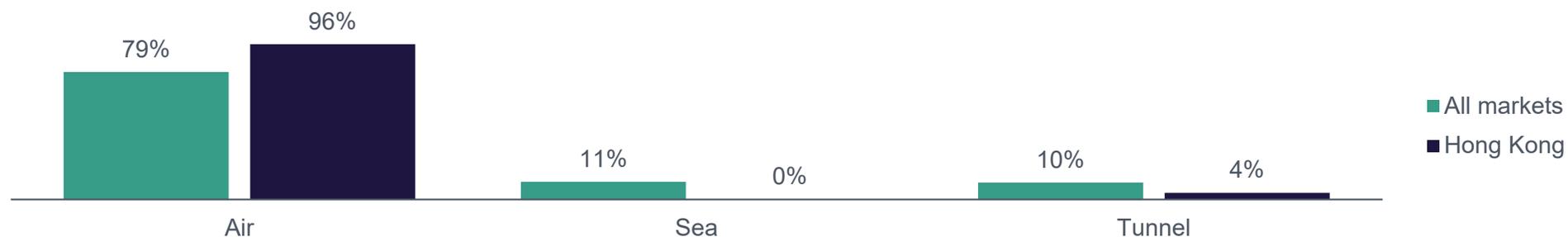
Measure	2019
Weekly aircraft departures	68
Weekly seat capacity	21,695
Airports with direct routes in Hong Kong	1
Airports with direct routes in Britain	3

4.1 Access: mode of transport

Visits by mode of transport

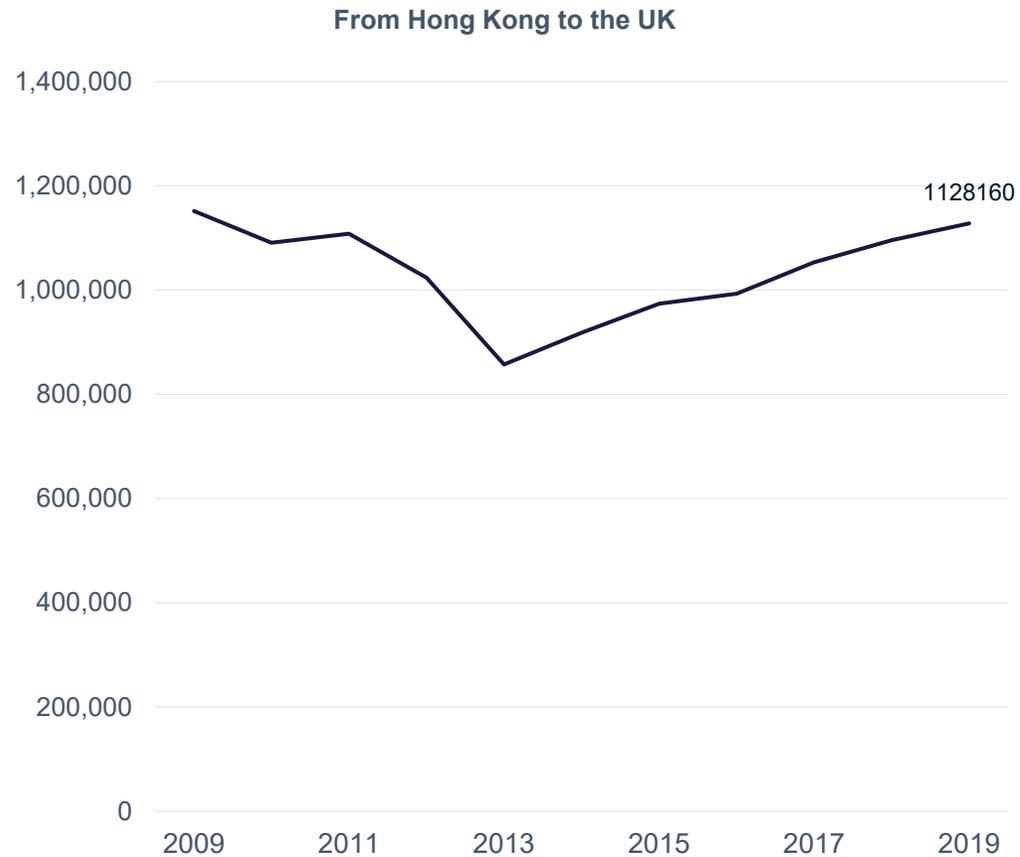


Annual share by mode (2019)

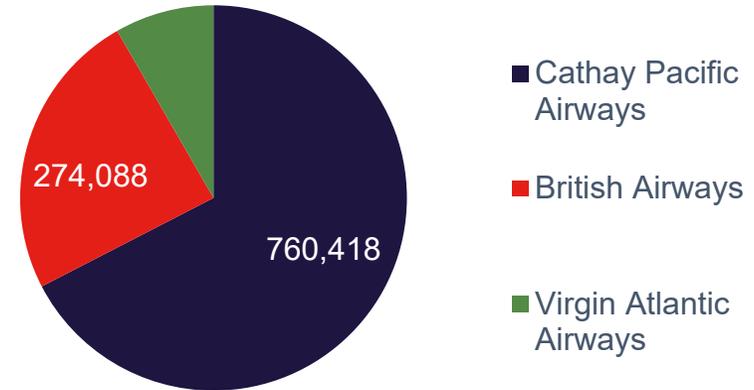


4.1 Access: capacity

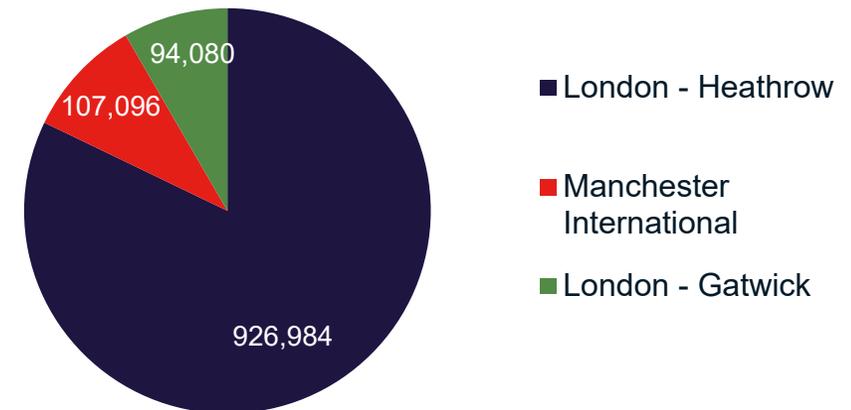
Annual airline seat capacity trends



Airline seat capacity by carrier (2019)



Destination airport seat capacity (2019)



Source: Apex 2019, non-stop flights only

4.2 Travel trade: general overview

- The Hong Kong travel industry can seem quite fragmented, but is well organised and regulated. Only a few major actors, agencies and wholesalers, dominate the market.
- Looking at outbound travel to Europe and the UK, there are only a few wholesalers, tours operators and travel agent groups that propose UK packages or tours.
- The smaller agencies will usually refer to products from some main European ground handlers. Some of them have offices in Hong Kong.
- Market trends have an impact on the general structure of the travel trade in Hong Kong. As online purchases are becoming the norm, the main travel agencies are promoting their online sites in order to address the growing use of online travel agents (OTAs). The rise in interest in family travel, packages for senior travellers, or special interest travel tours and packages have also developed in the last few years.
- Participating in some of the main Asian travel trade fairs outside of Hong Kong may also allow an opportunity to meet the local trade, as Hongkongese actors will be present at those main events too, and not only the main Hong Kong travel fair in June.

Over 1,700

Travel agents are
members of the Travel
Industry Council Hong
Kong

4.2 Travel trade structure and main players

Hong Kong wholesalers promoting Britain

Charming Holidays

Farrington Amex

Jardine Travel

Jetour Holidays

Kuoni Travel

Sincerity Travel

Travelex

Westminster Travel

European ground handlers with offices in Hong Kong

GTA

Kuoni

Miki

Trafalgar

Trade structure overview

- The Travel Industry Council Hong Kong (TICHK) counts over 1,700 travel agent members handling inbound and outbound travel. According to TICHK the value of the outbound market has increased in Hong Kong.
- Travel and tourism is one of the main sectors in Hong Kong; inbound travel is very important for the economy. Overall, the travel market in Hong Kong is mature, and the travel trade structure well organised. The Travel Agents Ordinance has implemented a licensing system regulating agents who provide inbound and outbound services.
- Approximately 20 major agencies handling all aspects of travel dominate the market.
- There are around 10-15 tour operators with retail branches, and around 30 agencies that can be classified as wholesalers; only a few agents are licensed to handle both inbound travel, and outbound ticketing and the rest handle ticketing only. A handful of major agencies handling all aspects of travel are the ones that dominate the market.
- Most travel agency front line staff have a limited knowledge of long haul destinations. In terms of Britain, most would not have much knowledge of places outside of London.
- In recent years the travel trade has known major changes: online travel purchase is becoming standard. As a consequence more and more traditional agents are advertising their website and online services, while OTAs are becoming more and more popular (Expedia, HotelCombined, Trip, Trivago).
- Smaller travel agencies deal mainly with ticketing, or a combinations of that, corporate, incentive and leisure travel for individuals. European ground handlers present in Hong Kong will usually handle some business for those local travel agencies. Airlines are also moving away from tickets only and offer some packages online.
- Only a handful of tour operators used to sell tours of Europe and Britain. Special interest tours have become more popular in recent years, though: some OTAs specialise in these.

4.2 Travel trade: doing business

Time difference: GMT + 8 (summer time +7)

Business hours: usually from 9:00 to 18:00, Mon-Fri.

Where to find the trade: The majority of agents are based around the commercial districts of Hong Kong and Kowloon. Some of the major tour operators and travel agencies have moved to Kwun Tong, an area outside Kowloon. Most travel agency front line staff have a limited knowledge of long haul destinations. In terms of Britain, most would not have much knowledge of places outside of London.

Staying there and getting around: taxis and the underground are the best ways to get around in Hong Kong. Taxis are cheap by international standards but most taxi drivers do not speak much English. International credit cards are widely acceptable at hotels, retail shops and restaurants. Charging money on an Octopus card will allow you to use Hong Kong public transport, and make some payments in convenience stores, supermarkets, and vending machines.

Promotional material: Bring a supply of brochures with updated rates and tariffs. Cost and commission levels are all important factors and will determine whether your contact is interested in your product at the meeting. It helps to show that you prepared for the meeting in advance, which will add to the seriousness of your offer.

Planning cycle: Travel Trade will start business planning at the beginning of the year. It is highly recommended to send all the products package and updated information to Hong Kong trade by December or January to ensure updated products can be promoted in the 1st quarter of the year. Regular products should also be sent to the trades throughout the year so that it can help the Hong Kong trade to keep the momentum to promote new travel products in different quarters.

Communication tips: Hong Kong Chinese people are direct communicators. However, sometimes silence can be a form of communication. They also tend to avoid direct confrontations and so it is recommended not to overly say no. If someone sucks air through his/her teeth while you are speaking, it means that they are unhappy with what you have just said. Denying a compliment is a sign of humility and considered a polite way to receive it.

Trade exhibitions: International Travel Expo (ITE) Hong Kong is when of the main travel trade exhibitions in Hong Kong. It usually takes place mid-June. Other travel trade events in China (and Shanghai in particular) or even in Asia (such as ILTM, International Luxury Travel Market Asia Pacific Singapore).

4.2 Travel trade: meetings

Tips for doing business

- Hong Kong's business etiquette is very similar to that of Britain. Most often, you can use English as the meeting and corresponding language.
- Hong Kong business activities are often competitive, transparent and quick. Hong Kongers are practically minded and very value conscious. The Hong Kong trade are interested to know more UK suppliers if that can give them new ideas to generate more business to promote to their customer.
- The Hong Kong Chinese take a long-term view of business relationships: commitment to the market is important. Personal relationships are important and need to be cultivated, often through more than one visit to the market.

Meeting etiquette

- If you are travelling to Hong Kong appointments are necessary and should be made between 1 and 2 months in advance. Try not to schedule a visit during Chinese New Year (late January or early February) as many businesses are closed at that time.
- Punctuality at meeting is appreciated. There will be some small talk before any business talks or negotiations. Offering a small gift representing your company is appreciated.
- Make sure to bring latest product brochures and rates. Business is often price driven: you should leave some room for negotiation. Prompt replies and instant follow-ups will show you are serious in trying to get business.
- Decisions are usually made at the top of the company. Business discussions can often last in time. However, the pace of decision making is swifter than in other Asian countries.

Greeting

- Handshakes are appropriate when greeting someone. Lowering one's eyes is also a sign of respect.
- If you are at a large function, you can introduce yourself to other guests. At smaller functions, it is polite to wait for your host to introduce you. Introductions should always start by those with the most senior ranking, an older person comes before a younger person, and a woman before a man.
- People should be addressed by their title and surname, traditionally the first one among the Chinese.
- Business cards are exchanged after the initial introductions. It will be appreciated if one side of the business card is translated into Chinese. Hong Kongers tend to remember people by their business cards so your title should be printed on them. However, nothing should be hand-written on them directly. Present the card the right way round with two hands for the recipient to read. Make sure to observe it carefully and remember your opposite's name. Place it on the table in front of you if you are sitting, or in your wallet or a holder, but never with yours.

4.2 Travel trade: Hong Kong holidays

National public holidays in 2021

Date in 2021	National Holiday
1 st January	New Year's Day
Feb 12 th –15 th	Lunar New Year's Holiday/ Chinese New Year
2 nd April	Good Friday
3 rd April	Day after Good Friday
5 th April	Day after Ching Ming Festival
6 th April	Day after Easter Monday
1 st May	Labour Day/ May Day
19 th April	Buddha's birthday
14 th June	Dragon Boat Festival/ Tuen Ng Festival
1 st July	Special Administration Region (SAR) Day
22 nd September	Mid-Autumn Festival (next day)
1 st October	National Day
14 th October	Chung Yeung Festival/ Dual-Yang Festival
25 th December	Christmas Day
27 th December	Family Day

There are 12 statutory holidays in Hong Kong, which should all be given to any employees, except Christmas which is discretionary. If a national statutory holiday falls on a rest day then it should be replaced. Some companies also observe some non-statutory holidays, such as Easter, Buddha's birthday or the Family day.

Usual annual leave entitlement: 7-14 days, depending on how long the person has worked in the company – 7 days for one or two years, and then progressively up to 14 days for those having worked for the same company during 9 or more years. Some companies offer more days though.

Schools start term in mid-August and end in mid-June. Major school holidays:

- Autumn holidays: 1 week in mid-October
- Winter holidays: 3 weeks from mid-December to beginning of January
- Lunar New Year holidays: 1 week in January or February depending on the years
- Spring holidays: 1 week end of April
- Summer holidays: from the end of term in mid-June to the start of the new one, in mid-August.

The government plans to increase the number of Hong Kong statutory holidays from 12 to 17 within 10 years, with one statutory holiday added every two years. This is to redress the balance between white collar workers (whose companies may allow 17 holidays) and blue collar workers

4.3 Caring for the consumer: hospitality

Understanding the culture and etiquette

- As we have seen previously, there is a high proportion of migrants in Hong Kong. It has also been retroceded by the UK to China in 1997. As a consequence, western influences are very present in the Hongkongese culture with the food scene being a mix of eastern and western-style cuisine, for example.
- Hong Kong is located in the Guangdong area. Thus the Cantonese culture is mainstream there and blends in with the more western influences.
- This explains why Hong Kong is quite unique in Asia. Concepts of family pride, solidarity, modesty and 'saving face' remains very important to Hong Kongers, while some have a more western way of life.

Language

- In Hong Kong both Chinese and English are official languages.
- While no specific Chinese dialect is mentioned in the Official Languages Ordinance, Chinese people from Hong Kong usually speak Cantonese. Standard Mandarin can also be spoken by some though. The written form of Chinese mostly used in Hong Kong is the traditional Chinese characters.

Food and drink

- Hong Kongers love food and are adventurous in tasting local cuisine and produce.
- Meal times are quite similar in Hong Kong and in the UK. Breakfast is taken between 8am and 9am, lunch (preferably a hot meal) between 1pm and 2pm, and dinner between 7pm and 8pm. With many office workers staying longer in the office later, though, dinners are becoming more common.
- Chinese tea is the customary beverage for all occasions. Hong Kongers continually refill their teacups when they are empty. By placing the lid of a teapot upside down (or open if attached) the customer is signalling to a waiter that more water is required.
- In the summer, they would prefer cold soft drinks or cold water to hot coffee and tea. It is not customary to go for drinks before a meal.

Accommodation

- Hong Kongers prefer modern hotels and would generally prefer just to visit country houses or stately homes.
- Flight time from Hong Kong to the British airports is around 13 hours. So if visitors arrive before the usual check-in time, they would appreciate flexible check-in times and being able to freshen up and get changed before the day.



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Useful links and further information

Appendix

Appendix 1: Working with VisitBritain (1)

We can help you extend your reach through:

- Digital and social media such as through Twitter, our Facebook page – Love GREAT Britain, or Pinterest.
- Press and PR by sending us your newsworthy stories or partnering to host journalists, influencers, and broadcast shoots
- Leisure, and the business travel trade via our programme of sales missions, workshops and exhibitions or promotion to our qualified Britagents and supplier directory
- Retailing your product through the VisitBritain shop
- Joining the [Tourism Exchange GB platform](#) – giving you access to a wide range of international customers, via connected distributors. Connection to the platform is free.
- Or as a major campaign partner

We are here to support you and look forward to working with you. To find out more browse our:

[Opportunity search](#) or [trade website](#)

or contact the B2B events team
(Email: events@visitbritain.org)

or campaign partnerships team
(Email: partnerships@visitbritain.org)

or trade support team
(Email: tradesupport@visitbritain.org)

or VisitBritain shop team
(Email: product@visitbritain.org)

Appendix 1: Working with VisitBritain (2)

VisitBritain's strategy to grow tourism to 2025

- **Developing world-class English tourism product:** VisitBritain has collaborated with VisitEngland to develop and deliver the **Discover England Fund** since April 2016
- **Collaborating globally:** VisitBritain's network extends in four regions: Europe, the Americas, APMEA and North East Asia. Meet those teams and their trade partners at VisitBritain's different trade events, VIBE, ExploreGB, or Destination Britain events in market.
- **Inspiring the world to explore Britain** as a **GREAT Britain** campaign partner and through our **'I Travel For...'** marketing campaign.
- **Acting as trusted partner and advisor** to the industry, but also our Government and Public Diplomacy partners by generating and offering them world-class market insights.

VisitBritain also develops and promotes products for Business Events, food & drinks, rail, luxury, regional gateways, and the Discover England Fund. Find out more at our [Discover England Fund page](#).

To find out more information, browse:

[VisitBritain's mission](#)

[The Government's Tourism Action Plan](#)

[VisitBritain's events](#)

['I Travel For...' campaign](#)

[The tourism sector deal](#)

Appendix 2: Useful research resources (1)

We have dedicated research and insights available which include:

- Latest [monthly](#), [quarterly](#), [overall](#) and [quarterly by area](#) data from the International Passenger Survey by ONS.
- [Inbound Tourism Trends by Market](#)
- [Inbound activity data](#)
- [Inbound nation, region and country data](#)
- [Inbound town data](#)
- [Sector-specific research](#) which includes topics such as accommodation, countryside and coast, culture heritage and attractions, food and drink, football tourism, shopping, transport and visits with a health condition or impairment.
- [2021 Inbound Tourism Forecast](#)
- [Britain's competitiveness](#)

We are here to support you and look forward to working with you.

To find out more about Hong Kong or other inbound markets browse our:

[Markets & segments](#)

[Inbound research & insights](#)

[Inbound COVID-19 sentiment tracker](#)

Or contact us directly
(Email: research@visitbritain.org)

Appendix 2: Useful research resources (2)

We have dedicated research and insights available which include:

- [Perceptions of Britain overseas](#)
- [Planning, decision-making and booking cycle of international leisure visitors to Britain](#)
- [Gateways in England, insights on overseas visitors to England's regions, participation in leisure activities, multi-destination trips and more](#)
- [Food & drink research](#)

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Or contact us directly
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Appendix 3: Definitions, sources and information on this report (1)

Details on main sources:

- The **International Passenger Survey (IPS)** is a UK-wide departure survey, carried out by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). All data are based on data collected as visitors are about to leave the UK about what they did, not on their intentions or perceptions. Except when specified, IPS refers to people according to their country of residence, not nationality. Where we talk about mode of transport, it refers to what is used on departure to leave the UK, with the presumption that shares are similar on arrival. To find out more and consult the release calendar, browse our [IPS page](#).
- **Oxford Economics** tourism forecasts are from the March 2021 update of the 'Global Travel Service' databank.
- **Apex** data was last updated with March 2021 data.
- **UNWTO** data are based on their latest Tourism Barometer and Statistical Annex, January 2021.
- **VisitBritain/IPSOS 2016** refers to the ['Decisions & Influences' research project](#) carried out in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Denmark, France, GCC (UAE and Saudi Arabia), Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Russia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, and USA. Its all-market averages are based on weighted average of those markets. Only international travellers participated, half of each market sample having travelled to Britain before.
- The **Anholt Nation Brands Index (NBI)**, now powered by Ipsos, was carried out online in July/August 2020 in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Poland, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Turkey, UK and USA. Its all-market averages are based on those markets. It is based on nation-wide representative samples. More detail in our ['How the world views the UK' foresight](#).

Appendix 3: Definitions, sources and information on this report (2)

Useful definitions and abbreviations

- **VFR** means Visiting Friends and/or Relatives.
- **Misc** journey purpose means Miscellaneous – other journey purposes.
- In IPS, to be defined as a **package**, a holiday must be sold at an inclusive price covering both fares to and from the UK and the cost of at least some accommodation. Neither the respondent nor the travel agent from whom the package was bought will know how much of the inclusive price is accounted for by fares or by accommodation.
- **High Net Worth Individuals**, or HNWIs, are people with liquid assets valued over USD1million.

Other useful information

- **Top 10 activities in Britain** is based on propensity for visitors to have undertaken activities whilst in Britain, data having been collected between 2006 and 2019. Where an activity was asked about more than once, only the most recent answers were taken into account.
- **Repeat visits** are visits made by people who had already visited the UK before; British expats have been excluded for better representation of the market's propensity to visit Britain repeatedly. IPS question asked in 2015.
- **Likelihood to recommend Britain** as a destination is based on holiday visits, of at least one night, excluding British expats.



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Market and Trade Profile: Hong Kong

March 2021