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## **BUSINESS LEADERS AND INVESTORS LOOK TO ASIA AND AI AMID VOLATILITY, FINDS HSBC SURVEY**

- *94% of Hong Kong businesses plan to increase cross-border trade or investment over the next five years*
- *51% of international businesses and investors cite strong AI and data-related infrastructure and attractive energy costs as an important driver when deciding to increase exposure to individual markets*

Senior leaders and institutional investors are prioritising Asia, and mainland China in particular, as they reposition for growth. This is according to a new independent survey from HSBC ahead of its annual HSBC Global Investment Summit in Hong Kong\*.

The survey of 3,000 international businesses and institutional investors in 10 markets – including 300 in Hong Kong – was conducted in mid-March against the backdrop of recent world events. It shows that, after a decade of cumulative global shocks, companies are adapting and still investing.

Ninety-four per cent of Hong Kong respondents continue to see strong opportunities for international growth. More than 8 in 10 (82%) anticipate moderate to significant repositioning of their businesses over the next three years, as they reassess where they operate and how they invest.

### **AI and technology drive strategic decisions**

Technology is now central to the global investment decisions of business leaders and institutional investors. Having strong AI and data-related infrastructure and attractive energy costs is one of the most important drivers when international businesses and investors decide to increase exposure to individual markets (51%), just behind strong growth prospects and customer demand (52%).

Hong Kong respondents believe that the most significant potential benefits of AI over the next three years will be improved productivity and workplace efficiency (60%) and reduction in operating costs (55%). This indicates an anticipated shift in how work gets done.

According to the report, 49% of institutional investors around the world cite increasing exposure to AI and technology themes as their most common strategy for positioning client portfolios in 2026 in response to the current economic climate.

## **Volatility: businesses are recalibrating**

Volatility is no longer viewed as a temporary disruption but as a feature of the global operating environment, a view held by 98% of Hong Kong respondents.

In response, 92% of local businesses and investors agree that they have recalibrated their capital allocation approach. Eighty-seven per cent say they are more willing to take calculated risks than they were five years ago.

## **Trade and investment are regionalising - mainland China becomes the focal point**

The survey points to globalisation becoming more regional in structure, with 94% of Hong Kong organisations planning to increase cross-border trade or investment over the next five years, and 95% expecting those flows to concentrate more heavily within regional networks.

International respondents identified mainland China as the market expected to grow most in importance to their economic relationships over the next five years, cited by 41% of decision-makers - more than any other region globally. Hong Kong respondents named mainland China (75%), ASEAN (38%), and continental Europe (37%) as the markets that will become more important in the next five years, highlighting a growing emphasis on Asia.

The survey shows that 91% of Hong Kong businesses and investors are actively increasing capital deployment in high-growth markets, reflecting a strong conviction in long-term returns despite volatility.

**Michael Roberts, CEO, HSBC Bank plc and CEO, Corporate and Institutional Banking**, said: "Our Global Investment Summit survey highlights a structural transformation in the global economy. Trade and investment flows are becoming more regional, Asia is growing in strategic importance, and technology is reshaping how and where capital is deployed.

"Business leaders and institutional investors are recalibrating where they operate, invest and allocate capital as complexity rises."

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### **Note to editors:**

\*The independently commissioned survey was conducted in mid-March 2026, ahead of the annual HSBC Global Investment Summit (<https://www.business.hsbc.com/en-gb/campaigns/global-investment-summit>). The full report is available here: HSBC: New networks for capital - The world rewired (<https://www.business.hsbc.com/en-gb/insights/new-networks-of-capital-the-world-rewired>)

**Methodology**

The HSBC GIS survey is based on insights from 2,500 Senior Business Decision Makers and 500 Global Institutional Investors, commissioned by HSBC and conducted by British Polling accredited Savanta. Responses were collected from 9-16 March 2026 across 10 markets: UK, France, Hong Kong, Germany, mainland China, Singapore, USA, India, UAE, & Saudi Arabia. The sample comprised 250 Senior Business Decision Makers and 50 Global Institutional Investors in each market. Of the 2,500 corporate respondents, 726 reported global turnover of over USD2 billion in the past 12 months, 900 turned over between USD500 million and USD2 billion, and 874 had turnover of USD50 million to USD500 million. Of the 500 Global Institutional Investors, 164 reported that their company manages \$10bn+ in AUM, 128 managed between \$1bn to \$9bn AUM, and 208 manage less than \$1bn AUM.

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