

Hong Kong

Archetype **High-trust diffusers**GDP / person **\$57k**Population **7.5M**10-yr trend **1.1%**Gradual **8.7%** · #73Fast **14.8%** · #48

WHERE HONG KONG STARTS

Hong Kong enters the AGI era as a high-trust diffuser: rich, skilled and fast to absorb AI. The scores explain the label. Cyber resilience is 5 out of 5, among the world's best today; AI diffusion capacity is 4.3 and language inclusion 4.5. This is a \$57,000-per-person economy built on finance, logistics and professional services, with world-class universities and the deep capital markets of the Hong Kong Stock Exchange. What it lacks is control over its own inputs. Geopolitical positioning scores just 1, the lowest, because Hong Kong sits on the US–China fault line and carries real sanctions exposure. Catch-up headroom is 1.5 and demographics 1.7, reflecting an aging, high-income city. Ten-year trend growth is only 1.1% a year, a mature economy near its own ceiling.

THE THREE PATHS

These are simulations, not forecasts. The Modest path is the baseline; the two AGI scenarios fork from it. Under the Modest scenario, AI stays a normal technology. Hong Kong would barely move above its low trend: 1.3% growth a year, 140th of 157. Its head start in adoption would help at the margins but not change the picture. Under **Gradual** takeoff, growth would build for two decades and reach 8.7% a year once AGI matures around 2045, lifting Hong Kong to 73rd. An economy at that rate doubles in a little over eight years. The long ramp lets its finance and services firms turn deep AI adoption into productivity. Under **Fast** takeoff, growth would reach 14.8% a year from the early 2030s, a doubling every five years, and rank would climb to 48th, a jump of twenty-five places. The gain comes from diffusion speed and cyber strength paying off early. Regulation and politics could slow or redirect any of these paths. How Hong Kong's people and its key stakeholders respond to transformative AI is a variable the model holds constant.

HOW YOU WOULD KNOW WHICH WORLD YOU ARE IN

The scenarios look almost the same until about 2030, so watch leading indicators, not GDP, and watch them live. Three global signals matter most. First, whether the METR task-horizon curve keeps doubling every four to five months through 2027–28; METR publishes it at metr.org. Second, whether frontier-lab revenue and capital spending keep compounding; Epoch AI tracks both at epoch.ai. Third, whether growth in the ten to twenty most-ready economies — the United States and China above all — breaks above trend in the early 2030s. Double-digit growth there within a couple of years of 2030 would signal a fast world; a point or two above trend by the mid-2030s a gradual one; a fade back to trend a modest one.

Hong Kong's own signals would arrive earlier than the growth data: AI adoption rates across its banks and trading floors, cloud-region and hyperscaler commitments on its soil, and the pipeline of AI-related listings on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange.

IF GROWTH GOES EXPLOSIVE

Explosive is relative. At 14.8% growth a year, Hong Kong would run far ahead of its own 1.1% history, but behind both the frontier and its region. The United States would compound at nearly 39% and the East Asian median at 22.5%, so Hong Kong would slip in relative terms even as it grew fast. Still, doubling every five years means a child starting school today would finish university in an economy several times larger. Finance, logistics and professional services would deepen rather than change shape. Hong Kong is an aging city that draws workers in; faster growth and higher wages would strengthen that pull. There is a way this leaves Hong Kong worse off, and its geopolitical score of 1 is the real exposure. It rents frontier compute and access it does not control, and it lives inside chip rules written in Washington and Beijing. A decision made elsewhere could cut that access overnight. The hedge is to widen trusted-partner ties and secure capital-market access rather than assume it. Even then, the pace-setter would shift to the state, testing how fast the HKMA, the securities regulator and the courts can supervise, approve and adjudicate.

WHAT HONG KONG CAN DO NOW

Three levers follow from the scores, and the first two pay off whether or not AGI arrives. Start with the no-regret moves. The first is geopolitical positioning, Hong Kong's weakest factor at 1. For a financial center, staying inside trusted-partner frameworks and keeping open access to global capital markets matters in every scenario; a cautious government can protect this today at no loss. The second is the energy side of compute and energy access, at 2.9. Firmer, expanded power — grid interconnection, new generation and faster permits — protects the economy under every path and is the very input a data-center build would need. The third lever is the bet. Chip access and physical build speed, at 2.6, barely move growth if AI stays ordinary, but under a fast takeoff they become Hong Kong's biggest lever. Meanwhile the diffusion and cyber strengths, at 4.3 and a leading 5, should be guarded, not left to erode. Singapore, a fellow high-trust diffuser, lifted its data-center moratorium and set a green data-center roadmap to court hyperscalers with clean power; Hong Kong could adapt the model. To see how moving any of these scores shifts Hong Kong's path under each scenario, open the atlas's [policy editor](#).

The three levers — and which pay off regardless

Trusted chip & tech access

score 1 / 5 · weight 8 under skeptic → 12 under fast takeoff

Weight climbs from 8 to 12 as takeoff nears. It barely moves growth if AI stays ordinary — the lever that needs a view on the takeoff.

AGI bet

Compute & energy access

score 2.9 / 5 · weight 8 under skeptic → 24 under fast takeoff

Weight climbs from 8 to 24 as takeoff nears. It barely moves growth if AI stays ordinary — the lever that needs a view on the takeoff.

AGI bet

Physical build speed

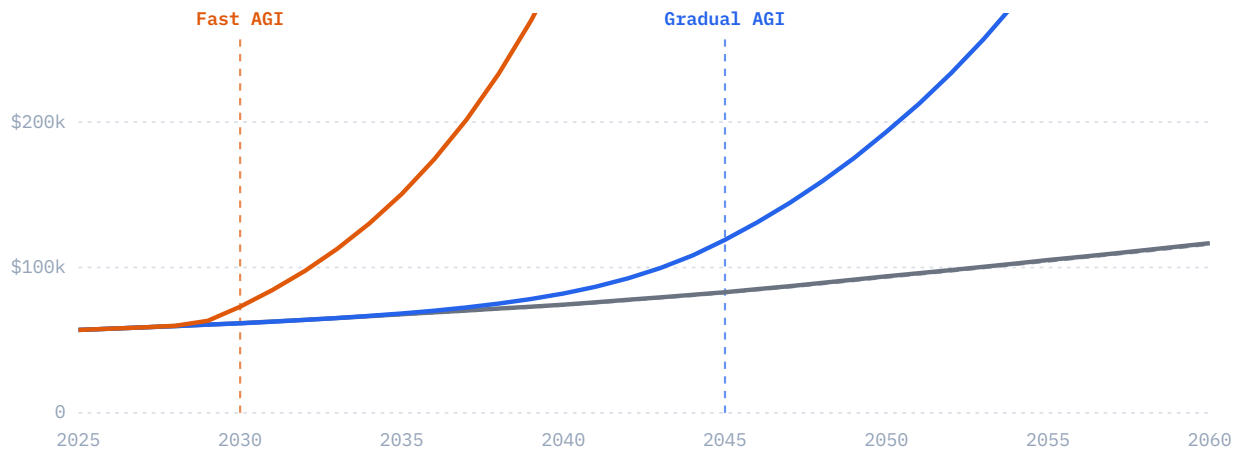
score 2.6 / 5 · weight 8 under skeptic → 17 under fast takeoff

Weight climbs from 8 to 17 as takeoff nears. It barely moves growth if AI stays ordinary — the lever that needs a view on the takeoff.

AGI bet

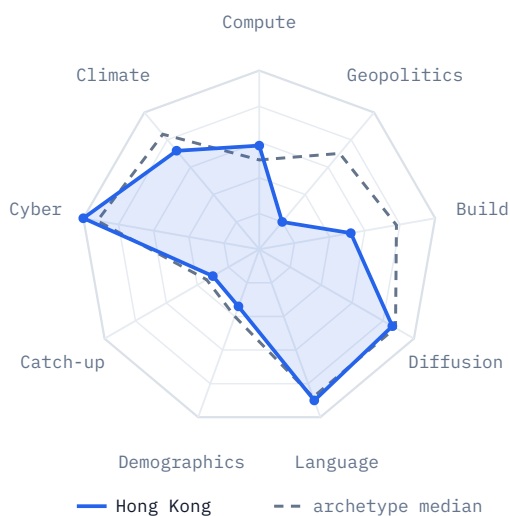
The no-regret levers pay off in every scenario, so a cautious government can act on them today. The AGI bets become decisive only if takeoff is real.

GDP per person to 2060, by scenario



Linear scale; solid lines are the three scenarios, dashed grey the no-AI baseline. Growth ramps from 2027 to each scenario's rate at its AGI year (Fast ~2030, Gradual ~2045), then holds. Timing and divergence are the point, not end levels; steep paths exit the top of the capped axis.

The nine factors



Solid: Hong Kong. Dashed: the median of its archetype. Scores are relative to the other 156 countries (3 ≈ global median, 5 = leading today).

Outcomes under each scenario

SCENARIO	GROWTH / YR	WORLD RANK	INDEX	DOUBLING
Modest	1.3%	140 / 157	61	—
Gradual	8.7%	73 / 157	58.1	8.3 yrs
Fast	14.8%	48 / 157	59.4	5 yrs

Post-AGI growth rate, rank among 157 countries, AGI Growth Index (0–100, scenario-weighted), and the implied economy doubling time. The Modest path is the baseline the AGI scenarios fork from.

THE THREE SCENARIOS

Modest the Acemoglu view

AI as a normal productivity tool

Intelligence was never the binding constraint on growth, so AI delivers real but ordinary gains. Each country gets a one-time boost of a couple of percent of GDP, phased in through 2035; growth then returns to trend. The mainstream-economics view.

≤0.66% TFP over a decade — a one-time gain

Hong Kong: 1.3% growth a year · #140 of 157

Gradual Erdil & Besiroglu, base case

Broad automation, on a long timeline

Broad automation of remote work arrives around 2045, with gains building slowly from the late 2020s. Growth then reaches up to ~20% a year for the best-positioned countries — ten times today's frontier trend. A slow arrival gives countries time to adapt, so the gains are wide but uneven.

up to ~20%/yr after 2045 — 10× the frontier trend

Hong Kong: 8.7% growth a year · #73 of 157

Fast Erdil & Besiroglu, fast takeoff

Fast takeoff — today's infrastructure decides

Transformation lands around 2030, before countries can adjust. Whoever already owns compute, capital and the ability to build wins; the gap between countries widens dramatically — and some are left growing slower than they would have without AGI.

up to ~40%/yr from 2030

Hong Kong: 14.8% growth a year · #48 of 157

Factor scores — and where policy bites



♦ marks this country's highest-leverage policy targets: the weakest factors carrying the most weight under the AGI scenarios. The atlas's interactive policy editor (agigrowth.org/#editor) simulates how raising any score changes growth under each scenario.

Archetype: High-trust diffusers

Rich, skilled and quick to absorb AI — including the big aging economies whose adoption outweighs their demographics.

Wins: The diffusion era — every year before full automation compounds their head start.

Watch: Little frontier capability of their own: dependent on alliance access and open weights; slow to build.

Canada 18.3% · #3	Ireland 17.4% · #4	United Kingdom 16.9% · #5	Australia 16.1% · #6	Singapore 15.7% · #7
New Zealand 15.5% · #9	Sweden 15.1% · #12	Norway 14.7% · #14	Germany 14.5% · #17	Switzerland 14.3% · #18

The regional picture — The supply chain lives here.

China is the only country running a frontier AI stack outside the United States — about 7% of tracked training compute (almost certainly an undercount), its own model labs, and the world's fastest build-out of power and data centers. Export controls cap its chip supply; its answer so far has been efficiency and open-weight releases that stay close to the frontier — which also makes China the second source of models for much of the world. Japan, South Korea and Taiwan hold the chokepoints: equipment and materials, memory, and fabrication. That makes them indispensable — and makes Taiwan the single greatest concentration of economic risk on the planet. All three are aging fast; Japan's population falls from 123 to about 100 million by 2060 in the projections used here, so AI arrives as a substitute for workers they will not have. The region's next twenty years turn on two questions: whether the chokepoints stay open, and whether China's constrained path converges with the US frontier or falls behind it.

Method, in brief

Each country is scored 1–5 on nine factors from public data (World Bank, Epoch AI, ITU, IMF and national sources). A scenario-weighted average forms the AGI Growth Index (0–100), which maps to a post-AGI growth rate inside ceilings derived from Erdil & Besiroglu (2023): ~20% growth a year for the best-positioned country under Gradual takeoff (AGI ~2045), ~40% under Fast (AGI ~2030); growth ramps convexly from 2027. The scenario sets the growth rates on offer; the index only decides where each country sits within them. The Modest scenario is the skeptics' baseline — a small uplift on each country's own ten-year trend. These are simulations for structured thinking, not forecasts; no probabilities are attached to any scenario.

Watch the global signals live: the METR task-horizon curve at metr.org/time-horizons · frontier-lab revenue at epoch.ai/ai-companies · AI-chip spending at epoch.ai/ai-chip-sales.

Explore further: full methodology agigrowth.org/#methodology · map & rankings agigrowth.org/#explore · country profiles agigrowth.org/#countries · policy editor agigrowth.org/#editor