

[HKETO Berlin hosts reception to welcome Year of the Pig \(with photos\)](#)

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, Berlin (HKETO Berlin) welcomed the Chinese New Year with cheer and greetings in Berlin, Germany, on February 21 (Berlin time). Marking the beginning of a new year on the traditional Chinese calendar, the Chinese New Year is an important festival to celebrate, seek good fortune and blessings, and enjoy time with families and friends.

The Chinese zodiac assigns an animal and its reputed attributes to each year in a repeating 12-year cycle. With the beginning of the year on February 5, it is the pig, with character traits such as amicability, compassion and generosity.

In his welcome speech at the reception, the Director of HKETO Berlin, Mr Bill Li, looked back at some of Hong Kong's achievements in the past year including the opening of two major mega infrastructure projects, namely the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, adding new highlights to Asia's world city. Both will significantly boost Hong Kong's connectivity and integration with the Mainland.

"Hong Kong's unique strengths will further enhance our city's status as the financial and innovation hub in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and bring forward long-term development opportunities for promoting sustainable growth in commerce, professional services, technology, tourism and culture," Mr Li added.

Business relations between Hong Kong and Germany have been strong and ever growing, with Germany continuing to be Hong Kong's largest trading partner in the European Union. Elaborating on HKETO Berlin's activities, Mr Li said, "On the ground, our Office participates actively in major events in Berlin, including the Asia-Pacific Week and IFA. On this solid foundation, a new trend of collaboration in innovation and research has just begun. In particular, the opening of an Invention Centre in Hong Kong by the prestigious Fraunhofer Institute for Production Technology in October 2018 signifies a new chapter of partnership in the application of Industry 4.0. Furthermore, German technologies in electronic and electrical waste treatment as well as tunnel air filter systems have successfully set foot in Hong Kong."

From a global perspective, the rise of protectionism and trade friction in recent years might have cast a shadow over the world economy. Nonetheless, Mr Li emphasised that he was upbeat on Hong Kong. "Thanks to our competitiveness and adaptability, as well as our long-standing embrace of free and unfettered trade, Hong Kong can turn some of those global challenges into new opportunities," Mr Li said in closing his speech.

Following the Chinese New Year receptions organised by HKETO Berlin in Berlin, Hamburg and Frankfurt, more are to come in Munich, Zurich, Warsaw, Vienna, Bratislava, Ljubljana, Budapest, Dusseldorf and Prague in the weeks ahead.

About HKETO Berlin

HKETO Berlin is the official Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government representative in commercial relations and other economic and trade matters in Germany as well as Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Switzerland.

