

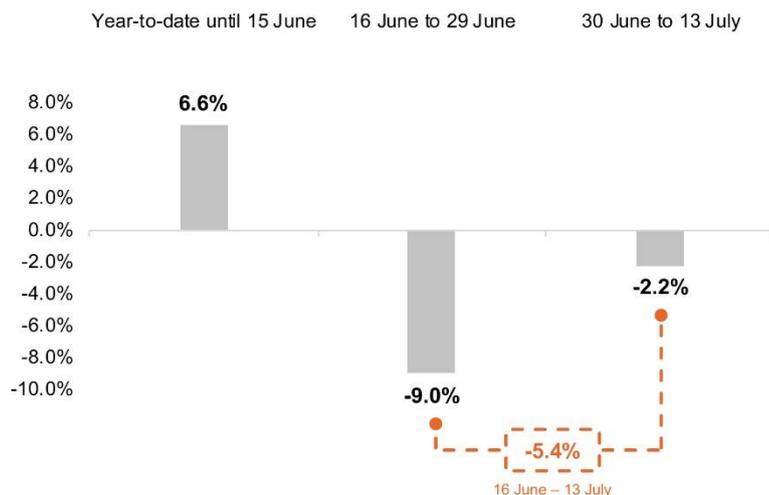
# Hong Kong suffers a short-term, short-haul set-back

## Demonstrations cause a 5.4% drop in flight bookings from Asia

A report from ForwardKeys, which analyses over 17 million flight bookings a day, has revealed that the recent wave of demonstrations in Hong Kong, against the controversial extradition bill, has had the effect of deterring people from making plans to visit the city.

In the four-week period from 16<sup>th</sup> June – 13<sup>th</sup> July, which was marked by a two million strong demonstration accompanied by a general strike and riots on 16<sup>th</sup> June, the siege of police headquarters on 21<sup>st</sup> June, the storming of the Legislative Council building on 1<sup>st</sup> July and riot police charging a group of protesters with batons on 7<sup>th</sup> July, flight bookings to Hong Kong from Asian markets\* fell by 5.4% on the equivalent period last year. In the first fortnight (16<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> June), bookings fell 9.0% and in the second (30<sup>th</sup> June – 13<sup>th</sup> July), 2.2%. This sharp set-back in bookings reversed a positive trend in which bookings for the first six and a half months of the year were 6.6% up on 2018.

Bookings made for arrivals from Asia in Hong-Kong (excl. China and Taiwan), year-on-year variations



Bookings made from 6 January to 13 July 2019 vs. 7 January to 14 July 2018.



Only considered pax staying at least 1 night.



Source: ForwardKeys actual air reservation data.

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(\*The bookings data excludes China and Taiwan because a fall in bookings from those destinations in the latter part of June could also be explained by the timing of the Dragon Boat Festival, which fell 11 days earlier this year than it did in 2018.)

Olivier Ponti, VP Insights, ForwardKeys, said: “Whilst the numbers do not look good, things are not all bad for Hong Kong’s visitor economy. So far, the adverse media coverage of the demonstrations has not caused an overall decline in long-haul bookings to Hong Kong and the number of Asian bookings made in 2019 is still ahead of those made during the same time period in 2018 – although growth has slowed substantially since the mass protest of 16<sup>th</sup> June. Also, it seems as if the lowest period occurred prior to the storming of the Legislative Council. However, on the less optimistic side, there were further demonstrations after our most recent numbers were run, so another downturn is possible.”

Ends

## About ForwardKeys

ForwardKeys analyses more than 17m flight booking transactions a day, drawing data from all the major global air reservation systems and selected airlines and tour operators. This information is enhanced with further independent data sets, including flight search and official government statistics, plus data science to paint a picture of who is travelling where and when. ForwardKeys' analytics are used by travel marketers, retailers, hotels, destination marketing organisations (DMOs), financial institutions, car rental companies, tour operators, online travel agents (OTAs) and other traveller-focussed businesses worldwide to monitor and anticipate traveller arrivals from a particular origin market at a specific time. This analysis enables parties to anticipate the impact of events, better manage their staffing levels, fine tune supply requirements, adjust and measure the effectiveness of their marketing efforts and anticipate future market trends.

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