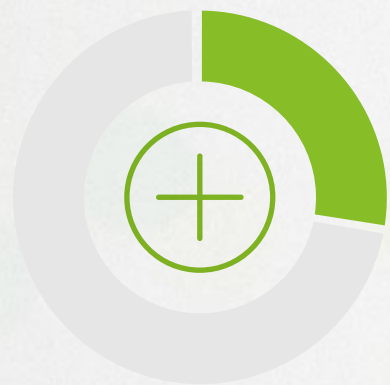


Deloitte Asia Pacific CFO Pulse Survey (May 2026)

Chinese Mainland and Hong Kong Highlights



Resilience, not retreat

Chinese mainland CFOs remain net optimistic about their own businesses, **at +29%** but less so than peers across AP +41%.

Standing 35 percentage points above their neutral view of the global economy (-6%).

While sentiment on China's economy is positive at +20%.

Chinese mainland and Hong Kong CFOs are clear: they have more confidence on global, regional and local economy than their regional peers in the Asia-Pacific, and their own business will be resilient to global economic uncertainty.



Stay ready, stay flexible

Most Chinese CFOs expect the Middle East conflict to negatively affect the global economy (mainland **86%**, HK **76%**), the local economy (mainland 69%, HK 64%).

70% CFOs expect negative impact to their own business, while only 6% expect a significant negative impact.

In response, Chinese CFOs are responding with characteristic discipline, taking a range of measures to reinforce their supply chains and financial stability, with more than 50% tightening cost controls and increasing focus on liquidity and cash management. This explains why CFOs remain confident in the outlook for their business.



From global risk to local strength

More than 80% of CFOs identify geopolitical instability as the principal risk to their business, while inflation concerns (23%) are lower among regional peers (41%). Most CFOs are more accustomed to managing uncertainty.

Growth priorities of Chinese CFOs are increasing operational efficiencies (mainland 50%, HK 35%), acquiring customers in existing geographies (mainland 47%, HK 58%), innovation/new products (mainland 46%, HK 50%). More Chinese mainland CFOs are focused on geographic expansion.

Among the 16 surveyed countries and regions, Chinese mainland ranks second in attention to improving operational efficiency. It demonstrates the broad focus on lean management practices.



Pacesetters, not spectators

Chinese mainland CFOs cite that AI adoption is now broadly mainstream, though slightly below the Asia Pacific average: organisation adoption is **56%** vs 67% (AP), with only 9% extensive use. Finance function adoption is **57%** vs 59% (AP).

What stands out is depth of use in finance, where extensive use is 14% vs 8% (AP).

Hong Kong CFOs trail AP peers in AI adoption in both organization-wide and finance function wide.

Across AP region, South Korea hold a clear leading edge, having achieved large-scale AI application. Enterprises in Chinese are still in the active exploration phase of AI adoption.



Turning hype into hard numbers

The AI investment return for enterprises in Chinese mainland and Hong Kong is still in the exploration stage: **less than half** Chinese mainland (49%) and Hong Kong (39%) CFOs report some value from AI investments, below AP peers (52%).

The most common uses of AI within the finance function are for financial planning and analysis automation (mainland 47%, HK 46%) and automated invoice processing (mainland 51%, HK 35%). This indicates that finance teams are primarily leveraging AI to automate routine processes, to allow greater focus on complex and value-adding activities.



Skills and data hold the key

Chinese mainland CFOs see data issues (61%) and talent (46%) as the top barriers to finance-function adoption; **Nearly three in four** opting to focus on training talent (70%) and upgrading finance systems (53%).

Hong Kong CFOs see talent or skills gaps and data issues as the top barriers, also see governance, risk or compliance concerns. The leading actions are training and upskilling existing finance talent (77%), transforming or upgrading finance systems (54%).

In summary, talent and data infrastructure are the foundation for Chinese enterprises to maintain a leading edge or overtake on the bend in the AI era.