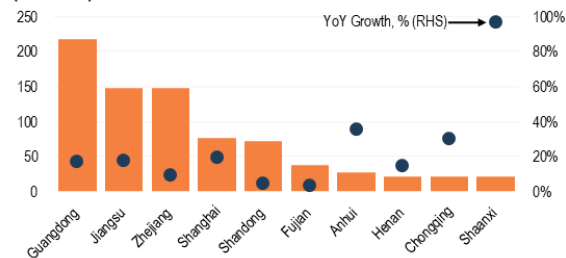


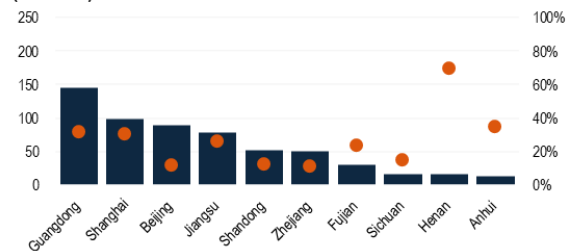
## The Specialised Industrial Zones Driving China's Trade

*A small group of highly specialised zones, spanning coastal innovation hubs, inland logistics platforms and integrated manufacturing clusters, anchors China's trade machine.*

China Top 10 Exporting Provinces, USD bn, YoY Growth, % (RHS) (Q1 2026)

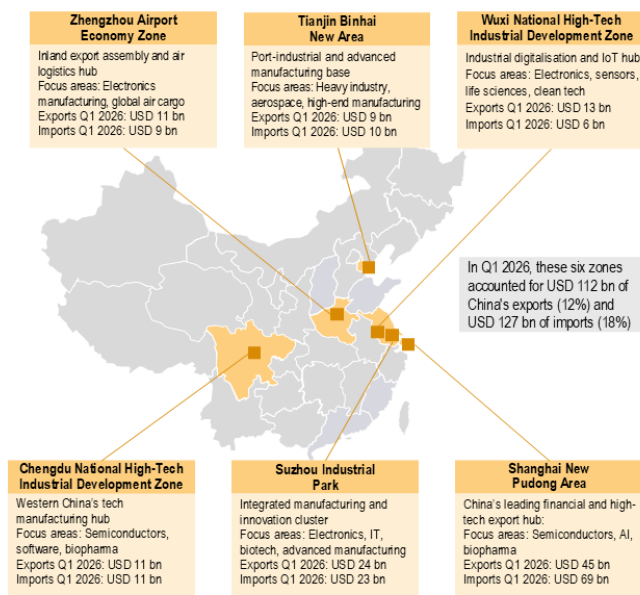


China Top 10 Importing Provinces, USD bn, YoY Growth, % (RHS) (Q1 2026)



Source: China Customs, Various, ANDAMAN PARTNERS Analysis

China Top 6 Trade Locations, USD bn (Q1 2026)



China's economic rise has long been anchored in its system of special economic zones (SEZs): controlled environments where policy, infrastructure and global capital are tightly aligned. From the earliest coastal SEZs to today's advanced industrial platforms, these zones have acted as testing grounds for reform and as engines of export-led growth, concentrating production, logistics and innovation into highly efficient clusters.

This structure is clearly visible in current trade data. In Q1 2026, China's exports remained heavily concentrated in coastal provinces, led by Guangdong (USD 220 billion), followed by Jiangsu and Zhejiang (both around USD 145 billion), with Shanghai also a major contributor. On the import side, Guangdong again leads (USD 145 billion), alongside Shanghai (USD 100 billion) and Beijing (USD 90 billion), reflecting both industrial demand and the role of major ports and commercial centres. However, provincial data masks a deeper reality: trade is not evenly distributed within regions but is concentrated in specific high-performance zones.

China Customs identifies more than 180 such zones across the country, spanning SEZs, Economic and Technological Development Zones (ETDZs), High and New Technology Industrial Development Zones (HNTIDZs) and integrated experimental areas. Among these, a small group stands out for scale and strategic importance.

- Shanghai Pudong New Area remains China's leading financial and high-tech export platform, recording USD 45 billion in exports and USD 69 billion in imports.
- Suzhou Industrial Park, a model of integrated manufacturing and innovation, contributed USD 24 billion in exports and USD 23 billion in imports.
- Wuxi National High-Tech Industrial Development Zone, a key industrial digitalisation hub, recorded USD 13 billion in exports and USD 6 billion in imports.
- Zhengzhou Airport Economy Zone, central to electronics assembly and air logistics, exported USD 11 billion and imported USD 9 billion.
- Chengdu's high-tech zone, anchoring western China's tech manufacturing, recorded USD 11 billion in both exports and imports.
- Finally, Tianjin Binhai New Area, northern China's core port-industrial base, exported USD 9 billion and imported USD 10 billion.

Together, these six zones accounted for USD 112 billion of China's total exports in Q1 2026, a share of 12%, and USD 127 billion of imports (18%). The outsized contribution of these six zones underlines how China's trade is ultimately organised around a network of specialised, high-performance industrial zones.



*Also by ANDAMAN PARTNERS:*

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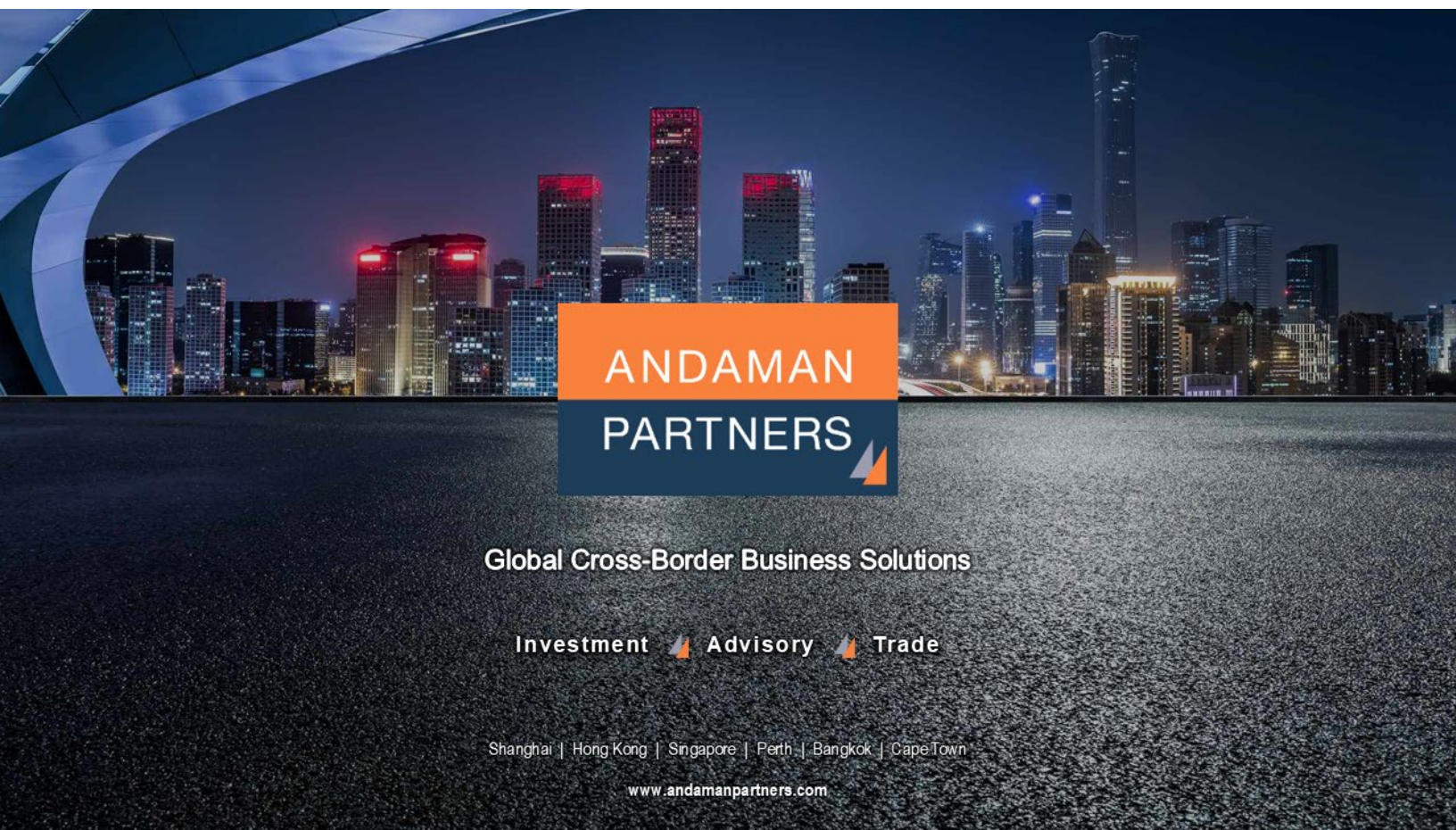
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