Scripts

"One Country, Two Systems" is a Chinese governance arrangement that allows Hong Kong to retain its distinct legal, economic and social systems from the mainland long-term under unified national sovereignty. Against this backdrop, the Shenzhen-Hong Kong boundary serves as a functional interface, accommodating two systems and lifestyles while supporting high-frequency cross-border exchanges, driving closer interactions. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted normalized cross-border mobility, but with its end and economic recovery, the boundary regained vitality, reconstructing people's perception of it and the dual-city relationship.

Chapter 1

This dynamic line chart, based on Hong Kong government immigration statistics, shows daily border crossings at Hong Kong ports (2023-2025). It supports filtering by travel direction, visitor type and control point; users can focus on specific traffic trends via tabs and select time periods for details.

After the Shenzhen-Hong Kong border reopened in Jan 2023, crossings saw vertical explosive growth, shaking off the pandemic slump and recovering to 85% of 2019 levels in Q1. Growth remained strong: 190% year-on-year (2023-2024), with a single-day peak exceeding 1.24 million.

This reflects a structural shift. In 2024, "northbound living" replaced "southbound shopping", with Hong Kong residents traveling north doubling mainland visitors going south. Weekend traffic surged 40% from weekdays, spawning the "5+2" dual-city lifestyle—working in Hong Kong on weekdays, living in Shenzhen on weekends, now a new normal. Traffic follows a weekly rhythm: inbound to Hong Kong on weekdays, significant net outflow on Saturdays, and a drop on Sundays.

Meanwhile, biometric authentication improved clearance efficiency, with e-Channel penetration reaching 75% by late 2025. The boundary is evolving from a divider to a convergence zone; with unified digital payments (e.g., AlipayHK) and denser transportation networks, an integrated metropolitan community is taking shape faster.

Chapter 2

Since 2017, when restrictions on Shenzhen residents visiting Hong Kong were relaxed, the "One trip per week" southbound trend has become normal. The dashboard displays annual crossings, year-on-year growth, daily averages and their share at 16 Hong Kong ports (2017-2025); users can check port locations and details via the left selection area.

Four main cross-border travel modes exist: aviation, rail transit, buses and private road travel. The Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong High-Speed Rail (Hong Kong Section), opened in Sep 2018, connected the three first-tier cities, reshaping Hong Kong-mainland cross-border travel. The Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, operational in Oct 2018, strengthened land links. These facilities boosted commuting efficiency, laying the foundation for the Hong

Kong-Shenzhen "One-Hour Living Circle". Users can select travel modes and durations on the dashboard to visualize its coverage.

Chapter 3

Within the Hong Kong-Shenzhen One-Hour Living Circle, cross-border commuters include students (who study cross-border and do homework on trains) and professionals (who pursue careers in Hong Kong). This lifestyle is now common. However, long cross-border commutes pressure commuters despite improved clearance efficiency.

On one hand, the entire clearance experience has not improved synchronously—the "last mile" transfer takes 70% of the journey, causing fast clearance but slow connections. On the other hand, high-frequency commutes lead to "time poverty": less than 3 hours of daily free time, 60% lower social participation than locals, and limited space for deep integration, making cross-border life "surviving on the go" rather than localized living.

Epilogue

In short, from traffic "awakening", to time-space "folding", to commuter life, the Shenzhen-Hong Kong narrative outlines an unfinished "symbiosis" future.