

### The HSBC Group

<b>Who we are</b>	The HSBC Group is one of the largest banking and financial services organisations in the world, with well-established businesses in Europe, the Asia-Pacific region, the Americas, the Middle East and Africa.
<b>Head office</b>	HSBC Holdings plc is incorporated in England, with its head office in London.
<b>Strategy</b>	HSBC's strategic direction reflects its position as 'the world's local bank' with its uniquely cosmopolitan customer base. The combination of local knowledge and international breadth is supported by a substantial financial capability founded on balance sheet strength, largely attributable to the scale of the Group's retail deposit bases. HSBC is progressively reshaping its business by investing primarily in faster growing markets and, in the more developed markets, by focusing on businesses which have international connectivity.
<b>Assets</b>	US\$2,547 billion (£1,278 billion, HK\$19,864 billion) at 30 June 2008.
<b>Profit before tax</b>	US\$10,247 million (£5,195 million, HK\$79,896 million) for the first half of 2008.
<b>Capital strength</b>	Tier 1 capital ratio: 8.8% } Total capital ratio: 11.9% } at 30 June 2008
<b>International reach</b>	Around 9,500 offices in 85 countries and territories.
<b>Staff</b>	335,000 employees worldwide.
<b>Customers</b>	About 100 million worldwide, with a total of 45 million customers registered for internet banking.
<b>Share listings</b>	HSBC Holdings is listed on the London, Hong Kong, New York, Paris and Bermuda stock exchanges. The company's US\$0.50 ordinary shares are traded on the London, Hong Kong, Paris and Bermuda stock exchanges and are traded in New York in the form of American Depositary Shares, each of which represents five ordinary shares. Shares in HSBC Holdings are held by more than 200,000 shareholders in over 100 countries and territories.
<b>Technology</b>	HSBC is a major user of advanced information technology, with an annual spending of US\$5.9 billion. Its e-business channels include the internet, PC banking and telephone banking. HSBC maintains its own private telecommunications network – one of the world's largest – to deliver IT services to customers and to staff around the world. HSBC web sites attracted 726 million visits during the first half of 2008.
<b>Customer groups and global businesses</b>	HSBC provides its personal customers worldwide with a full range of personal financial services, including current and savings accounts, mortgages, insurance, credit cards, loans, pensions and investments. Consumer finance, part of Personal Financial Services, facilitates point-of-sale credit to consumers, and lends money and provides related services to meet the financial needs of everyday people.
<i>Personal Financial Services (including Consumer Finance)</i>	Pre-tax profit for the first half of 2008 was US\$2.3 billion, a decrease of 51% compared with the same period in 2007, largely due to higher loan impairment charges in the US consumer finance business. Elsewhere the business performed strongly, with pre-tax profit increasing by 23%. HSBC Premier, the Group's global banking service which offers affluent customers a seamless international service is now available in 40 countries, up from 35. In emerging markets, cards in force grew by 5%, compared with year-end 2007.
<i>Commercial Banking</i>	HSBC is a leading provider of financial services to small, medium-sized and middle-market enterprises. Pre-tax profit increased by 35% to US\$4.6 billion. Growth in profit was strongest in the Middle East, Asia-Pacific and Brazil. Customer numbers grew by 8%, to 2.9 million, largely among small and micro-business customers. The number of small and micro-business customers using business internet banking increased by 22% to nearly 900,000.
<i>Global Banking and Markets</i>	This global business provides tailored financial services to corporate, institutional and government clients. In the most difficult financial market conditions seen for many decades, it delivered pre-tax profit of US\$2.7 billion or 37% higher than the second half of 2007. However, pre-tax profit was 35% lower than in the first half of 2007.
<i>Private Banking</i>	HSBC is one of the world's top private banking businesses, providing financial services to high net worth individuals and their families in 96 locations. Pre-tax profits increased by 5%, to US\$822 million, primarily due to strong performances in Switzerland and Monaco. In difficult times, total client assets rose by 1% to US\$499 billion. Private Banking generated 59% of its business from clients in emerging markets. Three new offices opened in China in early 2008.
<b>Primary press contacts</b>	London: 44 020 7992 3756 / 44 020 7992 1573 Hong Kong: 852 2822 4929 New York: 1 212 525 3800; Chicago: 1 224 544 3310
<b>Web</b>	www.hsbc.com

<b>Key events in the growth of the HSBC Group</b>	The HSBC Group evolved from The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, which was founded in 1865 in Hong Kong with offices in Shanghai and London and an agency in San Francisco. The Group expanded primarily through offices established in the bank's name until the mid-1950s when it began to create or acquire subsidiaries. Below are some key developments in the Group's growth since 1959.
<b>1959</b>	The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation acquires The British Bank of the Middle East (formerly the Imperial Bank of Persia, now called HSBC Bank Middle East Limited).
<b>1965</b>	The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation acquires a majority shareholding in Hang Seng Bank Limited, now the second-largest bank incorporated in Hong Kong.
<b>1972</b>	Midland Bank acquires a shareholding in UBAF Bank Limited (now British Arab Commercial Bank Limited).
<b>1978</b>	The Saudi British Bank is established under local control to take over The British Bank of the Middle East's branches in Saudi Arabia.
<b>1980</b>	The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation acquires 51% of New York State's Marine Midland Bank, N.A. (now called HSBC Bank USA, N.A.). Midland Bank acquires a controlling interest in leading German private bank Trinkaus & Burkhardt KGaA (now HSBC Trinkaus & Burkhardt AG).
<b>1981</b>	Hongkong Bank of Canada (now HSBC Bank Canada) is established in Vancouver.
<b>1982</b>	Egyptian British Bank S.A.E. is formed, with the Group holding a 40% interest. The Group now holds 94.5% in the renamed HSBC Bank Egypt S.A.E.
<b>1983</b>	Marine Midland Bank acquires Carroll McEntee & McGinley (now HSBC Securities (USA) Inc.).
<b>1986</b>	Hongkong Bank of Australia Limited (now HSBC Bank Australia Limited) is established.
<b>1987</b>	The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation acquires the remaining shares of Marine Midland and a 14.9% equity interest in Midland Bank plc (now HSBC Bank plc).
<b>1991</b>	HSBC Holdings plc is established; its shares are traded on the London and Hong Kong stock exchanges.
<b>1992</b>	HSBC Holdings purchases the remaining equity in Midland Bank.
<b>1993</b>	The HSBC Group's Head Office moves to London.
<b>1994</b>	Hongkong Bank Malaysia Berhad (now HSBC Bank Malaysia Berhad) is formed.
<b>1997</b>	In Brazil, the Group establishes Banco HSBC Bamerindus S.A. (now HSBC Bank Brasil S.A.-Banco Múltiplo), and acquires Roberts S.A. de Inversiones in Argentina (now HSBC Argentina Holdings S.A.).
<b>1999</b>	Shares in HSBC Holdings begin trading on a third stock exchange, New York. HSBC acquires Republic New York Corporation (now integrated with HSBC USA Inc.) and its sister company Safra Republic Holdings S.A. (now HSBC Holdings (Luxembourg) S.A.). Midland Bank acquires a 70.03% interest in Mid-Med Bank p.l.c. (now HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c.), Malta's largest commercial bank.
<b>2000</b>	HSBC acquires CCF (now HSBC France), one of France's largest banks. Shares in HSBC Holdings are listed on a fourth stock exchange, in Paris.
<b>2001</b>	HSBC acquires Demirbank TAS, now HSBC Bank A.S., Turkey's fifth largest private bank; and signs an agreement to purchase an 8% stake in Bank of Shanghai.
<b>2002</b>	Acquisitions include Grupo Financiero Bitel, S.A. de C.V. (now Grupo Financiero HSBC, S.A. de C.V.), one of Mexico's largest financial services groups.
<b>2003</b>	HSBC acquires Household International, Inc. (now HSBC Finance Corporation); and Losango Promotora de Vendas Ltda in Brazil. Four French private banking subsidiaries combine to form HSBC Private Bank France. HSBC Insurance Brokers Limited forms a joint venture, Beijing HSBC Insurance Brokers Limited. Hang Seng Bank acquires 15.98% of Industrial Bank Co Ltd, a mainland China commercial bank.
<b>2004</b>	HSBC acquires The Bank of Bermuda Limited and shares in HSBC Holdings are listed on a fifth stock exchange, in Bermuda. The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation acquires 19.9% of Bank of Communications Limited, China's fifth largest bank, since reduced to 19%.
<b>2005</b>	HSBC acquires 9.91% of Ping An Insurance (Group) Company of China, Ltd, subsequently increased to 16.8%. HSBC Finance Corporation acquires Metris Companies Inc.
<b>2006</b>	HSBC acquires the Panama-based Grupo Banistmo S.A., the leading banking group in Central America.
<b>2007</b>	In China, HSBC is one of the first foreign banks to incorporate locally under the name HSBC Bank (China) Company Limited, and HSBC Rural Bank opens for business in Hubei Province. In Vietnam, HSBC acquires 10% of Bao Viet, the country's top insurer. In Taiwan, HSBC obtains agreement to acquire certain businesses and operations of The Chinese Bank Co., Ltd.
<b>2008</b>	Chongqing Dazu HSBC Rural Bank Company Limited opens, making HSBC the first foreign-owned rural bank in western China. HSBC increases its stake in Vietnam's Techcombank from 14.4% to 20%.

© Copyright HSBC Holdings plc 2008 All rights reserved

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of HSBC Holdings plc.

Approved for issue in the UK by HSBC Bank plc, 8 Canada Square, London E14 5HQ, UK. AC11959

MCP 32509. Designed by Group Communications (Asia), The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited  
Printed by Chris Fowler International Limited, London, on Regency Satin paper using vegetable oil-based inks. Made in Italy, the paper comprises 92% virgin fibre and 8% mill broke. Pulps used are elemental chlorine-free.