

## Converging Social Consensus to Achieve the Second Five-Year Plan of the Macao SAR



In 2021, with the aim of further aligning with the country’s 14th Five-Year Plan, leveraging and consolidating Macao’s competitiveness and advantages, and seizing the opportunities to integrate into the overall national development plan, the MSAR Government compiled a consultation document based on initial research findings, and officially announced the Second Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development of the Macao Special Administrative Region (MSAR) Government (2021–2025) (“The 2nd Five-Year Plan of the Macao SAR”) after listening to and considering opinions collected from various sectors and all walks of life, in order to formulate an overall blueprint for Macao’s economic and social development in the next five years. All Macao people will join hands to promote the stable and long-lasting successful practice of “One country, two systems” with Macao characteristics.

In the five years from 2021 to 2025, the Macao SAR will implement the principle of “One country, two systems”, and seize the strategic opportunities of national development. The 2nd Five-Year Plan of the Macao SAR defines the directions of Macao’s economic and social development, and governs the future policy priorities of the Macao SAR Government.

The Government issued the consultation document on the 2nd Five-Year Plan of the Macao SAR on 13 September, and conducted a 60-day public consultation from 15 September to 13 November.

During the consultation period, the MSAR Government held nine sessions to listen to opinions from the general public, grassroots communities, consultative bodies, professional organisations and various sectors concerning Macao’s development. Through telephone messages, emails, faxes, postal mails, online messages, media reports or editorials, and new media and radio programmes, opinions and advice from all walks of life in Macao were also collected.

According to the summary report on the consultation, the consultation on the 2nd Five-Year Plan of the Macao SAR received widespread attention and active participation from society. A total of 3,166 opinions were received through 787 submissions. The public generally supports the Government's consultation document on the 2nd Five-Year Plan of the Macao SAR, with a support rate of 76.2 percent.

On 16 December 2021, after considering opinions collected from all sectors, the MSAR Government officially announced the Second Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development of the MSAR Government (2021–2025), delineating various major tasks to be undertaken during the period.

The 2nd Five-Year Plan of the Macao SAR is based on the national 14th Five-Year Plan, Macao's first Five-Year Development Plan, the actual circumstances of Macao, and perseverance in adopting solutions to problems, including expediting adequate economic diversification, optimising social and livelihood-related projects, deepening the development of a liveable city, improving public governance and integrating into overall national development.

By 2025, the contents of Macao as a world tourism and leisure centre will be enriched; the functions of Macao as an economic and trading service platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries will be expanded; there will be steady progress with the establishment of a multi-cultural exchange and cooperation base with an emphasis on Chinese culture; adequate economic diversification will be substantially achieved; people's livelihoods will be continuously improving; cultural life will be enhanced; the quality of government administration will be optimised; and the laws and enforcement mechanisms for safeguarding national security will be perfected on an ongoing basis. Macao will further integrate into the overall national development plan; the interim goals for the establishment of the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin will be realised; the preliminary roadmap for integrating Hengqin and Macao will be created; and Macao's impetus for development, vitality and competitiveness will be strengthened on an ongoing basis.

In accordance with the 2nd Five-Year Plan of the Macao SAR, during 2021 the MSAR Government continued optimising policy measures and services related to people's livelihoods, including housing, healthcare and social security.

## **Working on Housing Policy to Solve Housing Problems**

The issue of housing is the top priority of the Government's policy agenda, and is accorded high priority among the work of the administration. The Government's core housing policy is to establish the housing ladder, provide and ensure the basic living conditions of local residents, and help people to solve their housing problems according to their financial abilities and housing needs.

With the aim of steadily implementing the housing ladder policy through expediting the construction of public housing, construction of the Mong Tak Building of the Mong Ha public housing project was completed on 19 July 2021, providing 768 public housing units. The Housing Bureau arranged for the first batch of 60 eligible families to sign rental contracts, collect keys and move into their allotted units.

As of the end of 2021, more than 4,000 regular applications for public housing were received; 804 families were allocated public housing units. The Toi San and Venceslau de Moraes public housing projects are under construction and will provide 2,100 public housing units upon completion, to help meet demand for public housing.

Regarding Home-Ownership Scheme Housing: the four-month period for applying for Home-Ownership Scheme Housing commenced on 14 July 2021, involving a total of 5,254 flats in five land lots from A1 to A4 and A12 in the New Urban Zone Area A. These comprised the first batch of Home-Ownership Scheme Housing units after the amended Home-Ownership Scheme Housing Law came into effect. A total of 11,707 applications were received. On 13 July, the showroom for the housing units was opened for the public to visit by appointment.

Regarding the Housing Plan for the Sandwich Class: the summary report on the public consultation on the Housing Plan for the Sandwich Class was announced on 28 April. A total of 28,608 opinions had been received through 2,307 submissions. More than 90 percent (92.6 percent) supported the Government's introduction of the sandwich class housing policy; more than 60 percent of the opinions agreed with the definition of sandwich class as "People whose income exceeds the ceiling for Home-Ownership Scheme Housing eligibility; and the Housing Plan for the Sandwich Class can consider lower priority applications for Home-Ownership Scheme Housing". It is believed that the Housing Plan for the Sandwich Class can alleviate some of the demand for Home-Ownership Scheme Housing. Subsequently, the MSAR Government will commence drafting the related law, based on the views collected through the public consultation.

The pilot project on the senior housing complex aims to help elderly people with financial ability, but live in old buildings without elevators, to solve the problems they face in walking up and down flights of stairs, thus helping them get out and about and improving their quality of life. The pilot project commenced at the end of 2020 and is expected to be completed in 2023. The senior housing complex will commence operation in 2024, providing around 1,815 studio apartments.

In 2021, to better prepare a plan for the senior housing complex, from January to April related departments conducted surveys through social service organisations and elderly service organisations with people over 60 years old who live in aging buildings without elevators, to collect views on their eligibility, service expectations and intention to apply. In all, 606 valid questionnaires were collected.

To help the elderly and the general public to gain a better understanding of the design and configuration of the senior housing complex, a showroom was opened to the public on 13 July 2021, to demonstrate the single-bed and double-bed units according to the floor areas of the apartments, and the standard delivery requirements. Drafting of the allocation guidelines, procedures, rules for moving in and by-laws has also commenced.

The Government will strike the right balance between the development of public housing, Home Ownership Scheme housing units, housing for the elderly, sandwich-class housing and private housing, to set out Macao's overall housing policy in accordance with market demands.

## **Refining the Public Medical System with a New Operating Mode**

The Islands District Medical Complex is a major construction project for Macao's medical system. It is expected to be completed in 2022 and will commence operations in phases in 2023, opening

new horizons for Macao's medical system.

In 2021, in preparation for the opening, the Government defined the positioning and operation mode of the complex, and confirmed to invite renowned organisations in the mainland China to assist in the operation, with the aim of improving services in public hospitals with the new operation mode, providing residents with better medical services and greater access to healthcare services by introducing new services and high-end medical and healthcare services, and providing a platform to nurture local healthcare professionals and elevate the standards of specialist services.

On 15 September, the Health Bureau held a press conference on the result findings of a study on optimising the medical service model of the Islands District Medical Complex conducted by a team of researchers from the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Hong Kong.

The research team presented four feasible models and, after a comprehensive evaluation, recommended the Government adopt a public-private partnership model. Positioning the Islands District Medical Complex as a public hospital, the operation, management and provision of services can be commissioned by a third-party organisation, thereby introducing an innovative management model, to foster mutual development with the existing medical system, and enhance the operational efficiency of the Islands District Medical Complex and increase access to healthcare services, so that residents do not need to travel to other places for medical treatment.

Referred by the National Health Commission, the MSAR Government decided to collaborate with the Peking Union Medical College Hospital, which will assist in the operation, management and provision of services of the Islands District Medical Complex.

On 27 October, the working group for the Islands District Medical Complex held a press conference to announce the project plan, and stress that the Islands District Medical Complex is defined as a public hospital, and Macao residents will continue to enjoy existing medical benefits.

On 15 December, Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng witnessed the signing of a memorandum of cooperation regarding the Islands District Medical Complex between the MSAR Government and the Peking Union Medical College Hospital. After signing the memorandum, the MSAR Government introduced related legislation in accordance with the local legal system. After the bill is passed by the Legislative Assembly, the project will be implemented in accordance with the framework set out in the memorandum of cooperation.

The launch of the Islands District Medical Complex project can provide residents with better medical services, nurture local healthcare professionals, and elevate the standards of specialist services. In addition, the MSAR Government and the operation team will explore providing medical services at different levels, develop the "Big Health Industry", and explore the feasibility of "tourism + medical care", to create opportunities for promoting diversified economic development of Macao.

## **Enhancing Retirement Benefits with the Central Provident Fund**

The MSAR Government continued actively promoting the Central Provident Fund, to strengthen protection for residents after retirement. As of September 2021, 264 employers had joined the Non-mandatory Central Provident Fund, about 24,000 employees had joined the joint provident fund scheme, and about 75,000 residents had individual provident fund schemes. These figures

show that residents are concerned about their retirement protection, and are becoming aware of the importance of early planning and accumulating retirement reserves.

The Non-mandatory Central Provident Fund System Review Report was released on 29 October, and noted that the Government had appropriated a total of more than 28.6 billion patacas from 2010 to the end of 2020. An account owner can be allocated funds and income, up to a total of 86,910 patacas, which lays the foundation for constructing the system.

In the three years since the implementation of the contributory system, the participation, the amount of pension funds and the returns on investment have all continued to grow, indicating that the system was operating smoothly and had delivered results. Conditions have already been met for moving towards mandatory implementation of the system.

However, the emergence of COVID-19 impacted Macao's economy. The MSAR Government was recommended to set 2021 to 2023 as a three-year observation period and, depending on the economic recovery, set up two plans – one with a five-year, the other with a seven-year preparation period – and implement the Mandatory Central Provident Fund System in 2026 or 2028.

## Responding to Social Needs in a Timely Manner through Executive–Legislature Communications and Interactions



During the fourth session of the sixth Legislative Assembly, from 16 October 2020 to 15 October 2021, a total of 35 plenary meetings and 142 committee meetings were held, with 22 laws, one resolution and 32 simple-majority resolutions passed during the plenary meetings.