

## **Political Structure**

### **Macao People Governing Macao with a High Degree of Autonomy**

Macao became a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of the People's Republic of China on 20 December 1999. The MSAR's constitutional document, the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region, also came into force on the same day.

The Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region establishes, at the highest level of legal authority, the guidelines and policies of the Central People's Government regarding Macao. It stipulates the system to be practised in Macao, and lays down the political and administrative framework of the MSAR for 50 years from 1999.

The systems and policies of the MSAR – including its social and economic systems; safeguards for the fundamental rights and freedoms of its residents; the executive, legislature and judiciary; and Government policies – are all based on the provisions of the Basic Law.

Under the Basic Law, the MSAR is entitled to a high degree of autonomy in all areas except defence and foreign affairs. It enjoys executive autonomy, legislative autonomy, an independent judiciary and the right to final adjudication. The executive and the legislature of the MSAR consist only of permanent Macao residents. The MSAR maintains the status of free port and independent tariff region. It also maintains the free flow of capital and the freedom of operations of financial institutions. It may, under the name “Macao, China”, independently maintain, develop relations with and sign agreements with various countries, regions and international organisations in fields such as the economy, trade, finance, transportation, communications, tourism, culture and sports.

The principles of “One country, two systems”, “Macao people governing Macao” and a high degree of autonomy have been infused into Macao's social and political culture.

Macao people governing Macao” means that the people of Macao are in charge of their own affairs. Macao's Chief Executive, principal officials, members of the Executive Council and the Legislative Assembly, the President of the Court of Final Appeal and the Prosecutor General shall be permanent residents, and some of these positions may only be assumed by permanent residents of Macao who are also Chinese citizens.

“A high degree of autonomy” means that the National People's Congress (NPC) authorises the MSAR to exercise a high degree of autonomy in accordance with the Basic Law, and that the central government will not interfere in affairs that fall within the autonomy of the MSAR. The MSAR enjoys executive, legislative and independent judicial power and the power of final adjudication, as well as other powers authorised by the NPC, the Standing Committee of the NPC and the Central People's Government.

However, a high degree of autonomy does not mean full autonomy. In order to maintain a unified China and to safeguard the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country, the Central People's Government retains certain essential powers – for example, the Central People's Government is responsible for the MSAR's foreign affairs and defence.

### **Chief Executive**

The Chief Executive is the head of the MSAR and is accountable to the Central People's Government

and the MSAR.

The Chief Executive is charged with the responsibility of:

- Leading the MSAR Government;
- Implementing the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region and other laws applicable to Macao subject to the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region;
- Signing bills passed by the Legislative Assembly and promulgating laws;
- Signing budgets passed by the Legislative Assembly and reporting those budgets and final accounts to the Central People's Government for the record;
- Making decisions on Government policies and issuing executive orders;
- Formulating by-laws and promulgating them for implementation;
- Nominating candidates for the Central People's Government's appointment of the following principal officials: Secretaries, Commissioner Against Corruption, Commissioner of Audit, and leading officials of the Police and Macao Customs Service;
- Recommending to the Central People's Government the removal of the above officials;
- Appointing a proportion of the members of the Legislative Assembly;
- Appointing and removing members of the Executive Council;
- Appointing or removing presidents and judges of the court at all levels and prosecutors through legal procedures;
- Nominating candidates for the Central People's Government's appointment of the Prosecutor General and recommending his or her removal;
- Appointing or removing civil servants through legal procedures;
- Executing the orders on related affairs issued by the Central People's Government in accordance with the Basic Law of the Macao SAR;
- Addressing external affairs and other affairs on behalf of the MSAR Government as authorised by the Central People's Government;
- Approving the motions regarding fiscal revenue and expenditure proposed to the Legislative Assembly;
- Deciding whether government officials and other civil servants concerned shall testify and give evidence before the Legislative Assembly or its subordinate committees in accordance with the needs of the security and major public interests of the country and the Macao SAR;
- Awarding decorations of medals and honorary titles of the Macao SAR according to the law;
- Pardoning persons convicted of criminal offences or commuting their penalties according to the law; and
- Handling petitions and complaints.

The Chief Executive of the first and second MSAR Governments was Edmund Ho Hau Wah.

The Chief Executive of the third and fourth MSAR Governments was Chui Sai On. The Chief Executive of the fifth MSAR Government is Ho Iat Seng.

## **The Executive Council**

The Executive Council assists the Chief Executive in policymaking. Article 58 of the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region stipulates that, except for the appointment, removal and disciplining of officials and the adoption of emergency measures, the Chief Executive shall consult with the Executive Council before making important policy decisions, introducing bills to the Legislative Assembly, formulating by-laws or dissolving the Legislative Assembly. If the Chief Executive does not accept a majority opinion of the Executive Council, the specific reasons should be put on record.

Article 57 of the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region stipulates that the Executive Council shall be composed of seven to 11 Chinese citizens who are permanent residents of the MSAR. The Chief Executive shall appoint them from among principal officials, members of the Legislative Assembly and other public figures. The Chief Executive shall decide the appointment or removal of Executive Council members. The term of office of members shall not last beyond that of the Chief Executive who appoints them, but the members shall remain in place until the new Chief Executive takes office.

Article 58 of the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region stipulates that the Executive Council shall be presided over by the Chief Executive and meet at least once a month. The proceedings of the Executive Council meetings are confidential, but a spokesperson announces important decisions to the public.

The first- and second-term Chief Executive Edmund Ho appointed 10 members to the Executive Council in both his terms.

The Chief Executive of the third and fourth MSAR Governments, Chui Sai On, appointed 11 members to the Executive Council during his two terms in office.

The Chief Executive of the fifth MSAR Government, Ho Iat Seng, also appointed 11 members to the Executive Council: one Secretary, two members of the Legislative Assembly and eight public figures.

## **The Legislature**

According to the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region, the MSAR enjoys legislative autonomy and the Legislative Assembly is its sole legislature.

The Macao SAR has full legislative autonomy, which embodies and guarantees Macao's high degree of autonomy. The legislative power of Macao is exercised solely by the Legislative Assembly. No other body or entity has legislative power. Laws formulated by the Legislative Assembly shall conform to the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region.

The Legislative Assembly exercises its legislative power and supervisory power under the Basic

Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region and the Rules of Procedure of the Legislative Assembly.

## **Legislative Authority**

The term “legislative authority” broadly refers to the power to formulate general and abstract laws that are applicable to the MSAR and its residents. More specifically, the powers of the Legislative Assembly include the right to make laws, the right to amend laws, the right to suspend the execution of laws, and the right to abolish laws.

According to the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region and the Rules of Procedure of the Legislative Assembly, Legislative Assembly members and the Government have the right to introduce bills and propose amendments. The Government has exclusive sponsorship rights in the four following respects: electoral law for the Legislative Assembly, public income and expenditure, political structure and Government operation.

Bills passed by the Legislative Assembly shall come into effect only after being signed and promulgated by the Chief Executive.

## **Supervisory Authority and Other Responsibilities**

The responsibilities of the Legislative Assembly include: examining and passing budgets introduced by the Government; examining the Government’s reports on budget implementation; deciding on Government motions on taxation; approving debts to be taken on by the Government; and debating the policy addresses of the Chief Executive.

The term “issue of public interest” encompasses all aspects of Macao society; the Legislative Assembly may hold meetings to discuss such issues, and may require relevant Government officials to attend those meetings.

The Legislative Assembly receives and handles residents’ complaints; it receives complaints concerning the existing legal system, but it does not directly handle individual cases or applications for legal consultations.

The Legislative Assembly also has the authority to impeach the Chief Executive.

When exercising the above-mentioned powers, the Legislative Assembly may summon, as required, persons to testify or give evidence.

Moreover, members of the Legislative Assembly are also entitled to address enquiries regarding the Government’s work.

## **Composition and Term of Office of the Legislative Assembly**

Members of the Legislative Assembly shall be permanent residents of the MSAR. The majority of them are elected and the term of office, except for the first term, is four years.

The first Legislative Assembly of the MSAR had 23 members, eight of whom were elected

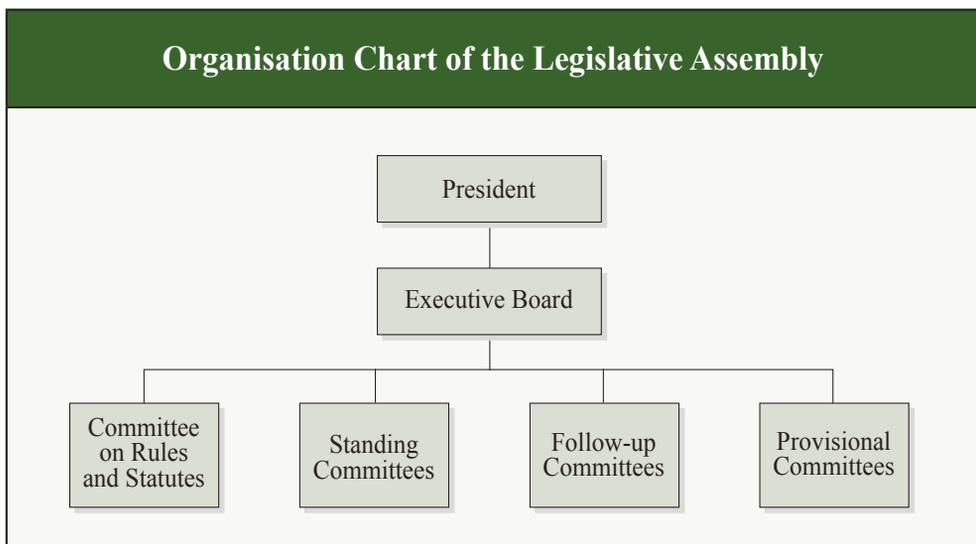
directly, eight indirectly and seven appointed by the Chief Executive. Their term of office expired on 15 October 2001. The second Legislative Assembly had 27 members, 10 of whom were elected directly, 10 indirectly and seven appointed by the Chief Executive. Their term expired in 2005. The third and the fourth Legislative Assembly likewise had 29 members, 12 of whom were elected directly, 10 indirectly and seven appointed by the Chief Executive. The fifth and the succeeding Legislative Assembly will have 33 members, 14 of whom are elected directly, 12 indirectly and seven appointed by the Chief Executive. However, the aforementioned does not apply to the amendments made through legal procedures to the method for forming the Legislative Assembly of the Macao Special Administrative Region.

The Legislative Assembly has one president and one vice president, elected by and from among its members. The president and vice president shall be permanent Chinese residents who have lived continuously in Macao for at least 15 years.

### Structure and Operation of the Legislative Assembly

The structure of the Legislative Assembly comprises the president, the Executive Board, the Committee on Rules and Statutes, standing committees, follow-up committees and provisional committees. The president represents the Legislative Assembly and leads and coordinates the assembly’s work. The president performs his or her duties in accordance with the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region and the Rules of Procedure of the Legislative Assembly.

Each Legislative Assembly usually serves four sessions. Each session lasts one year, normally from 16 October to 15 August of the following year. The Legislative Assembly uses Chinese and Portuguese, Macao’s two official languages.



## **Administrative Agencies and Technical Support Offices**

The administrative agencies of the Legislative Assembly include the president, the Executive Board and the Administrative Committee, all of which are responsible for the administrative affairs of the Assembly.

The Legislative Assembly's technical support offices report directly to the Executive Board. If the term of the Legislative Assembly expires or if the Legislative Assembly is dissolved, the Executive Board shall retain its responsibilities until the first meeting of the new Legislative Assembly. The technical support offices are led by the president and the Executive Board, and they report directly to the secretary-general. The technical support offices are divided into sections to handle different portfolios and to provide the administrative agencies and members of the Legislative Assembly with technical and administrative support.

## **The Legislative Assembly's Public Feedback System**

The Legislative Assembly has established a public feedback system to collect opinions, suggestions and criticisms concerning legislation, Government activities, policies and other issues of public interest. The system also aims to explain the work of the Legislative Assembly and help citizens to exercise their rights to submit petitions and make complaints.

Citizens may voice their opinions via the feedback system in person or by telephone, post, fax or e-mail. Public reception is available during normal hours of government service.

In addition, legislators receive citizens by appointment at the Legislative Assembly building from noon to 1 pm on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Legislators make themselves available according to a roster compiled by the Legislative Assembly.

## **Electoral Law**

Macao's electoral system is based on Law No. 12/2000 the Voter Registration Law (as amended by Law No. 9/2008) and Law No. 3/2001 the Legislative Assembly Election Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region (as amended by Law Nos. 11/2008, 12/2012 and 9/2016). The two laws govern both the direct and indirect elections of the Legislative Assembly, and the appointment of legislators as prescribed in Annex II (1) of the Basic Law.

The Voter Registration Law contains 60 articles, which govern the voter registration procedures for natural persons and legal persons, whereas the Legislative Assembly Election Law contains 222 articles, which govern the direct and indirect elections of members of the Legislative Assembly.

## **Electoral System for the Legislative Assembly**

Under the Legislative Assembly Election Law, there are direct and indirect elections.

In direct elections, any individual aged 18 years or older and who is a permanent resident of the MSAR may, after registration under the Voter Registration Law, vote for the 14 directly elected members of the Legislative Assembly.

In indirect elections, representatives of legal persons who are confirmed as members of the relevant sectors for at least four years may, after being registered with and given legal personality by the Identification Services Bureau for at least seven years under the Voter Registration Law, vote for the 12 indirectly elected members of the Legislative Assembly.

Under the two election systems, the method used for converting the number of votes into seats in the Legislative Assembly is as follows: the first candidate on each list receives a quotient equal to the number of votes recorded for that list. The second candidate on each list receives a quotient equal to half the number of votes recorded for that list. The third candidate on each list receives a quotient equal to a quarter of the number of votes recorded for that list, and so on. Legislative Assembly seats are then awarded to the candidates who, among all lists, have the highest quotients. As regards the assignment of the final seat: if two candidates from different lists have equal quotients, the seat shall be given to the candidate from the list that has yet to win a seat. If both lists have won one or more seats, the seat shall be given to the list that received the most votes. If both lists have won the same number of votes, the winner of the seat shall be determined by the open drawing of lots.

The Chief Executive shall appoint seven legislators to the Legislative Assembly within 15 days of receiving the final verified results, as stipulated in Clause 2 of Article 133 of the Legislative Assembly Election Law.

## **Electoral Affairs Commission for the Legislative Assembly Election**

The Electoral Affairs Commission for the Legislative Assembly Election is responsible for promoting, coordinating and supervising the elections of the Legislative Assembly.

The members of the Electoral Affairs Commission for the Legislative Assembly Election are appointed by the Chief Executive. The commission has one chairman and at least five members, appointed from among appropriately qualified permanent residents of the Macao SAR. The Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau provides support to the commission.

## **The Judiciary**

The courts of the MSAR have judicial autonomy. They are subordinate only to the law and are guaranteed to be free from any interference. The MSAR has a Primary Court, a Court of Second Instance and a Court of Final Appeal. The power of final adjudication is vested in the Court of Final Appeal.

The Primary Court may, when necessary, establish special courts. The previous criminal prosecution system has been maintained since the establishment of the MSAR.

The MSAR also has an Administrative Court, which is responsible for administrative and tax litigation. Defendants and plaintiffs who find the ruling of this court unsatisfactory can file an appeal to the Court of Second Instance.

Judges at all levels are appointed by the Chief Executive on the recommendation of an independent commission composed of local judges, lawyers and prominent members of the community. The Chief Executive appoints the presidents of the courts from among the judges. The President of the Court of Final Appeal shall be a Chinese citizen who is a permanent resident

of the MSAR. Any appointment or removal of the President of the Court of Final Appeal shall be reported to the Standing Committee of the NPC for the record.

The Public Prosecutions Office is independent and free from interference, as defined by law.

The Prosecutor General shall be a Chinese citizen who is a permanent resident of the MSAR. He or she shall be nominated by the Chief Executive and appointed by the Central People's Government. Other prosecutors shall be nominated by the Prosecutor General and appointed by the Chief Executive. The structure, powers, functions and remit of the Public Prosecutions Office are prescribed by law.

## **Relationship between the MSAR and the Central Government**

The MSAR is a local administrative region with a high degree of autonomy under the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China. No department, province, autonomous region or municipality under the Central People's Government may interfere in the MSAR's internal affairs as specified in the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region. Any person from another province, autonomous region or municipality must apply for an entry permit to enter Macao. If there is a need for central government departments, provinces, autonomous regions or municipalities to set up an office in Macao, they must obtain the consent of the MSAR Government and the approval of the Central People's Government.

The Central People's Government is responsible for the MSAR's defence and foreign affairs. However, it authorises the MSAR to conduct certain external affairs on its own, under the name of "Macao, China" as specified in the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region. The Central People's Government appoints and removes the Chief Executive, principal officials and the Public Prosecutor-General.

Laws enacted by the legislature of the MSAR must be reported to the Standing Committee of the NPC for the record. However, such reporting shall not affect the entry into force of such laws.

National laws shall not be applied in the MSAR except as follows, which shall be promulgated or legislated by the MSAR.

The national laws applicable in the MSAR as of 2021 were:

- Resolution on the Capital, Calendar, National Anthem and National Flag of the People's Republic of China;
- Resolution on the National Day of the People's Republic of China;
- Nationality Law of the People's Republic of China;
- Regulations of the People's Republic of China Concerning Diplomatic Privileges and Immunities;
- Regulations of the People's Republic of China Concerning Consular Privileges and Immunities;
- Law of the People's Republic of China on the National Flag;

- Law of the People’s Republic of China on the National Emblem;
- Law of the People’s Republic of China on Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone;
- Law of the People’s Republic of China on the Exclusive Economic Zone and the Continental Shelf;
- Garrison Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China;
- Law of the People’s Republic of China on the Immunity of the Property of Foreign Central Banks from Judicial Compulsory Measures; and
- Law of the People’s Republic of China on the National Anthem.

The MSAR has no jurisdiction over acts of state such as defence and foreign affairs.

Chinese citizens who are residents of the MSAR are entitled to participate in the management of state affairs according to law.

### **Liaison Office of the Central People’s Government in the MSAR**

As a working agency stationed in Macao by the Central People’s Government, the Liaison Office of the Central People’s Government in the MSAR shall, in the light of the principles of “One country, two systems” and “Macao people governing Macao”, support the SAR Government in administration in line with the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region, and be responsible for liaison between mainland China and Macao.

The liaison office is responsible for contacting the MSAR Commission of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC and the People’s Liberation Army Macao Garrison; contacting and assisting mainland China authorities in managing mainland Chinese-funded organisations in Macao; promoting social and economic exchanges and cooperation between mainland China and Macao; reporting to the Central People’s Government the opinions of Macao people about mainland China; handling Taiwan-related affairs in the MSAR; and handling any other matters assigned by the Central People’s Government.

In addition, the liaison office shall, through various channels, promote ties with all social segments in Macao, pay attention to development and stability issues, and provide assistance wherever necessary.

### **Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China in the Macao Special Administrative Region**

Under the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region, the Central People’s Government is responsible for handling foreign affairs related to the MSAR. To this end, the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China in the MSAR was established on 20 December 1999.

The duties of the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC in

the MSAR are:

- Handling foreign affairs issues related to the MSAR that are the responsibilities of the Central People's Government;
- Handling and coordinating affairs related to the MSAR's participation in international organisations and conferences; issues concerning international organisations and associations that establish branch offices in the MSAR; and matters related to inter-governmental conferences to be held in the MSAR;
- Handling matters concerning the application of international treaties in the MSAR; and assisting with issues concerning the Central People's Government's processing of authorisation for the MSAR Government to negotiate bilateral agreements with foreign countries;
- Coordinating and handling issues related to the establishment of foreign consular bodies, or other official and semi-official organisations in the MSAR, and dealing with relevant consular affairs; and
- Handling any other responsibilities assigned to it by the Central People's Government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## The People's Liberation Army Macao Garrison

The People's Liberation Army Macao Garrison took up its role in Macao on 20 December 1999 with the establishment of the MSAR.

According to the Garrison Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, the Macao garrison is responsible for the defence of Macao without interfering in the local affairs of the MSAR. The MSAR Government may, if necessary, ask the Central People's Government for assistance from the Macao garrison in maintaining social order and relieving natural disasters. The Macao garrison has strictly observed the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region and the Garrison Law, loyally fulfilled its duty, strengthened exchanges with various sectors of Macao society, and actively participated in charitable activities.

## Executive Structure

The MSAR Government is the executive authority of the MSAR. The Chief Executive is the head of the Government, supported by secretariats, bureaux, departments and divisions.

**Secretariats:** there are five secretariats in the Government, namely the Secretariat for Administration and Justice, the Secretariat for Economy and Finance, the Secretariat for Security, the Secretariat for Social Affairs and Culture, and the Secretariat for Transport and Public Works. Each is headed by a secretary. The secretaries, in the above order of seniority, stand in for the Chief Executive when the Chief Executive is unable to perform his or her duties.

**Bureaux:** units directly under the secretariats, performing designated functions.

**Departments:** units affiliated to the bureaux, responsible for establishing operational procedures.

**Divisions:** units affiliated to the bureaux or departments, responsible for operational duties.

The Government structure includes affiliated units, such as teams and sections.

The principal officials of the Government are the secretaries, the Commissioner Against Corruption, the Commissioner of Audit, and leading police and customs service officials. Principal officials of the MSAR shall be Chinese citizens who are permanent residents of Macao and who have ordinarily resided in Macao for a continuous period of not less than 15 years.

The Government is responsible for formulating and implementing policies; conducting administrative affairs; managing external relations as authorised by the Central People's Government under the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region; drawing up and introducing budgets and final accounts; introducing bills and motions and drafting by-laws; and designating officials to attend meetings of the Legislative Assembly to listen to opinions or to speak on behalf of the Government.

The Government must abide by the law and be accountable to the Legislative Assembly; implement laws passed by the Legislative Assembly and already in force; present policy addresses regularly to the Legislative Assembly; and answer questions raised by members of the Legislative Assembly.

According to By-law No. 6/1999 on Organisation, Authority and Functioning of Public Departments and Entities amended and re-promulgated by By-law No. 2/2021, the authority held by each Secretary in various areas are as follows:

### Secretary for Administration and Justice

The Secretary for Administration and Justice holds authority in areas including:

- Public administration and civil servant affairs;
- Legislative affairs, legal promotion, legal aid, international and regional legal affairs;
- Regulation of the registration and notarisation system;
- Civil and criminal records;
- Municipal affairs;
- Production and publication of the *Macao SAR Gazette*; and
- Legal and judicial training.

The Secretary for Economy and Finance holds authority in areas including:

- Supervision of industry, commerce, technology development and external trade (except those under the jurisdiction of other secretaries);
- Administration of public finances and the tax system;
- Gaming and tourism;
- Labour, employment and vocational training;

- The currency, foreign exchange and monetary system (including the insurance sector);
- Statistical data; and
- Consumer rights protection.

## Secretary for Security

The Secretary for Security holds authority in areas including:

- Civil protection;
- Internal security of the Macao SAR;
- Customs affairs;
- Criminal investigations;
- Immigration control;
- Fire services;
- Correctional services;
- Public security forces and officer training for public security departments; and
- Financial intelligence.

## Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture

The Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture holds authority in areas including:

- Education and youth development;
- Culture and cultural industry development;
- Sport;
- Healthcare;
- Social work;
- Social security; and
- Social rehabilitation.

In 2021, the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture attended:

- The 74th Session of the World Health Assembly (online conference) as a member of the government delegation of the People's Republic of China; and
- The Opening Ceremony of Asian Dialogue for Cultural Heritage Conservation (online conference) in the name of "Macao, China";

The signed agreements included:

- Memorandum of Understanding on Tourism Cooperation with the World Tourism Organization; and
- Memorandum of Cooperation Regarding the Islands District Medical Complex.

## **Secretary for Transport and Public Works**

The Secretary for Transport and Public Works holds authority in areas including:

- Land management, urban planning and cadastre management;
- Infrastructure, public and private projects;
- Waters and water resources management and port affairs;
- Environmental protection and energy development;
- Land transport, maritime and civil aviation management;
- Postal affairs and telecommunications;
- Public housing; and
- Meteorology.

## **Commission Against Corruption**

The Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) functions independently. The Commissioner Against Corruption shall be appointed by the Central People's Government on the nomination of the Chief Executive. The commissioner is accountable to the Chief Executive.

The Commission Against Corruption is responsible for:

- Preventing and suppressing corruption and corruption-related fraud in public departments and the private sector;
- Investigating, in accordance with criminal law and criminal procedural law, corruption and corruption-related fraud committed by civil servants, without prejudice to the duties conferred by law on other bodies to investigate such matters;
- Investigating, in accordance with criminal law and criminal procedural law, corruption and corruption-related fraud in the private sector, without prejudice to the duties conferred by law on other bodies to investigate such matters;
- Investigating, in accordance with criminal law and criminal procedural law, corruption and corruption-related fraud in voter registration and elections, without prejudice to the duties conferred by law on other bodies to investigate such matters; and
- Handling complaints to the ombudsman to promote the protection of human rights, freedom, legal guarantees, and legitimate rights and interests, and aims to ensure the legitimacy of the exercise of power, and justice and efficiency of public administration through approaches as stated in organisational law and other unofficial approaches.

## Commission of Audit

The Commission of Audit has been set up in accordance with the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region. It functions independently and is not subject to interference. The Commissioner of Audit is accountable to the Chief Executive.

The major duties of the Commission of Audit are:

- Monitoring the implementation of the Government budget;
- Compiling an audit report on the overall Government accounts;
- Monitoring the implementation of target departments' budget and the final accounts, as well as the management and expenditure of capital not included in the budget, together with assessing everything including assets, debts, profits, losses, and accounts, and verifying that all public expenditure is according to the proper purview of audit; and
- Conducting “value-for-money” assessments, through reviewing efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

The following bodies are subject to audit: (1) Those deriving over half their income from the Government; (2) Those with less than half their income from the Government, but subject to audit by written consent.

For public interest, the Chief Executive can issue a written authorisation to the Commissioner of Audit to audit and inspect any person of interest.

In 2021, as a member of China's Audit Delegation, the Commissioner of Audit attended the 15th Assembly of the Asian Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (online conference).

## Unitary Police Service

The Unitary Police Service is responsible for:

- Commanding police units in the performance of their duties;
- Effectively allocating operational resources of police units;
- Centralising and coordinating all criminal investigations of police units;
- Collecting, analysing, processing and disseminating by lawful means all information, including inter-connected data, and all necessary intelligence and information for performing its functions;
- Overseeing execution plans, instructions and tasks of police units;
- Inspecting and coordinating operational capability of police units; and
- Planning, coordinating and monitoring work on the civil protection system, and providing technical, administrative and logistical support to security committees.

The Commissioner-General is the head of the Unitary Police Service, and he or she is appointed by the Central People's Government on the nomination of the Chief Executive, to whom he or she

reports. However, this shall not affect the supervisory power of the Secretary for Security granted through by-laws.

### **Macao Customs Service**

The Macao Customs Service (Macao Customs) has been established in accordance with the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region.

It is a public body with administrative autonomy, which is responsible for directing, implementing and supervising customs policies, as well as conducting policing functions such as customs administration and supervision (as specified in Article 1 of Law No. 11/2001).

The head of the Macao Customs, the Director-General, is appointed by the Central People's Government on the nomination of the Chief Executive, to whom he or she reports. However, this shall not affect the supervisory power of the Secretary for Security granted through by-laws (as specified in Clause 6 of Article 50 in the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region and Article 6 of Law No. 11/2001).

### **Government Headquarters Affairs Office**

The Government Headquarters Affairs Office (DSASG) is a public department established under By-law No. 44/2020, to provide assistance and support to the Chief Executive's Office, all secretaries' offices and various departments of the Government Headquarters, including the entities designated by the Chief Executive, regarding administration, finance, technology, protocol, logistics and other affairs essential to the normal operations of the Government Headquarters. The DSASG is directly under the Chief Executive.

### **Policy Research and Regional Development Bureau**

The Policy Research and Regional Development Bureau is a public department of the MSAR Government, directly under the Chief Executive.

The bureau's duties include providing scientific background and information to support decisions made by the Chief Executive, the Government's administration and policy making, Macao's role in national cooperation and development strategies. It also coordinates work on major national strategies and national policies related to Macao and regional development, including exchanges, cooperation and development work with mainland China and other regions; coordinates implementation of major policies according to instructions from the Chief Executive, and facilitates policy implementation and other regional development work.

In 2021, the bureau commenced drafting the Second Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development of the Macao Special Administrative Region (2021–2025). After extensive collection of opinions and advice from various sectors of society, the plan was released in mid-December, based on the summary of a public consultation.

In April 2021, the summary report on the public consultation on the Housing Plan for the

Sandwich Class was completed and released, providing the Government with support and a basis to formulate a Sandwich Class Housing Plan that meets Macao's actual circumstances.

## **Office for Planning Supervision of Public Assets in the Macao Special Administrative Region**

The Office for Planning Supervision of Public Assets in the Macao Special Administrative Region was established according to Executive Order No. 195/2019. It is responsible for reviewing the system for supervising public assets in the Macao Special Administrative Region, and for promoting the related legislative work and following up regarding measures for optimising the system.

## **Office of the Macao Special Administrative Region in Beijing**

The Office of the Macao Special Administrative Region in Beijing reports directly to the Chief Executive, and it represents the MSAR in Beijing with administrative autonomy.

In 2021, the Office of the Macao Special Administrative Region in Beijing strictly complied with the anti-pandemic guidelines of the Central People's Government and the MSAR Government, and actively implemented pandemic prevention and disease control measures during the "new normal". Limited external exchanges were maintained to promote and publicise Macao's achievements in politics, economy, culture and tourism under the implementation of "One country, two system".

The events attended on behalf of the Government included:

- A seminar highlighting the ideology, the state and the development from the perspective of the history of Communist Party of China;
- Shanghai Cooperation Organization Forum on Women's Education and Poverty Reduction;
- The second United Nations Global Sustainable Transport Conference;
- 2021 Fuxi Memorial Ceremony;
- Youth Power for the Country's 14th Five-Year Plan to Build Towards the Chinese Dream Together – online seminar between Macao students studying in mainland China tertiary institutions and representatives of the Macao deputy to the National People's Congress;
- A visit to Xiangshan Revolution Memorial Hall, organised by the State Council's Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office; and
- Global Business Opportunities - Macao Business Opportunities Exchanges.

The office attached great importance to student and youth affairs and enhanced its communications with Macao students studying in tertiary institutions in mainland China. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, the office suspended off-line seminars and gathering events due to anti-pandemic restrictions, and maintained communication with students through online channels, such as recording video messages and participating in the concluding session for the Opening Ceremony of 2021 Hong Kong and Macao University Students' Cultural Practice Activity, and joining the online event of Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation - Seminar for Macao University Students and

a live broadcast of the “First Lesson of the Semester” for new students from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan in Beijing in 2021.

After the pandemic had subsided and entered the stage of normalised pandemic prevention, and provided that safety was ensured, the office assisted the Beijing (College) Macau Students Association in organising Careers for the Future - Employment Workshop, a Cantopop singing competition for Beijing students, and held a seminar with the key members of the Beijing (College) Macau Students Association to learn about the students’ life and studies during the pandemic.

The number of followers of the office’s Weibo account (<http://weibo.com/draemp>) has increased to more than 890,000 since 2011, while the number of followers of its WeChat account (macaubejing) has risen to more than 15,000 from the second half of 2013 to 2021.

The office introduced Macao’s overall developments by disseminating information about Macao’s culture, tourism and news through the Internet.

The office provides Macao residents with appropriate services and assistance in working, studying, and travelling in mainland China, especially in case of emergencies; issues Proof of Life certificates for Macao residents living in mainland China; and assists Macao residents who have lost their identification documents to complete the formalities for returning to Macao. During the pandemic, the office timely answered enquiries from Macao residents regarding the pandemic and assisted in cases referral.

## **Macao Economic and Trade Office in Lisbon**

The Macao Economic and Trade Office in Lisbon, which represents and supports the Chief Executive in trade relations and cooperation between Macao and Portugal.

In 2021, the office attached great importance to the COVID-19 situation, closely followed the pandemic prevention policies of the MSAR Government, the Portuguese Government and the Chinese Embassy in Portugal, and implemented corresponding anti-pandemic measures.

During the pandemic, the office maintained close contact with MSAR Government departments, such as the Identification Services Bureau, the Transport Bureau, the Social Welfare Bureau, the Social Security Fund Authority, the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau and the Macao Government Tourist Office – in order to assist Macao residents in Portugal with applying for proof of life, renewing MSAR Passports and applying for certificates of particulars required for driver’s licences; provide assistance to Macao students studying in Portugal with applying for Portuguese residence permits and taxpayer numbers, and conversion of Macao vaccination certificates to Portuguese vaccination certificates; and provide information on the pandemic and immigration to Macao residents and Portuguese residents intending to travel to Macao.

On behalf of the MSAR, the office participated in an online meeting as the President of the Union of Portuguese Language Capital Cities, and supported Coimbra’s candidacy for the Creative Cities of Gastronomy of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

The office participated in the opening ceremony of the “Happy Chinese New Year” event organised in online format by the Chinese Embassy in Portugal, and attended the 3rd International Congress on Sino-Portuguese Cooperation organised by the Portuguese Association for Sino-

Portuguese Cooperation and Development and Observatory for China, and co-organised by the Union of Portugal-China Cooperation and Friendship Associations.

To celebrate the 22nd Anniversary of Celebration of Macao's reunification to the motherland, the Macao Economic and Trade Office in Lisbon, the Macao Economic and Trade Office in the European Union, the Macao Economic and Trade Office to the World Trade Organization and the Macau Association of European Youth Exchange jointly organised "The Light and Shadow in Campus" photography exhibition.

### **Macao Economic and Trade Office to the European Union**

Based in Brussels, the Macao Economic and Trade Office to the European Union represents the MSAR, has administrative autonomy, and assists the Chief Executive with economic and trade liaison and cooperation between the MSAR, the EU and related organisations.

The office attached great importance to the development of the pandemic, closely followed the pandemic prevention policies of the MSAR Government, Chinese Embassy in the Kingdom of Belgium, ambassadors of China to the European Union, institutions of the European Union and the Belgium Government, and assisted in handling enquiries from Macao residents residing in Europe or European residents intending to visit Macao regarding the pandemic and travel restrictions.

The office participated in the online Chinese New Year celebration jointly organised by the Belgium-Hong Kong Society and Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Brussels.

### **Macao Economic and Trade Office to the World Trade Organization**

Based in Geneva, Switzerland, the Macao Economic and Trade Office to the World Trade Organization (WTO) represents the MSAR, promotes and handles economic and trade relations, and cooperation between the MSAR and WTO members.

In 2021, with Macao being a member of the World Trade Organization, the office participated in the process of appointing Director-General of the World Trade Organization.

### **Macao's Economic and Cultural Office in Taiwan**

Macao's Economic and Cultural Office in Taiwan provides comprehensive services for Macao citizens working, studying, travelling, doing business or living in Taiwan; promotes economic, trade, cultural, education, health, social services exchanges and cooperation between Macao and Taiwan; and enhances crime fighting and judicial support. (The office was temporarily closed from 19 June 2021.)

### **Municipal Services**

On 1 January 2019, the Municipal Affairs Bureau was established according to Law No. 9/2018, as a municipal organisation which is not an organ of political power. It includes the Municipal Administration Committee and the Municipal Affairs Consultative Committee.

As a management body of the Municipal Affairs Bureau, the Municipal Administration Committee is responsible for leading the daily operations of the Municipal Affairs Bureau and performing other duties as assigned by law, including providing services related to culture, recreation, environmental hygiene, food safety and greening in accordance with the law, with a view to improving residents' quality of life.

As a consultative body of the Municipal Affairs Bureau, the Municipal Affairs Consultative Committee comprises representatives of different sectors of the community, who listen to residents' opinions on municipal affairs, provide opinions and make recommendations to the Municipal Administration Committee, or to the Government through the Municipal Administration Committee, so that the Municipal Affairs Bureau and the Government can serve the public more effectively.

The Municipal Affairs Bureau holds public sessions every month to allow Macao residents to give suggestions and raise queries regarding the duties and functions of the bureau. Twelve public sessions were held in 2021. The management of the Municipal Affairs Bureau also hosts community seminars in various community centres and districts to introduce municipal works in the districts. Local organisations and residents of the districts are invited to attend and express their opinions on municipal affairs. Eight community seminars were organised in 2021, and were attended by representatives from 103 associations and organisations and over 200 residents.

The real-time feedback platform, IAM Connect, was launched on 1 January 2019. Residents can provide opinions on a total of 19 municipal services in four categories: environmental hygiene, gardens/green areas and leisure areas, equipment and facilities, and food safety. In 2019, a total of 10,900 cases were received through IAM Connect, and the two major categories of environmental hygiene and equipment and facilities accounted for 54 percent and 18 percent of the total cases, respectively.

## **The Macao Foundation**

The Macao Foundation's goal is to promote, develop and implement research relating to Macao's cultural, social, economic, educational, scientific, academic and philanthropic activities, including activities aimed at promoting Macao.

As a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, the Macao Foundation's funding allocation from gaming revenue was yet to return to pre-pandemic levels. In this regard, the foundation strictly adhered to the requirement of tightening its expenditure on operational costs, holding activities and financial assistance granting, to significantly reduced non-essential expenditure.

Also, the foundation focused on funding reform in 2021. Six special projects will be implemented in 2022, to actively support the Government in reforming and improving the management of autonomous funds, while the foundation will continue implementing the various anti-pandemic assistance schemes launched by the Government.

## **Subsidies and Charity Work**

In 2021, the Board of Trustees and Executive Committee of the Macao Foundation approved

677 sponsorship applications, with the Executive Committee executing nine projects, each with funding of over 500,000 patacas. The approved subsidies totalled nearly 109 million patacas, for projects mainly supporting people’s livelihoods (50.35 percent) and cultivation of talented young individuals (38.62 percent).

The foundation continued launching many special schemes with grassroots service organisations to address specific needs and difficulties of the underprivileged, including Climbing Ladder Service and “Listen, Talk, & Care” Scheme, as well as gift distribution to the underprivileged through community groups during festive seasons.

The foundation continued supporting China Soong Ching Ling Foundation, the Chinese Foundation for Lifeline Express and other charities in launching various charity projects in mainland China.

### **Photo Exhibition of the 100th Anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party**

In 2021, the Photo Exhibition of 100th Anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party was organised by the Information Office of the State Council, the MSAR Government and the Liaison Office of the Central People’s Government in the Macao Special Administrative Region, and co-organised by the Macao Foundation and Nam Kwong (Group) Company Limited. The 23-day exhibition attracted over 43,735 visitors, and was followed by the launch of an online gallery.

### **Scholarships**

In 2021, the Macao Foundation continued granting scholarships to Macao and mainland China students. A total of 13,057 students were awarded tertiary scholarships and scholarships for secondary and primary schools, totalling 54.33 million patacas. It also continued granting scholarships – totalling nearly 7.88 million patacas – to students from Portuguese-speaking countries and Asian regions, to facilitate talent cultivation and enhance education and academic exchanges and cooperation with different regions.

### **Academic Research**

In 2021, the Macao Foundation organised 12 online themed exhibitions, photo collection campaigns and quiz games through the Macau Memories website, and held 22 school talks and “Memory Salon” seminars to enhance public awareness of local history and culture. In addition, the foundation signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Office of Local Chronicles of the People’s Government of Guangdong Province and Hong Kong Chronicles Institute on Cooperation Within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

### **Promotion of Culture and Art**

In 2021, the Macao Foundation organised 55 performances, exhibitions and workshops through the branded activities of Macao Artists Promotion Project, Macao Young Artists Promotion Project and the Macao Foundation Citizens’ Concert, to provide local artists with a platform for presenting and

exchanging ideas. The foundation also organised multiple competitions, lectures and publications to promote literature, encourage creative writing and identify literary talents.

## **History and Cultural Affairs**

In 2021, the Culture and History Committee of Macao Foundation organised the 2nd History Knowledge Contest for Secondary School Students in Macao and the 6th History and Culture Ambassadors Training Programme; published the traditional Chinese version of 30-minute Comic of the Party's History (1921-1949) and two volumes of an enlightening picture book series for kindergarten pupils, to promote patriotism; and launched a special funding scheme for schools, supporting a diversified and vivid approach to promote Chinese culture in schools and strengthening community publicity on Chinese culture.

## **Cooperation with Other Organisations**

In 2021, the Macao Foundation provided subsidies for the maintenance of the office premises and the hostel rental cost of the United Nations University International Institute for Software Technology. The foundation also subsidised the Macao Science Center Limited and the Science and Technology Development Fund; subsidised local drivers to take part in local and overseas races through the Sports Bureau.

## **Office for Personal Data Protection**

The Office for Personal Data Protection operates independently under the supervision of the Chief Executive. Its responsibilities are to monitor and coordinate the enforcement and implementation of the Personal Data Protection Act, to formulate confidentiality rules, and to monitor how the act is put into practice.

In 2021, the office received 104 complaints regarding, or reports of, leaks or mishandling of personal data; 47 requests for advice; 901 notifications concerning personal data processing; 65 applications for authorisation of data sharing; and 2,423 legal inquiries. It held or co-organised 17 briefing sessions and six talks on the Personal Data Protection Act, with a total of 1,769 attendees.

## **Civil Service System**

The general eligibility requirements for civil servants are that they should be permanent residents of the MSAR, aged between 18 and 64; should possess relevant educational qualifications or work experience and be capable of performing the roles required; have no criminal record or other conditions as laid down by law that would render a person inappropriate for the post or job concerned on a full-time or part-time basis; and be of sound health and mind.

Civil servants are recruited either by appointment or on contract terms. The promotion and relocation of civil servants are prescribed by law. Civil servants who breach disciplinary rules may be sanctioned by written warning, fine, suspension, forced retirement or dismissal. Concerning the continued service, appointment and employment of civil servants, under Articles 98 and 99

of the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region, Macao's serving civil servants, including the police and supporting members of the judiciary, remained in employment after the establishment of the MSAR. They may remain in the civil service and retain their seniority with pay, allowances, benefits and conditions of service no less favourable than before. The Government shall pay such civil servants, or their dependents, all pensions and allowances due to them on terms no less favourable than before, and irrespective of their nationality or place of residence.

The Government may employ Portuguese and other foreign nationals previously employed in the civil service who are permanent residents of the MSAR to serve as public officials in Government departments at all levels, unless otherwise prohibited by the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region. The Government may also employ Portuguese and other foreign nationals as advisers or to fill professional and technical posts. These persons shall be employed only in their individual capacities and shall be responsible only to the Government.

### **Civil Servant Training**

The Civil Servant Training Centre, under the Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau, is responsible for studying, developing and coordinating the civil servant training system, promoting the culture of continuous learning among civil servants, and organising and arranging training activities within the scope of central management for civil servants promotion. The centre also organises various training activities to enhance the overall capability of civil servants at all levels, and special training courses according to departments' specific needs.

The Government attaches great importance to the training and development of civil servants. In accordance with the Rank and Grade System for Civil Servants, the Government has included training as an important requirement for promotion of civil servants. Civil servants enjoy corresponding rights and undertake obligations to participate in training. There are two types of training courses for promotion: elective and compulsory courses, with emphasis on developing national affairs; and e-governance training to further nurture civil servants' capabilities.

### **E-Governance**

The Government has continued promoting e-governance. Leveraging cross-departmental cooperation and coordination, the Government streamlined administrative processes, enhanced administrative efficiency and improved public services.

Regarding internal management, the Government has added new functions to the digitalised official correspondence between public departments under the Document and Case File Management System. Upon departments receiving electronic documents, the documents can be electronically transmitted, circulated and processed internally, thus achieving fully digitalised document flows. A function enabling electronic replies to written questions from members of the Legislative Assembly was also added to the system, to enhance the efficiency of handling members' question papers.

Leveraging the secure, stable operating environment provided by the cloud computing centre, the Government built a common management platform to reduce the duplication of resources and costs in building and maintaining similar systems, and improve administrative efficiency. For example,

the Official Documents and Filing Management System can reduce the use of paper and manpower resources for document delivery, and minimise social contact and movement during the pandemic.

Regarding external services, the Government continued expanding the functions and applications of the One-stop Public Services, and launched a series of simplified and optimized measures to boost public convenience. An online account opening service was added for Macao residents under the age of 18, while Macao residents aged 18 or above can more easily register for an account by phone number verification.

The One-stop Public Services also introduced the “e-Card Pack” function, which allows residents to link 28 cards issued by 13 government departments, and display card information by electronic means in real time.

The One-stop Public Services comprise 120 services spanning social security, education, healthcare, entrepreneurship and business, and notarisation and registration – significantly more than the approximately 40 services before the Electronic Governance Law came into effect. For example, residents can apply for Proof of Life certificates for the Social Security Fund, the Social Welfare Bureau and the Pension Fund in one go through the One-stop Public Services, anytime and anywhere.

In 2021, nearly 110,000 residents completed electronic formalities for the Proof of Life certificates, of which more than 40,000 residents completed the procedure through the One-stop Public Services. After the launch of the service, the number of registered account holders has increased significantly. By the end of January 2022, more than 300,000 residents have registered electronic accounts for the One-stop Public Services.

To support the seventh Legislative Assembly Election of the Macao SAR, the Government invested resources in information devices and systems. To assist with pandemic prevention and control, the waiting areas of polling stations were expanded, and the numbers of people waiting to vote were announced through various electronic channels, to help the public to arrange their voting times and reduce crowding. Also, the systems for receiving ballots, final vote counting and headquarters communication tools were improved, to enhance the efficiency of disseminating information on the Legislative Council election.

## **Continuous Enhancement of Service Models and Functions of Inter-departmental Cooperation**

By developing e-governance, the Government has further streamlined service processes and facilitated cross-departmental collaboration. Online and offline services have been combined to improve the network of public services, thus providing more convenient and attentive, and higher quality, public services.

The Government Integrated Service Centre and the Islands District Integrated Government Services Centre serve as important centres for the Government to provide integrated cross-departmental services to the public. In 2021, the two service centres provided over 300 services to 26 public departments, with a total of 912,000 cases handled, 638,000 of which were handled in the Government Integrated Service Centre; while 274,000 cases were handled in the Islands District Integrated Government Services Centre. The Government Integrated Service Centre and

the Islands District Integrated Government Services Centre received 806,000 and 374,000 visitors, respectively, totalling 1.18 million visitors.

## Official Languages

In accordance with Article 9 of the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region, in addition to the Chinese language, Portuguese may also be used as an official language by the executive authorities, the legislature and the judiciary of the MSAR.

## Award of Decorations, Medals and Merit Certificates

To commend individuals and organisations for their outstanding performance in terms of personal achievements, contributions to the community or service to the MSAR, in November 2001 Chief Executive Edmund Ho promulgated By-law No. 28/2001, which established rules for awarding decorations, medals and merit certificates to them. It stipulated four categories of decorations and merit certificates in the MSAR: the Decoration of Honour, Medal of Merit, Medal for Distinguished Services and Certificate of Merit.

As of 2021, the Chief Executive had signed administrative orders to award decorations of honour, medals and certificates to 21 batches of individuals and entities.

## Flag and Emblem of the MSAR

The flag of the MSAR has identical patterns and colours on both sides, with the five stars, lotus flower, bridge and seawater design on the front and back. The rectangular flag has a green background and a 3:2 length-height ratio. A white, three-petal lotus flower is in the centre of the flag. Five golden stars, including a larger one in the middle, form an arch over the lotus flower. Below the lotus flower, a white bridge and seawater are represented as green and white stripes (See Appendix II of Law No. 6/1999).



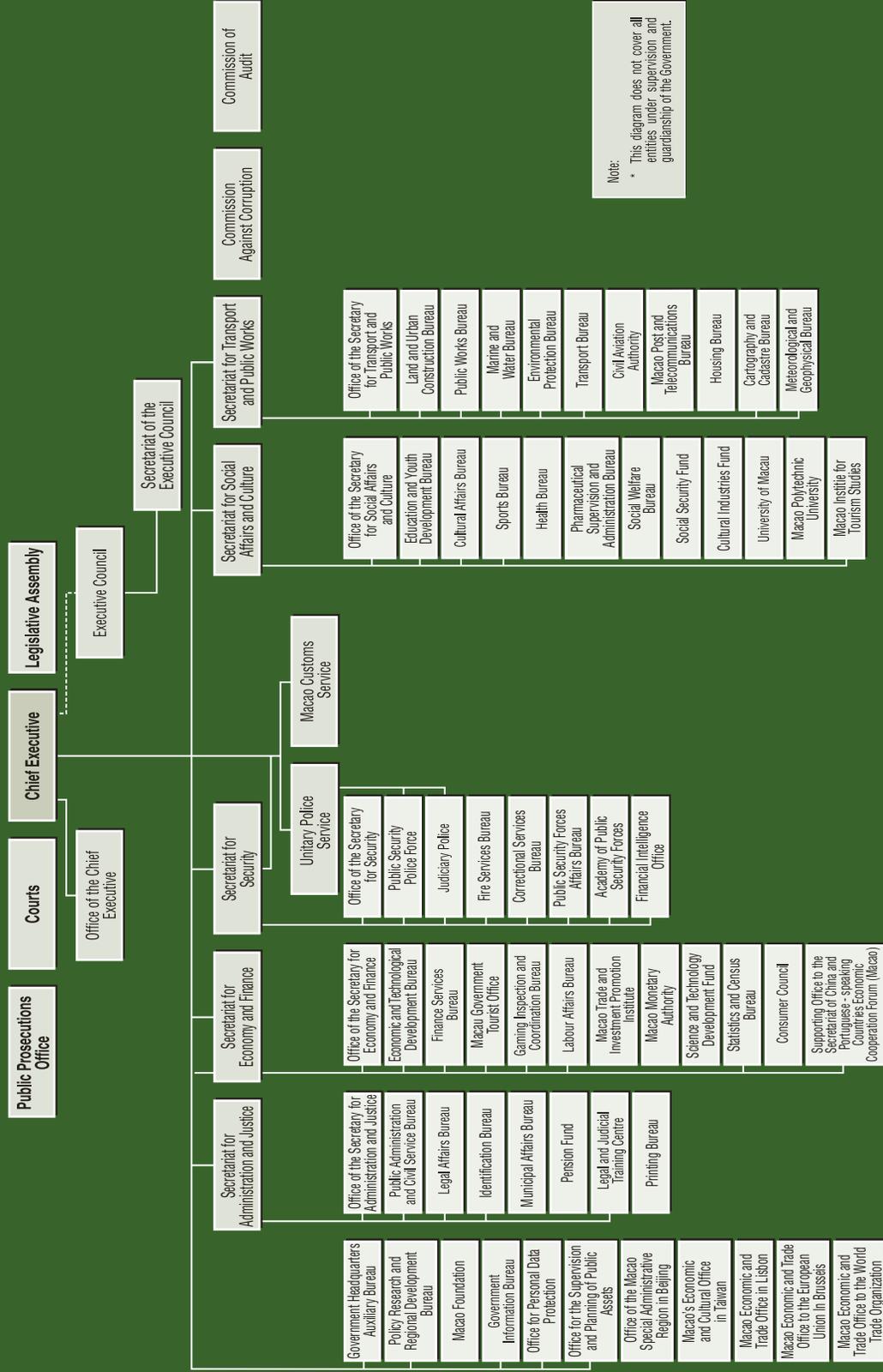
The Flag of the MSAR

The circular MSAR emblem consists of a narrow green border, a ring of characters on a white background, a green inner circle and elements including stars, a lotus flower, a bridge and seawater. The outer ring of characters lies between the narrow green border and the green inner circle. In the upper half of the ring of characters, 14 Traditional Chinese characters meaning “The Macao Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China” are set in a standard traditional font, evenly distributed along the width of the arch. The lower portion of each character points to the centre of the emblem. In the lower half of the ring of characters, the Portuguese word “Macao” is printed in a standard font. The letters are evenly spaced, with the upper portion of each letter pointing to the centre of the emblem. Both the Chinese and Portuguese characters are distributed symmetrically on opposite sides of a vertical axis through the emblem. A white lotus flower with three petals is in the centre of the green inner circle. Above the lotus flower, five golden stars, of which the middle one is largest, radiate from the centre of the emblem. The lower points of the stars are directed at the centre of the emblem. Below the lotus flower, a white bridge and seawater are represented as green and white stripes.



**The Emblem of the MSAR**

# Structure of the Macao SAR Government \*



Note:

\* This diagram does not cover all entities under supervision and guardianship of the Government.



**Guangdong-Macao Intensive  
Cooperation Zone in Hengqin**





The Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin was officially established on 17 September 2021. Guangdong and Macao jointly formed the intensive cooperation zone's administrative committee and executive committee. Focusing on promoting Macao's economic diversification, the intensive cooperation zone provides a new platform for Macao's adequate economic diversification, a new space for Macao people to live and work, a new enriched showcase for implementation of "One country, two systems", and new high ground for fostering the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.