

1

POLITICAL SYSTEM AND ADMINISTRATION



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 comprise only permanent Macao residents.

The MSAR maintains the status of free port and independent tariff region, along with 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 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 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 7 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 each member shall not last beyond that of the Chief Executive who appoints them, but existing 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 Chief Executive’s policy addresses.

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.

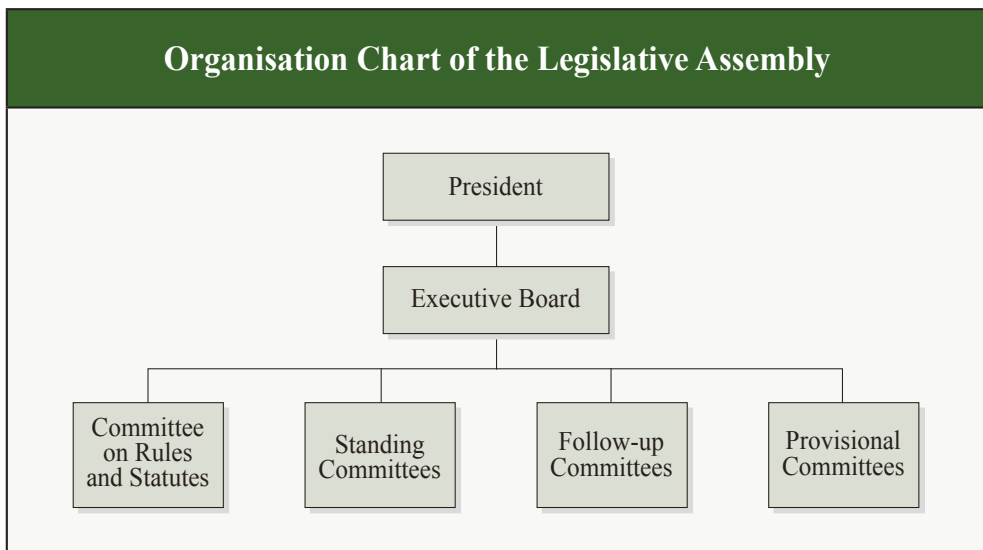
The first Legislative Assembly of the MSAR had 23 members, eight of whom were elected directly, eight indirectly and seven appointed by the Chief Executive. Their term of office expired on 15 October 2001. The second Legislative Assembly had 27 members, 10 of whom were elected directly, 10 indirectly and seven appointed by the Chief Executive. Their term expired in 2005. The third and the fourth Legislative Assemblies likewise had 29 members, 12 of whom were elected directly, 10 indirectly and seven appointed by the Chief Executive. The fifth Legislative Assembly has 33 members, 14 of whom are elected directly, 12 indirectly and seven appointed by the Chief Executive; so too will subsequent Legislative Assemblies. 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 Chinese citizens who are permanent residents of Macao and who have ordinary residence in Macao for at least 15 consecutive 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 Legislative 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 1pm 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 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 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 Court of First Instance, a Court of Appeal and a Court of Final Appeal. The power of final adjudication is vested in the Court of Final Appeal.

The Court of First Instance 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 Appeal.

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 a central government department, province, autonomous region or municipality 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 the following, which shall be promulgated or legislated by the MSAR.

The national laws applicable in the MSAR as of 2023 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 accordance 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 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 of each Secretary in various areas encompasses the follow:

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 notarisisation system;
- Civil and criminal records;
- Municipal affairs;
- Production and publication of the *Macao SAR Gazette*; and
- Legal and judicial training.

In 2023, the Secretary for Administration and Justice, on behalf of the Macao SAR, signed the Summary of Minutes of the Meeting between the Ministry of Justice and the Secretariat for Administration and Justice of the MSAR Government on Further Deepening Cooperation in Talent Cultivation and Legal Services.

Secretary for Economy and Finance

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.

In 2023, the Secretary for Economy and Finance attended the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2023, the 9th China (Shanghai) International Technology Import and Export Fair and the 6th China International Import Expo, as well as accompanied the MSAR Government delegation led by the Chief Executive to visit Portugal, Luxembourg and Belgium.

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 2023, the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture attended the 76th Session of the World Health Assembly as a member of the government delegation of the People's Republic of China. The agreements that were signed included:

- The Agreement on Cooperation Between the Secretariat for Social Affairs and Culture of the MSAR Government and the Peking Union Medical College Hospital;
- The Memorandum of Understanding on Health Cooperation Between the Secretariat for Social Affairs and Culture of the MSAR Government and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Singapore;
- The Agreement on the Establishment of a Joint Working Committee Between Mainland China and Macao for the Promotion of the Development of a Base for Multicultural Exchanges and Cooperation with an Emphasis on Chinese Culture;
- The Agreement for Cooperation in Chinese Medicine Between the State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine and the Secretariat for Social Affairs and Culture of the MSAR Government;
- The Agreement for Cooperation in the Operation of the Macao Medical Centre of Beijing Union Medical College of Islands District Medical Complex; and
- The Arrangement for Cooperation in Health Care Between the National Health Commission and the Secretariat for Social Affairs and Culture of the MSAR Government.

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 aiming 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.

In 2023, the Commissioner Against Corruption attended the International Ombudsman Institute Asian Regional Meeting cum International Seminar, the Third Thematic Forum on Clean Silk Road of the Belt and Road for International Cooperation, and the 13th General Meeting of the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities. He also led delegations to visit the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China; the National Supervisory Commission; the Supreme People's Court; the Supreme People's Procuratorate; the Ministry of Public Security; Hebei Provincial Supervisory Commission; Zhejiang Provincial Supervisory Commission; Guangdong Provincial Supervisory Commission; Guangzhou, Zhaoqing, Zhongshan and Zhuhai Municipal Supervisory Commissions; the Independent Commission Against Corruption of Hong Kong; and the Office of the Ombudsman of Hong Kong.

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' budgets and final accounts, as well as the management and expenditure of capital not included in the budget, together with making comprehensive assessments 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 written authorisation to the Commissioner of Audit to audit and inspect any person of interest.

In 2023, as an observer, the Commissioner of Audit attended the 12th General Assembly of the Supreme Audit Institutions of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries. He also visited the China National Audit Office (CNAO) and attended the Seventh Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Audit Conference and the 40th Anniversary Innovation and Development Conference of Nanjing Audit University.

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).

In 2023, the Director-General of Macao Customs attended the 6th Three-Country-Five-Party Drug Enforcement Information Exchange Conference and Regional Customs Organisation Drug Enforcement Summit, the 24th World Customs Organization Asia/Pacific Regional Heads of Customs Administration Conference, and the 141st/142nd Sessions of the World Customs Organization Council.

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 other 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 2023, led by the Chief Executive, the Policy Research and Regional Development Bureau worked closely with various departments of the MSAR Government, and on 1 November announced the Development Plan for Appropriate Economic Diversification of the Macao Special Administrative Region (2024-2028). This is the first comprehensive and systematic plan for appropriate economic diversification in the history of Macao, and is a major document for guiding the MSAR Government's implementation of the Central People's Government's requirements for realising appropriate economic diversification, which is an essential issue.

The plan specifies the objectives, major tasks and key projects for appropriate economic diversification of Macao from 2024 to 2028, with the aim of expediting the establishment of an industrial structure that fits Macao's actual situation, appropriate diversification and sustainable development, to lay a solid economic foundation for the implementation of "One country, two

systems” in the Macao SAR, and to guide investors and residents regarding the direction of development.

During 2023, the Policy Research and Regional Development Bureau coordinated the inter-departmental Policy Promotion and Coordination Group, so it could continue enhancing publicity work related to various policies, and launch timely and targeted publicity regarding policies, in order to provide the community with a clearer, more accurate and comprehensive understanding of the MSAR Government’s policies and measures, thereby enhancing the interpretation and publicity work regarding various major plans, policies and legal measures of the MSAR Government – including the Policy Address for the Fiscal Year 2024, the Development Plan for Appropriate Economic Diversification of the Macao Special Administrative Region (2024-2028), various major policies of the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, housing policies, and the System for Importing Talented People.

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.

By-law No. 43/2023, on the Organisational Structure and Operations of the Public Assets Supervision and Administration Bureau, came into effect on 1 February 2024.

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 2023, the office fully resumed its external exchanges and liaison work, and actively participated in various events in order to continue promoting and publicising Macao’s achievements in the implementation of “One country, two systems” in areas such as politics, the economy, culture and tourism and, in particular, the MSAR Government’s “1+4” economic diversification strategy, and the development of Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin.

The office attended events including:

- The 10th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Chinese Association of Hong Kong and Macao Studies;
- The 12th Tianjin-Hong Kong-Macao Joint Working Meeting;
- The Online Exchange Session for Representatives of the “Two Sessions”, Committee Members and Macao Tertiary Students titled “Integrating into National Development and Creating a Flourishing Chapter for the Young Generation”;
- The Opening Ceremony of the “Experience Macao, Unlimited” roadshow in Beijing, which

was organised by Macao Government Tourism Office, and a Macao tourism promotion seminar and related business negotiations;

- The Launch Ceremony of 2023 China International Fashion Week for University Students, hosted by Macao Productivity and Technology Transfer Centre (CPTTM);
- “Back to Common Roots - the 26th Anniversary of Macao Youth Symphony Orchestra Touring in Beijing”; and
- The Celebratory Reception for the 20th Anniversary of the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries (Macao).

The office also assisted MSAR Government departments and community organisations with launching activities in mainland China, including:

- A seminar on further education in Beijing, co-organised by the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau and six Macao tertiary institutions;
- The opening ceremony of the National Education Programme for Members of the Cultural Sector in Macao, organised in Beijing by the Department of Communications and Culture of the Liaison Office of the Central People’s Government in the Macao Special Administrative Region and the Federation of Associations of Cultural Sectors of Macao; and
- A seminar on the Basic Law, organised by the Macao Basic Law Promotion Association.

In terms of external publicity, the office participated in the Fourth China-Mongolia Expo, hosted by the Ministry of Commerce and the Government of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region and set up an exhibition zone about Macao; co-organised the Jilin-Hong Kong-Macao Youth Festival with the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of Jilin Province and the Office of the Government of the HKSAR in Beijing; and organised a seminar for Beijing’s tourism industry.

Since 2011, the number of followers of the office’s Weibo account (<http://weibo.com/draemp>) has exceeded 1,010,000, while from the second half of 2013 to 2023 there were approximately 17,000 followers of its WeChat account (macaubeijing).

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 answered enquiries from Macao residents regarding the pandemic, and assisted in case referrals.

Macao Economic and Trade Office in Lisbon

The Macao Economic and Trade Office in Lisbon represents the MSAR, and supports the MSAR Government in economic and cultural cooperation between Macao and Portugal.

In 2023, the office received delegations to Portugal, Luxembourg and Belgium led by the Chief

Executive, as well as the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, the Commissioner of Audit, and delegations to Portugal from the Economic and Technological Development Bureau, the Legal and Judicial Training Centre, Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute, Kiang Wu Nursing College of Macau, the Macao Artist Society and other organisations. The office maintained close contacts with MSAR Government departments, such as the Identification Services Bureau, the Social Welfare Bureau, the Social Security Fund Authority, the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau and the Macao Government Tourism Office – in order to assist Macao residents in Portugal with applying for Proof of Life certificates, renewing MSAR Passports, and applying for Certificates of Criminal Record; and assisted Macao students studying in Portugal with applying for Portuguese residence permits and taxpayer numbers.

The office participated in the reception organised by the Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in Portugal for the 74th Anniversary of the Establishment of the People’s Republic of China; as well as activities and seminars organised by the Ministry of Commerce of the People’s Republic of China, the Chinese Embassy in Portugal, the Diplomatic Ambassador in Lisbon, the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Brussels, the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, the Portugal-Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Zhejiang Provincial Commerce Department, and the Union of Portugal-China Cooperation and Friendship Association. It also attended the 39th General Assembly of the Union of Portuguese-Speaking Capital Cities.

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.

In 2023, the office received delegations the Chief Executive led to Brussels to attend various conferences and events, and a delegation the Director-General of Macao Customs led to attend the annual general meeting of the World Customs Organization.

The office participated in a reception jointly organised by the Ambassadors of China to the European Union and the Chinese Embassy in Belgium, to celebrate the 96th Anniversary of the Founding of the People’s Liberation Army; a reception to celebrate the 74th Anniversary of the Founding of the People’s Republic of China; and a new year reception organised by the Embassy of China in Belgium. The office also participated in activities held by the Belgian-Chinese Chamber of Commerce, the Belgium-Hong Kong Society and the 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 is responsible for cooperation between the MSAR and WTO members.

In 2023, the office received a delegation led by the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture attending the 76th Session of the World Health Assembly, as well as delegations from the Legal

Affairs Bureau, the Social Welfare Bureau, the Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau, and the Labour Affairs Bureau to Geneva, which participated in international conferences.

The office attended a reception jointly organised by the Permanent Mission of China to the United Nations and the Permanent Mission of China to the World Trade Organization, to mark the 74th Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China, as well as events organised by the Permanent Mission of China to the World Trade Organization, and the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Geneva.

The office submitted a letter accepting the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies to the Director-General of the WTO.

Macao's Economic and Cultural Office in Taiwan

Macao's Economic and Cultural Office in Taiwan provides services and assistance to Macao citizens working, studying, traveling, doing business or living in Taiwan. It also promotes exchanges and cooperation between Macao and Taiwan in the following areas: commerce and trade; tourism; technology and environmental protection; education; healthcare; culture; academic publishing; professional skills; and social services. (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 more effectively serve the public.

The Municipal Affairs Bureau holds public sessions every month to allow Macao residents to give suggestions and raise queries regarding the bureau's duties and functions. Twelve public sessions were held in 2023. The Municipal Affairs Bureau management 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. Twelve community seminars were organised in 2023, and were attended by representatives of 121 associations and organisations, and over 280 residents.

The real-time feedback platform, IAM Connect, was launched on 1 January 2019. Through

this, residents can provide opinions on 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, with the two major categories of environmental hygiene and equipment and facilities accounting for 54 percent and 18 percent of the total cases, respectively.

In October 2021, the Municipal Affairs Bureau launched the IAM Connect mobile app, through which – apart from giving opinions – users can enquire about streamline procedures, make advance bookings, carry out decimal conversions, and access public toilet navigation and market information, as well as receive the latest information and promotions of the Municipal Affairs Bureau.

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 the Macao SAR.

Work on Subsidies

In 2023, the Macao Foundation launched various subsidy schemes for academic projects, exchanges with mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, international exchanges, and community projects, as well as for the operation of community groups. The Board of Trustees and Executive Committee of the Macao Foundation, in accordance with their respective authority and pursuant to By-law No. 18/2022 - the MSAR System of Public Financial Assistance and Executive Order No. 195/2022 - the Regulations on the Granting of Subsidies by the Macao Foundation, approved a total of 2,163 projects, providing a total of approximately 890 million patacas.

Scholarships and Awards

In 2023, the Macao Foundation launched the Scholarship Scheme for Higher Education Degree Programme Students, and signed cooperation agreements with the Education and Youth Development Bureau and the Manpower Development Committee on issuing the Macao Foundation Award (Primary and Secondary Scholarships) and the Incentive Scheme for Talent Cultivation and Accreditation. In the same year, the foundation granted various scholarships and awards to 12,578 individuals, with grants totalling about 44.26 million patacas.

Youth Cultivation

In 2023, the Macao Foundation, the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference, the Liaison Office of the Central People’s Government in the Macao Special Administrative Region, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and other organisations/departments and entities jointly organised a number of social practice and learning and exchange activities with the aim of nurturing young talents – including the Macao University Students’ Tianjin Learning Exchange Programme, the Hong Kong and Macao University Student Cultural Practice Activity, the Study Camp for Macao

University Students, the Shanghai Study and Internship Programme for Macao Youth, the Shanxi Experiential Training Programme for Community Workers in Macao, and the Guangdong Hong Kong Macao Greater Bay Area Annual Conference on Public Welfare for Young People.

Academic Research

In 2023, the Macao Foundation partnered with various organisations in Macao and mainland China to organise the Seventh International Symposium on Macaology, the 2023 Forum on Mutual Learning about Civilizations between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries, the Third Annual Conference of Macao Studies 2023 and other academic seminars.

In addition, the foundation continued promoting the compilation of *The Macao Volume of the Chinese Folk and Ethnic Culture and Arts Collection*; completed the revision to *Chinese Quyi Chronicle – Macao Chapter*; and participated in the compilation of *The Annals of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area*, *The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Cities Chronicle* and *The Blue Book of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area*.

Knowledge Exchanges

The Macao Foundation has established the Macao Memories website (macaumemory.mo), which organised 13 online events and 47 offline “Memory Salon” seminars in 2023. As of 31 December 2023, the website has recorded more than 3.36 million visits, and has 8,741 registered members, and 41,586 followers on various social media pages and channels.

The Macao Virtual Library website (macaadata.mo) was launched in 2000, and is the first and largest online reading platform in Macao. As of 31 December 2023, a total of 2,175 books and issues of periodicals, as well as 185 theses, are available for the public to read. Since the launch of a new version of the website in 2022, over 650,000 visits have been recorded.

In 2023, the Macao Foundation published 16 books and four issues of journals, including the *Macao Studies Series*, the *Laws of the Macao Special Administrative Region Series*, the *Macao Knowledge Series*, the *Macao Young Artists Series* and *Macao Studies*.

Arts and Cultural Events

In 2023, the Macao Foundation organised six exhibitions and supporting events through the Macao Young Artists Promotion Project, to provide local artists with platforms for presenting and exchanging ideas. It also organised five exhibitions of renowned artists, jointly organised the “Serving Her Country and People’s Heart and Soul — Exhibition of Soong Ching Ling’s Life”, commenced the Chinese Peking Opera Arts Troupe’s Performance and Exchange Activities in Macao, and jointly organised the Greater Bay Area Cup (Shenzhen) Internet Literature Competition.

History and Cultural Affairs

In 2023, the Culture and History Committee of Macao Foundation organised the 4th History

Knowledge Contest for Secondary School Students in Macao and the 7th History and Culture Ambassadors Training Programme; printed additional copies of *Party History in a 30-Minute Comics* series: (Traditional Chinese version) and *Macao History Book: A Journey of Time in a Small Town*, to support a diverse and vivid approach to promoting Chinese culture and strengthening community publicity on Chinese culture.

External Cooperation and Exchange

The construction of the secondary school building in He Shi Town, Xiushui County, Jiangxi Province, supported by the Macao Foundation, was completed in 2023. The school was renamed Ao Yuan Secondary School in appreciation of Macao's support.

On 18 December 2023, an earthquake with a magnitude of 6.2 on the Richter scale occurred in Jixishan County, Linxia Prefecture, Gansu Province, causing significant casualties and damage to infrastructure. To support the earthquake relief work in the area, the Chief Executive approved the Macao Foundation to launch a special funding procedure, and provide a grant of 30 million patacas.

As the executive body of the Agreement Concerning the Establishment, Operation and Location in Macao of the United Nations International Institute for Software Technology, in 2023 the Macao Foundation continued to provide subsidies for the maintenance of the office premises, and the dormitory rental costs of the United Nations University International Institute for Software Technology.

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 2023, the office opened a total of 105 cases of administrative irregularities, and received 47 requests for advice, 1,601 notifications concerning personal data processing, 57 applications for authorisation of data sharing, and 1,766 legal inquiries. It held or co-organised 26 briefing sessions and eight talks on the Personal Data Protection Act, with a total of 2,450 attendees.

The Personal Data Protection Bureau was established on 1 February 2024, in accordance with By-law No. 42/2023 on the Organisation and Operation of the Personal Data Protection Bureau.

Civil Service System

The general eligibility requirements for civil servants are that they are permanent residents of the MSAR, who are between 18 years and 64 years old; possess relevant educational qualifications or work experience and are 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 are of sound health and mind.

Civil servants are recruited either by appointment or on contract terms. The promotions and

relocations of civil servants are prescribed by law. Civil servants who breach disciplinary rules may be sanctioned by written warnings, fines, 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 promotion of civil servants. 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, leadership and e-governance training to further nurture civil servants' capabilities.

e-Governance

With public administration reform as the starting point, the Macao SAR Government continued promoting the development of e-governance, expanding service applications and building new infrastructure to provide more effective, secure and stable support for the optimisation of the Government's internal management and external services, with a view to building a modern, citizen-friendly, business-friendly and service-oriented government, and enhancing the effectiveness of government administration.

In terms of laws and regulations, the Macao SAR Government has amended Law No. 2/2020 on the Electronic Governance Law, to further promote e-governance and facilitate data sharing among departments.

Regarding internal management, the Macao SAR Government has adopted the standardised data principle and commenced the re-structuring of the system and service platform for managing civil servants, which has integrated human resources-related data to build a new Government communication system with personnel management functions that was launched in mid-2023. The personnel data that is centrally integrated by the system enables authorised departments to keep track of the Government's human resources status in real time, and supports the Government's organisational set-up and scientific management of its personnel.

A common administration platform for interdepartmental communication was launched on schedule in January 2024, to realise a comprehensive electronic process for managing human resources in the MSAR Government, thereby further enhancing the effectiveness of the Government's internal administration and management.

Regarding external services, the Macao SAR Government has continued expanding a variety of e-services. In particular, after the enhancement and upgrading of "Macao One Account", more user-experience functions have been added under "My e-Services". The number of "Macao One Account" registrants has increased eight-fold, from 67,000 in 2020 to 560,000 by the end of 2023, before the Electronic Governance Law came into effect, and the number of areas covered by government services has increased to 350.

The newly introduced "Electronic Identity" of "Macao One Account" can be used for public sector services and border crossing, as well as online appointment bookings for Home Return Permits, financial services and telecommunication services. In addition, with the "Electronic Identity", users can redeem healthcare vouchers at medical clinics, and sign in and out of over 300 Macao educational institutions when enrolling in courses under the Continuing Education Programme.

The Government continued expanding the scope of "Macao One Account" services. For instance, it extended the counter appointment service to 34 public departments in Macao, spanning more than 660 counter services, seven of which are Hengqin administrative services. Macao residents can book appointments through "Macao One Account" at any time and in any place. In addition, registration and change-of-address services were introduced, allowing citizens to register and simultaneously update their information with 23 departments.

Regarding business-friendly services, in 2023 the Government built a platform for business enterprises and community groups. Upon completion of the platform, the Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau organised a number of seminars and opinion exchange sessions to listen to participants' views and improve the platform's functionality. The Business and Associations Platform was launched in January 2024, to provide integrated and speedy e-services for businesses, creating a comprehensive, favourable business environment.

Regarding infrastructure, since becoming operational in 2019, the Cloud Computing Centre has been providing an efficient, secure and stable infrastructure platform for e-governance in the Macao SAR, with around 40 public departments using it and supporting the operation of a number of important systems, including the "Macao One Account" platform. The Macao SAR Government has commenced the expansion of the Cloud Computing Centre, to bolster the overall demand for the Cloud Computing Centre and network security construction, in order to support the long-term development of e-governance in Macao.

Building a Quality Public Service Network with e-Governance Development

To build a modern, service-oriented government, the Macao SAR Government has continued with its efforts to optimise the procedures of various services, enhance inter-departmental cooperation – especially in data sharing, and actively promote the development of e-governance. At present, through the online “Macao One Account” livelihood services platform, the Business and Association Platform, synergised offline service points of all departments, the “One Stop” convenient and integrated service points and the seven 24-hour self-service centres, the Government has created a round-the-clock network of public services for the public, to meet the needs of various users and groups.

In 2023, the two convenient, integrated service centres – the Integrated Government Services Centre and the Islands District Integrated Government Services Centre – provided over 310 services from 27 public departments, with a total of 1,073,000 cases handled, 738,000 of which were handled in the Government Integrated Service Centre, while 335,000 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 over 970,000 and some 430,000 visitors, respectively, totalling 1,400,000 visitors.

On 5 December 2023, the Macao SAR Government launched seven 24-hour self-service centres, located on the Macao peninsula, Taipa and Coloane. Each centre is equipped with new self-service application kiosks and self-service card-collection kiosks, as well as multi-functional self-service kiosks of various government departments, providing the public with a more convenient way to access government services.

The Pension Fund

The Pension Fund was established in 1987, as a public corporate body with administrative, financial and property autonomy. Its main responsibilities are to administer and enforce the system for retirement, widow and orphans’ pensions, and the system for the civil servants’ provident fund.

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 be used as an official language by the executive authorities, the legislature and the judiciary of the MSAR.

Awarding 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 2023, the Chief Executive had signed administrative orders to award decorations of honour, medals and certificates to 23 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).



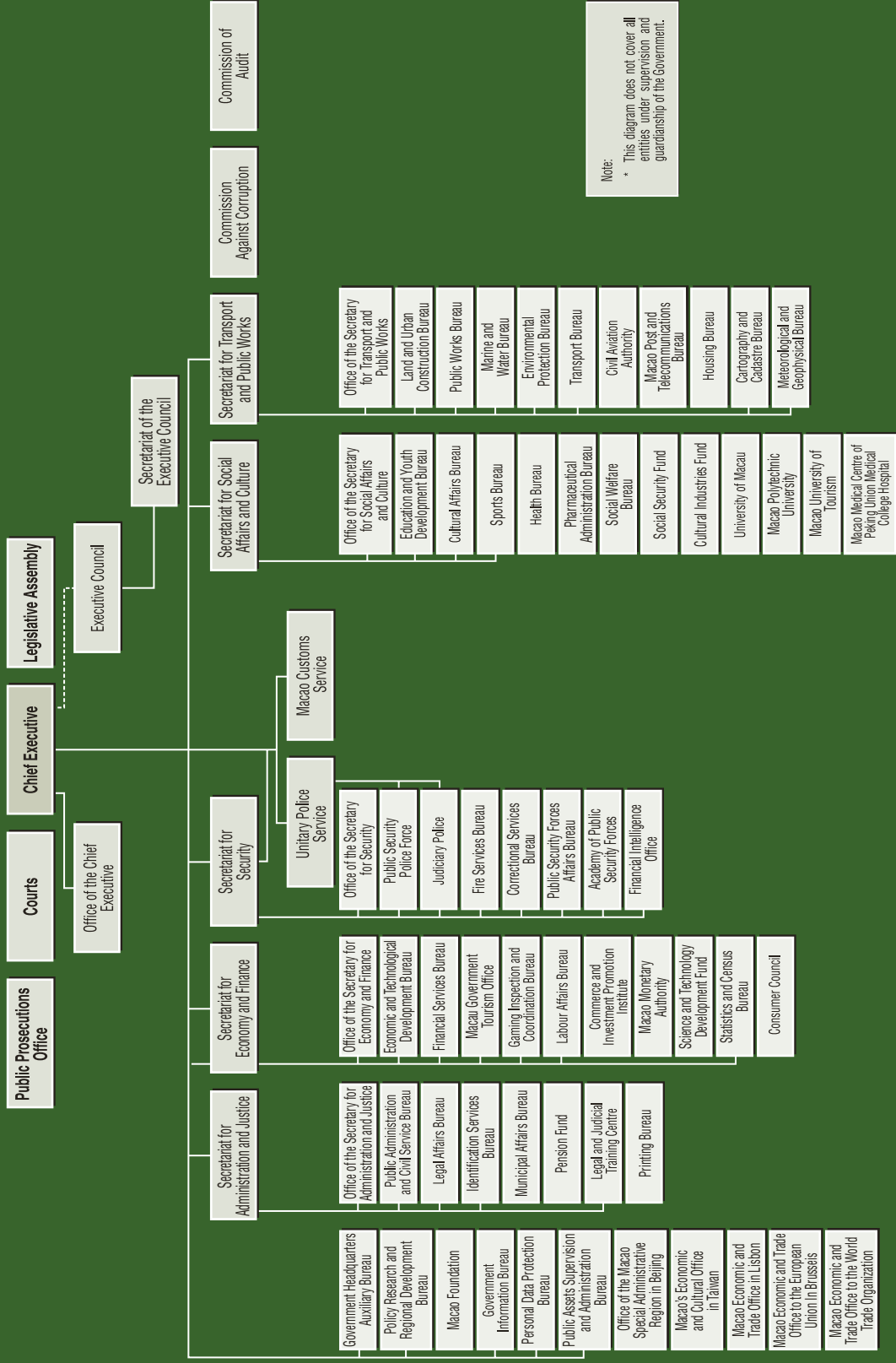
The Flag of the MSAR

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 “Macau” 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.



24-hour Self-Service Centres





As part of its ongoing efforts to promote e-governance and build a modern service-based government, the MSAR Government has set up seven 24-hour government self-service centres in Macao, providing machines for self-service applications, self-service card collection and multi-function self-service kiosks, which assist Macao residents with applying for identity cards, travel documents and other services.