

# OVERVIEW OF THE MACAO SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION IN 2024

2024 marked the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China and the 25th anniversary of Macao's return to the motherland. The Central Government launched a series of policies and measures to benefit Macao and its residents, injecting new momentum for Macao to maintain long-term prosperity and stability, fully demonstrating the Central Government's care and affection for Macao.

On 18 December, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, President of the People's Republic of China and Chairman of the Central Military Commission, Xi Jinping, arrived in Macao to attend the celebrations of the 25th anniversary of Macao's return to the motherland and the inauguration ceremony of the sixth-term MSAR Government, and inspect Macao. Upon his arrival, President Xi praised Macao as "a pearl on the palm" of the motherland, reflecting his care for Macao and its residents.

The election of the sixth-term Chief Executive of the Macao SAR was the first important election held under the newly revised "Chief Executive Election Law", and was held on 1 January 2024. This marked the effective implementation of the principle of "patriots governing Macao", thus holding innovative and symbolic significance. On 13 October, Mr Sam Hou Fai was elected as the Chief Executive-designate of the Macao Special Administrative Region, by receiving an overwhelming percentage of votes.

The MSAR Government is progressing with its overall administrative direction of "Strengthening Recovery, Fostering Diversification, Improving Livelihoods, Enhancing Development" with a focus on promoting appropriate economic diversification. The basic statistical framework of the "1+4" nascent industrial structure has been completed, and the Central Government's series of beneficial policies and measures for Macao are being fully implemented. As high-quality development of the integrated tourism and leisure industry is being promoted, Macao was selected as China's "Cultural Capital of East Asia 2025". The construction of "City of Performing Arts" and "City of Sports" has been expedited, with ongoing improvements in both hardware and software support.

The Macao Bridge, the Seac Pai Van Line and the Hengqin Line of the LRT have commenced operations, boosting ongoing optimisation of municipal facilities and the transportation system. The Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin has achieved its first phase development goals. It has officially implemented the two-tier closed-loop customs arrangement, becoming the first special customs supervision territory on the Chinese mainland to adopt this policy, significantly accelerating integration between Macao and Hengqin.



## President Xi Praises Macao’s Achievements and Encourages Macao to Aim for Greater Heights



General Secretary of the Communist Party of China, President of the People’s Republic of China, and Chairman of the Central Military Commission, Xi Jinping, arrived in Macao in the afternoon of 18 December 2024 to attend the inauguration of the sixth-term MSAR Government – in celebration of the 25th anniversary of Macao’s return to the motherland – and for inspecting the city.

### Macao is “a pearl on the palm” of the Motherland

At around 4 p.m. on 18 December, President Xi Jinping and his wife Peng Liyuan arrived at the Macau International Airport by his special plane. President Xi and his wife waved to the welcoming crowd as they stepped out of the cabin, and were greeted by an enthusiastic welcome tune played by the police band, accompanied by lively dragon and lion dances. Two children presented bouquets to President Xi and Madame Peng, who then warmly shook hands with the welcoming officials. Hundreds of Macao youngsters and representatives from various sectors waved national flags, regional flags, and flowers, expressing their enthusiastic welcome.

In his address at the airport, President Xi noted that during the past 25 years, the practice of “One country, two systems” with Macao characteristics had achieved globally recognised success, demonstrating its vitality and unique character. National development is progressing rapidly and irresistibly, while Macao’s development is poised for further growth and has a bright future. This is the honour of Macao residents and the pride of all Chinese people. By fully leveraging the advantages of “One country, two systems” with a daring and innovative spirit, Macao will certainly forge a brighter future.

President Xi Jinping stressed that Macao was “a pearl on the palm” of the motherland, and that he had always cared about Macao’s development and the wellbeing of Macao people.

Later that afternoon, President Xi met with the fifth-term Chief Executive of the Macao SAR, Ho Iat Seng. President Xi pointed out that during Mr Ho’s five-year term of office as the Chief Executive, he had led the fifth-term MSAR Government and united all sectors of Macao to thoroughly and accurately adhere to the principle of “One country, two systems”, and firmly safeguarded the interests of the country’s sovereignty, security and development, thereby consolidating and developing a favourable environment of prosperity and stability. President Xi said that the Central Government fully affirmed the work of Mr Ho and the fifth-term MSAR Government.

### **Macao is capable of conducting top-tier scientific research**

On the morning of 19 December, President Xi visited the Macao University of Science and Technology, where he commended Macao’s dedication to aligning education with socio-economic development and its progress in promoting the principles of “letting Macao thrive through education” and “building Macao with talented people”.

President Xi was briefed on the university’s research into the quality of Chinese medicines and the State Key Laboratory of Lunar and Planetary Science, learning about the latest scientific achievements. He also visited the university’s Data Center for Science and Application of Macau Satellites, where he observed real-time satellite operations via electronic screens, and learned about the centre’s progress with research and prospects for applied research. He engaged in cordial exchanges with researchers and student representatives. In the university library, President Xi viewed the “Global Mapping of Macao” exhibition, which showcases historical maps of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and Macao. He encouraged students and teachers who were present to pursue lofty ideals, aligning with the country’s vision while keeping abreast of the times as they realise self-fulfilment.

### **Elevating Hengqin-Macao integration to new heights**

On the same morning, President Xi visited the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin. At the Hengqin Tianmu Qintai Innovation Center Exhibition Hall, he toured the “Hengqin-Macao in Harmony” exhibition, and stated that since the establishment of the Cooperation Zone over three years ago, all aspects of its work had made positive progress, which validated the decision of the Central Government to develop Hengqin and establish the Cooperation Zone.

President Xi had warm exchanges with residents of Macao New Neighbourhood. After listening to young entrepreneurs from Macao sharing their experiences of starting businesses in Hengqin, President Xi said Hengqin’s development had provided them with ample space and opportunities. He hoped that more young people from Macao would pursue fulfilling lives in Hengqin.

President Xi also exchanged views with representatives of teams involved in the planning, construction, management and services of the Cooperation Zone, and said that “Macao + Hengqin” was becoming a new paradigm for enriching the implementation of “One country, two systems”, a favourable environment for promoting the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and a new platform for achieving high-level opening-up of the country. He also pointed out the importance of honouring the original mission of developing Hengqin for promoting

Macao's appropriate economic diversification, and stressed the need to firmly implement the plan, maintain strategic focus, and persevere with efforts to realise the mission. Guangdong, Zhuhai, and Macao are all contributors to and beneficiaries of the Cooperation Zone's development, and should therefore work together towards this goal.

President Xi highlighted the hope that all parties would adopt a new starting point in accordance with the requirements of the Central Government, and jointly work towards a new direction in the construction of the Cooperation Zone by resolutely undertaking reforms and tackling the challenges ahead. He called for strengthening the "hard connectivity" of infrastructure, the "soft connectivity" of rules and mechanisms, and the "emotional connectivity" between Hengqin residents and Macao residents, together with accelerating the establishment of a system with a high degree of economic synergy and deep integration of rules, thus elevating Hengqin-Macao integration to a higher level. President Xi urged full use of the various supportive policies provided by the Central Government, to focus on creating a first-class business environment, with the aim of fostering Macao's appropriate economic diversification, and furthering market integration within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

### **Three aspirations for Macao**

On the afternoon of 19 December, President Xi met with the Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), Edmund Ho Hau Wah, and former Chief Executive of the Macao SAR, Chui Sai On. President Xi acknowledged their efforts as successive chief executives, leading the MSAR Government and all sectors of Macao society in firmly safeguarding national security, maintaining Macao's prosperity and stability, and laying a solid foundation for long-term development, which significantly contributed to Macao's current favourable position.

President Xi also met with the principal officials of executive, legislative, and judicial bodies of the MSAR Government. He expressed the Central Government's full affirmation and high appraisal of the work of the MSAR Government, and hoped that they would continue to fully support the Chief Executive-elect and the incoming MSAR Government in governing in accordance with the law, and contribute to building a better Macao. President Xi also met with the representatives of the MSAR disciplinary forces and various sectors of Macao, and officials in charge of the Central Government offices and major mainland Chinese-funded enterprises stationed in Macao.

During a welcome dinner on the evening of 19 December, President Xi delivered a keynote speech, in which he pointed out that the remarkable achievements Macao had made in its development over the past five years were attributable to the thorough implementation of the "One country, two systems" principle, the strong support from the Central Government and the motherland, the active participation of the international community, and the concerted actions of the MSAR Government and all sectors in society striving for these achievements.

President Xi stated that with its unique advantage of "One country, two systems", Macao had already established a solid foundation for development. Leveraging the strong momentum of national development and rejuvenation, Macao is fully equipped for and capable of reaching greater heights and further expanding for better development.

President Xi raised three aspirations for Macao: First, Macao should aim high and look far,

and more proactively integrate with national development strategies, such as the development of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and playing a more active role on the international stage. Second, Macao should be inclusive and open, fostering greater openness, inclusiveness, and unity with patriotism and love for Macao, attracting talented individuals from around the world, and jointly building a better Macao. Third, Macao should be enterprising and innovative, demonstrating greater resolve, embracing reform and innovation, and better leveraging the advantages of “One country, two systems” to strive towards new horizons for Macao’s development.

President Xi expressed his confidence that with the solid support of the nation, Macao was set to further build on its successes and strive for excellence and new heights.

### **Central Government fully supports the new-term MSAR Government**

On the morning of 20 December, President Xi attended the inauguration of the sixth-term MSAR Government in celebration of the 25th anniversary of Macao’s return to the motherland, and delivered a keynote speech. He expressed his hope that the new-term MSAR Government would unite and lead all sectors of society in seizing opportunities, determinedly pursuing reform, and shouldering responsibilities, to better leverage the advantages of the principle of “One country, two systems” and continuously create new horizons for the quality development of the “One country, two systems”.

President Xi emphasised that Macao’s brilliant achievements since its return to the motherland demonstrated to the world that “One country, two systems” possessed significant advantages and strong vitality, and was a solid system for maintaining long-term prosperity and stability in Hong Kong and Macao, serving the great cause of national development and rejuvenation, and achieving harmonious integration and mutually beneficial cooperation between different social systems, which must be adhered to in the long term. The values of harmony, inclusiveness, openness, and sharing embodied in “One country, two systems” belong not only to China but also to the world, and are worth jointly safeguarding.

President Xi said that the practical experience of Hong Kong and Macao since their return to the motherland had demonstrated the following four important points regarding maintaining the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong and Macao, in order to implement the principle of “One country, two systems”: First, Macao must uphold the foundation of “one country” and leverage the advantage of “two systems”; always uphold national sovereignty, security, and development interests above all else, and unwaveringly implement the Central Government’s overall jurisdiction; respect the differences between the “two systems”, fully safeguard the high degree of autonomy in Hong Kong and Macao, and continue to thoroughly and resolutely implement the principles of “One country, two systems”, and “Hong Kong people governing Hong Kong and Macao people governing Macao, with a high degree of autonomy”, ensuring that these principles will remain unshaken, intact and undistorted. Second, Macao must maintain a high level of security and promote high-quality development, with security as the foundation for development and development as a guarantee of security; cherish the current stability, focus on the economy, development and construction, and continue to achieve new momentum and advantages. Third, Macao should fully leverage its unique advantages and strengthen internal and external connectivity; expand its international connections with more openness and inclusiveness to enhance its global influence and attractiveness; profoundly align with national development strategies, accelerate integration into overall national development, and play a better bridging role in fostering new development. Fourth, Macao should promote core

values for inclusiveness and harmony, uphold the core values of patriotism, love for Hong Kong, and love for Macao, and promote exchanges and integration between different cultures, to unite all positive forces to support the “One country, two systems” at home and abroad.

President Xi put forward four hopes for the new MSAR Government: promote appropriate economic diversification; enhance the effectiveness of Macao’s governance; build a platform for higher level of external opening-up; and safeguard social harmony and stability.

Afterwards, President Xi met with Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai, and the principal officials of the executive, legislative, and judicial bodies of the new-term MSAR Government. President Xi stated that the Central Government would fully support Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai and the MSAR Government in fulfilling their duties. He also expressed his hope that the principal officials of the executive, legislative, and judicial bodies of the new-term MSAR Government would uphold their oaths and missions, be accountable to the country and Macao, and deliver outstanding performance for the nation, Macao, and themselves.

After concluding his activities in Macao, President Xi departed on his special plane on the afternoon of 20 December. Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai; Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the CPPCC, Edmund Ho Hau Wah; former Chief Executive Chui Sai On; leading officials of Central Government offices stationed in Macao; and principal officials of the MSAR Government saw President Xi off at the airport.

## **Upholding Integrity and Innovation, Sam Hou Fai Elected to Chief Executive by High Percentage of Votes**



The election for the sixth-term Chief Executive of the Macao Special Administrative Region (MSAR) Government was held on 13 October 2024. Sam Hou Fai was elected as the sixth-term Chief Executive-designate with 394 valid votes. The Chief Executive election was conducted successfully, marking another sound practice and vivid demonstration of the comprehensive and accurate implementation of the principles of “One country, two systems,” “Macao people governing Macao,” and a high degree of autonomy, as well as the maintenance of the constitutional order of the Macao SAR established by the Constitution and the Macao Basic Law.

## Joining hands to build a bright future

The Chief Executive Election for the sixth-term MSAR Government was the first major election held in accordance with the newly revised Chief Executive Election Law that became effective on 1 January 2024, marking the effective implementation of the principle of “patriots governing Macao” with both pioneering and symbolic significance.

The former president of the Court of Final Appeal of the Macao SAR, Sam Hou Fai, held a press conference on 28 August, announcing his candidacy for the sixth-term Chief Executive of the MSAR. In his declaration of candidacy, he stated that the fundamental motivation for his candidacy was the comprehensive, accurate, and unwavering implementation of the “One country, two systems” principle, driven by the call of the times to promote the construction of a strong nation and the great cause of national rejuvenation; whilst, during the new era and new journey, safeguarding Macao’s long-term prosperity and stability, and demonstrating Macao’s new responsibilities and new endeavours with a strong sense of mission; and arose from the aspiration and desire to create a better future for Macao, enabling better lives for the whole population.

Mr Sam Hou Fai said he would lead the Government with the philosophy of “Striving Together, Upholding Integrity and Innovating”. At this new historical starting point, he demands unifying different sectors of society, rallying all forces, working together to promote development, and jointly creating prosperity and stability, allowing the whole population to share the fruits of economic and social development, and build the biggest united force possible for patriotism and love for Macao.

Mr Sam Hou Fai promised that if successfully elected, he would fully and accurately implement “One country, two systems” and uphold its fundamental rationale. He would strictly perform his duties in accordance with the Constitution and the Basic Law, seize the historical opportunities arising through national development, and work hand-in-hand with the new administration team of the MSAR Government and all sectors of society to create a better future for Macao.

On 20 September, Sam Hou Fai was confirmed as a Chief Executive Election candidate. As the sole nominee of the election, Sam Hou Fai garnered nominations from 386 members of the Chief Executive Election Committee, accounting for about 96 percent of the committee members.

The successful completion of the highly significant election for the sixth-term Chief Executive of the Macao SAR fully reflects Macao society’s heartfelt support for the “One country, two systems” principle and its firm confidence in the development path and achievements of the Special Administrative Region over the past 25 years.



In his speech after being elected, Sam Hou Fai said that, according to the provisions of the Basic Law, the Chief Executive must be accountable to the Central Government and to the Macao SAR. He would firmly undertake this significant responsibility, faithfully fulfil his election principle and political platform, and make the pursuit of citizens' expectations for better lives the highest goal of his administration. He would adhere to the comprehensive, accurate, and unwavering implementation of the "One country, two systems" principle as the fundamental guide; uphold national sovereignty, security, and development interests as the highest tenet; and embrace the mission and vision of accelerating the promotion of appropriate economic diversification and better integrating into and serving overall national development.

Mr Sam Hou Fai said he would unite and lead all sectors of society and the public; enhance the guiding role of the Government; fully mobilise the initiative, enthusiasm, and creativity of all parties; listen to public opinion; gather public wisdom; and pool public strength to promote comprehensive development of society, the economy, culture, and people's livelihoods. Sam Hou Fai also said he would diligently fulfil his duties for the people, for Macao, and for the country; wholeheartedly dedicate himself to his role as chief executive; continue to uphold social fairness and justice with the rule of law as the core; conform to the will of the people; continuously improve governance capabilities and levels; ensure that citizens have a higher sense of wellbeing while experiencing continuously optimised public services; and work diligently and pragmatically on practical services for the people, thus living up to the expectations of the population.

President Xi Jinping met Sam Hou Fai, the newly elected sixth-term Chief Executive of the Macao SAR, after his appointment was officially acknowledged by the Central Government, in the Great Hall of the People on 1 November.

Witnessed by President Xi, Premier Li Qiang delivered the State Council Decree No. 794 to Sam Hou Fai, officially appointing him as the sixth-term Chief Executive of the Macao SAR.

President Xi pointed out during the meeting that Sam Hou Fai had a firm stance of patriotism and love for Macao, and had made positive contributions to Macao's prosperity and stability. The Central Government fully affirms and trusts him, hoping that he will bravely shoulder heavy responsibilities and live up to his mission.

## **Fortifying the defence of national security and safeguarding the stability and harmony of the Macao SAR**

In 2024, the MSAR Government continuously improved the mechanisms for safeguarding national security, strengthened the social and political foundation of patriotism and love for Macao, and consistently enhanced the construction of the urban security system.

The Government improved the legal system for safeguarding national security; and made further progress in supporting legislation for safeguarding national security. The Law on Guarding State Secrets, the Legal System for the Control of Weapons and Related Items and its related regulations, and the Law on Oath-taking upon Assumption of Office have come into effect. Research on improving the anti-terrorism legal system has been basically completed.

The Government continuously improved the mechanisms for safeguarding national security; fully supported the National Security Advisor and the National Security Technical Advisors in performing their statutory duties; adhered to bottom-line thinking to strengthen prevention, early warning, and targeted deployment in accordance with the law; effectively carried out anti-interference and anti-infiltration work; and effectively managed various cyber security risks.

The construction of the urban security system has been continuously improved. Comprehensive security control has been strengthened, to ensure the safe conduct of large-scale events. The sixth phase of the research and planning of the ‘Sky Eye’ camera surveillance has been completed. The construction of the maritime operations command centre has been continuously enhanced, focusing on maintaining maritime safety. The new civil defence model has been fully implemented. Regional police cooperation has been strengthened, to effectively prevent and combat various illegal and criminal activities.

In 2024 – the 10th anniversary of the holistic approach to national security, the MSAR Government and the Liaison Office of the Central People’s Government in the Macao SAR jointly held the National Security Education Exhibition for the seventh consecutive time, with the theme “Holistic National Security Concept, Leading Innovation for the 10th Anniversary”. The number of visitors reached a new high, achieving excellent results with publicity and education. Citizens, social groups, youth organisations, educational institutions, public departments, and private organisations enthusiastically visited the exhibition, with the number of visits exceeding 220,000 and the dedicated webpage receiving nearly three million views. The exhibition has become the most influential national security education platform in Macao.

The Macao SAR has gradually formed a full-echelon patriotic education system, including the Patriotic Education Camp for first-year junior secondary school students to cultivate a sense of national identity; the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin Study Tour for first-year senior secondary school students, which connects to the National Defence Education Camp for the second-year junior secondary school students and the Outdoor Camp for the third-year junior secondary school students, thus forming a “national security education chain”. As regards the curriculum, higher education has achieved full coverage of courses on the Constitution and the Basic Law, and in the 2024/2025 academic year, supplementary teaching materials on ‘National Security Education’ covering universities, secondary schools, primary schools, and kindergartens were introduced to widely enhance residents’ awareness of national security and deeply cultivate the core values of patriotism and love for Macao.

## **Implementing the Central Government’s Favourable Policies for Macao and Achieving New Developments in Economic Diversification**

In 2024, the MSAR Government fully implemented a series of Central Government policies for benefiting Macao, and adopted a proactive fiscal policy to increase infrastructure investment, to expand domestic demand and promote steady economic recovery. The annual GDP reached 403.3 billion patacas, representing year-on-year growth of 8.8 percent in real terms, with the overall scale of the economy recovering to 86.4 percent of the 2019 level.



The Government seized the opportunities arising through the addition of new Chinese mainland cities to the facilitated individual travel (FIT) scheme for Hong Kong and Macao; capitalised on the implementation of successive convenient and business-friendly boundary-crossing policies and measures; disseminated information on Macao tourism; and launched travel and consumer promotions through multiple channels, boosting an ongoing rebound in both Chinese mainland and international visitor arrivals. In 2024, the total number of inbound visitors reached 34,928,650, representing a year-on-year increase of 23.8 percent, with the number of international tourists rising by 66 percent to 2,423,093. Total tourist spending (excluding gaming) increased by 5.8 percent year-on-year, to 75.36 patacas.

### High-quality development of the integrated tourism and leisure industry

In 2024, the Government actively promoted high-quality development of the integrated tourism and leisure industry, and continued enhancing the “Tourism +” strategy and enriching non-gaming elements to demonstrate Macao’s diverse cultural and tourism integration, to polish Macao’s profile (“golden calling card”) as an international metropolis. The Government facilitated investments by integrated tourism and leisure businesses in developing non-gaming elements, promoted revitalisation of six historical and cultural areas, and supported small- and medium-sized enterprises in operating commercial projects with distinctive features and vibrant atmospheres in tourist areas, resulting in a significant increase in visitor footfall and cultural and tourism consumption in the old districts.

The Government revised the legal system to further improve the monitoring and regulation of the gaming industry. A mechanism for implementation of non-gaming elements was established, and the casino gaming concessionaires were strictly monitored to ensure they fulfil their commitments

under the concession contracts, with a view to injecting new impetus to enrichment of the content of Macao as a world tourism and leisure centre, and facilitating the development of the integrated tourism and leisure industry. In 2024, the gross revenue of games of fortune was 226.782 billion patacas, representing a year-on-year increase of 23.9 percent. The figure was boosted by a 24.77 percent year-on-year increase in revenue from mass gaming floors to 172.018 billion patacas, which was 9.4 percent higher than the figure in 2019. The mass gaming floor revenue accounted for 75.85 percent of the total gaming revenue for the year, and set a new historical high.

### **The “1+4” industry structure has been established**

The Government has effectively implemented the Development Plan for Appropriate Economic Diversification of the Macao Special Administrative Region (2024-2028), and pragmatically facilitated the development of the four key industries; and has established a statistical framework for the “1+4” nascent industrial structure.

During the year, the Government promoted agglomerated development and upgrades of the traditional Chinese medicine and Big Health industries, and actively encouraged local businesses to design and develop tourism products with traditional Chinese medicine health food therapy and wellness as the theme. The Traditional Chinese Medicine Science and Technology Industrial Park of Cooperation between Guangdong and Macao (GMTCM Park) continued attracting key enterprises and projects, resulting in a noticeable clustering effect of the traditional Chinese medicine and Big Health industries. As at the end of December 2024, the GMTCM Park had 233 registered enterprises, 86 of which were Macao-based. Macao Union Hospital, which officially commenced operation on 16 September 2024, has enhanced the attractiveness of Macao’s specialist medical services with high-end services, attracted more tourists to Macao for medical, wellness and healthcare purposes, and promoted the development of the Big Health industry by launching health-oriented service products in conjunction with integrated tourism and leisure enterprises.

The modern financial services industry continued to develop steadily. The Government continued perfecting the regulatory system related to the bond market, and facilitated the connection of domestic and overseas investment and financing. In April 2024, the first company recommended by the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin received approval to operate a specialised private equity fund management business in Macao; and in July 2024, the first public fund in Macao was formally established. The Investment Funds Law has been passed to the Legislative Assembly for deliberation. The Insurance Intermediary Activities Law was passed by the Legislative Assembly, and would come into effect on 1 August 2025. The revised implementation details for the pilot scheme of Cross-boundary Wealth Management Connect in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area have come into force, to further optimise the pilot scheme. After years of preparation, the project on research and development of the digital pataca (e-MOP) has reached a substantive implementation stage. A public demonstration of the prototype system was conducted in December 2024, and the project aimed to enter the sandbox testing stage by the fourth quarter of 2025.

Also during the year, the Government promoted transformations and upgrades of high technology industries and traditional industries. The Work Plan for Restructuring the State Key Laboratories in Macao has been endorsed by the Ministry of Science and Technology of the People’s Republic

of China (MOST), and the restructuring work is underway. By December 2024, 33 technology enterprises had been certified under the Technology Enterprises Certification Programme, covering fields including integrated circuits, information technology, traditional Chinese medicine, and artificial intelligence, employing about 1,300 people and generating annual revenues of over three billion patacas.

The exhibition and convention, commerce and trade, and culture and sports industries have achieved further progress. Macao's convention and exhibition industry has developed into an internationally recognised brand, as the Government continued optimising the “industry + convention” business environment and boosting appeal to business through exhibitions. In 2023 and 2024, Macao was named the “Best Convention City (Asia)” and “Best BT-MICE City” for two consecutive years. More ICCA-accredited conventions were held in Macao, and more professional merchants and buyers came to Macao to participate in the exhibitions and launch their investment projects. Throughout 2024, Macao hosted a total of 1,524 MICE events, representing a year-on-year increase of 31.4 percent. It is estimated that these events generated approximately 5.48 billion patacas in revenue for Macao's non-gaming industries.



Macao was selected as China's Culture City of East Asia 2025, bringing a distinctive golden calling card to Macao as an international metropolis. The Government also expedited the establishment of Macao as a “City of Performing Arts” and a “City of Sports”. From 2020 to 2024, Macao organised 60 large-scale sports events and 56 large-scale cultural and arts events, attracting more than 21 million participants.

The Government alleviated pressures on small- and medium-sized enterprises and promoted the development of a community economy. The maximum loan repayment period of the assistance schemes for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and young entrepreneurs has been extended to 10 years. The Government strengthened online and offline publicity to encourage residents and

tourists to spend within the community, boosting the community’s consumption potential. Notably among these community-oriented promotions, the “Weekend Consumer Rewards in Northern District” saw a total of over 29.75 million patacas in e-commerce discounts reimbursed, boosting consumption in the Northern District by about 150 million patacas. The “Macao Spending Rewards” mega consumer promotion campaign recorded redemption of e-commerce discounts totalling around 227 million patacas, stimulating over 1.1 billion patacas in consumption across Macao.

## Enhancing Hengqin-Macao In-depth Integration and Pursuing Joint Development via a Cooperation Platform Between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries

2024 marked the 25th anniversary of Macao’s return to the motherland, and was an important year for the Macao SAR regarding deepening appropriate economic diversification and integrating into the national development plan. In its role as the first new model of joint consultation, joint construction, joint management, and shared benefits between Guangdong and Macao under the “One country, two systems” principle, Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin (“Cooperation Zone”) implemented a two-tier management model in 2024, along with a series of policy measures, to achieve better connections and integration between Macao and the Cooperation Zone. Regarding the construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, the MSAR Government actively promoted the implementation of various policy measures concerning the economy and people’s livelihoods, to better enable Macao residents and enterprises to live, work, and conduct business in the Greater Bay Area.



Since the establishment of the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin in 2021, and with the strong support of the Central Government, the MSAR Government has regarded the high-quality completion of the first-phase development goals of the Cooperation Zone as an important political task. Together with Guangdong Province, we have worked hard and achieved significant progress. The operating entities and added value of Macao-funded enterprises have significantly increased, the proportion of the “four nascent industries” has continued to rise, the livelihood index related to Macao has significantly improved, and work on integrating Macao and Hengqin has accelerated.

## Accelerating development of the “four nascent industries” and enhancing Hengqin-Macao economic linkages

During the year, the effectiveness of the interconnections between the “four nascent industries” was enhanced. The Government clearly defined the development positioning and industrial structure of the Guangdong-Macao Traditional Chinese Medicine Technology Industrial Park, with nine renowned traditional Chinese medicine enterprises recently established in the park; announced guidelines for management of the “Products inspected by Macao”, “Production supervised by Macao” or “Designed by Macao” accreditation; and launched the “Products inspected by Macao” accreditation logo. The Government also strengthened the cross-boundary cooperation mechanism between financial authorities in Macao and Hengqin, with the implementation of the Electronic Fence accounts (EF Accounts) in the Cooperation Zone, promoted the use of Macao’s Simple Pay integrated electronic payment platform in the Cooperation Zone, and actively facilitated collaboration between Macao’s insurance industry and the Hengqin Insurance Service Centre. Under the strategy of “R&D in Macao, Commercialisation in Hengqin”, several projects have been successfully implemented in Hengqin. To promote the flows of people and the development of tourism, the Government has launched the Macao-Hengqin Travel Stimulation Programme, and implemented a policy allowing tour groups from the Chinese mainland to take multiple trips between Hengqin and Macao.

According to the unified accounting results of the regional gross domestic product (GDP) of the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, in 2024, the Cooperation Zone achieved a regional GDP of 53.848 billion yuan, representing a 5.3 percent year-on-year increase at constant prices. This includes an added value of 9.842 billion yuan by secondary industries, representing a year-on-year increase of 0.5 percent; the added value of the tertiary industries was 44.006 billion yuan, representing a 6.5 percent year-on-year increase.

In terms of industry-wide calculations, the “four nascent industries” have achieved significant growth: the added value of the electrical machinery and equipment manufacturing industry, the special equipment manufacturing industry, the computer, communication and other electronic equipment manufacturing industry, and the pharmaceutical manufacturing industry increased by 61.4 percent, 39.2 percent, 30.2 percent, and 13.4 percent year-on-year respectively. The information transmission, software and information technology service industry grew by 46.9 percent, and the accommodation and catering industry grew by 9.7 percent year-on-year.

By the end of 2024, there were 6,798 entities with significant funding from Macao (including 6,681 entirely Macao-funded enterprises) operating in the Cooperation Zone, representing a 12.9 percent year-on-year increase. Macao-funded operating entities accounted for 11.6 percent of all operating entities in the zone, 1.2 percentage points higher than the figure for the previous year.

On 1 March 2024, the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin officially implemented the two-tier management model together with closed-loop customs arrangement, becoming the first special customs supervision area on the mainland to implement such a policy. The policy, centred on “first-tier” relaxed administration and “second-tier” strict customs control, has significantly enhanced flows of goods and people. During the year to the

end of February 2025, more than 23.8 million people and over 2.54 million vehicles passed through the “first tier” Hengqin Port, representing year-on-year increases of 30.7 percent and 31.4 percent, respectively. Among them, Macao residents and vehicles with only Macao licences accounted for 5.46 million people and 1.68 million vehicles, respectively, comprising 23 percent of the total passenger flow and 66 percent of the total vehicle flow. The “second tier” channel saw an average of about 51,300 vehicles leaving the island daily, fully reflecting the convenience and effectiveness of the policy covering the two-tier management model together with closed-loop operations.

### **Measures implemented to boost convenience for people, facilitating entry to Hengqin by Macao citizens**

While promoting economic interactions and exchanges, the MSAR Government continuously improves the livelihood-related work in the Cooperation Zone. The supporting facilities of the Macao New Neighbourhood project are continuously improved, including through opening the first school for Macao children in the mainland during autumn of 2024, the family community service centre and the elderly services centre becoming operational, and the health station being managed and operated according to the model adopted by Macao health centres. In addition, the pilot programme for dual-currency payment collection has been implemented by shops and businesses within the zone, allowing Macao citizens to more conveniently use Macao pataca mobile payment tools.

The Guangdong-Macao Social Insurance Window and the Personal Income Tax Preferential Assistance System for Macao Residents have been launched, further facilitating the handling of cross-boundary social security and tax affairs for residents.

To further safeguard the health of residents, the MSAR Government has extended the Macao Healthcare Subsidy Scheme to the Cooperation Zone. The first batch of 296 medications has been approved for use in designated medical institutions within the Cooperation Zone. Since the establishment of the Cooperation Zone, public medical institutions have provided medical services to over 25,000 Macao residents.

### **Actively participating in Greater Bay Area cooperation for better integration with the national development plan**

In 2024, the MSAR Government continued participating in the construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, promoting the interconnection of electronic payments, cross-boundary insurance, and cross-boundary wealth management with Chinese mainland financial departments. Several Macao-funded banks opened branches in the Greater Bay Area. The Government also assisted Macao training institutions with registering as social training and accreditation organisations recognised by the Chinese mainland for certification of vocational skill levels. Also, during the year, the Government established a system for aligning civil and commercial rules in the Cooperation Zone with those in Macao, and continuously improved the diversified dispute resolution mechanism in the Greater Bay Area, promoting further integration of mediation and arbitration mechanisms among Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao.



To facilitate the flow of people between Hong Kong and Macao, the governments of both regions have optimised the convenience of entry and exit measures. The Macao One Account and entry-exit inspection systems were upgraded. A QR code clearance service is provided for residents of Hong Kong and Macao who have registered to use their regional self-service clearance channels.

According to the latest data released by the Statistics Bureau of the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, on 10 December, the number of Macao residents employed and/or residing in the Cooperation Zone has reached 20,818, representing a year-on-year increase of 15.2 percent. This figure includes 5,132 employed people, representing a year-on-year increase of 4.9 percent, and the 16,539 people residing in the zone, representing a year-on-year increase of 19.1 percent.

The MSAR Government also deepened exchanges and cooperation with mainland provinces and cities through Guangdong-Macao, Fujian-Macao, and Shanghai-Macao cooperation mechanisms, as well as through special teams connecting with Hainan and Guangxi. Also, the Government continued supporting rural revitalisation work in Xiushui County, Jiangxi, to foster local economic and social development.

### **Fostering the development of a platform for cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking countries, and actively participating in the “Belt and Road” initiative**

An important component of the platform for trade and economic cooperation services between China and Portuguese-speaking countries – the Sixth Ministerial Conference of the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries, was held in 2024. The conference identified key areas and methods for future economic and trade cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking countries, further enhancing Macao’s role as a platform for cooperation in business services between China and Portuguese-speaking countries. The participating countries jointly signed the Strategic Plan for Economic and Trade Cooperation (2024-2027) and assisted several traditional Chinese medicine products with entry to Portuguese-speaking countries’ markets. Meanwhile, the Centre for Science and Technology Exchange and Cooperation Between China and Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CSTCP) officially commenced operation; to date, its two locations in Hengqin and Macao have attracted four projects. The centre aims to promote cooperation in scientific and technological innovation between China and Portuguese-speaking countries.

The MSAR Government actively participates in the “Belt and Road” initiative. So far, it has signed Agreements for Elimination of Double Taxation and Prevention of Tax Evasion and Avoidance with eight Portuguese-speaking countries, and countries along the “Belt and Road”. Through the International Infrastructure Investment and Construction Forum and various large-scale exhibitions, the Government has strengthened cooperation with countries and regions along the “Belt and Road” and established a “Belt and Road” themed pavilion to deepen related cooperation. The Government has additionally actively promoted the establishment of a friendship city relationship with Dili, East Timor, and officially signed a friendship city memorandum.

## Infrastructure Gradually Improving to Build a Beautiful and Liveable Home

In line with the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and under the premise of the Second Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development of the Macao Special Administrative Region, the Government continued implementing various initiatives in public housing, transportation, environmental protection, urban planning, and public infrastructure.



### Macao Bridge opens for traffic

The Macao Bridge officially opened to traffic on 1 October 2024. As an important transportation infrastructure adjacent to the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, the Macao Bridge not only enhances Macao's overall transportation network, but also affords more convenient travel for residents and tourists.

Construction of the Macao Bridge officially began on 26 March 2020, and the main structure was completed on 12 March 2024. The bridge starts at the east wing of Macao New Urban Zone Area A, connects with the Artificial Island of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, crosses the Outer Harbour Channel and the Macao Channel, and ends at Macao New Urban Zone Area E1, with a viaduct reserved for future connection to the Taipa Grande Tunnel. The 3.1-kilometre-long bridge includes an approximately two-kilometre-long cross-sea section. It features two navigable spans for passing vessels, each measuring 280 metres in width. The bridge is designed to support eight lanes, including two in the middle that are exclusively for motorcycles.

The opening of the Macao Bridge effectively alleviated the traffic pressure on the existing three bridges, thus improving the capacity of traffic between the Macao peninsula, Taipa, and Coloane island, and accommodating the transportation needs of New Urban Reclamation Zone A's development. In the early stages of the Macao Bridge's operation, it diverted approximately 10 percent of the traffic volume from the Friendship Bridge. The traffic volume from the original Zone A to Taipa via the Friendship Bridge decreased significantly, by 93 percent, demonstrating the bridge's increasingly effective role in redistributing traffic in the surrounding areas.

## LRT development enters a new phase

In 2024, the development of Macao's Light Rail Transit (LRT) entered a new phase with the openings of the Seac Pai Van Line and the Hengqin Line, providing residents and tourists with more comfortable and convenient travel options.

On 1 November, the LRT Seac Pai Van Line officially opened, marking the first network interchange for the Macao LRT system beyond the Taipa Line, extending services to the Seac Pai Van community.

The Seac Pai Van Line is 1.6 kilometres long. It not only provides a faster and smoother travel option for residents and tourists travelling to Seac Pai Van and Coloane, allowing easier access to various districts in Taipa and the Barra area, but also provides important experience to benefit the future opening of other new lines. The total travel time on the Macao LRT Seac Pai Van Line is approximately two minutes, with trains running at intervals of about six minutes.

The LRT Hengqin Line opened to traffic on 2 December, making it more convenient for residents and tourist to access the Hengqin port, and creating a closer connection between Macao and Hengqin.

The LRT Hengqin Line is approximately 2.2 kilometres long and has two stations: Lotus Station and Hengqin Station. The total travel time is about two minutes, with trains running at intervals of approximately six minutes. The line provides residents and tourist with another convenient and efficient transportation option to and from Hengqin port, facilitating Macao's integration into the "Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area one-hour living circle".

The LRT, as an environmentally friendly and convenient form of public transportation, not only supports Macao's overall public transport capacity and alleviates road traffic, but also serves as key infrastructure for promoting the region's sustainable development.

The MSAR Government continued the project to construct the LRT East Line project, which began in 2023. The line will be approximately 7.7 kilometres long, connecting New Urban Zone Areas A and E, and connecting with the LRT Taipa Line, further meeting the travel needs of residents and tourists. The Government is also creating favourable conditions for facilitating the westward extension of the East Line to the Qingmao Checkpoint.

## Constructing a tunnel linking Zone A and the Macao peninsula

In line with the overall development schedule of New Urban Zone Area A, a series of connecting roadworks between Zone A and the Macao peninsula will be constructed, while also taking the opportunity to reorganise the surrounding road network. Four connecting roads have been planned between Zone A and the Macao peninsula. Among them, the A1 connecting bridge is already in use, part of the A2 connecting bridge has been opened to traffic, and work on the remaining projects is progressing on schedule.

The construction of a bridge connecting New Urban Reclamation Zone A and the Macao peninsula (A3) began construction in the second quarter of 2024. On the Macao peninsula side, the bridge has four access ramps connecting to the Friendship Bridge, the Friendship Bridge access ramp, Avenida da Amizade and the Outer Harbour Ferry Terminal Road. It will also

provide access to the viaduct that connects to the Fourth Macao-Taipa Bridge boundary-crossing checkpoint located in Zone A.

With the development of New Urban Zone Area A and Area B, as well as the completion and operation of the Artificial Island of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, there is a need to effectively manage the resulting traffic flow demands. The construction of vehicle flyovers in Areas A and B will provide essential transportation links and support for the development of the New Urban Areas.

## Optimising detailed urban planning

The Government has carried out detailed planning for various planning zones, including Eastern District-2, Outer Harbour District-1, Outer Harbour District-2, Northern District-1, and Taipa Central District-2. Among these, the Detailed Plan for Eastern District-2 has already been published, in March 2024.

The Eastern District-2 is on the eastern side of the Macao peninsula, with a reclaimed land area of approximately 1.38 square kilometres and a projected residential population of 96,000 people. The Marine Functional Zoning of the Macao Special Administrative Region and the Maritime Planning of the Macao Special Administrative Region came into effect in July 2024.

The latest edition of the Atlas of Macao was released in November 2024. This updated atlas not only records the urban development of Macao through conventional topographic maps, but also incorporates advanced surveying and mapping technologies such as satellite imagery and aerial photography by drones to serve as an up-to-date record of the region. Atlas of Macao – 2024 has abundant content, covering detailed street maps, satellite image maps, planning and zoning maps, maps of land formation at different stages, and geographical statistics and other elements. In addition, a special series of topics including Roaming Along the Macao Coastline and Review of Macao's Urban Infrastructure have been added.

## Promoting the construction of major projects

The pre-reclamation flood control and environmental monitoring for the expansion of Macau International Airport have been completed. The reclamation project for the expansion of Macau International Airport commenced in November 2024, with the entire project expected to be completed by 2030. In the first phase after completion of the reclamation, the airport's annual passenger handling capacity will be increased to 13 million.

The construction of a rainwater pumping station and sewer project in the southern area of the Inner Harbour is one of the MSAR Government's major disaster prevention initiatives. The rainwater pumping station is designed to cope with 50-year return period rainfall, aiming to alleviate the long-standing flooding issues in the Inner Harbour area arising from its low-lying terrain. The first phase of the project mainly involves the construction of a large rainwater pumping station and wastewater treatment facility structural platform. Construction commenced in November 2022 and was completed in July 2024. Meanwhile, the design of the Flood Prevention and Drainage at West Coloane (also known as the Two Lakes Project) has been finalised, and construction has commenced.

## Optimising the transportation system and municipal facilities

The Civil Aviation Activity Law and the Road Traffic Law have been submitted to the Legislative Assembly for deliberation. The new Road Traffic Law will include stronger penalties for offences such as driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and speeding and other violations. It will also expand the mandatory use of seat belts and prohibit the use of mobile phones, other telecommunications devices, and audiovisual equipment while driving.

The annual vehicle growth rate in Macao has been kept below three percent. A total of 33 traffic improvement and efficiency enhancement projects have been completed. Several elevated pedestrian corridors and footbridges have also been brought into use, effectively improving road traffic conditions. Five hundred new taxis with licences valid for eight years have been put into operation.

Work on the second phase of the green promenade along the southern shores of the Macao peninsula has commenced, covering a total area of approximately 60,000 square metres. The project design focuses on three main themes for its functional spaces: family recreation, leisure and fitness, and waterfront scenery, providing residents with a high-quality, large-scale waterfront leisure and recreation space.

Enhancements to public wet markets are being implemented, optimising their management and business operations to revitalise their image. This work included the two-year project on renovating the Almirante Lacerda Market, which reopened to the public in the second quarter of 2024.

## Endeavouring to Improve People's Livelihoods and Enhancing the Living Standards of Macao Residents



The MSAR Government persists in upholding the principle of serving the public and has implemented the administration philosophy of “comprehensively improving the overall living standards of Macao residents”. Despite the challenges the Covid-19 pandemic posed to the economy and government revenue, the Government ensures that people’s livelihoods are given top priority. Various measures have been introduced to enhance people’s livelihoods and public spending on people’s well-being has been steadily increased. The proportion for education, healthcare, social welfare, and housing in the general integrated budget rose from 39.2 percent in 2019 to 44.8 percent in 2024, with a view to unwaveringly safeguarding and improving the well-being of Macao residents.

In 2024, the MSAR Government implemented several policy initiatives to significantly improve people’s livelihoods, including expanding welfare measures, optimising housing supply, promoting employment for residents, enhancing social security systems, and optimising healthcare services.

### **Continuing to promote welfare measures**

The MSAR Government extended various tax incentives and welfare measures to relieve the burden on the public and enhance the quality of life, with the total estimated expenditure for 2024 reaching 24.677 billion patacas, accounting for 28.07 percent of the general consolidated budget expenditure. The subsidies for the general public were budgeted at around 8.514 billion patacas in 2024, spanning the Wealth Partaking Scheme, the Medical Subsidy Scheme, the electricity bill subsidy for residential units, and the Continuing Education Programme.

Regarding social security, the Government has provided appropriate security benefits for the elderly and underprivileged sectors. In 2024, the Government continued to disburse old age allowances, pensions and disability gratuities, whilst providing free education and tuition fee subsidies to students, with an estimated expenditure of 13.063 billion patacas.

Pursuant to the law on the Non-Mandatory Central Provident Fund System, the Government injected a special allocation of 7,000 patacas from the budgeted surplus to individual accounts of eligible residents. This benefited about 390,000 residents, involving approximately 3.1 billion patacas.

### **Implementing the five-rung housing ladder policy**

Housing has always been a major concern of the community. The MSAR Government places a high priority on solving residents’ housing problems, and in 2024 achieved significant progress in public housing under the five-rung housing ladder policy. Over the past five years, the Government has completed six public housing projects, increasing the number of public housing units to 57,117; and more than 14,000 public housing units are under construction.

Public housing and Home-Ownership Scheme housing are the major housing components of the MSAR Government. In 2024, the Mong Son Building of the Mong Ha Public Housing project was completed, providing 1,590 residential units with commercial facilities and car parks. Regarding Home-Ownership Scheme housing, construction of the Home Ownership Scheme lots B4, B9 and B10 in New Urban Zone Area A was completed, fulfilling the demand for Home-Ownership Scheme housing applications made in 2019, with a subsidy rate of 64.5 percent.

With the increasing ageing of the population, the MSAR Government has proposed the construction of Government Housing for Senior Citizens, to help solve the housing problems of the elderly. In 2024, the Government Housing for Senior Citizens in Lot P in the Areia Preta New Reclamation Zone was completed, providing 1,815 units to satisfy demand from first-time applicants.

Under the MSAR Government's housing for the sandwich class policy, which serves as a type of buffer for the Home-Ownership Scheme housing and private property markets, a project is underway to construct sandwich-class housing on Rua Oito do Bairro lao Hon. The tender process for the foundation and basement work has been completed, and construction has begun, with the project set to create around 250 residential units.

### **Strengthening care for the elderly, young people and the underprivileged**

The MSAR Government attaches great importance to care for the elderly, women, children and the underprivileged, and has increased the number of service places. By the end of 2024, there were about 2,510 subsidised places in homes for the elderly and 505 day-care service places in Macao. Also in 2024, the Government promoted collaboration between home care and social service organisations, and launched the “Pilot Project on Support Services for Senior Citizens Living Alone”, which incorporates a step monitor mobile phone app, with staff taking the initiative to check on abnormalities when detected.

The Government continued improving healthcare services for the elderly, with the Denture Installation Programme covering all eligible senior citizens, colorectal cancer screening and cataract surgeries for the elderly, as well as the expansion of the remote out-patient services to several residential care homes for the elderly.

Regarding rehabilitation and early treatment services, the number of places increased by about 1,010 from 2019 to 2024, especially for support services for high-functioning autistic persons, and endeavoured to shorten waiting times for early treatment services for children.

Regarding education, the Government completed the revision of the Framework for Formal Education Curriculum of the Local System, promulgated the legal frameworks for Macao Polytechnic University and Macao University of Tourism, and commenced the construction of a new main building of the university.

### **Enhancing healthcare services and ensuring capability to treat serious illnesses in Macao**

With strong support and help from the nation, Macau Union Hospital became officially operational in 2024, with the aim of becoming a “national medical centre”, providing high quality medical services and nurturing medical talents, to ensure the capability of treating serious illnesses in Macao. The hospital has 26 operating theatres, with a planned capacity of over 1,000 beds, featuring advanced medical technologies.

The Government completed the construction of healthcare infrastructure, such as the Public Health Specialist Building, and launched pre-employment training for medical specialists to reserve medical and administrative staff for the new hospital.

In compliance with the Healthy China 2030 plan, in 2024 the MSAR Government formulated the Healthy Macao Blueprint, and worked with health centres to finalise the diabetes performance assessment process, thus facilitating the development of the quality assessment system for chronic disease management, in order to improve residents' health. Programmes such as "Healthy Restaurants" and "Healthy Enterprises" were launched, to encourage residents to make use of "My Health" function on the Macao One Account to enhance their personal health management capabilities.

## Legislative Assembly Fulfils Supervisory Function to Strengthen the Rule of Law in Macao

During the third session of the seventh Legislative Assembly, from 16 October 2023 to 15 October 2024, a total of 35 plenary meetings and 145 committee meetings were held, with 23 laws, one resolution and nine simple-majority resolutions passed during the plenary meetings.



### Fulfilment of legislative function:

With regard to safeguarding national security, the Legislative Assembly passed:

- Law No. 20/2023 on Amendments to the Chief Executive Election Law, and Law No. 8/2024 on Amendments to Legislative Assembly Election Law, to strengthen the vetting mechanisms for candidates in both elections and improve the electoral management process;
- Law No. 9/2024 on Amendments to Law No. 4/1999 on the Law on Oath-taking upon Assumption of Office, to increase ways of oath-taking, refine oath-taking requirements



and the oath administration system, and include members of the Chief Executive Election Committee as oath takers; and

- Law No. 21/2023 - Law on Guarding State Secrets, to stipulate the definition of state secrets, criteria for classifying state secrets, confidentiality measures, periods of classification, declassification procedures, and the system of penalties for contravening the law, thereby ensuring appropriate and stringent protection of state secrets.

With regard to combating crime and controlling weapons:

- Law No. 18/2023 and Law No. 16/2024 on Amendments to Law No. 17/2009 Prohibiting the Illegal Production, Trafficking and Consumption of Narcotics and Psychoactive Drugs were passed during urgent procedures, to incorporate 21 substances into the list of controlled substances in response to decisions of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, and society's need to align with neighbouring regions and the international community in preventing and combating drug-related crimes; and
- Law No. 12/2024 on the Legal System for the Control of Weapons and Related Items was also passed, to improve the approval system and regulatory mechanisms concerning various weapons and related items, implementing tiered management based on their threat level and clarifying the obligations and responsibilities of various entities.

With regard to the streamlining of public administration and the promotion of e-governance, the Legislative Assembly passed:

- Law No. 23/2023 on Amendments to Law No. 1/2001 - Unitary Police Service of the Macao SAR, to establish a technically and operationally independent subordinate body within the Unitary Police Service, thereby incorporating the Financial Intelligence Office into the Unitary Police Service;
- Law No. 17/2024 on Amendments to Law No. 10/2000 on the Organisational Law of the Commission Against Corruption of the Macao Special Administrative Region, to clearly define the mission and scope of work of the Commission Against Corruption and update its investigation system;
- Law No. 2/2024 on the Vehicle Registration System, to strengthen collaboration and data interconnections among public departments, and simplify vehicle registration application procedures and required documents by implementing a fully electronic process;
- Law No. 11/2024 on Amendments to the Civil Registration Code, to implement electronic birth and death registration and marriage applications, expand the scope of consensual divorces that can be handled by the registry, and empower private notaries to officiate marriages; and
- Law No. 13/2024 on Amendments to Law No. 2/2020 - Electronic Governance Law and Law No. 5/2022 - Submission of Legal Procedure Documents and Electronic Payment of Procedural Costs, to further refine a series of administrative procedural regulations related to the promotion of e-governance and expand the application of various electronic documents and certificates.

With regard to enhancing the quality of higher education: Law No. 3/2024 on the Legal Framework for Macao Polytechnic University and Law No. 4/2024 on the Legal Framework for Macao University of Tourism were passed, thereby providing greater flexibility in academic development, daily operations, and personnel management of the two higher education institutions.

With regard to protecting labour rights: Law No. 19/2023 on Amendments to Law No. 5/2020 - Law on Minimum Wage, and Law No. 6/2024 - Union Law were passed. The former increased the rates for the minimum wage to 7,072 patacas, 1,632 patacas, 272 patacas and 34 patacas per month, week, day and hour, respectively; while the latter regulates the formation, registration, operation, rights, and obligations of trade unions.

With regard to promoting responsible gaming and strengthening the regulation of the financial services sector:

- Law No. 7/2024 on the Legal System on Regulating Credit Related to Gaming was passed, clarifying that only concessionaires can engage in gaming-related credit business, and that gaming promoters can act as agents for concessionaires in credit business through agency contracts in the name of and for the benefit of the concessionaires, while also establishing the obligations of credit entities and a penalty system; and
- Law No. 15/2024 on the Insurance Intermediary Activities Law was passed, to strengthen the supervision of insurance intermediaries in order to enhance public trust in the industry.

To address land issues arising from the transfer of government-owned properties, Law No. 14/2024 on the Transfer System for Individual Units of Home-Ownership Scheme and Housing for the Sandwich Class was passed, proposing targeted solutions to fill in gaps in the existing system.

Finally, Law No. 10/2024 on the Authorisation of the Macao Special Administrative Region's Jurisdiction over the Relevant Land and Maritime Areas Southeast of the Gongbei Port in Zhuhai City, Guangdong Province, was passed, to clarify the application of Macao laws in the relevant areas, thereby implementing a decision by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, in order to better realise Macao's jurisdiction over these areas and maximise the socio-economic benefits of the LRT East Line construction project.

All 20 above-mentioned laws were initiated by the MSAR Government.

### **Fulfilment of supervisory functions:**

The Legislative Assembly supervised the government budget and public finances by exercising the powers enshrined in the Basic Law, including by passing Law No. 22/2023 on the 2024 Government Budget; passing Law No. 1/2024 on Amendments to Law No. 2/2018 on the Stamp Duty on Acquisition of Second and Subsequent Residential Properties, and Law No. 5/2024 on the Elimination of Tax Measures Related to Real Estate Demand Management, to ease and eventually eliminate tax and regulatory measures related to property demand; deliberating the Government's Reports on Budget Implementation for 2022 and the Commissioner of Audit's Report 2022 submitted by the Government; and hearing and discussing the 2024 Policy Address delivered by the Chief Executive.

To enhance communications and interactions between the executive and legislative systems, a question-and-answer session with the Chief Executive was held in April, for legislators to put questions to the Chief Executive on government policies and issues of public concern – such as safeguarding national security, improving the mechanism for talent development, promoting urban renewal of old districts, fostering the integration of culture, sports and tourism, accelerating Hengqin-Macao integrated development, promoting the implementation of new quality productivity, and optimising the business environment.

To better solicit and gather the views of Legislative Assembly members, the MSAR Government organised dedicated briefings and exchanges for legislators on the Master Plan for the Development of the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin and the Opinions on Supporting the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin Through Relaxing Special Measures for Market Access. During the session, to strengthen communications and understanding between the executive and legislative systems, legislators were also invited to visit six key historical areas, and actively participated in a subsequent presentation session organised by the Government on revitalisation of these old areas, providing recommendations and advice for Macao's appropriate economic diversification.

During the legislative session, legislators delivered 327 pre-agenda speeches, covering safeguarding national security, strengthening patriotic education, implementing the spirit of the third plenary session of the 20th CPC Central Committee, intensifying the development of the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, promoting industrial diversification, improving the system for scientific innovation, strengthening food safety supervision, and increasing the application of digital technologies. In addition, legislators raised 812 written and 97 oral questions, and called for 10 plenary meetings regarding the oral questions.

Lastly, the Follow-up Committee for Land and Public Concession Affairs, the Follow-up Committee for Public Finance Affairs and the Follow-up Committee for Public Administration Affairs strived to make progress with important issues regarding public administration and the applicability of related laws, and compiled seven reports on the following issues:

- Follow-up regarding the public project tender process;
- Follow-up regarding measures related to land security in the Development Plan for Appropriate Economic Diversification of the Macao Special Administrative Region (2024-2028);
- Follow-up regarding the Government's Interim Reports on Budget Implementation for 2023;
- Follow-up regarding the Government's Reports on Investment Planning and Budget Implementation for the Second and Third Quarters of 2023;
- Follow-up regarding the Government's Reports on Investment Planning and Budget Implementation for the Fourth Quarter of 2023 and the First Quarter of 2024;
- Follow-up regarding the Current Situation and Development Prospects of the Logistics Industry in the Inner Harbour; and

- Follow-up regarding the Executive Authorities' Mechanisms for Suicide Prevention and Related Support Measures.

Other responsibilities of the Legislative Assembly include listening to and fully reflecting different views, suggestions and criticisms from the public, and making prompt responses regarding public aspirations. During the session, 11 residents were personally received by legislators. The Legislative Assembly also received 128 opinions and suggestions from the public through visits, phone and email. Moreover, the Legislative Assembly received two petitions from groups, and handled these appropriately.

During the session, the Legislative Assembly Open Day was also reinstated for the first time after the pandemic, attracting a total of 2,340 visitors and 30 visiting groups. Through the Open Day, the public gained a detailed understanding of the functions, structure, and basic operations of the MSAR legislature, particularly the process of deliberating and voting on bills.

Finally, starting with this legislative session, in addition to existing e-governance development and applications – including the online meeting registration system, the Legislative Assembly electronic document receiving system, and the Legislative Assembly electronic document download system, which provide convenient and efficient services for members – the Legislative Assembly has also begun adopting the newly launched Government communication system to enhance the efficiency of personnel management.

## Enhancing Mechanisms for Ensuring Integrity and Preventing Corruption, and Strengthening the Audit Team



In 2024, the Commission Against Corruption of Macao (CCAC) actively forged ahead with its anti-corruption work, and achieved results in preventing and combating corruption as well as perfecting its systems.

In 2024, the newly amended legal system and related administrative regulations of the CCAC came into effect, clarifying the mission and remit of the CCAC, with an emphasis on economic and financial crimes; optimising the authority of the CCAC with the added authority to collaborate with the public and private sectors to promote corruption-free operations and management; updating the investigators' management system with the introduction of a long-term service bonus; and refining the organisational structure with the addition of a new investigative department. These amendments to the laws and regulations help the CCAC to better perform its duties and safeguard the public interest.

Regarding anti-corruption, the CCAC persevered in investigating unlawful practices identified in the previous year's cases; and proactively initiated an investigation into a public fund, and referred the administrative issues and supervisory loopholes identified therein to the relevant entities so they could be rectified.

In addition, the CCAC also handled several cases involving false attendance reports by civil servants. During the year, for the first time, several integrated tourism and leisure enterprises took the initiative to report suspected bribery of their internal employees to the CCAC, reflecting a change in the community's attitude towards the handling of bribery cases in the private sector.

Regarding complaints to the ombudsman, most cases are related to public services, municipal services, and lands and public works. In line with the policy objective of encouraging self-confidence in administration, the CCAC has, during the course of investigations, made its views and stance known to the relevant departments or authorities regarding areas that need to be improved, enabling them to rectify and improve their operational mechanisms or systems in a timely and independent manner.

The CCAC has also leveraged its advantages to fully utilise its functions in combating corruption and handling cases involving administrative grievance. Regarding cases involving false sick leave, the CCAC has opened a comprehensive investigation file with the Ombudsman to follow up on these cases and made recommendations for improvements, to assist the executive authorities in tackling the problem at root and achieve the objective of continuous monitoring, to facilitate continuous enhancement of the Government's administration.

In 2024, the CCAC received 1,667 requests for assistance; and 768 complaints, reports and sources of information. Among the complaints or reports, 113 anti-corruption cases and 33 cases on file for mutual assistance were sent to the Anti-Corruption Bureau for investigation; and 147 cases were sent to the Ombudsman for investigation after merging similar cases which met the conditions for being placed on file. There were 393 cases which did not meet the conditions for being placed on file and were sent to the Complaints Management Centre for handling; 208 of these cases were directly archived and 185 were referred to the relevant departments for conducting follow-up work.

Together with the cases carried forward from 2023, the CCAC concluded a total of 263 cases in 2024. Among the 120 cases concluded by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (including 91 corruption cases and 29 mutual assistance cases), 19 have been referred to the Public Prosecutions Office, and the

remainder have been archived. Among the 143 cases concluded by the Ombudsman Bureau, there were 28 cases in which the departments concerned have improved and optimised their measures and work and given positive responses, and six cases that were included in the “retrospective review” list in order to conduct further reviews.

As regards cases involving mutual assistance, together with the cases carried forward from the previous year, the CCAC handled 62 cases in 2024; 49 of the cases were filed at the request of counterparts outside the region, 29 have been concluded, and 20 are still being followed up. Also, 13 requests for assistance with cases were made by the Macao CCAC to its counterparts outside the region, including Chinese mainland agencies and the Hong Kong ICAC.

Regarding promotion and education, the CCAC organised 622 events, talks and seminars throughout the year, attracted 41,901 participants. In 2024, the CCAC launched a new programme on promoting integrity, focusing on the essence of the law on Prevention and Suppression of Bribery in the Private Sector and the law on Prevention and Suppression of Bribery in External Trade. The programme included an extended training activity on integrity titled “Workshop on Value of Integrity”, and an informative programme on corruption prevention that was jointly produced with youth associations to promote the progressive development of a corruption prevention culture in the private sector.

Other major promotion and education initiatives included strengthening support for integrity education for teaching staff; and implementing the youth-oriented approach in promotion activities, to provide more opportunities for young people to directly participate in work on building integrity.

Regarding external exchanges, in 2024 the CCAC organised delegations to visit the Supervisory Commission of Liaoning Province, as well as the Supervisory Commissions of Zhuhai, Zhongshan and Shenzhen in Guangdong Province, and received visits from Chinese mainland, Hong Kong and overseas counterparts, thus maintaining bilateral and interregional exchanges and cooperation. In addition, the CCAC continued supporting the country’s participation in reviewing the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), and sent a delegation as part of the China delegation that attended a conference on anti-corruption work held in Vienna, Austria.

In fulfilling its obligations as a member of international or regional organisations, the CCAC sent personnel to participate in online and offline meetings, forums, seminars and workshops organised by organisations including the Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities (GlobE Network) of the United Nations, the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI), the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities (IAACA), to share experience in law enforcement with international counterparts.

In addition, the CCAC signed the Memorandum of Understanding on Bilateral Cooperation with the Office of the Ombudsman of Hong Kong, to facilitate information exchanges, and establish a long-term partnership.

In 2025, the CCAC will continue enhancing its standards, coordination and synergy, and strive to implement its various policy objectives, helping the Macao SAR to enhance the effectiveness of its governance and build an efficient and just society under the rule of law.



In 2024, the Commission on Audit (“CA”) published the performance audit report on “Barrier-free Pedestrian Facilities for Visually Impaired Persons” and the Commissioner of Audit’s Report 2023.

The performance audit report on “Barrier-free Pedestrian Facilities for Visually Impaired Persons” examined the work of the related interdepartmental group, and revealed that the group’s performance in planning, implementation and reporting was unsatisfactory, including as during the formulation of the Ten-year Plan of Rehabilitation Services 2016 - 2025, the proposals related to barrier-free pedestrian facilities for visually impaired persons were only described in general terms, without a formal document stipulating the division of work, resulting in difficulties in monitoring and assessing the work that was conducted. Also, the group failed to perform an effective review of the content of the evaluation report, resulting in the report failing to reflect the actual implementation of the work.

According to the CA, the discontinuities and dispersed nature of barrier-free facilities in Macao needed to be addressed by various departments. Regardless of whether an interdepartmental group has been set up or not, the participating departments should work towards the same objective, to ensure that public funds are reasonably utilised, whilst enabling the various types of barrier-free facilities constructed by the Government to perform their intended roles, and to provide convenience to the needy, in order to help build an inclusive society.

In accordance with Article 3 of Law No. 11/1999, requiring auditing supervision of the implementation of the budget of the MSAR Government, the Commission of Audit completed the Commissioner of Audit’s Report 2023. During the Legislative Assembly’s plenary meeting on 28 October 2024, the Commissioner of Audit explained in detail the main contents of the report, and the details of implementation.

In addition to auditing, the Commission of Audit conducted the following activities in 2024:

From 3 July to 5 July, the 8th Seminar of the Organization of the Supreme Audit Institutions of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (OISC/CPLP) was held in Lisbon, Portugal.

Representing the Commission of Audit of the Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China as an observer of the OISC/CPLP, the Commissioner of Audit, Ho Veng On, gave a speech on the seminar's theme, "Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance", and initiated a discussion with the delegates to introduce the results of exchanges and cooperation between the National Audit Office and the Commission of Audit of Macao SAR in recent years. Mr Ho cited the important speech given by General Secretary Xi Jinping at the meeting of the Central Auditing Committee, which stressed that the basic requirement for performing sound auditing work in the new era is to establish a centralised, comprehensive, authoritative and efficient supervision system for auditing; the government's audit work should be commanding, pervasive, and impactful, to strengthen the management and control of audit quality, deepen and implement research-based auditing, and enhance the supervisory function of auditing, thereby providing strong and effective auditing services for Macao's high-quality development.

As a member of the China Audit Delegation, the Commissioner of Audit, Ho Veng On, attended the 16th Assembly of the Asian Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions held in New Delhi, India, from 21 September to 27 September. During the assembly, Mr Ho exchanged views on the assembly's theme and the management and development of audit authorities with the Commissioner of Audit of the National Audit Office, the Director of Audit of Hong Kong Audit Commission and leading officials from the audit authorities of various Asian countries.

In 2024, the Commission of Audit sent delegations to participate in the following United Nations audit projects organised by the National Audit Office:

- March and October – participated in training newly-appointed United Nations auditors in Beijing, organised by the Office of the United Nations Audit Committee Members Working Group of the National Audit Office;
- April – participated in the final audit project of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Global Environment Facility for the financial year 2023 in Nairobi, Kenya; and
- November – participated in the audit work of the United Nations Secretariat in New York, the United States.

Regarding training, the CA is committed to strengthening the audit team and implementing the policy objective of promoting good governance through auditing. Also, through organising targeted training activities, the CA has further examined issues beneficial to improving the system for auditing and the promotion of reforms. To help achieve these goals, on 6 November and 7 November, experts from the National Audit Office were invited to Macao to exchange experience in corporate auditing, financial auditing and big data auditing, through seminars. Apart from introducing the relevant technologies, the delegation also shared their experience with case studies and the latest development trend.

On 2 December and 3 December, the CA invited experts from the Beijing Municipal Audit Bureau to Macao to discuss and share practical experience on topics such as performance auditing, engineering investment auditing and data analysis auditing, and to encourage auditors to actively learn new auditing concepts and effective work approaches.

Regarding promotion and publicity, to enhance the public's understanding of the Government's auditing work, the CA introduced its work to members of the Youth Committee of the Macau Civil



Servants Federation during their visit to the Commission of Audit. In addition, the CA continued promoting the importance of optimising the utilisation of public resources to public administration staff, to boost their awareness of audit supervision.

## Enhancing Efficiency of Legal Proceedings, and Performing Prosecution Duties in Accordance with the Law



### Numbers of cases admitted by the three-tier court system

2024	Court of Final Appeal	Court of Appeal	Base Court (including the Examining Magistracy)	Administrative Court	Total
Cases admitted	163	1,004	18,024	86	19,277
Cases concluded	132	1,112	17,463	92	18,799
Cases pending	100	329	13,499	85	14,013

The majority of the cases in the three-tier court system were criminal cases and criminal labour cases, which totalled 6,115 (excluding Examining Magistracy cases). Ranking second were civil and

labour cases, which totalled 4,119. There were also 247 administrative cases, and 8,796 other cases.

## Law promotion and legal consulting services

To strengthen promotion of the law and foster transparency of the judicial system, starting from 9 October 2013, the court issues press releases about typical concluded cases, and publishes them on the websites of the court and the Government Information Bureau. Various media may republish and report on these cases, which can hopefully promote legal awareness and law abidance in society, and inform the public regarding judicial approaches and methods for settling various disputes. As at the end of 2024, an accumulated total of 1,156 articles had been released, 83 of which were released in 2024.

Summary of consulting services provided by the Base Court in 2024:

2024	Criminal Courts	Civil Courts	Small Claims Court	Total
Total number of inquiries	1,807	4,254	1,349	<b>7,410</b>
Number of cases	1,773	3,747	1,349	<b>6,869</b>
Number of cases directly handled by the information centre	1,701	3,571	1,349	<b>6,621</b>
Number of cases transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office	71	130	---	<b>201</b>
Number of cases transferred to other departments	0	46	---	<b>46</b>
Number of telephone inquiries	478	970	---	<b>1,448</b>

## Legal assistance and enforcement

Regarding delivery of judicial writs and assistance in investigations and evidence collection in civil and commercial cases, in 2024 the Court of Final Appeal received 304 judicial writs from mainland courts, and delivered 125 judicial writs to mainland courts on behalf of courts in Macao.

In 2024, the Court of Appeal received 40 requests for reviewing and endorsing judgments made by mainland courts or arbiters; 22 judgments endorsed by the Court of Appeal were sent to the Base Court for enforcement. The Base Court received one request under the “Arrangements Concerning Mutual Assistance in Court-ordered Measures in Aid of Arbitral Proceedings between the Chinese Mainland and the Macao Special Administrative Region”.

The MSAR Government and the HKSAR Government signed the “Arrangements Concerning Reciprocal Recognition and Enforcement of Arbitral Awards between the Hong Kong Special

Administrative Region and the Macao Special Administrative Region” in January 2013, which officially came into effect on 16 December 2013. As at the end of 2024, the Court of Appeal had accepted nine cases requesting the confirmation of arbitral awards.

In addition, the MSAR Government and the HKSAR Government signed the “Arrangements for Mutual Service of Judicial Documents in Civil and Commercial Cases between the Macao Special Administrative Region and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region” on 5 December 2017, which officially came into effect on 1 August 2020. As at the end of 2024, the Court of Final Appeal had received 63 judicial writs from Hong Kong courts and delivered 97 judicial writs to Hong Kong courts on behalf of courts in Macao.

### **Declarations of assets and interests**

In 2024, the Court of Final Appeal followed the provisions in Law No.11/2003, which had been amended by Law No.1/2013, in the process of receiving individuals for the declaration of assets and interests. It opened 163 individual dossiers, processed 2,079 documents for the declaration of assets and interests that involved 1,777 people, and organised and updated the contents of the individual dossiers according to the law.

In accordance with the provisions of the same law, the Office of the Court of Final Appeal ensures that the public can access the contents of Part IV of the declaration of assets through the official website of the Courts of Macao. In 2024, the disclosure documents (Part IV) of 469 individual dossiers involving 355 people were published online and could be retrieved. A total of 2,566 disclosure documents involving 1,092 people have been published online and can be retrieved.

### **Summary of the work in 2024 by and outlook for the MSAR courts**

In the past judicial year, Macao’s three-tier court system operated smoothly, and the number of cases handled continued to follow the upward trend seen after the end of the pandemic.

Since the end of the pandemic, criminal cases arising from gambling-related activities have been rising. It is believed that this situation is closely related to Macao’s economic recovery, the gradual increase in tourist arrivals, and the revival of related industries.

Fraud-related crimes remain at a high level, particularly telecommunications network scams that involve impersonating “public security, procuratorate, and judiciary” personnel, and phone scams targeting the elderly. Crimes involving telecommunications networks often have a cross-boundary nature, complicating investigations, and it is often challenging to trace their origins back to the criminal groups. On the other hand, the number of cases involving “money exchange gangs” decreased in the past judicial year, which is largely related to the comprehensive efforts by mainland public security authorities to combat illegal cross-boundary currency exchange activities.

In addition, there was a significant increase in judicial assistance requests between Macao and the Chinese mainland, as well as cases requesting the confirmation of judgments by the Chinese mainland. The majority of judicial writs from mainland courts were from courts in Guangdong Province, particularly from the nine cities within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, especially the People’s Court of the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone

in Hengqin.

In 2024, in addition to performing judicial functions in accordance with the law, the MSAR courts also carried out the following:

- I. Promotion of judicial reform with the aim of enhancing the efficiency of legal proceedings and improving the quality of trials. The MSAR courts actively cooperated with the Government in the legislative process for the mediation system for family cases, hoping to achieve the goals of diversified dispute resolution and appropriate diversion of family affairs cases through the establishment of a mandatory pre-trial mediation procedure;
- II. Actively carried out external judicial assistance and judicial exchanges. Judicial exchanges with other countries and regions were strengthened by participating in the Supreme Court Presidents Conference of Portuguese-speaking Countries and Regions, as well as the Conference of Chief Justices of Asia and the Pacific. Furthermore, the MSAR courts placed particular emphasis on exchanges with the courts of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. In March 2024, a delegation from the MSAR courts conducted a series of focused visits to nine courts or tribunals in the Greater Bay Area, engaging in in-depth discussions on topics such as further improving the judicial assistance mechanism between Guangdong and Macao, intensifying judicial exchanges and cooperation between the two regions, simplifying judicial assistance procedures, mutually learning from rules for legal proceedings, expanding channels for finding facts related to the law, and establishing a long-term mechanism for exchanging information on cases.

In future, the MSAR courts will facilitate a pilot programme at the People's Court of the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin by appointing Macao judges as non-permanent judges, who will form joint panels with Chinese mainland judges to hear civil and commercial cases involving Macao.

To further expedite the handling of civil cases, a new civil court will be established. This new court will help reduce the workload of existing courts, shorten the time required for scheduling civil cases, and ensure the timely protection of public interests.

To enhance the quality and efficiency of trials, the provision of assistants to judges of the Court of Final Appeal and the Court of Appeal will be considered, aiming to improve the quality of trials, achieve efficient operation of legal proceedings, and alleviate the pressure on making judicial decisions.

In addition, the digitalisation of the litigation processes will continue, with plans to launch electronic exchanges of official documents between the courts and government departments, as well as to introduce electronic notifications and electronic certificate services by the courts in 2025, to improve the efficiency of document transmissions and provide more convenient services to the public.

Furthermore, close cooperation with the National Judges College will be continued, with national affairs training classes to be held in the mainland. These programmes aim to deepen judges' and judicial support staff's understanding of national affairs, the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region, and the "One country, two

systems” principle, thereby ensuring the accurate implementation of “One country, two systems” in Macao.

Efforts will also be made to actively review and revise the promotion and training systems, as well as the additional remuneration scheme for judicial support staff. This aims to motivate staff enthusiasm and enhance efficiency, while ensuring rational use of public resources, thereby contributing to the stable operation of the entire judicial system.



Regarding the main function of the Public Prosecutions Office, in 2024 the number of criminal cases was 15,840, 13.7 percent higher than the figure of 13,931 cases in 2023, marking the highest number of criminal cases filed in any year to date. Also, 14,722 cases were concluded, 18 percent more than the 12,476 cases concluded in the previous year. Among them, 3,671 cases resulted in prosecutions following investigations, while 10,622 cases were archived due to reasons such as victims being unwilling to take the cases further, insufficient evidence, and inability to determine the identity of offenders after investigations; the figures are 8.19 percent and 20.59 percent higher than in the previous year, respectively. A total of 7,460 cases were carried over from 2023 to 2024, representing an increase of 32.15 percent compared to 5,645 cases carried over from 2022 to 2023.

The number of cases reopened due to discovery of new evidence was 264, representing a decrease of 23.7 percent compared to 346 cases in the previous year. This indicates a gradual reduction in the reopening of archived cases, due to a reduction in a “backlog” of numbers of individuals involved having to enter Macao to make reports to the authorities, following the resumption of normal boundary crossings.

A data analysis reveals that the top five categories of crimes in terms of numbers of cases prosecuted in 2024 were as follows:

1. 4,946 cases of offences against property (theft, robbery, damage, etc.), up 17.12 percent year-on-year;
2. 3,152 cases of offences against assets (various types of fraud, extortion, etc.), up 9.79 percent year-on-year;
3. 1,696 cases of offences involving physical assault, up 22.10 percent year-on-year;
4. 999 cases of offences related to violation of road traffic laws, up 11.25 year-on-year; and
5. 981 cases of computer crime, up 83.71 percent year-on-year.

In addition, the Public Prosecutions Office initiated relatively high numbers of investigations of the following crimes:

- 857 illegal immigration and immigration-related crimes, down 15.04 percent year-on-year;
- 437 cases of illegal gambling, up 163.25 percent year-on-year;
- 378 cases of forgery, up 19.24 percent year-on-year;
- 240 cases crimes against personal freedom, such as threats and imprisonment, up 17.65 percent year-on-year; and
- 239 cases of infringement of sexual freedom and self-determination, down 4.02 percent year-on-year.

In 2024, the Public Prosecutions Office conducted a series of tasks to ensure that courts proceed according to the law. It also lawfully fulfilled its functions regarding civil and labour matters, including labour rights, parental authority, social protection, guardianship, adoption, incompetence, and bankruptcy.

In terms of criminal prosecutions, in addition to routine tasks such as acting as prosecutors in court and participating in the enforcement process, the Public Prosecutions Office at the Base Court filed 45 appeals against Base Court judgments during the year, and responded to 468 criminal appeals filed by parties involved in criminal cases.

Regarding civil and labour litigation, the Public Prosecutions Office at the Base Court participated in 962 civil cases, representing a 7.61 percent increase compared to 894 cases in the previous year. It also participated in 380 labour cases, marking a 15.56 percent decrease compared to 450 cases in the previous year.

Cases involving labour litigation are summarised as follows:

- 277 newly initiated cases involving work accidents and occupational health, representing a 3.48 percent decrease compared to 287 cases in the previous year. The Public Prosecutions Office attempted mediation for 285 of the labour litigation cases, with 13 cases proceeding to litigation after failure to agree on mediation.
- 103 ordinary labour litigation cases were newly initiated, representing a 36.81 percent

decrease compared to 163 cases in the previous year. Among these, the Public Prosecutions Office conducted 84 mediations, with 30 cases proceeding to litigation after mediation agreements were not reached.

- During 2024, 368 workers were involved in the successful mediation procedures conducted by the Public Prosecution Office, 21.37 percent less than in the previous year.

In 2024, a total of 1,435 pre-litigation cases concerning parental authority, association statutes, social protection, and other matters were opened, with 1,373 of these cases completed. Additionally, 779 procedures were initiated, including for the execution of litigation costs, tax settlements, and interdiction proceedings. The Public Prosecutions Office also provided 1,901 legal consultations to citizens. These figures are little changed from those in 2023.

In 2024, the Office of the Administrative Court at the Public Prosecutions Office participated in 78 newly opened administrative, tax, and customs cases, representing a slight decrease of 4.88 percent compared to 82 cases in the previous year. These included 47 judicial appeals, 15 litigation cases, one case involving urgent procedures, 11 cases of objection to administration of taxation, three litigation procedures on behalf of the Public Prosecutions Office, and one case involving another procedure. The case volumes for each type of litigation were broadly similar to those in the previous year.

In 2024, the Public Prosecutions Office before the Court of Final Appeal and the Court of Appeal participated in 1,011 criminal (including misdemeanours related to traffic and labour), civil and commercial (including labour civil litigation), and administrative proceedings of the Court of Appeal, in the Court of Appeal, representing a 7.32 percent increase compared to 942 cases in the previous year. It also participated in a total of 155 cases in the Court of Final Appeal, representing a 32.48 percent increase from 117 cases in the previous year.

In 2024, the Office of the Prosecutor General's work mainly covered the following:

- 1) Ensured the administrative and financial operations of the Public Prosecutions Office were in accordance with the law, and provided technical support to judicial officers;
- 2) Coordinated and promoted information technology infrastructure development of the Public Prosecutions Office;
- 3) Submitted 11 legal advice documents and reports to the Chief Executive, in accordance with the instructions of the Prosecutor General and at the request of the Chief Executive;
- 4) Provided 115 external documents with legal advice or responses to legal consultations;
- 5) Opened 55 international and regional judicial assistance cases;
- 6) Handled 1,056 inquiries regarding litigation procedures;
- 7) Represented the Public Prosecutions Office in 178 opening of public tenders; and
- 8) Organised 68 external exchange activities for the Public Prosecutions Office.

The overall work of the Public Prosecutions Office of the Macao SAR in 2024 can be summarised as follows:

- (1) The total number of newly registered criminal cases reached a historical high, with the incidence of various crime categories generally increasing compared to the previous year, indicating a relatively clear trend of more active criminal activity. In response to the new public security situation arising from the rising number of cases, the Public Prosecutions Office, in close cooperation with the security authorities, actively enhanced the quality and efficiency of its work. As a result, the overall social order and public security in the SAR remained stable and peaceful;
- (2) Numbers of fraud cases continued rising, accounting for over one-sixth of the total number of criminal cases initiated, posing a severe threat to society. The Public Prosecutions Office will continue to work closely with security authorities and all sectors of society, strengthen judicial cooperation with the Chinese mainland and overseas jurisdictions, and enhance efforts in prevention and enforcement to rigorously combat this trend;
- (3) Crimes related to gaming activities saw a significant increase. Given the importance of the integrated tourism and leisure industry to the Macao SAR's economic development, it is essential to strengthen prevention and control efforts, eliminate potential risks, and ensure healthy and orderly development environment for the integrated tourism and leisure industry;
- (4) Cases involving sexual assault of minors have declined, with an increase in self-reported instances by minors, indicating that related enforcement and preventive education measures have had some effect. However, the number of serious sexual offense cases has risen significantly. Investigations suggest that a considerable portion of these cases may be linked to prostitution-related activities. Therefore, it is necessary to further strengthen measures targeting the control of prostitution and related illegal activities, in order to further improve the safety and security of society;
- (5) The overall number of drug-related cases have generally declined, and no cases involving minors were recorded, indicating that anti-drug measures and educational campaigns have achieved a certain level of effectiveness. However, law enforcement agencies and judicial authorities must remain vigilant, to strictly prevent and curb any emerging signs of this serious social threat;
- (6) In 2024, the Public Prosecutions Office closely aligned its work with the new developments and requirements for improving the legal framework for safeguarding national security in the Macao SAR, and actively strengthened the operational mechanisms for fulfilling its statutory duties in safeguarding national security;
- (7) The Public Prosecutions Office followed up regarding the trial proceedings of three major criminal cases in accordance with the law: the “Suncity” case, the “Tak Chun” case, and the corruption case involving former officials at the Public Works and Transport Bureau. Following the final judgements in these cases, the Public Prosecutions Office has been fully committed to enforcing them, further upholding judicial justice and the public interest in the Macao SAR;
- (8) The number of reports and cases related to money laundering criminal activities has increased. The Public Prosecutions Office continues to strengthen cooperation with other



functional departments to effectively combat financial crimes such as money laundering, monitor the risks of money laundering, and prepare for related assessments by international organisations;

- (9) There has been a reduction in demand for services related to international and regional judicial assistance cases. Through participation in negotiations for the Macao SAR's agreements on foreign judicial assistance and representing the SAR in technical exchange activities with international judicial cooperation organisations, the Public Prosecutions Office supports and facilitates the SAR's efforts to expand its scope of judicial cooperation in various fields;
- (10) Successfully hosted the 57th Executive Committee Meeting of the International Association of Prosecutors, ensuring the representation of the "One China" sovereignty principle within the International Association of Prosecutors. The event also showcased the successful implementation of the "One Country, Two Systems" policy and the sound legal environment and development achievements of the Macao SAR;
- (11) The Public Prosecutions Office strengthened the supervision of law enforcement, the protection of public interest, and the safeguarding of the legitimate rights and interests of specific vulnerable groups such as workers and minors. The Public Prosecutions Office has assisted over 1,000 workers in obtaining more than 82 million patacas in wage compensation, effectively ensuring the protection of labour rights;
- (12) Combining judicial practice with internal research, the Public Prosecutions Office provided prosecutorial opinions on legislative, amendment-related, and other legal matters to the administrative authorities through various means. It actively participated in and promoted development of Macao SAR's legal system, jointly building a legal framework that aligns with the new trends in social development;
- (13) The Public Prosecutions Office further improved and perfected its internal operational oversight mechanism by implementing concrete measures such as strengthening supervisory responsibilities, optimising procedural guidelines, clarifying the scope of authority and responsibilities, incorporating technological support, and enhancing internal education and awareness, to ensure the quality and efficiency of prosecutorial and judicial work; and
- (14) Accelerated the development of prosecutorial informatisation by building internal digital applications and management systems within the Public Prosecutions Office, establishing internal data connectivity and sharing mechanisms to enhance the efficiency of prosecutorial work, and continuously implementing judicial services that facilitate public access.