

Hong Kong SAR (Special Administrative Region)

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Overview

The Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong exercises a unique political system of One Country, Two Systems with the People's Republic of China as a result of the Sino-British Joint Declaration signed on 19 December 1984, which established that China would take control over Hong Kong on 1 July 1997. Politically, Hong Kong maintains its pre-1997 legislative system. Hong Kong has a Chief Executive, an Executive Council and a Legislative Council. The Chief Executive is Tung Chee-hwa. The Executive Council consists of three ex-officio members and 10 appointed members. The unicameral Legislative Council or LEGCO has 60 seats with 30 indirectly elected by functional constituencies, 24 elected by popular vote, and 6 elected by an 800-member election committee. Members serve four-year terms. The next election will be held in 2004.

Hong Kong continues to have a free market economy highly dependent on international trade. Natural resources are limited, and food and raw materials must be imported. Indeed, imports and exports, including re-exports, each exceed GDP in dollar value. Even before Hong Kong reverted to China on 1 July 1997 it had extensive trade and investment ties with the mainland. Per capita GDP compares with the level in the four big countries of Western Europe.

ILO Constitutents

Government - Labour Department, is the government agency responsible for the implementation and enforcement of labour laws and regulations of Hong Kong.

Employers - There are a number of organizations that represent the interests of employers. The Employers' Federation of Hong Kong is one of the organizations recognized by Hong Kong to represent employer issues. The Hong Kong general chambers of Commerce, Federation of Hong Kong Industries, and the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce are among the group of employer representatives who sit on the Hong Kong Advisory Board.

Workers - The Registry of Trade Unions, part of the Labour Department, administers the Trade Unions in Hong Kong. Hong Kong allows for multiple trade unions and collective bargaining. The Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU) is one of the largest independent representatives of workers, with members over 140,000, and is affiliated to the ICFTU.