

IMPROVING HONG KONG'S ELECTORAL SYSTEM



In recent years, Hong Kong has faced unprecedented challenges that have risked undermining the “One Country, Two Systems” principle and have revealed loopholes and deficiencies in Hong Kong’s electoral system. Groups advocating “Hong Kong independence”, organising resistance against the governance of the Central Authorities, and even colluding with external elements to stir up disorder in society have placed the city’s stability and prosperity at risk.

Having considered the actual situation in Hong Kong, the Central Authorities took the initiative from the national level to improve the electoral system of Hong Kong, aiming to ensure that Hong Kong can stay true to the original aspiration in implementing the principle of “One Country, Two Systems” and get Hong Kong back on the right track. It is only by putting in place institutional safeguards to ensure “patriots administering Hong Kong” that the principle of “One Country, Two Systems” can be fully and faithfully applied in the HKSAR which is conducive to the long term prosperity and stability of the city.

Passage of the National People’s Congress’s Decision

Against such background, the 13th National People’s Congress (NPC) passed the Decision on improving the electoral system of the HKSAR on March 11, 2021. The NPC Standing Committee then approved the amended Annex I on Method for the Selection of the Chief Executive of the HKSAR and Annex II on Method for the Formation of the Legislative Council (LegCo) of the HKSAR and Its Voting Procedures of the Basic Law on March 30. The HKSAR Government took forward the amendments to the local electoral legislation in accordance with the amended Annex I and Annex II.

The political structure of HKSAR, of which the electoral system is an essential component, is the prerogative of the Central Authorities. The Decision, made in accordance with the Constitution of the People’s Republic of China (PRC), and relevant requirements in the Basic Law of the HKSAR and the Law of the PRC on Safeguarding National Security in the HKSAR, is fully constitutional and legal.

Amendments to Annex I and Annex II to the Basic Law according to the following principles:

- Fully and accurately upholding and implementing the principles of “One Country, Two Systems”, “Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong” and a high degree of autonomy;



The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam (centre), holds a press conference to unveil and explain the Improving Electoral System (Consolidated Amendments) Bill 2021 on April 13. Other officials at the press conference included the Secretary for Justice, Ms Teresa Cheng, SC (second left); and the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Erick Tsang Kwok-wai (second right).

- Firmly safeguarding the constitutional order of the HKSAR as enshrined under the Constitution and the Basic Law;
- Ensuring “patriots administering Hong Kong”;
- Effectively enhancing the governance capability of the HKSAR; and
- Upholding HKSAR permanent residents’ right to vote and the right to stand for election in accordance with law.

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The Decision comprises nine articles, including the following:

Election Committee - broadly representative, suited to the HKSAR's actual situation, and representative of the overall interests of society

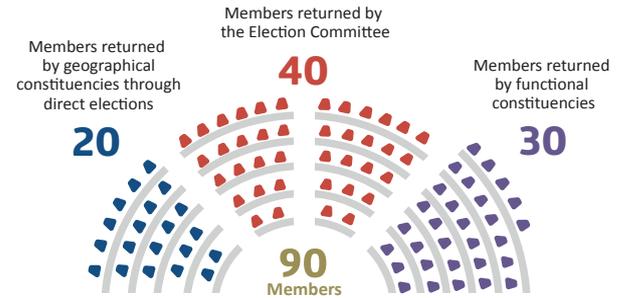
- Responsible for electing the Chief Executive designate and part of the Members of the LegCo
- Responsible for nominating candidates for the Chief Executive and LegCo Members
- Expanded from 1,200 to 1,500 members from five sectors, such as industrial, commercial and financial sectors; the Professions; grassroots, labour, religious and other sectors; LegCo members and representatives of district organisations

Chief Executive

- Candidates nominated jointly by not less than 188 Members of the Election Committee, among whom the number of members of each sector should not be less than 15
- The Election Committee to elect the Chief Executive designate by secret ballot on a one-person-one-vote

basis. The election shall require a simple majority vote of all the Members of the Election Committee.

Legislative Council



Candidate Eligibility Review Mechanism

- A Candidate Eligibility Review Committee established to assess and validate the eligibility of candidates for the Election Committee Members, the Chief Executive, and the LegCo Members
- Aimed to provide a robust systemic safeguard for implementing the principle of “patriots administering Hong Kong” in our political system

(For details of “Improving Electoral System”, please refer to the website www.cmab.gov.hk/improvement)