

## **Analysis Report: 22 Years After Macao's Handover**

- **Macao's Political operations have grown increasingly conservative. The CCP's "comprehensive view of national security" is embedded in Macao's administrative system, but critics are concerned about its potential overreach into Macao's judicial system**
- **There are signs of economic recovery, but the ripple effect of the Gaming Law amendments on Macao's industrial structure and economic development deserves continuous attention**
- **Restrictions on rights to assembly & demonstration and on free press provoked constant controversies, leading to deeper public concerns over the further weakening of diverse voices in the society**
- **The CCP continues to accelerate mainland China's integration with Macao through strategies such as forging a common market and carrying out cross-regional governance, raising widespread concerns over the looming Mainlandization of Macao's system**
- **The international community is concerned about the tightening of political participation, freedoms, and rights in Macao. Some foreign think tanks have already said that they would not give Macao an independent ranking for its economic freedom in the future**
- **Macao suspended operations of MECO in Taiwan, whereas the staff members at TECO in Macao continues to hold steadfast to their posts to safeguard the rights and interests of the people of Taiwan and Macao**

### **I. Overall review and analysis**

Macao was handed over to mainland China on December 20, 1999. Premised on Macao maintaining its free economic system and autonomous status, the government of the Republic of China (ROC) treats Macao as a "special area," unique from the Mainland area, in order to maintain consistency

and continuity in its Macao policy and the various direct interactions between the people of Taiwan and Macao. The government therefore annually reports on the overall developments in Macao and the status of Taiwan-Macao relations. This is the 22<sup>nd</sup> in a series of regular reports, covering the period from December 2020 to December 2021.

In general, Macao witnessed a number of controversial events over the past year, including the mass disqualification of pro-democracy Legislative Council candidates, rejecting several applications from the public seeking to hold assemblies and demonstrations, and censoring news reports from media outlets. These events have all reflected an increasingly conservative stance of the Macao government on its political operations. The US and European Parliament both expressed concerns over the curtailment of freedom and rights in Macao. The fact that Macao's Court of Final Appeal rejected several appeals on the issue of banned commemorative events for the "Tiananmen Square incident" and on the candidacy disqualification of the Legislative Council election has led to widespread concerns over whether Macao's judicial system has been overpowered by the CCP's "comprehensive view of national security." In addition, the Macao government announced that it would embark on law amendments for the Safeguarding National Security Law, a move that should be closely monitored for whether it will further undermine human rights and the rule of law in Macao.

Macao's economy had a slight recovery in the first three quarters of 2021; however, the city's leading gaming industry generated merely MOP\$78.99 billion in the first 11 months of the year, far short of the Macao government's forecast of an annual revenue at MOP\$130 billion. In September, the Macao government initiated public consultation on its Gaming Law amendments. With

the amendments, the government hopes to address Macao's over-reliance on the gaming industry so it could mitigate risks to its economy and deal with the socio-economic by-products of this phenomenon, such as the small-and-medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) being squeezing out and the job market being dominated by gaming. Some critics suspected that these amendments were not solely meant to address the imminent expiration of gaming licenses in the middle of next year; rather, some suggested that these amendments were drafted to help the CCP prevent a potential capital flight and gain an upper-hand in the ongoing US-China rivalry. Furthermore, in recent years, the CCP has been accelerating integration between mainland China and Macao through strategies such as building a common market and carrying out cross-regional governance; these policy directions have drawn considerable public attention as they seem to suggest that Macao has been further incorporated into mainland China's overall development plans.

People-to-people exchanges between Taiwan and Macao continued to decline due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but the trade activities have rebounded slightly. On June 16 this year, the Macao government unilaterally announced that it would suspend operations of its representative office in Taiwan (Macao Economic and Cultural Office, MECO), shortly after the Hong Kong government announced the suspension of its office operations in Taiwan on May 18. In light of the inflection points of Taiwan-Macao relations and the possible future scenarios of Taiwan's representative office in Macao (Taipei Economic and Cultural Office, TECO), our government has actively initiated discussion on countermeasures and has directed our staff based in Macao to hold steadfast to their posts and continue providing services in order to safeguard people's rights and interests in their exchanges.

The following is an analysis of the overall developments in Macao 22 years on from its handover, covering the period from December 2020 to December 2021:

**1. Macao’s Political operations have grown increasingly conservative. The CCP’s “comprehensive view of national security” is embedded in Macao’s administrative system, but critics are concerned about its potential overreach into Macao’s judicial system**

The biggest political event in Macao over the past year was the unprecedented mass disqualification of non-establishment candidates ahead of the 7<sup>th</sup> Legislative Council election. On July 9, 2021, the Electoral Affairs Commission (hereinafter the EAC) of the Macao Legislative Council ruled that 21 candidates in 6 constituencies did not meet the criteria to be considered upholding the Basic Law or loyal to the Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR) and that they were disqualified in accordance with Article 6 of the Electoral Law for the Legislative Assembly. Following this announcement, the EAC unveiled the "seven principles"<sup>1</sup> used in its vetting process and announced the “Decision on Correction or Replacement of Candidates” at the same time. As stated in this Decision, the EAC eliminated 5 constituencies<sup>2</sup> in the direct election, including the “Prosperous Democratic Macao Association”; it also revoked the candidacy status of 20 incumbent Legislative Council members,

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<sup>1</sup> Must uphold the constitutional order established by the Constitution and the Basic Law; must maintain national unity and territorial integrity; candidates must not collude with foreign countries or foreign forces seeking to infiltrate SAR organs of power; must not defame China or the Macao SAR; must not engage in actions detrimental to national sovereignty and security; and must respect the authority of the National People’s Congress and its Standing Committee.

<sup>2</sup> The others are the Association for the “Progress of New Macao,” “New Macao Progressives,” “Macao Victory”, and “New Macao Gaming.”

including Antonio Ng and Sulu Sou Ka Hou.<sup>3</sup> Some of the disqualified members appealed, but the Macao Court of Final Appeal maintained the EAC's original decision as it agreed that these individuals had shown that they did not uphold the Basic Law and were disloyal to Macao with their past record of participating in or supporting commemorative events of the "Tiananmen Square Incident" and "Charter 08" petition.

The Legislative Council election officially took place on September 12. The direct election (for 14 seats) received 137,279 votes, representing a 42.38% turnout rate. It was the first time that the turnout rate dropped below 50% and, compared with last year's 57.22%, the rate this year plunged nearly 15%, making it the lowest-ever turnout since Macao's handover to mainland China in 1999. The indirect election (for 12 seats) received 7,000 votes, representing a 87.33% turnout rate. The election saw a total of more than 5,000 blank and invalid votes, an amount that was also a record high. When asked about the plunge in the turnout rate and surge in invalid votes, the officials cited factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the weather in their explanation, while critics generally attributed these phenomena to a voter boycott, the public's passive show of frustration over the mass disqualification of pan-democratic candidates back in July. The Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council in mainland China claimed that the results of the election truly reflected the principle of "patriots ruling Macao," whereas critics expressed sympathy for the suppressed pan-democrats and voiced concerns about the shrinking space of free speech and people's political participation in Macao.

In light of the strict and brutal enforcement of the Hong Kong National

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<sup>3</sup> One was a replacement candidate.

Security Law, the Macao government has come under the spotlight for its moves related to shoring up its national security legislation, especially those related to the Safeguarding National Security Law (hereinafter the “Macao’s National Security Law”) that was passed back in 2009 but has remained dormant for over a decade. In the third policy address of his tenure released on November 16, Chief Executive of Macao Ho Iat Seng made it one of his policy priorities in 2022 to amend Macao’s National Security Law, marking an official proclamation to put this issue on his agenda. Much attention has been focused on the details of the amendments, and Ho responded by saying that his administration would refer to the definitions used in the legislations of other regions; he also promised that the amendments would not deviate from the related rules in Macao’s Criminal Code. Moreover, the Beijing authorities decided on November 30 to appoint under Macao’s Committee for Safeguarding National Security a national security adviser and three technical advisers. These positions were filled by officials including Fu Ziying, Director of the Liaison Office of the Central People’s Government in Macao and other officials at the Liaison Office, who are now in charge of supervising, guiding, and coordinating national security work in Macao.

In terms of judicial operations, Chief Executive of Macao Ho Iat Seng stated at the opening ceremony of the judicial year on October 20 that the Macao government remained committed to upholding judicial independence. However, the fact that the Court of Final Appeal of Macao rejected several appeals on the issue of banned rallies in commemoration of the “Tiananmen Square incident” and on the candidacy disqualification of the Legislative Council election has sparked questions about whether Macao’s judicial system is

gradually shifting from a system that resolves legal disputes to one that is subordinate to the CCP's "comprehensive view of national security."

In addition, Macao's gaming tycoon Alvin Chau was suspected of illegal gambling operations in mainland China by the Wenzhou Public Security Bureau in late November this year, an accusation that resulted in the Wenzhou prosecutor initiating a public prosecution and issuing an arrest warrant; the day after, the Macao government arrested and detained Chau and others on charges of illegal gambling operations, money laundering, etc., saying that they were acting upon the notification by the mainland Chinese authorities. This case raised questions about whether mainland China's criminal law could be applied to the gaming industry in Macao, and whether Chau would be "extradited to mainland China" for trial after finishing his sentence in Macao. Related developments are worth watching.

## **2. There are signs of economic recovery, but the ripple effect of the Gaming Law amendments on Macao's industrial structure and economic development deserves continuous attention**

Compared with a -56.3% economic growth in 2020, Macao's economy showed signs of recovery in 2021, but the pace of its GDP growth was affected by recurrent waves of the COVID-19 pandemic, rendering GDP growths at -0.9%, 69.5%, and 32.9% respectively in the first three quarters of the year. The total tourist arrivals in Macao were more than 5.77 million in the first three quarters, up 43.7% year-over-year (YoY). The overall unemployment rate in the third quarter was 2.9%. Consumer prices generally remained stable. The

gaming revenues over the first 11 months of the year totaled at MOP\$78.99 billion, up 49.9% YoY, but the amount was still far smaller than the Macao government's forecast of an annual revenue at MOP\$130 billion.

The gaming industry is Macao's economic pillar, main source of government revenues, and primary source of employment. Prior to the pandemic, this sector contributed more than 50% of Macao's GDP and generated nearly 80% of the government's tax revenues. By the end of 2020, statistics showed, Macao's gaming industry had around 82,043 employees, accounting for around 17% of the overall population. On September 14, the Macao government unveiled its plan to amend the "Legal Framework for the Operations of Casino Games of Fortune" (Macao Law No. 16/2001, hereinafter the "Gaming Law"), and the 45-day public consultation period began from September 15. The key amendments in this proposal included the number and duration of gaming licenses granted, new statutory requirements for supervisory purposes, protection of employee welfare, strengthening the vetting mechanism for gaming intermediaries and associates, appointing government representatives to the enterprises, promoting non-gaming projects, demanding more social responsibility, and clarifying criminal responsibility and administrative penalties. The draft amendments drew widespread public attention. In early December, the Macao government said it was in the process of revising the consultation report for the "Gaming Law" following the Legislative Council's deliberation, and would soon release the revised version.

The Macao government claimed that the Gaming Law amendments were meant to address its over-reliance on the gaming industry so it could mitigate risks to its economy and deal with the socio-economic by-products of this



phenomenon, such as the SMEs being squeezing out and job market being dominated by gaming. Analysts in different sectors widely agreed that these amendments were the Macao government's attempt to make a bold, decisive, comprehensive, and structural overhaul of the industry to create a favorable environment for industrial diversification, a policy goal that had never been achieved. Nonetheless, these amendments also reeked of the CCP's political agenda, including: ramping up crackdowns on hotbeds of corruption and channels of capital outflow to ensure mainland China's economic and financial security; containing the local political forces in Macao to prevent the political clans and business communities between mainland China and Macao from forming interest groups strong enough to influence the CCP's policy-making; fully implementing policies to rein in the private enterprises in mainland China, Hong Kong, and Macao; and diluting the influence of American-invested enterprises in Macao's gaming industry to create bargaining chips for its future dealings with the US.

Currently, there are six gaming operators in Macao: SJM Holdings Limited, Galaxy Entertainment Group Limited, Wynn Macau Limited, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Inc., the Venetian Macao (the Las Vegas Sands Corporation), and Melco Crown Entertainment, all of which face an imminent expiration of their gaming licenses on June 26, 2022. Macao's Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng said in mid-November, 2021, that if the Gaming Law amendments were not passed before the tender of gaming license renewal, these licenses could be renewed according to the original contract. The minute the news broke about the Gaming Law amendments, the Hong Kong-listed Macao gaming stocks tumbled; some analysts even suggested that the VIP room operators, which

contributed to 70% of Macao's gaming revenues, would be hit the hardest by these amendments. Subsequent developments pertaining to the law amendments and the rights to gaming operations have critical implications on the economic development in Macao, and thus deserve continuous attention.

In addition to the Game Law amendments, more shockwaves were sent through Macao's gaming industry with the arrest of Alvin Chau, a gaming tycoon in Macao and the founder of the "Suncity Group." Hong Kong-based media Sing Tao Daily suggested that the Beijing authorities were behind the scene as Beijing believed that Macao's gaming industry posed a serious threat to China's economic security. Several other VIP room operators in Macao<sup>4</sup> were also identified in the indictment for alleged involvement. Following this incident, rumors went around about many casinos in Macao shutting their junket-run VIP rooms. It was predicted that the ripple effect of this incident would lead to a fall of gaming revenues by 30 to 50%.

### **3. Restrictions on rights to assembly & demonstration and on free press provoked constant controversies, leading to deeper public concerns over the further weakening of diverse voices in the society**

Over the past year, Macao witnessed at least five controversies over restrictions on the rights to assembly and demonstration. These incidents include police pressure in February and March on rally applications to support Myanmar's struggle for democracy by some Macao-based Burmese nationals and Macao residents. There were also cases in October where some Macao-

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<sup>4</sup> Tak Chun Group, GuangDong Group, Golden Resorts Group, GreatStar, and Hengsheng Group

based Philippine nationals were subjected to investigation for displaying banners of the Philippine presidential election in public places by Macao's police, immigration, and prosecution.

In addition, the demonstration launched by Macao's pro-democracy groups calling on the government to "Cancel coupons and provide consumption cards, protect people's livelihood and employment" was forced to cancel by Macao's Health Bureau on grounds of difficulty to enforce pandemic control measures. Similarly, the application by the Macao Democratic Development Association to hold a commemorative gathering for the "Tiananmen Square Incident" was rejected, again, on grounds of pandemic prevention, against the Criminal Code, and violating other regulations.<sup>5</sup> Critics believed that this series of incidents indicated a tightening of social controls by related authorities and were concerned that the freedoms and rights promised in the Macao Basic Law might exist only on paper going forward.

The aforementioned trend of tougher restrictions on people's freedoms and rights is also seen in the media sector. The Macao government had previously installed in the executive committee of the state-run Macau Broadcasting (TDM) some retired security officials, who allegedly imposed a fresh order in March on TDM's Portuguese news department to ban any critical reports about the governing authorities by the journalists. Although the TDM Executive Committee denied having issued this order, it did publicly admit in June that it had censored some news programs and had removed the discussion on applications being rejected for those seeking to hold commemorative

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<sup>5</sup> The police pointed out past assemblies contained contents such as "attributing responsibility for the massacre," "ending the one-party dominant system," advocating the "Jasmine Revolution" and "Charter 08." These contents incite subversion of state power and involve "provocation and defamation."

gatherings for the "Tiananmen Square Incident"; the committee also admitted that this decision provoked boycott and protest by two commentators. According to media reports, at least 10 journalists from the Portuguese department of the TDM have voted with their feet out of disapproval.

Moreover, the online media channel "Macao Concealers," which was founded by the pro-democracy "New Democratic Macao Association" and had been operating for 16 years, announced that it would cease operations from midnight, October 20, due to "unprecedented environmental changes and scarce resources." Considering "Macao Concealers" had been an active participant in Macao's public affairs and social movements, its closure was widely interpreted as a case in point for the further weakening of diverse voices in Macao's society.

#### **4. The CCP continues to accelerate mainland China's integration with Macao through strategies such as forging a common market and carrying out cross-regional governance, raising widespread concerns over the looming Mainlandization of Macao's system**

In the past year, as part of its overall development plans, the CCP has stepped up its acceleration of mainland China's integration with Macao through doubling down on the "common market" incentive and consolidating the philosophy of "cross-regional governance."

On March 11, the CCP's National People's Congress (NPC) passed the "14<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035," in which the CCP reiterated the

principles of "one country, two systems" and "Macao ruled by Macao people." Meanwhile, the CCP pledged to actively promote the integration of Hong Kong and Macao into China's overall national development plan by building a functional platform for their joint "Belt and Road" projects, deepening ties with Hong Kong and Macao on economy & trade and technological innovation, and enhancing the connectivity of their financial markets. Moreover, the CCP promised to further improve the policies and measures for Hong Kong and Macao residents seeking development and living in mainland China. It also vowed to strengthen the national identity and patriotism of Hong Kong and Macao residents. Further, on May 4, the Macao government established the "Working Committee on National Integration and Development" directly under the chief executive of Macao.<sup>6</sup> The committee is responsible for coordinating Macao's participation in the "Belt and Road" initiatives and construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA).

The interaction and cooperation between Macao and mainland China has continued on the aforementioned foundation. For instance, Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng led many delegations to mainland China, during which time he visited eight major cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao GBA<sup>7</sup>, Sichuan, Shaanxi, Hangzhou, etc. in July, September, and November. On June 4, Macao co-hosted the first Shanghai-Macao Cooperation Conference with Shanghai. On November 30, Macao and Zhuhai signed the "Agreement on the Framework of Work Related to the Zhuhai-Macao Vocational Skill Level Certification." In October, Macao inked an agreement on the framework of strategic cooperation

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<sup>6</sup> Members include five secretaries of the Macao government, the police chief, and the director-general of the Macao Customs.

<sup>7</sup> Zhongshan, Jiangmen, Zhaoqing, Foshan, Guangzhou, Dongguan, Huizhou, and Shenzhen.

with Fudan University. On May 19, a total of 10 tourism associations in Macao, including the Macao Hoteliers and Innkeepers Association, signed the "Tourism Industry Strategic Cooperation Agreement" with Hengqin.

The most high-profile Macao-mainland China collaboration among the all projects was the "General Plan for Building a Guangdong-Macao In-depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin" announced by mainland China on September 5. The cooperation zone is defined as the customs control area on Hengqin Island between the "first-tier" (between Hengqin and Macao) and "second-tier" (between Hengqin and other areas within the customs territory of mainland China). The governments of Guangdong and Macao jointly set up the Management Committee of the Cooperation Zone with a dual-director system headed by the governor of Guangdong and chief executive of Macao. The two governments will coordinate and make decisions on major plans, policies, projects, and important personnel appointments and dismissals related to the Cooperation Zone. This project is considered a new model of "one country, two systems." An overview of external analyses reveals an overwhelming sense that as Macao increasingly involved in the regional economy and mechanisms constructed by the CCP, the city seems to have been further absorbed into mainland China's overall development plans.

**5. The international community is concerned about the tightening of political participation, freedoms, and rights in Macao. Some foreign think tanks have already said that they would not give Macao an independent ranking for its economic freedom in the future**

The international community's assessment of Macao is affected not only by Macao's internal situation but by the evolving situations in Hong Kong. The large-scale disqualification of Legislative Council candidates in Macao sparked concerns of the European Union and the US. The "Report on a New EU-China Strategy" passed by the European Parliament in September addressed Macao's candidacy disqualification and highlighted Macao government's crackdowns on free speech through its decisions to ban the public from holding commemorative events for the "Tiananmen Square Incident" and through issuing orders demanding that the media abide by the pro-China editorial guidelines. The report called on the CCP to respect Macao's Basic Law and refrain from interfering in its elections or media operations.

Moreover, the US Department of State released its annual human rights report in March this year, signaling the major human rights violations in Macao, including disrupting peaceful assemblies, limiting free speech, and restricting political participation. Similarly, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) issued a statement in the same month, condemning the senior officials at the TDM for interfering with the editorial process and threatening media independence as a result. The RSF then urged the chief executives of both Hong Kong and Macao to protect freedom of the press.

The Heritage Foundation, a US-based think tank, released an annual index of economic freedom based on its evaluation of economies in different regions in the aspects of free trade, property rights, judicial efficiency, and government integrity. In March this year, the foundation said that given the increasing control Beijing commands over Hong Kong's policies, it decided to treat Hong Kong and Macao as cities of mainland China and would not provide rankings to these two

places independently in the future.

The CCP has positioned Macao as a platform to facilitate China-Portugal exchanges. At the “International Infrastructure Investment and Construction Forum” (IIICF Forum) held in Macao this July, the Macao government stressed that it would step up efforts to deepen the infrastructure cooperation between Portuguese-speaking countries and countries in the "Belt and Road" initiative. During the forum, participants signed 11 agreements in areas of strategic cooperation, infrastructure, power engineering, energy storage and transportation, construction machinery, and so on.

In addition, regarding bilateral agreements signed with foreign countries, Macao and Cambodia signed the “Agreement on the Elimination of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Tax Evasion” on April 23 this year, making it the 8<sup>th</sup> agreement signed by Macao to eliminate double taxation.

**6. Macao suspended operations of MECO in Taiwan, whereas the staff members at TECO in Macao continues to hold steadfast to their posts to safeguard the rights and interests of the people of Taiwan and Macao**

The state of Taiwan-Macao relations is subject to that of cross-Strait relations and of the COVID-19 pandemic. In terms of people-to-people exchanges, between January and October, 2021, a total of around 58,000 Taiwanese citizens visited Macao, down nearly 40% year-over-year (YoY), while the number of Macao visitors to Taiwan fell to 1,103, or down 92.7% YoY. In the 2021 academic year, 724 Macao students applied to study in Taiwan, down nearly 100 students, or about 12%, from the 823 applicants last year.



Contrarily, the Taiwan-Macao economic and trade relations had recovered slightly. Between January and October, 2021, the overall trade volume between the two sides reached almost US\$96 million (including around US\$95 million of Taiwan exports to Macao and around US\$1 million of Macao exports to Taiwan), up 24.1% YoY.

On June 16 this year, the Macao government unilaterally announced the suspension of operations at MECO from June 19 the same year. Moreover, two officers at TECO in Macao had been denied work visas and since returned to Taiwan due to their refusal to sign the "Letter of Commitment to One China." Additionally, the Macao government turned a blind eye to the violent protests and slanderous smear by pro-China individuals against TECO in Macao, clearly indicating strong disrespect and unfriendliness towards Taiwan. In light of the current situation and possible future scenarios of TECO in Macao, our government has embarked on discussion of countermeasures. It has also directed our staff based in Macao to hold steadfast to their posts and continue providing services to safeguard people's rights and interests in their exchanges.

## II. Appendix - Major Events in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Year since Macao's Handover

Date	Event	Source
2021.1.8	Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng met with Zhongshan CCP Municipal Committee Secretary and Director of the Municipal People's Congress Standing Committee Lai Zehua.	Macao government press release, 2021.1.8
2021.3.4-7	Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng visited Beijing and attended the opening ceremony of the Fourth Session of the 13 <sup>th</sup> CCP National People's Congress.	Macao government press release, 2021.3.3
2021.4.8	Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng met with Ge Huijun, Chairperson of the Zhejiang Provincial Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. The two sides exchanged views on COVID-19 prevention and control, tourism promotion, and other topics.	Macao government press release, 2021.4.9
2021.4.19-20	Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng attended the 2021 Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference in Hainan Province.	Macao government press release, 2021.4.16
2021.5.4	The Macao Government established the "Working Committee on National Integration and Development."	Xinhua News Agency, 2021.5.4
2021.6.4	The first meeting of the Shanghai-Macao Cooperation Conference was held in Shanghai.	Macao government press release, 2021.6.4
2021.6.6-9	Macao Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Elsie Ao Ieong U led a delegation to Beijing to visit the Organizing Committee of 2022 Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics and Paralympics, China Central Radio and Television Station, National Bureau of Disease Control and Prevention, and the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council.	Macao government press release, 2021.6.10
2021.6.16	The Macao government announced that operations of Macao's office (MECO) in Taiwan would be suspended from June 19, 2021.	Macao government press release, 2021.6.16
2021.6.18	The Executive Council of Macao completed deliberation of draft administrative regulations on the "Organization and Operation of the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau."	Macao government press release, 2021.6.18
2021.7.9	The Electoral Affairs Commission of the Macao SAR Legislative Council announced that 21 candidates in 6 constituencies were disqualified and could not stand for election on	Xinhua News Agency, 2021.7.9

Date	Event	Source
	grounds of them not upholding the Basic Law and not swearing allegiance to Macao.	
2021.7.9-11	Macao held the 9 <sup>th</sup> Macao International Tourism (Industry) Expo.	Macao government press release, 2021.7.9
2021.7.23	Macao held the “12 <sup>th</sup> International Infrastructure Investment and Construction Forum” and participants signed 11 cooperation agreements.	Macao government press release, 2021.7.23
2021.8.12	The Macao Cyber Security Council held its first 2021 plenary meeting.	Macao government press release, 2021.8.12
2021.9.1	The Monetary Authority of Macao and Hong Kong Insurance Authority signed a “Memorandum of Understanding on Fintech Cooperation.”	Macao government press release, 2021.9.1
2021.9.5	The CCP Central Committee announced the “General Plan for Building a Guangdong-Macao In-depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin.”	Macao government press release, 2021.9.5
2021.9.12	Macao held the 7 <sup>th</sup> Legislative Council election.	Macao government press release, 2021.9.12
2021.9.15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Macao Government announced that, from September 15 to November 13, a 60-day public consultation period will be held on the “Second Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development of the Macao SAR (2021-2025).”</li> <li>● The Macao government announced on September 15 that it would begin a 45-day public consultation period on the draft amendments to the “Legal Framework for the Operations of Casino Games of Fortune Operations.”</li> <li>● Macao Secretary for Security and Vice Chairman of the Guangdong Provincial Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Zhang Jiaji discussed issues related to facilitating customs clearance at the Hengqin Port.</li> </ul>	<p>Macao government press release, 2021.9.13</p> <p>Macao government press release, 2021.9.14</p> <p>Macao government press release, 2021.9.15</p>
2021.9.17	The Macao Executive Council completed deliberations on the draft “Amendments to Administrative Regulations (2021 Census System).”	Macao government press release, 2021.9.17
2021.9.21	The Macao Court of Final Appeal confirmed the	Macao

Date	Event	Source
	results of the direct and indirect elections of the 7 <sup>th</sup> Macao Legislative Council and announced the elected members.	government press release, 2021.9.21
2021.9.23	Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng appointed seven members of the Legislative Council.	Macao government press release, 2021.9.23
2021.9.23-28	Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng went to Chengdu, Sichuan Province and Xi'an, Shaanxi Province to attend the 2021 Pan-Pearl River Delta Regional Co-operation Chief Executive Joint Conference.	Macao government press release, 2021.9.21
2021.9.24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng attended the opening ceremony of the Macao Week in Chengdu City, Sichuan Province.</li> <li>● Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng met in Chengdu City, Sichuan Province, with Hainan Governor Feng Fei, Jiangxi Governor Yi Lianhong, Guizhou Governor Li Bingjun, Chairman of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region Lan Tianli, and Hunan Governor Mao Weiming to exchange views on economy and trade, finance, tourism, traditional Chinese medicine, talent training and development, and other issues.</li> </ul>	Macao government press release, 2021.9.24
2021.9.27	Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng went to Shaanxi for the National Games. He met with Secretary of the CCP Shaanxi Provincial Committee and Director of the Standing Committee of the Shaanxi Provincial National People's Congress Liu Guozhong and Deputy Secretary of the Provincial Party Committee and Governor Zhao Yide. The two sides exchanged views on strengthening Macao-Shaanxi cooperation on economy and trade, investment, cultural exchanges, and youth exchanges, and other issues.	Macao government press release, 2021.9.27
2021.10.12	Guangdong Province issued its first local government offshore RMB bond in Macao.	Macao government press release, 2021.10.12
2021.10.14	Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng attended the opening ceremony of the 130 <sup>th</sup> China Import and Export Fair and Pearl River International Trade Forum in Guangzhou. He met with officials of the Guangzhou Municipal Party Committee and municipal government to exchange views on Guangdong and Macao's respective COVID-19 prevention and control	Macao government press release, 2021.10.14

Date	Event	Source
	measures and deepening Guangzhou-Macao exchanges and cooperation.	
2021.10.16	The 7 <sup>th</sup> Legislative Council of Macao held its first plenary session.	Macao government press release, 2021.10.16
2021.10.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Several banks in Macao were officially approved to launch services under the “Cross-boundary Wealth Management Connect.”</li> <li>● The Macao Government and Fudan University in Shanghai signed by video an agreement on a strategic cooperation framework.</li> <li>● The Macao Public Assets Supervision and Planning Office announced that a 60-day public consultation period on the “Legal System for Public Capital Enterprises” would run from October 20 to December 18, 2021.</li> </ul>	<p>Macao government press release, 2021.10.18</p> <p>Macao government press release, 2021.10.19</p>
2021.10.22	Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng went to Guangzhou to attend the first meeting of the Management Committee of the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin.	Macao government press release, 2021.10.22
2021.10.27	The Executive Council of Macao completed deliberations on the legal amendments to the “Draft 2021 Fiscal Year Budget.”	Macao government press release, 2021.10.27
2021.10.30	The Macao government announced a public consultation on the “Trade Union Law” from October 31 to December 14.	Macao government press release, 2021.10.30
2021.11.3	Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng met with Chairman of the Hangzhou Municipal Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference Pan Jiawei to exchange views on cultural tourism cooperation and development, COVID-19 prevention and control, and other topics.	Macao government press release, 2021.11.3
2021.11.4-7	Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng attended the opening ceremony of the 4 <sup>th</sup> China International Import Expo and had an inspection tour in Hangzhou.	Macao government press release, 2021.11.7
2021.11.5	The Macao Executive Council completed deliberations on the draft administrative regulations on the “Main Implementation Rules for the Legal System of Immigration Control and Visitor and Residence Permits in the Macao SAR.”	Macao government press release, 2021.11.5
2021.11.7	Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng met with	Macao

Date	Event	Source
	Secretary of the Zhejiang Provincial Party Committee and Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Provincial National People's Congress Yuan Jiajun.	government press release, 2021.11.7
2021.11.10-12.24	The Macao Talents Development Committee held a 45-day public consultation on the "Talent Introduction System" from November 10 to December 24.	Macao government press release, 2021.11.9
2021.11.15	Staff from the Commercial Service Bureau of the Guangdong-Macao In-depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin visited the Macao Legal Affairs Bureau.	Macao government press release, 2021.11.16
2021.11.16	Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng delivered the "Fiscal Year 2022 Policy Address" in the Legislative Council.	Macao government press release, 2021.11.16
2021.11.24	Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng attended the opening of the Forum on Internet Media of China in Guangzhou.	Macao government press release, 2021.11.24
2021.11.27	The Macao government stated that it arrested 11 suspects, including Alvin Chau, on charges of illegal gambling operations and money laundering upon mainland China's notification.	Xinhua News Agency, 2021.11.27
2021.11.30	The CCP decided that it would appoint one national security affairs adviser and three national security technical advisers to the Macao Committee for Safeguarding National Security, and that these positions would be served by the director of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in Macao and related personnel.	Xinhua News Agency, 2021.12.3
2021.12.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng attended the opening ceremony of the "2021 China Science and Technology Summit" on the theme of "Moderately Diversifying Macao's Economy through Transformation of Scientific and Technological Achievements."</li> <li>● Macao Secretary for Economy and Finance Li Wei Nong met with Deputy Mayor of Chongqing Municipality Cai Yunge to exchange views on economic and trade relations, tourism, advanced and innovative technology, modern finance, and traditional Chinese medicine exchanges between the two sides.</li> </ul>	<p>Macao government press release, 2021.12.3</p> <p>Macao government press release, 2021.12.4</p>
2021.12.4-6	The Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute and 24 Macao-based enterprises participated in the "Chongqing-Macao Week"	Macao government press release,

Date	Event	Source
	to showcase Macao's economic and trade exhibition resources.	2021.12.1
2021.12.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng went to Hengqin to attend the second meeting of the Management Committee of the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin.</li> <li>● Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng served as a witness at the signing ceremony for the Memorandum of “Understanding on the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area” and delivered a pre-recorded speech.</li> <li>● The Macao Polytechnic Institute and University of Bologna, Italy, jointly launched Macao's first dual doctoral degree program (in the field of information technology and engineering).</li> </ul>	Macao government press release, 2021.12.6
2021.12.10-13	Shanghai and Macao co-organized the “International Trade and Investment Forum 2021.”	Macao government press release, 2021.12.3
2021.12.14	The appointments of national security advisor and technical advisors under the Committee for Safeguarding National Security came into effect.	Macao government gazette, 2021.12.13
2021.12.20	The 22 <sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the handover of Macao.	Macao government press release, 2021.12.20