

The right to participate in political life is broadly conceived as the ability to take part in public affairs; the opportunity to register as a candidate in elections and what ways are available to express their opinions to the government at different levels.

There are multiple ways for Hong Kong residents to participate in politics, and raise their voices while the HKSAR government seek to hear from a diversity of views from different aspects of the society. In the following, let's review the ways for Hong Kong residents to participate in politics and the wide range of opportunities for individuals to play a role in Hong Kong's political systems and foster positive change.

First, Hong Kong residents can express their views and opinion through the public consultation process. The purpose of public consultation is to engage the public and also stimulate community discussion.

Second, every Hong Kong permanent resident can be registered as an elector after 18 years old in order to exercise his or her right to vote in the Legislative Council and District Council elections. Right to vote is an important way for individuals to elect the representative they believe in to raise their voices in the councils that affect decision-making and community development. Furthermore, the implementation of an improved electoral system and constitutional development ensure a stable and healthy political environment which provides the foundation for economic prosperity and also protects the young generation who are interested in politics to feel safe to speak up.

Third, qualified and eligible residents can be nominated for council elections to be elected as council members in the Legislative Council and District Councils, which is one of the most straightforward ways to participate in politics except by joining the government and becoming a civil servant.

Fourth, the HKSAR government has set up a scheme called "Member Self-recommendation Scheme for Youth" to engage more young people in public affairs and enhance their interaction and trust with the HKSAR government. Individuals aged between 18 and 35 who are committed to serving the community can apply for the scheme and be self-nominated to become members of specified government advisory committees.

Finally, there are also some other ways for Hong Kong residents to participate in politics. By joining a political party or an association which reflects one's beliefs and values; by expressing one's opinions through media such as newspapers, radio stations, and social media platforms; or by volunteering for a political campaign to support a candidate who reflects what you believe in. There are multiple ways for Hong Kong residents to engage in politics who surely have the right to, and of course, on the foundation that we should strictly adhere to laws because it is put in place to protect the safety and well-being of society and individuals.

According to the "One country, two systems" principle, Hong Kong's legal system is separate from the legal system in Mainland China. The continuation of the common law system in Hong Kong is protected by the Basic Law, i.e. a constitutional document of the HKSAR which sets out clearly the country's basic policies regarding Hong Kong. The Hong Kong Police Force is the primary law enforcement body, with the vision to maintain Hong Kong as one of the safest and most stable societies in the world. According to the "2023 Safety Index" by Global Residence Index, HKSAR ranked 11th safest city in the world, while Abu Dhabi ranked 12th; Geneva ranked 16th and Copenhagen ranked 17th.

In order to protect life and property, to prevent and detect crime, to maintain law and order, as clearly stated in Chapter 6 Section 45 of "Police Use of Force" in Public Order Policing, "any police officer may use such force as may be necessary to prevent crime, arrest suspects and overcome the resistance of lawful execution of the power under the Ordinance" The ordinance also limits the degree of force to be not greater than is reasonably necessary for the intended purpose.

The Independent Police Complaints Council (IPCC) is an independent body established under the Independent Police Complaints Council Ordinance to observe, monitor and review the handling and investigation of Reportable Complaints against the Police by the Commissioner of Police. One can lodge a complaint against the Police for misconduct by attending the police station/ by hotline/ by post and by submitting an e-Report form. While the Complaints Against Police Office team in the Police force will follow up and investigate the complaint. IPCC will observe, monitor and review the handling and investigation of all reportable complaints to ensure that they are dealt with in a fair, impartial and thorough manner.

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