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# The Chinese Communist Party in Hong Kong

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**Special Report**

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## Executive Summary<sup>(1)</sup>

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leads and manages governance in China, a rising geopolitical and economic superpower. The party is organized territorially throughout the country, including in local jurisdictions like the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. However, because of Hong Kong's recent past as a British colony, the party operates differently there than on the mainland. Understanding these differences sheds light on the operation of the CCP as the leading institution in the world's most populous country. The paper drills down into the history, organization, and functions of the local party in Hong Kong and its relationship to the central party and government in Beijing.

During the British colonial period, the CCP in Hong Kong operated “underground” and continues to do so in some sense, although, since 2020, the party has assumed more direct political leadership of the Hong Kong government. The leadership of policymaking in Hong Kong policies now falls to the most senior party officials in China, indicating Hong Kong's place in the central party's understanding of the country's security. As a consequence of six months of increasingly violent anti-government protests in Hong Kong in 2019, the party expanded its institutional footprint there, focusing on security and institutional change. Still, party membership in Hong Kong lags the mainland. Accordingly, the party in Hong Kong has so far been unable to call on the deeply penetrating network of party members and organizations found in most Chinese cities. The party is engaged in a battle for the hearts and minds of the people of Hong Kong in a relatively open environment that includes access to global media and the internet. This situation challenges the party to cement control in this global financial center.

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(1) I am grateful for the advice of Ching Cheong in the production of this paper. All errors remain the responsibility of the author.

## Introduction

The People's Republic of China (PRC) has increasing influence in world affairs in a raft of critical policy areas, from climate change and international security to global trade, as well as more narrow issues like food and water security and pandemic management. In an age of profound global interconnectivity, the behavior of great powers reverberates worldwide, including in the Gulf and the Arab world. Understanding the behavior of powerful actors like China is important for policymakers, business leaders, academics, and the informed public. For nearly eight decades, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has been the core of China's political system.

The party is composed of various groups (arguably, factions) organized around key central leaders.<sup>(2)</sup> The party Central Committee's selection of Xi Jinping as secretary-general in 2012 marked a turning point. Xi led the party to re-centralize China politically and crack down on localism.<sup>(3)</sup> These developments occurred in a geopolitical environment of increasing contention, competition, and conflict with the West, especially the United States.

This paper seeks to understand the organization and behavior of the CCP in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), focusing on developments from 2019 to 2021. The city represents a significant challenge for the party because, as a legacy of the colonial past (China resumed sovereignty over Hong Kong in 1997), the CCP has elected to exercise its authority indirectly in Hong Kong (and Macau) through unique instruments and special methods not used on the mainland, mostly through its control of the top positions in the Hong Kong government. However, in 2020 the party began exercising more direct control, reacting to six months of increasingly violent anti-government protests that the local authorities were unable to put down. As a result, since 2020, the party has extended its reach further into the government and society.

I argue that the post-1997 challenges to the CCP began in 2003 and escalated from 2014 to 2019, as manifested in various mass anti-government protests. The evolution of the CCP in Hong Kong reflects the party's mobilization of support to meet these new challenges. As of 2021, the party influences but does not control the Hong Kong government (civil service) personnel

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(2) See for example, Sebastian Heilmann, *China's Political System* (Lanham, M.D.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2017), 40.

(3) See David J. Bulman and Kyle A. Jaros, "Localism in Retreat? Central-Provincial Relations in the Xi Jinping Era" *Journal of Contemporary China*, 30:131, 2021, 697–716.

administration, nor does it control the media and education. Party control is less complete in Hong Kong than in the rest of China, as the party competes for influence using a wider array of coercive, material, and normative tools than it uses on the mainland.

Hong Kong remains one of the world's leading financial hubs and is, therefore, a major priority for the central government in Beijing. The party chooses a more indirect mode of governance to maintain the city's global financial status and minimize the risk of capital flight. Still, the party may exercise direct and tight control of Hong Kong at any time entirely at its own discretion. However, to do so would require the CCP to vastly expand party membership in the city. Recruiting and disciplining party members is a fraught exercise that requires care, sufficient time to test commitment and loyalty and to build trust and cannot be rushed. This is a dilemma facing the party in Hong Kong today.<sup>(4)</sup>

The remainder of the paper details the history, organization, and functions of the CCP in Hong Kong. The paper is and draws on an institutionalist perspective. The paper concludes with a short section drawing together the findings and marking out avenues for future research.

## History

The Chinese Communist Party has had a presence in Hong Kong since the 1920s. In May 1947, the party established an office in Hong Kong under the name New China News Agency, Hong Kong Branch (NCNA).<sup>(5)</sup> After the CCP came to power on the mainland in 1949, the NCNA Hong Kong also served as the CCP organization in Hong Kong as the CCP Hong Kong Work Committee (中共香港工作委员会, HKWC). Authorities in Beijing appointed the head of the NCNA Hong Kong Branch to serve concurrently as the party secretary (党委书记) of the CCP HKWC.<sup>(6)</sup> That is, NCNA Hong Kong and the CCP HKWC functioned as a “single

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(4) Christine Loh, *Underground Front: the Chinese Communist Party in Hong Kong*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong Press, 2019); Muxian Liang, *Wo yu Xianggang di xia dang [My Time in Hong Kong's Underground Communist Party]* (Xianggang: Kai fang chu ban she, 2012).

(5) Cheong Ching, “China's Administration over Hong Kong—the New China News Agency and the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office,” *The Other Hong Kong Report 1996*, edited by Mee-kau Nyaw and Si-ming Li (Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, 1997), 111–123.

(6) See CCP Organization Department Research Office, editor, *中国共产党组织工作大事记1993–1997 [Party Organization Work Chronicle 1993–1997]* (Beijing: Party Construction Materials Press, 1999), p. 384; In 2016, Zhang Xiaoming was listed as both the Secretary of the Hong Kong Work Committee and the Head of the Liaison Office. See Standing Committee of the Guangdong People's Congress, “Name List of Delegates of Guangdong Province Selected for the 12<sup>th</sup> National People's Congress” *Guangdong Rendawang*, February 29, 2016, [https://web.archive.org/web/20171014233938/http://www.rd.gd.cn/pub/gdrd2012/rdgzxgnr/rddbmd/ljdbmd/201510/t20151020\\_147831.html](https://web.archive.org/web/20171014233938/http://www.rd.gd.cn/pub/gdrd2012/rdgzxgnr/rddbmd/ljdbmd/201510/t20151020_147831.html) ..

organization with two designations” (一个机构两块牌子). From 1949 until 1997, when China resumed sovereignty over Hong Kong, NCNA Hong Kong served as the de facto embassy of the PRC in Hong Kong.<sup>(7)</sup>

Under the terms of the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration, Britain agreed to return sovereignty to China, and on July 1, 1997, after 156 years of British rule, Hong Kong became the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China (HKSAR). The central government immediately stationed a People’s Liberation Army (PLA) garrison in Hong Kong and established the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region or FMCOPRC (中华人民共和国外交部驻香港特别行政区特派员公署).<sup>(8)</sup> The former focuses mostly on external defense, only occasionally helping local authorities, for example, to clear the streets after a severe typhoon. Authorities could call on the PLA garrison in Hong Kong, however, to restore order in the territory. The latter handles foreign affairs for the HKSAR government and assists it in dealing with diplomatic matters. In 2006 the FMCOPRC, led by a commissioner and three deputies, was organized into six departments: General Affairs, Policy Research, International Organizations and Conferences, Treaties and Laws, Media and Public Relations, and Consular Affairs.<sup>(9)</sup> Like all offices delegated by a higher level of government (派出机构), the PLA and the FMCOPRC report vertically — to the Central Military Commission and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing, respectively.

In 1999, the Hong Kong government formally acknowledged that NCNA Hong Kong was one of the organizations the central government had set up in Hong Kong. In the same year, the central government renamed it the Liaison Office of the Central People’s Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (中央人民政府駐香港特別行政區聯絡辦公室) or LOCPG.<sup>(10)</sup> However, the Hong Kong party committee’s name remained unchanged. So too did the practice of the Liaison Office serving as the headquarters of the CCP in Hong Kong.

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(7) See John P. Burns, “The Structure of Communist Party Control in Hong Kong,” *Asian Survey*, 30:8, August 1990, 748–765; John P. Burns, “Strengthening Central Party Control of Leadership Selection: The 1990 *Nomenklatura*,” *The China Quarterly*, 138, June 1994, 458–491; Ching, “China’s Administration over Hong Kong.”

(8) Now renamed Commissioner’s Office of China’s Foreign Ministry in the Hong Kong SAR (FMCOPRC).

(9) See “Main Functions,” *Commissioner’s Office of China’s Foreign Ministry in the Hong Kong SAR*, accessed April 22, 2022, <http://www.fmcoprc.gov.hk/eng/zjgs/zygy/>.

(10) See “中联办简介 [About the Liaison Office],” 中央政府駐港聯絡办 [*Liaison Office of the Central People’s Government in the Hong Kong SAR*], accessed April 22, 2022, [http://www.locpg.gov.cn/zjzlb/2014-01/04/c\\_125957081.htm](http://www.locpg.gov.cn/zjzlb/2014-01/04/c_125957081.htm).

Colonial government regulations required that all formal organizations in Hong Kong register either with the police as a society or with the Companies Registry and the Inland Revenue Department as a company or business. The CCP in Hong Kong refused to register, which the colonial government accepted. As a result, the party in Hong Kong operated “underground”<sup>(11)</sup> and has to some extent continued to do so. However, despite its irregular status, since 2020, the CCP has ruled Hong Kong more directly and now provides political leadership to the Hong Kong government.

After 2003, the CCP watched uneasily as Hong Kong’s governance began deviating from the party’s initial intention of an “executive-led” government.<sup>(12)</sup> The period was punctuated by increasingly frequent large-scale public protests (2003, 2012, 2014, and 2019), which officials in the LOCPG in Hong Kong mostly failed to anticipate, an apparent intelligence failure. Hong Kong was divided over its relationship with the mainland. Localist politicians, some advocating independence for Hong Kong, fanned growing political and socio-economic discontent. Sources of discontent were many: declining social mobility, unaffordable housing, competition from the mainland, and unanswered demands for universal suffrage. In 2014 protesters occupied and shut down Hong Kong’s central government quarter for 79 days. On July 21, 2019, protesters attacked the LOCPG headquarters building in Hong Kong.

After six months of increasingly violent anti-government protests in 2019, which the local government was unable to manage, the CCP took more direct control of Hong Kong. In the decision of the 4<sup>th</sup> Plenum of the 19<sup>th</sup> CCP Central Committee of October 31, 2019, the party resolved to ensure that “patriots” rule Hong Kong, strengthen the laws and institutions in Hong Kong to protect national security, perfect the system of accountability of the Hong Kong Chief Executive to the central government in Beijing, integrate Hong Kong into the country’s national development (including the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macau Greater Bay Area or GBA); solve Hong Kong’s “deep-rooted contradictions and problems,” and strengthen the education of both Hong Kong public employees and young people in the Basic Law, national security, and understanding of the nation, its history and culture to build

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(11) Loh, *Underground Front*.

(12) Cheong Ching, “The Fall of Hong Kong: China’s Strategic Plan to Conquer Hong Kong and Purge it of its People,” *MEMRI*, February 4, 2021, <https://www.memri.org/reports/fall-hong-kong-chinas-strategic-plan-conquer-hong-kong-and-purge-it-its-people>.

a norm of patriotism.<sup>(13)</sup> The decision set the scene for a major overhaul of the mainland's organizations for managing public administration in the HKSAR and the national security and political system of Hong Kong. We can expect further policy changes in other areas as well.

The CCP rolled out new policies swiftly. First, the party removed the traditional “Hong Kong handlers” leading the LOCPG and the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office (HKMAO), the State Council body with formal responsibility for Hong Kong and Macau at the center. They had repeatedly failed to understand the depth of discontent in Hong Kong. Then, in January 2020, the party replaced Wang Zhimin (whose experience in Hong Kong matters dates to 1992) as director of the HKWC and LOCPG with Luo Huining. A month later, the party replaced Hong Kong handler Zhang Xiaoming, a former LOCPG head, with Xia Baolong as head of the HKMAO. Both Wang and Zhang were demoted. Luo and Xia, who had served as provincial party secretaries, are more senior party cadres than their predecessors.<sup>(14)</sup> Neither of the newcomers had experience managing the Hong Kong portfolio, an apparent advantage from the perspective of senior party leaders in Beijing.

Second, the central government imposed a new national security law on Hong Kong that took effect on 30 June 2020.<sup>(15)</sup> The law authorized Beijing to set up its own national security apparatus in Hong Kong, the Office for Safeguarding National Security of the Central People's Government in the HKSAR or CPGNSO (中央人民政府駐香港特別行政區維護國家安全公署).<sup>(16)</sup> This office is

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(13) See Section 12 (1–3) of “中共中央关于坚持和完善中国特色社会主义制度 推进国家治理体系和治理能力现代化若干重大问题的决定 [Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Several Major Issues Concerning Adhering to and Improving the Socialist System with Chinese Characteristics and Promoting the Modernization of the National Governance System and Governance Capability],” *Xinhua News Agency*, November 5, 2019, [http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/2019-11/05/content\\_5449023.htm](http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/2019-11/05/content_5449023.htm).

(14) Xia joined the CCP in 1973, was a full member of the 18th Central Committee and alternate member of the 15th, 16, and 17th Central Committees. He served as Zhejiang party secretary from 2012 to 2017. Luo joined the CCP in 1982 and has been a full member of the 18th and 19th Central Committees and was an alternate of the 17th Central Committee. He served as Shanxi party secretary from 2016 to 2019. See “Xia Baolong Concurrently Serves as Director of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council (Photo/Resume),” *人民日报 [The People's Daily]*, accessed April 10, 2022, <http://renshi.people.com.cn/n1/2020/0213/c139617-31585432.html>, and “骆惠宁简历 [Luo Huining's Resume],” 中央政府駐港联络办 [Liaison Office of the Central People's Government of the Hong Kong SAR], accessed April 22, 2022, [http://www.locpg.gov.cn/zjzlb/2020-01/04/c\\_1210425197.htm](http://www.locpg.gov.cn/zjzlb/2020-01/04/c_1210425197.htm). On Luo's party membership, see “骆惠宁 [Luo Huining],” 维基百科 [Wikipedia], accessed April 22, 2022, <https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/骆惠宁>.

(15) See “Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Administrative Region,” *Hong Kong e-Legislation (HKEL)*, accessed April 22, 2022, [https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/fwddoc/hk/a406/eng\\_translation\\_\(a406\)\\_en.pdf](https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/fwddoc/hk/a406/eng_translation_(a406)_en.pdf).

(16) The office does not appear to have a publicly searchable website. There is information provided on the Baidu website, China's equivalent to Google. See “中央人民政府駐香港特別行政區維護國家安全公署 [Office for Safeguarding National Security of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region],” 百度 [Baidu], accessed April 22, 2022, <https://baike.baidu.com/item/中央人民政府駐香港特別行政區維護國家安全公署/50824317>. There is also information

headed by Zheng Yanxiong, who has extensive experience in Guangdong province,<sup>(17)</sup> is staffed entirely by mainland officials and reports to the Ministry of Public Security in Beijing. The formal duties of the CPGNSO are: “to analyze and evaluate the national security situation in Hong Kong, suggest ways to enhance that security; supervise, guide, coordinate and support the HKSAR to fulfill duties of safeguarding national security, collect and analyze national security intelligence, and oversee criminal cases endangering national security in accordance with the law.” In addition, the CPGNSO meets with a Hong Kong government national security committee, chaired by the HKSAR Chief Executive, on which Luo Huining sits as an advisor, to “supervise, guide, coordinate and support” the Hong Kong government in its national security responsibilities. The joint coordination committee met for the first time on July 31, 2020.<sup>(18)</sup>

The law also authorized the Hong Kong police to set up a new national security department, headed by a deputy commissioner of police, which implements the national security law in Hong Kong (focused on secession, subversion, terrorism, and collusion with foreign forces). Since 2020, authorities have used this law and colonial-era sedition laws to arrest, convict, and jail all prominent opposition politicians and close media and NGOs in Hong Kong (for example, trade unions, and advocacy groups) that supported the politicians.

The four offices of the central state in Hong Kong (the LOCPG, the FMCOPRC, the PLA, and the CPGNSO) are each part of separate vertical bureaucratic systems (系统). The LOCPG reports to the HKMAO, the FMCOPRC to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the PLA to the Central Military Commission, and the CPGNSO to the Ministry of Public Security. Three

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available on Xinhua and Wikipedia. See “法制工作委员会负责人向十三届全国人大常委会第十九次会议作关于《中华人民共和国香港特别行政区维护国家安全法（草案）》的说明 [The Person in Charge of the Legal Affairs Committee Gave an Explanation to the 19th Meeting of the Standing Committee of the 13th National People’s Congress on the ‘Law of the People’s Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (Draft)’],” 新华通讯社 [Xinhua], accessed April 22, 2022, [http://www.xinhuanet.com/legal/2020-06/20/c\\_1126139511.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/legal/2020-06/20/c_1126139511.htm); “Office for Safeguarding National Security of the CPG in the HKSAR,” *Wikipedia*, accessed April 22, 2022, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Office\\_for\\_Safeguarding\\_National\\_Security\\_of\\_the\\_CPG\\_in\\_the\\_HKSAR](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Office_for_Safeguarding_National_Security_of_the_CPG_in_the_HKSAR).

- (17) Zheng joined the CCP in 1986, and has spent his career in Guangdong, serving as Sanwei City party secretary and then in leadership positions in the Guangdong party committee propaganda and general office. See “黄宁生、郑雁雄任广东省委常委(图/简历) [Huang Ningsheng and Zheng Yanxiong Were Appointed Members of the Standing Committee of the Guangdong Provincial Party Committee (Photo/Resume)],” 人民日报 [The People’s Daily], accessed April 22, 2022, <http://renshi.people.com.cn/n1/2019/0130/c139617-30598150-2.html>.
- (18) A photo of the members of the coordination committee reaffirms Luo Huining’s position in the hierarchy of central state organs in Hong Kong. He sat to the right of the Chief Executive, the chair of the committee. Zheng Yanxiong sat to his right with two other members of the CPGNSO. See the photo in the press release “CPG Office on National Security Holds Co-ordination Meeting with the HKSAR Committee on National Security (with photo),” *Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region*, July 31, 2020, accessed April 22, 2022, <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202007/31/P2020073100692.htm>.

civilian functional systems operating in Hong Kong are brought together in the Beijing-based Central Hong Kong and Macau Work Leading Small Group or LSG (中央港澳工作领导小组),<sup>(19)</sup> headed by Politburo Standing Committee member Han Zheng (See Table 1). The LOCPG leads the implementation of party policy in Hong Kong. Xia Baolong’s position as executive deputy head of the LSG indicates the HKMAO and the LOCPG’s leading role. The other deputy head of the LSG, Zhao Kezhi, is the Minister of Public Security.

Third, the central government imposed a new political system in Hong Kong to align the legislature and the executive, ensuring legislative support for the Hong Kong executive (in the interests of consolidating “executive-led government”). The party designed a new electoral system for Hong Kong that empowered the LOCPG to vet and select candidates and assign candidates to electoral subsectors and constituencies for Hong Kong’s postponed Legislative Council (Legco) elections.<sup>(20)</sup> Authorities held the elections on December 19, 2021, using the new system with no surprise results. Therefore, we should expect the new-look Legco to strongly support the Hong Kong government. The central government may also use the new-look Legco to articulate its policies and criticisms of the Hong Kong government. Taken together, these measures mark the start of the implementation of the 4<sup>th</sup> Plenum’s decision of October 31, 2019, mentioned above.

The Hong Kong Basic Law codified into PRC law colonial arrangements that were pro-business, restricted participation, and were executive led. These arrangements served the party’s interest in maintaining control of Hong Kong and the interests of China’s elite in making money in Hong Kong. As they departed Hong Kong, however, the British colonial authorities set in motion policies that encouraged an expansion of civic participation, a political “ticking time bomb.”<sup>(21)</sup> Anti-government protests since 2003 have focused in part on demands for more and faster moves toward universal suffrage in Hong Kong, a goal of political development laid down in the Basic Law. CCP institutions in and for Hong Kong have evolved to meet these challenges. In 2019 the CCP sought to mobilize support for the party’s initial vision of

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(19) LSGs are high-level policymaking and coordination committees. For more, see the discussion in the section on “Organization.”

(20) See “全国人民代表大会关于完善香港特别行政区选举制度的决定 [Decision of the National People’s Congress on Improving the Election System of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region],” 全国人民代表大会关 [National People’s Congress of the People’s Republic of China], March 11, 2021, accessed April 22, 2022, <http://www.npc.gov.cn/npc/kgfb/202103/e546427083c944d484fef5482c56f9fb.shtml>.

(21) See, for example, Jonathan Dimpleby, *The Last Governor: Chris Patten and the Handover of Hong Kong* (Boston: Little Brown, 1997).

governance in Hong Kong — namely, an executive-led government led by “patriots” approved by the party. To achieve a new equilibrium in Hong Kong, the party displaced existing rules with new ones (national security and electoral changes) and layered this new system on existing political institutions, the Election Committee and the Legco.<sup>(22)</sup>

## Party Organization

### *Membership and Institutional Structure*

The CCP rules China through control of civil and military personnel administration on the one hand, and the internet, media and education systems, on the other.<sup>(23)</sup> A Leninist organization, the party is highly centralized but at the same time has proven to be agile, adaptable, resilient, and high performing. The party is also hypersensitive to perceived threats to its own security and grip on power. The party celebrated its centenary on July 1, 2021. In 2021, the party was overwhelmingly urban and had over 95m members or about 6.3 percent of China’s 1.4 billion people. This makes the CCP an elite, not a mass political party. Party members are primarily male (71.2%) and Han Chinese, with 7.5% of party members coming from an ethnic minority.<sup>(24)</sup> In 2019, CCP members were primarily middle-aged or older (52% over the age of 50), and nearly 40% were employed as professional, technical, managerial or government/party cadres.<sup>(25)</sup>

The CCP is, first and foremost, an institution. In this paper, I draw on Mahoney and Thelen’s definition of institutions as “distributional instruments laden with power implications.”<sup>(26)</sup> As the authors note, because they imply resource considerations and have distributional consequences, institutions are “fraught with tensions.”<sup>(27)</sup> In such an environment, compliance becomes a vital issue at an organizational and system level. When institutions are challenged, those who benefit from them must mobilize support to maintain them.

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(22) On “displacement” and “layering” as modes of gradual institutional change, see James Mahoney and Kathleen Thelen, “A Theory of Gradual Institutional Change,” *Explaining Institutional Change: Ambiguity, Agency, and Power*, edited by James Mahoney and Kathleen Thelen, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 1–37.

(23) Astrid Hedin, “Communist State Administrative Structures,” in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, accessed April 22, 2022, <https://oxfordre.com/politics/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228637-e-1411>.

(24) “Official Report: CPC Membership Grows to Over 95 Million,” *CGTN*, June 30, 2021, <https://news.cgtn.com/news/2021-06-30/CPC-membership-grows-to-over-95-million-11vF0GvIadG/index.html>.

(25) Phoebe Zhang, “China’s Communist Party in Profile: Its Makeup by Sex, Ethnicity, Age, and Profession” *South China Morning Post*, June 1, 2021, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/politics/article/3135532/chinas-communist-party-profile-its-make-sex-ethnicity-age-and>.

(26) Mahoney and Thelen, “A Theory of Gradual Institutional Change.”

(27) Mahoney and Thelen, “A Theory of Gradual Institutional Change.”

As mentioned, the CCP is a Leninist organization that exercises power in part by making all strategic personnel decisions throughout the country. Imported from the Soviet Union, the CCP operates a nomenklatura system based on the principle of the “party managing cadres” (党管干部).<sup>(28)</sup> The CCP is organized territorially, with party committees established in each of the country’s provinces/provincial-level municipalities, prefectures/cities, counties, and so on. This system recognizes Hong Kong as a provincial-level entity. According to party policy and practice, central authorities (the central Organization Department, an agency of the Central Committee, which manages the nomenklatura system) have personnel authority over key positions generally from one administrative level down, that is, to the provincial level. With some exceptions, provinces exercise personnel authority over prefectures and so forth.<sup>(29)</sup>

The CCP is highly centralized and led by a seven-man Politburo Standing Committee or PBSC (there are currently no women at this level). Led by the party secretary-general, the PBSC serves as an executive committee of the full Politburo (25 members). The secretary-general and the PBSC lead the party Central Committee (in 2021, 204 full and 172 alternate members). The Politburo makes policy, including policy on Hong Kong, which the Central Committee then endorses. In addition, the Politburo has established several leading small groups (领导小组 or LSGs), which function as high-level policymaking and coordination committees.<sup>(30)</sup>

### **Organization in Hong Kong**

As mentioned, one LSG is devoted to Hong Kong and Macau and, in 2021, was chaired by a PBSC member, Han Zheng. This LSG makes and coordinates all significant policies on Hong Kong and Macau. The deputy heads of this LSG are very senior party officials in charge of Hong Kong and Macau work and public security. The LSG brings together key party officials in charge of security, foreign affairs, united front work,<sup>(31)</sup> Guangdong affairs (Hong Kong

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(28) Melanie Manion, “The Cadre Management System, post-Mao: The Appointment, Promotion, Transfer and Removal of Party and State Leaders,” *The China Quarterly*, 102, 1985, 203–233; John P. Burns, “China’s Nomenklatura System,” *Problems of Communism* 36:5, September–October 1987, 36–51; Burns, “Strengthening Central Party Control”; Hon S. Chan, “Cadre Personnel Management in China: The Nomenklatura System, 1990–1998,” *The China Quarterly*, 179, September 2004, 703–704; Kjeld Erik Brødsgaard, “Cadre and Personnel Management in the CPC,” *China: An International Journal*, 10:2, 2012, 69–83, <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/482925>; Kjeld Erik Brødsgaard, “China’s Communist Party,” *China Report*, 54:4, 2018, 385–402, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0009445518806076>; Kjeld Erik Brødsgaard and Gang Chen, “The Chinese Communist Party since 1949: Organization, Ideology, and Prospect for Change,” Brill Research Perspectives in *Governance and Public Policy in China*, 3.1–2, 2018, 1–60, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1163/24519227-12340004>.

(29) Heilmann, *China’s Political System*.

(30) Heilmann, *China’s Political System*., 68–69.

(31) This refers to building support for party policy among non-party members in Hong Kong, which will be discussed in further detail below.

and Macau are contiguous to Guangdong), and the Greater Bay Area LSG, which Han Zheng also chairs (Table 1).

Two key members of the LSG are Xia Baolong, executive deputy head of the LSG and head of the HKMAO of the State Council and Luo Huining, director of the LOCPG in Hong Kong. Both are very senior party members and were appointed to their posts in 2020 when the party began to exercise much tighter control of Hong Kong. Nine members of the Hong Kong and Macau Work LSG are also full members of the CCP Central Committee. That is, this body of 11 members includes three Politburo members (who are also Central Committee members) and six additional Central Committee members. No Hong Kong government official is a member of any of these groups. Yet, this is where policy on Hong Kong is made.<sup>(32)</sup>

**Table 1. Members of the Central Hong Kong and Macau Work Leading Small Group**

Position	Members	Concurrent positions
Head	Han Zheng	PBSC, Vice Premier, GBA Construction LSG Head
Deputy Heads	Zhao Kezhi	CC, Political & Legal Committee Dep Secretary; State Councilor, Minister of Public Security
	Xia Baolong (Exec.)	CPPCC Dep Head, HKMAO Head
Members	Li Xi	PB, Guangdong Party Secretary
	Yang Jiechi	PB, Central Foreign Affairs Work Committee Office Head
	You Quan	Central Secretariat Secretary, United Front Work Dept Head
	Wang Yi	CC, State Councilor, Foreign Minister
	Zhang Xiaoming	CC, HKMAO Dep Head, GBA Construction LSG Member
	Luo Huining	CC, HKMAO Dep Head, HKLO Head, GBA Construction LSG Member
	Fu Ziyang	CC Alt., HKMAO Dep Head, Macau LO Head, GBA Construction LSG Member
Ma Xingrui	CC, Guangdong Dep Party Sec, GD Governor	

Abbrev.: PBSC = Politburo Standing Committee, GBA = Greater Bay Area, LSG = Leading Small Group, CC = Central Committee, CPPCC = Chinese Peoples' Political Consultative Conference, HKMAO = Hong Kong Macau Affairs Office, PB = Politburo, CC Alt. = Alternate Member of Central Committee; LO = Liaison Office, HK = Hong Kong.

Source: Compiled by the author based on online sources.<sup>(33)</sup>

(32) For example, see the CCP 4th Plenum Central Committee decision of October 31, 2019, cited above.

(33) Jiang Gengyu “中央港澳工作領導小組亮相 韓正任組長 趙克志夏寶龍任副組長 [The Central Leading Group for Hong Kong and Macao Work Unveiled. Han Zheng Appointed as the Head, Zhao Kezhi and Xia Baolong as Deputy Heads],” *HK01.com*, June 3, 2020, [https://www.hk01.com//即時中國/481532/中央港澳工作領導小組亮相-韓正任組長-趙克志夏寶龍任副組長](https://www.hk01.com//即時中國/481532/中央港澳工作領導小組亮相-韓正任組長-趙克志夏寶龍任副組長;); (“中央港澳工作領導小組 [Central Hong Kong and Macao Work Leading Group],” 維基百科 [Wikipedia], accessed April 22, 2022, <https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki//中央港澳工作領導小組>).

Hong Kong is represented on the LSG and the LOCPG by CCP members familiar with Hong Kong affairs. The most familiar with Hong Kong may perhaps be Luo Huining (born in Zhejiang), Xia Baolong (Tianjin), and Li Xi, party secretary of Guangdong (Gansu). They, together with the Guangdong governor, Ma Xingrei (Shandong) and the Shenzhen Party Secretary, Wang Weizhong<sup>(34)</sup> (Shanxi), are in daily contact with Hong Kong matters. But they do not represent the interests of Hong Kong narrowly understood, nor are they expected to in the mainland political system. On the contrary, the party expects them to represent the national interest. However, a characteristic of the Chinese political system is that officials lobby for the interests of their locality.<sup>(35)</sup> Hong Kong apparently has no such lobbyists sitting on the committees that matter.

The office's website indicates that central authorities have charged the LOCPG with five main functions: 1) liaise with the FMCOPRC and the PLA garrison in the HKSAR; 2) liaise with and assist mainland governments and other organizations in managing Chinese state-owned enterprises in the territory; 3) promote exchanges and cooperation between Hong Kong and the mainland on economic, educational, scientific, cultural, and sports issues, liaise with individuals in Hong Kong society and report the concerns of Hong Kong residents about the mainland; 4) handle Taiwan affairs; 5) and address other matters assigned by the central authorities.<sup>(36)</sup> To these functions should be added liaison with the CPGNSO and the traditional functions of all territorially organized party committees: organization and personnel work, propaganda, united front work, and international liaison work (See Table 2).

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(34) Wang replaced Ma Xingrei as governor of Guangdong in 2022.

(35) See Heilmann, *China's Political System*.

(36) See “中联办简介[About the Liaison Office],” 中央政府驻港联络办 [*Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong SAR*], accessed April 22 2022, [http://www.locpg.gov.cn/zjzlb/2014-01/04/c\\_125957081.htm](http://www.locpg.gov.cn/zjzlb/2014-01/04/c_125957081.htm).

**Table 2. Structure of the Liaison Office of the Central People’s Government  
in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region**

<b>Luo Huining</b> (Head)	(7 Deputy Heads) <b>Chen Dong</b> <b>Lu Xinning</b> (Media) <b>Tan Tieniu</b> <b>Luo Yonggang</b> <b>He Jing</b> <b>Yin Songhua</b> <b>Wang Songmiao</b> (Sec Gen)	Organization Dept.*
		Propaganda Dept.*
		United Front Work (UFW) Dept.*
		International Liaison Dept.*
		General Office
		Personnel Dept.
		Publicity & Documents Dept.
		Coordination Dept
		Research Dept.
		Social Groups Liaison Dept.
		Social Work Dept.
		Economy Dept.
		Education, Science & Technology Dept.
		Taiwan Affairs Dept.
		Youth Work Dept.
		Legal Dept.
		Organization Work Dept.
		Information & Advisory Office
		Security Dept.
		Police Liaison Dept.
Administration, Financial Affairs Dept.		
Information Center		
HK Island Work Dept.		
Kowloon Work Dept.		
New Territories Work Dept.		
Beijing Liaison Dept.		
Guangdong Liaison Dept.		
Shenzhen Liaison Dept.		

\* Departments of every territorial party committee are not listed on the official Liaison Office website.<sup>(37)</sup>

Source: Compiled by the author based on information from the Liaison Office website.

(37) See Cheong Ching, “China’s Administration over Hong Kong.”

## Functions of the Hong Kong Work Committee / Liaison Office

Traditionally observers have understood the functions of the Hong Kong Work Committee and NCNA as being mostly focused on united front work — that is, building support for party policy among non-party members in Hong Kong.<sup>(38)</sup> However, from its establishment in the 1950s, NCNA Hong Kong’s role extended beyond united front work to include propaganda, organization and intelligence gathering, the latter never publicly acknowledged. In addition, NCNA Hong Kong sought to establish a parallel or shadow government in Hong Kong to enable the party to take over in the event of an unexpected British withdrawal, such as could have occurred during the 1967 riots.

The functions of the HKWC/LOCPG resemble those of provincial party committees on the mainland while acknowledging the unusual status of the party in Hong Kong. Because the party is still formally “underground” in Hong Kong, it uses different tools to manage the territory. These tools include those used on the mainland, such as administrative hierarchy (for example, power of appointment and dismissal), but also Hong Kong’s more independent legal system, access to the mainland, and persuasion. But the agencies cannot rely on a network of party members in Hong Kong (which, if mirroring the mainland, would number over 440,000 members) or the party’s disciplinary machinery. The HKWC/LOCPG is, therefore, more dependent on the HKSAR government to implement policies than would be a mainland provincial party committee.

HKWC/LOCPG functions include political leadership, organization and personnel work, propaganda, and united front work. We will detail how each of these functions is performed in Hong Kong, in turn.

### *Political Leadership*

In 2020, the HKSAR Chief Executive, Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor, ceded de facto political leadership in Hong Kong to LOCPG director Luo Huining. The local government’s inability to stop the 2019 anti-government protests and restore order was the immediate proximate cause of the change in power dynamics. The central authorities, through Luo, centralized power over

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(38) Eliza W. Lee, “United Front, Clientelism, and Indirect Rule: Theorizing the Role of the ‘Liaison Office’ in Hong Kong,” *The Journal of Contemporary China* vol. 9, no. 125, 2020, 763–751; Wai-man Lam and Kay Chi-yan Lam, “China’s United Front Work in Civil Society: The Case of Hong Kong,” *International Journal of China Studies* 4:3, 2013, 301; Edmond W. Cheng, “United Front Work and Mechanisms of Countermobilization in Hong Kong,” *The China Journal*, 83:1, 2020, 1–33.

Hong Kong. The central government began leading in various domains, including the economic integration of Hong Kong with the mainland, especially via the GBA project.<sup>(39)</sup> In October 2020, the Chief Executive postponed the annual policy address to incorporate new mainland-designed priorities, which reflected the shift of power.<sup>(40)</sup> With the party’s 2019 4<sup>th</sup> Plenum decision, Luo had a mandate to implement centrally designed measures in national security, institutional change, and economic integration, especially via the GBA. The party also put Hong Kong on notice that the agenda included education reform, civil service reform and solving Hong Kong’s “deep-rooted contradictions and problems.” The 4<sup>th</sup> Plenum decision also explicitly called for strengthening the HKSAR government’s compliance with the central authority in Beijing.

### *Organization and Personnel Work*

The nomenklatura system gives the CCP the authority to vet, approve, remove, train, and discipline all leading officials on the mainland. This system has yet to be formally extended to Hong Kong. However, the LOCPG and the central party bureaucracy have long exercised authority to vet candidates for (and recommend appointments to) various positions. Prior to 1997, the party exercised this authority in several domains for various kinds of positions, including Hong Kong delegates to the National People’s Congress, the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC, both national and local), and other organizations connected to the drafting and implementation of the Basic Law.

Since 1997 authorities have extended the LOCPG’s vetting authority to include candidates for the HKSAR Chief Executive and Principal Officials of the government, which the central government appoints. In 2021 authorities dramatically expanded the party vetting authority to ensure that only party-defined “patriots” hold official positions in Hong Kong. Through the Chinese constitution, the Basic Law, the national security law, and the Election Ordinance (2021), the party vets all members of the Hong Kong Election Committee (1,500 members), all candidates for legislative positions and the position of Chief Executive, and candidates for positions as principal officials (POs) of the Hong Kong government.<sup>(41)</sup>

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(39) PBSC member Han Zheng is also head of the Greater Bay Area project (See Table 1).

(40) Tony Cheung, Gary Cheung and Denise Tsang, “Hong Kong Leader Carrie Lam Postpones Policy Address to Next Month after Xi Jinping’s Shenzhen Celebratory Visit Confirmed,” *South China Morning Post*, October 12, 2020, <https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/politics/article/3105085/president-xi-jinping-visit-shenzhen-wednesday-40th>.

(41) “Basic Law,” *Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region*, accessed April 22, 2022, <https://www.basiclaw.gov.hk/en/basiclaw/index.html>; “Constitution of the Peoples Republic of China,” *Government of the Hong*

The party's nomenclatura system-in-practice in Hong Kong thus extends to all candidates for these positions, perhaps numbering 1,600 individuals, and senior leadership positions for statutory bodies, such as the Hong Kong Jockey Club chair and the vice-chancellors of Hong Kong's universities. In addition, the HKWC/LOCPG undoubtedly maintains a vast database of the social, economic, and political backgrounds, opinions, and activities of a wide range of people in Hong Kong, enabling the party to ensure that patriots are coopted into the united front network (discussed below).

Absent a network of party members in Hong Kong, the HKWC/LOCPG has relied on the available evidence of reliability, discipline, and loyalty, which the party has been collecting, especially since 2003.<sup>(42)</sup> From the perspective of central authorities, the Hong Kong police demonstrated their loyalty and reliability in the 2019 anti-government protests. Reports indicate that the Ministry of Public Security advised/led the local police force in its handling of the protests. Since arrested for corruption, Deputy Minister of Public Security Sun Lijun<sup>(43)</sup> was the local police's reported point of contact. Unable to trust many in the Hong Kong government, the party selected a police officer as Chief Secretary for Administration and then Chief Executive in 2022 to implement Hong Kong's new national security and changed its political regime.<sup>(44)</sup> The party in Hong Kong relies on disciplined services officers to staff key positions in the local government.

## *Propaganda*

The HKWC/LOCPG and central authorities lead propaganda efforts in Hong Kong designed to support party policies and take on any opposition. Through party-controlled traditional and social media, the authorities praise and blame, investigate, expose, or ignore actions, individuals, and organizations in Hong Kong to support party policy or undermine and destroy enemies. These efforts were on display in 2020–21 as the party demanded that Hong Kong be wiped

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*Kong Special Administrative Region*, accessed April 22, 2022,

<https://www.basiclaw.gov.hk/en/constitution/introduction.html>; "Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Administrative Region," *Hong Kong e-Legislation (HKeL)*, accessed April 22, 2022, [https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/fwddoc/hk/a406/eng\\_translation\\_\(a406\)\\_en.pdf](https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/fwddoc/hk/a406/eng_translation_(a406)_en.pdf); Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, *Improving Electoral System (Consolidated Amendments) Ordinance 2021 Ord. No. 14 of 2021* (Hong Kong: Legco, 2021), <https://www.legco.gov.hk/yr20-21/english/ord/2021ord014-e.pdf>.

(42) Ching, "The Fall of Hong Kong."

(43) William Zheng, "'Decedent' Former Chinese Police Chief Sun Lijun to Face Trial for Corruption," *South China Morning Post*, September 30, 2021, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/politics/article/3150801/decadent-former-chinese-police-chief-sun-lijun-face-trial>.

(44) John Lee Ka-chiu, since identified as the party's choice to lead the sixth HKSAR government, from July 1, 2022.

clean of “anti-communist and anti-China forces,” both domestic and foreign. In addition, the party has used propaganda tools to attack the actions and reputations of Hong Kong’s traditional pan-democrat and localist/independence-advocating politicians and all significant groups (for example, media, trade unions, NGOs) and individuals that allegedly supported them. The LOCPG propagates its views through its ownership of a vast array of traditional and social media and cultural organizations in Hong Kong (See Figure 1).

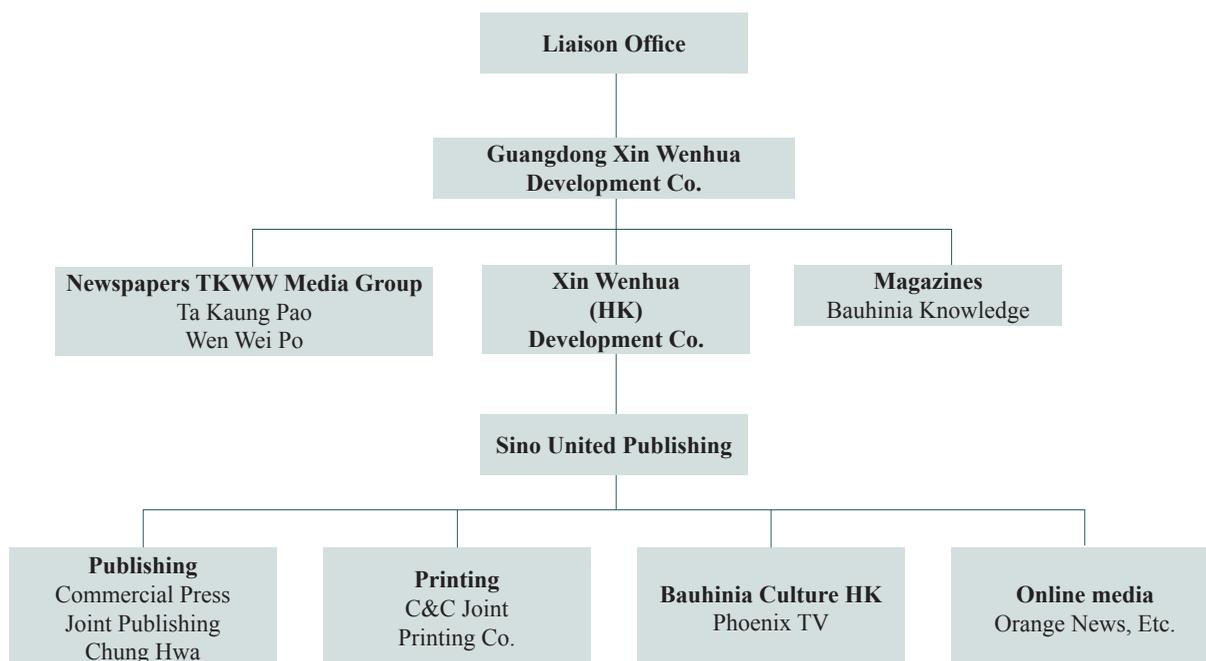
The party manages social media platforms such as Dot Dot News, Orange News, Lion Rock Daily, HoMemory, Kowloon Post, Loop.hk (the Hong Kong United Foundation, HKUF), Speakout HK, shifiles.hk, truereport.hk, HKGpao.com, Hong Kong Good News, Think Hong Kong, omouth.org, Sky Post, Lite News Hong Kong, Mango Directions, kinliu.hk, beyondnews852.com, and KOL HK.<sup>(45)</sup> Although the readership of the party’s traditional media has been small,<sup>(46)</sup> it exercises considerable and growing influence on the Hong Kong government and society. The media speak for the party and the central authorities in exercising their political leadership in Hong Kong.

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(45) Ching Cheong, “The Fall of Hong Kong.”

(46) Bess Wang and Tin Chi Wong, “The Landscape of Newspapers in Hong Kong,” in *The Evolving Landscape of Media and Communication in Hong Kong*, edited by Yu Huang and Yunya Song (Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong Press, 2018), 13–30.

**Figure 1. Schema of Media Control by the Liaison Office of the Central People’s Government in Hong Kong<sup>(47)</sup>**



Source: Author-based material in note 47.

Since 2016, officials merged Ta Kung Pao and Wen Wei Po into the TKWW Media Group.<sup>(48)</sup> The Guangdong New Culture Development Company transferred a majority of its shares to the new TKWW Media Group in 2021. In 2019, the HKWC/LOCPG established Bauhinia Culture Hong Kong under its Sino United Publishing Group. Bauhinia subsequently bought a majority stake in Phoenix TV.<sup>(49)</sup> The HKWC/LOCPG is consolidating, expanding, and diversifying its media presence in Hong Kong to win the hearts and minds of local people.

(47) Apple Daily April 9, 2015 accessed in “Media of Hong Kong,” *Wikipedia*, accessed April 22, 2022, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Media\\_of\\_Hong\\_Kong](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Media_of_Hong_Kong). See also Betsy Tse, “Basic Law Violation Seen as LOCPG Tightens Grip on HK Publishers,” *EJ Insight*, April 9, 2015, <https://www.ejinsight.com/eji/article/id/1025075/20150409-basic-law-violation-seen-as-locpg-tightens-grip-on-hk-publishers> ; Blake Schmidt, “The Publishing Empire Helping China Silence Dissent in HK,” *Bloomberg* August 18, 2020, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2020-08-17/the-publishing-empire-helping-china-silence-dissent-in-hong-kong> ; Pak Yiu, “Hong Kong’s Independent Media Fight to Survive,” *Nikkei Asia*, February 9, 2022, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/The-Big-Story/Hong-Kong-s-independent-media-fight-to-survive>.

(48) See also “香港大公文匯傳媒集團 [Hong Kong Ta Kung Wen Wei Media Group],” *tkww.hk*, accessed April 22, 2022, <https://www.tkww.hk/agreement/group-initiative-615-more.html>; Blake Schmidt, “The Publishing Empire Helping China Silence Dissent in HK,” *Bloomberg* August 18, 2020, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2020-08-17/the-publishing-empire-helping-china-silence-dissent-in-hong-kong>.

(49) Pak Yiu, “Hong Kong’s Independent Media Fight to Survive,” *Nikkei Asia*, February 9, 2022, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/The-Big-Story/Hong-Kong-s-independent-media-fight-to-survive>.

## *United Front Work*

From 1949 onward, the public face of the HKWC and NCNA focused on united front work, the function of which was to build support for its policies outside the party among the vast middle ground with the potential to support the party. The CCP facilitated the establishment of party-friendly political groups (such as the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong, DAB), trade unions, and professional groups across the width and breadth of Hong Kong society. The party has left no sector untouched. It cultivates good relationships with traditional organizations with which it can establish alliances (for example, Heung Yee Kuk, a council representing rural interests in Hong Kong's New Territories). It has established or encouraged the establishment of geographic- and occupation-based associations "of various circles." The party supports candidates in local elections that it deems supportive of party policy and has played a crucial role in the DAB's electoral successes. The party facilitates fundraising for these groups.<sup>(50)</sup> Through united front work, the party identifies enemies, friends, and its own supporters to be attacked, persuaded, and supported as the need arises. The party identifies and tests potential candidates for membership and official positions. Decades of united front work reaped dividends as the party identified those groups and individuals who may participate in Hong Kong's first post-2020 Election Committee and as candidates in Legco elections.<sup>(51)</sup>

## *Liaison and Coordination*

In addition to the functions outlined above, the HKWC/LOCPG acts as a bridge to the mainland, facilitating contact between the central and other local governments on the mainland and Hong Kong. The HKWC/LOCPG manages official visits across the border. In addition, it provides advice on the appropriate way for public organizations and individuals to approach and interact with one another.

Figure 2 provides a summary schematic diagram of the authority relations involved in the party's network of agencies charged with Hong Kong work. The Politburo and its Standing Committee leads, providing direction to the Central Committee's Hong Kong and Macau Work LSG, on which three Politburo members sit. The LSG coordinates information it shares

(50) See Cheong Ching, "The Fall of Hong Kong;" Cheng, "United Front Work and Mechanisms;" Lee, "United Front, Clientelism, and Indirect Rule;" Lam and Lam, "China's United Front Work."

(51) See "Method for the Constitution of the Election Committee," *Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau*, accessed April 10, 2022, <https://www.cmab.gov.hk/improvement/en/ceo-ele-committee/index.html>.

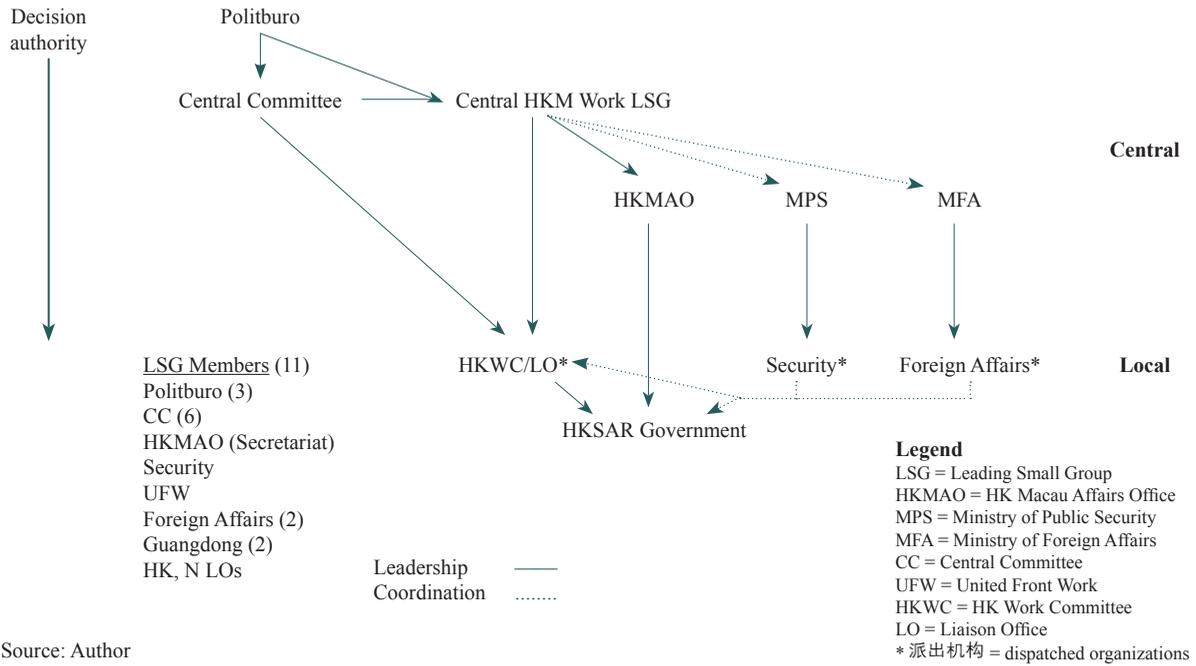
with the bureaucracies involved and makes policy on and for Hong Kong that it communicates to the HKMAO, other central ministries, and the HKWC/LOCPG in Hong Kong. Centrally determined policies are communicated to Hong Kong authorities via the HKMAO and the HKWC/LOCPG. The Hong Kong-based CPGNSO coordinates security policy with the HKWC/LOCPG and the security department of the Hong Kong police. In addition, the CPGNSO provides input to the various vetting mechanisms managed by the HKWC/LOCPG. The LOCPG also coordinates with the FMCOPRC in Hong Kong and the Chief Executive's Office in Hong Kong.

## Conclusion

This brief snapshot of the Chinese Communist Party in Hong Kong offers several lessons for knowledgeable outside observers, including in the Gulf and the Arab world. First, we see that the party is adaptable, resilient, and highly capable of meeting new challenges, such as those thrown up by Hong Kong. The capacity of the party to adapt should not be underestimated. Second, we see that the party has many tools to impose its will on Hong Kong, operating as it does there in a capitalist economic system. This is further evidence of the party's adaptability. Third, while the party is developing the legal system on the mainland, the CCP has become more adept at molding and using Hong Kong's relatively mature "rule of law" system to achieve the party's political ends. Thus, the party has crafted national security and electoral change legislation that achieves regime objectives while still maintaining a certain degree of autonomy for Hong Kong.

The CCP in Hong Kong has come a long way as it emerges from the shadows in Hong Kong. From its united front work beginnings, the party in Hong Kong now wields direct de facto authority over the Hong Kong government as it "supervises, guides, coordinates, and supports" the HKSAR to play a more integrated role with the mainland. But the party does not have access to the most important tool it uses on the mainland—a substantial network of loyal party members. Building such a network in Hong Kong is a long and difficult process. Identifying, evaluating, testing, further evaluating, and testing again, and so forth is a lengthy and costly process. Yet this is what the party is now doing with accelerated speed.

**Figure 2. Central–Local Relations and Hong Kong**





## King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies (KFCRIS)

*KFCRIS* is an independent non-governmental institution based in Riyadh, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Center was founded in 1403/1983 by the *King Faisal Foundation (KFF)* to preserve the legacy of the late King Faisal and to continue his mission of transmitting knowledge between the Kingdom and the world. The Center serves as a platform for research, Islamic and contemporary studies, bringing together researchers and research institutions from the Kingdom and across the world through conferences, workshops, and lectures, and through the production and publication of scholarly works, as well as the preservation of Islamic manuscripts. The Center seeks to expand the range of existing literature and research to bring it to the fore in academic discussions and interests; while observing the contributions of Islamic societies in the humanities and social sciences, arts, and literature, nowadays and in the past.

The Center contains a library that preserves precious Islamic manuscripts and huge databases in the field of humanities. It also includes the Museums Department, which contains six valuable collections that the Center preserves, as well as the *Museum of Arab Islamic Art*. The Center contains the *Al-Faisal Cultural House*, its executive arm in the publishing industry, which publishes books, cultural and peer-reviewed journals. *KFCRIS* also includes *Darat Al Faisal*, which is concerned with documenting the biography of King Faisal and his family in addition to preserving his legacy.

For more information, please visit the Center's website: [www.kfcris.com/en](http://www.kfcris.com/en)



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