

Chapter 7

International Labour Affairs

International Instruments Setting Out Labour Standards

- 7.1** International Labour Conventions set by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) prescribe relevant labour standards for member states. As at year-end, 41 International Labour Conventions were applied to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), with or without modification ([Figure 7.1](#)), notwithstanding that Hong Kong is neither a sovereign entity nor an ILO member. Other international instruments, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, also touch on labour standards, albeit to a much smaller extent.
- 7.2** A comprehensive set of labour legislation and administrative measures are in place in the HKSAR to enable the Government to implement internationally accepted labour standards. Through continuous improvements to labour legislation and administrative measures, the HKSAR maintains a level of labour standards as good as those of neighbouring places with similar economic development as well as social and cultural background.

Participation in the Activities of the ILO

- 7.3** The HKSAR participates in the activities of the ILO, either as part of the delegation of the People's Republic of China or, for activities which are not limited to states, on its own using the name "Hong Kong, China".
- 7.4** In 2012, the Labour Department continued to participate actively in activities organised by the ILO to keep abreast of the latest development of international labour matters. In the year, representatives from the HKSAR participated in the 101st Session of the International Labour Conference held in Geneva, Switzerland. ([Figure 7.2](#))

Contacts with Other Labour Administrations

- 7.5** Delegations of labour administrators from the Mainland and other places visited the Labour Department in the year. The department also sent study missions to the Mainland and foreign countries such as Singapore and UK. Apart from strengthening mutual cooperation, these visits provided opportunities for representatives of the department to exchange views and experience with its counterparts on various labour issues.

7.6 The Agreement on Labour between Hong Kong, China and the Member States of the European Free Trade Association (including Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland) entered into force on October 1 (with Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland) and November 1 (with Norway) respectively. The Agreement establishes a set of shared labour principles and provides a sound basis for communication on labour matters of common interest.