

# Civil Society

## Definition

Civil society is composed of the totality of voluntary civic and social organizations and institutions that form the basis of a functioning society. It allows a public sphere for citizen to share opinions, interests and benefits at the same time an arena to negotiate with their government, force-backed structures and commercial institutions as to put their wants to succeed. Civil Society is able to restrain their government, unite citizens forming power and finally to advance democracy.

公民社會, English translated as “Civil Society”. What civil means? Civil means common citizens public, not at all, civil also means educated. What we talk about civilization is whether a place got their own culture, own thinking, citizens with high education and their behaviour.

If we ask, is a Hong Kong a Civil Society? The answer is definitely YES! We can see that Hong Kong got thousands and thousands of voluntary social organization, like Zi Teng(紫藤), a group care for sex workers. Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions(職工盟), a group care for labourers, Mother’s Choice care for unmarried pregnant young girls and so many to go. But is that the theory that, “They exist and we are civic”? What they need is to function. Non-governmental Organizations made up most of the part of a Civil Society; they are the most important value of the society. For instance, the HKCTU function by supporting the structural iron and steel workers to fights for collective negotiation, supporting the flight attendants of Cathay Pacific for their salaries. Zi Teng help to educate sex workers how to protect themselves from affection of disease and to help make their life better. Mother’s Choice provides a shelter for those unmarried pregnant young girls and help to maintain their lives. And one thing is though these people are being discriminated; there are still associations to help them which make me wonder that Hong Kong is a fair city!

Apart from NGOs, the government got a systematic institution to back up these NGOs. Not talking to advance them but no to be picky with. Then it formed a Civil Society. However, we can apparently see that there is only a small arena that mentioned above on selective issues. Let’s say, the Queen Ferry Pier, what the use is for a short and unknown consultation time and what is so mean about that shopping mall? Though situation goes on, nobody can restrain their government only those private developers

can. From this, we see that our civil society needs to grow more mature until they can fully handle the situation.

Frequently, Hong Kong people said that “It is so glad we had been once ruled by British”. I think that is no mistake in this sentence. It is the case that British bring Hong Kong with their fully developed jurisdiction and also a chance of education. Otherwise, Hong Kong will not have such an advantage to be a famous international financial centre and highly educated level. Most importantly, DEMOCRACY! British introduce election system and voting system so that many decisions are made to the best people benefit sake. The final stage of Civil Society is just a democratic society with citizens ruling their lives! But the matter on how can people power to be united to maximum its capacity and do the most benefits is still need to improved. Civil Society is a step by steps learning and we need people care. It is just rubbish if nobody is devoted.

So, reflecting the case of Hong Kong in terms of Mainland China, China is actually getting better and better. As they many political conditions, China got a really late start to hers economy, technology and the public education. At present there are many NGOs is trying very hard to change those unfavourable conditions of China, like poor education standard, poor economic growth in some interior regions. Since they are just soon on going we cannot found groups that can restrain the government and negotiate with commercial institutions. Only we can see suppressed workers from poor place to the big cities earning a little sum of money that just marginally able to provide me three meals or even two a day. At the same time that, it is so glad to see that there are really government officials are so determined to reform and help. I believe in some year’s time, it is not difficult to see a “civilized” China.