

**DECLINING CONFIDENCE IN
“ONE COUNTRY, TWO SYSTEMS”
IN HONG KONG**

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Executive Summary

1. Growing skepticism of the “One Country, Two Systems” (OCTS) model of governance has become a major cause of Hong Kong’s current governance conundrum. According to the latest poll, net confidence in the OCTS principle has dropped to historically zero.
2. In 2013, the social attitude towards “patriotism” has changed significantly. Unlike in 2004 when people still generally expressed their love for the country – specifically China’s culture, people and history other than its political regime – even the notion of “patriotism” has come into question now.
3. Hong Kong’s economic integration with China, as well as China’s emphasis on “One Country” instead of “Two Systems” has caused the city’s declining confidence in the OCTS principle.
4. Although the OCTS formula is meant to preserve the differences between China and Hong Kong to calm apprehensive Hong Kongers and facilitate a smooth handover in 1997, issues of economic integration and China’s more prominent political interventions after the handover have become increasingly touchy in the city.
5. The strain to the city’s resources as a result of an influx of Mainlanders, the metaphor of “Mother and Son” frequently used in mainland China and the emphasis on the city’s reliance on China for survival have fanned the flames in Hong Kong.
6. Some Hong Kongers have rebutted the inferiority claim as largely a political discourse and manipulation. They argue that China-Hong Kong relations should be mutually beneficial instead of hierarchical.

7. Besides, China's political interventions in Hong Kong affairs have become more visible after the 18th Party Congress in fall 2012. For the first time, China's sovereignty, security and development interests have publicly become the key premises of its policy towards Hong Kong.
8. Amid rising discontent in Hong Kong is nostalgia for British rule. After the Falkland referendum, *South China Morning Post* conducted a similar online poll in March 2013, asking respondents if they would "vote to return to a British overseas territory, given the option". Ninety-two percent said yes.
9. At the same time, some moderate intellectuals have chosen to take a more radical approach by initiating a civil disobedience movement to push for the democratic election of Hong Kong's leader in 2017. This provokes a harder stance from Beijing and concern whether the movement will turn into a mini Tiananmen incident in Hong Kong.