Hong Kong vs China: The Differences

Perhaps the most significant difference between mainland China and Hong Kong is that the mainland is communist and controlled by a single party, while Hong Kong has a limited democracy. Both share the president of China as their chief of state. However, each has its own head of government: the premier is the head of mainland China, while the chief executive is the head of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

	Hong Kong 🇭🇰	**China** 🇨🇳
Government type	Limited democracy	Communist party-led state
	Mixed legal system of common law based on the English model	Civil law influenced by Soviet and continental European civil law

Freedom of speech, of the press and of publication	✅	⚠️ Limited
Freedom of association, of assembly, of procession and of demonstration	✅	⚠️ Limited
Freedom of religious belief and to preach, conduct and participate in religious activities in public	✅	⚠️ Limited
The right to confidential legal advice, access to the courts, choices of lawyers for timely protection of their legal rights interests or for representation in the courts, and to judicial remedies	✅	⚠️ Limited
Uncensored Internet	✅	❌

Legal system	Mixed legal system of common law based on the English model and Chinese customary law (in matters of family and land tenure) **Presumption of innocence**	Civil law influenced by Soviet and continental European civil law systems; legislature retains power to interpret **Suspects of crimes have to defend themselves**
Political parties	Hong Kong has no legislation for political parties, there are three main political ideological blocs, which presents to pro-democracy camp, pro-Beijing camp and the localist groups	Chinese Communist Party China has 8 nominally independent small parties ultimately controlled by the CCP
Suffrage	**For the legislature:** limited to about 220,000 members of functional constituencies **For the chief executive:** a 1,200-member election committee drawn from broad sectoral groupings, central government bodies, municipal organizations, and elected Hong Kong officials	❌
Freedom of speech, of the press and of publication	✅	⚠️ **Limited**