



Flexible employment the preferred choice?

Flexible employment has become popular worldwide and according to this survey, it offers a better work-life balance and more autonomy than a conventional job. However, the latter is usually better paid in Hong Kong. Does working flexibly have other disadvantages?



Flexible employment is an increasingly popular option in Hong Kong among the young, who like to choose where and when they work. However, it brings problems such as unrecognized work experience, employment contracts and inadequate business and professional support. Nevertheless, over half of all Hong Kong working youth had done flexible work in the year before this survey. 52.4% of them say it gives greater control over working hours and 44.8% say it's more lucrative than conventional full-time, salaried jobs.

Flexible workers in this survey include:

- Independent contractors who work on a per-project basis
- Freelancers who own their own company
- Multiple job-holders with traditional and freelance assignments
- Full-timers who also do informal part-time work
- Temporary personnel who are hired for less than a year
- Part-timers who work less than 30 hours per week

Comments from group members

Members of the youth think tank group working on the survey with the Federation's Youth Research Centre emphasize the need for better career support for flexible work as a top priority.

Kyle Si "Employers and other stakeholders need better understanding of this kind of work in order to provide opportunities for more diversified youth career development. A support platform or "flexi-circle" with information on vacancies, business consultancies, legal and other professional services for flexible workers would be useful."

David Wong "The government's Qualifications Framework contains a 'Recognition of Prior Learning' mechanism that claims to be a 'measure to recognize work experiences and competencies acquired by practitioners at the workplace,' yet it does not recognize the accumulation of flexible work experience. This should be changed. Flexible employment should also be included as a factor in official manpower projections to provide suitable training and retraining opportunities."

Keith Leung "The concept of flexible employment could be introduced in career and life planning education at secondary school so that students understand more about the diverse modes of employment that might be available to them in future."

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528 working youth aged 15-34 were successfully polled in a random sample telephone survey.

20 young people doing flexible work and 5 experts or academics were also interviewed.

Full details [in Chinese]

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