



## Women's employment

*Enabling more women to go to work is one solution for reversing Hong Kong's shrinking labour force. Women are less likely to be employed because of their responsibility for childcare, according to widespread belief. Indeed, the labour force participation rate among women who are or have been married is 21% lower than for women who have never married. This indicates strong potential among this group for joining or rejoining the workforce.*

### Key points from respondents

- 83.1% of the respondents support improvements in women's employment conditions.
- Over 75% think that the childcare services in Hong Kong are insufficient.
- 57.1% think that adoption of the "home office" concept would be "very helpful" if the number of women in the workforce is to grow.
- 50.4% think adoption of "flexi-time" would also have the above result.



75.1% think that the government should offer greater support for women at work and rate the HKSARG's efforts in this respect at only 4.11 on a 0-10 scale, on average. Interviews with women find that many of them experience tension as a result of the dual responsibilities of a career and family life. Employers' representatives said they welcome women who return to the workplace but have reservations about implementing family-friendly employment practices such as flexi-time, flexi-workplace and job sharing.

### Comments from Youth I.D.E.A.S. think tank members

**Keith Leung, group deputy convener** "Childcare services in Hong Kong are insufficient to an extreme and many women who are interested in employment cannot find jobs. To cope with the problem, we recommend the introduction of an After School Care Programme for all primary schools. It should be a tripartite cooperation model whereby the schools provide the venue, NGOs offer the services and the government offers a subsidy. The government could also offer a Family-Friendly Practices Grant that provides incentives for companies that implement women-friendly practices in order to build the female workforce."

**Manson Chow, group member** "The government, education, public, NGO and business sectors should join hands to implement family-friendly employment practices such as working from home. The government could split some full-time civil service support posts into part-time work for personnel such as translators and technical officers. Universities could provide home office arrangements for staff in computer programming and research. The experience gained could then be used to motivate the commercial sector to extend such benefits to all women who want to work."

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**Participants/respondents** 520 Hong Kong residents aged 18 or above surveyed; 20 women with young children aged 25-54 interviewed; 6 experts and scholars interviewed

**More details** [in Chinese] [yrc.hkfyg.org.hk/2018/10/30/yi035/](http://yrc.hkfyg.org.hk/2018/10/30/yi035/)

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