



Prejudice against SEN and disabilities

Youth with SEN or disabilities face lack of employment support, negative employer attitudes and misunderstandings of both colleagues and the general public, irrespective of their qualifications. How might the situation be improved?

The number of Hong Kong SEN (special educational needs) students studying in mainstream primary and secondary schools has recently been rising and the number in local post-secondary programmes is up by 50% since 2015. However, according to the Census and Statistics Department's latest report (2013)*, 70% of the overall population with tertiary qualifications was employed compared to only 35% of well-qualified disabled people.

Key points from respondents

26% are unwilling to work with SEN youth. Their reasons include:

- 60.7% expect an increased workload.
- 43.7% say they don't know how to work with them.
- 27.4% think SEN youth might be "dangerous or harmful".



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Respondents 520 adults aged 18+

More details [in Chinese] yrc.hkfyg.org.hk/2018/11/27/yi036/

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

Alan Yip, convener, & James Cheng, group member

"The number of government placements in summer student internships should be doubled to 200 for all those with disabilities. The government should also make provision for post-placement civil service employment for outstanding SEN students and ensure that the overall percentage of civil servants with disabilities rises from 1.8% to 4%. New civil service hires of disabled people should be a minimum of 2% per annum."

Darcy Fung & Christine Chan, group members

"Subsidies for employing disabled workers should be available for a year instead of nine months in the government's Work Orientation and Placement Scheme. The scheme's maximum employer allowance should be maintained at HK\$51,000. The recruitment service run by the Selective Placement Division of the Labour Department should not only provide low-skilled job openings for disabled applicants but also provide more opportunities for those who are technically well-qualified."

Disabled and employed: all education levels

Hong Kong 35.3% of disabled people aged 18-64 have jobs compared to 71.2% for those without a disability.

Australia 18.5% of the population is disabled. 53.4% of those in the labour force have jobs compared to 83.2% of people with no disability.

Singapore Around 13.3% of the over 50s and 3.4% of 18-49 year-olds are considered disabled but disabled people comprise only about 0.55% of the resident labour force. The overall employment rate is high at 97.8%.

UK 45% of disabled people of working age in the UK have jobs compared to 77% for those without a disability.

US 35.9% of US civilians aged 18-64 living with disabilities have a job, compared to 76.9% of others.

Sources

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