

# **Chapter Four**

## **Employment and Unemployment**

## Section A: Employment Status

### 53. Employed youth population

**Table 4.1: Number\* of employed persons by age and sex (1991-2001)**

Sex/Age	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.
<b>Male</b>											
15-19	57300	56000	51100	44900	41500	43000	44700	37700	34600	32200	29300
20-29	429900	411100	411200	405200	387400	398100	402900	384100	367200	373900	359800
<b>Female</b>											
15-19	47400	39900	34900	34000	32200	34500	34000	33300	28000	26900	26200
20-29	400300	387000	389700	395900	390700	405800	412900	405300	401100	409500	401100
<b>Both sexes</b>											
15-19	104600	95900	86000	78900	73700	77500	78700	71000	62600	59100	55500
20-29	830200	798100	801000	801000	778100	803900	815900	789400	768300	783300	760900

**Source: General Household Survey, Census and Statistics Department**

*Note: \*Numbers are rounded to the nearest hundred.*

**Table 4.2: Do respondent's present job requires you to go to Mainland China?**

	Number	Percentage
Always	37	4.9%
Occasional	60	8.0%
Less frequent	36	4.8%
No need	614	82.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>746</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Source: Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups (2001)**

There has been more change in the employment situation of youths. Number of employed young people has decreased between 1991 and 2001. Full-time students of the 2000s are much more than those of the early 1990s. The students of the 2000s are pursuing more education in the school than those of the early 1990s. In 2001, there were 55,500 young people employed in comparison with 104,600 in 1991.

## 54. Underemployed youth population and rate

**Table 4.3: Number \*\*of underemployed persons and underemployment rate (UDR) by age and sex (1991-2001)**

Sex/ Age	1991		1992		1993		1994		1995		1996	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Male</b>												
15-19	500	0.8	900	1.5	800	1.4	400	0.8	800	1.6	1200	2.4
20-29	5800	1.3	7900	1.9	5700	1.3	4900	1.2	7300	1.8	6400	1.5
<b>Female</b>												
15-19	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	500	1.3	300	0.9
20-29	2700	0.7	2200	0.6	2000	0.5	1300	0.3	900	0.2	1300	0.3
<b>Both sexes</b>												
15-19	700	0.6	1000	1.0	900	1.0	500	0.5	1200	1.5	1500	1.7
20-29	8400	1.0	10200	1.2	7700	0.9	6300	0.8	8200	1.0	7700	0.9

Source: Census and Statistics Department (2001)

Sex/Age	1997		1998		1999		2000		2001	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Male</b>										
15-19	1100	2.2	1500	3.2	3000	6.3	2200	5.1	2000	5.2
20-29	3900	0.9	10400	2.5	13500	3.3	11000	2.7	9700	2.5
<b>Female</b>										
15-19	500	1.3	1100	2.6	1700	4.4	1600	4.4	1400	4.1
20-29	1100	0.3	2600	0.6	4000	1.0	3600	0.8	3100	0.7
<b>Both sexes</b>										
15-19	1600	1.8	2600	2.9	4700	5.5	3700	4.8	3400	4.7
20-29	5000	0.6	13000	1.5	17500	2.1	14500	1.7	12800	1.6

Source: Census and Statistics Department (2001)

Note: \* Figures of small magnitude is suppressed owing to large sampling error; \*\*Numbers are rounded to the nearest hundred.

In 2001, the underemployment rate for young females aged 20-29 was 0.7% as compared to a rate of 2.5% for young males. For young females aged 15-19, the unemployment rate was 4.1 % as compared to 5.2% for aboriginal males. It is clear from this data that the underemployment rate for young people of both sexes was considerably higher than for teenage group of 15-19.

## 55. Unemployed youth population and rate

**Table 4.4: Number\*\* of unemployed persons and unemployment rate (UDR) by age and sex (1991-2001)**

Sex/Age	1991		1992		1993		1994		1995		1996	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Male</b>												
15-19	5400	8.6	4000	6.7	4800	8.5	4300	8.8	6000	12.5	6200	12.6
20-29	11600	2.6	12700	3.0	12200	2.9	12800	3.1	19100	4.7	18100	4.4
<b>Female</b>												
15-19	3800	7.5	2800	6.5	2800	7.5	3000	8.2	4700	12.8	4900	12.3
20-29	7700	1.9	9600	2.4	10100	2.5	7800	1.9	13200	3.3	11900	2.8
<b>Both sexes</b>												
15-19	9200	8.1	6800	6.6	7600	8.1	7300	8.5	10700	12.7	11100	12.5
20-29	19400	2.3	22300	2.7	22300	2.7	20600	2.5	32200	4.0	30000	3.6

Sex/Age	1997		1998		1999		2000		2001	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Male</b>										
15-19	4600	9.4	9700	20.5	13200	27.6	10100	23.9	9800	25.1
20-29	13800	3.3	28600	6.9	38800	9.6	27400	6.8	30800	7.9
<b>Female</b>										
15-19	4200	10.9	8500	20.3	9700	25.8	8200	23.4	7200	21.4
20-29	9400	2.2	19000	4.5	23500	5.5	20700	4.8	19500	4.6
<b>Both sexes</b>										
15-19	8800	10.0	18200	20.4	22900	26.8	18300	23.7	17000	23.4
20-29	23200	2.8	47600	5.7	62300	7.5	48000	5.8	50300	6.2

**Source: Census and Statistics Department (2001)**

*Note: \* Figures of small magnitude is suppressed owing to large sampling error; \*\*Numbers are rounded to the nearest hundred.*

In 2001, 6.2% of 20-29 year-old Hong Kong youth in the labor force were unemployed, compared with 3.6% in 1996. Young male were more likely than young females to be unemployed (7.9% compared with 4.6% in 2001)

## 55. Unemployed youth population and rate

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**Table 4.5: Unemployment rate of youth from different countries**

<b>Year</b>	<b>USA</b>	<b>Japan</b>	<b>Taiwan</b>	<b>Macau</b>	<b>Singapore</b>	<b>Hong Kong</b>
	<b>2000</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>15-19 age</b>	13.1	9.2	7.34	10.6	11.9	23.4
<b>20-24 age</b>	7.1	-	-	-	8.1	7.8
<b>25-29 age</b>	3.7	5.6	-	4.9	6.0	4.3
<b>Overall</b>	4.0	4.7	2.92	6.8	6.0	4.9

**Source: Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups (2001)**

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The unemployment rate is calculated by dividing the number of unemployed persons in a population by the number of persons in that population who are in the labour force. The data reveals that younger people aged 15-19 are less likely than youth aged 20-29 to participate in the labour force and are more likely to be unemployed in different countries.

## 56. Economically Inactive Youth (not in school) Population

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**Table 4.6: Economically Inactive Population by Age Group and Sex, 1991, 1996 and 2001**

Year	Age Group	Male		Female		Both Sexes	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1991	0-14	599 044	56.0	552 872	33.7	1 151 916	42.5
	15-19	138 215	12.9	140 051	8.5	278 266	10.3
	20-24	32 944	3.1	36 556	2.2	69 500	2.6
1996	0-14	596 253	50.4	554 785	30.0	1 151 038	37.9
	15-19	152 912	12.9	155 589	8.4	308 501	10.2
	20-24	45 633	3.9	52 492	2.8	98 125	3.2
2001	0-14	574 357	43.0	535 060	27.7	1 109 417	33.9
	15-19	180 665	13.5	177 979	9.2	358 644	11.0
	20-24	55 963	4.2	61 594	3.2	117 557	3.6

**Source: Census and Statistics Department (2001)**

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There have been more changes in the economically inactive population of youths. The youths of the 2000s are pursuing more education in the school than those of the early 1990s. Number of economically inactive young people has increased between 1991 and 2001.

## 57. Availability for work

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**Table 4.7: Labour Force Participation Rate (Excluding Foreign Domestic Helpers) by Age Group and Sex**

Age group	Sex	2001 (%)
15-19	F	14.6
	M	17.0
20-29	F	77.2
	M	84.7

Source: Census and Statistics Department (2001)

**Table 4.8: Labour Force by Sex and Age Group**

Age group	Sex	1986	1991	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
15-19	F	66.3	51.2	39.4	38.2	41.7	37.7	35.1	33.1
	M	77.4	62.6	49.2	49.3	47.4	47.8	42.3	38.9
20-29	F	431.8	408.1	417.7	422.3	424.3	424.6	430.1	420.1
	M	538.0	441.5	416.2	416.8	412.7	406.0	401.2	389.9

Source: Census and Statistics Department (2001)

*Note: Figures are in thousand*

**Table 4.9: Labour Force Participation Rate (%) by Age Group and Sex**

Age group	Sex	1986	1991	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
15-19	F	31.7	25.7	18.5	17.0	18.2	16.6	15.7	15.3
	M	34.5	29.4	22.0	21.2	20.0	20.2	18.0	17.0
20-29	F	77.8	80.6	80.6	80.4	80.6	80.6	81.1	80.4
	M	93.5	91.8	88.1	87.6	87.8	87.1	86.6	84.7

Source: Census and Statistics Department (2001)

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As might be expected, participation in the labour force varies by age. Those in the younger age groups of 15-19 show the lower participation rate, with those aged 20-29 showing higher labour force participation rate. This pattern holds true for both females and males.

## 57. Availability for work

**Table 4.10: Youths in the Labour Force by Sex, 1991, 1996 and 2001**

Sex	1991		1996		2001	
	Labour Force	Non Labour Force	Labour Force	Non Labour Force	Labour Force	Non Labour Force
Number (Percentage*)						
<b>Including foreign domestic helpers</b>						
<b>Male</b>	258 560 (60.2)	171 159 (39.8)	242 099 (54.9)	198 545 (45.1)	220 011 (48.2)	236 628 (51.8)
<b>Female</b>	233 515 (56.9)	176 607 (43.1)	220 786 (51.5)	208 081 (48.5)	224 233 (48.3)	239 573 (51.7)
<b>Both sexes</b>	492 075 (58.6)	347 766 (41.4)	462 885 (53.2)	406 626 (46.8)	444 244 (48.3)	476 201 (51.7)
<b>Whole Population Aged 15 and Over</b>						
<b>Male</b>	1 742 271 (78.7)	470 676 (21.3)	1 925 095 (76.6)	586 759 (23.4)	1 948 976 (71.9)	762 011 (28.1)
<b>Female</b>	1 067 731 (49.5)	1 088 687 (50.5)	1 257 402 (49.2)	1 297 262 (50.8)	1 489 016 (51.6)	1 398 969 (48.4)
<b>Both sexes</b>	2 811 002 (64.3)	1 559 363 (35.7)	3 182 497 (62.8)	1 884 021 (37.2)	3 437 992 (61.4)	2 160 980 (38.6)
<b>Excluding foreign domestic helpers</b>						
<b>Male</b>	258 387 (60.2)	171 159 (39.8)	241 793 (54.9)	198 545 (45.1)	219 838 (48.2)	236 628 (51.8)
<b>Female</b>	226 290 (56.2)	176 607 (43.8)	205 063 (49.6)	208 081 (50.4)	191 393 (44.4)	239 573 (55.6)
<b>Both sexes</b>	484 677 (58.2)	347 766 (41.8)	446 856 (52.4)	406 626 (47.6)	411 231 (46.3)	476 201 (53.7)
<b>Whole Population Aged 15 and Over</b>						
<b>Male</b>	1 741 111 (78.7)	470 676 (21.3)	1 922 446 (76.6)	586 759 (23.4)	1 946 666 (71.9)	762 011 (28.1)
<b>Female</b>	1 014 879 (48.2)	1 088 687 (51.8)	1 141 878 (46.8)	1 297 262 (53.2)	1 310 011 (48.4)	1 398 969 (51.6)
<b>Both sexes</b>	2 755 990 (63.9)	1 559 363 (36.1)	3 064 324 (61.9)	1 884 021 (38.1)	3 256 677 (60.1)	2 160 980 (39.9)

**Source: Census and Statistics Department (2001)**

*Note: \* Figures in brackets represent the percentages in respect of the total.*

It should be noted that labour force participation rate includes both those who are currently employed and those who are looking for work. Thus, while labour force participation rates reveal the proportion of the population who are in the labour force, they do not tell us what proportion of that group are currently employed and what proportion are unemployed. While the labour force participation rate for youth males has decreased from 60.2% in 1991 to 48.2% in 2001 and youth females has also decreased from 56.2% in 1991 to 44.4% in 2001.



## 57. Availability for work

**Table 4.11: Labour Force Participation Rates of Youths by Sex, 1991, 1996 and 2001**

Sex	Labour Force Participation Rates (%)					
	1991		1996		2001	
	Including Foreign Domestic Helpers	Excluding Foreign Domestic Helpers	Including Foreign Domestic Helpers	Excluding Foreign Domestic Helpers	Including Foreign Domestic Helpers	Excluding Foreign Domestic Helpers
<b>Youths</b>						
Male	60.2	60.2	54.9	54.9	48.2	48.2
Female	56.9	56.2	51.5	49.6	48.3	44.4
Both sexes	58.6	58.2	53.2	52.4	48.3	46.3
<b>Whole Population Aged 15 and Over</b>						
Male	78.7	78.7	76.6	76.6	71.9	71.9
Female	49.5	48.2	49.2	46.8	51.6	48.4
Both sexes	64.3	63.9	62.8	61.9	61.4	60.1

Source: Census and Statistics Department (2001)

**Table 4.12: Working Youths by Economic Activity Status, 1991, 1996 and 2001**

Economic Activity Status	1991	1996	2001
	Working Youths	Working Youths	Working Youths
	Number (Percentage <sup>(1)</sup> )		
Employees <sup>(2)</sup>	443 024 (95.9)	399 973 (95.9)	382 132 (96.4)
Employers	5 110 (1.1)	3 469 (0.8)	3 020 (0.8)
Self-employed	7 850 (1.7)	7 986 (1.9)	7 104 (1.8)
Unpaid family workers	6 008 (1.3)	5 495 (1.3)	4 125 (1.0)
<b>Total</b>	461 992 (100.0)	416 920 (100.0)	396 381 (100.0)

Source: Census and Statistics Department (2001)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets represent the percentages in respect of the total. (2) The figures include outdoor-workers.

For both sexes of youth, the labour force participation rates have decreased from 58.2% in 1996 to 46.3% in 2001. The number of working youths has also decreased during the past ten years.

## Section B: Structural Constraints to Youth Employment

### 58. Present occupation of employed youth

**Table 4.13: Working Youths by Occupation, 1991, 1996 and 2001**

Occupation	1991	1996	2001
	Working Youths	Working Youths	Working Youths
Number (Percentage <sup>(1)</sup> )			
Managers and administrators	7 417 (1.6)	7 479 (1.8)	3 880 (1.0)
Professionals	8 943 (1.9)	15 178 (3.6)	15 318 (3.9)
Associate professionals	57 522 (12.5)	58 905 (14.1)	65 576 (16.5)
Clerks	140 844 (30.5)	133 720 (32.1)	107 358 (27.1)
Service workers and shop sales workers	97 009 (21.0)	87 568 (21.0)	93 494 (23.6)
Craft and related workers	64 472 (14.0)	49 421 (11.9)	38 833 (9.8)
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	35 976 (7.8)	14 343 (3.4)	8 871 (2.2)
Elementary occupations <sup>(2)</sup>	45 664 (9.9)	46 918 (11.3)	62 066 (15.7)
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers; and occupations not classifiable	4 145 (0.9)	3 388 (0.8)	985 (0.2)
<b>Total</b>	<b>461 992</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>416 920</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>396 381</b> <b>(100.0)</b>

**Source: Census and Statistics Department (2001)**

*Notes: (1) Figures in brackets represent the percentages in respect of the total. (2) The proportion of working youths in elementary occupation was 8.4% in 1991, 7% in 1996 and 8.0% in 2001 when foreign domestic helpers were excluded.*

In comparing the proportion of working youths in broad occupational categories, some trends emerge. Broad occupational categories refer to the general kind of work that youths do. When looking at the various occupational groupings, it can be seen that females in the Hong Kong outnumber primarily in clerical jobs as well as in service and shop sales jobs. In 2001, 50.7% of the working youth was found in these occupational fields.

## 59. Present industry of employed youth

**Table 4.14: Working Youths by Industry, 1991, 1996 and 2001**

Industry	1991	1996	2001
	Working Youths	Working Youths	Working Youths
	Number (Percentage <sup>(1)</sup> )		
<b>Manufacturing</b>	118 232 (25.6)	66 260 (15.9)	34 364 (8.7)
<b>Construction</b>	21 114 (4.6)	27 258 (6.5)	26 025 (6.6)
<b>Wholesale, retail and import/export trades, restaurants and Hotels</b>	122 814 (26.6)	117 390 (28.2)	117 965 (29.8)
<b>Transport, storage and Communications</b>	41 042 (8.9)	43 276 (10.4)	39 858 (10.1)
<b>Financing, insurance, real estate and business services</b>	62 709 (13.6)	62 242 (14.9)	62 053 (15.7)
<b>Community, social and personal services</b>	89 296 (19.3)	95 035 (22.8)	113 976 (28.8)
<b>Others<sup>(2)</sup></b>	6 785 (1.5)	5 459 (1.3)	2 130 (0.5)
<b>Total</b>	461 992 (100.0)	416 920 (100.0)	396 381 (100.0)

**Source: Census and Statistics Department (2001)**

*Notes: (1) Figures in brackets represent the percentages in respect of the total. (2) "Others" include such industries as "Agriculture and fishing", "Mining and quarrying", "Electricity, gas and water" and industrial activities inadequately described or unclassifiable.*

When examining the working youths by industrial division in 1991, it can be noted that young workers are more likely to be found in the manufacturing industries and service industries including wholesale, retail trade and restaurants. However, there is a increasing proportion of young workers in community, social and personal services for the past decade.

## 60. Economically Inactive Youth

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**Table 4.15: Youths in the Economically Inactive Population by Economic Activity Status, 1991, 1996 and 2001**

Economic Activity Status	Economically Inactive Population		
	1991	1996	2001
	Youths	Youths	Youths
Number (Percentage)			
Home-makers	14 852 (4.3)	15 745 (3.9)	14 362 (3.0)
Students	320 990 (92.3)	379 838 (93.4)	437 274 (91.8)
Other economically inactive persons	11 924 (3.4)	11 043 (2.7)	24 565 (5.2)
<b>Total</b>	<b>347 766</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>406 626</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>476 201</b> <b>(100.0)</b>

**Source: Census and Statistics Department (2001)**

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The economically inactive youth refers to those who were neither working nor seeking work during the reference period. It includes mainly homemakers, students, retired persons and inmates of institutions such as prisons and hospitals. Table 4.15 summarizes the economic status of the youth population in 2001.

## 61. Youth employment in relation to previous industry

**Table 4.16: Unemployed persons (UE) and unemployment rate aged 15-29 by previous industry (1996-2001)**

Previous Industry	1996						1997					
	Male		Female		Both Sexes		Male		Female		Both Sexes	
	UE	(%)	UE	(%)	UE	(%)	UE	(%)	UE	(%)	UE	(%)
Manufacturing and construction	6000	4.8	1800	3.2	7800	4.3	4700	3.7	1300	2.8	6000	3.5
Wholesale, retail and import/export trades, restaurants and hotels	7100	5.1	6800	4.2	14000	4.6	5300	3.7	5700	3.4	11000	3.6
Transport, storage and communications	2900	4.6	700	2.4	3600	3.9	2300	4.0	600	1.8	2900	3.2
Financing, insurance, real estate and business services	1500	2.6	1100	1.6	2600	2.0	1300	2.1	1000	1.3	2300	1.6
Community, social and personal services	2100	2.9	1700	1.3	3800	1.8	1500	2.2	1500	1.1	3000	1.5
Others	100	0.8	#	1.9	100	1.0	100	2.2	0	0	100	1.8
Overall@	24300	5.2	16700	3.7	41000	4.4	18400	4.0	13500	2.9	32000	3.5

Source: Census and Statistics Department (2001)

Previous Industry	1998						1999					
	Male		Female		Both Sexes		Male		Female		Both Sexes	
	UE	(%)	UE	(%)	UE	(%)	UE	(%)	UE	(%)	UE	(%)
Manufacturing and construction	10300	8.6	2400	5.9	12800	7.9	14200	12.4	2300	5.9	16500	10.8
Wholesale, retail and import/export trades, restaurants and hotels	10700	7.7	11700	6.9	22400	7.3	13400	10.2	14700	8.9	28100	9.5
Transport, storage and communications	4000	6.7	1200	3.8	5100	5.7	5800	10.2	1400	4.8	7200	8.4
Financing, insurance, real estate and business services	2900	4.3	2800	3.7	5700	4.0	3600	5.1	2500	3.4	6000	4.3
Community, social and personal services	2700	4.3	2400	1.7	5100	2.5	4000	5.9	2900	1.9	6900	3.2
Others	100	1.3	#	3.2	100	1.6	200	6.3	0	0	200	4.6
Overall@	38300	8.3	27500	5.9	65700	7.1	52000	11.5	33300	7.2	85300	9.3

Source: Census and Statistics Department (2001)

## 61. Youth employment in relation to previous industry

Previous Industry	2000						2001					
	Male		Female		Both Sexes		Male		Female		Both Sexes	
	UE	(%)	UE	(%)	UE	(%)	UE	(%)	UE	(%)	UE	(%)
Manufacturing and construction	9900	9.1	1600	4.6	11500	8.0	9800	9.6	1700	5.9	11500	8.8
Wholesale, retail and import/export trades, restaurants and hotels	10500	7.9	13200	7.6	23600	7.7	11400	9.0	12400	7.8	23800	8.3
Transport, storage and communications	4300	7.4	1100	3.5	5300	6.0	5200	9.2	1000	3.6	6200	7.3
Financing, insurance, real estate and business services	2600	3.7	2100	3.0	4700	3.3	3100	4.3	2400	3.4	5400	3.8
Community, social and personal services	2700	4.2	3200	2.1	5900	2.7	3400	5.4	3200	2.0	6600	3.0
Others	100	4.1	#	4.2	100	4.2	100	3.0	#	4.8	100	3.3
Overall@	37500	8.4	28900	6.2	66300	7.3	40700	9.5	26700	5.9	67300	7.6

Source: Census and Statistics Department (2001)

In 2001, working youths are much more likely to be unemployed in the industries of manufacturing and construction, wholesale and trades, and transport than in 1997. The 2001 unemployment rate for youth was about 7.6 percent. High unemployment rates persisted for Hong Kong, with about 9.3 and 7.3 percent of youths 15- to 29-year-olds being unemployed in 1999 and 2000 respectively compared with 3.5 percent in 1997.

## 61. Youth employment in relation to previous industry

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**Table 4.17: Have you planned to change job or search new job in the next half-year?**

	Percentage
Yes	37.4%
No	61.5%
Don't know / Hard to tell	1.1%
Total	100.0%

**Source: Hong Kong Federation of Youth Group (1998)**

**Table 4.18: What kind of organization will you like to work in?**

	Percentage
Government	59.2%
Self-employed	18.8%
Private company	15.6%
Others	2.5%
Don't know / Hard to tell	3.9%
Total	100.0%

**Source: Hong Kong Federation of Youth Group (1998)**

*Notes: Others include social service organisation, government sponsored organisation, religious organisation*

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Table 4.17 shows that more than half of the respondents (61.5%) did not plan to change job or search new job. In terms of preferred organization, significantly more respondents (59.2%) would like to work in the government (Table 4.18).