

Forum : Labour

2026

Thématique : Empowering the youth to drive / thrive / embrace and match the requirements of the future labour market

Name of the citizen: Héloïse Schellekens

Family situation ○ Married / dating ○ Single ● With kids, if so how many: 1	Education level ○ Primary ○ Secondary ● University
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1. How are you concerned by the subject?

I come from a family where working wasn't an option; where speaking out about miserable work conditions was a luxury that, paradoxically, the workers didn't have the money to risk. My mother was a factory worker in Vietnam and arrived in Taiwan as a migrant worker. There, she met my father, a constructor that prayed every month that he would get any form of salary. I've grown up in this fear of unemployment, in this image of the employee as a servant, threatened by the employer's control over one's only possible source of income. But as I grew, I felt that it is possible to bring more shades to the world than pure blacks and whites.

During my studies that combined Psychology with Business Management, I learned how necessary physical and mental health is for the world of enterprises. I got to understand that in an enterprise each party should be seen by the other as a cooperant. I learned the effect of a contented staff on the productivity levels, on their effectiveness and availability. I learned how relations based on trust between colleagues ensured a proactive work environment. And I especially learned how much there is left to do to maximize work standards.

Due to my job, I discover the disturbing realities of the labour market right in front of my eyes. Numbers of women, unable to quit their jobs in unsafe work environments due to gender-associated inequalities in salary. In 2022, the median salary of all workers, was of 48,000\$ per year for a woman, while reaching 55,000 for men. Statistics demonstrates the Taiwanese women are 3 times more likely to experience sexual harassment than men.

In the streets, I've encountered migrant workers protests such as the one in December 2025 in Taipei, due to their job's informality, their limit of 12 years of work or their inaptitude to receive medical treatments, long hours, physically demanding conditions, a lack of governmental involvement. They also pointed out the unloyalty of company inspection corrupted by fraud.

The businesses I work with are also affected by the demographic factors. Taiwan faces a wave of aging population combined with early retirements and plummeting birth rates. In 2022 according to MOL numbers, 2 million workers from 45 to 64 left the work force with 95 percent of them uninterested in returning. A hospital workplace where people feel safe and satisfied is necessary to keep the country's competitiveness afloat. This is where well-being program play a central role.

These statements are why the Labour Standard Act introduced in 2024/ 2025 has been such an advance for my country. It ensures the protection of the workers privacy and rights, handles the conditions of fair employment and aspire to eliminate discrimination.

Nowadays I am the mother of a young girl. While her future is far from being decided, I profoundly believe that our generation has the power to ameliorate the working conditions of our children. This isn't only a question of today: this is a matter of tomorrow. And there is lots to do.

Hope for the future is tangible but can only be held with concrete actions.

<https://english.mol.gov.tw/21139/21174/21176/21642/>

<https://newbloommag.net/2025/12/12/work-limit-march/>

[https://www.ios.sinica.edu.tw/people/personal/ccf/2024_Labor_Shortage_and_Gender_Inequality_in_Taiwan_\(English\).pdf](https://www.ios.sinica.edu.tw/people/personal/ccf/2024_Labor_Shortage_and_Gender_Inequality_in_Taiwan_(English).pdf)

<https://www.taipeitimes.com/News/feat/archives/2025/09/18/2003843982>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UbWrIRTx2tA>

2. What do you suggest on your scale ?

At my scale, I can make a difference in various workplaces.

As a well-being program manager, I am developing plans in workplaces to improve workers conditions and make sure they get followed. These plans subsequently improve the company's productivity and success. Improving conditions in a maximum of companies will result in a higher global standard of work. However, I may only serve in the companies that hire me and cannot reform the entirety of the Taiwanese work system.

My proposition for improvement for every company must consider the mental, physical, financial and social well-being of the workers.

Firstly, I find it primordial to give access to aid for health, whether physical or mental. Therefore, every company should have the obligation to offer guaranteed sickness leaves and psychological help. It has become a problem in Taiwan, when often insufficient services are being offered. One solution would be to affiliate each company to its region's closest hospital, as it would enable an easier guarantee for available help. Employees should also have access to lawyers that ensure there is no unfair refusal of sick leaves. On a daily basis, regular break times and access to exterior areas are crucial to guarantee a long-lasting motivation and health among the workers.

Secondly, to ensure financial well-being, we must solve the issue of informality. Every employer must mandatorily provide data about their workers to area-specific business organisations. This data will be used to formalize the company and keep track of the distribution of salary and ensure that it lives up to the government's standards. At my scale, I can only encourage bigger companies to take part in such organisations as support for smaller companies. The data can be mostly collected through digital tools such as AI to make sure that as many businesses as possible can afford it. To the request of an employee, inspectors should be sent to inspect a company's records and behaviour towards the workers. The requester should also get the right to a lawyer's verification of it being no fraud during the inspection.

Finally, for the social well-being topic, workers should have subsidies for caregiving for children. The amount subsidized should depend on the number of children. This would resolve the issue of the plummeting birth rates and subsequently leading to a future generation of workers. Furthermore, leaves to visit ill parents should also be accepted if justified with medical evidence (such as a certificate). For a closer relationship between colleagues, I would propose to have companies' team building activities from once to twice a year. This will motivate workers, help them form relationships and a trustworthy environment in which everyone feels free to express their opinions to improve the company.