

# talking points

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## Is there a fair minimum wage for people working in Hong Kong?

### Megan Lo, 15, Heep Yunn School

I think HK\$40 would be a reasonable minimum wage for workers. HK\$32.5 per hour just isn't enough. These people have worked hard and contribute a lot to society. I think they deserve a higher wage than they earn right now. This is especially true for those who have families at home.

Rent is also really high in Hong Kong. Most workers can expect to spend around half of their wages on rent. And that's before they even think about food, bills or other expenses.

Raising the minimum wage to HK\$40 wouldn't make a huge difference to employers, but it would make a big difference to all of the workers who are on minimum wage.

### Naz Iraj, 17, St Margaret's Girls' College

A fair minimum wage for workers in Hong Kong would be when the low-skilled workers can afford to pay the soaring rents, and buy food and other essentials.

Ideally, they should be able to save a part of their salary, too.

But because the cost of living in Hong Kong is so high, that is never going to happen. When the minimum wage increases, the cost of living also increases. Really, this means the minimum wage hasn't gone up.

But putting up the minimum wage might not be the answer. If the minimum wage is higher, bosses will probably just employ people for shorter shifts. Or they will hire less staff. These means minimum wage workers will still be left with the same salary at the end of the month. Some might not even get a job in the first place.

I don't think there can ever be such a thing as a fair minimum wage.



### Winnie Ng Wing-yiu, 15, Ma On Shan Tsung Tsin Secondary School

HK\$32.5 is definitely not enough for the minimum wage. I think HK\$40 is more reasonable.

At the moment, even if workers on minimum wage work eight hours a day, six days a week, they earn less than HK\$7,000 a month. A family cannot survive in Hong Kong on that amount. That's why so many people in Hong Kong are living under the poverty line.

In the US, the minimum wage is around HK\$60. Why can't ours increase to at least two thirds of that?



### Sharon Leung, 17, St Paul's School (Lam Tin)

The wealth gap in Hong Kong is growing. We need a minimum wage that is fair and that people can live on.

But because inflation rates are always changing, it is hard to say what a fair minimum wage is.

As long as people have enough to pay for basic items, that minimum wage is sufficient. The government needs to check the cost of living often to make sure that the minimum wage covers this.



### Tina Chung, 19, Fung Kai Liu Man Shek Tong School

A fair minimum wage should be enough for workers to enjoy a good quality of life.

People who are on the minimum wage still have very expensive expenses. These include things like rent, food and transport.

Even if they live in public housing, if they have children, they need to pay to look after them.

Setting the minimum wage should take these things into account.



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