

## **Flexwork: more and more highly qualified workers are in temporary work**

**Contrary to widespread opinion, temporary work is also an attractive way of working for highly qualified workers. Globalization, advancing digitalization and – in more recent times – the coronavirus pandemic have accelerated demand for flexible working relationships, even for highly qualified specialists. Flexwork for highly qualified workers is therefore a promising working model, as a new trend study by the industry association swissstaffing demonstrates. More and more highly qualified workers value the unique combination of maximum flexibility and social security that staff leasing companies can offer them.**

Flexibility is becoming equally important for the working population and the economy. Highly qualified workers are faced with the question of how they can adequately meet their need for flexibility and independence. Working as a self-employed freelancer comes with hurdles such as false self-employment and a lack of social security. As time goes on, more and more highly qualified workers turn to temporary work. For the first time ever, an empirical study by the industry association swissstaffing has documented the operations of this market, which is still comparatively small and exclusive but has strong growth. To achieve this, swissstaffing commissioned the gfs-zürich institute to organize a survey of more than 600 highly qualified flexworkers. The focus of the survey was what specific needs and requests this segment of temporary workers directs towards staff leasing services, compared with conventional business.

### **High job satisfaction thanks to flexibility and social security**

There are various reasons why highly qualified workers are choosing temporary work. Ultimately, these all fall under one common denominator: flexibility combined with social security. Highly qualified flexworkers are taking advantage of demand in shortage occupations, highly specialized sectors, or project-based sectors, where their work is highly valued. In return, they benefit from a high level of flexibility in terms of working hours and work content. Salaries in this configuration are also more than competitive. So it is no surprise that flexworkers are hugely satisfied: on a scale of 0 to 10, 68 percent would recommend this type of work to a friend or acquaintance with a 9 or 10.

### **Access to expert knowledge and quick assistance when there is an acute need for staff**

Highly qualified temporary workers are specialists and use their flexibility in order to work in the job market in those places where their expertise is needed the most. From a company's perspective, therefore, they fill gaps in specific sectors where there is a skills shortage, such as the pharmaceutical industry, IT or the

healthcare sector. Companies particularly benefit from the use of highly qualified flexworkers in the following situations:

- There is an acute need for staff
- There is a lack of expert knowledge in the company
- The company operates on a project basis
- Resources are required to cover a vacancy

Companies in shortage occupations are often particularly reliant on flexworkers to maintain their operations. Hiring companies value the flexibility, agility and professionalism of highly qualified flexworkers for such deployments.

**Temporary worker sectors:**

<b>Highly qualified flexworkers</b>	
Pharmaceutical & Medical Technology	31%
IT	21%
Banking & Insurance	9%
Health & Social Care	7%
Construction	3%
Retail & Wholesale	1%
Other Services	18%
Industrial Production	6%

*Observations: Highly qualified flexworkers n=579  
Source: swissstaffing, gfs-zürich, 2020*

**The next generation is boosting the trend towards highly qualified flexwork**

Globalization, advancing digitalization and – in more recent times – the coronavirus pandemic have increased the need for flexible working relationships. These make flexwork a promising working model for highly qualified specialists. Flexwork is a valuable solution even for older workers boasting a lot of experience and specialist expertise. The new Generation Y – digital, self-reliant and agile – is looking for flexibility and a work-life balance. Thanks to social security, this will result in flexwork models being permanently established for highly qualified workers on the Swiss job market under the umbrella of temporary work.

**The vital role played by staffing service providers in this growth market**

Temporary work can serve as a legal framework for many of these working models, and is a suitable model in the context of both employers’ and employees’ increasing need for flexible employment opportunities. This is clear from the example of highly qualified flexworkers. Temporary work is an established tool – governed by the Swiss Federal Law on Employment Recruitment (AVG), the Federal Act on Employment Services (AVV), and the CBA on Staff Leasing (CBA Staff Leasing) –

that safely manages the balancing act between flexibility and the need for protection, and is monitored by the cantons and the joint committee.

*For the study "Flexwork: more and more highly qualified workers are in temporary work", at the end of 2020 the gfs-zürich institute conducted a survey commissioned by swissstaffing of 603 highly qualified temporary workers, asking about their work situation and their motives for choosing their particular form of work. This was supplemented by personal interviews with flexworkers, hiring companies and staffing service providers.*

The full **white paper "Flexwork: more and more highly qualified workers are in temporary work"** can be downloaded at [www.swissstaffing.ch/whitepaper](http://www.swissstaffing.ch/whitepaper).

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**What is staff leasing?**

The term “staff leasing” describes a triangular relationship between a staff leasing company, a hiring company, and an employee. The employee concludes an employment contract with the staff leasing company (art. 19 AVG). The staff leasing company cedes authority over the employee to the hiring company, but remains their statutory employer. The Swiss Federal Law on Employment Recruitment (AVG), the Federal Ordinance on Employment Services (AVV), and the CBA on Staff Leasing (CBA Staff Leasing) – declared to be universally applicable – form the legal basis for the relationship.



\* incl. social security and salary.

**swissstaffing** is a service centre and centre of excellence for staff leasing companies in Switzerland. As an employers’ association, swissstaffing represents the interests of its 400 members in matters of policy, the economy and society. swissstaffing is a social partner of the CBA on Staff Leasing, the agreement covering more employees in Switzerland than any other.

**Studies on temporary workers and recruitment agencies in Switzerland**

The market research institute gfs-Zürich completes regular surveys on behalf of swissstaffing. The current studies can be found by clicking on [this link](#).