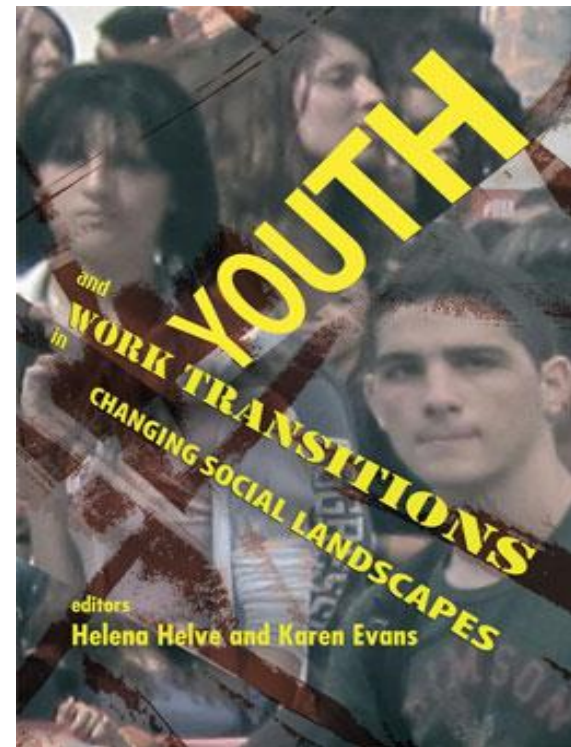


Learning and Working Life in Changing Social Landscapes



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**HOW NON-PERMANENT
WORKERS LEARN
AND DEVELOP**
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Expressions of bounded agency

‘The agency of young people is expressed in and through the social practices of everyday life, from peer group to the workplace. Their modes of participation reflect, in their quality and intensity, the life world and the system world in interaction’.

From ‘Reconciling the system world with the life worlds of young adults’ Evans, K. 2012.

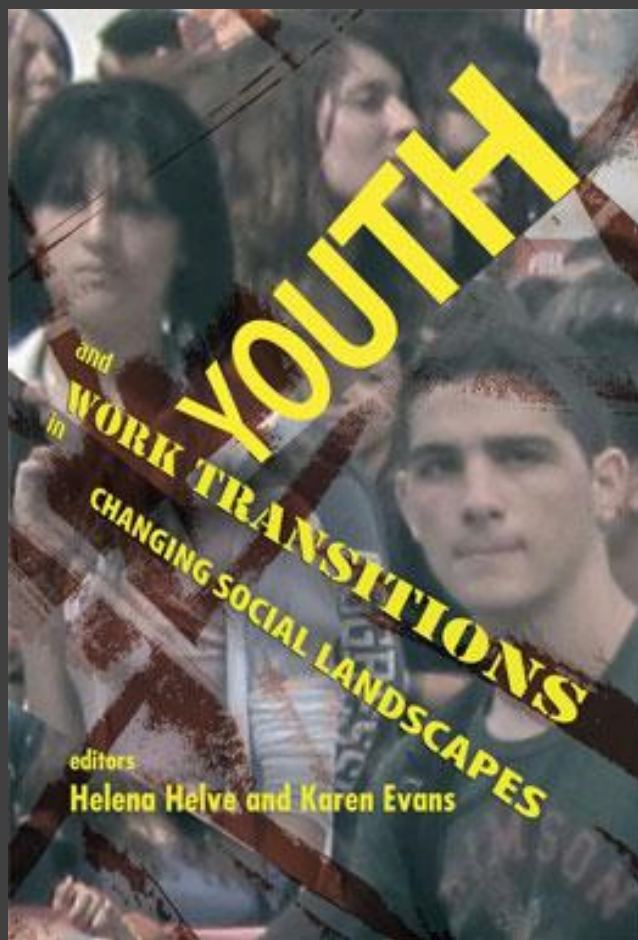
Learning and Working Life: two analytical perspectives

Social organisation of learning

- emphasises adjustments to changed conditions in work and society
- consequences for educational institutions and learning providers
- Identifies dysfunctionalities in existing provision
- Pathways to 'progression'.
- Supports for workplace/community learning' learning organisations'


Learning as biographical process : the learning individual

- sees people as 'social actors' in social landscapes
- Place-based – environments, relationships and opportunities
- Socially positioned lives. understood in life course perspective
- reflexivity in learning
- significance of social networks and 'social capital'



Shift the focus from normative transition points to the spaces in-between these points, to understand how a sense of belonging and being connected often drives decision-making. .

‘Education and work are significant elements of their lives, but these elements are framed by young people’s sense of who they are and where they belong.’ (Wyn, J. in Helve and Evans 2013)

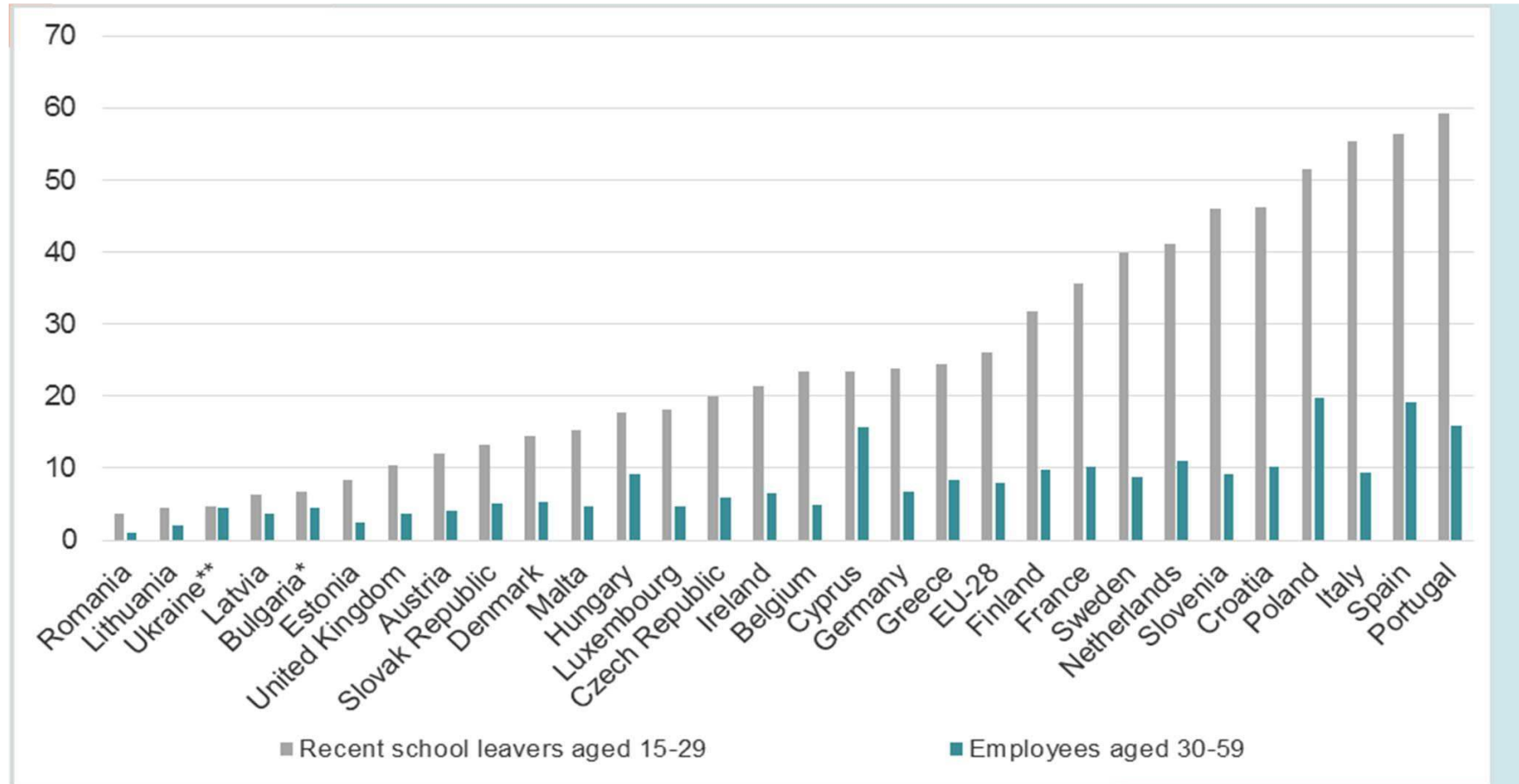


‘Flexible and temporary world views help them to accept temporary jobs...’

- ‘In the world views of young people I have interviewed, the future is unpredictable and subject to change. Flexible and temporary world views help them to accept temporary jobs and even to value them as part of their lifestyles. They seem to want to keep their future unknown. My interpretation is that many of today's young people in Finland are in no hurry to reach adulthood. Maybe we should listen to young people who, in their transition to work life, emerge from a vague and prolonged youth and stumble on towards a vague and prolonged adulthood...’ Helena Helve 2013

Temporary contracts among recent school leavers aged 15-29 and employees aged 30-59 in European countries in 2013

Based on *EU-Labour Force Survey (Rokicka et al., 2016)*



A global issue



Global increase in non-permanent workforce

UK – since 2001 number of zero-hours workers tripled (ONS)

US*

- 25 - 30% of total workforce in 2006; to exceed 40% by 2020

Australia**

- 33% of total workforce in 2013
- 2018 – some 40% of workers are in ‘insecure work’

Singapore***

- Term contract: 11.8% of resident workforce
- Own account workers: 8.7% of resident workforce
- Non-residents: 38% of total workforce



Limited access to / participation in L&D

Learning & development (L&D) generally structured and made available for permanent employees

Opportunity cost of attending training

Implications for ‘skills strategies’.

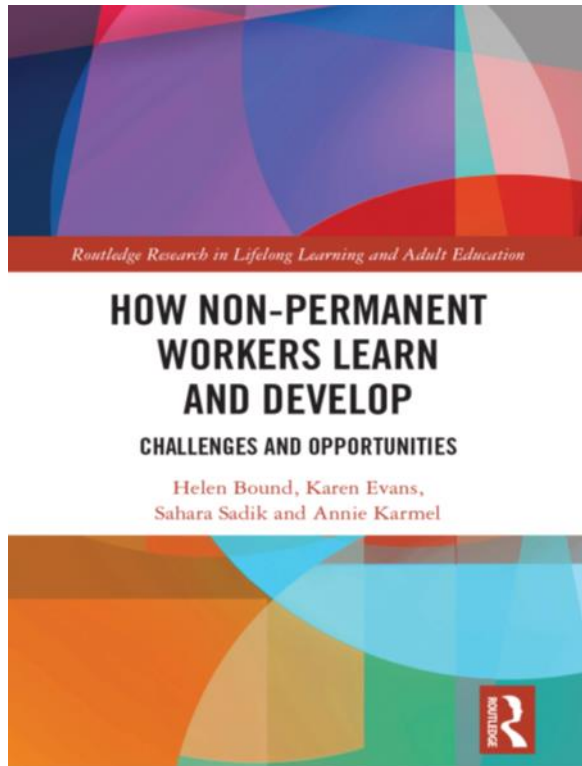
*Intuit 2010; ILO 2016, US labour force participation is from 16 years, economically active

**Australian Bureau of Statistics, Nov 2013; Australia’s labour force participation is from 15 years, economically active;

***Labour Force in Singapore, 2014; Singapore’s labour force participation is from 15 years, economically active



Life worlds and learning of contract and freelance workers in a 'lifelong learning eco-system'



Our definition of non-permanent worker

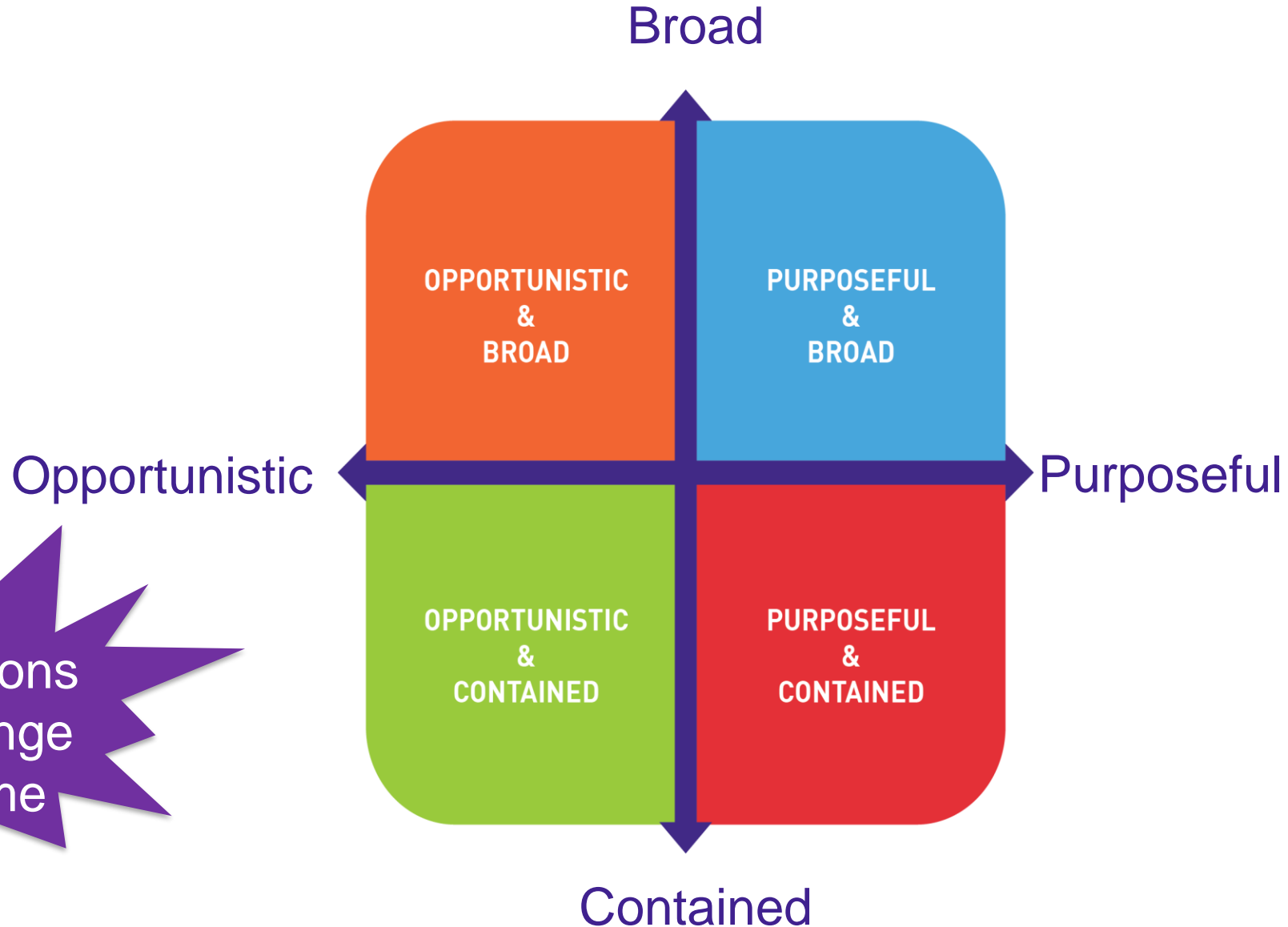
Someone who has work for less than 12 months (e.g. contract, casual), &/or receives no benefits

‘Cultivate myself to be malleable....’

‘As time goes by... the more you come to an understanding that you have to change to fit yourself into different environment. There’s no point in complaining that we don’t have this and we don’t have that. Every company we go to is very different and no company will change for freelancers. So you change for them, and not the other way around. So it was something that took me a long, long, long while to cultivate myself to be malleable. But it’s a very precious experience. (Howard Video editor)



Dispositions (frames for perceiving and reacting to situations and 'opportunities')



Dispositions
can change
over time

Overview of findings

Non-permanent workers **identify with their work differently** depending on their **dispositions** and **work context**.

They grow by integrated development of their **craft identification**, **entrepreneurialism** and **learning-to-learn** capabilities.

Non-permanent work arrangements contribute to or constrain learning through the **availability of affordances**

Contributes:

specialised assignments
diverse experiences
powerful networks
autonomy to exercise
judgement...

Constrains:

repetitive task based assignments
low entry requirements
limited networks
high opportunity costs
low autonomy...

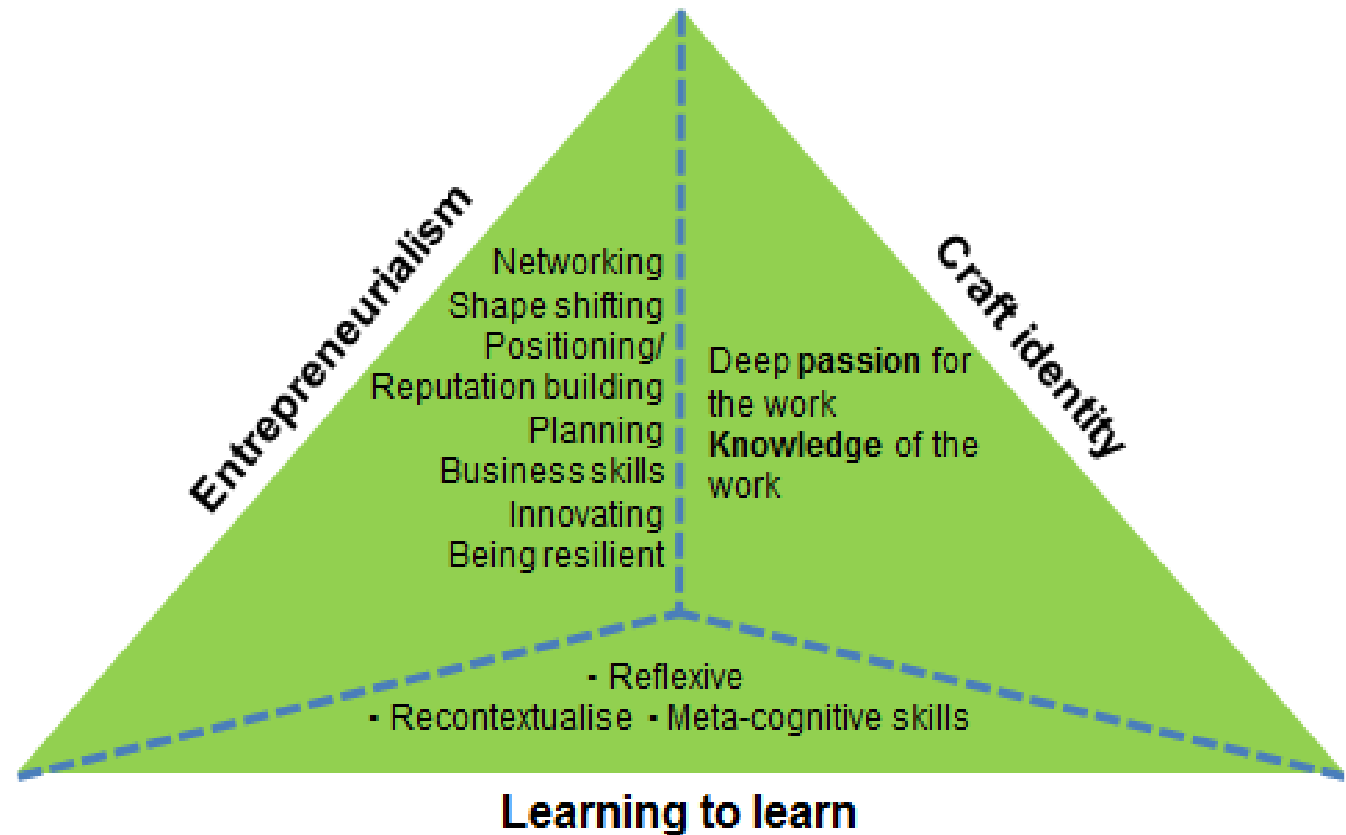


Integrated practice
leads to
knowledgeable
practice

Integrated practice captures the
idea of *identification* with

- the craft,
- entrepreneurialism
- learning to learn

Not separate sets of skills and
dispositions but brought together
as a cohesive, co-ordinated set of
actions and activities that are
evident, to varying degrees in the
working practices (of 'free-lance'
/contract-based workers)



Inadequate support from social institutions

Recognition of non-permanent workers

“Oh, freelancer, you tick this: the box refers to odd-job labourer.”

– Gail, freelance producer, on filling up forms that require declaring her occupation

Challenge of late or non-payment

“..the payment come late...there's no regulatory body to help us. There's no union.”

– Kevin, freelance director

Self-planning for housing, medical & retirement needs

You don't have medical insurance, you cannot take sick leave and get paid, whatever you get paid, that is it. I have to buy my own insurance, I have to plan my own retirement, I have to plan for my own travels, insurance, everything is done on your own. You are a one man company. A lot of people will not have that kind of knowledge or diligence to make sure that you plan for your future.”

– Ron, freelance lighting designer

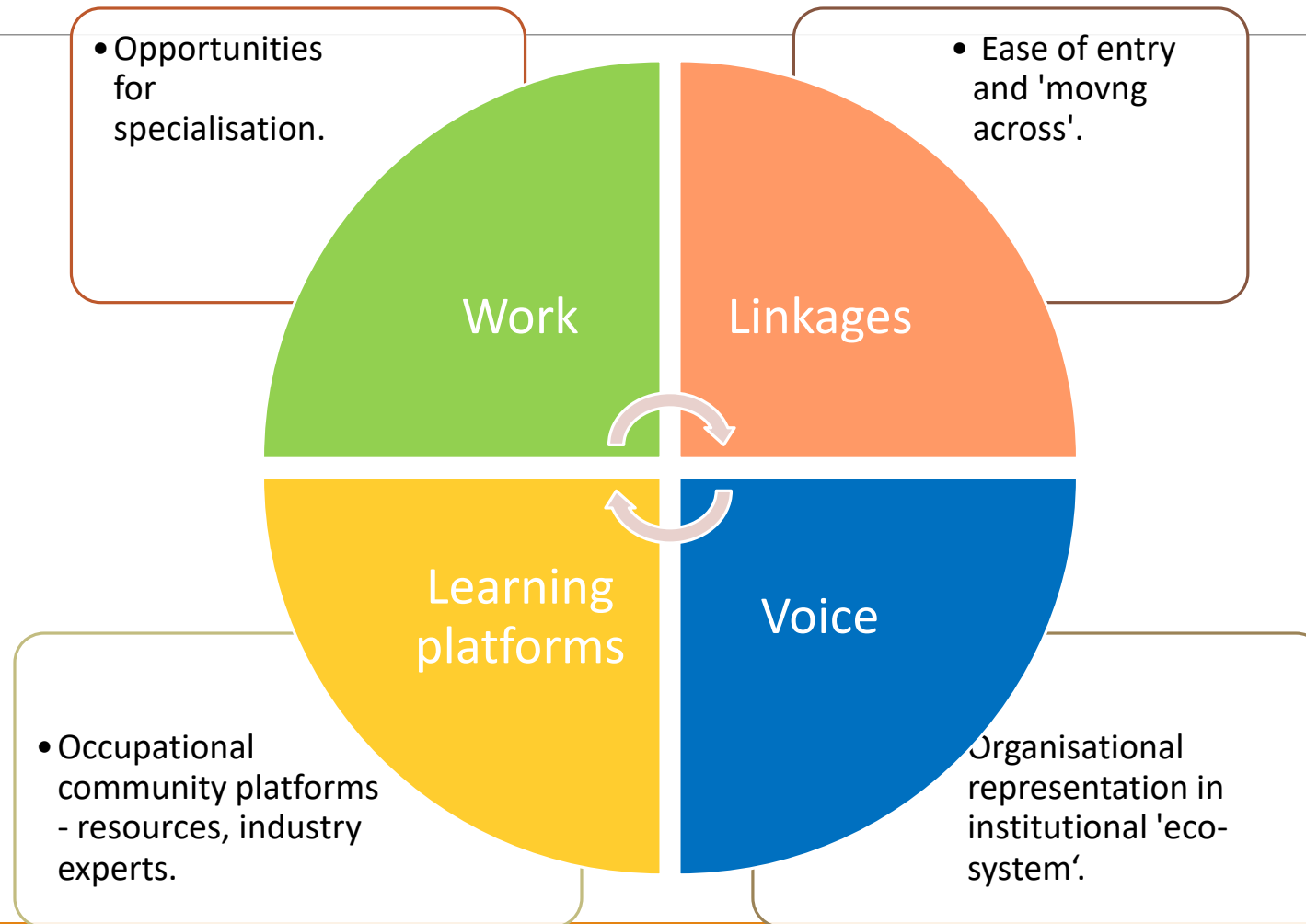
Access to Social Assistance / Career Services

“Yah because last time this company, they don't have CPF contributions, so I justsay that I'm not working and all that, so they continue helping. So now that my job have CPF, they cannot help me anymore because I started working.”

– Tisha, currently a part-time banquet waitress, whose case is considered closed even though she is still searching for her preferred job



The importance of occupational affordances for contract-based 'free-lance' workers



Thank you for your attention

Book sources cited:

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