

HOW IS FINLAND DOING? RESEARCH PROJECT:

# Development of well-being at work from late 2019 to late 2024

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**11 March 2025**



**In this summary of results based on the How is Finland Doing? research project, we present how well-being at work and various work attitudes have developed from the time before the pandemic to the end of 2024.**

**MORE INFO  
AND PREVIOUS RESULTS:  
[TTL.FI/EN/RESEARCH/  
PROJECTS/HOW-IS-  
FINLAND-DOING](https://ttl.fi/en/research/projects/how-is-finland-doing)**

# Study method

The research data examines working Finns aged 18–65.  
The results are based on two population surveys:

- 1) **In late 2019**, randomly selected people from the population register and the Taloustutkimus Internet panel were invited to participate in the study (response rate 18%).
  - 2) In summer 2023, new respondents from the population register and Internet panel were invited to participate in the study (response rate 18%). Biannual follow-up questionnaires were sent to respondents that granted permission to continue the survey. For this respondent group, we will examine **respondents to the most recent surveys in summer 2024 (response rate 72%) and in late 2024 (response rate 75%)**.
- The results of the statistical analyses are weighted based on age, gender and area of residence in order to ensure the representativeness of the results.

# Participants

Background information	Responded 12/2019	Responded 6/2024 & 12/2024
Employed respondents	N = 1,567	N = 933
Women / men	41 / 59%	49 / 51%
Age (average)	46 years	48.4 years
Under the age of 36 / Aged 36 or older	20 / 80%	18 / 82%
Education: university degree / other higher education / basic or upper secondary education	28 / 36 / 36%	22 / 33 / 45%
In-person work / hybrid / remote work only	Not asked	59 / 17 / 24%
Weekly working hours (average)	36.9 hours	36.8 hours
Supervisor or manager / employee	17 / 83%	15 / 85%
Permanent employment / other employment relationship	89 / 11%	92 / 8%
Sector where employed: public / private / other sector	48 / 21 / 31%	42 / 22 / 36%
Lives in Uusimaa / elsewhere in southern Finland / in western Finland / in northern or eastern Finland	38 / 54 / 8%	40 / 54 / 6%
Women / men	40 / 20 / 23 / 17%	36 / 22 / 22 / 20%

# Different types of employee well-being in our study



## WORK ENGAGEMENT

is a **positive affective and motivational state**, characterised with feeling vigorous, dedicated and absorbed at work (Schaufeli et al. 2019).



## JOB BOREDOM

is an amotivational state due to **under stimulation and lack of challenges at work** characterised with difficulties to concentrate, time passing slowly and sense of meaninglessness (Reijseger et al. 2013).



## JOB BURNOUT

Is a **prolonged stress syndrome** caused by too high job demands and lacking job resources and characterised with exhaustion, mental distance, and cognitive and emotional impairment (Schaufeli et al. 2020).



## JOB SATISFACTION

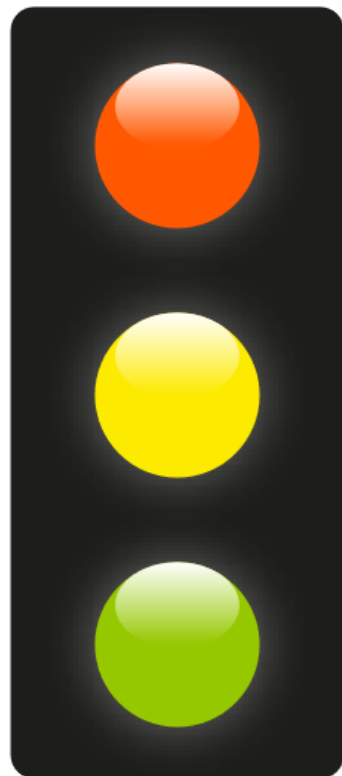
is a **pleasurable or positive emotional state** resulting from an appraisal of one's job or job experiences. Not so strongly motivational state as work engagement but more about being satisfied how things are now (Wanous et al. 1997).



## WORK ABILITY

Self-assessed work ability compared to one's lifetime best work ability (0–10).

# Job burnout traffic light model



## Probable job burnout

People for whom the light is red suffer from symptoms of job burnout. Recurring job burnout symptoms hinder coping with daily life and require immediate action in order to remedy the situation.

## Heightened risk of job burnout

When the light is yellow, burnout symptoms occur occasionally and/or to some extent. People can persevere for a long time, but now is the time to identify the problem and take action to restore well-being.

## No symptoms of job burnout

People for whom the light is green do not experience job burnout and they are likely doing well in this respect. Nevertheless, it is possible for these people to experience fatigue, stress, boredom at work or a low level of work engagement.

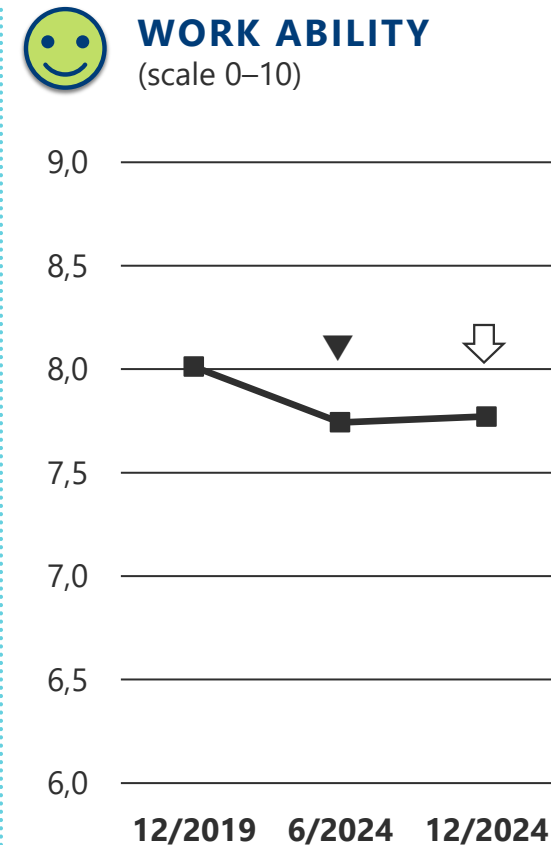
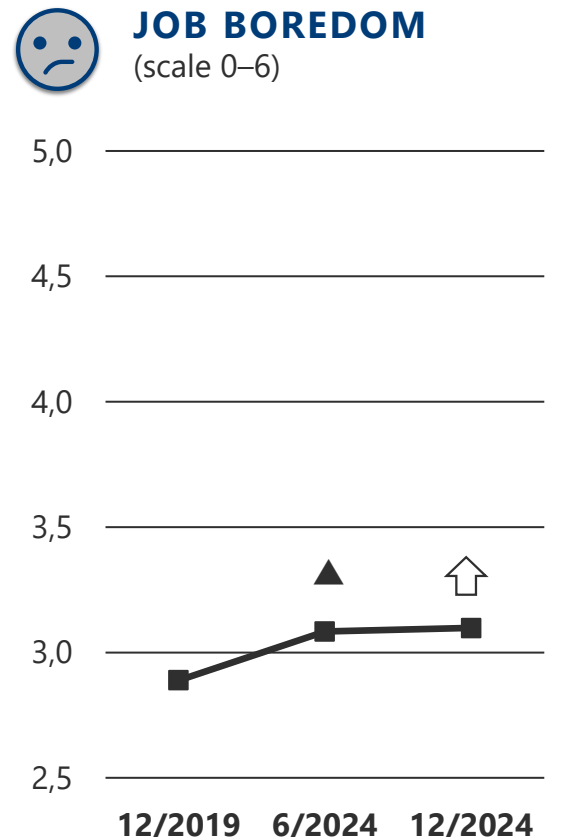
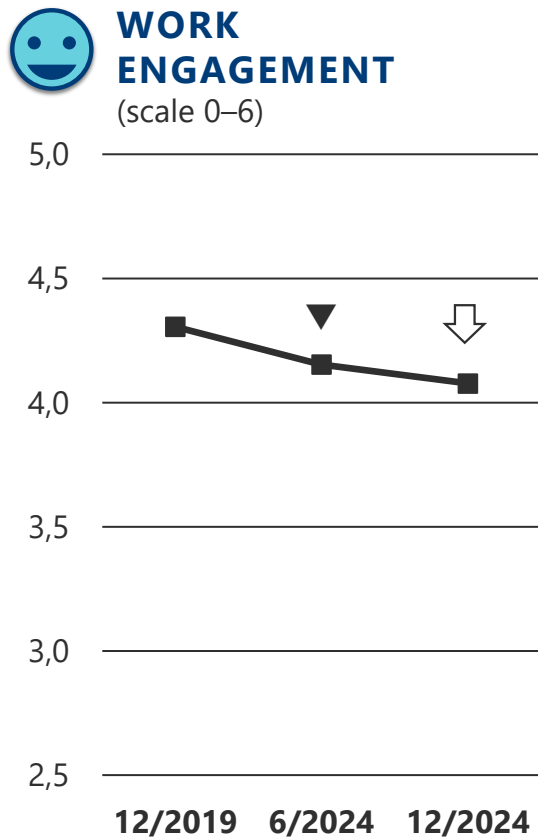
Source: Hakanen, J. J. & Kaltiainen, J. (2022) *Työuupumuksen arviointi Burnout Assessment Tool (BAT) –menetelmällä*. Finnish Institute of Occupational Health. <https://www.julkari.fi/handle/10024/145527>

# Key study findings

**The deterioration of Finns' well-being at work has stopped, but has still not returned to the pre-pandemic level.**



# Work engagement, boredom at work and work ability still at a weaker level than before COVID-19



**In late 2024:**

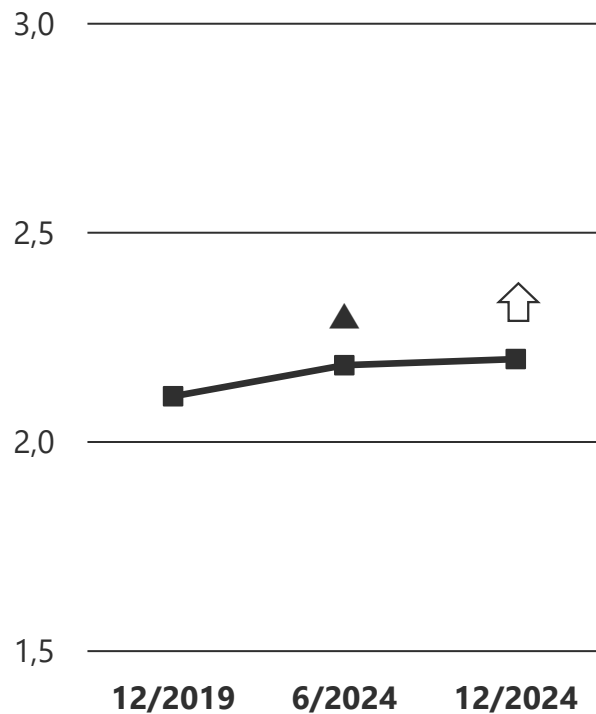
- 50% experienced work engagement several times per week.
- 22% felt bored at work several times per week.
- 35% felt that their work ability was good.

▲▼ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) compared to the previous survey  
 ↕↕ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) between the surveys carried out in late 2019 and late 2024

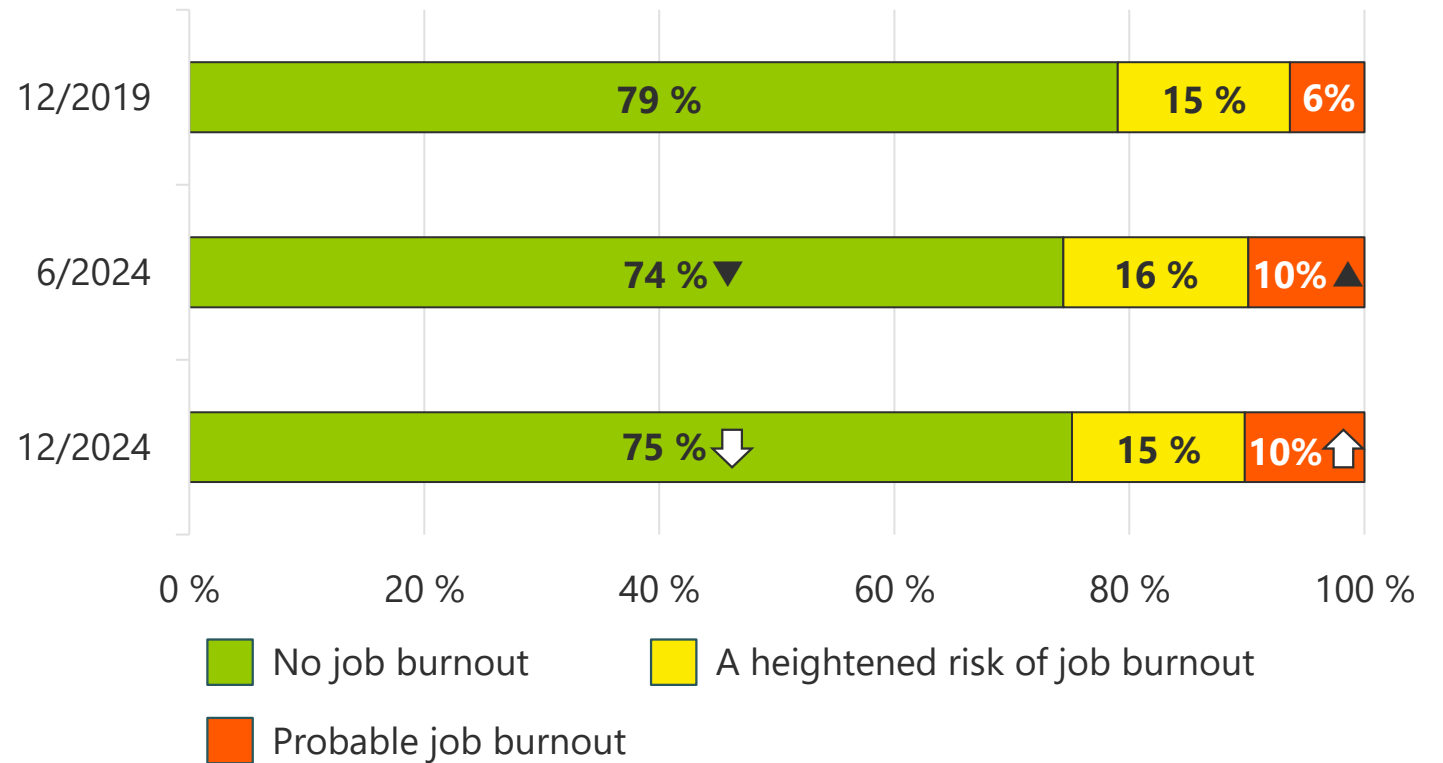
# Job burnout still common than before COVID-19, but no changes over the past six months



**JOB BURNOUT**  
scale 1–5)



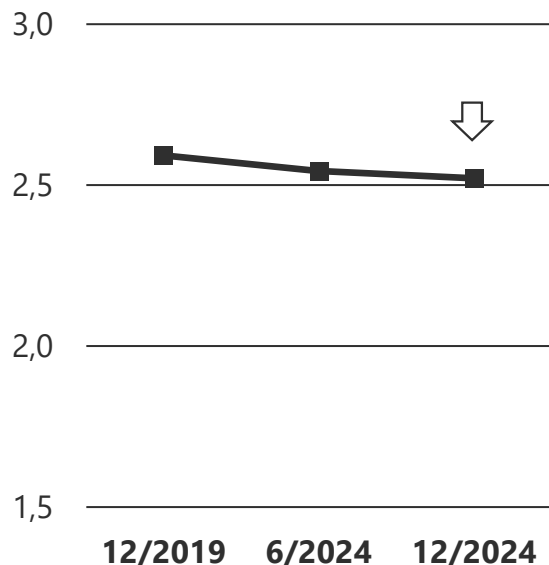
## JOB BURNOUT RISK GROUPS



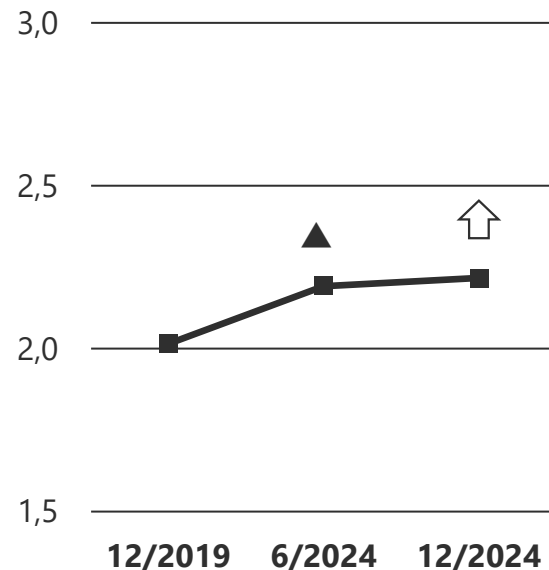
▲▼ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) compared to the previous survey  
 ↕↕ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) between the surveys carried out in late 2019 and late 2024


# No changes in individual symptoms of job burnout compared to six months prior

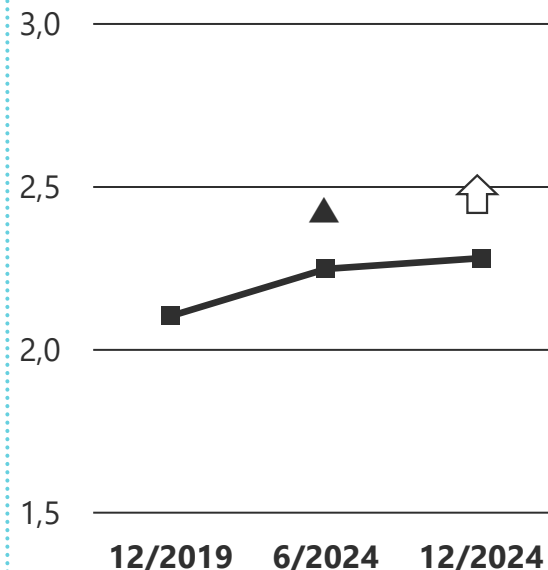
 **CHRONIC WORK FATIGUE**  
(scale 1–5)



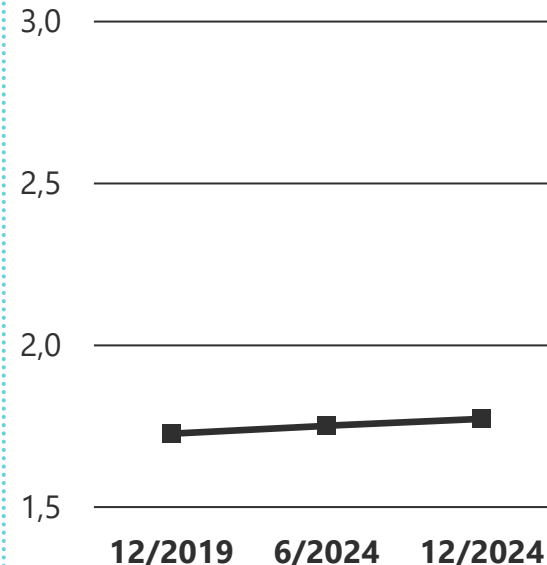
 **CYNICISM AT WORK**  
(scale 1–5)



 **COGNITIVE DISORDERS**  
(scale 1–5)



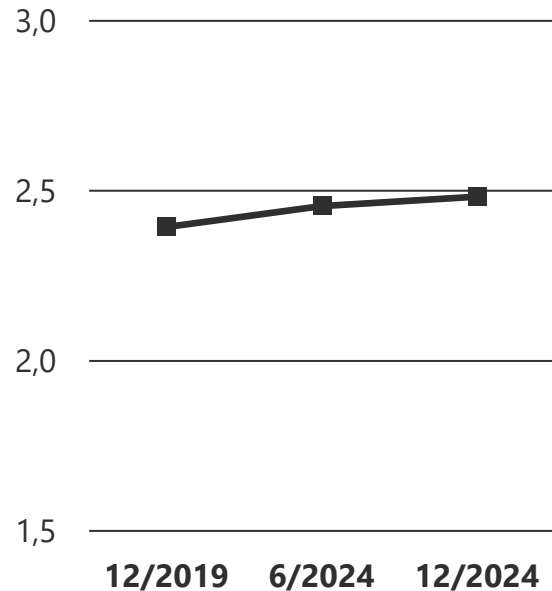
 **EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION**  
(scale 1–5)



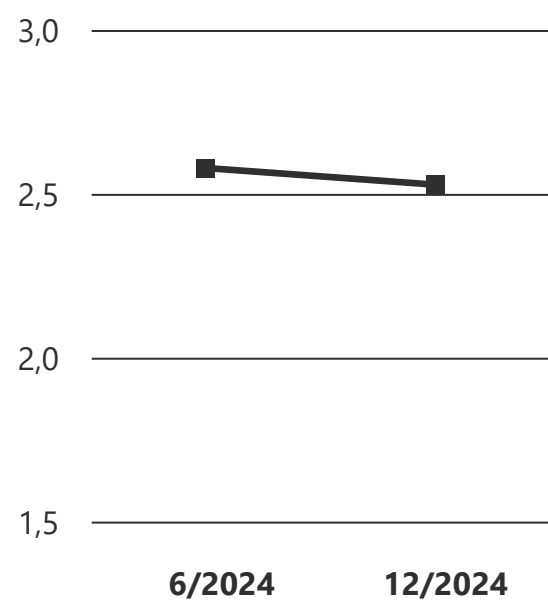
▲▼ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) compared to the previous survey  
 ↕↗ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) between the surveys carried out in late 2019 and late 2024

# Plans to resign and loneliness remain unchanged, difficulties falling asleep have become more common

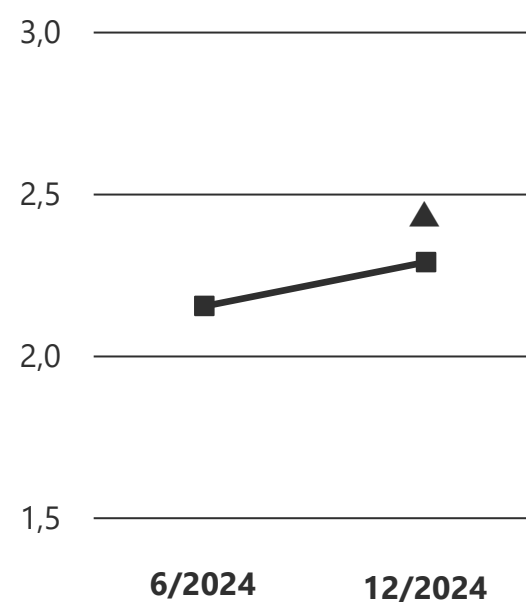
**PLANS TO RESIGN**  
(scale 1–5)



**LONELINESS\***  
(scale 1–5)



**DIFFICULTY FALLING ASLEEP\***  
(scale 1–5)



**In late 2024:**

25% had often considered resigning from their job.

27% felt lonely.

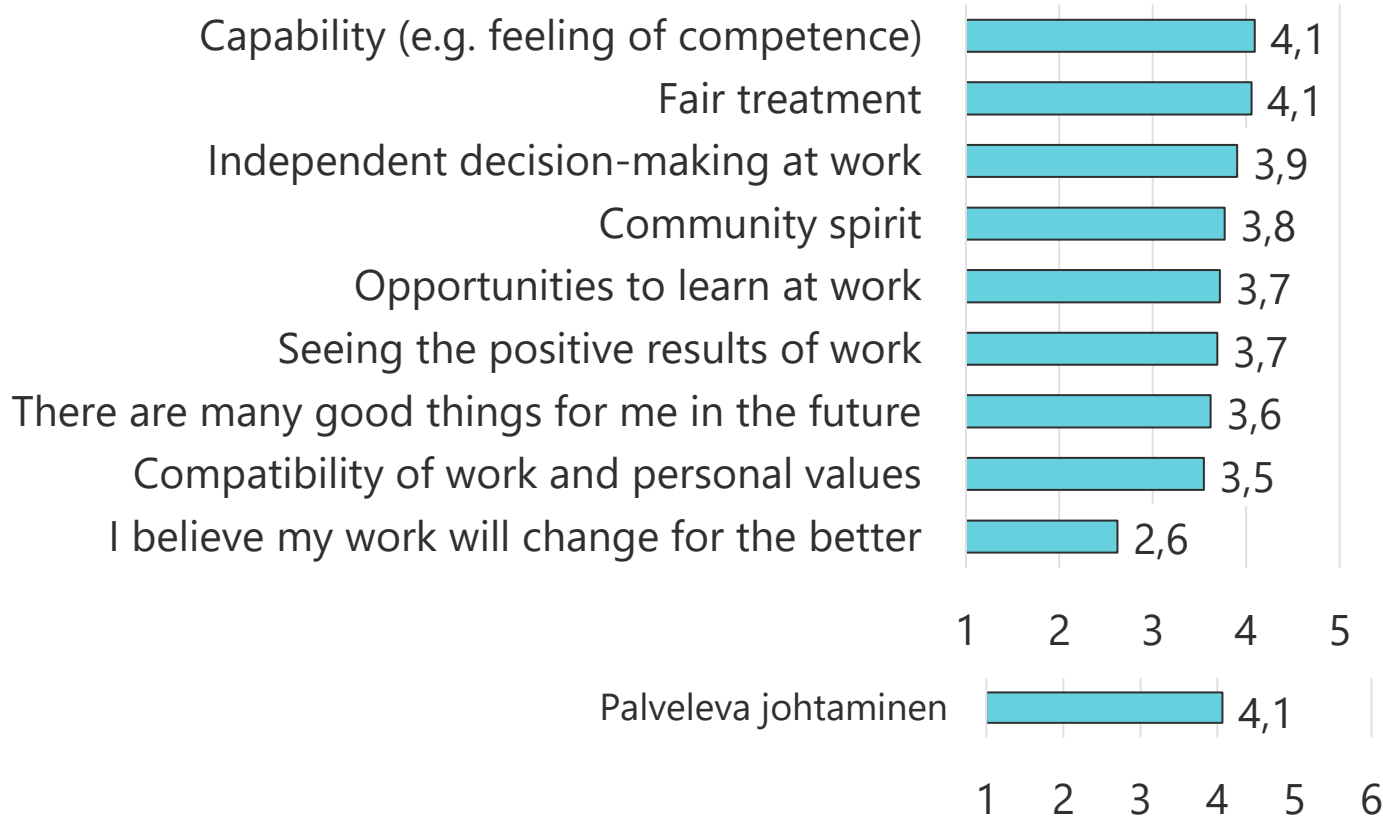
15% had difficulty falling asleep at least 3–5 days per week.

\* Not measured in the 12/2019 survey

▲▼ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) compared to the previous survey  
 ↕↕ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) between the surveys carried out in late 2019 and late 2024

# Opportunities for learning at work have weakened

## Prevalence of resources in the population 12/2024 (the longer the bar, the more common)



## Development of resources between summer 2024 and late 2024

Indications of slight growth ( $p = 0.056$ )

No change

No change

No change

Slightly decreased ( $p = 0.017$ )

No change

No change

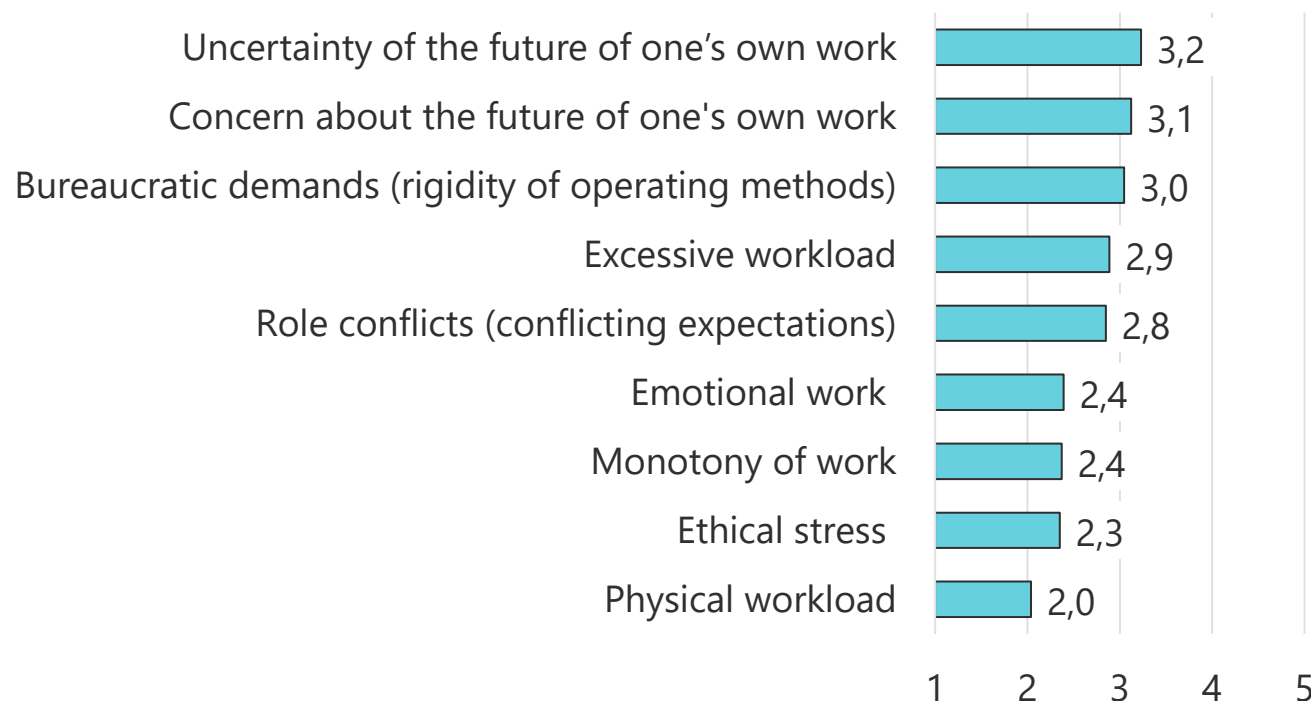
No change

No change

No change

# Work-related uncertainty and worry continue to stress Finns

## Prevalence of requirements in the population 12/2024 (the longer the bar, the more common)




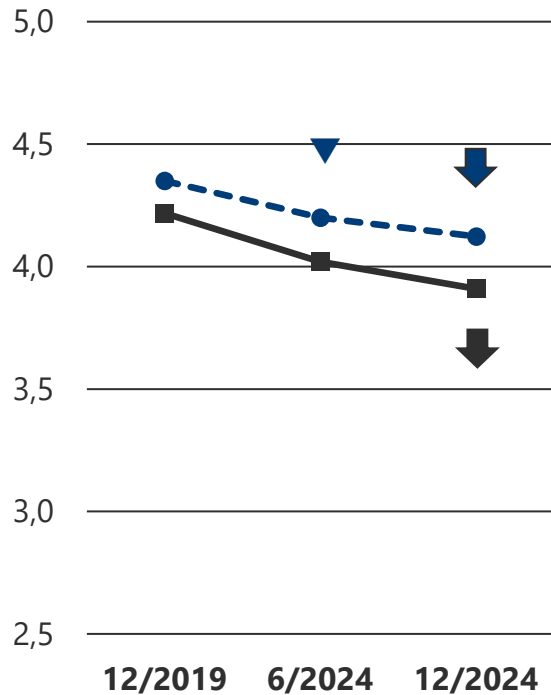
## Development of requirements between summer 2024 and late 2024

No change  
No change  
No change  
No change  
No change  
No change  
No change  
No change  
No change

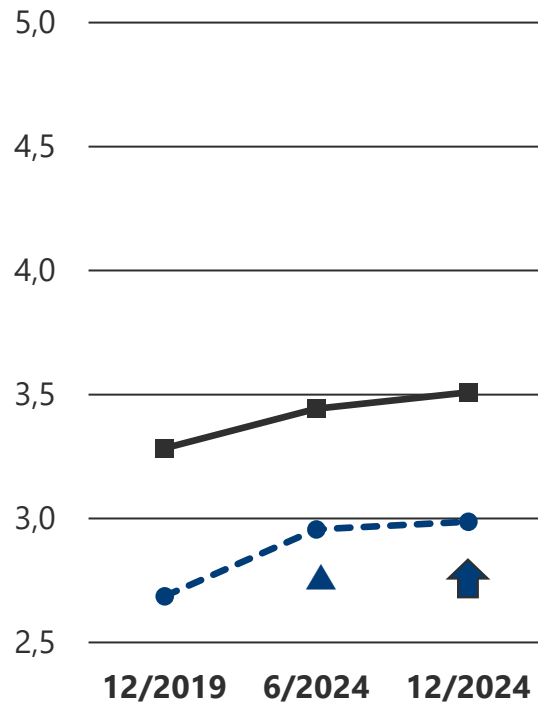
**All indicators show that  
young adults' well-being at work is  
weaker compared with older people.  
Nearly one in three young adults  
already have symptoms of burnout.**


# Young adults experience less work engagement and their work ability has decreased to the level of older employees

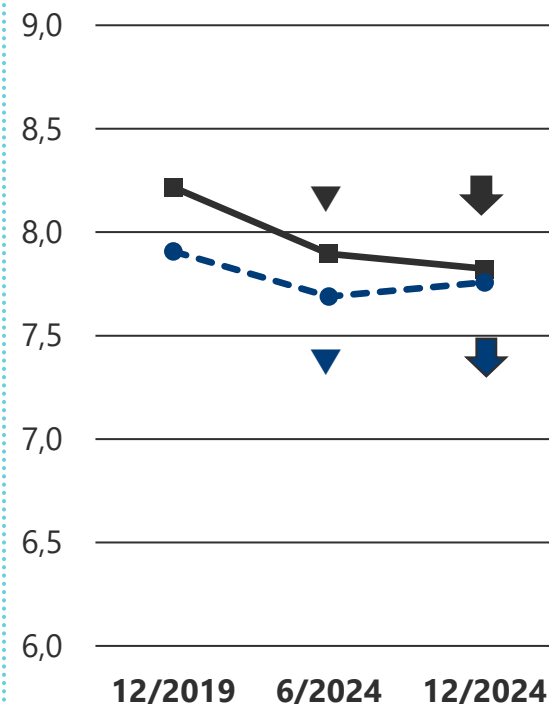
 **WORK ENGAGEMENT**  
(scale 0–6)



 **JOB BOREDOM**  
(scale 0–6)



 **WORK ABILITY**  
(scale 0–10)





**In late 2024:**

40% of young adults and 52% of older people experienced high work engagement.

33% of young adults and 20% of older people experienced boredom at work.

36% of young adults and 35% of older people felt that their work ability was good.

 Under the age of 36  
 36 or older

▲▼ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) compared to the previous survey  
 ↘↗ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) between the surveys carried out in late 2019 and late 2024

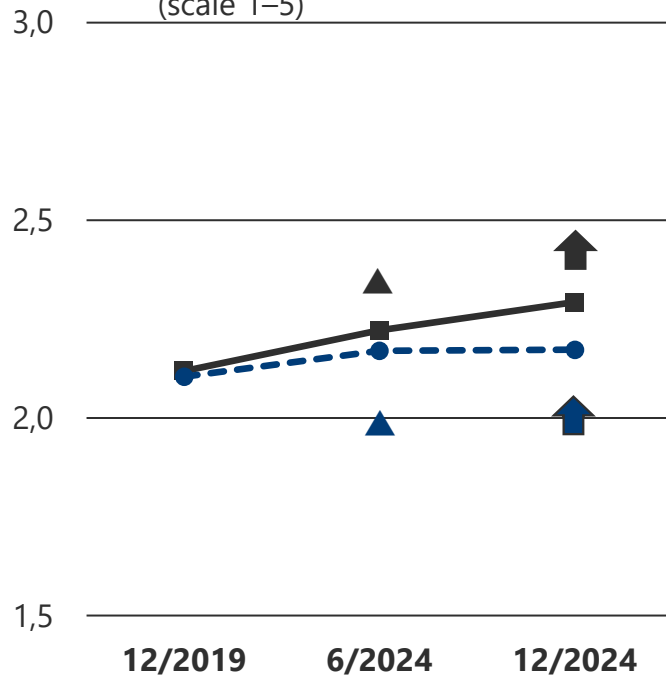


# Young adults are more likely than older people to have at least a higher risk of job burnout



## JOB BURNOUT SYMPTOMS

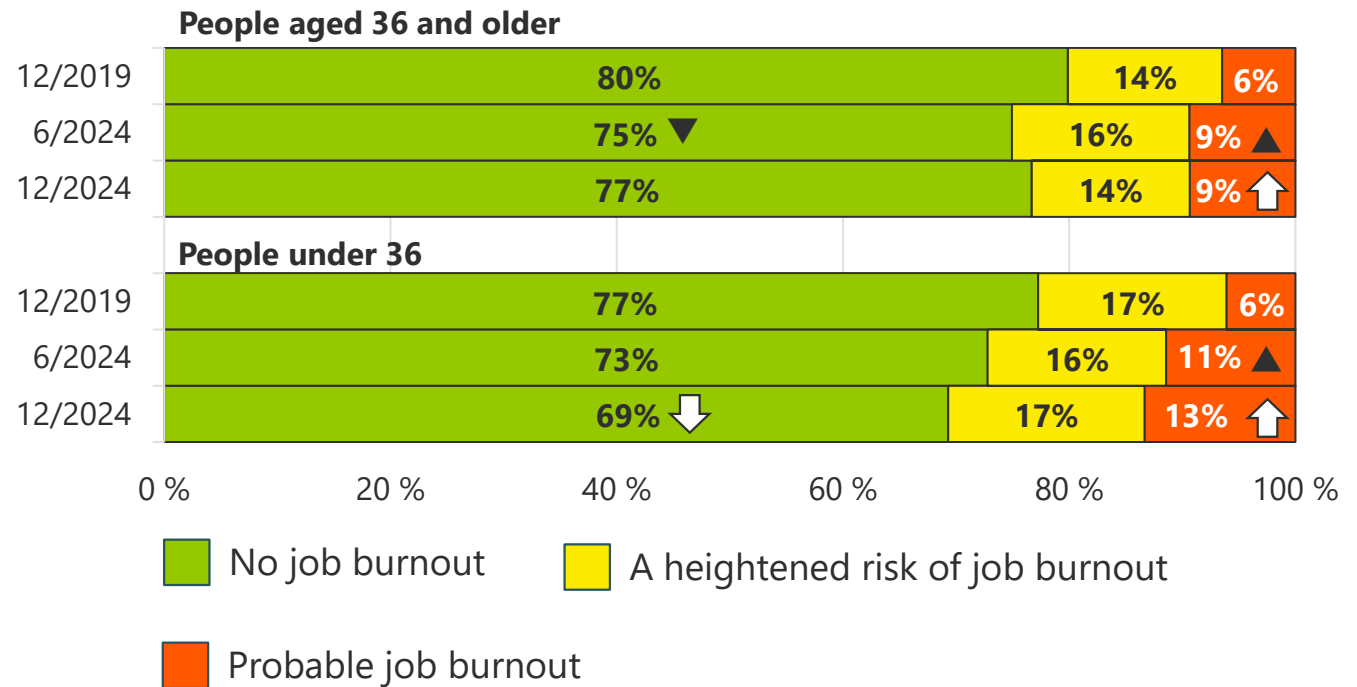
(scale 1–5)



—■— Under the age of 36  
 - -●- 36 or older

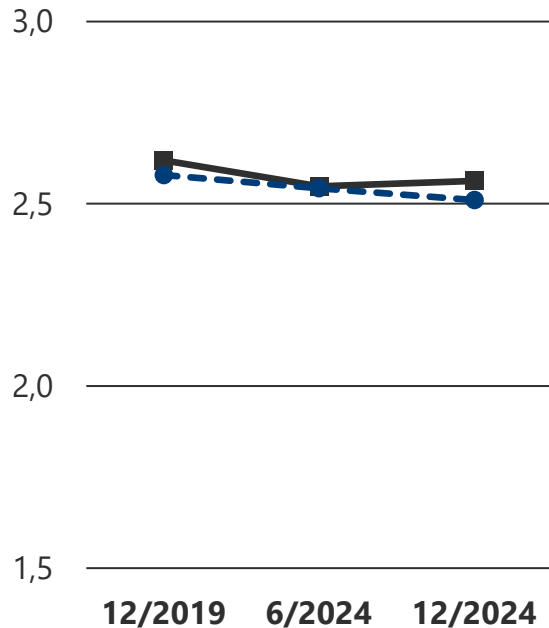
▲▼ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) compared to the previous survey  
 ⇩⇧ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) between the surveys carried out in late 2019 and late 2024

## JOB BURNOUT RISK GROUPS

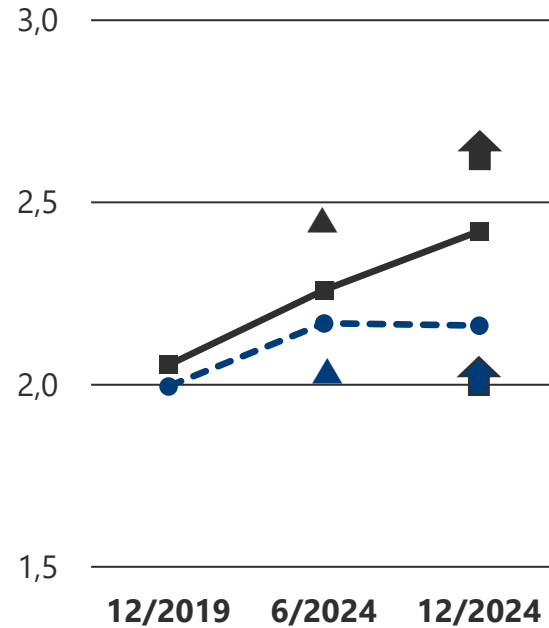


# Young adults experience more cynicism and cognitive disorders at work compared with older people

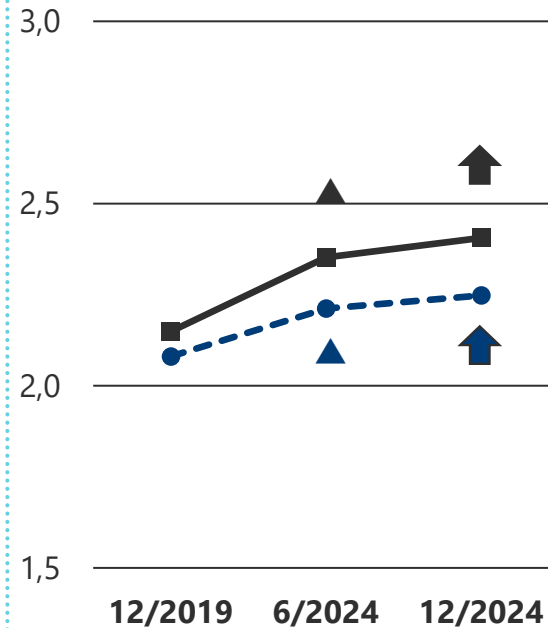
**CHRONIC WORK FATIGUE**  
(scale 1–5)



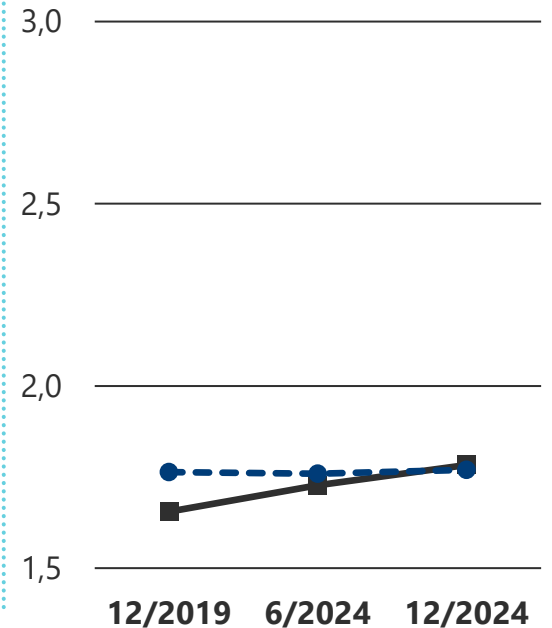
**CYNICISM AT WORK**  
(scale 1–5)



**COGNITIVE DISORDERS**  
(scale 1–5)



**EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION**  
(scale 1–5)

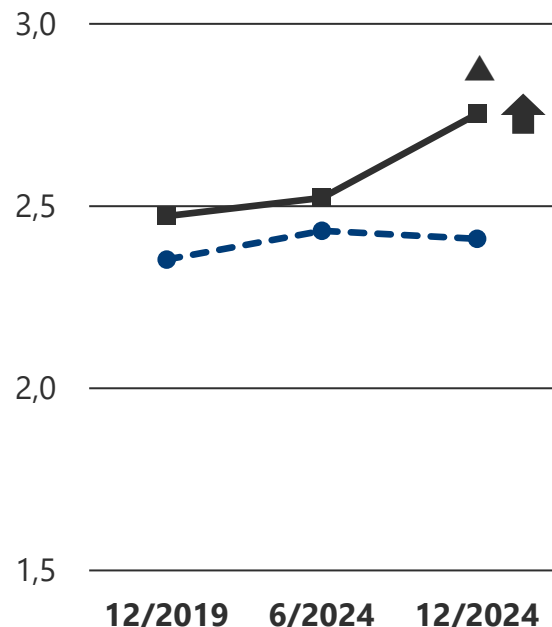


▲▼ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) compared to the previous survey  
 ↕↕ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) between the surveys carried out in late 2019 and late 2024

# Plans to resign have grown more common among young adults and one in three experience loneliness

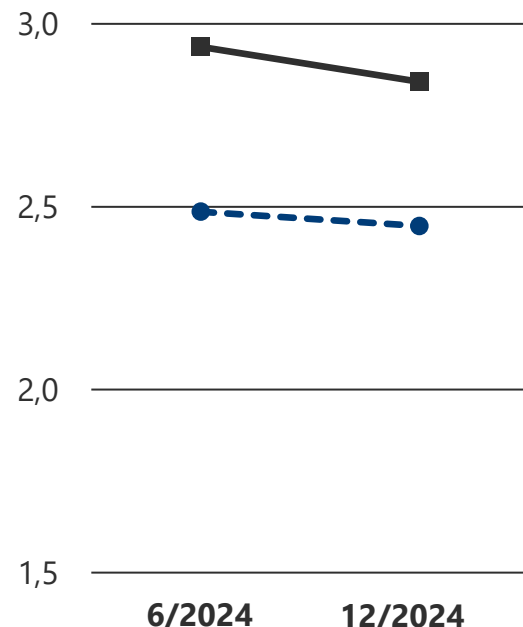
## PLANS TO RESIGN

(scale 1–5)



## LONELINESS\*

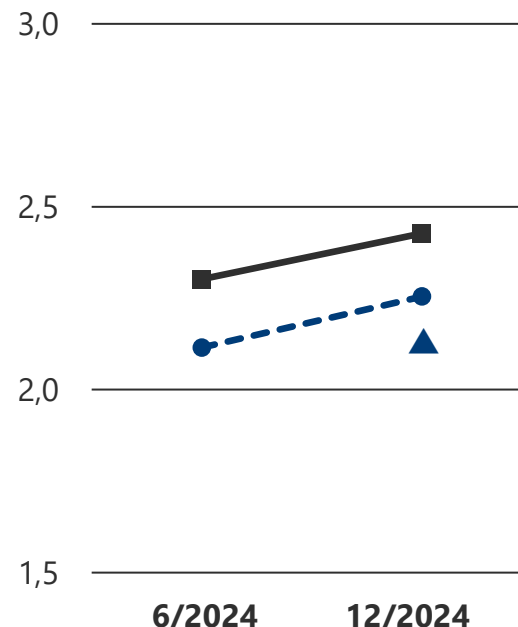
(scale 1–5)



\* Not measured in the 12/2019 survey

## DIFFICULTY FALLING ASLEEP\*

(scale 1–5)



### In late 2024:

31% of young adults and 24% of older people have often considered resigning.

31% of young adults and 24% of older people felt lonely.

20% of young adults and 15% of older people had difficulty falling asleep at least 3–5 days a week.

—■— Under the age of 36  
- -●- - 36 or older

▲▼ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) compared to the previous survey  
 ↕↕ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) between the surveys carried out in late 2019 and late 2024

# Young adults have more positive expectations of the future of their work, but less independence

## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN RESPONDENT GROUPS

Statistical differences in work resources and requirements among young adults (under 36) and older people (aged 36 and over) in late 2024.

### Positive for young adults

- More positive expectations for the future of one's work.

### Negative for young adults

- Less autonomy in work (e.g. independent decisions).
- Positive results of work less visible.
- More ethical stress (not being able to act in the way that feels right at work).

## CHANGES

Changes in work resources or requirements among young adults and older people between summer 2024 and late 2024.

### Positive changes

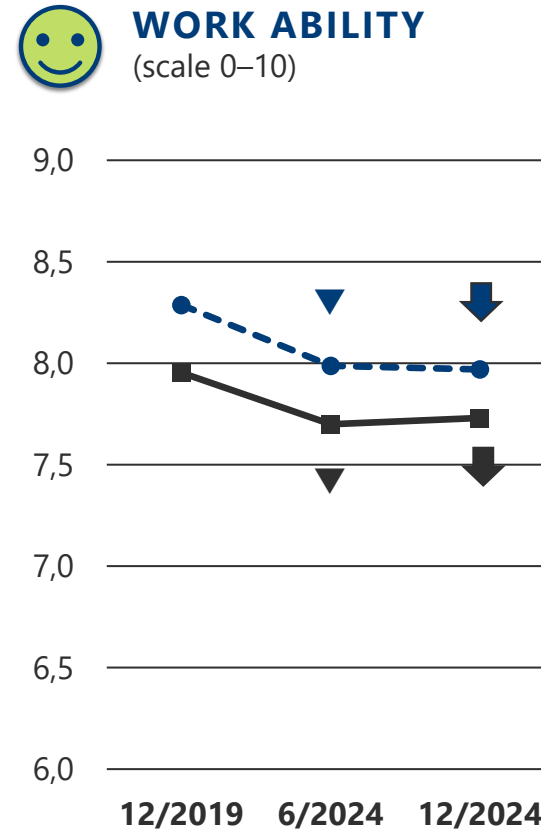
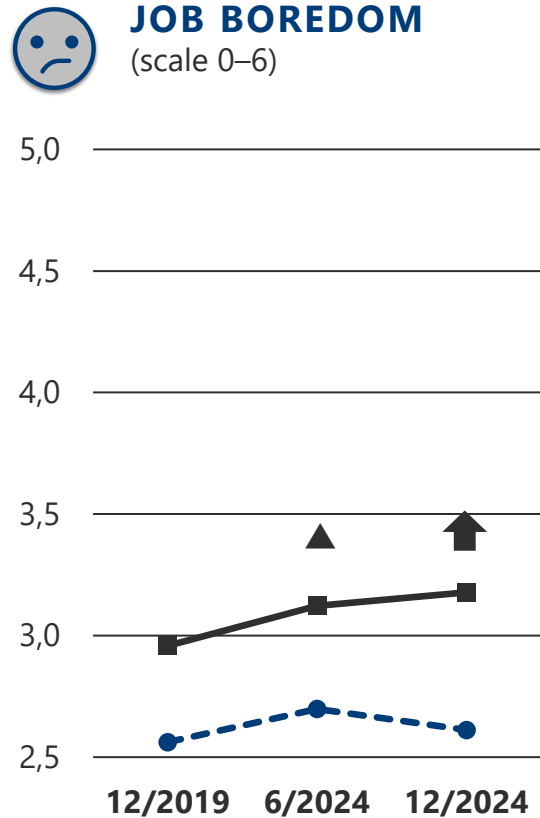
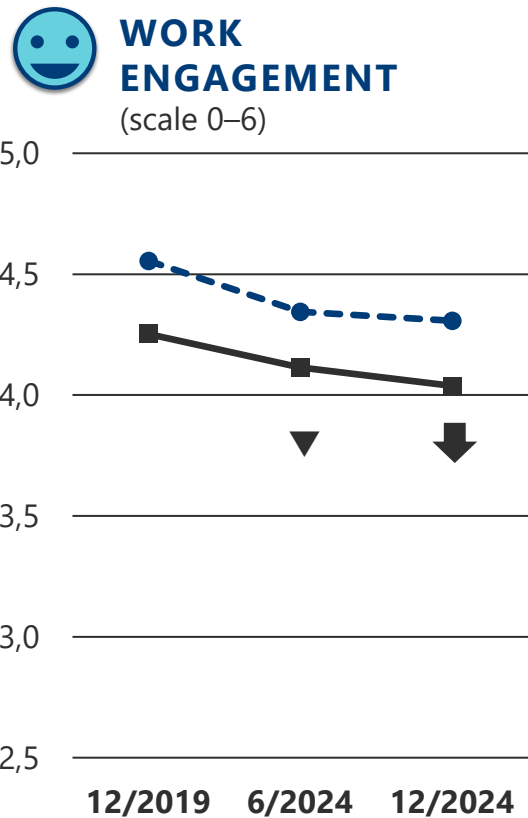
- Sense of capability among older people grew slightly.

### Negative changes

- The sense of community and independent decision-making among young people weakened slightly.
- The opportunities to learn at work decreased slightly among older people.

**Supervisors' intentions to resign from their current work have become more prevalent and burnout symptoms almost as common as among employees.**

# Supervisors' work engagement, boredom at work and work ability are at a better level compared with employees



**In late 2024:**

48% of employees and 59% of supervisors experienced high work engagement.

24% of employees and 12% of supervisors experienced boredom at work.

33% of employees and 41% of supervisors felt that their work ability was good.

—■— Employee  
-●- Supervisor

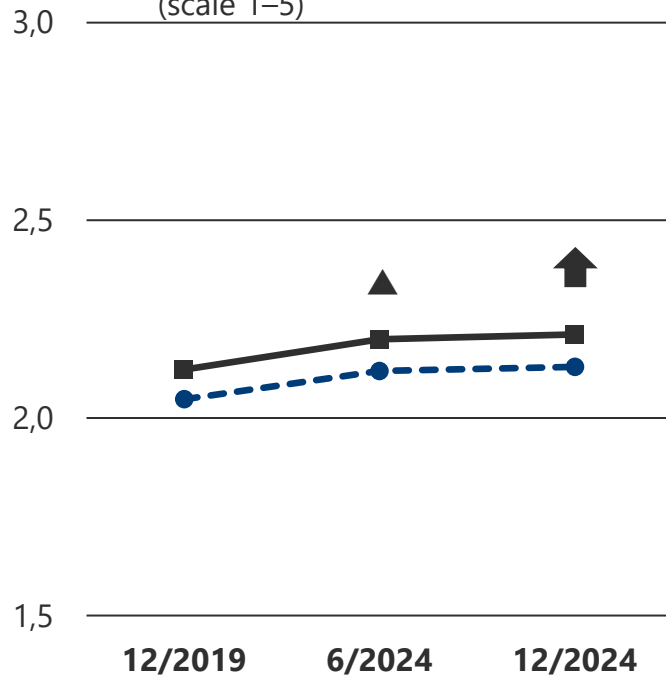
▲▼ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) compared to the previous survey  
 ↕↕ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) between the surveys carried out in late 2019 and late 2024

# About one in ten supervisors and employees suffer from likely job burnout



## JOB BURNOUT SYMPTOMS

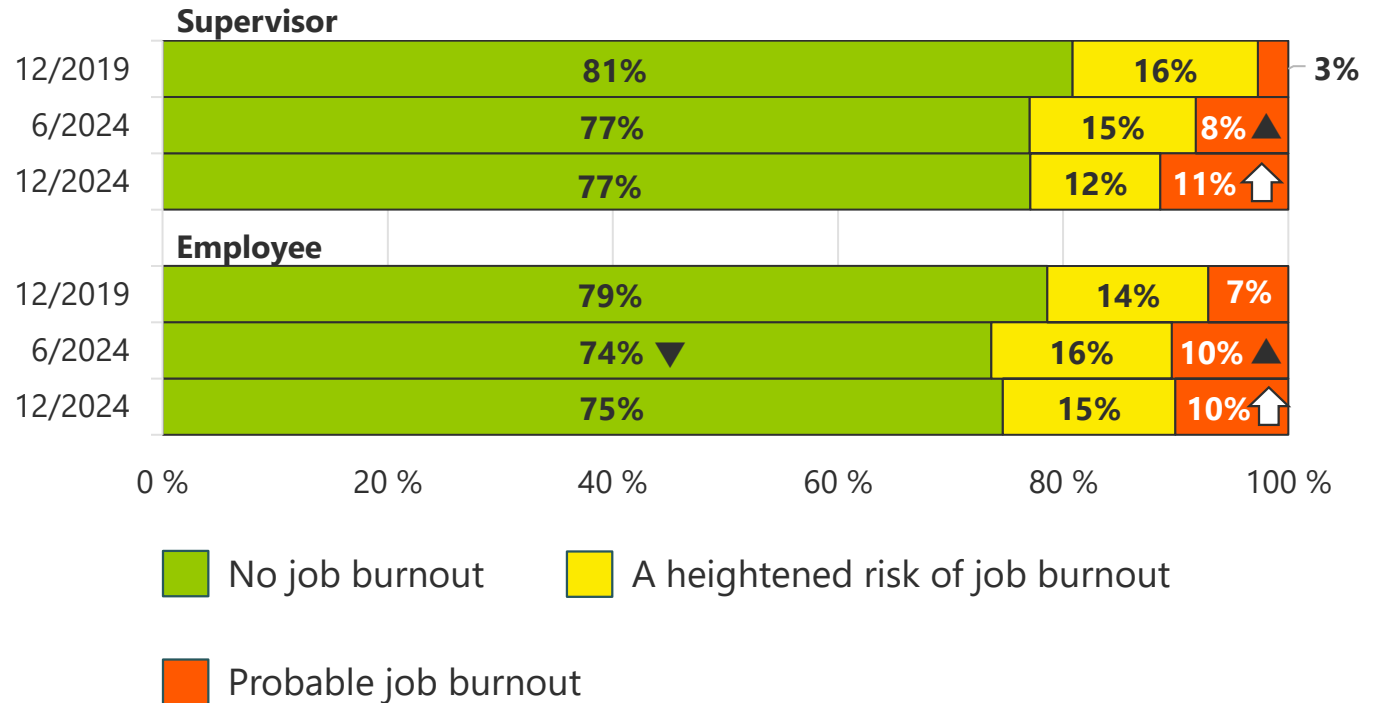
(scale 1–5)



—■— Employee  
- -●- - Supervisor

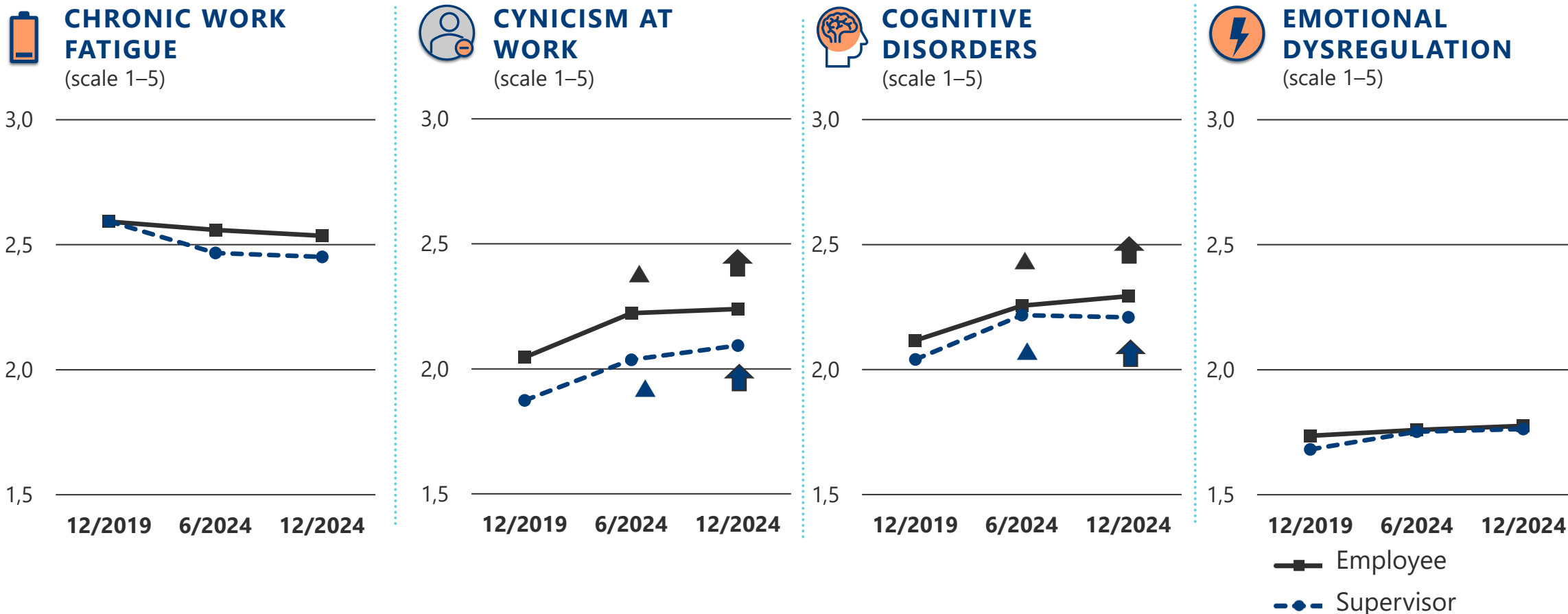
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## JOB BURNOUT RISK GROUPS



■ No job burnout    ■ A heightened risk of job burnout  
 ■ Probable job burnout

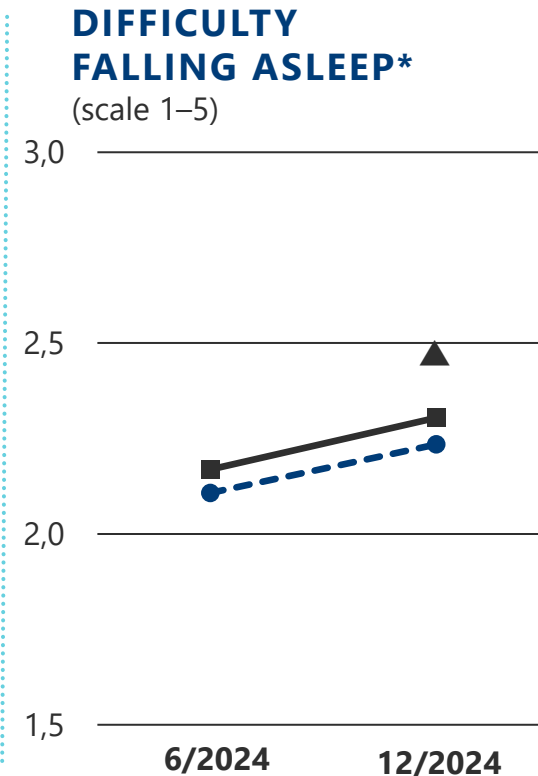
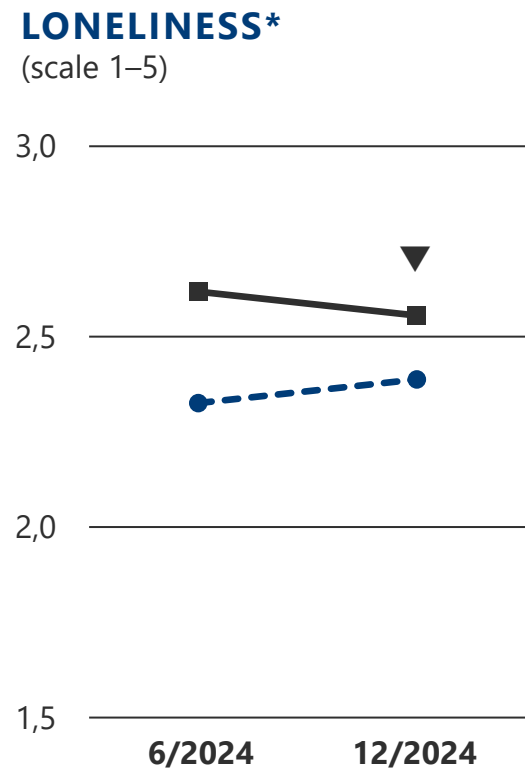
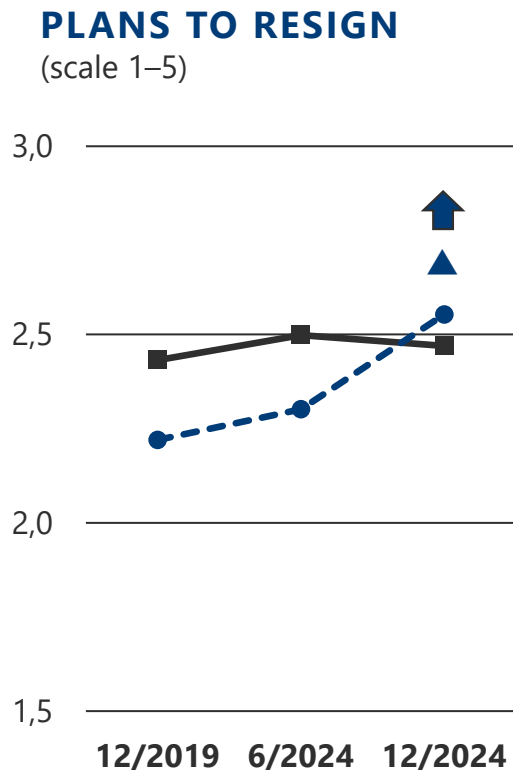
# Cynicism and cognitive disorders have increased among supervisors and employees since COVID-19



▲▼ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) compared to the previous survey  
 ↑↓ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) between the surveys carried out in late 2019 and late 2024



# Supervisors' intentions to resign have increased to the same level with employees



**In late 2024:**

26% of employees and 24% of supervisors had often thought about resigning.

28% of employees and 23% of supervisors felt lonely.

16% of employees and supervisors had difficulty falling asleep at least 3–5 days a week.

—■— Employee  
 -●- Supervisor

▲▼ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) compared to the previous survey  
 ↕ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) between the surveys carried out in late 2019 and late 2024

\* Not measured in the 12/2019 survey

# Supervisors have more work resources than employees

## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN RESPONDENT GROUPS

Statistical differences in work resources and requirements between employees and supervisors in late 2024.

### Positive for supervisors

- More autonomy in decision-making and opportunities for learning at work.
- Work and personal values align better.
- More positive expectations and less concern and uncertainty about the future of one's own work.
- Less excessive workload and physical stress.
- More opportunities for learning at work.

## CHANGES

Changes in work resources or requirements for employees and supervisors between summer 2024 and late 2024.

### Positive changes


- Employees' sense of capability improved slightly.

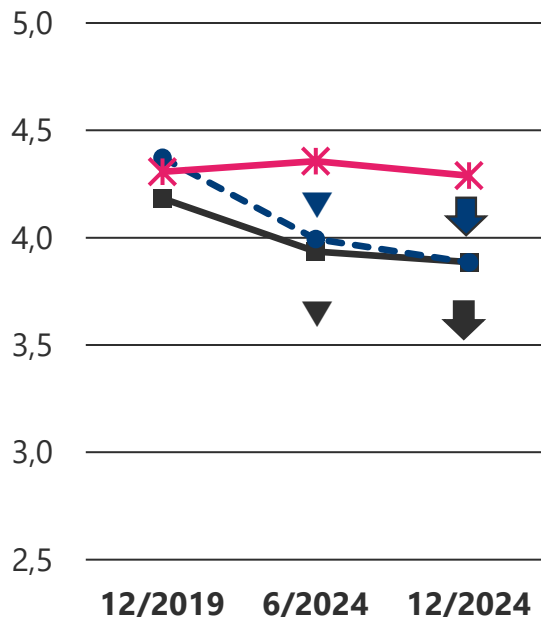
### Negative changes

- The sense of community among supervisors weakened slightly.

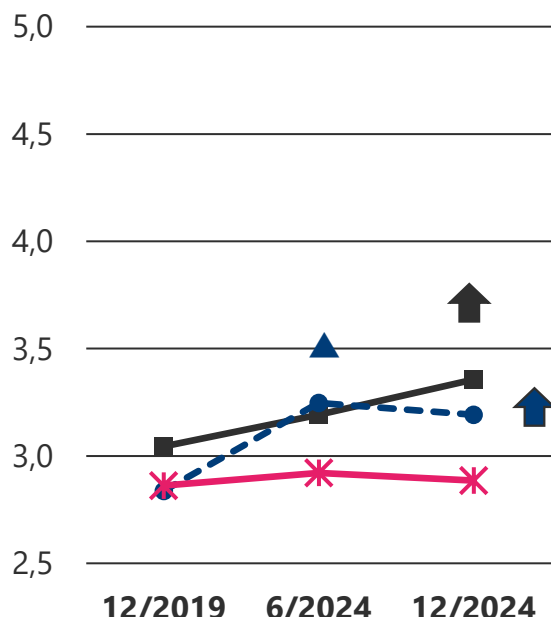
**Upper white-collar employees have a better level and more positive development of well-being at work compared with lower white-collar and blue-collar employees.**


# Work engagement, boredom at work and work ability remained unchanged for upper white-collar employees, and weakened for others

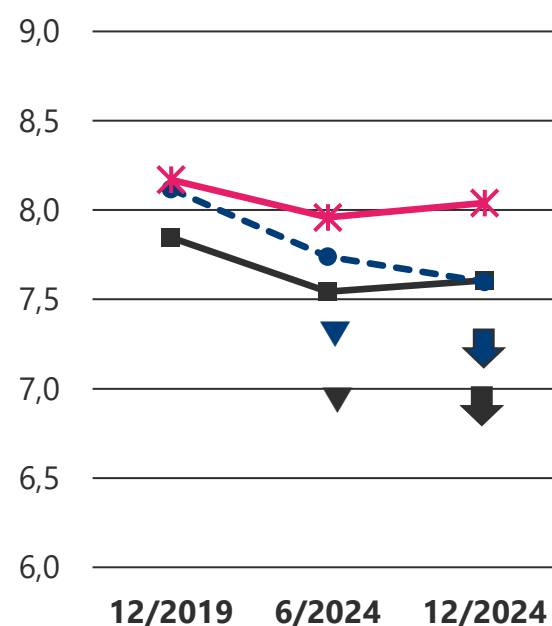
 **WORK ENGAGEMENT**  
(scale 0–6)



 **JOB BOREDOM**  
(scale 0–6)






 **WORK ABILITY**  
(scale 0–10)



**In late 2024:**

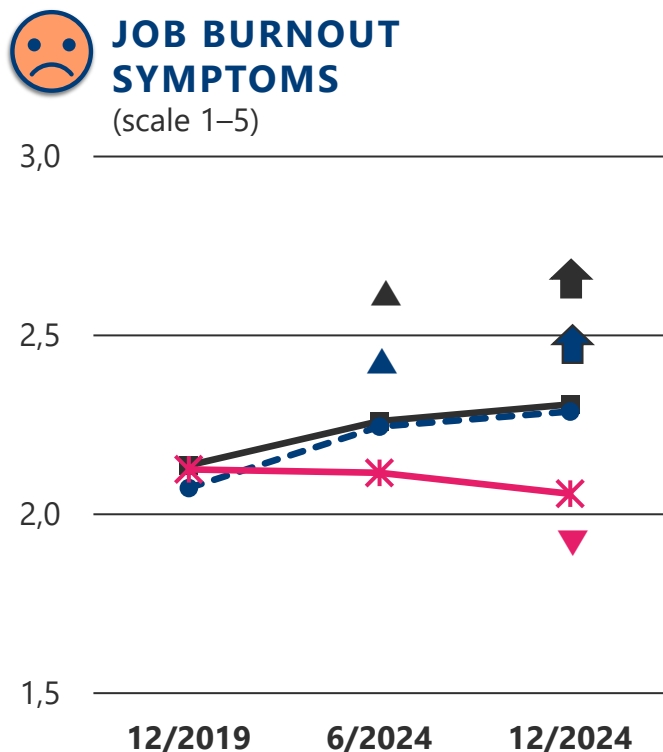
54% of upper white-collar employees, 41% of white-collar employees and 45% of blue-collar employees experienced high work engagement.

14% of upper white-collar employees, 26% of white-collar employees and 31% of blue-collar employees experienced boredom at work.

-  Blue-collar employee
-  White-collar employee
-  Upper white-collar employee

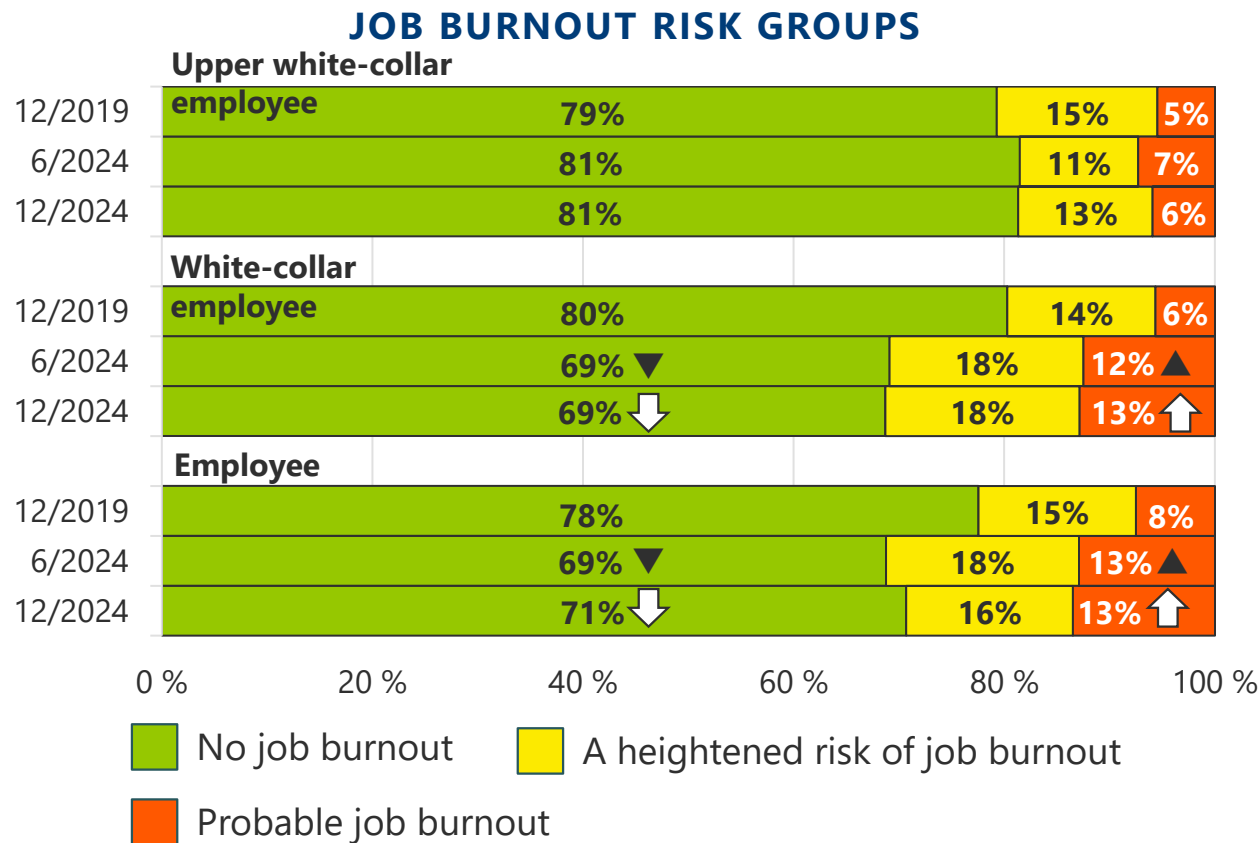
▲▼ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) compared to the previous survey  
 ↕↗ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) between the surveys carried out in late 2019 and late 2024

# Nearly one in three blue-collar employees and white-collar employees have at least a heightened risk of job burnout

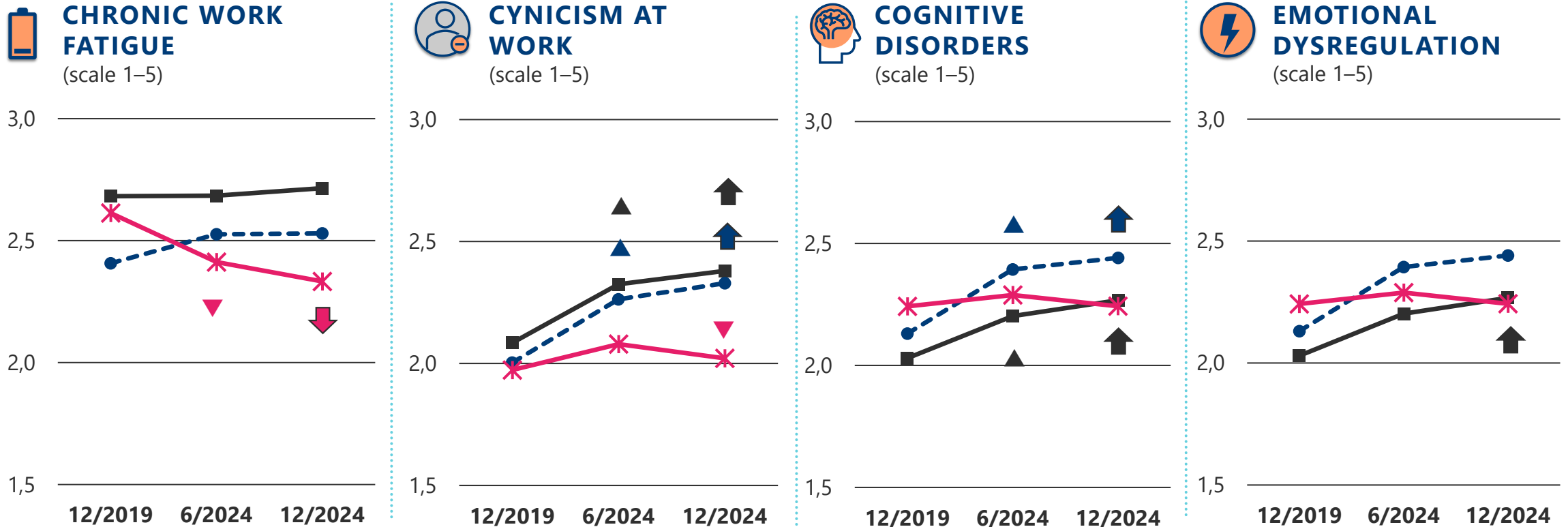


- Blue-collar employee
- White-collar employee
- Upper white-collar employee

▲▼ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) compared to the previous survey  
 ⇕⇑ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) between the surveys carried out in late 2019 and late 2024



# Cynicism and cognitive disorders have become more common since COVID-19 among blue-collar and white-collar employees



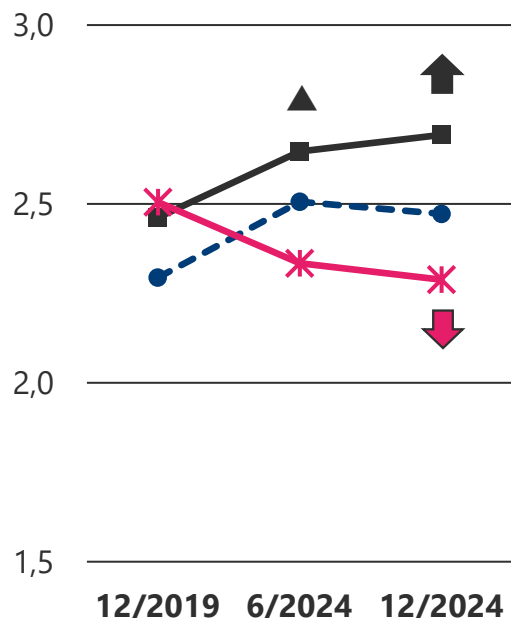
▲▼ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) compared to the previous survey  
 ↓↑ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) between the surveys carried out in late 2019 and late 2024

■ Blue-collar employee  
 ● White-collar employee  
 \* Upper white-collar employee

# Intentions to resign have increased among employees and decreased among upper white-collar employees since COVID-19

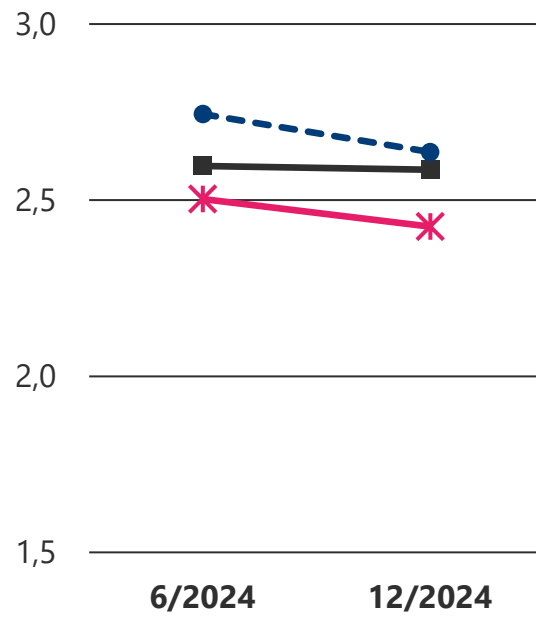
## PLANS TO RESIGN

(scale 1–5)



## LONELINESS\*

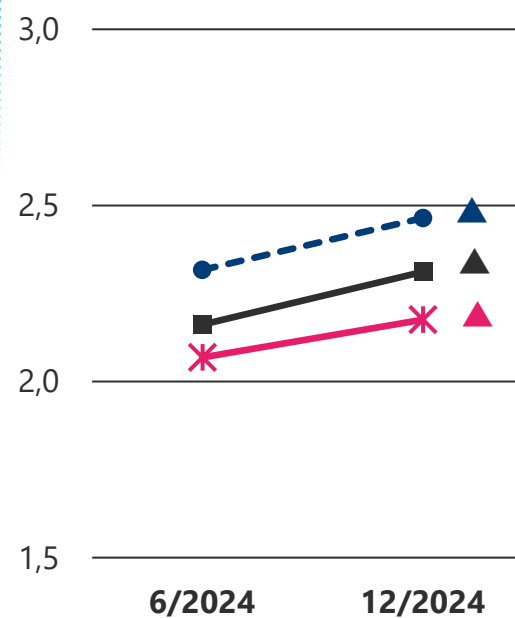
(scale 1–5)



\* Not measured in the 12/2019 survey

## DIFFICULTY FALLING ASLEEP\*

(scale 1–5)



**In late 2024:**

21% of upper white-collar employees, 28% of white-collar employees and 30% of blue-collar employees have often thought about resigning.

13% of upper white-collar employees, 20% of white-collar employees and 15% of blue-collar employees had difficulty falling asleep at least 3–5 days a week.

- Blue-collar employee
- White-collar employee
- Upper white-collar employee

▲▼ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) compared to the previous survey  
 ↕ = Statistically significant increase/decrease ( $p < .05$ ) between the surveys carried out in late 2019 and late 2024

# Upper white-collar employees have fewer stressful work requirements and more resources

## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN RESPONDENT GROUPS

Statistical differences in work resources and requirements among blue-collar and white-collar employees compared to upper white-collar employees in late 2024.

### Positive for upper white-collar employees

- Less physical work stress.
- More independence at work
- More opportunities to learn at work.
- More servant leadership
- A stronger sense of community.
- More positive expectations and less concern and uncertainty about the future of one's own work.

### Negative for upper white-collar employees

- Excessive amount of work more common.

## CHANGES

Changes in work resources or requirements for blue-collar employees, white-collar employees and upper white-collar employees between summer 2024 and late 2024.

### Positive changes

- Assessment of capability improved slightly among white-collar employees and upper white-collar employees.

### Negative changes

- Employees were slightly more concerned about the future of their work.
- Opportunities for learning at work decreased slightly among white-collar employees and upper white-collar employees.



**Remote work was found to have  
positive immediate impacts,  
but the direct benefits may not be  
as notable after six months.**

# Remote work immediately connected to many positive phenomena

Examined by studying statistical correlations between the amount of remote work and possible consequences in late 2024. Focused on respondents who reported working remotely at the time (n = 507). The analyses were standardised in relation to the effects of education, age and supervisory position. The associations presented here were statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), albeit weak.

## Possible immediate positive phenomena + related to remote work:

- Less physical work stress
- Less workaholism (addictive relationship to work)
- Excessive amount of work less common
- Fewer role conflicts (conflicting expectations that make work difficult)
- More fair treatment at work
- Less emotional dysregulation (severe and/or sudden emotional reactions without a clear immediate reason)
- Less emotional work (the need to show feelings that do not correspond to the feelings experienced)

# Remote work has hardly any direct connections to work and well-being at work beyond six months

Examined by studying statistical correlations between the amount of remote work reported in summer 2024 and possible consequences measured in late 2024. Focused on respondents who reported having worked remotely in summer 2024 and also responded to the late 2024 survey ( $n = 483$ ). The analyses were standardised in relation to the effects of education, age and supervisory position. The associations presented here were statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), albeit weak.

## Positive phenomena related to remote work after six months:

- Less physical work stress

# Summary

# Representativeness of the study

- Although the datasets are relatively extensive (1,567 and 933 respondents), the respondent groups may have been selected. For example, people suffering from challenges with well-being could have responded to the survey less or more often than others.
- That is why we compared all studied assessments of work and well-being at work from summer 2023 (28 factors) and background information (8 factors) in two groups of respondents: 1) only those who responded to the survey in summer 2023 ( $n = 1,531$ ) and 2) also those who responded in late 2023, summer 2024 and late 2024 ( $n = 933$ ).
- We found only minor differences between these respondent groups in 14 of the 44 examined factors.
  - Respondents for whom chronic fatigue, difficulty falling asleep, workaholism, belief in a positive future outlook and that work will change for the better, compatibility between the workplace and personal values, seeing positive results of work and the physical burden of work were lower in summer 2023 were slightly more likely to respond to the follow-up surveys ( $p < .05$ ).
  - Respondents with somewhat increased emotional dysregulation and bureaucracy requirements at the workplace were also slightly more likely to participated in the follow-up survey.
  - In addition, blue-collar employees (compared to lower and upper white-collar employees), people with a lower level of education and those in fixed-term employment relationships were also slightly less likely to respond to three follow-up surveys than their comparison groups.
- Since the differences were quite small and only concerned the above-mentioned variables of those studied, the observed slight selection of respondents is unlikely to have a significant impact on the conclusions.

# Main results regarding Finns' well-being at work in late 2024 1/2



**Finns' well-being at work** is no longer deteriorating, but it has still not returned to the pre-pandemic level.



**Young adults'** well-being at work measured by all indicators is worse compared with older people. Nearly one in three young people already have symptoms of burnout.



**Burnout symptoms among supervisors** have become almost as common as among employees. Supervisors' plans to resign have also become more prevalent.

# Main results regarding Finns' well-being at work in late 2024 2/2



**Upper white-collar employees** have a better level and more positive development of well-being at work compared with lower white-collar and blue-collar employees.



**Remote work** was found to have positive immediate impacts, but the direct benefits may not be as notable after six months.

# Tips and tools for employees and workplaces



**The Mental Health Toolkit** contains tools and materials for promoting well-being at work that are available free of charge:

**[MENTAL HEALTH TOOLKIT](https://ttl.fi/en)** (ttl.fi/en)



One of the tools is the '**How are you?**' **well-being at work test** (in Finnish) which has already been used by more than 100,000 Finns to assess their well-being at work:

**[HOW ARE YOU? WELL-BEING AT WORK TEST](https://ttl.fi)** (ttl.fi)



Survey the **risk of burnout** in your own organisation and compare the results with others:

**[JOB BURNOUT TRAFFIC LIGHTS FOR WORK COMMUNITIES](https://ttl.fi/en)** (ttl.fi/en)



**More info and previous results:  
[tvl.fi/en/research/projects/  
how-is-finland-doing](https://tvl.fi/en/research/projects/how-is-finland-doing)**

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