

Employee Wellbeing Before vs. During Covid-19: Evidence from Finland

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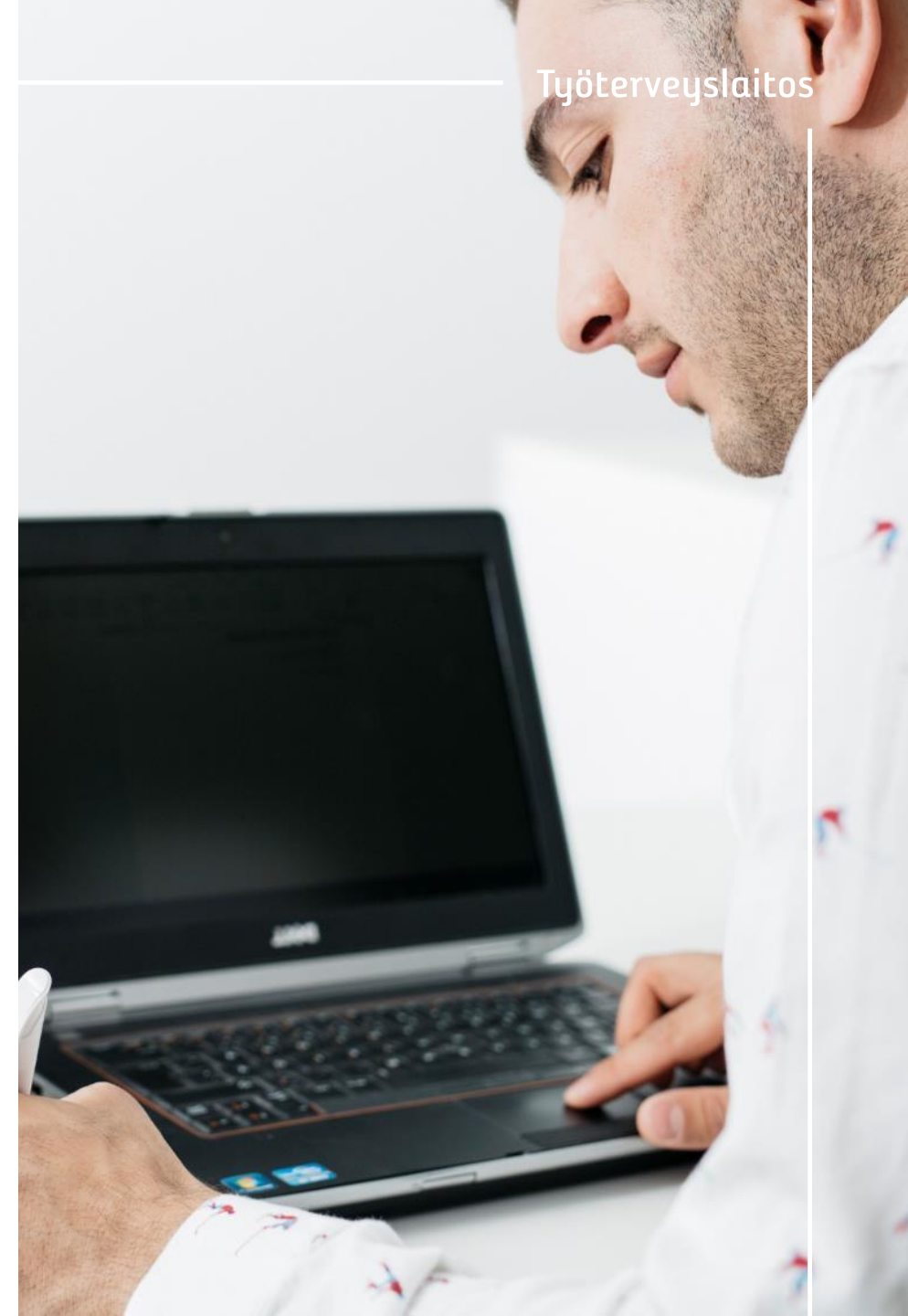
Employee Wellbeing Before vs. During Covid-19: Evidence from Finland

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COVID-19 in Finland

- In general, the COVID-19 situation has not been as bad as in many other countries in terms of infected, hospitalized, and deaths.
- Wide-ranging impact on general life: restrictions for gatherings, traveling, working at office etc. In Spring 2020, schools were closed and access to daycare was restricted.
- Amongst European countries, the percentage of employees who increasingly telecommuted was highest in Finland: 57 %, the average in Europe 37 % (Eurofound, May 2020)
- Around half of the one million employees telecommuted in Spring of 2020 (Statistics Finland, 2020)

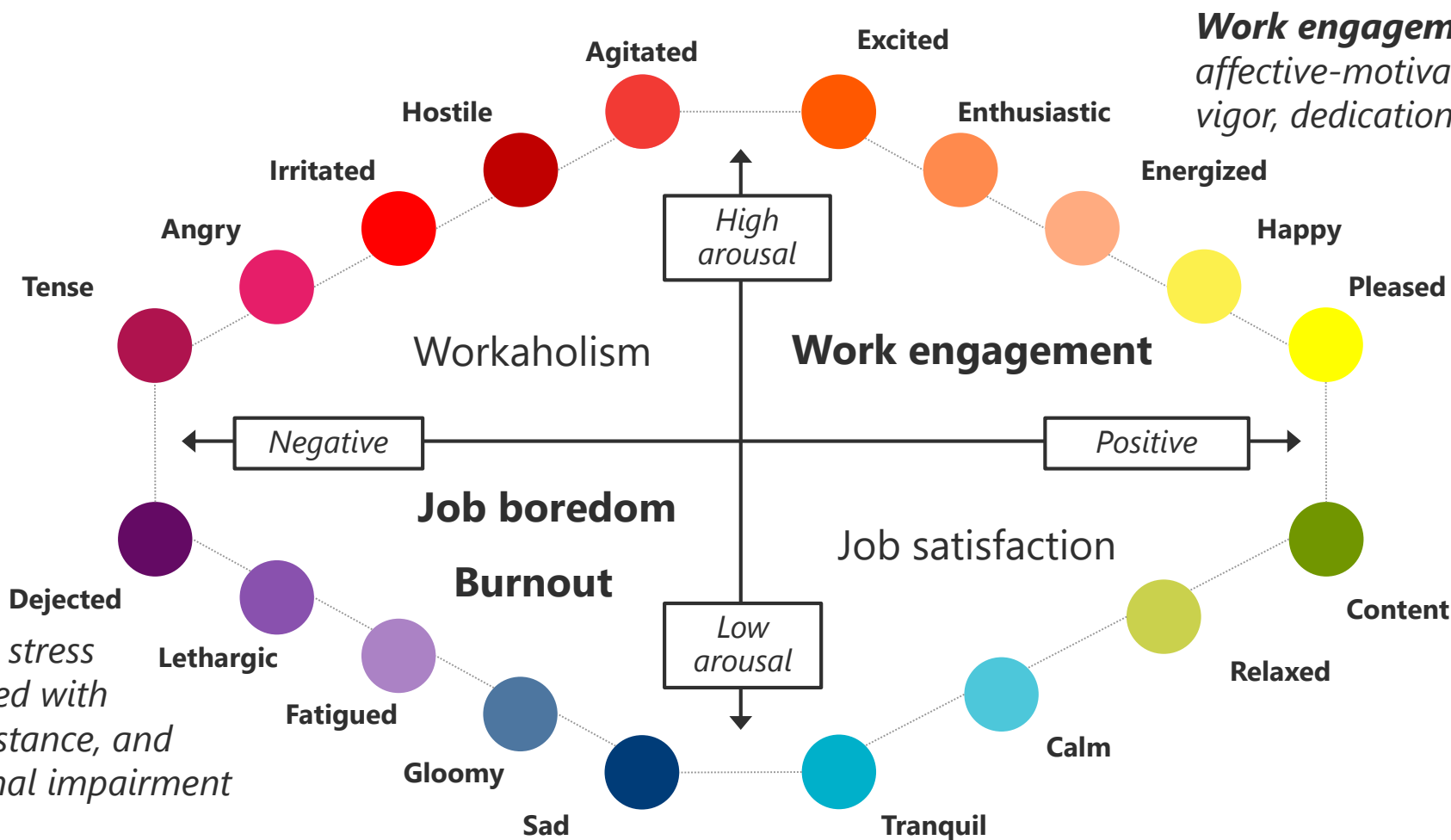


The Research Project: 'Employee Well-being During COVID-19 in Finland'

- Random sample of Finnish population who were employed Dec 2019-Jan 2020 and aged 18-65.
- Survey was sent to the same respondents at three different time points:
 - 1st survey (T1): Dec/2019-Jan/2020
 - 2nd survey (T2): Jun/2020
 - 3rd survey (T3): Nov-Dec/2020
- **Three-wave longitudinal data: $n = 757$.**
- The development of well-being in comparison to the baseline before COVID-19.
- Results are weighted in terms of age, gender and residential area to match the population distribution.



There are both positive and negative feelings which can include high or low levels of mental activation



Work engagement is a positive affective-motivational state of vigor, dedication and absorption

Burnout is prolonged stress syndrome characterized with exhaustion, mental distance, and cognitive and emotional impairment

Job boredom is an amotivational state due to under stimulation and lack of challenges

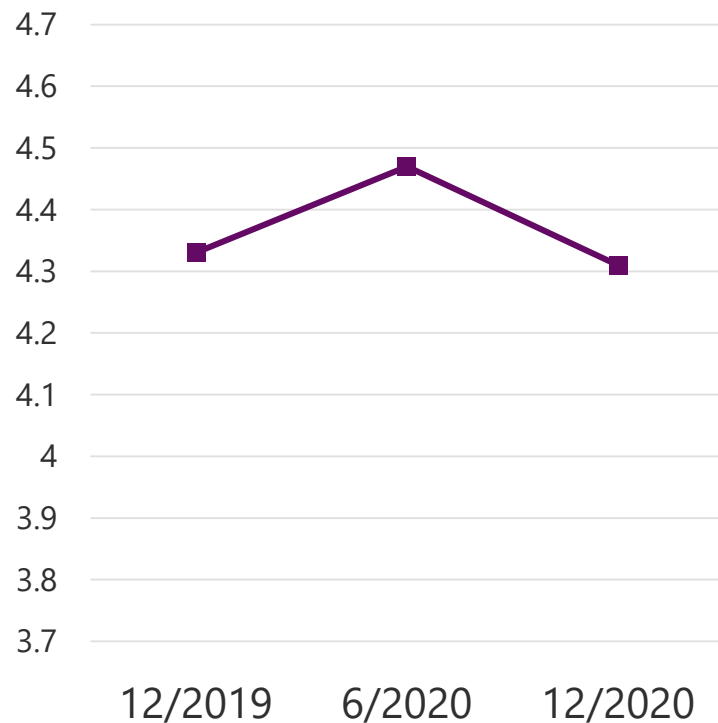
(Adapted from Russell, 1980)

Findings in the general working population

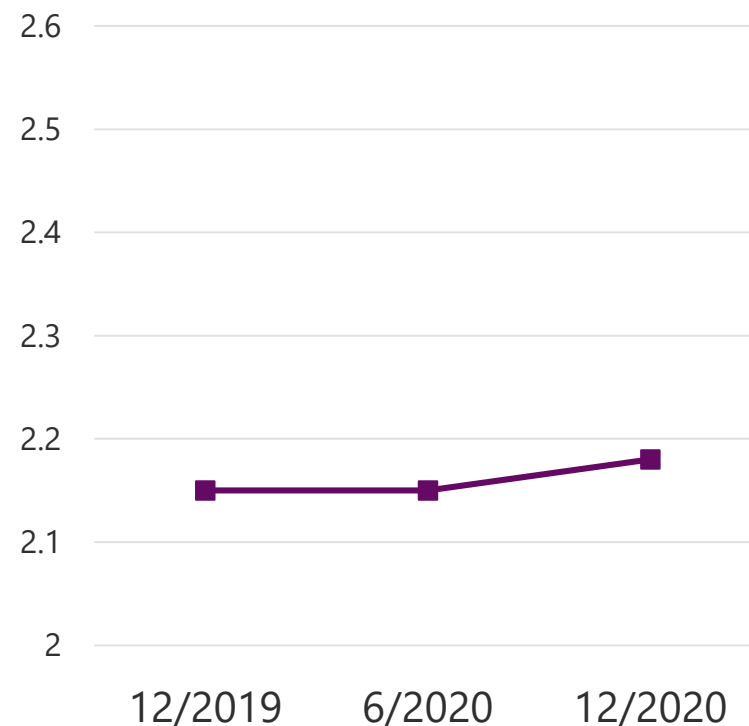
Well-being at work before and during the pandemic



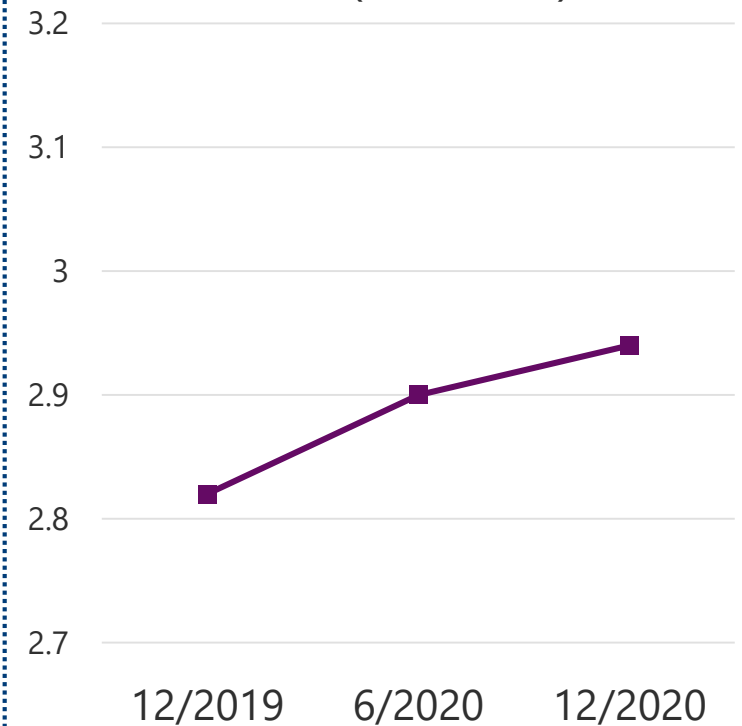
Work engagement
(scale 0-6)



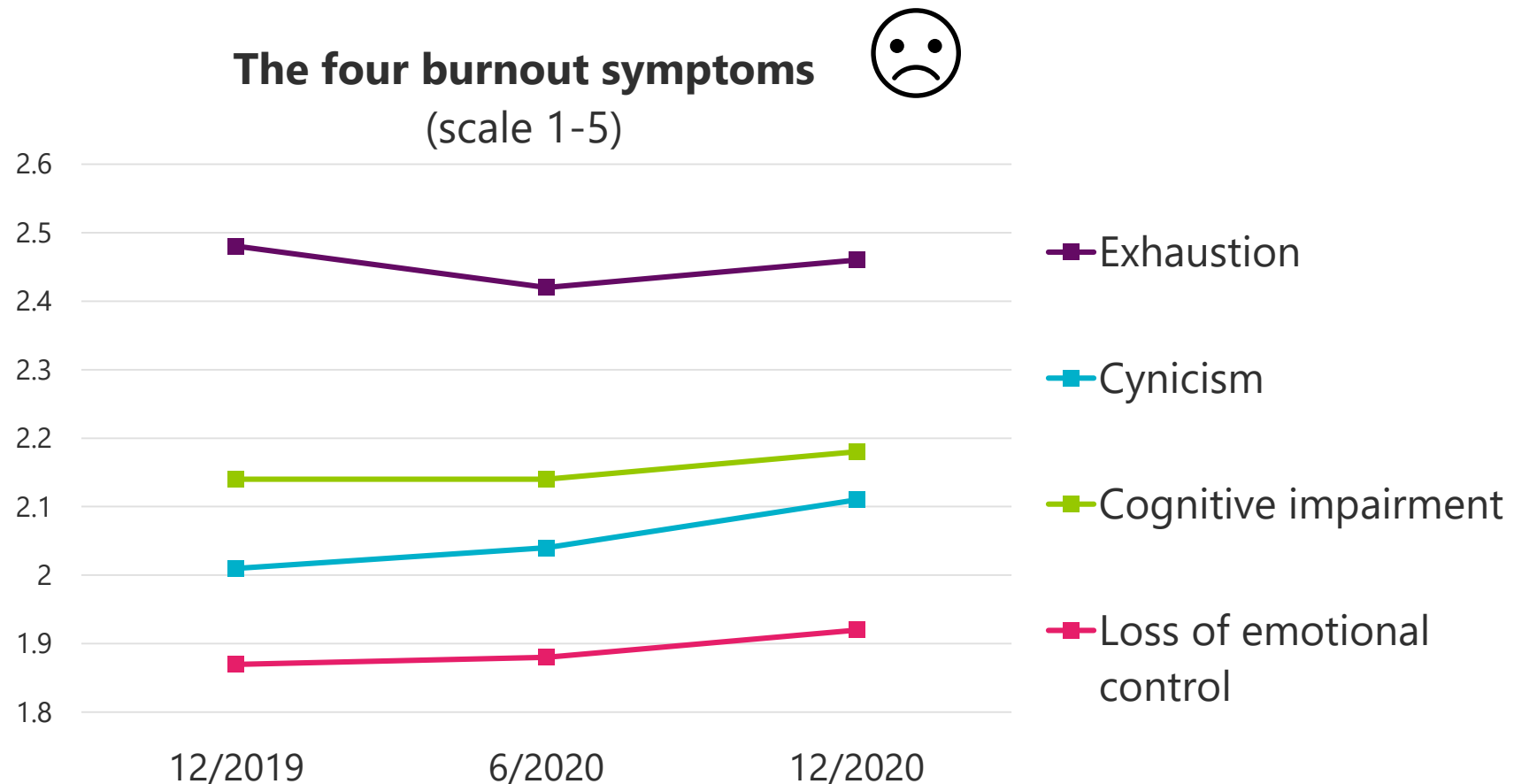
Burnout
(scale 1-5)



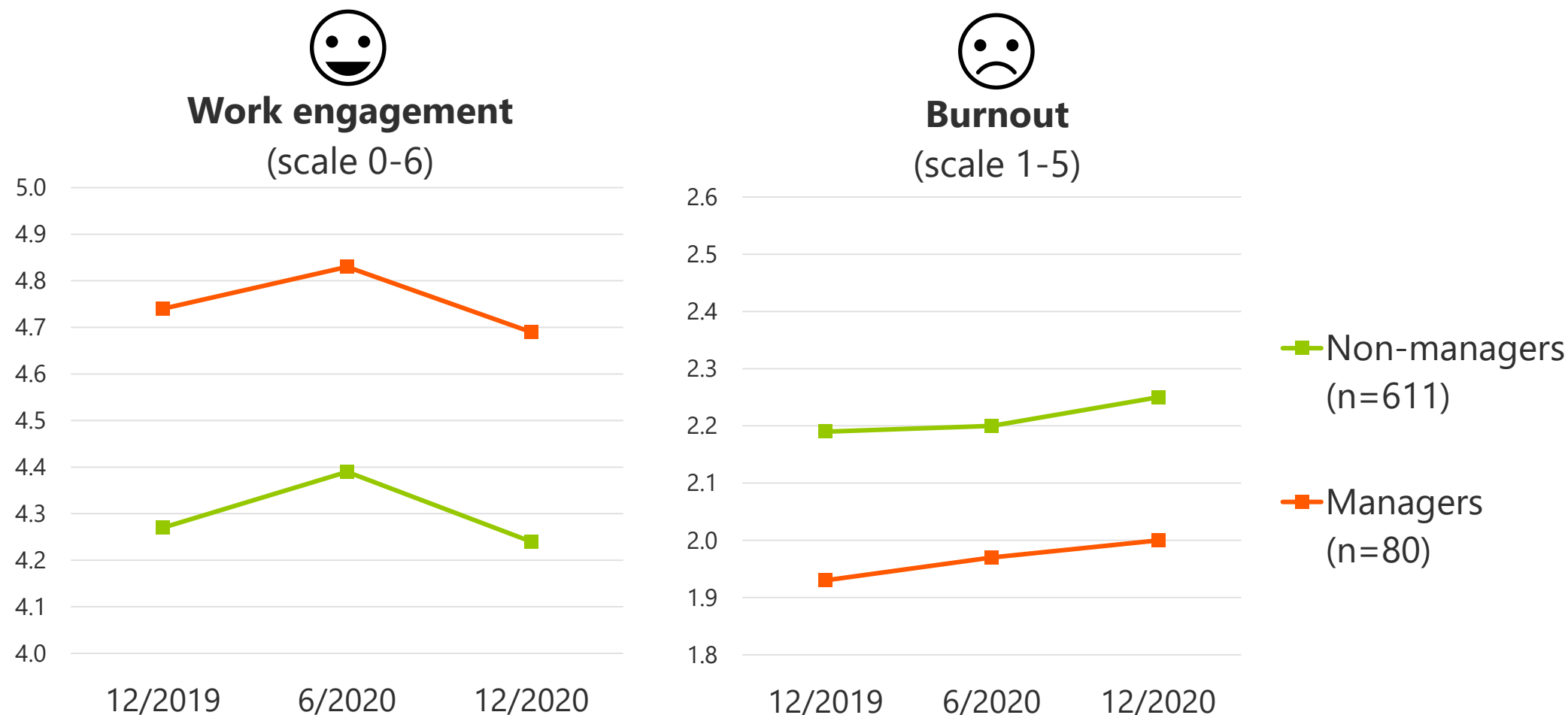
Job boredom
(scale 0-6)



Development of different burnout symptoms



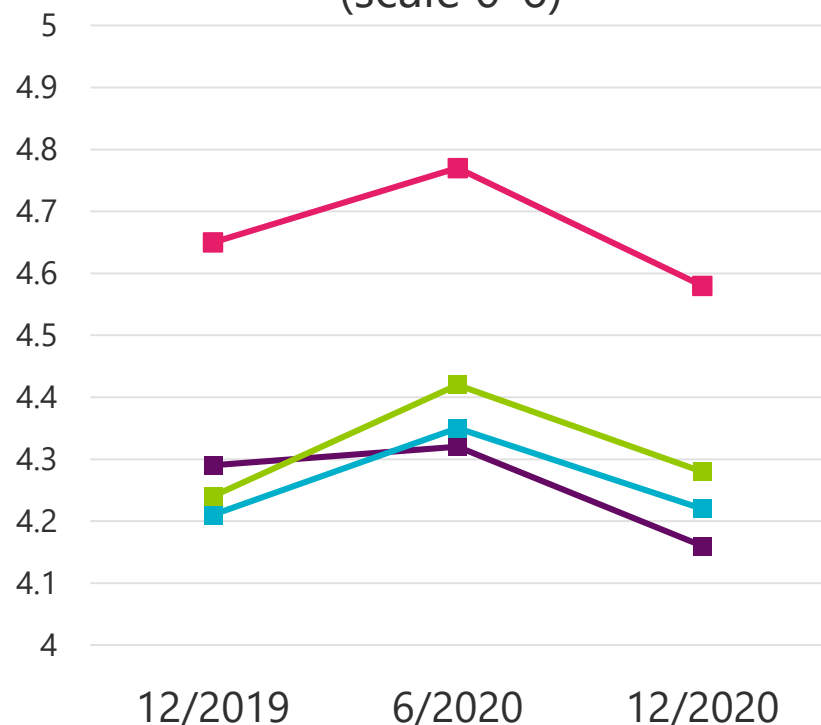
Work engagement and burnout amongst managers and non-managers



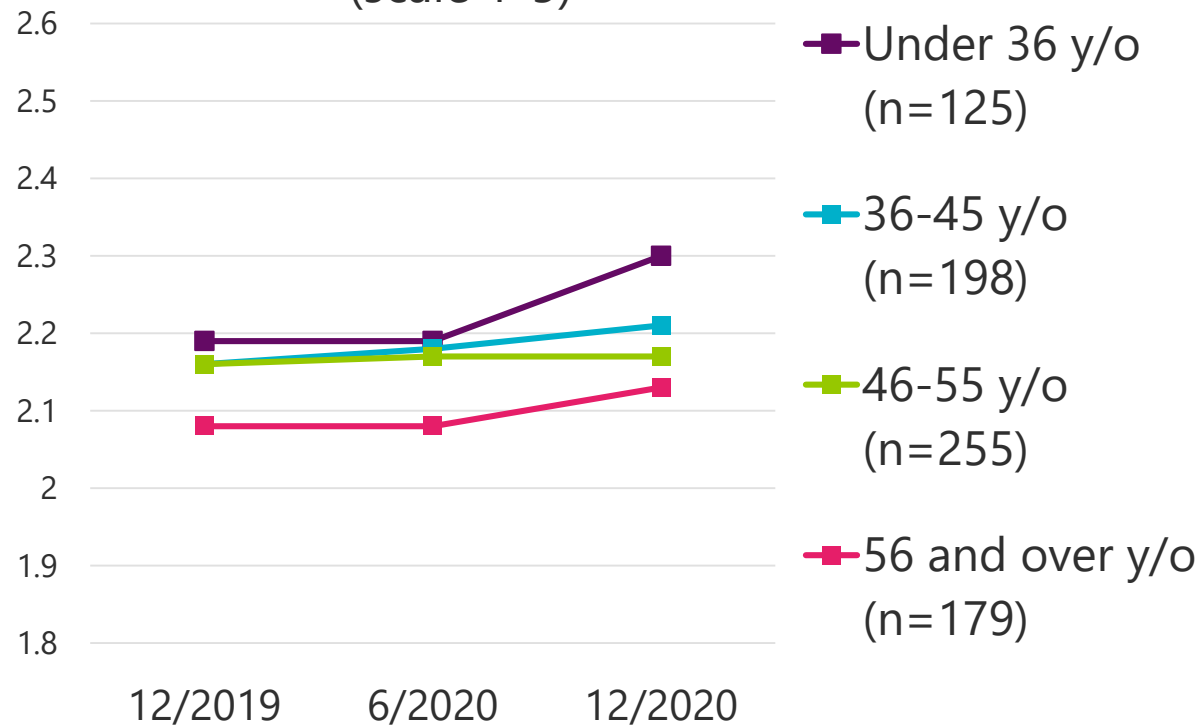
Work engagement and burnout in different age groups



Work engagement
(scale 0-6)



Burnout
(scale 1-5)



Well-being in employed population: summary

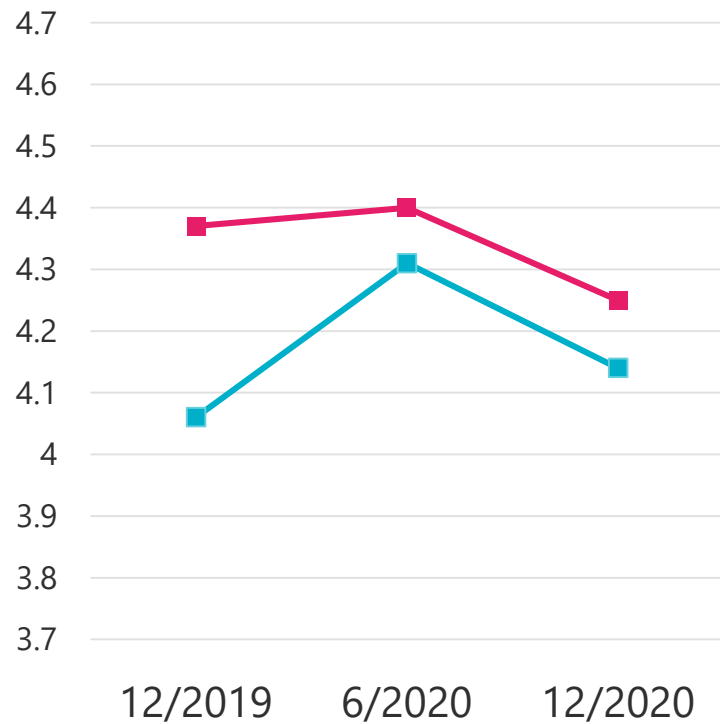
- After initial increase (Dec 2019 -> Jun 2020), **work engagement** decreased back to the same level as before COVID-19 (Jun 2020 -> Dec 2020)
- Slight increases in **burnout** across subsequent time span, now higher than before COVID-19, despite the initial decrease in job exhaustion.
- **Job boredom** increased across all three time points.
- Amongst **managers**, burnout has kept on increasing. For non-managers, similar increases across T2-T3.
- **Worrisome trends amongst the youngest age group:**
 - Highest burnout and lowest work engagement in Dec 2020
 - Strongest increase in burnout from Jun 2020 to Dec 2020
 - No initial increase in work engagement unlike in other age groups

Well-being at telework?

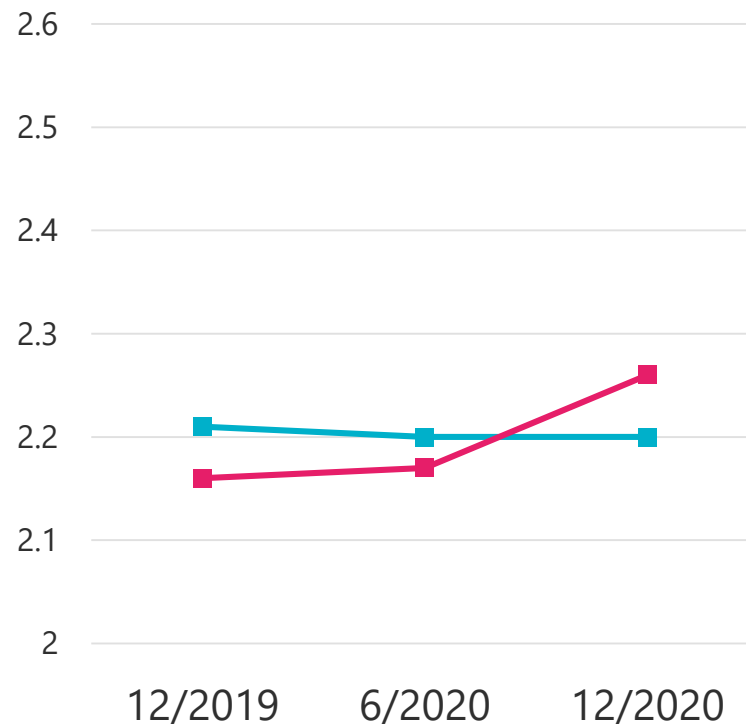
Teleworking and well-being



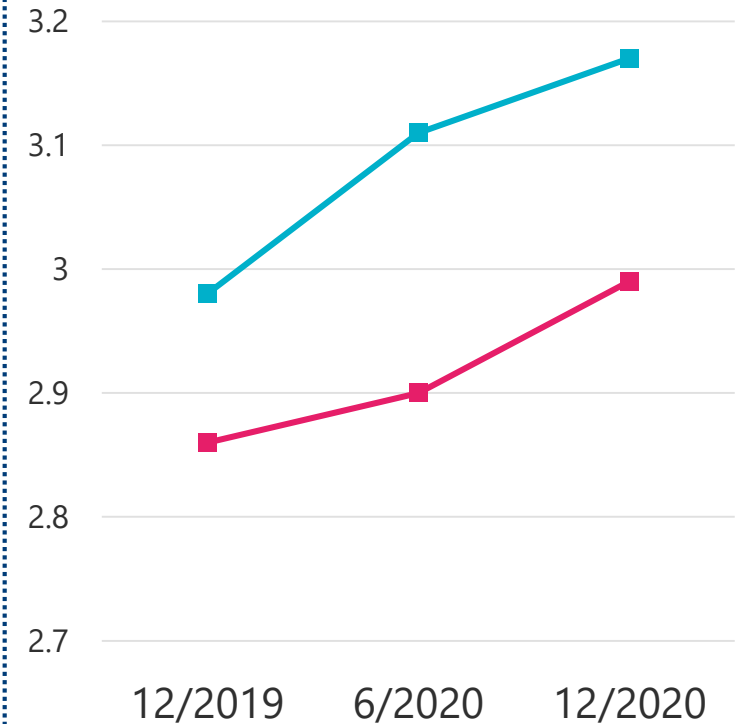
Work engagement
(scale 0-6)



Burnout
(scale 1-5)



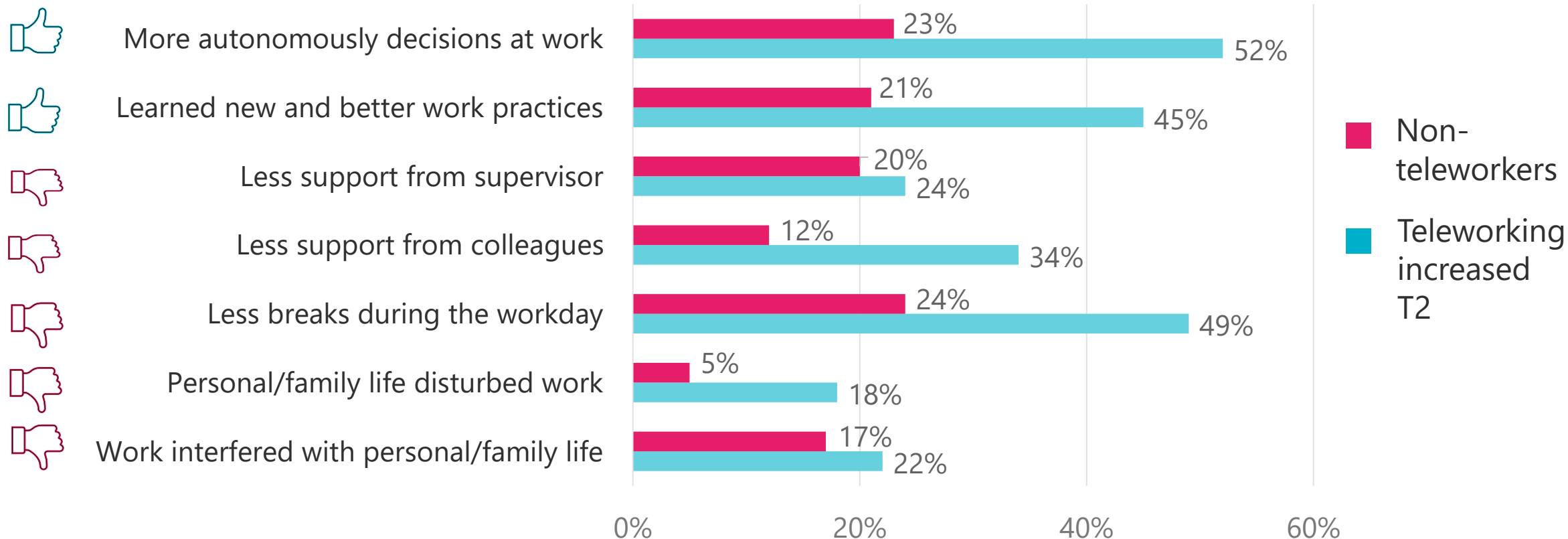
Job boredom
(scale 0-6)



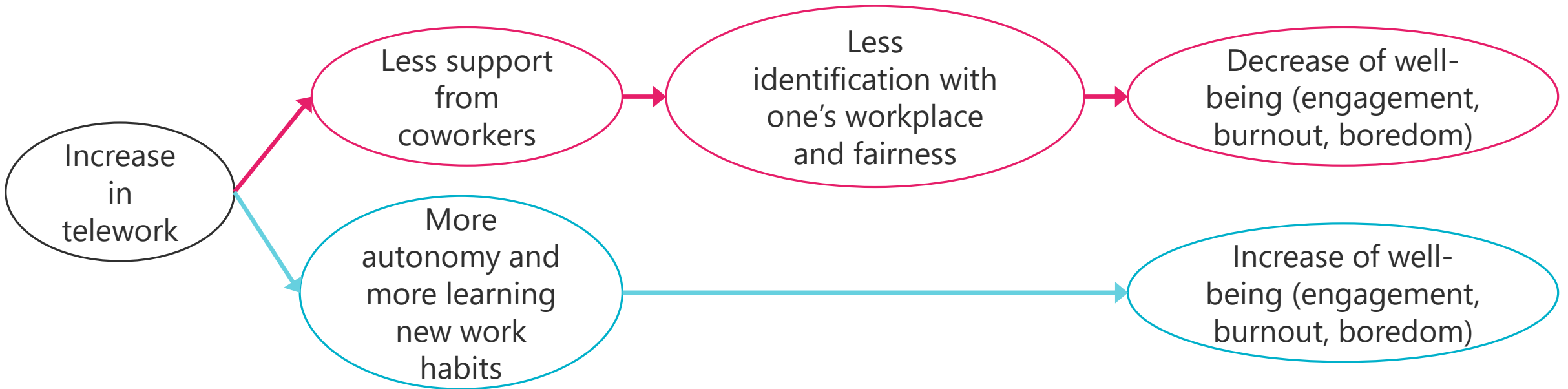
—■ Non-teleworkers (n=369) —■ Teleworkers (n=226)

Work-life interface and changes in job resources among those who increasingly teleworked vs. others

Percentage of those who agree with the following statements



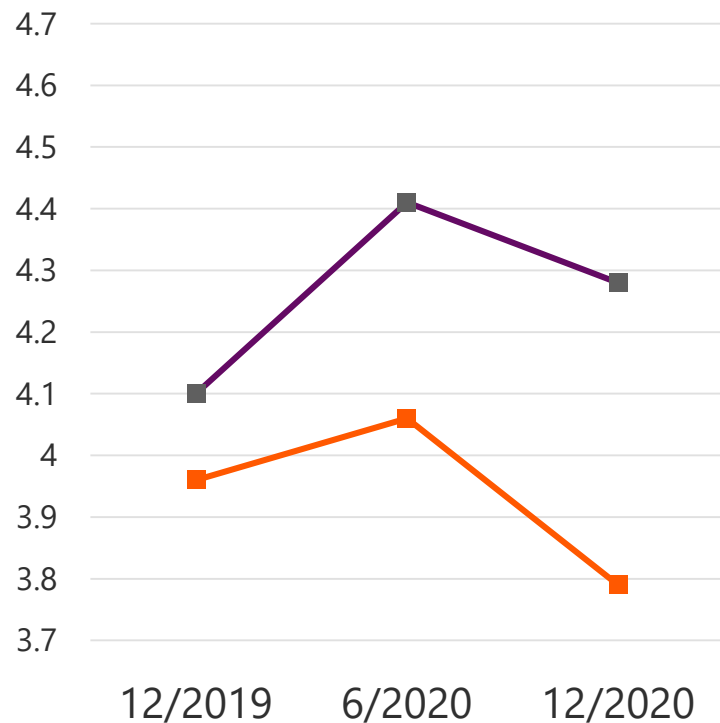
Working at home has had both positive and negative consequences for employee well-being



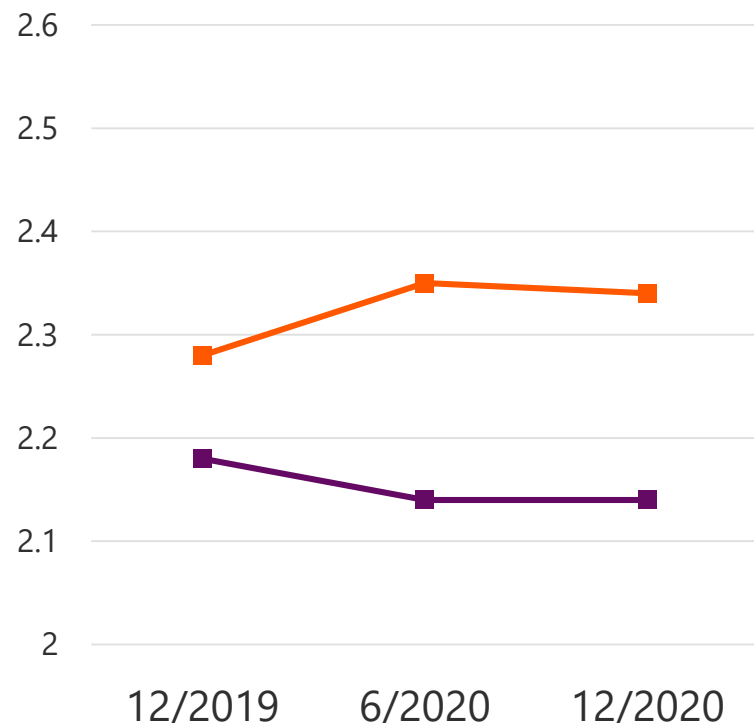
Teleworkers living with others and single households



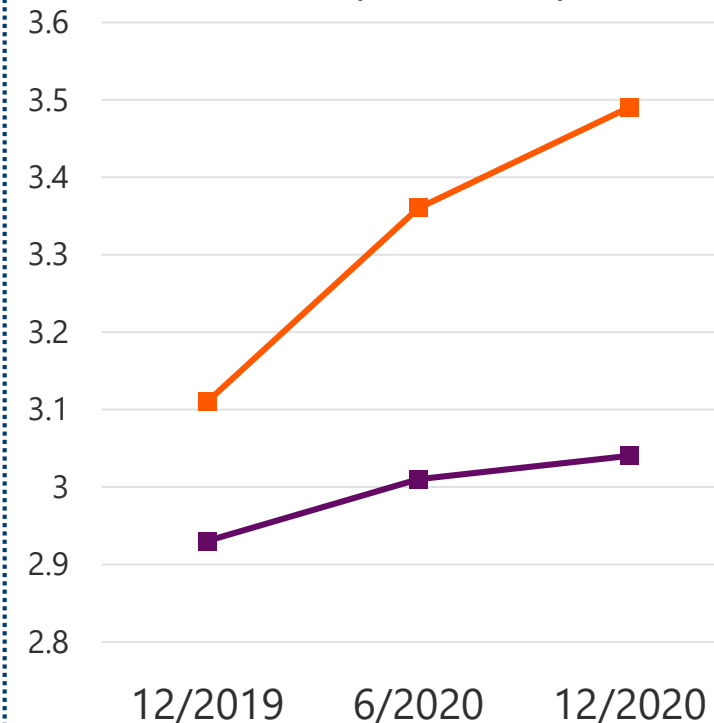
Work engagement
(scale 0-6)



Burnout
(scale 1-5)



Job boredom
(scale 0-6)



— Living with others (n=160) — Single household (n=66)

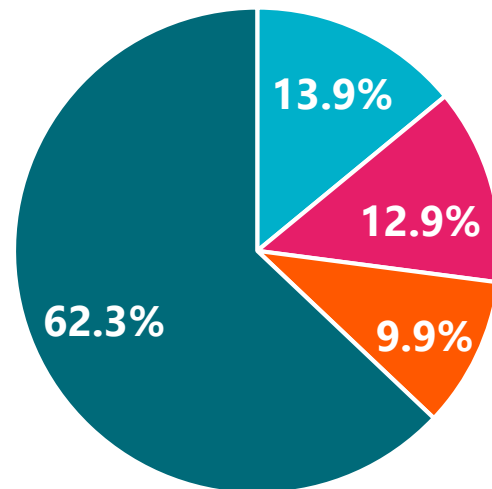
Well-being amongst teleworkers: summary

- Especially teleworkers' work engagement increased from Dec 2019 to Jun 2020 followed by a subsequent decrease; yet higher levels than before COVID-19.
- No changes in teleworkers' burnout, but increases amongst non-teleworkers across Jun 2020 and Dec 2020.
- Strong increase in job boredom during Spring 2019 amongst those who increasingly teleworked, slighter increases from Jun 2020 to Dec 2020.
- Especially single household teleworkers' well-being has decreased since pre-COVID-19
- New task-related resources benefited teleworkers well-being, whereas loss of social support and work-family conflict as a risk for well-being

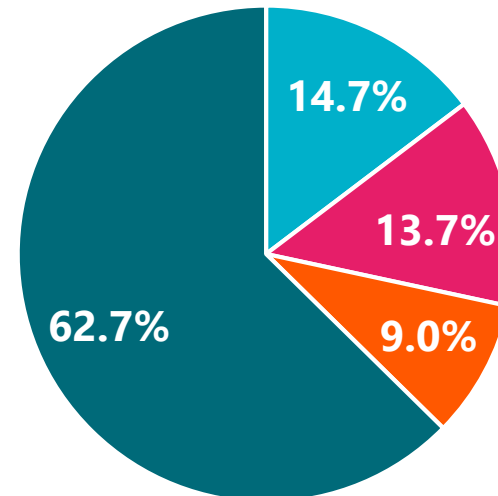
Conclusions

Comparison of factors impacting changes in well-being at work before and after the outburst of COVID-19 (6-month follow-up)

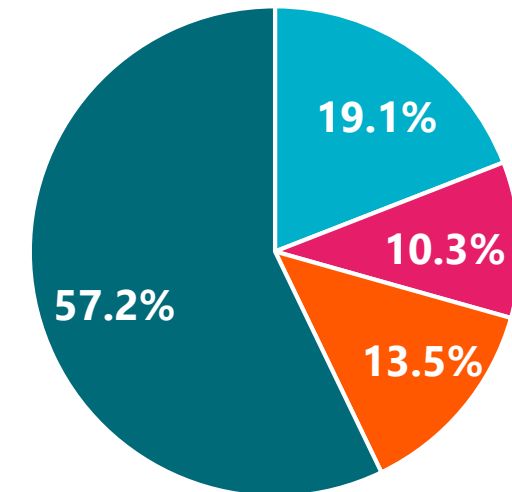
Work engagement



Burnout



Job boredom



Changes in work characteristics
(justice, organizational identification, job insecurity)

Demographic factors (e.g. age, gender, SES, education)

Background factors at work
(e.g. status, work hours, work contract)

Tele/close contact work (magnitude, portion, move to telework)

Concluding remarks

- Despite changes in employee well-being during COVID-19, the overall changes thus far can be considered relatively small.
- However, the situation has worsened in late autumn 2020 compared to June 2020, and particularly well-being in the youngest age group is worrying.
- Forced teleworking may be particularly detrimental for employees in single households; however, it is noteworthy that well-being of non-teleworkers has similarly worsened.
- Practically, for example, servant leader orientation, staying in touch with colleagues and social support, feedback, discussing purpose, new (learning) challenges, recovery during the workday are among the means to stay engaged.
- In addition to this population data, we are collecting similar pre- and during Covid-19 longitudinal data from seven organizations (at T2, N \approx 3000) with many more topics (e.g. job, social, and organizational resources and demands, job crafting etc.)

Kiitos!

Thank you!

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- Future events:

Webinar 10 February @10am: Improving Wellbeing Without the Resource of Google

- <https://www.propelhub.org/the-spangle-trap-how-to-improve-workplace-wellbeing-without-the-resources-of-google/>

Webinar 5 March @3pm: Taking a Strategic Approach to Managing Conflict

- <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/taking-a-strategic-approach-to-the-management-of-workplace-conflict-tickets-138471727665>

- Check out our website for resources on improving people management skills and strategy: www.propelhub.org