



**UNIVERSITY
OF TURKU**

Turku School of
Economics

News readers' discussions in Finland on reduced working time

Futures studies

Master's thesis

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17.11.2024

Turku

The originality of this thesis has been checked in accordance with the University of Turku quality assurance system using the Turnitin Originality Check service.

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Number of pages: 69

Date: 17.11.2024

This thesis explores the Finnish news readers' attitudes towards reduced working time back in the summer of 2021. News from other countries and specifically from Iceland of experiments of reduced working time were reported in the Finnish press. These news articles were commented on social media by Finns. The comments formulate the data used in this paper. The comments are analyzed using Causal Layered Analysis, to reveal, what kind of discussions, social and causal structures, underlying worldviews and myths shape what Finns think about working time. In result of the analysis three futures images are presented that give a glimpse to the year 2060 and what the working hours could look like in Finland. The findings of the analysis are reflected against the scientific research, and expert opinions on working time that provide the framework for this thesis.

Key words: CLA, futures images, shortened working time.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Relevance

Working time is a subject that is entangled in people's lives in several fields. It affects when people work, how families function with time challenges; when certain services are available, how critical infrastructures operate, etc. It is affected by political decision-making, labor unions, economy, resources, employees and employers, and business owners. Furthermore, it is shaped by history, cultural habits, values, and beliefs. To understand what shapes the Finns' response to the news from Iceland's experiment the causal layered analysis (CLA) method is used as a tool for untangling the currently held beliefs, attitudes, and values that influence working time. Working time is being studied through the lenses of occupational health care, working life studies, and social and political history. However, it seems that futures studies could provide a new kind of approach and expertise to other sciences, that could broaden the spectrum of how working time is studied and what kind of results emerge.

Shorter working hours or a four-day week were much in the news during the year 2021, thanks to several experiments conducted in different countries by private companies, municipalities, and governments. Iceland's government and the city of Reykjavik conducted perhaps the largest experiment by 2021, which was widely reported as a great success. The Icelandic four-day week was reported to have been "an overwhelming success" by several prominent news outlets, such as the BBC (6.7.2021), Washington Post (7.7.2021), The Independent (4.7.2021) and The Forbes (5.7.2021). In Finland, the news outlets went along the same lines reporting on the Icelandic experiment as a success. However, while the results were positive – productivity increased or remained and workers were happier, in Finland the news was received with mixed responses. The mixed response to the experiment which sparked heated conversations in social media, was intriguing from a research point of view. Why so many people thought this was a terrible idea that could never work in Finland? And, conversely why so many people would have welcomed a shorter working time with open arms? The trial was like a futures image had been flashed before the Finns, making people think of the possibility of something like shortened working hours happening in Finland. From futures studies point of view, research that focuses on exploring time and how people perceive the use of time, in this case working time and time off, was interesting. The experiment in Iceland, the news

articles, and the upheaval in social media provided valuable research material that gave multiple angles to shortened working time and Finns' attitude toward it.

1.2 The aim of the thesis

This thesis examines the response of Finnish readers and commentators toward the news in the Finnish press that reported the Icelandic experiment of shortened working time in the summer of 2021. The focus is on social media comments that concern the news articles of the experiment. These social media comments provide the data for this study. The comments are analyzed using the CLA method, which allows finding layers and dimensions in the comments that are not in plain sight but should be brought to light to understand people's deep-rooted beliefs and attitudes about work and working hours. As a result of the analysis, the themes are reconstructed into future images that aim to depict the future of work and working hours in Finland in 2060.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

This thesis contains two larger parts: the theoretical and the empirical. The theoretical part focuses on explaining the tools used to study the second part. It also gives a frame of reference to the subject of working time in Finland, which will help understand the themes that arise from the CLA and the results. Furthermore, the Icelandic experiment of reduced working time is described to contribute to the overall understanding of the subject.

The second part of the thesis focuses on the method and analysis, how CLA works as a method, and how it was applied to the data in practice in this case. The paragraph describes the data selection process and its limitations. Furthermore, the ethical dimensions of using social media comments in a thesis are discussed together with the nature and tone of internet commenting. CLA is applied to the data and the themes found in the layers are described. As a result of this analysis, the themes are utilized in creating three futures images that are presented in narrative form.

This thesis ends with a discussion on this research, the applicability of CLA to the data, reflecting on personal bias, comparing how findings from the CLA relate with what is

known about working time in Finland, further research opportunities, and finally conclusions.

1.4 Experiment in Iceland

From 2015 to 2019 an experiment of shorter working hours was conducted in Iceland. Autonomy (2021), an independent research institution, reports that the motive to start these trials arose from the notions that firstly, work-life balance was disproportioned toward work and secondly, that productivity was low based on GDP per person versus working hours. The report highlights that many Icelanders reported that they were constantly too tired after work to enjoy their free time. The working week in Iceland was 40 hours.

The trial had two main aims: to improve work-life balance and productivity. In total over 2,500 workers which is over 1% of Iceland's working population, were involved in the trial. The trial included the government and the city of Reykjavík workplaces. The different workplaces had to apply to the trial and in their application had to explain how they were going to implement the trial and organize their work so that the work quality and output would not suffer from reduced working hours, as the pay for the employees would stay the same as before. Within the trial, the working hours were reduced from 40 hours per week to 35 or 36 hours.

According to the report the organizations selected included different kinds of workplaces, from police departments, care homes, offices, museums, and childcare protection to the directorate of immigration. As the organizations and functions of these workplaces were so different, several adjustments were needed to be able to implement the new model. It is explained in Autonomy's (2021) report that the implementation of reduced working hours demanded changes e.g. sharing responsibility and delegating, organizing the work and the processes, prioritizing, improving communication, leaving personal errands outside the working hours, shorter meetings and holding fewer meetings with emphasis to evaluating if a meeting could be an e-mail. Furthermore, reorganizing breaks, transferring services to be available online, and moving toward lean management processes.

Reportedly the trial was studied, and data was gathered before, along, and after the experiment. The Icelandic government conducted several quantitative studies during and after the trial. Based on the report the trial was studied and documented so that it would serve as a valid example of how such trials could be implemented in other countries as well. The results of the trial are strongly indicative in the sense that any other countries wanting to improve the productivity and well-being of their working populations, should experiment by reducing working hours and making corrective changes. Reducing working hours required people to rethink and reorganize their work and to cooperate. The results show, that while productivity did not increase in all cases, it did not decrease either. However, the well-being of the workers improved as they had more time for their families and hobbies. Thus, both two aims of the trial were achieved. (Autonomy 2021.)

1.5 Research questions

The purpose of this thesis is two-dimensional. Firstly, it aims to explore what Finns were saying about the experiment in Iceland and what was their response to it. CLA is used as a method for deconstructing and reconstructing the discussions and to provide, an answer to the question

- How are Finns perceiving the news on reduced working time experiment in Iceland?

As a result of the analysis, three futures images will be created that draw from the layers and themes of CLA. These futures images are in a narrative form that depict working time systems, working life, and their effect on people's lives. The stories answer to the question

- What could the possible futures of work and working time be like in Finland in 2060?

These research questions are quite open in purpose. As CLA allows several interpretations of language through the deconstruction of the data, it is quite natural that also reconstructing the data can offer multiple results. The purpose of this thesis is not to hypothesize or prove anything, but to explore. It takes an overview of the reactions Finns have to the news from Iceland, sees what they reveal of the attitudes, expectations, and myths that Finns hold on to, and projects them to images of the future.

2 Theoretical and conceptual framework

2.1 CLA as a theory

In this thesis CLA is used for analyzing Finnish social media comments on the Iceland shortened working hours experiment. Here CLA is discussed as a theory. As a method, it will be discussed in section 3.1.

Causal layered analysis (CLA) is a qualitative futures studies method and theory developed by Sohail Inayatullah. CLA stems from multiple influences. One of the ideas behind it is from Galtung's work, and his notion that there are deep civilizational codes that are shared and embodied by civilization, trauma, and myth. These codes affect how nations live from day to day. Another contributing factor is the work of Foucault, whose historical frames of knowledge; deconstruction, genealogy, distance, alternative pasts and futures, and reordering knowledge offered a view on how nominations of reality become naturalized. By combining genealogy with deconstruction, a multilayered method emerged. CLA theory is also rooted in Indic philosophy where reality is perceived as a vertical construction of layers. Furthermore, the mind is seen as vertically constructed, and it is a virtue to move up and down those layers in search of moral and spiritual enlightenment, and traveling deeper across the layers of the mind, the truth can be discovered. Slaughter's typologies contributed to the birth of CLA. (Inayatullah 2004, 8-10; 2009, 3-4.)

CLA has been further developed by absorbing complexity theory, which suggests that the future is both patterned and chaotic. This kind of approach allows accepting that both knowing and unknowing are possible and that there can be many ways of knowing. Jungian approach has added to the dimension of CLA that guides from external to internal discovery and allows differing and alternative narratives between the external and internal. Both rational and irrational can exist at the same time. (Inayatullah 2009, 3-4.)

CLA belongs to the critical field of futures studies (Slaughter 2008, 131) As a theory, it allows intertwining different ways of knowing and deeper analysis of different kinds of issues. CLA is post-structuralist and seeks to understand the social systems, structures, and ways of knowing as cultural and time-bound constructs (Aalto 2022, 291). The current framework according to Inayatullah (2009, 5) consists of the structures people live in, such as the state, religion, and time in history, which bind people's ways of

knowing. Once these structures are deconstructed, it is possible to see the future as open. He discusses further that the goal of critical research is to challenge the current reality thus truth can be explored as more of a function; whose truth, who creates truth, how it works, who gains and who loses in a particular setting? While CLA in this way deconstructs, it is not done to criticize but to unravel issues, understand, and contextualize. (Inayatullah 2009, 6-8.) As Inayatullah (2009, 5) describes, the purpose is to “undefine” the future. In poststructuralist CLA, language mediates knowledge of reality, and it is not only symbolic, but it also constitutes reality (Inayatullah 2004, 7; 2009, 6). The process of building understanding through CLA is communicative and creates a space where one can place oneself into the real world of others and thus learn how they see, think, and create the future. (Inayatullah, 2009, 5.)

From an epistemological point of view, CLA combines empirical, interpretive, critical, and action research. These four ways of knowing have their assumptions of what is real, the truth, the role of the subject, and the nature of the universe and the future (Inayatullah 2009, 2.). Inayatullah (1998, 820) also describes the ways of knowing by saying that there are different levels of reality and that “individuals, organizations, and civilizations see the world from different vantage points - horizontal and vertical”. According to Inayatullah (2009, 4), this combination allows contextualizing data, combining it with meanings, and locating these into the power and knowledge structures along with the unconscious stories that define the knowledge. In the ontology of CLA, reality is seen as vertically constructed, and all discourses have a place in the structure (Inayatullah 2004, 4). CLA utilizes the tools of genealogy, distance, alternative pasts, and futures and reordering knowledge (Inayatullah, 2009, 3; Minkkinen, 2013, 27). However, Inayatullah (2004, 14) also says that CLA does not favor any specific ways of knowing, one of those being scientific knowledge.

2.2 Futures images

Images of the future are one of the central concepts in futures studies (Bell 2017, 81) According to Jokinen et al. (2022, 134), futures images provide snapshots of the future that can present different aspects; but do not provide paths or scenarios to the images. They can be used for imagining different kinds of futures with aspects that depending on viewpoint can be probable, possible, or preferable. The images can provide pictures of

distant futures, as they do not need to explain what leads to those futures images. Rather they give the interpreter the possibility to reflect on what kind of events or developments could make those futures images a reality. They can provide a point of reflection against which a desired futures image can be created. (Jokinen et al. 2022, 134.) The image of a future is a representation of the state of the future, a construction of the mind that takes its shape from the present; how the present and the past are understood. It also constructs from what is known and understood, observed and believed. Furthermore, expectations, values, hopes, and fears have a role in shaping the images. The images have an impact on individuals and societies consciously and unconsciously. (Rubin 2003, 902-903.) Futures images are composed of beliefs, expectations, opinions, and assumptions. They have the ingredients of both knowledge and imagination. They are based on what is known about the past, how the present is perceived and are heavily influenced by culture, personal tastes, values, and needs, and experience of what is normal. Futures images can be shared or private. This means that a group of people can share a futures image, but people can have individual futures images that concern their personal future. The images can function on a conscious level, but there can also be futures images that have an impact on an unconscious level. Futures images can emerge, they can be created, changed, adopted, and crushed. There can also be conflicting futures images (Rubin 2013, 40.)

De Jouvenel's postulates on people as makers of their futures. One of the postulates is that the importance of images that show how or what the future could be like is that they provide direction, something to pursue, as cited by Söderlund and Kuusi (2003, 281.) According to Rubin (2013, 40) people form futures images as planning and have assumptions of the future is natural human behavior. This behavior helps in planning and acting toward a certain direction. While a futures image can offer a desirable or undesirable future, it impacts behavior at present, yet the behavior of the present also has an impact on what kind of images of the future emerge. Images of the future and human behavior are in interaction with each other. Futures images can be studied in terms of what they contain, what kind of behavior they cause and their consequences. According to Bell (2017, 82, 86) futures images work in two ways. While a futures image can offer a desirable or undesirable future, they impact behavior at the present time, the behavior of the present also impacts futures images. They are always in interaction with each other.

2.3 Working time in Finland

One of the functions of futures studies is interpreting the past and orienting the present. Unless it is understood where we come from, where we are now, and where we are going the present is unintelligible. (Bell, 88-89.) The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of working time in Finland. Firstly, an overview of the dimensions and drivers of working time are given. The purpose is to explain how working time can be perceived and what kind of phenomena are driving changes. Secondly, the history of working time in Finland, in particular the moments when working time has changed and some of the reasons as to why, will be discussed. The historical review aims to give a reader an understanding of how Finland has the working time law it does these days. Thirdly, to further elaborate on where Finland is now and relate to the news that comes from other countries, a short review of the news of working time is given. Also, the news from Finland and public debates over working time are reviewed through some examples. Fourthly, and lastly, a review of expert opinions and debates describes how people from different organizations and fields view working time and the possibilities for changes. Through this review, it is possible to gain a more widely framed picture of the working time and complications that are related to it.

2.3.1 Dimensions of working time

In an article published in *Industrial Health*, Anttila et al. (2021, 285-292) look at past and current trends in working hours. They name four key dimensions that play a role in discussions of working hours. The key dimensions are the duration of work (hours), the timing of work (when), tempo i.e. the pace of work, and the autonomy to decide on working time. Furthermore, they have considered the spatial changes of work and its impact on working hours. To explain these dimensions and their meaning with a practical example, Anu Järvensivu (Pamflettisarja 27.4.2017), elaborates that e.g. in an expert work, the quality of results and meeting deadlines is more important than the actual time used for achieving these targets. I.e. tempo, pace, and autonomy are more relevant dimensions than the hours invested.

Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, further FIOH, (2024) has identified the number of hours, the timing of those hours, the recurrence of working hours balanced with

recovery, and the social dimensions of working hours, i.e. organization of free time, predictability of working hours and opportunities to influence, as dimensions of working hours. Anttila et al.'s (2021, 287 - 289) dimensions differ only slightly from dimensions identified by FIOH, missing only the recovery time. However, to add to the discussion on dimensions, Ukkola (2018, 131) explains that these kinds of dimensions do not necessarily apply to post-industrial work culture. She elaborates that the dimensions are constantly renewed and challenged by everyday practices. The dimensions collide with “common sense, the inflexibility of the nature of work to the time of day, the socio-cultural time structure of the workplace, the employment relationship being based on a psychological rather than a formal employment contract, the demands of the economy and individual time needs”. She explains further that as people increasingly move to, or already are in knowledge work, their experience of time, its meaning, and its influence on the rhythm of work will change. This will challenge the traditional perception of normal working hours and the practices that maintain or undermine it. The function of time as a measure of work is questioned.

2.3.2 Drivers of working time changes

Anttila et al. (2021, 286) identified five driving factors that impact working hours.

- 1) The impact of *globalization* on working hours derives from the reorganization of traditional industrial work toward more fragmented production, the move toward post-industrialism, and the transition of Western economies to service industry. This has required changes to laws and regulations and identifying that standardized working hours do not work in every field of industry. What was considered normal working hours in the past have moved into irregular hours, thus blurring the lines between working time and time off.
- 2) *New communication technologies* have made it possible to work wherever, and whenever.
- 3) *COVID-19*, as one of the identified drivers, showcased how information technology allowed the change to happen overnight when people started to work from home and outside previously taken-for-granted office hours.

- 4) *Demographics* are creating another catalyst for change as large groups of people are aging and leaving the workforce thus creating an imbalance between working and non-working age groups E.g. in Finland this is a recurring issue discussed in the media. One of the issues is, how to provide health care for the aging population, where to get more nurses, and how to pay for all this without wrecking the national economy.
- 5) *Climate change* will have a global impact on world economics, agriculture, immigration, and new technologies and will thus work as a driver to changing working hours.

2.3.3 Roughly 100 years of working time

From a larger temporal perspective, working hours are a new concept in human history. According to Anttila, et al. (2021, 286), industrialization brought the need to monitor working hours and created the need for standardization and institutionalization. According to Wuokko (2020, 198) at the beginning of the 20th century, workers began to organize and demand that working hours must be limited. The Eight-hour Working Time Act was enacted in 1917 (Finlex 1917). This meant that working hours were allowed to be a maximum of 8 hours a day and 96 hours in two weeks, and consequently 48 hours a week. This in practice meant that the working week was 6 days; Saturdays were working days.

In the 1930s employee organizations were pushing for 36-hour work weeks, but the employers' resistance crushed the demands. The employees were demanding shorter work weeks, because of the economic recession that left many employees without work. Sharing the work to be done in shifts, meaning that working fewer hours per person, the employee side tried to find a solution to unemployment. The reasons from the employing side for opposing shortening working time were that it would have a negative impact on productivity and raise production costs significantly. They were also concerned about the increasing leisure time the employees would have; the workers would become lazy, their work ethics would suffer, and they would have time for practicing politics. (Wuokko 2020, 200.)

In the 1950s the conversations around shorter working time became in focus again. The Finnish government appointed a task force in 1954 to investigate the possibilities of shortening working time. Again, tensions between employees' and employers' organizations were rife. In 1965 the parliament decided the new weekly working time to be 40 hours (Finlex 1965, 15§). Simultaneously labor market organizations agreed that the working week was 5 days. This in practice meant that people had weekends off and the working hours during the week fell between 7:00 and 17:00. (Wuokko 2020, 202.)

In the 1980s the trade union movement started to demand that working time should be reduced to 35 hours. The employer side did not agree to this but offered some lenience; in the private sector, the working time was reduced by 32 hours per annum in 1984. The employee side however kept pushing toward a 35-hour week and for twisting the employers' arm, launched a strike in the spring of 1986 with 250,000 participants. Employers' side still did not yield, and the parties came to an agreement that annual working time was to be reduced by 68 hours. However, at the same time, the employers' side demanded that working time (as in when work takes place) should not be limited. This led to the relaxation of regulations on when working hours take place. (Wuokko 2020, 204.) It can be said that the journey toward 24/7 society and fragmentation of working times began. According to Wuokko (2020, 208) the trend of shortening working hours ended in Finland at this time.

However, trials of shortened working time were conducted between 1996 and 1999. According to a labor market councilor, Pekka Peltola (IS 19.8.2019), these local experiments were based on a so-called 6+6 model. The model in practice meant that each employee had a 6-hour shift and after they were done, another employee came and took over for the next 6 hours. This way the company or plant was running 12 hours per day instead of only 8 hours. All together 30 workplaces were involved, half of which were privately owned. According to Peltola (2019, 12), the results of the experiment were largely positive. Peltola describes that while the middle management was able to see the benefits clearly, the owners were not ready to move from measuring working time into measuring productivity; the owners wanted to pay for the time, not the output. On the other hand, he remarks that the owners' resistance could have also been due to fear of losing control as they would have had to plan and negotiate the reorganizing of work with different functions to gain maximum benefits of the 6+6 model. Peltola (IS 19.8.2019) also describes the situation in the 1990s as having been difficult due to resistance from

the employers' organizations and explains that the reasons for this were largely ideological and political. The trials ended in 2000.

The next change to working hours was in 2016. Then during the economic recession, the trade unions together with the government agreed that annual working time would be increased by 24 hours per annum. This collective bargain was made to improve Finland's competitiveness. However, in 2020 this increase was wiped out during the new labour market review. (Wuokko 2020, 207-208.) Today, according to Eurostat (Eurostat 2024) in 2023, the average working hours in the European Union are 36 hours per week, and in Finland 34,8 hours per week. The lowest average working hours are in the Netherlands, 32,2, and the highest average is in Greece with 39,80 hours per week.

The latest working time law (Finlex 2019) was enacted in 2019. One of the changes this new law introduced was that working time is defined as working time, even if one works from home and is not at the workplace. Previously working time meant the time that a person spends at the place their employer has appointed as the primary place of work. The law also included that with separate contracts the employer and employee can agree that if the 40-hour weekly working time is achieved, the employee can decide their time of work, as in when they want to work. Furthermore, the law allows more flexitime than previously. Flexitime used to be 3 hours and now with the new law, it is 4 hours. Therefore, within 4 months, the employee can have 60 hours saved (previously 40) or conversely owe 20 hours.

2.3.4 Perspectives on working time

Shorter working hours or a four-day week have been much in the news during the previous years, thanks to several experiments conducted in different countries by private companies, municipalities, and governments. During the years 2023 and 2024 experiments on shortened working time have been reported e.g., from the United Kingdom, Germany, and Finland. As an example, in the United Kingdom a trial dubbed as the "world's largest experiment on a four-day week" by the Guardian (21.2.2023), was reported to have been a "major breakthrough". It was reported to have increased workers' well-being and business productivity either improved or maintained, while employees were paid full 5-day salaries. 61 companies took part in this trial of 6 months, and 56

companies extended the trial. 18 companies made the four-day week permanent. The companies taking part were offered support and mentoring in rethinking their practices.

A couple of months after The Guardian had published the results to larger audiences, in Finland a seminar hosted by The Central Organization of Finnish Trade Unions, further SAK, promoted the introduction of a 4-day week to Finland in the light of the great results from the UK trial. According to Iltalehti (22.3.2023) the chair of SAK, Jarkko Eloranta, took a strong position saying that “now is the time to introduce a 4-day week to Finland”. On the other hand, reportedly the Confederation of Finnish Industries, which is the largest Finnish employers’ association, was adamantly against the idea.

In Germany, a trial period of 6 months began in February 2024, where a four-day week and salary remaining the same for employees, is experimented with by 45 companies. The trial is hoped to increase productivity, but also battle the labor shortages that pester the industrialized countries such as Germany. A four-day week could entice people who are not willing to work full time into taking a job that offers this possibility, thus becoming a full-day worker (Euronews 2.2.2024.) An article published by Uusimaa (24.5.2023) presents the ideas of the German Metalworkers trade union leader Jörg Hofmann. He thought that a greatly needed boost to the German car manufacturing industry could be found in a four-day working week. Hofmann too pointed out that a four-day week could make it easier to get the workforce to take on a full-time job, which with the current five-day week is not possible for them to commit.

Quite recently in Finland, a small business of 7 employees, specializing in electronics was reported to have taken on a four-day week while salaries remained the same. The owners of Sercap say that only good has come out of the decision. Reportedly the days are busier, but everything gets done in time and everyone is more energized, happier, and able to enjoy the days off. (Yle 27.3.2024.) However, not all business owners are willing to try a shortened work week. According to a poll conducted by the Federation of Finnish Enterprises (21.3.2023), 75% of business owners would not try a four-day week if salaries remained the same. 37% of the respondents might try the shortened work week if the salaries would decrease. 59% would not try even when salaries would decrease. According to the poll, 48% of the respondents believe that a four-day week would harm the company’s profitability and 27% believed that the company’s labor situation would deteriorate. Only 19% believed that productivity would increase. However, 43% of the

respondents recognize that it might ease finding a better balance between work and personal life.

More about the debate over working time is reflected in an article published early in 2024 by a Finnish newspaper *Maaseudun Tulevaisuus* (15.1.2024), reporting how two politicians hold quite opposing views over the matter of working time. A Left Alliance politician, Minja Koskela, was reportedly astonished by the claims made by Finland's current Prime Minister, Riikka Purra, from the Finns Party, who was saying that Finns work too few hours. Koskela pointed out that the current decisions made by the government do not consider the well-being of employees and their mental health and that burnout is a threat to all working people.

According to Satu Ojala (HS 11.3.2023), an assistant professor at Tampere University, the discussions around shortened working time are somewhat one-dimensional and lack a broader view of the topic. To her, it seems that the topic of shortened working time has just become a tool for different interest groups to further their causes and agendas. People are choosing sides either for or against, without sparing a thought to the other issues that surround the question of working time, namely what happens within that time, how, by whom, and what should and could be changed. Ojala points out that what is lacking from the discussions is the timing of work, intensity of work, and flexibility about workers' personal lives.

Timo Anttila (JyUnity 22.3.2023), a senior lecturer at Jyväskylä University, explains that lately the discussions on the topic of shortened working time have been rejected by bringing up issues such as shortage of labor force, aging population and that some people do not have enough working hours to begin with.

According to Marko Rissanen (Pamflettisarja 27.4.2017), senior vice president and human resources director at DNA Plc, working hours is a topic that is likely to spark controversies. The fears and worries revolve around work overloads, customer satisfaction, the tempo of work, equality, and from employers' point of view the worry; will the work get done? Rissanen expresses that, working hours, working days, or time of work should not be the same standard for everyone and all fields of business or industries. The conversations around working time should be around flexibility and not structures and systems. He summarizes that the quality of working life will not improve with grand scale alignments.

2.3.5 Opportunities and problems

In the 1930's John Maynard Keynes published a short essay in which he predicted that in 100 years, people would only work 15 hours per week. He based this prediction on the premise that economic and technological advances would be so vast by 2030 that people would only need to work 3 hours per day. He was concerned that this would tilt a healthy work-life balance to the extent that people would not know what to do with all the leisure time in their hands. (Craft 2022, 815.) However, Keynes' prediction has not come true.

According to Craft (2022, 825), one purely statistical reason is that lifetime expectancy has risen drastically since the 1930's. Now that people live longer and enjoy pensions, there is a need to accumulate wealth at a younger age so that retirement is possible. Jaakko Kiander (Pamflettisarja 27.4.2017), the CEO of Keva Pension Agency offers another explanation as to why the working time has not reduced during the past 30 years. One reason is that consumption habits have changed dramatically, and technical innovations have opened a new way of consuming. Consuming has for a long time been more important to people than having more time off work in their hands. Kiander highlights that the biggest impact on the Western economies is that the production rate has decreased significantly during the last decades. This is why it has not been possible to realistically consider reducing working hours on a national level. However, he sees that the possibility is there on an individual level, which can mean flexible working time or part-time work.

Timo Anttila (Pamflettisarja 27.4.2017) points out that working time reductions have traditionally been brought into discussions when the economy is in recession. Sharing the work by reducing working hours per individual and splitting the workload among multiple people seems fair and would be an act of solidarity but is not affordable due to stagnating demand. On the other hand, while during an economic boom, the demand increases, the pressure to extend working hours increases. He sums up that there never seems to be a good time to act toward reducing working hours.

A Finnish journalist and politician Matti Apunen (Pamflettisarja 27.4.2017) explains that reduced working hours will not increase employment unless it increases the profitability of employment. However, when possible, providing that increased productivity allows, it should be possible in individual cases to agree more flexibly on working hours. According to Jaana Kurjenoja (Pamflettisarja 27.4.2017), the Head Economist of the Finnish Commerce Federation, the only opportunity to increase the standard of living

and to reduce working hours in Finland would be to take a huge leap in productivity. To her, there seems to be no prospect that in Finland working hours could be reduced, but that the contents of work could be transformed. (Pamflettisarja 27.4.2017.) Anu Järvensivu (Pamflettisarja 27.4.2017), a research manager at FIOH, suggests that historical and institutionalized practices are the biggest hindrances to making changes to the idea that time equals productivity. According to Rissanen (Pamflettisarja 27.4.2017), the challenges that the working time law has these days in Finland is that it is rigid and any deviation from weekly working time requires leveling-off periods and anticipatory planning.

3 Research method and data selecting

3.1 CLA as a method

As a method, CLA works like a guide on how to analyze data in a structured manner and create a space where exploring alternative futures is possible. (Inayatullah 2009, 2.) The deeper one dives into the layers the more challenging the interpreting gets. On the other hand, the deeper one dives into the depths of worldview and myths the method allows the researcher to understand why litany and social causes layers look the way they do. CLA places a great deal of emphasis on understanding the worldview and myth levels. Where deconstructing the issue into four layers allows a horizontal view, the way the layers explain and reflect each other allows, but also demands vertical movement. (Inayatullah 2009, 6.) The most important layer is myth “The intent is to draw out and deconstruct conventional metaphors, articulate alternative metaphors, and bring the unconscious and the mythic to futures work” (Riedy 2008, 151).

The layers of CLA are usually depicted as an iceberg (Figure 1).

- The first layer is the litany. It is the layer that is instantly visible and represents current quantitative trends, problems, provoking news headlines, and the obvious that can be easily seen (Riedy 2008, 151; Inayatullah 2009, 9). Simply put, it answers the question, “What do we say?”, thus describing everyday experiences (Breen et al. 2016, 125).
- The second level, the social causal or systems, is concerned with more as to how economic, cultural, political, and historical systems work, i.e. how things are assumed to work without much questioning (Riedy 2008, 151; Slaughter 2008, 131; Inayatullah 2009, 9). This layer would answer to question “What do we do?” (Breen et al. 2016, 125).
- The third level is called worldview. These are ideas of legitimacy, and the given rights, and that are actor-invariant (Inayatullah 2009, 9). These concern frameworks of values, assumptions, and preferred modes of knowing (Slaughter 2008, 131). Another way of understanding this layer, could be again in a form of a question, which here would be “How do we think?” (Breen et al. 2016, 125).

- The fourth layer, myth, and metaphor reveal collective stories, archetypes, the unconscious and emotive, and even mythical (Inayatullah 2009, 10; Slaughter 2008, 131). Understanding the myth or metaphor level, the question asked could be “Who we are?” (Breen et al. 2016, 125).

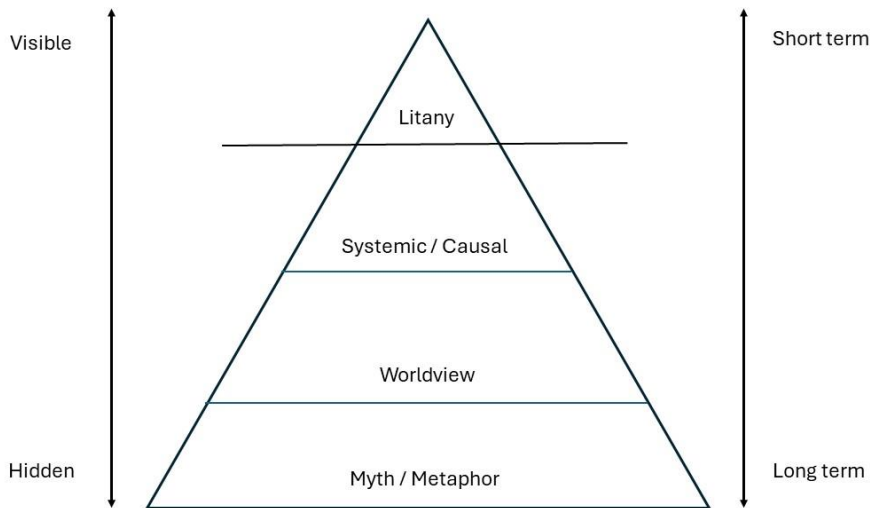


Figure 1. CLA pyramid (Inayatullah 2004b, 543)

The layers also have different timelines. Meaning, that while litany can change at a fast pace as everyday reality and talk can change quickly, the lower one moves on the iceberg to longer the timeline gets. At the deepest level is the lowest pace of change. (Inayatullah 2009, 13.)

According to Breen et al. (2016, 126), the analysis typically consists of five steps. Firstly, it begins with a research question that concentrates on the depth and the complexity of the issue at hand. Secondly, the data and the frame of the data are studied carefully to get an understanding of the context. Thirdly, data or excerpts of it are coded in layers. Fourthly, the data is analyzed. (Breen et al. 2016, 126.) While analyzing the CLA iceberg it is important to remember that the idea is not only to categorize the elements of the issue horizontally but to move up and down between the layers vertically (Inayatullah 2009, 10 - 11). Visiting different layers gives a broader and deeper understanding yet layering keeps discipline (Inayatullah, 2009, 36). Fifthly, the issue deconstructed during the process is reconstructed to provide answers or solutions to the initial research question (Breen et al. 2016, 126). Inayatullah (2009, 5) emphasizes that after the analysis, action

should be taken. As Inayatullah points out, is that the result should not be better categories, instead better policies should emerge (Inayatullah, 2009, 6). E.g. scenarios can be developed as a result. CLA is a method that can be used for understanding the world there and then, but for futures studies purpose, scenarios or futures images could be offered as vehicle for expanding the ideas into the future. Inayatullah (1998, 285) points out, that CLA alone does not produce the future, but it should be combined with some other futures studies method that allows projections of the analysis results to the future. in this thesis CLA is combined with futures images.

3.2 Selecting data

The results of the Icelandic trial were widely reported by different news agencies in the world. The data for this thesis was chosen from the Finnish news outlets, that reported Iceland's experiment or at the same time more broadly about shortened working time experiments. The main criteria in selecting which of the news outlets to choose were that they did not require a subscription, that the comment sections were open for reading and copying, or that they had a Facebook page where they had shared the news articles where it was possible to copy the comments. The selected sources thus were:

- Keski-suomalainen, a local newspaper in Central Finland
- YLE, the Finnish national broadcasting company with nationwide distribution
- Iltalehti, a tabloid magazine with nationwide distribution
- Reddit, a social media forum, where YLE articles were linked

Keski-suomalainen has allowed commenting on their website, where it was possible to copy comments. Yle and Iltalehti have their pages on Facebook where these news pieces were shared and allowed commenting. Also, two discussion threads from Reddit were included as someone had shared a link to YLE articles on the Icelandic trial on 26. June and 6. July 2021 and had requested a conversation. As to why so many YLE sources were selected, the reason was that YLE was writing about the experiment within the time when data was gathered and that the discussion was easily available. The data was collected in the autumn of 2021.

The total number of comments after editing that were included in the CLA analysis was 1240. The breakdown of the number of comments per source can be seen in Table 1. The links to the original news articles can be found from the References.

Table 1 Data by source type

Title	Source type	Nr. of comments	Published
Facebook discussions			
Would a four-day workweek be valid? What about a five-hour workday? Reduced working hours are a boom in the world and such results have been obtained from it	Yle published news comments in their Facebook page	50	26.6.2021
Iceland's experiment with a four-day working week is a "success", according to researchers - in these places there have been attempts to reduce working hours before, in Finland the proposal met with criticism two years ago	Keski-Suomalainen published news discussion on their Facebook page	8	6.7.2021
Icelanders tested a shortened working week in an extensive trial - the majority of the workforce shortened their working hours after the trial: "Overwhelming success"	Yle published news comments in their Facebook page	317	6.7.2021
Iceland's experiment with a shortened working week was successful: "Huge success"	Iltaalehti's news discussion on their Facebook page	462	6.7.2021
Reddit r/Suomi discussions			
Icelanders tested a shortened working week in an extensive trial - the majority of the workforce shortened their working hours after the trial: "Overwhelming success"	Yle news linked to the forum and discussed	200	6.7.2021
Would a four-day work week be valid? What about a five-hour workday? Reduced working hours are a boom in the world and such results have been obtained from it	Yle news linked to the forum and discussed	203	26.6.2021

While the comment sections of each of these forums provided an interesting read some editing had to be made before beginning CLA. One-word comments, short comments such as "Yes I do" or "No I don't" were deleted. Off-topic comments, e.g. comments regarding someone's appearance or character were left out as irrelevant. Links shared in

the comment threads to other articles were deleted. Spamming comments were deleted but leaving the comment in the data once so that it would still contribute to the richness of the communication. Comments that were incomprehensible due to incoherence had to be left out. Sentences with spelling mistakes and grammatical mistakes when the sentence and words still made sense were kept, however, corrected so that they did not further confuse the analysis. Discussion threads that wandered too far from the original topic were cut short so that they would not draw attention away from the working hours' discussion and distort the research.

3.2.1 Internet commenting and ethical use as object of study

According to Houston et al. (2011, 88), the discussion that comments on a news article influence other readers as well. They influence how other readers interpret the piece and can affect the attitudes of others toward the article. The comments of others, when the reader disagrees with them, and perceives the comment section as hostile toward their view, may also interpret the news article to be in discord or poorly covered (Lee 2012, 35). Also, if comments are biased, they can provoke further biased comments from others. (Hsueh et al. 2015, 12) According to Ziegele et al. (2014, 1118-1119) the likelihood of commenting on a news article is higher if the topic is perceived as controversial, uncertain, difficult to understand, negative, or personalized. Springer et al. (2015, 806-807) found that the motive to comment can be to provide more information, express one's own opinion, entertainment, and humor or to socially interact with others. The comment readers are likely to look for more information, compare their views of others, for entertainment, or observe others' opinions and emotions (Springer, et al. 2015, 806-807.)

From an ethical point of view sourcing comments from the internet for research purposes can be controversial. The commentators have not been aware that their comments would be used as data in a thesis. However, the comments can be perceived as public opinions (Houston, et al. 2011, 88). Yet, to protect commentators' privacy the choice was made to delete all names and nicks from the data even if commentators must have been aware that their comments can be publicly seen, read, commented on, copied, and shared. Therefore, when the comments were copied for this work, everything that was written was included. The comments have been kept as authentic as possible, even if they could be interpreted as being politically incorrect or racist. Some of the comments might be provoking and

insulting to the reader, but they have nevertheless been used as data in this thesis. The reason for this decision is that even if the reader cannot agree, these comments still represent the views, opinions, or feelings of the commentator, thus contributing to the greater entity of data. Interestingly some of these comments, when revisiting the comment chain, have disappeared. Either they may have been deleted by moderators or after second thoughts by the users themselves. Most of the entire discussion threads have disappeared since and this has perhaps been a choice made by the news outlets maintenance.

3.3 Applying CLA to data

The technical side of transferring data from the social media and news site comment sections into data began with copying the material into processable form.

- Firstly, all comments from different sources were copied into source-specific Word documents to delete all disturbing formatting such as emojis and spaces.
- Secondly, an Excel workbook was created that had a separate sheet for each source. The sheets contained a column for comments and own column for each CLA layer. The comments were copied to their own Excel column so that each comment fell into a unique cell and therefore each comment had their line. The analysis of the comments was done in Excel; by copying and pasting each comment or section of a comment into fitting layer column or columns depending on what the comments were analyzed to fit in. This was repeated for each sheet thus combing through each source material individually.
- Thirdly, a new Excel file was created to be able to condense the themes that arose from each layer. At this point all sources were blended as each layer was copied into a new sheet so everything considered to represent e.g. litany was on one sheet. This was repeated for all layers.
- Fourthly, as all layers were in their respective sheets, the search for recurring themes began. The themes were gathered into columns where the comments that represented those themes were gathered. Upon starting to see what kind of themes

emerged and how the overall data related to them some corrections had to be made. It became clear that revisiting the process of analyzing the comments was necessary, which is a part of the iterative process of the CLA. It was easier to see the relationship between the comments based on their nuances by sometimes tracing back to earlier phases of the analysis.

Sorting the comments or sections of comments into different layers was done following Inayatullah's (2009, 9 - 10) and Breen et. al.'s (2016, 126) guidelines: litany-level comments were those that were stating something obvious or generally accepted truths and "media language". Comments and phrases that described reasons or how things function were categorized as social causal. Roughly said, opinions "I think, or I feel that" were sorted as representative of worldview. Comments presenting strong emotions or proverbs were categorized as representing the myth-metaphor level. Proverbs often present the inbuilt cultural ideas or beliefs that are deeply rooted in the consciousness. However, in some cases, these strict alignments were difficult to put into practice and the comments or sections were sorted under several layers. When analyzing the data and themes began to arise some corrections to the original layering had to be made. It became apparent that some sentences or words were more suited to e.g. litany than systemic or worldview versus social causal.

4 Analysis

The purpose of this analysis is to explore the answers to the first research question. What are Finns' perceptions of the reduced working time experiment in Iceland? This analysis provides the building blocks for the futures images in paragraph 5. In this section, the layers and themes that were found from the data are described with examples. Findings are summarized at the end of each layer providing more concise answers to the question.

4.1 Litany

On the litany level, the comments were mostly repeating the news headings. Also, words that are currently used frequently in the media, that are “trendy” were found in many of the comments. In many of the comments, people were trying to make sense of the meaning of the news piece, understand the concepts, and build common ground with other commentators on what is the phenomena in question. Another theme was that people tried to relate and compare the news to what they knew about working hours and conditions. Some people also reflected on their relationship to work. Furthermore, commentators in some cases expressed how they think about larger, global phenomena and how they affect work.

4.1.1 Sensemaking

Many of the comments were focused on making sense of the article; what was said and what it meant. This is one of the themes that was found when looking at all comments sorted as litany together.

In the comments, people rephrased the articles, and some quoted them directly. An example of this type of comment:

“If you read the article, you must have noticed, that it said that productivity had increased or stayed the same.”

In this example, someone explains what productivity and measuring mean:

“If a person can do the same job in less time, it means that productivity increases. It means that during a four-day week, the employee is more

productive, then they can do better and more work and sick leave days decrease. This has been the result of many trials. So, the salary does not decrease, and the amount of work done does not decrease.”

Meanwhile, some people maybe did not read the article or did not understand what they read:

“The reporter probably didn't think about that success from the entrepreneur's point of view when productivity decreases the profit remaining for the entrepreneur decreases.”

“In the case of productive or performing work, it is not possible”.

Here some people try to make sense of who was involved in the trial in Iceland:

“This was done in the public sector.”

“There are other professions in the public sector than those who sit in the office.”

Someone is skeptical because the trial was done in the public sector:

“How can you even measure the change in the amount of work done there? Of course, it works when taxpayers pay the same salary for fewer working hours.”

4.1.2 Comparisons

Another common feature of Litany was comparing the Iceland trial to what has happened in the past, what kind of trials have been conducted in other countries, and sensemaking regarding what working hours look like in Finland these days.

Historical perspectives were brought into the conversation, such as:

“That's just how it is. At one time eight hours per day and a five-day-week was utopia.”

“It actually isn't that long ago when we got the five-day and eight hours per day working week. At the time it felt like utopia and what is it now?”

“At one time, the five-day work week was supposed to derail the entire country's economy into ruin and destruction.”

Someone also drew a line from the past toward the future in their comment, saying:

“A six-day work week was still commonplace in the 60s and a 12-hour workday in the factories of the 19th century. Shortening working hours has

not collapsed national economies, competitiveness or exports. In this century we may move to a four-day work week.”

Comparisons to other trials in the past were commented on. Here are some examples of what was said:

“In Sweden at Toyota Motors, they tried years ago a six-hour day, paying for eight hours. The trial was so successful that the employer did not want to go back, they still go on.”

“The same thing, reducing working hours, has been tried in many countries, also in Finland. The results were the same. Productivity increased, employees’ well-being improved, insomnia decreased.”

There were also comments on the working hours in general, trying to make sense if the Iceland trial and working hours in Finland are like comparing apples to pears or if real comparisons between the trial and Finland can be made.

“There are many types of working time systems. Most of the workforce still works 40-hour work weeks.”

“This is familiar in the field of trade. Mainly 24-30h/week contracts. Additional work is requested. Many don’t ask but stick to the 30 hours.”

“In Finland, the public sector has the same working week as in Iceland, which has been shortened.”

“There is already a lot of contract-based work available in the construction industry.”

4.1.3 Relationship to work

A part of the commentators stated that life is not only work. They also raise issues that relate to well-being and a good work versus life balance. Here are a couple of comments highlighting this.

“For everyone, life is not just work.”

“Many have more content in life than work.”

Some of the comments raise issues that are present in working life now as it is.

“The employees cannot stand the working conditions and develop symptoms or become permanently ill.”

“The strain at work can be mental or physical.”

Some reflect on the benefits of finding a good balance between work and leisure time.

“Time to recover from work to enjoy the increased free time.”

“More time to spend with family”.

But not all would embrace the increased time off:

“If I wasn't allowed to work as I do now, I would lose my mind in no time.”

4.1.4 Transitions

Some comments bring to light the issues that relate to the larger transition of work, such as remote work, COVID-19, globalization, technology, leadership, and shortage of manpower. These comments are not directly commenting on the shortened working hours per se that the articles are about, but some other issues related to or associated with the news article were discussed. These comments relate to the larger transition of working life and to what people are experiencing and what is talked about in the press. Remote work was commented to bring change to living:

“The relationship between suburbs and remote work will permanently change in those fields where it is possible.”

The pandemic had the effect that remote work is now possible:

“It took a pandemic to convince the companies that the gang would willingly agree to work if given the chance.”

It is also suggested that since working life is in a transition phase, different solutions should be tried:

“Working life is already changing due to digitization and remote work. Different options should be tried by sector.”

Globalization was one theme that arose from the comments. Here someone is commenting on what Finland should do to stay competitive in the global environment:

“In the future, in global competition and the division of tasks, it may be difficult to manage with cheap bulk products, that is why we must invest in Finnish know-how and research.”

Some of the comments focused on technology and robotics saying e.g. that:

“The increase in robots and automation reduces the need for traditional labour. Many companies have very good experiences with this!”

“The automation of work already causes the reduction of manual work.”

“The development of technology means that work that used to take all day can be done in a couple of hours, and some jobs have completely disappeared because they can now be done in seconds.”

4.1.5 Summarising litany

Much of the content was the initial response to the news articles. The comments revolved around making sense of the news pieces and first reactions to the idea of shortened working time. The comparisons served as reference points to many of the commentators and were aiding the discussions in relating the news to current working hours and thus anchoring the news into today’s realities. Many of the commentators also reflected their relationship to work and this way were trying to locate themselves in relation to the articles. While some people related the news to larger global transitions and this way helped build understanding around the subject. The conversations framed the idea of shortened working time in relation to what is known or what is their personal understanding of the subject.

4.2 Causal

Overall comments revolve around discussing the pros and cons of reduced working time and discussing what would happen if working time was reduced in Finland. Another arising topic in the comments was the discussion on the applications of reduced working time in different professions and industries. This is closely related to the overall commentary on what working life is now and its causal problems on health and larger societal problems. Expansion to this topic was the comments where people described the larger causal issues that have landed the working life and economy to where it is now. These conversations attempt to reason what the pushing and pulling forces are in the development of alternate working conditions.

4.2.1 What if and then what?

People in conversations take their thoughts into imagining that if shortened working time were to become a reality then what would happen? They are trying to imagine the implications of shortened working time in their lives and working conditions. There are ideas both that present the benefits but also ideas that take a strong stand against the idea and see the possible results as problematic. Here someone is imagining how deploying a four-day week could benefit the employer:

“In many fields, the employer would get an equally large and higher-quality work contribution with shorter working hours, and at the same time the ancillary costs of the work, such as rents and medical costs, would be reduced.”

But then countering this idea, someone comments that:

“The employee would get full salary even for those days for which the employer should hire someone else with full salary, health insurance payments, pension payments, etc. The company would collapse, and everyone would run out of work.”

It seems that where some people see possibilities others see threats. Here is one commentator, who is thinking ahead of the overall benefits to the economy of the four-day week model:

“The unemployed get jobs, unemployment benefits decrease, the need for support decreases, tax revenues increase, purchasing power increases, consumption increases, the increase in consumption creates an increasing need to produce something and that in turn creates new jobs.”

However, some people believe that:

“If the employees worked less, there would be no people for the remaining fifth day to fill the need for labour.”

Increased well-being because of a four-day model is something that people discussed widely. How would shortened working time benefit people? Here are examples of thinking of the possibilities:

“Productivity would probably improve, people's willingness and enthusiasm to work would improve, and coping would be better than before, which is now a big problem in many workplaces.”

“Some people have time to take care of the elderly or parents when the working hours are reduced, taxes could be lowered if the unemployed could

also find work and taxes would not have to be used for subsidies of all kinds, which today is one of the biggest consumers of tax resources.”

“People's own and so-called activities of the third sector could become livelier, which could ease social responsibilities and expenses.”

While many of the commentators see that several good things could come out of the four-day week model, some have fears that it could lead to ruin. Here is an example of this kind of thinking:

“Alcohol problems are increasing, when another day comes to continue drinking beer. You spend more money on your day off than if you are at work. So, there will be more over-indebted people.”

4.2.2 Applications

Within this theme, people are trying to apply their understanding of shortened working time and productivity to different fields of work. They are discussing the implications of the practice. They are thinking ahead of how reduced working time could be implemented and what benefits this change might bring:

“In the process industry with shift work, there should be a shift from a three-shift model to a four-shift model, whereby the benefits of shorter working hours would be further emphasized while at the same time, the effects of shift work would be eased.”

“A hospital's intensive care unit would certainly be a good example of how shortening the working day would improve results, endurance and well-being.”

But countering these ideas, some people bring out their scepticism while applying their understanding of the idea of reduced working time to reality:

“Yep, yep... gravel trucks drive 120 km/h, dentists only remove, barbers only use sabres, pizzas are eaten raw, ambulances are closed on Fridays, industrial lines can be sped up if you just adjust the speed of the belt.”

4.2.3 Working life now

The working life now as it is with processes and systems that define how employees behave and how work gets done is one of the topics that arises from the Systemic level.

This represents a part of the entire sense-making conversation but on a deeper level. Describing the pace of work and how straining it can be to employees are discussed:

“Work is already at a forced pace, so more and more people are voting with their feet. More and more people just can't stand this kind of life.”

“Nowadays, not many people have the time to manage their work well, and it both eats away at employees from the inside and endangers work safety as well as patient and customer safety.”

Another topic within the field of working life now in Finland is payment basis and efficiency.

“I just spend time at the workplace, even if there is nothing to do, just so that I get the full hours. This is inefficient.”

“So, what is paid for? About the work done, or about the hours spent at the workplace? In Finland, in many workplaces, the most important thing is that you are at your workplace exactly from 8.00 to 16.00, no matter what you are doing.”

Personal risk bearing is something that people have commented too, meaning that risks to the health of the modern working life are not on the owners and investors, but on the workers and societies.

“Working life has become so fast and hectic that it is no longer even healthy. It also seems that investors' risks are often on the shoulders of employees, in low-wage industries, hired labour and commission wages are commonplace.”

4.2.4 Larger changes

As part of the discussion of what working life is now like, a larger dimension of this discussion can be found in the data. Some people have commented on how the world should change so that working life and the economy would become more sustainable. Some comments also elaborated on the topic of why the working life now is what it is, taking an eagle-eye perspective to explain issues. Worry about poor decision-making and the need for reforms are at the heart of these comments, but also some offer solutions and ideas.

“However, there is a need for decision-making that crosses the ideological boundaries of party and labour market organizations, a comprehensive labour reform and if we can get the legislation, the trade unions and the

leaders to understand, then modifying working hours, the definition of work and the whole concept of work very individually to suit everyone is the way we should go."

"Where could we find more labour e.g. nursing, teachers, support staff, doctors, etc. There are unemployed people, but do they have the necessary qualifications and training for all possible short-time jobs? - the fact that there is a shortage of workers in that type of field is more precisely a political question and problem."

Solutions and obstacles to change are discussed with both enthusiasm and scepticism:

"The ownership base of private companies should be expanded to the grassroots level because robotics is starting to replace most of the work, thus welfare is also distributed to the employees and not just to the owners."

"New ideas are supported, but at the same time, they are not implemented, lest something go wrong and then we get screwed. No leader will risk his position and reputation by doing his job. This is why, instead of a manager, workplaces have custodians who are interested in securing their position rather than doing work and innovating."

4.2.5 Summarising social causal

In comparison to litany level discussions the social causal commenting extended the thinking into the implications of if shortened working time was to be implemented then what would happen? The discussions touched on the current systemic set-up and how shortened working time would change it. Also, the application of the possibility of shortened working time to different professions was discussed. However, at this point, it seemed that some people had perhaps not understood the concept of productivity or had not read the news articles except for the headlines. This caused some disruption in the conversation, yet served as a reference point for understanding how different the ideas can be among the commentators. Challenging working life and how work is organized was one of the themes. Here the implications of applying shortened working time were not as much at focus but represented the worry and anxiety of people working these days. Larger systemic changes that are happening globally and the worry about the state of the world and labour sparked into the conversations. The news articles of shortened working time raised many questions and discussions that are not necessarily directly linked to working hours but to the organization of work these days.

4.3 Worldview

The comments analysed as representative of the worldview layer have four distinct themes that arise from the data. The first is that there is a belief that working life will and cannot change and the opposing view is that it can and will change as it has in the past. Some also express a wish for change and see the need for improvement, while they might be sceptical of changes ever happening. Secondly what arises is the strong belief in the economy, measuring economic growth and these being the metrics of well-being. These are countered by comments on how well-being cannot be measured in numerals only. Thirdly quality of life is something that shows up from the comments. To different people, it means different things and achieving good quality of life both individually and as a society can be arrived at in several ways. Fourthly the political views of the commentators give their flavour to the comments. These comments are polarized and quite provoking targeting either the left or the right withholding prejudice and stereotyping what left versus right-wing supporters are like, what the opposing parties think their counterparts are like and what they want.

4.3.1 Unchangeable working life

Things cannot be changed, and they will not change – this is one of the themes that arises from the analysis. Some commentators are fixated on thinking that working hours or the way work is divided or shared between individuals cannot be changed or that threatening the current system would lead to chaos and ruin. Organizing work in a new and different way is not possible, because they are seen as given. Historically it seems strange that things could not be changed, and some commentators bring this point of view to discussion.

“Fortunately, not all things work in Finland. You can't imagine a more terrible idea than working a shorter work week. Well, maybe buying wine at the grocery store is just as awful.”

“Even in those fields where that would apply, it's somehow symptomatic that employers wouldn't agree to that shit no way.”

“This is not a surprise that the Confederation of Finnish Industries and the Finnish Entrepreneurs, as scumbags stuck to old formulas, are trying to stop any reforms even slightly related to working hours that would shorten

working hours. They are not satisfied with the proven results that productivity increases, but they have a principled need to stick to the old ways.”

4.3.2 Belief in the economy

These comments are representative of a deep-rooted trust and belief in the economy and financial metrics of success such as GDP. If anything should be changed in the working life of Finnish industries, people are sure Finland will go bankrupt.

“Work decreases when some companies go bankrupt and some move their production abroad, then GDP falls. Finland alone cannot do something like this if the same is not done elsewhere.”

“Survival of the national economy requires work with a proper salary, a full 37.5 hours per week with an employment rate of 80%.”

On the other hand, there are also countering thoughts that see the positive implications of the possible shortened working week and suggest that it could benefit Finland in global competition.

“In this case, shortening working hours could help jobs stay in Finland. However, as we cannot compete with third-world sweatshops with long working hours and low wages, we should prefer to go in the opposite direction.”

Critical comments on the current economic system can also be found in the data.

“These are not ideological issues, but the question is about the functioning of humanity, states and society in the future. It cannot be based on the greed of individuals and that banks keep the world functioning.”

4.3.3 Quality of life

Quality of life means different things to different commentators. Some are concerned for the environment and its' ability to sustain, while humankind is destroying it. For some quality of life means more time off from work and the benefits it could bring to everyone, yet some think that well-being stems from working hard. The downside of working hard can for some show as the time that is wasted from self-development and thus developing the society.

“In recent decades, productivity growth has been channelled in greater proportion to growing consumption instead of leisure time than before. What makes this especially crazy is that in the same era, we have realized that

growing consumption is not environmentally sustainable, and its ability to increase well-being is weakening.”

The well-being of the entire society is worrying some of the commentators, however the focus of their concern can come from slightly different places.

“Employers would like to extend working hours. I lose faith in their desire to think about society as a whole.”

“The moral obligation of us healthy and able-bodied people in a welfare society is to work a lot and thereby pay enough taxes so that the financial base of the welfare society is sufficient, and the sick and disabled can also be guaranteed a decent life.”

“But I agree with the ideological opposition of our capitalists. They are opposed on principle to everything that makes life easier for workers because all kinds of misery keep people thinking about their position without being able to think about it as part of social conditions.”

4.3.4 Political views

Quite a few of the comments focus on slandering either the political left or the right. The topic of reduced working hours seems to have called for polarizing, oversimplifying comments. Commentators are looking for someone to blame either for how things are, but also for whose fault it is that nothing can change or if changed, to the wrong direction.

“Today, the left is denigrating work. Everything has come ready to the table. Shame on you.”

“Of course, the National Coalition Party will tear its pants off if someone suggests improving the working conditions.”

” The left wants to create a society where people must be lured to work. I’m ashamed.”

“At the same time, in Finland, the days should be longer, with lower pay, according to the upper classes.”

” The bourgeois wants to lower wages and the socialist wants to reduce work. Famine years coming?”

4.3.5 Summarising worldview

The topic of shortened working hours revealed several aspects that people hold strong beliefs about. The world is seen as unchanging, or perhaps for some this stems from the fear of change and wanting to preserve the status quo. While some people see the need for change and are optimistic some are strictly against changes. The voices both for and against change back their opinions with reasoning that relies on economic metrics. However, some are sceptical of these metrics' functionality and reliability in measuring success. Success and quality of life means different things to different people. There is a division between money meaning happiness and well-being meaning happiness. Political views play into this cocktail of what is perceived as good and who is good.

4.4 Myth

The deepest level of the CLA analysis, myths, reveals the deepest-held ideas that are often unconscious. From the comments that have been analysed to be representative of the myth level, four themes arise quite clearly over others. The first of these four is suffering, being forced to struggle in extremely hard conditions and that everything is immeasurably difficult and that by only truly suffering one can have a small piece of contentment. The second theme is envy, the fear that somebody has it easier or better, the idea that there can be no freeloaders and that if somebody seems to have it too well, there must be something wrong, or some injustice has taken place. The third regards agency and victimhood; how people see themselves as agents of their own lives, of society or victims of the circumstances without opportunities to impact their lives or the system they live in. The fourth is the generational divide of the so-called old and the young.

4.4.1 Suffering

Drudging is one of the themes that arise from the metaphor level of the data. Working hard in Finland is something people have traditionally been proud of; the harder you work the better person you are. The heroism of working hard is glorified suffering.

“The entrepreneur works 24/7”, “paid a high price for their company with a shocking amount of work, sweat, and blood.”

“Here at home in Finland, the mood is more like “suffer, suffer, you will get a brighter crown.”

Working hard and for long hours in this comment equals more productivity and also reveals the attitude toward working hard and long hours.

“If your productivity increases when you work less, there is a problem with you. You are simply lazy.”

To this same category of the idealized hard-working Finn, the comments that make a division between real work and useless fidgeting, are descriptive of the thinking that work must be a battle, and that physical work is real work.

“You probably don't do real, physical work, useless pen pusher.”

Some Finns' relationship to work is also critical

“working extra-long hours and giving everything for your career are idealized”.

4.4.2 Envy, what if somebody has it easy?

Comments on who should have the right to shorter working hours, if anyone, represent a Finnish myth of envy and happiness. Envy is related to the previous of a hard-working Finn – nobody should get things too easily. Even those who work hard and manage to get a life that is perceived better can become a subject of envy. The thinking can be quite petty and hurt the one who is envious of someone's success.

“We envy our employers if they succeed, some even enjoy their employer's failure.”

A Finnish proverb that someone mentions summarizes the thinking well:

“Jealousy takes even the fish out of the water.”

The effect of this kind of envy within the Finnish mentality has the effect that people hide their happiness, and do not flaunt their success or wealth, but try to blend in. Some of the

commentators point out this effect on society. A Finnish proverb was used by one of the commentators.

“Who has luck, let them hide it.”

4.4.3 Agency and victimhood

In Finland people have had universal and equal suffrage since 1907 and thus a way to influence what parties and to some extent which individuals make decisions. However, there is a great deal of bitterness and resentment in the comments and a sense of being a helpless victim of the decisions made by “the others” or “them”, who alone are responsible for the circumstances Finland is in now. There is a division between us and them, finger-pointing and being a victim of unfair practices. While the majority of Finns do not influence who is a business owner, they can themselves start a business or choose where and for whom to work. However, business owners and managers get resentment as well as political decision-makers and are seen as greedy, opportunistic and exploitive.

“Bosses must have big pockets. It is easier to make a poor person pay 20 cents more for bread than to make a rich person raise an employee's hourly wage by the same amount.”

Also, the Finnish mentality of being a victim contributes to this kind of thinking. It is what it is, and only humble, yet passive-aggressive compliance is the acceptable response.

“It's clear from these bosses, to die right at work so that you will not use your pensions.”

4.4.4 Generational divide

One of the arising myths from the data is the age-old division between the old and the young. The older generations glorify the past, disapprove of the present, and fear for the future. There is a competitive discussion on who has built the world and worked harder.

“And when will we remember that the pensioners have been building this country in such a way that future generations can afford and have the audacity to criticize the pensioners? I must say that ingratitude is the world's reward. You, the posterity, will also notice that in time.”

“No complaints, we were happy. Now nothing is enough for people, no one, and nothing is respected.”

While perhaps the younger generations see the past as gloomy and that mistakes were made, the present and the future allow them to avoid past mistakes, improve the world, and feel hopeful.

“Old people are so stuck in their ways.”

“The young people of the future will hardly agree to work endlessly under these conditions, the symptoms are already visible when labor force is not available for many professions, the winds of change forcefully enter working life.”

4.4.5 Summarising myth

Several archetypal stories can be found from the myth level of this analysis. While the myths in this analysis have been grouped into themes by subject, these themes withhold and overlap with the archetypes that are behind the myths. A growth story: mythical hero suffers, works hard, does not give in or complain, survives, and becomes a better person. The moral story: an antihero, who is prone to envy and thinks that they are a victim of unfair circumstances. In their feelings of envy and bitterness, while trying to hurt others they simultaneously harm themselves. The David versus Goliath story: this hero is also a victim, yet takes agency, rises against the invincible enemy and wins. The story of power: one of the heroes is old and wise, has built a world for themselves, but is not willing to hand the torch to younger generations, because the young in their new ways might destroy everything.

5 Results

Based on the results of CLA, three short stories have been written to illustrate what working hours in Finland could look like 2060. These stories are futures images depicting how many hours or days people work and how they function between work and time off. The themes for these stories have been drawn from the aspects that arose from the analysis. The stories use both the horizontal; the themes, and vertical layers; the depth of the analysis. They are incorporated into the stories to give them depth and profusion. The focus of the stories is more on the timing and pace of work, rest, recovery time, autonomy and workplace. As the results of the CLA show working time cannot be isolated from the rest of people's lives. The stories therefore combine descriptions of how people live their lives within these frameworks; what they think about their working lives, how they see themselves as part of society and workers, and how then working time affects time off. Technological advancements will undoubtedly change work and the professions by 2060, but these aspects are a more circumstantial and not at the centre of the stories. The formation of these stories started from the myth level as the assumption is that myth level changes slowly over time. However, the larger events of the world can affect the circumstances people work in, and thus different kinds of myths can be reinforced or weakened. These images give a glimpse into the lives of three different people and their work-life relationships.

5.1 Futures image 1

The first futures image takes inspiration from the myths of Suffering (4.4.1) and Envy, what if somebody has it easy? (4.4.2). These are explored through the relationship the main character has with his work and other people around him.

From the worldview level, it incorporates the themes of Belief in the economy (4.3.2), which shows that the main character is obsessed with statistics and reporting. Quality of life (4.3.3) for him means hard work but feeling tired in his time off.

On a causal level, the story plays with the Applications (4.2.2) and Larger changes (4.2.4). These two themes are presented in who he works for, how his work is timed and the kind of working rhythm he has which are quite different from what we now know as normal.

From the Litany level, it provides an angle to Relationship to work (4.1.3). In this image of the future, the character is highly dedicated to work. Furthermore, it uses the theme of Comparisons (4.1.2) which shows in his thinking of other people who work the same way he does.

5.1.1 Black hole

It is Tuesday morning and Zelus is feeling exhausted from the last 48 hours. The first thing he does is check the universal statistics of working hours done to see how his amount of work compares to the world average of the last 24 hours. He gets paid by the hour and efficiency, so he wants to know where he stands in statistics. Zelus himself worked six-hour shifts every six hours, meaning he did four six-hour shifts and rested between each shift for six hours. He has several colleagues doing the same job as he and they rotate the shifts so that everything is running 24/7. His particular interest also stems from the fact that all workers are also owners of the cooperative. It is good to know that everything he does he also does for himself.

Now it is time for some rest. Every third day each one gets a 24-hour leave. He is proud to work hard and to dedicate much of his days to work. Usually, during the six-hour breaks he eats something and checks the latest statistics on work, his investments, and the latest stock exchange rates. He decides to take a nap. However, now, like many times he has trouble sleeping. He feels sad like something is wrong, but he quickly pushes those thoughts aside and begins to think about eating, gaming, exercising, whatever to keep the sadness away and allow sleep to follow. From the media, he has heard that other people suffer from feelings of inadequacy, emptiness, and loneliness. People say that the 24/7 society is killing them. Zelus does not believe in this nonsense. The silliest part is that some doctors even give people sick leave for this and prescribe human closeness as a cure for anxiety. He thinks that people who need this are like black holes. No matter how much you give them, all they do is whine. They should just concentrate on working hard. Zelus pays high taxes, and this is where his money goes. This is not right!

He is proud to know he is a good worker, makes good money, and pays his taxes, so he is a good person. Everybody around him is working, except for the children, the sick, and the elderly. During his time off Zelus likes to go shopping, to restaurants, exercise, and

drive around the city just for fun. This is why he works. He appreciates that everything runs 24/7 every day of the year. He can do or get whatever he needs or wants at any hour of the day.

5.2 Futures image 2

The second image of the future loans from the myth-level themes of Agency and victimhood (4.4.2) and Generational divide (4.4.3). These themes are explored in the interaction between three generations.

The worldview level in this image incorporates Unchangeable working life (4.3.1). This is explored in the interaction between the main character and her mother. They have different perceptions as to what working life is like. Quality of life (4.3.3) is presented here between the main character's relationship to work and her valuing time with her family.

From the causal level, this image explores the theme of What if and then what? (4.2.1) and Applications (4.2.2). This image shows another kind of setup where a person works in a post-industrial environment and how it reflects on her work and timing. It explores the possibilities of a shortened working time and what kind of implications it could have for life.

On the litany level, it uses the themes of Sensemaking (4.1.1), Relationship to work (4.1.3), and Transitions (4.1.4). Sensemaking in this image of the future is shown in the character's work, what she is teaching her children, and how she interacts with her mother. Relationship to work and transitions shown here is explained by describing her work, the timing, and that while this kind of balance between work and time off is now rare, it could become a reality in the future.

5.2.1 Coach mom

Minerva loves her work; she is toggling between several companies that together pay her salary per task done. She is an expert at inspiring others, and she has been able to set people on incredible journeys of innovation and success. She works three days a week.

For those three days she is available 24/7, although majority of the coaching sessions are in the daytime. The job is demanding, especially as the clients are not always the most receptive to her coaching when the meeting takes place, and sometimes it takes time for her advice and support to sink in and ignite the innovation process. Therefore, she is available, as she understands that people with creative mindsets can get inspiration or the doubts in the middle of the night and they need to meet her remote. In extreme cases of the client's self-doubt, she has also agreed to physically meet them at whatever time. She also feels huge pride in her work. Globally Finland has become an innovation hub, and Minerva is happy to be able to help and support the people who are in the business of innovations.

After working three days, she hands all the cases to her colleague, whose been off while she was working. Now she has time for her family. Her two children go to school on those days when she works. Her spouse has the same working rhythm. They home-school the children when they do not go to school. They teach the kids to be proactive and to learn decision-making, and social skills. Most of the time they take the kids somewhere where they can be active, get experience from different places, and collaborate with other people. Minerva and her husband firmly believe that these are the key skills for people to become independent, social, and kind people, who can navigate the world. Since information about everything is available all the time, they think that learning people skills and understanding life are the most important lessons they can give to their kids.

During one of their four family days, Granny usually comes to visit. However, Minerva has mixed feelings about those visits. Granny seems quite upset by their rhythm of life. Granny used to work 5 days a week but saw how slowly people increasingly moved toward shorter work weeks. Besides Grandma has difficulty understanding why so much focus is placed on teaching the kids people skills rather than what Granny calls "real knowledge". Minerva sometimes gets frustrated hearing from her mother that "you kids do not understand what real work is like" and "how are your kids supposed to do well in life if they know nothing". Granny is what she is. Minerva, however, tries to explain to Granny that the world has changed and that the modern world requires different kinds of skills than what was needed when Granny was still working. Often Minerva thinks that trying to explain this is pointless. It does not make any sense to Granma. She is immune to her coaching.

5.3 Futures image 3

The third and final image of the future is based on the myth level theme of Agency and victimhood (4.4.3). Both characters are trapped in a position where they struggle to work together. Furthermore, they are both working in a setting where it is not possible to make changes that they would like or see beneficial.

The worldview level of the story draws from the themes of Unchangeable working life (4.3.1) and Political views (4.3.4). In this image, working life has not much changed from what we know now as normal. This is apparent from the goals they must achieve and the working time. Political views become apparent from how they try to avoid the subject, leaving each guessing that those views are opposing.

On a causal level, the image incorporates the theme of Working life now (4.2.3), utilizing the assumption that shortened working time could not be possible and that working culture remains like how it is now. The larger changes (4.2.4) theme in this image is presented through the description of the characters' week. .

Litany-level themes in this image are Sensemaking (4.1.1) and Transitions (4.1.4). While in the story the productivity is being increased by placing the target higher, the accuracy suffers from errors. The Transitions theme in this image is explained by the way the characters utilize AI.

5.3.1 Take a deep breath

Soteria and Hermes have been assigned to work as a pair because their manager thinks that they make a good team. Soteria's considering, thoughtful nature combined with Hermes' quickness to act is in their manager's opinion optimal for producing great results. They work 5 days a week, 10 hours a day together to optimize the use of AI in healthcare. Where AI comes short at picking up the slightest nuances of planning and suggesting tailored healthcare for individual patients Soteria and Hermes step in. Diagnosing used to be assigned to doctors and nurses, but since the pressure of pace quickened, AI was considered much faster and cost-effective at diagnosing illnesses and

planning treatments. However, the results still need humans to check that every aspect of care is included.

During the 10 hours, they must together handle a staggering number of cases but do so with precision. The number of cases per working day used to be lower, but since the management saw how quick Hermes was, they increased the target, saying that this would increase productivity. Soteria is almost daily going out of her mind trying to hold Hermes at bay. He is going so fast that quality suffers. Soteria would prefer attention to be more on the quality of decisions than on the number of cases solved. She notices often that decisions passed as “approved” by Hermes contain several errors and spends time fixing them or sending them back to Hermes.

At lunch break, they disagree about almost everything. Hermes likes to see results and good statistics and Soteria would like to have better quality that ensures patients get the right treatments. They do not talk politics at work, but both are guessing they vote for the opposite factions. They both get tired of each other and wish that it was possible to work for shorter weeks, but it is not possible within the working time law. Also, the employer is a stickler to the rules, so it is not possible to come to an individual agreement. They have both requested that they be transferred to other teams, but also this was denied.

When the weekend finally comes, they both go to their homes and try to untangle from the feelings of frustration and recover from the 50- hour week. During weekends Soteria usually wishes that there was another way of working without the impossible targets and time pressure, also maybe a chance to work less. And without a working pair such as Hermes. Hermes on the other hand hopes that he could get a job in a company where action and pace were better appreciated so that he wouldn't have to hold back. They both take a deep breath. By Monday morning both have rested and gathered enough new strength so that they can suffer a new week together.

6 Discussion

6.1 Applicability of CLA to the data

Throughout the analysis phase, it became clear that CLA is a tool that allows all voices to be heard. While internet commenting can be quite polarized and provoking as it is, deconstructing the discussions and finding the themes revealed that there truly are very opposing worldviews that seem to drive Finns apart from each other. While on the myth level, there were more similarities, and people share the same myths, already at worldview level there can be found more differences. Moving upwards through the layers the divisions became increasingly clear. Thanks to CLA it became easier to understand why layers of litany and social causal turned out to be as they are. The worldview level revealed from the data how differently people think of the possibilities of change, economic growth and metrics. Also, quality of life for some meant more time and for some more work and money. Discussion on politics was very divisive. These deeper layers reveal why some on systemic level came up with all kinds of reasons why shortened working hours are a terrible idea versus those who thought that it could work. This might also explain why on litany level some people straight away said no to the entire notion and some said yes.

6.1.1 Challenges of the data

Another kind of data-gathering method, such as interviews might have provided stronger, multidimensional data for the CLA. The interview situation would have allowed clarifying central concepts, such as productivity and thus bring the participants into a more equal setting. For a researcher, this would have given perhaps more reliable data on what the participants think when they understand the concepts and the topic. An example of the problem was that throughout applying the CLA method to the data it became somewhat clear that many of the commentators either did not understand the concept of productivity or they had not read the articles, only the headlines. This confusion made it difficult to understand what the commentators meant with what they wrote. However, as productivity was not at the heart of this research, it was not a problem that would deteriorate the entire work.

While social media comments give a rich database for analysis, gathering comments from the internet without the chance to interact with the people is limiting. Interpreting what is meant by the comment is one-dimensional as one cannot read any physical cues, such as expressions, gestures, or voice tones and it is not possible to pick up the cues where some clarification would be needed. This kind of data gathering also rules out the possibility of asking clarifying questions. Therefore, the nuances are muted, and the written text provides the only cues as to what is meant. However, as it was not possible to interact with the commentators, the data is perhaps rawer and less influenced by the researcher. This kind of data source can also be a benefit, as all voices are heard. As explained before, CLA utilizes different ways of knowing and allows many voices to be heard, this type of data certainly provides a spectrum of both.

6.1.2 Researcher's bias

Interpreting the comments and layering them proved to be a thought-provoking process as the writer of this thesis, a 40-year-old female who identifies as Finnish and European with green-left-leaning political views, struggled trying to relate to the comments that were e.g. saying that Finland is not getting anything from European Union, or that Social Democratic and Green policies are detrimental to Finnish welfare. At first, these critical comments were interpreted to be representing worldview, but with further thought a realization came that the comments could also reflect litany, an everyday reality to the commentator. As described in section 2.3.4 News review and debates, the article (Maaseudun Tulevaisuus 15.1.2024) where two politicians from different ends of the political scale argue about working time, litanies are opposite. Both arguments are equally valid and true and depending on where the reader comes from the other one resonates better with one's worldview and reads into the litanies of their life. These kinds of comments were difficult to handle and probably, had the original writers been involved in sorting them into different layers of the CLA pyramid, they might have disagreed with the choices that were made in this analysis.

6.2 CLA versus review on working time in Finland

To tie the pieces of this thesis together, a review on the findings of CLA and how they compare to what was written in the overview of Working time in Finland (2.3) section, is in place. As the overview is based on academic articles, expert opinions, and news articles, it is interesting to see, if the same points can be found from the CLA.

6.2.1 Dimensions of working time found from CLA

When compared to the dimensions Anttila et al. (2021, 285-292) named which are the duration of work (hours), the timing of work (when), tempo i.e. the pace of work, and the autonomy to decide on working time, these are described in the CLA. On level social causal: Working life now (4.2.3) and Applications (4.2.2) there can be found comments that relate to this. There are descriptions of forced pace, feelings of hurry, and working life being too fast and hectic but also that people are just waiting for the day to end doing nothing just waiting for the time when they can go home and call it a day.

When discussed about the benefits of shortened working time, the well-being and health related comments resonate with what was missing from Anttila, et al.'s (2021, 285-292) list, but was on the list of FIOH (2024), namely recurrence of working time balanced with recovery time. These topics can be found from sections litany: Sensemaking (4.1.1), and social causal: Applications (4.2.2) and Working life now (4.2.3). There are comments that describe endurance and well-being, working life not being healthy and that it makes people physically and mentally ill. Also, that with introduction of either shorter working week or shorter hours in shifts would improve recovery time and reduce sick leaves.

To dig deeper, on the level myth: Suffering (4.4.1). There are descriptions of e.g. entrepreneurs, who work all the time and pay the price for their business with their health.

The autonomy to decide, when to work is largely lacking from the discussions and therefore from the CLA. It seems that only few people have the autonomy to decide the hours when they want to work. It seems that everybody is quite stuck with the Monday to Friday, 8-16:00 pattern, that societal structures expect, while realistically the time of the day, when one works could be different.

6.2.2 Drivers of change found from the CLA

Anttila et al. (2021, 286) identified globalization, new communication technologies, COVID-19, demographics, and climate change as drivers of change to working hours. From the CLA these drivers can be found across several layers.

Globalization was discussed in layers litany: Transitions (4.1.4), and worldview: Belief in economy (4.3.2). It was brought up that in the future Finland should invest in research and know-how to be able to compete in the global environment and that there is no point trying to compete against countries who can produce bulk products.

New communication technologies and COVID-19 were discussed on level litany: Transitions (4.1.4). New communication technologies made it possible to work remotely during COVID-19. COVID-19 was also recognized as a driver of change to remote work and to fully utilize the technologies that were available.

Demographics were discussed on level social causal: What if and then what? (4.2.1.) and Larger changes (4.2.4). From the social causal level, where there was discussion on how shortened working time enables people to take better care of their elders, and that more nurses are needed to the public sector. Yet also, worry over the lack of work force in general was expressed, that who would work on the fifth day of the week. Further down the CLA pyramid demographics came up on level myth: Generational divide (4.4.4). The relationship between the old and the younger summarized in one comment, where someone reminded that the now pensioners have built Finland and that the younger should be grateful and not criticise them. Thinking of why demographics penetrated the layers all the way to the myth level might be explained by the inevitable fact that all people age and this makes the topic relatable. As the situation in Finland with demographics is difficult to non-pensioners, it is no wonder that it stirs up feelings and conversations that go deep into the experiences of what it is like to toggle between the old and the younger generations. After all new systems are built by criticizing the old ones and learning from their short comings.

Climate change played hardly any role in the discussions. There were only a few comments that discussed the connection between climate change and working life. These were found from the level worldview: Quality of life (4.3.3), where they were discussed with worry. Productivity growth is directed towards increasing consumption, which is not

environmentally sustainable, and with this behavior people are deteriorating the planet's ability to carry life and produce well-being in the long run.

6.2.3 Historical themes found from the CLA

The historical changes on working time arose from the CLA. On litany level: Comparisons (4.1.2) the discussion reminded through historical changes that working time has changed before too, so why not again. The development from first limiting working time in the 1917(Finlex 1917), and in 1965 (Finlex 1965, 15§) were given as examples of change. Also, the shortened working time experiment, which assumably, referred to the trial of the so called 6+6 model (Peltola 2019, 12) that ran from 1996 to 1999, was mentioned as an example of the fact that in Finland this has been tried too.

When looking at the history of working time in Finland and relationship between employing and employee factions (Wuokko 2020, 200, 202, 204, 207-208) and how Peltola described (IS 19.8.2019) that the 1990's 6+6 trial ended because of the employers' ideological and political resistance, the same tensions between the two exist in this CLA. From the CLA it becomes quite clear that nothing has changed. The factions roughly being the right i.e. employers and business owners and the left, i.e. the employees. These factions are visible in the CLA layers of worldview: Unchangeable working life (4.3.1), Quality of life (4.3.3) and Political views (4.3.4). The comments that arose described how unwilling the employers' side is to implement any kinds of changes, even if productivity increases and that the resistance is ideological. Also, the comments that blame the right greedy and left lazy show that it still is the same parties against each other. Perhaps this tension could be seen to stem all the way from the myth level: Suffering (4.4.1) and Envy, what if somebody has it easy? (4.4.2). In Finland it seems, that everyone is on the same boat when it comes to suffering and working hard. Nobody wants to see the other party seemingly do better with seemingly less effort. Not even, when it might be wise to put these prejudices aside for the common good and make changes that would actually make the future better for everyone.

Historically used arguments against shorter working time, such as the case from the 1930's when employees demanded shorter working hours, but employers crushed the demands saying that it would decrease productivity, are in this CLA. This kind of talk

can be found from social causal level: What if and then what? (4.2.1). Discussions revolved around other people saying that productivity would increase, and others were sure that all businesses would go bankrupt. In the 1930's workers suggested, that working fewer hours, the workload could be shared between more people and the unemployed could find jobs as well. CLA revealed this kind of thinking too in layer social causal: Larger changes (4.2.4). There it was recognized that if work was split between more people the unemployed would become employed. While this could work, the problem now is that many jobs need qualifications.

Quite intriguingly while Wuokko (2020, 200) described what the reasons behind employees' side to crush the demands for shorter working time in the 1930's, similar notions were found from the CLA. In the 1930's case the employers were worried where increased time off would lead. What would the employees do in their leisure time, would they go to politics, and would they become lazy unethical workers? From the layers of social causal: What if then what?, and worldview: Quality of life (4.3.3) can be found ideas that employers want to keep their workers in a short leash so that they do not have the time or the energy to think about their place in life or larger social conditions. Some comments also reveal the worry that people would just use more alcohol if they had more time.

According to the CLA there is pressure to review working time law again. The arguments found from layer social causal: Larger changes (4.2.4), call for decision making that crosses ideological and political lines and re-defines work and working time to better suite the needs of today. To explain, while at the moment there does not seem to be any action taking place in radically renewing working time law, the pressure is building for a reform.

6.2.4 CLA vs news review and debates day

Along the lines how SAK chair Eloranta endorsed the idea of a 4-day week and the Confederation of Finnish Industries shutting down the idea all together (Iltalehti 22.3.2023) the CLA level social causal: Larger changes (4.2.4) discussed. The comments there discuss the phenomena that while changes would be needed, they are shut down because nobody wants to disturb the status quo in fear of causing a mess. The same kind of lack of employees willing to change the system is expressed on level worldview:

Unchangeable working life (4.3.1). On the level myth: Agency and victimhood (4.4.3) analysis revealed a somewhat fatalistic view on the working life and what the bosses want. People were saying that all the employers side wants is for the workers to die at work and never enjoy pensions. The same content of the CLA also concerns the poll conducted by the Federation of Finnish Enterprises (21.3.2023) that was described in the review.

The news (Euronews 2.2.2024; Uusimaa 24.5.2023) from Germany where two leaders there thought that shortened working time could be an answer to labor shortage were not discussed in the CLA. For the obvious reason being that the news articles are from 2023 and 2024, but the other more interesting reason is that nobody made the connection of these two problems. Nothing in the CLA indicated that the people would have seen that shortened working time could attract people who now are not able to take on a full-time job, to work.

The CLA reflects on level worldview: Political views (4.3.4) very closely to the argument that was reported by Maaseudun Tulevaisuus (15.1.2024), that the left and right faction politicians had. The ideologies clash also on level myth: Agency and victimhood (4.4.3). The argumentation of these two politicians is like what can be found from level worldview: Quality of life (4.4.3). There seems to be competing ideas of what good life means, if it is time or money.

Ojala (HS 11.3.2023) described that the discussion on working time is one dimensional and having become a tool for different interest groups to further their agenda can perhaps best be seen in the CLA as the polarization of the comments. It seems that there are two competing ideas and that there is no bridge-building between them. This could of course just be a symptom of the internet commenting culture, but perhaps also represents the reality what working life is now and how the post-industrialism is challenging the historical and institutional practices.

6.2.5 CLA vs opportunities and problems

Kiander (Pamflettisarja 27.4.2017), explained of the changed consumption habits as one the reasons why Keynes' prediction on working time has not become reality. Some

material from the CLA talk about the same thing. In the worldview layer: Quality of life (4.3.3) it is pointed out that people rather consume than have more time off from work.

Anttila (Pamflettisarja 27.4.2017) discusses how it never seems to be a good time to reduce working time. In recession it might be sensible to reduce working time and share the work between several people. This idea is talked about in CLA layer social causal: What if and then what? Some are theorizing how the unemployed people having jobs would lead to positive cycle where there is less need for social benefits, more tax revenues, more purchasing power and possibly in return new jobs.

Apunen and Järvensivu (Pamflettisarja 27.4.2017) explained that reducing working hours is not possible because it is not economically viable. This is something that arose from the CLA too. There is a worry about the national economy and how would shortened working time effect on it. From the layer worldview: Belief in economy (4.3.2) can be found that people worry that if implemented, companies would go bankrupt, GDP would fall, and the entire national economy would be in danger if people did not work full hours.

Järvensivu and Rissanen (Pamflettisarja 27.4.2017), explained the the biggest hindrances to changes in working time are historical and that the working time law is rigid. The findings from the CLA that were explained in the Historical themes found from the CLA (6.2.3), the progress is somewhat stuck between the needs of the old world and the emerging new. It is also stuck in the debates and reasons that are already 100 years old.

6.3 Further research opportunities

For future research there are multiple options as work and working time is an integral part of society and touches everything. Three topics arise based on this thesis.

Firstly, how different kinds of jobs influence people's understanding of time. While it is generally accepted that in Western cultures time is understood as linear, in some jobs it could be perceived as cyclical, or relative. E.g. time could be experienced as cyclical in work where the same processes are repeated perhaps daily, monthly, or annually. Time could be experienced as relative at jobs where the results are ready when they are ready, e.g. creative knowledge or craft work. This could be formally studied by interviewing people from different kinds of workplaces. The practical benefit of understanding this

could contribute to working time studies and have an impact on building better working time and compensation models, with more focus on the impacts of working time, its influence on workers, and their experience of time. From futures studies point of view, this kind of study would allow projecting the interview into the future and outline some kind of new models on how to build working life so that it considers the human experience better than the time-based measuring now does and alternative payment-basis could emerge.

Secondly, the future power of labor unions and their function post-industrial society. In many industries, people increasingly work in individual roles and need more flexibility regarding working time, terms, and conditions. Another factor is that large-scale labour-intensive industrial work with high demand for labor is disappearing (if it has not already) from Finland. Therefore, in post-industrial society, the unifying power of unions can become redundant and a hindrance to developing working terms and conditions that would better serve the needs of modern work. The bargaining power of a labor union has in the past been based on their power to influence through their size. This has been seen as a safety net and as a strength, but nowadays and in the future these features could turn against labor unions. Therefore, the future of how labor unions should develop to stay relevant in increasingly fragmented demands of work and jobs could provide a research opportunity.

Thirdly, assuming that work and money equals better life quality, then it would be interesting to study, how people who think like this, see the future of the planet in terms of its' survival. As it seems that the planet and the ecosystem cannot withstand the consumerism, then how can money and buying power support better life for humans? The futures images of people who think like this could provide an interesting field of study. Conversely, assuming that the system remains where time spent at work equals money. This combined with the findings of this thesis that there are people who would like to work fewer hours or days, then how do these people see the future of the well-fare state such as Finland. Would the productivity indeed increase, and would this mean better and more sustainable life? Comparing these two kinds of views could be interesting and provide material for further research. Could a combination of these two be found in some image of the future?

7 Conclusions

Changing working time that have become historically, and institutionally accepted norms is not simple. Furthermore, people in Finland hold on to the known practices dearly. From the CLA it can be seen that, under the surface the new needs for changes to working time are bubbling. While working time law has not significantly changed in the previous 30 years, it does not mean that it could not or should not be changed. While post-industrial work would require changes to the working time law and adding flexibility to it, more responsibility should be on business owners in negotiating more flexible working times with employees. As the working life is fragmented and will keep on moving toward more individually defined jobs the working time flexibility should go hand in hand with this development.

However, it seems that Finns lack a commonly shared futures image of work and working time. The news articles of the experiment in Iceland could also be interpreted to have been presenting futures images. They painted a picture of an alternative system of working hours that was reported in the Finnish press. While the articles as futures images were not at the heart of this research process, applying CLA to the discussions was revealing. While everyone in Finland undoubtedly wants a better future, this thesis shows that shortened working time is not something everybody wants. It does not represent a desirable future for all people, and it does not even represent a path to a better future for some. However, working life is in turmoil and people are increasingly working in many types of jobs. Experiments of shortened working hours are being conducted now and they will accumulate knowledge of the impacts they can have e.g. on productivity and employee well-being. Hopefully, when there is more evidence from these experiments, Finnish decision-makers and businesses will have the courage to experiment too. Change is difficult and moving to a shortened working time will need ditching the old habits and adjusting to the new, but sometimes it must be done, to be able to grow, prosper and build longevity.

Through this research process it has become rather clear that while working time is being studied, the field could benefit from the methods of futures studies. Unifying research that considers the historical, institutional, the present and occupational health care aspects of working time could result to a more comprehensive view on the points that should be changed. Measuring work and its results by the hour does not seem to serve anymore.

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