



# DESIGNING LIFE

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Filosofian Akatemia

Frank Martela  
Post-doctoral researcher, Aalto-yliopisto  
Co-Founder, Filosofian Akatemia Oy



**WHY DO YOU STUDY WHAT YOU STUDY?**

# **THIS COURSE AIMS TO HELP YOU IN DESIGNING A BETTER LIFE FOR YOURSELF.**

**INSTEAD OF READYMADE ANSWERS, IT WILL:**

- **AWAKEN YOU TO THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING IN CHARGE OF YOUR OWN LIFE CHOICES**
- **GIVE YOU CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL TOOLS TO THINK ABOUT GOALS, VALUES, AND LIFE CHOICES**
- **INTRODUCE YOU TO THE SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY BEHIND THESE QUESTIONS AND WHAT DO WE EMPIRICALLY KNOW ABOUT GOOD LIFE CHOICES**
- **INTRODUCE YOU TO VARIOUS LIFE PATHS, VALUES, AND GOALS THAT CAN OFFER YOU INSPIRATION IN MAKING YOUR OWN CHOICES**
- **GIVE YOU A NUMBER OF EXERCISES AND TOOLS THAT CAN HELP YOU BOTH NOW AND IN THE FUTURE TO MAKE MORE INFORMED AND DELIBERATE LIFE CHOICES THAT BETTER REFLECT YOUR OWN BASIC HUMAN NATURE**



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MAIL MANTUTKUA "World researcher"

A photograph of a young boy with light hair, wearing a green sweater with a cartoon character on the front, standing in his room. The room is filled with books, a telescope on a tripod, a desk lamp, and various other items, suggesting a space of learning and exploration. The boy is looking directly at the camera. The background shows shelves with books and a desk with a lamp and more books. The overall atmosphere is one of a dedicated young researcher or explorer.





ORIGINAL PAPER

# Prosocial behavior increases well-being and vitality even without contact with the beneficiary: Causal and behavioral evidence

Frank Martela<sup>1</sup> • Richard M. Ryan<sup>2,3</sup>

## The Benefits of Benevolence: Basic Psychological Needs, Beneficence, and the Enhancement of Well-Being

Frank Martela<sup>1</sup> and Richard M. Ryan<sup>2,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Helsinki, Finland

<sup>2</sup>Institute for Positive Psychology and Education, Australian Catholic University

<sup>3</sup>University of Rochester, NY

J Happiness Stud  
DOI 10.1007/s10902-017-9869-7

RESEARCH PAPER

## Meaningfulness as Satisfaction of Autonomy, Competence, Relatedness, and Beneficence: Comparing the Four Satisfaction and Positive Affect as Predictor of Meaning in Life

Frank Martela<sup>1</sup> • Richard M. Ryan<sup>2,3</sup> • Michael F. Steger<sup>4,5</sup>

Journal of Personality 84:6, December 2016  
© 2015 Wiley Periodicals, Inc.  
DOI: 10.1111/jopy.12215



CrossMark

*The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 2016  
Vol. 11, No. 5, 531–545, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2015.1080174>

## The three meanings of meaning in life: Distinguishing coherence, purpose, and

Frank Martela<sup>a,\*</sup> and Michael F. Steger<sup>b,c</sup>

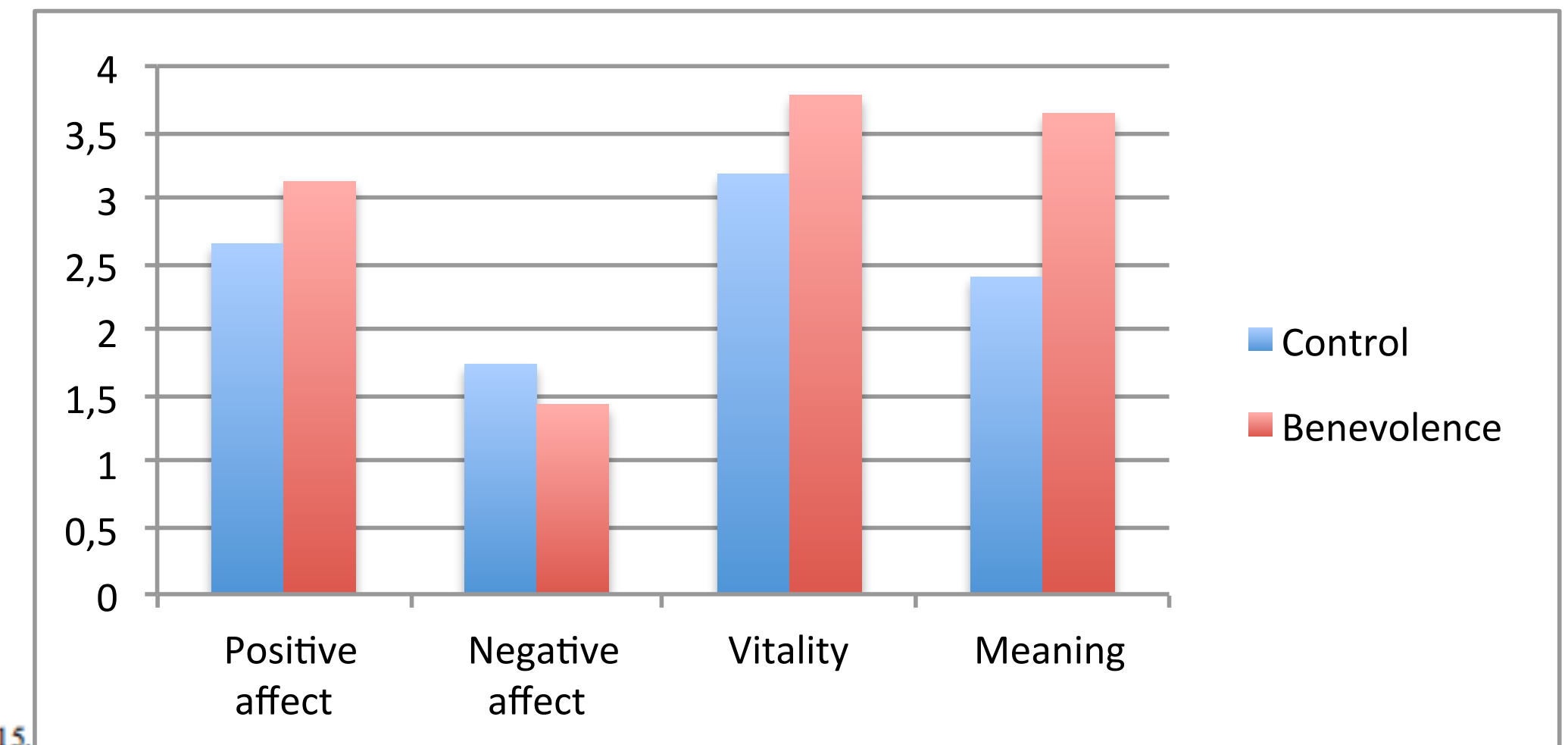
<sup>a</sup>Faculty of Theology, University of Helsinki, P.O. Box 4, Helsinki 00014, Finland; <sup>b</sup>Department of Psychology, University, 1876 Campus Delivery, Fort Collins, CO 80523-1876, USA; <sup>c</sup>School of Behavioural Sciences, North Vanderbijlpark, South Africa

Article

## Fallible Inquiry with Ethical Ends-in-View: A Pragmatist Philosophy of Science for Organizational Research

Frank Martela

Department of Industrial Engineering and Management, Aalto University, Finland



*The Southern Journal of Philosophy*  
Volume 55, Issue 2  
June 2017

## MEANINGFULNESS AS CONTRIBUTION

FRANK MARTELA



Organization Studies  
2015, Vol. 36(4) 537–563  
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[sagepub.co.uk/journalsPermissions.nav](http://sagepub.co.uk/journalsPermissions.nav)  
DOI: 10.1177/0170840614559257  
[www.egosnet.org/os](http://www.egosnet.org/os)

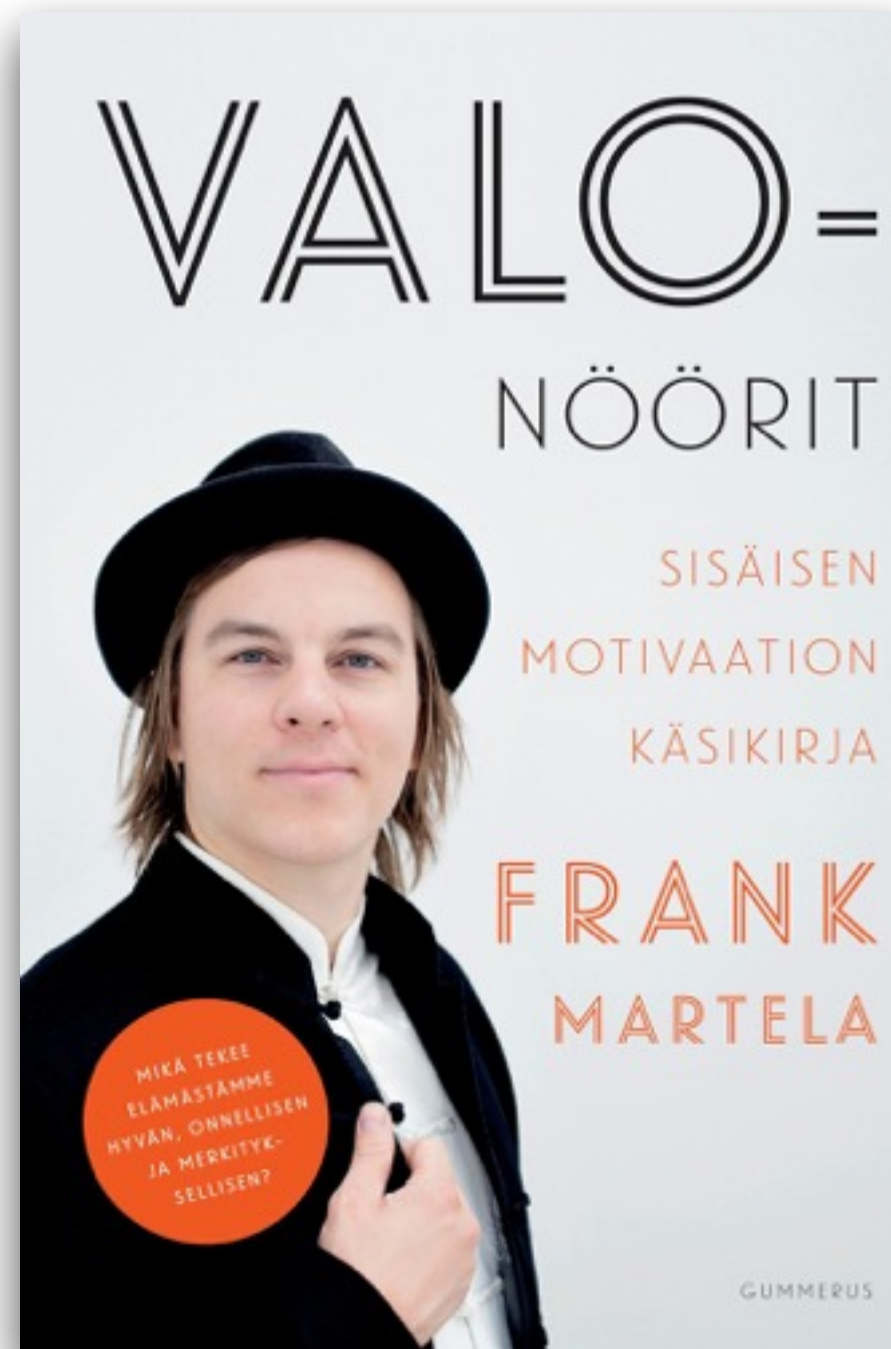




# Finland Is the Happiest Country in the World, and Finns Aren't Happy about It

They tend to downplay positive emotions, which could paradoxically increase their satisfaction with life

By Frank Martela on May 11, 2018



salon

NEWS & POLITICS ECONOMY & INNOVATION CULTURE SCIENCE & HEALTH FOOD

**Exercise, eat well, help others:  
Altruism's surprisingly strong health  
impact**

The benefits of giving rather than receiving are more than just spiritual



FRANK MARTELA  
SEPTEMBER 9, 2018 6:59PM (UTC)

Työelämä 5.9. 6:18

**Kolumni: Työn merkityksellisyys ei ole mikään yltiöpäinen luksusvaatimus – Sen kaksi ulottuvuutta ovat hyvän elämän perusedellytyksiä**

Vaatimus merkityksellisestä työstä on pohjimmiltaan varsin nöyrä. Sen mukaan ihminen saisi toteuttaa ihmisyytään myös työaikanaan, kirjoittaa Frank Martela.







# THE COURSE PRACTICALITIES



# 21C03000 DESIGNING LIFE: CONTENT

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- 6 lectures á 2 hours
- 6 team gatherings á 2 hours
- 6 tasks and task reports
- 5 pre-readings and reading responses
- Final essay



## 21C03000 DESIGNING LIFE: GRADING

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- Class attendance (6 lectures)      30 points (5 points / class)
- Reading responses (5 responses)      15 points (3 points / returned response)
- Task reports (5 reports)      15 points (3 points / returned report)
- Final essay      40 points (evaluated on a scale from 1 to 5)
  
- TOTAL:      100 points

*Minimum 4 reading responses, 4 task reports & final essay will be required to pass the course.*



## 21C03000 DESIGNING LIFE: GRADING

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**Warning:** Overt focus on extrinsic rewards such as grades is likely to:

- 1) diminish your interest in the course material
- 2) undermine your enjoyment of the class
- 3) impede your capacity to focus on truly learning and growing as an individual through the course.



# 21C03000 DESIGNING LIFE: LECTURES

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- 13:15 - 15:00
- Lecture hall Y203a in the Undergraduate Center (Kandikeskus, Otakaari 1).
- Attendance not mandatory but attending will earn points towards the final grade
- The lecture contents and exercises a key part of the learning of the course



# 21C03000 DESIGNING LIFE: LECTURE TOPICS

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- 9.1: Introduction. Practicalities. The future of work.
- 16.1: Who are you and what do you value?
  - Guest lecturer Juha Äkräs (Aalto / Hintsä)
- 23.1: What motivates humans and what is the meaning of life?
- 30.1: How to find your own path?
  - Guest lecturer Tiina Alahuhta-Kasko (Marimekko)
- 6.2: TBA
- 13.2: How to design your future?



## 21C03000 DESIGNING LIFE: TEAM GATHERINGS

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- Teams of ~6 people.
- Team gatherings will offer you the opportunity to discuss key course themes and life choice questions in a small and intimate group setting.
- The team gathers every week for 2 hours for a total of 6 meetings.
- The default time for team gatherings is Friday 13 – 15. But if your team wants to gather at some other time, that is completely up to you.
- Also the location of your meetings is for you to choose.



## 21C03000 DESIGNING LIFE: PRE-READINGS AND TASKS

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- Before each team meeting
  - There is a task to be completed
  - There are readings to be read (except 1st)
- A written reading response (~1 page) and task report have to be returned to MyCourses for each pre-reading and task.
- To ensure high-quality discussions during the gatherings, these have to be returned before the relevant gathering.
- —> Deadline for the task report & the reading responses (1 page) is always on Friday after the lecture at 13.00.

# 21C03000 DESIGNING LIFE: FINAL ESSAY

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- The final essay will consist of a few separate sections
  - More information will be available closer to the time for the final essay
- Deadline 1.3



## 21C03000 DESIGNING LIFE: LATE SUBMISSIONS

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- All responses, reports and essays returned through MyCourses
- Reading responses and task reports returned within 1 week after the deadline will receive 1 point instead of 3 points.
- Final essay returned within 1 week after the deadline will be evaluated on a scale from 0-20 points (vs. 0-40)
- Final essay returned more than 1 week after the deadline will be evaluated on a scale from 0-10 points. No returns will be accepted 2 weeks after the deadline.
- Exemptions can be granted for well-justified reasons.

**FIRST TEAM GATHERING**



# FIRST TEAM GATHERING: THE TASK

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- Write a reflective essay (at least 1 page) where you answer these three questions:
- **1) From whom did you get your current worldview?** Which people or other influences have been central in shaping you into the person you are?
- **2) Can you recall a singular moment, when your worldview changed?** I mean a situation where you encountered some new fact / point of view / insight / experience, that significantly challenged something that you until that moment had taken as self-evident. Describe briefly such a moment and what happened.
- **3) What belief are you unwilling to give up, no matter the evidence?** In other words, do you have convictions or beliefs that you are so committed to that you would never want to change them, no matter what happens?
- Please write this reflective essay and return it to MyCourses before Friday 11<sup>th</sup> Jan at 13.00.

# FIRST TEAM GATHERING: THE AGENDA (1/2)

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The gathering should last for 90-120 min. Here is the agenda:

## 1. Introductions

- Introduce yourself to each other
- Tell who are you
- Tell how and why did you end up on this course

## 2. The origins of your worldview

- Conduct a round where everybody tells the story behind their own worldview
  - From whom did you get your current worldview
  - Can you recall a singular moment, when your worldview changed?
  - What belief are you unwilling to give up, no matter the evidence?
- I suggest going over these questions one by one. I.e. first having a round where everybody talks about the first question, then a separate rounds for the second and third question



# FIRST TEAM GATHERING: THE AGENDA (2/2)

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## 3. Deciding the book and movie for the next gatherings

- During the fourth gathering your task consists of watching a movie beforehand
  - Then in the gathering you'll discuss what insights about good living and life direction you derived from the movie
  - Have a discussion about the potential movie to watch
  - Make a choice of what movie to watch
- During the fifth gathering your task consists of reading a book beforehand
  - Then in the gathering you'll discuss what insights about good living and life direction you derived from the book
  - Have a discussion about the potential movie to watch
  - Make a choice of what book to read
- There is a list of suggested books/movies in MyCourses. But you are allowed to choose a book/movie from outside that list, provided that you see that it could provide important insights about good living and finding direction in life
- If you are unsure, whether the book/movie you have been thinking about fits, you can send me an email to ask: [frank.martela@aalto.fi](mailto:frank.martela@aalto.fi)

# TEAM GATHERINGS: SOME GROUND RULES

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The aim is to provide you with a safe and encouraging space to explore topics related to life in general and to your own life.

To ensure this, a few ground rules for team meetings:

- Everybody is respected and listened to
- If somebody shares something personal, that stays within the group
- One does not have to share anything personal if one doesn't want to
- Try to ensure that each person gets to speak roughly equally
  - If you notice that you speak all the time - step back
  - If you notice someone is mostly silent - encourage them to step up
- Commenting, discussing and even disagreeing is encouraged, but be respectful
  - Criticize the idea, not the person
  - Avoid prejudicial comments
- Most everything discussed in the groups will not have one right answer
  - Try to understand others' points of views to broaden your own understanding



**WHAT LEARNING MEANS IN  
THIS COURSE?**

# 21C03000 DESIGNING LIFE: UNDERSTANDING OF LEARNING

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Objectivist

Transmission of information

Student: Passive recipient



Constructivist

Constructing understanding

Student: Active meaning creator

See: Biggs, J.  
(1996). Enhancing  
teaching through  
constructive  
alignment. Higher  
Education, 32(3),  
347–364.



**"WHAT THE STUDENT DOES IS ACTUALLY MORE IMPORTANT IN DETERMINING WHAT IS  
LEARNED THAN WHAT THE TEACHER DOES."**

**-T. J. SHUELL 1986: COGNITIVE CONCEPTIONS OF LEARNING**



# ATTITUDE TO LEARNING: FIXED VS. GROWTH

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Are you suffering from the straight-'A's syndrome?

	<b><u>Fixed mindset</u></b>	<b><u>Growth mindset</u></b>
	"Be good"	"Get Better"
<b>Challenges:</b>	Avoid	Seek
<b>Obstacles:</b>	Give up quickly	Work more
<b>Failures:</b>	Sign of inability	Part of learning
<b>Struggling:</b>	Unnecessary and worthless	Path to mastery
<b>Success of others:</b>	Threat	Source of learning and inspiration
<b>Goal:</b>	Looking good	Learning more





# FUTURE OF WORK

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The times they are a-changin'





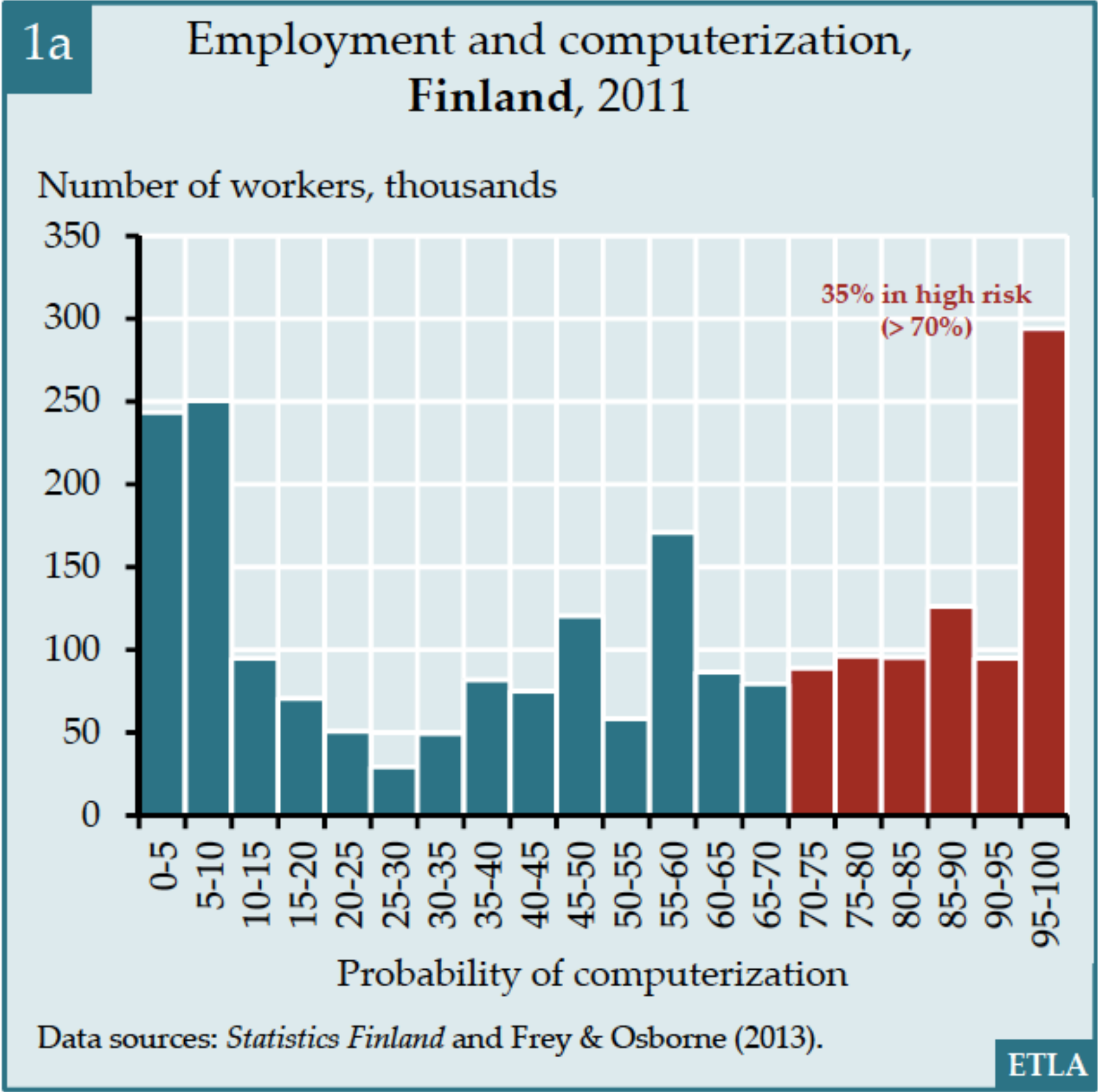
**MEGATREND:**

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**AUTOMATIZATION**  
**ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**  
**DIGITALIZATION**



# THE EFFECT OF AUTOMATIZATION & DIGITALIZATION ON JOBS AVAILABLE



SCIENCE | SMARTER THAN YOU THINK

# *Armies of Expensive Lawyers, Replaced by Cheaper Software*

By JOHN MARKOFF MARCH 4, 2011

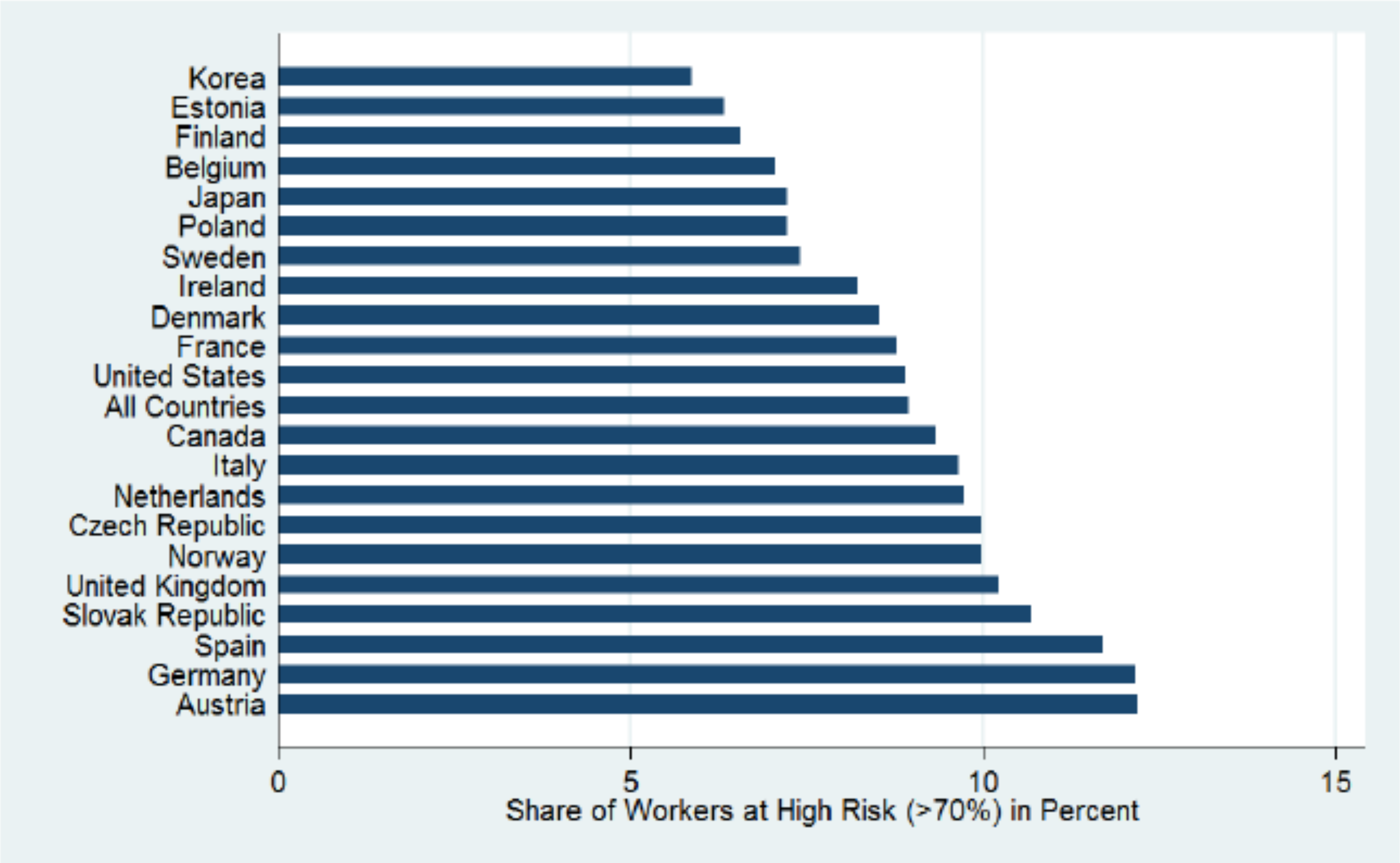


"People get bored, people get headaches. Computers don't," said Bill Herr, a lawyer who used to work for a chemical company. Ramin Rahimian for The New York Times



# THE EFFECT OF AUTOMATIZATION & DIGITALIZATION ON JOBS AVAILABLE

Figure 3. Share of Workers with High Automatability by OECD Countries

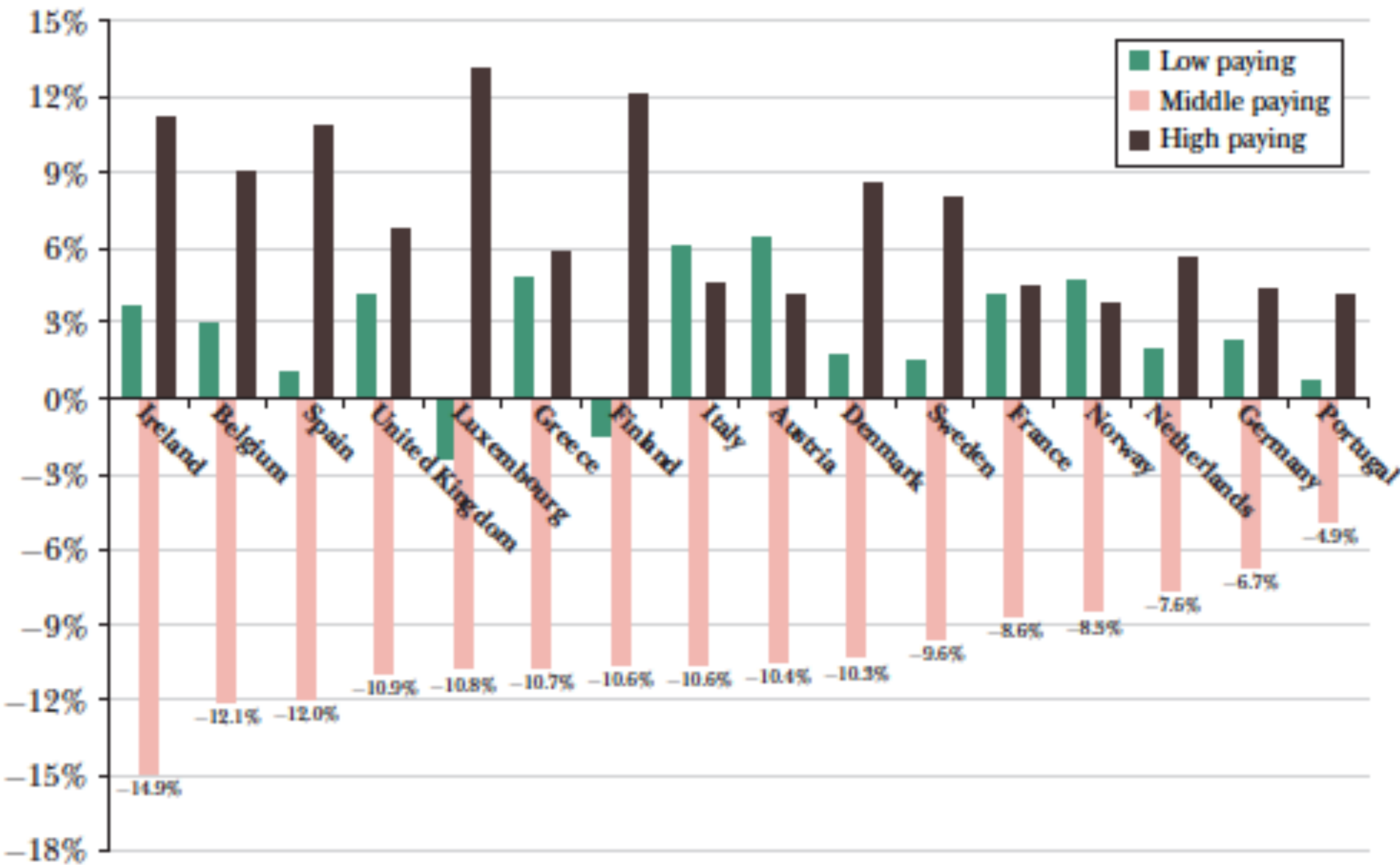


Source: Arntz, M., Gregory, T., & Zierahn, U. (2016). The risk of automation for jobs in OECD countries: A comparative analysis. In OECD Social, Employment, and Migration Working Papers No. 189. Paris: OECD Publishing.



# THE DISAPPEARANCE OF MIDDLE PAYING JOBS

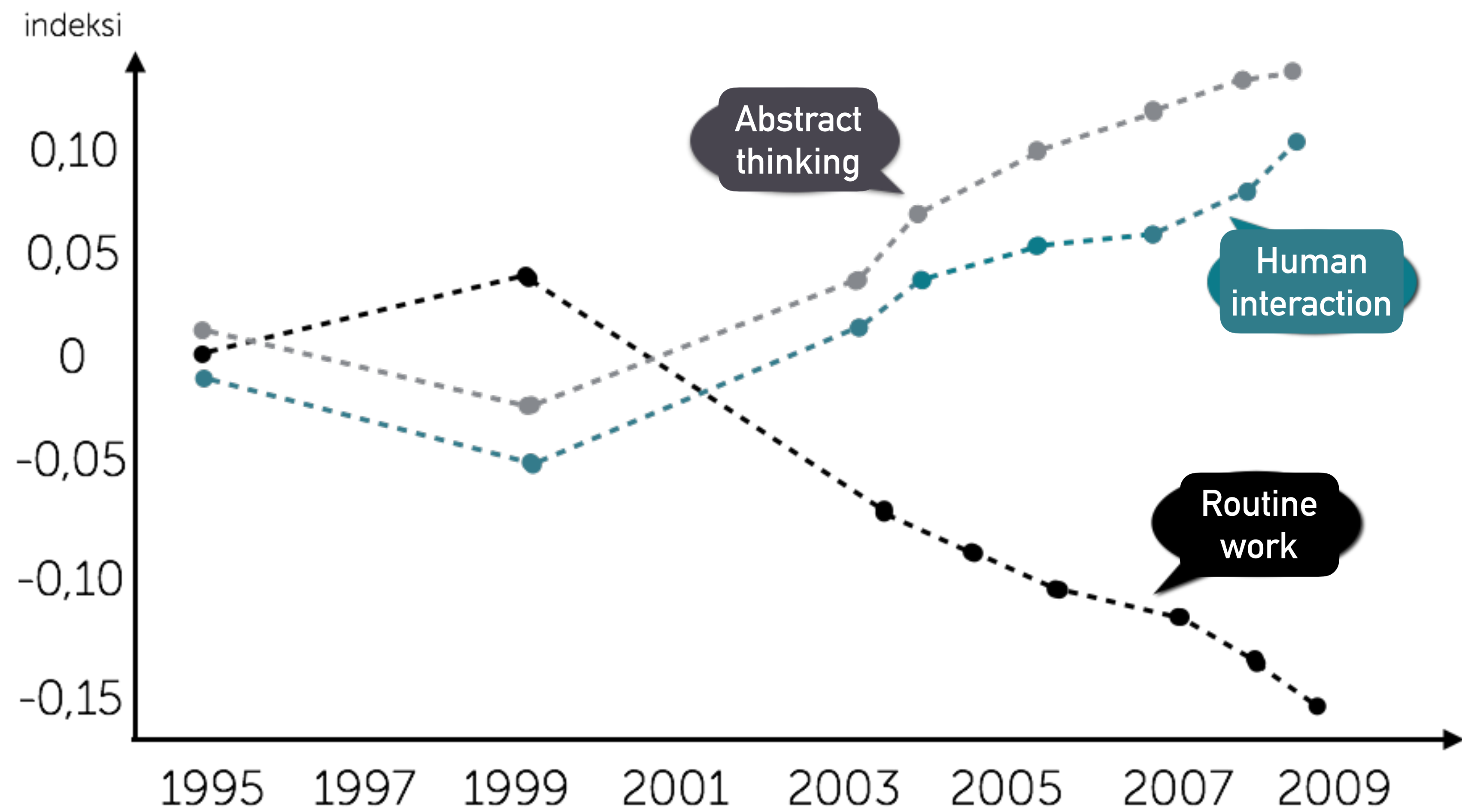
Figure 3  
Change in Occupational Employment Shares in Low, Middle, and High-Wage Occupations in 16 EU Countries, 1993–2010



Source: Goos, Manning, and Salomons (2014, table 2).

From: Autor, D. H. (2015). Why are there still so many jobs? The history and future of workplace automation. The Journal of Economic Perspectives, 29(3), 3–30.

# THE IMPACT OF AUTOMATIZATION ON THE TYPES OF WORK AVAILABLE

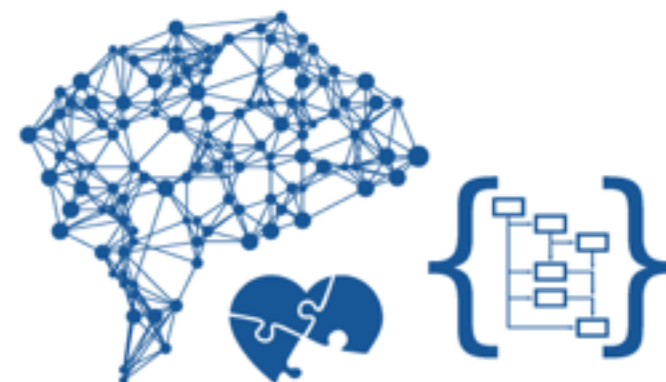


Lähde: Mika Maliranta, ETLA

# Top 10 skills

## in 2020

1. Complex Problem Solving
2. Critical Thinking
3. Creativity
4. People Management
5. Coordinating with Others
6. Emotional Intelligence
7. Judgment and Decision Making
8. Service Orientation
9. Negotiation
10. Cognitive Flexibility



## in 2015

1. Complex Problem Solving
2. Coordinating with Others
3. People Management
4. Critical Thinking
5. Negotiation
6. Quality Control
7. Service Orientation
8. Judgment and Decision Making
9. Active Listening
10. Creativity





# WHAT FUTURE WORK WILL BE LIKE

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- 1. TASKS REQUIRING CREATIVE, CRITICAL THINKING AND INDEPENDENT DECISION-MAKING**
- 2. TASKS REQUIRING HIGH-QUALITY HUMAN INTERACTION**

**—> THE QUALITY OF MOTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT WILL PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN CAREER SUCCESS**





# WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE 20-SOMETHING?

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JANUARY 24, 2008

THE TRUTH ABOUT  
SOCIAL SECURITY

## MEET THE TWIXTERS,

young adults  
who live off  
their parents,  
bounce from job  
to job and hop  
from mate to mate.  
They're not lazy...

# THEY JUST WON'T GROW UP

BY LEV GROSSMAN

www.time.com AOL Keyword: TIME



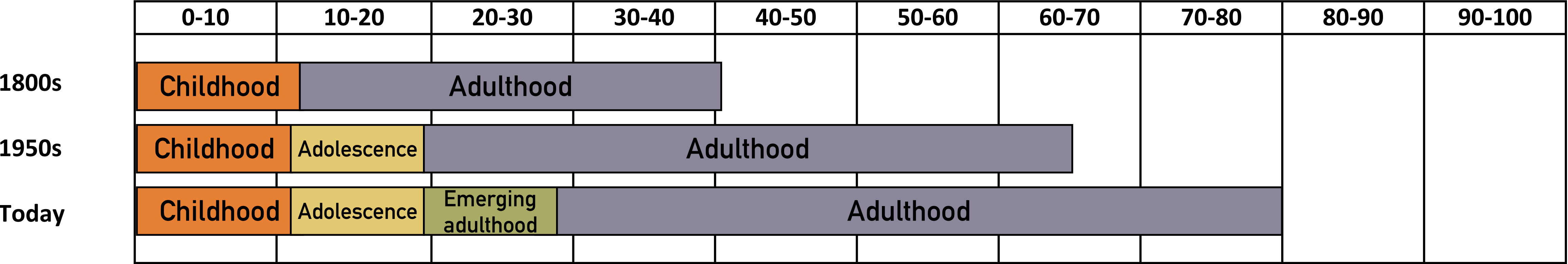
# TRADITIONAL MILESTONES OF 'ADULTHOOD'

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1. Marriage
2. Parenthood
3. Stable job
4. Financial independence

# EMERGING ADULTHOOD

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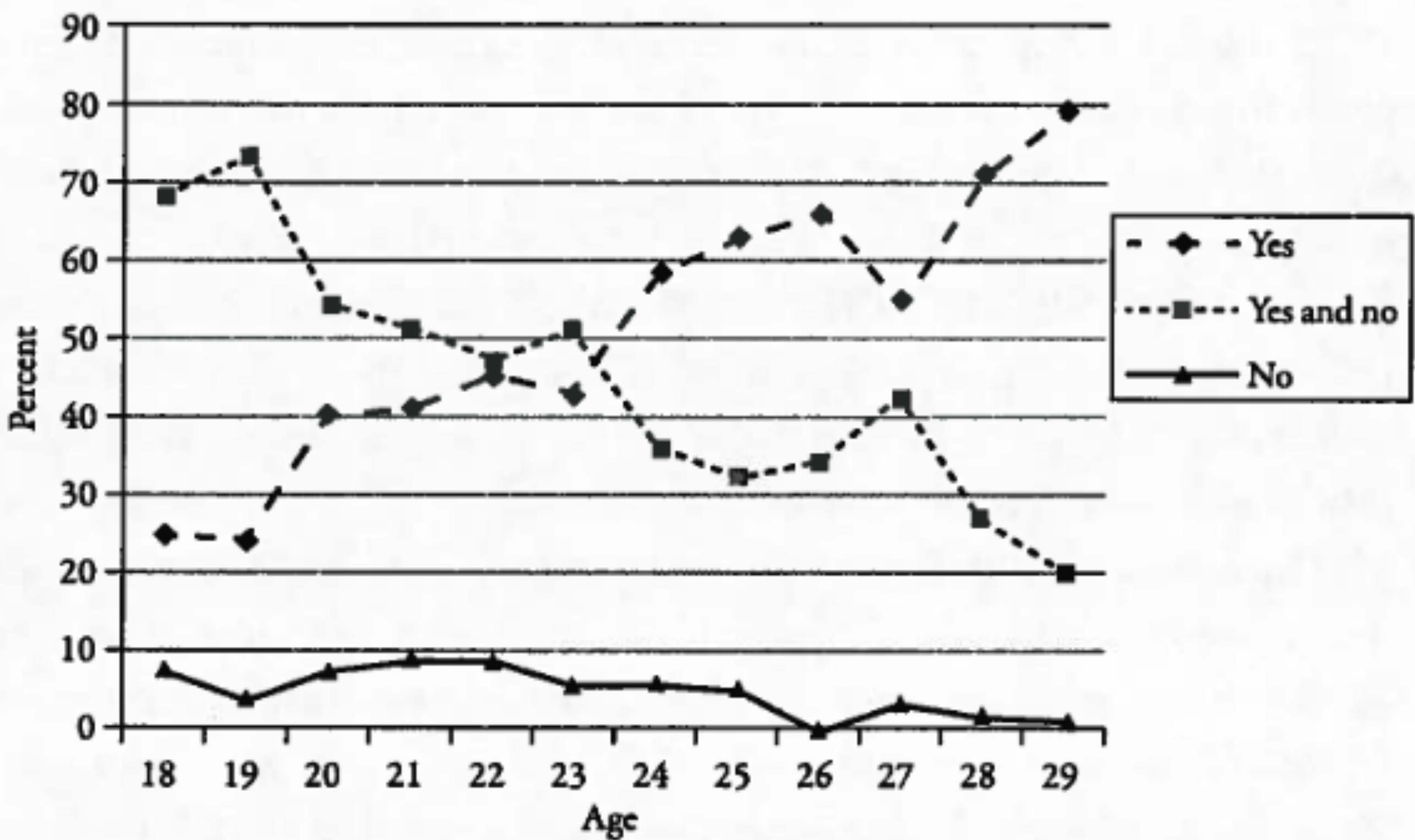




# EMERGING ADULTHOOD

**Table 1.1** The Five Features of Emerging Adulthood: Percent Agreement in a National (American) Sample

Feature of Emerging Adulthood	%
Identity Explorations	
This is a time of my life for finding out who I really am.	77
Instability	
This time of my life is full of changes.	83
Self-Focus	
This is a time of my life for focusing on myself.	69
Feeling In-Between	
Do you feel that you have reached adulthood?	
No	5
In some ways yes, in some ways no.	45
Yes	50
Possibilities	
At this time of my life, it still seems like anything is possible.	82



**Figure 1.5** Feeling “In-Between”: Changes With Age.

**NOT KNOWING WHAT YOU'LL  
BE WHEN YOU 'GROW UP' IS  
THE NEW NORMAL**



**LIFE DESIGN IS NOT HOUSE  
BUILDING.**

**IT IS A LIFELONG PROCESS**





# WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LIVE IN AN INDIVIDUALISTIC CULTURAL ERA?

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# COLLECTIVISM AND INDIVIDUALISM

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## COLLECTIVISM

## INDIVIDUALISM

**GROUP BEFORE  
INDIVIDUAL**

**INDIVIDUAL BEFORE  
GROUP**

Task **FULFILLING YOUR ROLE**

**FULFILLING YOURSELF**

Morality **GROUP NORMS**

**SELF-CHOSEN NORMS**

Feelings **MOSTLY IRRELEVANT**

**CENTRALLY IMPORTANT**

Norm  
violation **SHAME**

**GUILT**



# TRANSITION TO INDIVIDUALISM

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## GAINS

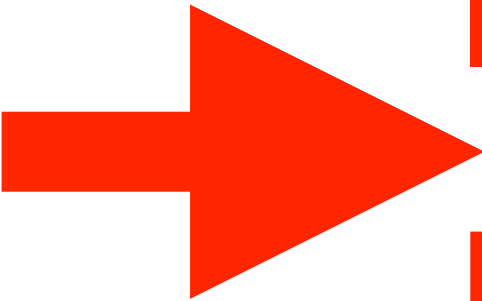
FREEDOM TO EXPRESS AND BE YOURSELF

FREEDOM TO CHOOSE YOUR OWN PATH

## LOSSES

LACK OF CLARITY AND DIRECTION

EROSION OF COMMUNITY



## SYNTHETIC

INAUTOMATIC

ESCAPE

LOSS



**LIFE VALUES, GOALS, DIRECTION  
AND MEANING WILL BE MORE  
AMBIGUOUS AND FLUCTUATING  
THAN EVER BEFORE**

**➔ BEST TO LEARN TO EMBRACE  
UNCERTAINTY**





**TODAY WE FOCUSED ON THE HISTORICAL  
SITUATION WHERE YOUR LIFE TAKES PLACE**

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**NEXT WEDNESDAY WE FOCUS ON YOU**



**MAKING THE TEAMS**

# MAKING THE TEAMS

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1. Make a team of 3 people from people around you
2. Write your names on a piece of paper (all three names on the same paper)
3. Bring the papers to the front of the lecture hall
4. I'll randomly match two teams together for teams of 6
5. Meet up with your team of 6
  1. Say hi to each other
  2. Gather contact information (email/phone) & student numbers
  3. Agree where you'll meet on Friday at 13
6. Send me the names and student numbers of your team





**THANK YOU!**

[frank.martela@aalto.fi](mailto:frank.martela@aalto.fi)