

TALLINN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

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**BENEFITS OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN  
COVID19 PERIOD – OPINION OF EMPLOYEES**

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I hereby declare that I have compiled the thesis independently and all works, important standpoints and data by other authors have been properly referenced and the same paper has not been previously presented for grading.

The document length is 12178 words from the introduction to the end of conclusion.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The Covid-19 pandemic was a real shock for all of humanity, claimed many lives, changed the usual course of time, had a devastating effect on the economy and much more. The states of all countries promptly reacted to the incident by providing the necessary assistance to their citizens. However, the author of this work was interested in exactly how corporations behaved towards their employees in the current situation and how their corporate social responsibility policy changed. The purpose of this work is to articulate the benefits of employees of Estonian companies due to the fact that employers were socially responsible during the Covid-19 pandemic. To accomplish this goal, previous studies on CSR were highlighted, examples of corporate social responsibility of corporations around the world during the Covid-19 pandemic were examined, employees of Estonian companies were interviewed regarding their benefits from the social responsibility of their firms during the pandemic, the data obtained were analysed, and conclusions. As a result, it was revealed that corporations in Estonia were not socially responsible enough towards their employees, and employees did not benefit from the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Key Words:** Covid-19 and CSR, CSR, Corporation social responsibility, employees, employees' benefits

## **INTRODUCTION**

2020 has been a very hard year for the whole world. A lot of natural disasters, threats of new wars, mass protests and of course one of the worst pandemics the world has seen in the decades have taken place. It was the Covid-19 pandemic that originated in China at the end of 2019 and spread across the whole world in 2020 that has caused major changes and consequences no one could even imagine.

The unimaginable rate of infection predetermined the rules, by which people had to live now. Governments closed borders, airlines cancelled flights, tourism has reached its lowest point, but all these measures did not manage to contain the virus. Because of that, curfews were introduced, restaurants were closed, concerts cancelled, people were forced to stay home and only go outside in case of emergency. Schools, universities and kindergartens were closed.

The words like lockdown, self-isolation, and quarantine have suddenly and swiftly integrated themselves into our speech. This complete cut-off of social life could not leave economies untouched. Many companies have gone bankrupt, many started reducing their spending, because of which millions of people all across the world have lost their jobs. The unemployment rate grew exponentially. In this atmosphere of chaos and despair, governments took the responsibility to support enterprises, people who had lost their job and economy as a whole.

However, it is important to understand that companies do not only have responsibilities to their shareholders, but to their employees, clients, suppliers and other interested parties (Jones, 1980). This is exactly what the concept of corporate social responsibility touches upon.

From the aforementioned information, the author conceived the idea to research how coronavirus has influenced the concept of corporate social responsibility and find out, whether companies were socially responsible or started reducing their spending no matter what.

While writing the thesis, the author has faced a problem: the topic he chose was too voluminous and was too large for a bachelor's thesis. Because of that, a decision was made to narrow down the topic and research the positive aspects that corporate social responsibility provided to employees. As the author is a resident of Estonia, he decided to examine only Estonian market.

The aim of this thesis is: to formulate benefits of employees of Estonian companies due to the fact that their employers were socially responsible for them during the Covid-19 pandemic.

While composing the theoretical part of the thesis, 3 main questions have been identified and used in the later part of analysis.

Research questions:

1. Is the CSR aimed at increasing workplaces in a company beneficial for employees of the following branches/industries: online, logistics, manufacture of goods with higher demand during the pandemic?
2. Does the CSR policy to have an opportunity to work remotely remain a benefit for employees during the time of pandemic?
3. Is the following list of benefits that employees received due to Covid-19 complete and relevant? The list of benefits includes: additional funds, paid leaves or quarantines, investments into leisure of employees' children, additional health insurance and investments into mental health.

In order to answer these questions, the following research steps will be completed:

T1: To outline and review previous research on CSR.

T2: To research examples of corporate social responsibility in corporations all across the world during the Covid-19.

T3: To conduct a questionnaire among employees of Estonian companies in regards to the benefits they received from the corporate social responsibility policy of their companies during the pandemic.

T4: To analyze the collected data

T5: To formulate the benefits of Estonian employees in connection to the social responsibility of their employers during the Covid-19 pandemic.

In order to achieve the goal, namely the step 3, a decision was made to conduct a quantitative analysis in the form of an online questionnaire.

The thesis consists of introduction, theoretical part, methodology, research and conclusion.

In order to write the theoretical part of the thesis, articles on the topic of CSR found in the Ebschost, Google Scholar, and Google Search have been used. The author has divided the theoretical part

into two subparts. In the first one, the history of corporate social responsibility is examined and the first step of the research is completed. The second part is aimed at researching the examples of corporate social responsibility all across the world during the Covid-19 pandemic. This will also complete the second step of the research. Due to the fact that the topic is very recent, there is no possibility to use exclusively scholarly articles when writing it. A lot of information will be taken from the official web-pages of companies in question and articles published on the official websites of WTO, UNESCO, The World Bank, etc.

Methodology includes the description of the technical part of the research, namely how many people and how they were questioned.

A part of the analysis is dedicated to analyzing the data collected in the quantitative research. This part includes the completion of step 4. Additionally, in this part of the research, the author answers the questions posed in the theoretical part.

The last, final part consists of conclusion, in which the author offers final answers to the research questions and formulates the benefits of Estonian employees in regards to their employers being socially responsible for them during the Covid-19 pandemic, which is ultimately the main objective of the thesis.

The author would like to thank his supervisor for her assistance in writing this thesis, as well as all people that took part in the questionnaire for providing data necessary to conduct the research.

# **1. CRS OVERWIEV**

## **1.1. Theoretical background of corporate social responsibility**

Howard Bowen was one of the first people to address the topic of social responsibility in business in the year of 1953 in his book „Social Responsibilities of the Businessman “According to his views, big corporations have great influence on society and are required to adjust their decisions, while taking into account the consequences they can lead to in said societies (Bowen, 1953). It is important to note that at that time he was rather talking about social responsibility (SR), than corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Carroll, 1999).

Later in 1960, in his work „Can business afford to ignore social responsibilities?“, (Davis) „Can business afford to ignore social responsibilities?“ derived “The Iron Rule of Social Responsibility”, according to which “social responsibility of a businessman should be proportional to one’s social power” (Davis, 1960). At the same time he claimed that avoidance of social responsibility leads to gradual decline of social power (Davis, 1960). From this, one can conclude that it was Davis who asserted the fact that a successful business cannot exist without social responsibility. In the same year, Frederick (1960) proposed a new theory of corporate responsibility and divided its zones of responsibility into five parts: «1) to have a criteria of value, 2) to be based on the latest concepts of management and administration, 3) to acknowledge the historical and cultural traditions behind the current social context, 4) to recognize that the behaviour of an individual businessmen is a function of its role within society and its social context, and, 5) to recognize that responsible business behaviour does not happen automatically but on the contrary, it is the result of deliberate and conscious efforts».

Later in 1967, in his new article “Understanding the social responsibility puzzle”, (Davis) talked about a new stage in the development of social responsibility as a concept, and drew attention to “institutional actions and their influence on social system as a whole” (Davis, 1967), thereby highlighting the role of corporations in issues of social responsibility. In the same year, Walton



admitted the contiguity of corporations and society and asserted that their interactions should be regulated by top-managers (Walton, 1967).

H. Jonson was one of the first people to assert that profit should not be the only goal of a corporation (1971). In his book “Business in Contemporary Society: Framework and Issues”, he specifies that the aim of any corporation, apart from profits, should also be its employees, suppliers, dealers, local institutions and nation as a whole (Jonson, 1971). Additionally, he approached the issue from a global perspective and presumed that “corporations increase their profits by conducting social programs” (Jonson, 1971). In other words, fulfilment of one’s social responsibilities is an investment into the future of one’s company.

In 1973, Henry Eilbirt and Robert Parker published a research called “The practice of business: The current status of corporate social responsibility”. In it, they listed the issues that the directors of major corporations considered to be important at that time (Carroll, 2008). The following issues were included: «Minority hiring (100) Ecology (concern for environment) (95), Minority training (91), Contributions to education (91), Contributions to the arts (83), Hard-core hiring (79), Hard-core training (66), Urban renewal (62), Civil rights (58)» ( Eilbirt, Parket 1973) (Eilbirt & Parket, 1973) (The number in brackets indicates the percentage of corporations that considered the issue to be important).

In 1980, in his work, Jones wrote that Corporate Social Responsibility is a notion that corporations not only have obligations to shareholders but to society, in particular to clients, employees, suppliers and related communities as well (Jones, 1980), which coincides with Jonson’s opinion on the matter (1971)

The nineties are determined by CSR being an integral part of big corporations (Carroll, 2008). New concepts, such as global social investments, corporate reputation, partnership with communities, corporate social policy and others have become common in big corporations (Muirhead, 1999). Following positions had emerged: Corporate philanthropy managers, corporate social responsibility managers (Muirhead, 1999).

In 1992, CSR was given a new definition: „a principle stating that corporations should be accountable for the effects of any of their actions on their community and environment” (Frederick et al. 1992).

In 2005, the book called «Corporate Social Responsibility: Doing the Most Good for Your Company and Your Cause» by Kotler, Philip and Lee, Nancy expanded the theoretical concept of

CSR. Among other issues the six main social initiatives that define CSR are described in the book. These initiatives include: (1) cause promotion (increasing awareness and concern for social causes); (2) cause-related marketing (contributing to (p. 41) causes based on sales); (3) corporate social marketing (behaviour change initiatives); (4) corporate philanthropy (contributing directly to causes); (5) community volunteering (employees donating time and talents in the community); and (6) socially responsible business practices (discretionary practices and investment to support causes). (Kotler, Lee 2005) (Kotler & Lee, 2005)

Many other research papers on social corporate responsibility of the 2000s were rather of empirical nature. So in 2006, Manuel Castelo Branco and Lúcia Lima Rodrigues drew attention to the connection between investments into social responsibility and non-material resources, specifically the ones regarding employees (Branco, Rodrigues 2006). In 2008, Wayne Visser raised the issue of poverty reduction in developing countries and how it influences CSR in his research (Visser, 2008).

From the information mentioned above one can conclude that the topic of corporate social responsibility has been relevant for the last seventy years and widely covered in scientific articles.

It is important that topics covering corporate responsibility on a social level are highly dependent on what is happening in the world at a given moment in time. Davis (1960) suggested that it is the occurring fundamental social, cultural and political shifts that reflect the burden that entrepreneurs must carry, when fulfilling public and social responsibilities. For example, the movements for protection of workers' rights that began after the industrial revolution in the sixties, for the first time forced entrepreneurs to address the social aspect of business (Agudelo et al. 2019). The seventies were driven by environmental concerns, adding an environmental dimension to the definition of CSR (Agudelo et al. 2019).

From that one can conclude that a global event like the COVID-19 pandemic, that affected the world in 2019, simply could not be ignored by the concept of corporate social responsibility. Because of that, the author of this thesis decided to pay special attention to the topic of CSR during the pandemic of COVID-2019.

## 1.2. Covid and CSR

On 31st December 2019, the World Health Organisation called attention to cases of “viral pneumonia” in the city of Wuhan, People’s Republic of China. Later the virus would be named “coronavirus”. After less than a month WHO reported first cases of infection in Europe, and already on the 11th of March concluded that the COVID-19 outbreak could be characterised as epidemic (WHO, 2020).

As at 25th of October 2020, there is 43 323 448 confirmed cases of COVID-19 (Figure 1), including 1 158 810 deaths (Figure 2). (Worldometer, 2020)

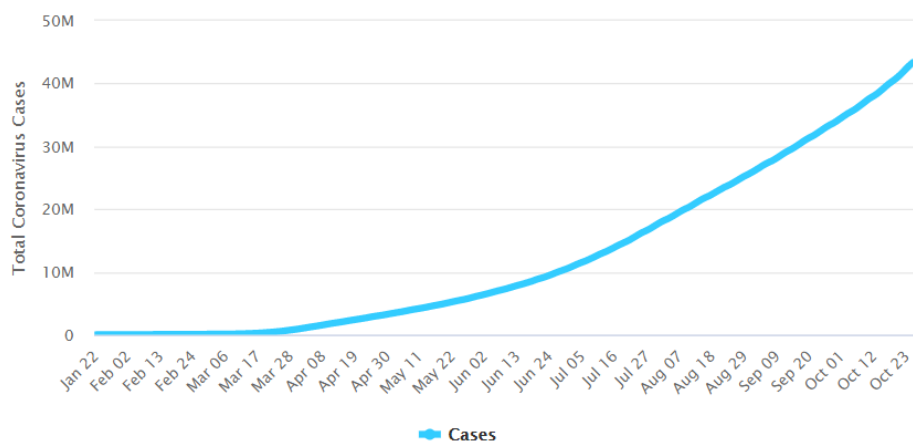


Figure 1. Total Cases (worldwide)

Source: (Worldometer, 2020) It is evident that since mid-March, there has been an increase in infection and mortality from covid 19.

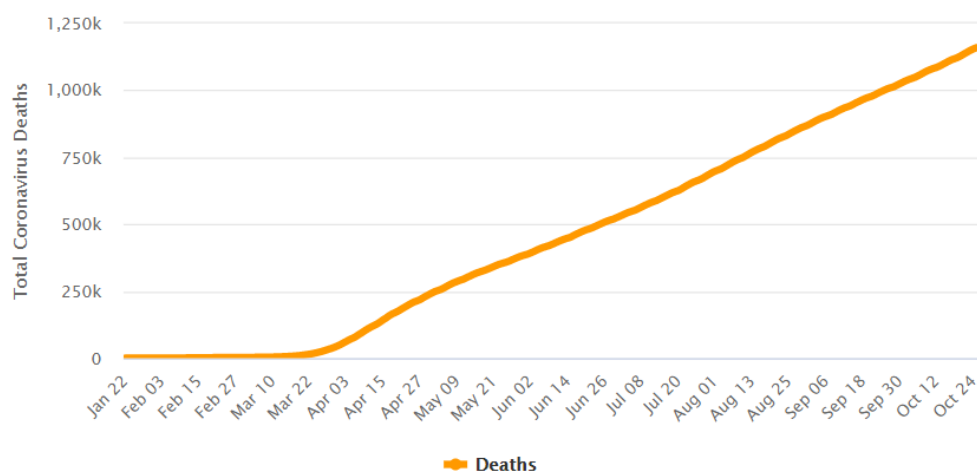


Figure 2. Total Deaths (worldwide)

Source: (Worldometer, 2020)

As the virus spread, the governments of different countries needed to react accordingly. The most common reaction was closure of borders and full or partial quarantine inside the affected countries (TheWorldBank, 2020). All across the world, school and university students switched to learning online. According to the data published by UNESCO (2020), the closure of schools and universities because of COVID-19 affected more than 1.5 million students worldwide, which amounts to 87% of the total number of students.

Mass closure of enterprises, massive lay-backs and transition to home office have resulted in serious economic consequences. Workers in the service industry became unemployed (Thompson, 2020); hotel and tourist industries were halted (lay-offs in these branches reached 90%) (Fernandes, 2020); millions of Americans could not afford health care, as they have lost their jobs and their health insurance with them (Thompson, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic has destroyed the life of every single human and the economy as a whole (Popkova et al. 2021). The outbreak of coronavirus had also prompted people to reexamine their lifestyles, it urged organizations to reconsider their aims and values within the general ecosystem of business (Alliance Manchester Business School, 2020). This, in turn, has contributed to the development of initiatives of corporate social responsibilities (CSR), as more and more companies felt the need to react to consumer expectations, to act with higher social awareness (Alliance Manchester Business School, 2020).

Popkova *et al.* , (2021) in their article «Corporate Social Responsibility Amid Social Distancing During the COVID-19 Crisis: BRICS vs. OECD Countries» believe that corporate social responsibility has reached a new level in the conditions of social distancing caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Hongwei and Lloyd (2020) claim that the Covid-19 pandemic gives corporations an opportunity to switch to more fair and authentic CSR and contribute to solving urgent global social and ecological problems. P. Kirloskar (2020) regards the COVID-19 period as a good time to relaunch and reconsider the whole concept of CSR both in terms of its constituents and politics that manage it to coordinate CSR actions with people's actual needs.. Wenzhi *et al.* ,(2020) have proven in their research that companies with stronger politics and higher activity of CSR before the pandemic had higher stock value during the pandemic.

In April, (2020) André Gonçalves published his opinion on Yumatter, regarding what lessons entrepreneurs should learn from the pandemic. One of them states that companies should conduct open and transparent discussions with every interested party and strive to create a relationship of

trust. According to the definition of Jones (1980), clients, employees, suppliers and related communities are interested in CSR policies the most.

In the opinion stated on the OECD web-site (2020), inclusion of responsible business behaviour standards into measures to overcome the COVID-19 crisis could help companies both to make decisions regarding ecological, social and administrative crisis-related issues, as well as to ensure that the taken measure would not create additional risks for people, planet and society. The way business behaviour responsibility changes in times of crisis will have long-term effects on balance of companies and their productivity in time of recovery. Companies that take decisive steps to eliminate the risks related to the COVID-19 crisis in the way that would reduce adverse impacts on their workers and supply chains will, most likely, create longer-lasting value and sustainability, increasing their short-term resilience, as well as opportunities for medium-term and long-term recovery. In short-term perspective, observing RBC at the height of the crisis also guarantees that taken measures will minimise unfavourable consequences for both people and the planet. (OECD, 2020)

While the aim of this research is to formulate the benefits of employees working at Estonian companies, due to the fact that their employers were socially responsible during the COVID-19 pandemic, the author considers it necessary to focus on only one group of interested parties, that is on employees. In the next paragraph, examples of corporate social responsibility applied by international corporations in the Covid-19 pandemic will be examined through the lens of employee benefits.

### **1.2.1. Corporate social responsibility during Covid-19 – groups of employees**

Companies need to be more resistant and adaptive (Gonçalves, 2020). Kirloskar (2020) claims that in the time of crisis the CSR fund should not strive for public charity, but instead invest in creation of jobs in the sphere the company works in. That was, for example, what Amazon did. The rising demand for online deliveries forced the company to hire hundreds of thousands additional warehouse workers and couriers. At the same time it was decided to raise the hourly wage. This way, the wage was raised by \$2 in the US. To accomplish this, Amazon planned to spend \$350 million (Amazon, 2020). Online markets definitely became more successful during the pandemic (Arora, 2020). According to Forbes, Amazon received a huge increase in sales, due to the quarantine, as the consumers were not able to visit shops and make purchases there (Arora, 2020). On the 12th of March, when the isolation from COVID-19 started, the stock value of the company

reached its peak at 1 676,61 USD (Arora, 2020). At the end of June, it was almost 1 000 USD higher than a couple of months ago (Arora, 2020).

Creation of new workplaces is certainly a policy of corporate social responsibility that benefits employees. Yet, the Amazon example urges one to consider if the CSR concept aimed at investing into creation of workplaces is only possible for industries that were either growing during Covid-19 or had an increase in demand for services or goods they provide. Consequently, only employees in certain industries would benefit from that.

This point of view is confirmed by the OECD research that indicates a decrease of economic activity in all branches among the countries of G-7 due to the pandemic of Covid-19. It is also necessary to note that OECD (2020) acknowledges decrease in demand and impossibility for companies to function. So, companies that produce products that are not considered essential in this period and are not expected to have an increase in demand are forced to decrease their economic activity until it fully halts. Based on the findings of OECD, a total halt of vehicle production and other personal or household services; 50 per cent decrease of production is expected to happen in construction and professional services; 75 percent decrease is expected to happen in tourist industry, avia transportation, arts and leasure (OECD, 2020).

In the view of Forbes, industries with increased demand during Covid-19 were: supermarkets, sanitiser manufacturers, liquor stores, enterprises that offer online entertainment (i.e. Netflix) and enterprises that offer solutions for working online (i.e. Zoom) (Arora, 2020).

According to The Economic Times, companies that thrived during Covid were companies that benefited from isolation and home office: streaming OTT services, online educational websites, digital content suppliers, online gaming and other similar enterprises.

In the opinion of journalistic flair “The Conversation“, the branches that benefited the most during the corona-crisis were logistics companies (home food delivery as well), e-commerce trading platforms, streaming platforms and games (Harris, 2020).

According to the examples mentioned above, one can divide the benefitting branches into three categories: one way or another connected to online (streaming services, e-shops, online conference platforms, etc.), logistics and manufacturers of goods with increased demand during the pandemic (masks, sanitisers, etc.).

Taking all the aforementioned into account, one can conclude that CSR aimed at increasing workplaces in a company is beneficial for employees of the following branches/industries: online, logistics, manufacture of goods with higher demand during pandemic.

Nowadays, the strategy of enterprises in the area of corporate social responsibility is compared to its ability to maintain processes and procedures in the area of worker protection, workplace safety, and high-quality production and provision of services (Alliance Manchester Business School, 2020). Some consider that one of the most important indications of implementation of work safety during COVID-19 is providing employees an opportunity to work from home.

André Gonçalves (2020) agrees that flexibility and ability to adapt to circumstances plays an important role in the CRS policy. However, he claims that if previously an opportunity to work from home was simply a plus to a company's reputation, now it's rather a necessity that can save the company from bankruptcy. (Gonçalves, 2020). In support of this thought, Gartner, in his research, came to the conclusion that almost a quarter of financial directors have announced that they transfer at least 20% of their employees to permanent remote positions (Gartner, 2020). In the work called „What Jobs are Being Done at Home During the Covid-19 Crisis? Evidence from Firm-Level Surveys“ ( Bartik et al. 2020), it was concluded that more than a third of questioned companies, where employees were transferred to remote positions, consider that remote work will remain more prevalent in their company even after the crisis is over.

From the aforementioned, it can be concluded that it is possible that remote work will remain unavoidable for much longer than the duration of the pandemic. Some of repeated questionnaires conducted before the crisis have shown that 80% of employees would like to spend at least some part of their time working from home (Lister, 2020). The question if they would still prefer to work remotely after a year of pandemic remains open. In other words, does the CSR policy to have an opportunity to work remotely remain a benefit for employees during this time?

According to the Employee Benefits research, almost all employers (46%) have changed their concept of CSR and increased attention to their compliance to health and well-being of their employees due to the COVID-19 pandemic (coronavirus) (Pratt, 2020). For example, a research conducted in America has shown that COVID-19 urges employers to be significantly more interested in benefits. The benefits include: paid leave, support programs for employees, insurance or compensation of losses, mental health services, discounts on health-related services (sport, massage) (Mayer, 2020)

For example, an American company Target decided not to work online, and instead provided its employees other benefits. They offered a paid 14-day quarantine, and a possibility to take a paid leave up to 39 days for the most vulnerable group of people: those aged 65 and older. In order to provide their employees a possibility to keep working during the time when schools are closed and their kids are forced to learn from home, an additional free care offer was included into the CSR system of the company for every employee from the US: including discounts on tutoring and educational resources, as well as assistance in finding babysitters, child care centres or caregivers. (Target, 2020)

Twitter and Sun Life U.S. also invested into the leisure of children that are forced to learn at home while their parents continue to go to work. They have created a platform with virtual camps. (Mayer, 2020)

One of the largest food market chains, Kroger, that remained open, as most other businesses were closed because of coronavirus, offered its employees various bonuses and increased number of paid leave days to aid them and express its gratitude. It also paid out a one-time bonus for every employee as an additional support measure. (Mayer, 2020)

Starbucks paid special attention to the mental being of its workers (Mayer, 2020). Following services are included into the psychological assistance package of Starbucks: free psychological counselling for employees and their relatives, a meditation course, as well as assistance by employee support centres (Williams, 2020).

The topic of CSR has been of interest to people from the middle of the 20th century to the present day. The author of the work analyzed a number of articles from the 1960s to 2020, and noticed that each author introduced new elements of the meaning of the concept into the CSR concepts and let's understand what advantages CSR can give. Especially now, in times of unstable situation in the world, when people are left with themselves with problems in the workplace.

The author has identified and proposes the following benefits from CSR: from these examples, one can compile a list of benefits that employees received due to COVID-19. These were: additional funds, paid leaves or quarantines, investments into leisure of employees' children, additional health insurance and investments into mental health.



## **2. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH**

### **2.1. Methodology of the research and data collection**

In order to investigate the conclusions put forward in the theoretical part the author has used quantitative research by composing Appendix 1.). The aim of the questionnaire is to collect information necessary to conduct subsequent analysis and fulfill the objective of the research, namely formulating benefits that workers receive from the CSR policy in Estonian companies during the pandemic.

The questionnaire consists of 5 blocks. The first one aims to define personal characteristics (gender, age, occupation). Occupation is an important criterion in this research. This question enables the author to divide the questioners into 4 groups: unemployed, entrepreneurs, students and employees. Since the objective of the thesis is to formulate employee benefits specifically, employees are the target audience of the questionnaire. Because of that, it is important to separate respondents that are unemployed, students or entrepreneurs and concentrate on questioning the target audience.

A block named „Unemployed”, following the question on occupation, is listed separately. Only the respondents who have marked the graph „unemployed” are redirected to this question. The main objective of the work is not to determine, whether respondents have lost their job or not, but the author considered this question to be important in analyzing the full picture of what was happening on the labor market during the pandemic.

Next follow 3 blocks of the questionnaire, each of them aiming to collect information to either confirm or refute the conclusions made in the theoretical part. Only the respondents who marked themselves as „employees” may answer questions presented in this part.

The third block is dedicated to answering the question put forward in the theoretical part: is CSR aimed at increasing the number of workplaces during pandemic a benefit for employees in

following branches: online, logistics, manufacture of goods, the demand for which should increase during pandemic. This block consists of four questions.

The fourth block aims to answer the question put forward in the theoretical part: are the benefits that employees received during Covid-19 the following: additional funds, paid leaves of quarantine, investments into leisure of employees' children, additional health insurance and investments into mental health. The block consists of three questions.

The last fifth block consists of every benefit touched upon in the theoretical part of CSR and aimed at employees. It was decided to give every questionee a possibility to answer questions in the fifth block, without any limit on audience.

The questionnaire was composed in both Estonian and Russian languages. This was done to the fact that the aim of the questionnaire was to formulate employee benefits of Estonian companies, and the majority of Estonian employees speak either Estonian or Russian.

The questionnaire in both languages was available in electronic format on Google Docs during the period of 1 november to 15 november. The link to the questionnaire was distributed to companies and accessible on social media. The questionnaire was sent to 20 Estonian companies via email. The relevant e-mail addresses were found on the companies' web pages. The author tried to send the questionnaire to personnel managers, if it was possible. Also, the link to the questionnaire was posted in several groups on social media such as Facebook and LinkedIn.

One of the problems faced when collecting the data was the unwillingness of people to fill out the questionnaire and the disinterest of employers, whom the questionnaire was sent to, to distribute it among their staff, as it could damage the reputation of the company and cause disagreements between employers and employees.

A total of 210 people have taken part in the questionnaire, which makes data analysis possible. The results were coded and added into Excel, after which they were analyzed, and conclusions were made

## **2.2. Analysis of the results of the survey.**

A total of 210 have participated in the research. Out of which, 138 (66%) respondents were women and 72 (34%) men.

All respondents were divided into five age groups. The first one – younger than 18 years – consists only of one respondent, which amounts to less than one percent of all people questioned. The second group includes people from 19 to 25. This group includes 50 people, which represents 24% of respondents. The third group, consisting of respondents aged 26 to 35, makes up 43% of respondents. This is the largest group and includes 91 respondents in total. The fourth group, aged from 36 to 45, amounts to 16% of respondents and includes 33 people. The last group consists of respondents over 46 years of age. This group includes 35 people, making up 17% of respondents. Figure 3 demonstrated below represents the age distribution of respondents.

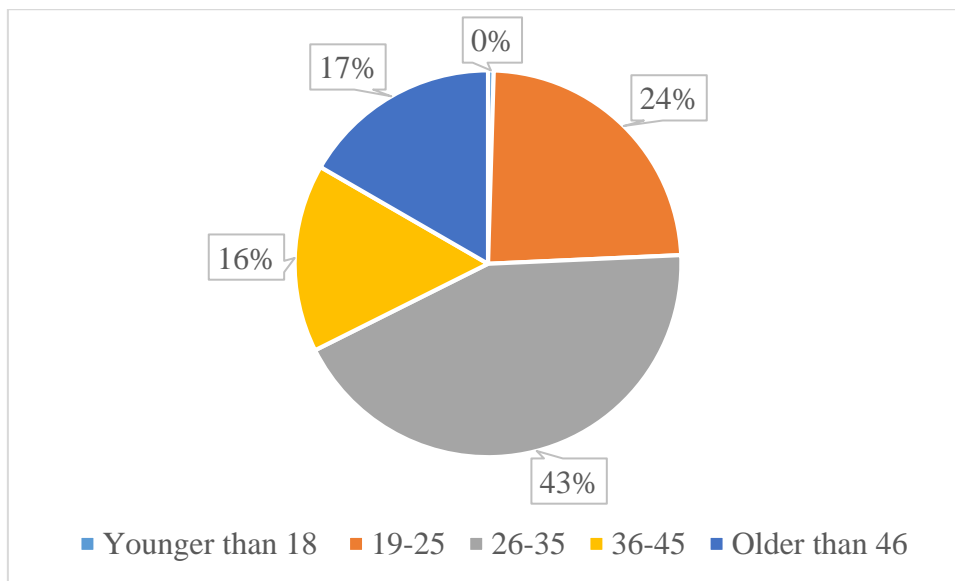


Figure 3. Respondents' age  
Source: Made by author

The next question addressed employment and divided respondents into four groups. The aim of this question was to identify the target audience of the research. Due to the fact that the objective of this thesis is to formulate the benefits of employees of Estonian companies, as their employers were socially responsible for them during the Covid-19 pandemic, it was necessary to separate employees and hired workers specifically. The smallest group out of four presents in the questionnaire consists of people who answered that they were unemployed at the time: 15 respondents or 7% respectively. The next group – entrepreneurs – amounts to 21 respondents or 10%. Students make up a slightly bigger percentage: 27 people or 13% of all respondents. The largest group consists of hired workers: consists of 147 respondents or 70%. Figure 4 shown below indicates the employment distribution of respondents.

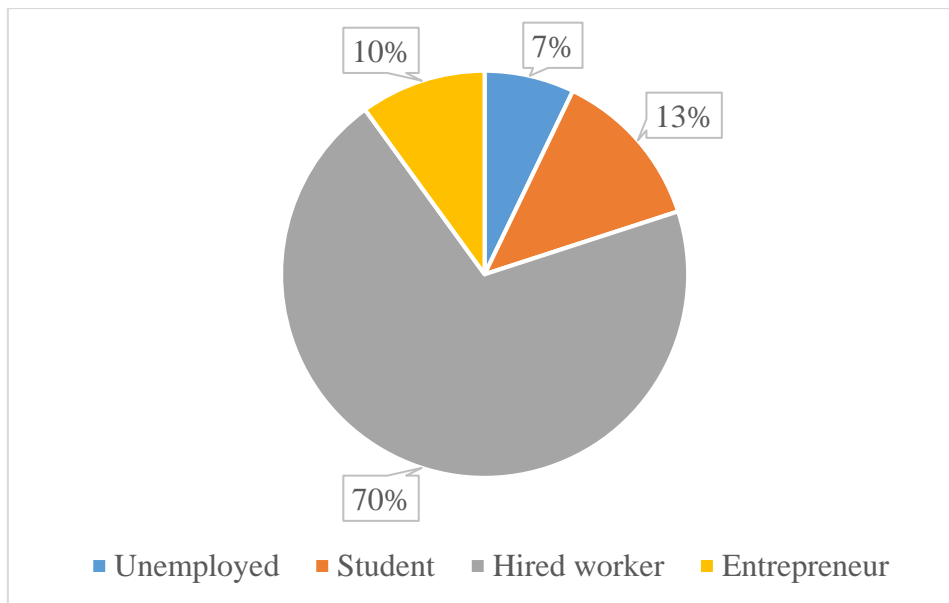


Figure 4. Respondents' employment.

Source: Made by author

The target audience of the research is hired workers. The number of hired workers (147 people or 70% of respondents) in this questionnaire give the author the opportunity to continue the research of the target audience and consider it relevant.

Even though analysis of unemployment was not one of the objectives of the thesis, the author decided to create an additional question for those who answered 'unemployed' in the 'employment' graph in order to evaluate what happens on the work market during a pandemic. The question is as follows: „Have you lost your job during the pandemic? “. 15 people answered this question, and only three respondents (20%) indicated that they did lose their job during the pandemic, whereas 12 respondents (80%) answered that they were unemployed before the pandemic. The results of the survey indicated that 20% of respondents have lost their job during the pandemic.

The number of respondents in this part is too meager to make conclusions about the economic situation in Estonia and whether the pandemic contributed to unemployment in Estonia.

The second block of question follows, aiming at answering the question put forward in the theoretical part (and the first research question): Is CSR aimed at increasing workplaces in a company beneficial for employees of the following branches/industries: online, logistics, manufacture of goods with higher demand during pandemic?

The second block consists of four questions that only hired workers could answer (147 people). As the first question precisely defines the fields, which demonstrated an increase of workplaces, it is necessary for the research to first determine the fields the companies that employ the respondents work in. In the questionnaire, the respondents had the opportunity to choose, whether the company they work in deals with online technologies (for example, streaming platforms, online marketplaces, online conference platforms, etc.), and logistics or manufactures goods with higher demand during the pandemic (for example, masks, sanitizers, etc.). Additionally, respondents could choose the option 'other' and type in the field of their company if the above mentioned ones do not fit. On the Figure 5 the data is presented that shows that about 40% of respondents (or 59 people) work in companies that provide online technologies; 12% (or 18 people) work in logistics; 5% (or 7 people) work in companies that manufacture goods with increased demand during the pandemic; 43% (or 63 people) provided other answers.

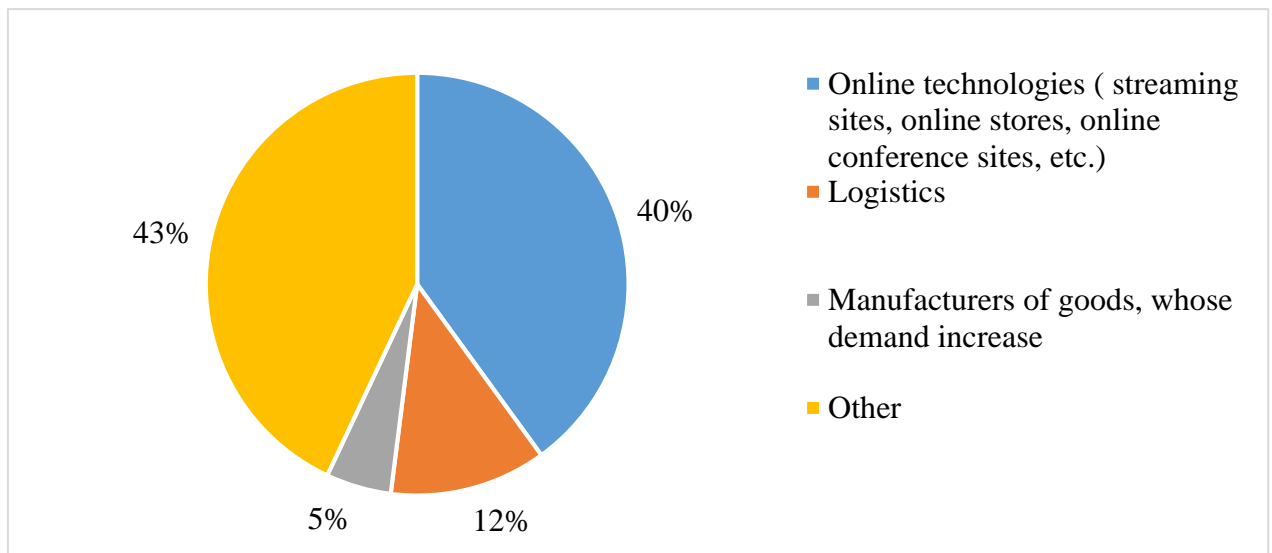


Figure 5 : Field of activity  
Source: Made by author

The following field distribution may be attributed to the fact that Estonia is a very developed country in the field of info technologies, hence the predominance of people working in the sphere.

It is also necessary to examine Figure 6 where the distribution of fields from the option 'other' is displayed. As 63 people provided other answers, the author grouped them into fields in the following way: Retail trade 29% or 18 people, Service – 19% or 12 people, Education – 17% or 11 respondents, Construction – 11% or 7 people, Finances – 9% or 6 respondents, Manufacture of goods, demand for which has not increased during the pandemic – 5% or 3 respondents; About

3% or 2 people each work in the fields of energy production and entertainment, and about 2% or 1 person each works in the fields of healthcare and real estate

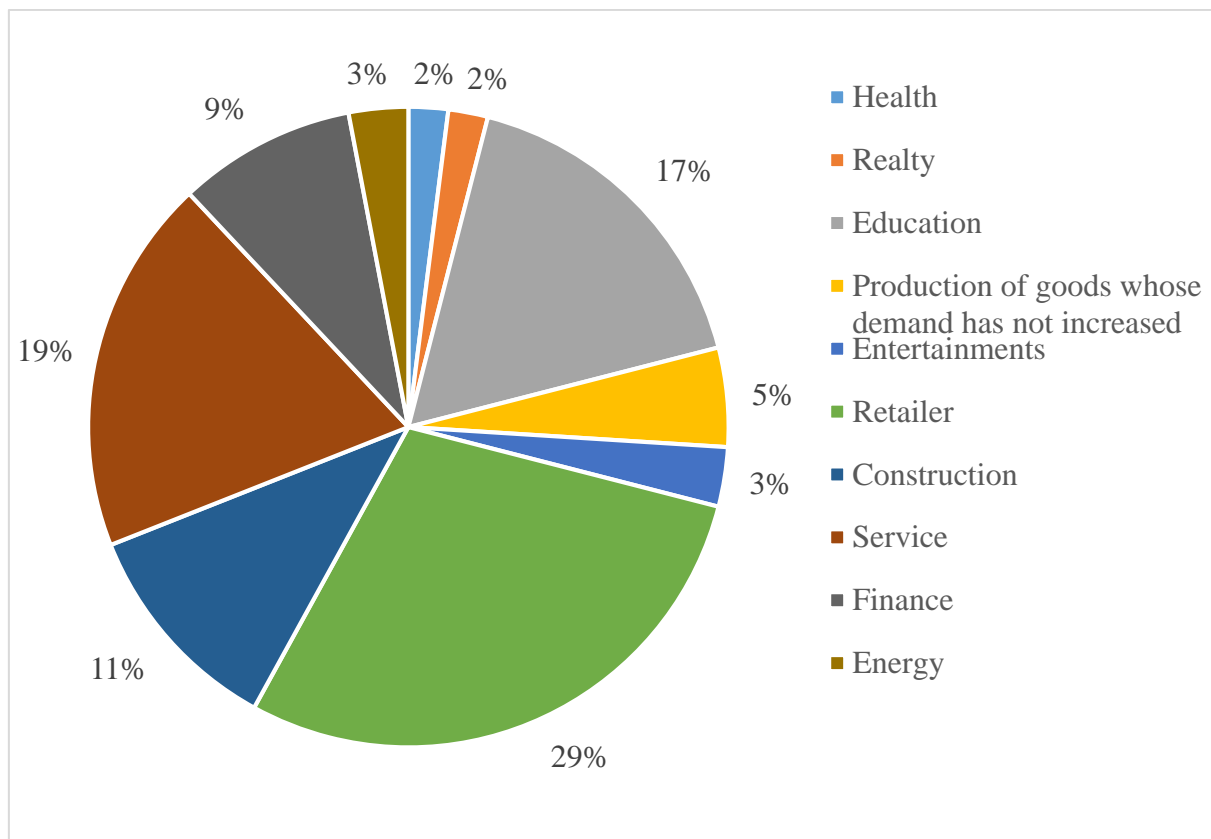


Figure 6. Field of activity from other industries  
Source: Made by author

Respondents were asked the following two questions to determine, whether the demand for goods/services provided by the company the work at has increased during the pandemic or not and whether additional work places were created. Apart from that, the author would like to ascertain whether there is a correlation between an increase in demand for goods and creation of additional workplaces in a company.

In Table 1, the data regarding the demand for services or goods and increase of workplaces in fields touched upon in the first part of research is shown.

According to the data, there was an increase in demand in the field of online technologies. 86% of respondents confirmed that their products or services were in higher demand during the pandemic. However, additional jobs have not been created. Only 40% answered that new workplaces were created in their companies during the pandemic. In the field of logistics, only 17 respondents confirmed that demand for their services was higher. Accordingly, additional jobs have not been

created in this field. Only 6% of respondents (or one person) confirmed that there was an increase in workplaces.

Table 1. Growth in demand for services and increasing employment in the investigated sectors

Investigated sectors		Growing demand for products or services		The number of jobs has increased	
Industry	total respondents in this industry	yes	no	yes	no
Online technologies	59	51	8	24	35
Logistics	18	3	15	1	17
Manufacturers of goods with increased demand	7	5	2	1	6
Total	84	59	25	26	58

Source: Made by author

Due to the fact that all three fields, namely online technologies, logistics and manufacture of goods with increased demand during the pandemic, were added as one option in the first question, it is important to examine them as one unit too.

70% of respondents working in the target fields have noticed a rise in demand for products or services that their company provides, while only 31% of them agreed that there will be an increase in available positions during the pandemic.

These fields (online, logistics and manufacture of goods with increased demand during the pandemic) were chosen in the theoretical part for a reason. There, using the data provided by OCED (2020), the author recognized the connection between the decrease in demand and the inability of companies to function. Consequently, after researching the examples of worldwide enterprises, the author concluded that an increase of available positions during the pandemic is only possible if the demand for provided services/goods is increased and proposed the aforementioned fields for analysis.

In order to give a thorough answer to the question, it is necessary to research if there is a connection between an increase in demand for products/services and creation of additional positions in responden companies.

To do that, the author conducted a correlation analysis of the two parameters. The first one was an increase in demand for production/services; the second one was creation of additional positions.

The correlation coefficient derived from calculations was 0,998289444, which means that these parameters have strong direct correlation. In other words, an increase in one of them leads to increase in the other. In case of this research, this coefficient implies that the more people notice an increase in demand for any given production, the more positions are available in the company.

From the aforementioned, it can be concluded that even though the correlation between an increase in demand for production and creation of additional positions exists, it does not represent the current market situation. However, one must notice that even though there is an increase in demand in target fields, there is no clear increase in available positions.

To give a full overview of the situation, the author proposes to examine Table 2, which shows the same data, but according to the fields that the respondents included themselves. The data from the table shows that there was no increase in demand for products/services in other fields. Only 32% of respondents answered that they notice an increased demand for products in their fields. Additionally, mere 20% of questionees answered that there was an increase in available positions in their companies.

Table 2. Growth in demand for services and increasing employment in other industries

Other sectors		Growing demand for products or services		The number of jobs has increased	
Industry	respondents in this industry	yes	no	yes	no
Health	1	1	0	0	1
Realty	1	0	1	0	1
Education	11	5	6	1	10
Production of goods whose demand has not increased	3	2	1	0	3
Entertainments	2	1	1	0	2
Retailer	18	6	12	3	15
Construction	7	1	5	2	5
Service	12	4	7	3	8
Finance	6	2	4	3	3
Energy	2	0	2	1	1
Total	63	22	39	13	49

Source: Made by author

From the data listed above, one can conclude that most respondents only marked online technologies and production of goods with increased demand during the pandemic as the fields



with increased demand during the pandemic. Sadly, most respondents also marked that no additional positions were created in these fields.

In order to provide a thorough answer to the first question of the research, it is important to examine whether employees from fields in question consider having additional positions a benefit for employees. Table 3 shows how important employees from fields in question consider having an increase in available positions to be

Table 3. Increase in available positions in the companis in the investigated sectors

Investigated sectors	1 – Not important	2-Doesn't matter	3 – Of medium importance	4-Important	5 – Very important
Online technologies	6	4	20	17	12
Logistics	3	4	7	0	4
Manufacturers of goods, whose demand increased	0	1	3	0	3
Total	9	9	30	17	19

Source: Made by author

Based on the data from the table, 6 people or 10% of questionees working in online technologies do not consider an increase in available positions to be a benefit; 20 respodents (34%) or the majority of respondents think that an increase in available positions is a benefit of medium importance; 29% or 17 people answered that an increase in available positions is an important employee benefit; and only 12 questionees or 20% think it is very important.

The opinion of people working in logistics was distributed in the following way: 3 respodents or 17% of respondents think having additional positions not important at all; 4 people or 22% consider it to be not important; 7 respondents or 39% think it is of medium importance; no person considers it important; and 4 people or 22% answered it was a very important benefit for them.

In the field of manufacture of goods with increased demand during the pandemic, opinions were distributed as follows: no person answered that having an increase in available positions was not important at all or important; 1 person thinks it is not that important; 3 people consider it to be of medium importance; and 3 people think it is very important.

When examining the overall opinion of employees of target fields, the majority considers having additional positions to be of medium importance (30 respodents or 35%); 20% consider this benefit

to be important; 23% think it is very important; 11% in each graph think it is either not that important or not important at all.

In order to analyze the whole picture of the research, the author proposes to examine the data collected from workers of non-target fields, as well as the data collected from workers of fields marked as ‘other’. The data is shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Importants of increase in available positions in ohter sectors

Other sectors	1 – Not important	2- No matter	3 – The medium is important	4 – Important	5 – Very important
Health	0	0	0	0	1
Realty	1	0	0	0	0
Education	2	2	3	0	4
Production of goods whose demand has not increased	0	0	1	1	1
Entertainments	0	1	1	0	0
Retailer	8	0	8	2	0
Construction	2	1	3	1	0
Service	3	0	6	0	3
Finance	1	1	3	1	0
Energy	0	1	0	1	0
Total	17	6	25	6	9

Source: Made by author

The author deems it not necessary to analyze the data from every field, as the number of respondents is relatively low, and instead examine the overall data, as it would provide more relevant information.

So, 17 respodents or 27% of people working in non-target fields consider having additional positions during the pandemic not important at all; 6 people or 10% think it is not that important; 25 respodents or 39% think it is of medium importance; 6 people or 10% consider it important; 9 respondents or 14% answered that it was very important to them.

Regarding the opinion of employees from both target and non-target fields, 55 people or 37% consider having additional positions to be of medium importance; 23 respodents or 16% think it

is important; and 28 respondents or 19% answered it is very important to them. Only 28% of questionees answered that having additional positions was not important to them.

Now, when all the questions from the second block had been analyzed, one can make conclusions and answer the second question of the research.

The initial conclusion put forward in the theoretical part stated that creating additional positions was definitely a beneficial policy of corporate social responsibility for employees. This conclusion can be considered confirmed, as the majority of questioned employees (or 72%) considers having additional positions a benefit and evaluate its importance as below average.

Additionally, it is stated in the theoretical part that the CSR policy aimed at investment in creating additional positions during the pandemic can only be possible in the fields, demand for which has been increased because of Covid-19. From the examples provided there, it was concluded that these fields were the following: online, logistics, manufacture of goods with higher demand during the pandemic. Because of this, the second question was stated as follows: Is the CSR aimed at increasing work places in a company beneficial for employees of the following branches/industries: online, logistics, manufacture of goods with higher demand during the pandemic?

Based on the research findings, employees of fields of online technologies, logistics and manufacture of goods consider the policy aimed at increasing available positions during the pandemic to be a benefit and evaluate its importance as above average. However, it is important to note that according to the opinion of employees working in these fields, the policy to increase the number of available has not been introduced despite increased demand.

Therefore, the question can be answered in the following way: The employees in fields of online, logistics and manufacture of goods with higher demand during the pandemic consider an increase of jobs to be a benefit, yet sadly Estonian companies working in these fields decided to not add additional jobs, despite increased demand.

The second question of the research was the following: is the CSR policy to have an opportunity to work remotely a very important benefit for employees during the time of pandemic? In order to answer this question, the third block, consisting of four questions, has been created. Only employees could answer this question (147 people).

The first question asked, if the employees have been transferred to remote work. Figure 7 shows the distribution of answers to this question.

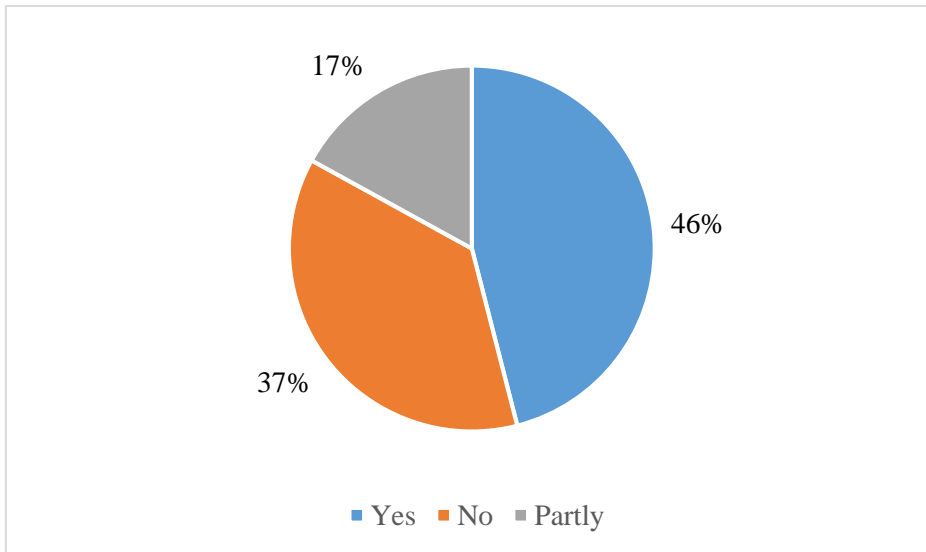


Figure 7. Employees transferred to a remote workplace.  
Source: Made by author

From the data presented at Figure 7 it is obvious that 46% of respondents or 68 people were transferred to remote work during the pandemic; 37% or 54 respondents were not transferred to remote work during the pandemic; and 17% or 25 questionees were partly transferred to remote work.

The aim of the second question was to determine the percentage of people working in office and how many of them continue to work remotely. The distribution of answers may be seen on Figure 8.

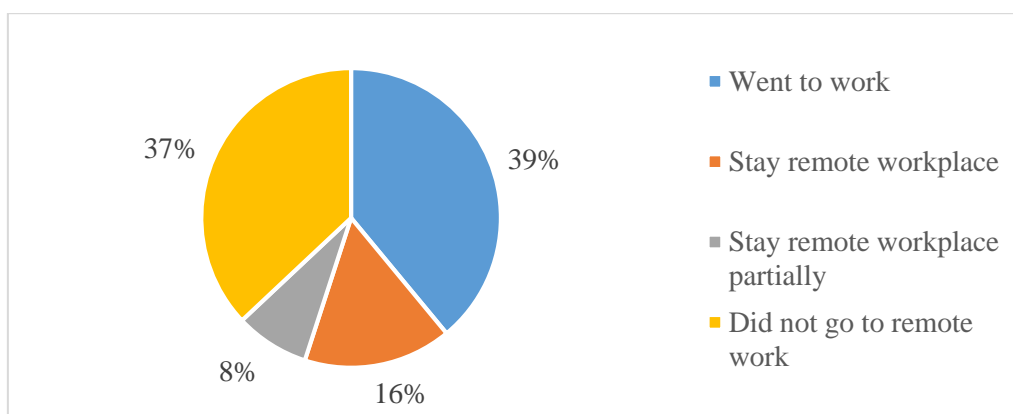


Figure 8. Remote work opportunity during the pandemic  
Source: Made by author

From the data presented at Figure 8 it is obvious that 39% or 57 respondents have already started working normally again, 37% or 54 respondents have not work remotely in the first place; 16% or 24 people continue working remotely; and 8% or 12 questionees continue working remotely in part.

It is important to note that the percentage and number of people that were not transferred to remote work in the first question and the percentage of people who were not working remotely in the second question is equal, which indicates the accuracy of research. A more detailed overview can be found in Table 5. The vertical row demonstrates the data from the first question, the horizontal one – the data from the second one.

Table 5. Comparison of responses to the first two questions from the third block of the survey

Reply	I go to work	I work remotely	My work is partly remote	Did not go to remote work
Yes	35	24	9	0
No	0	0	0	54
Partly	22	0	3	0

Source: Made by author

After examining the data from the table, one can determine that 35 people or 52% of respondents who were transferred to remote work have returned to office; 24 respondents or 35% still work remotely; and 9 respondents or 13% work remotely in part. Out of those who were transferred to remote work in part, 22 respondents or 88% came back to work; and only 3 people or 12% continued working remotely in part.

In the next part of the questionnaire, respondents were to evaluate the importance of the possibility to work remotely before and after the pandemic. The evaluation consisted of 5 possible ratings, 5 meaning excellent and 1 very poor.

Figure 9. demonstrates the distribution of respondents in regard to the importance of having the possibility to work remotely before the pandemic.

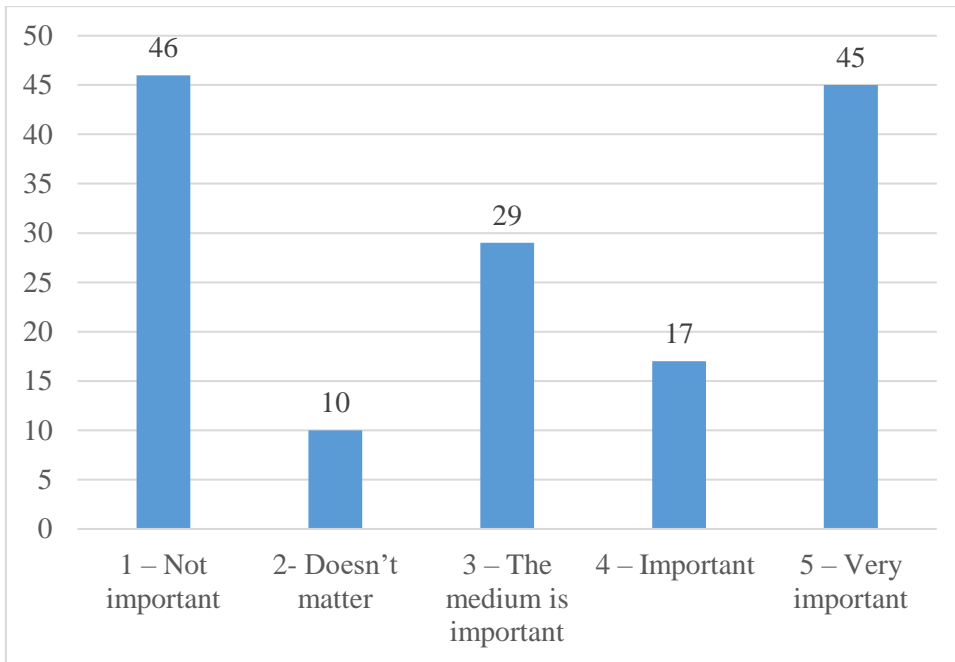


Figure 9. Employees' Assessment of the importance of being able to work from home before the outbreak of the pandemic.

Source: Made by author

From the data presented by Figure 9 it is obvious that 46 employees or 31% considered the possibility of working from home before the pandemic not important at all; 10 respondents thought it was not important; 29 people or 20% considered it to be of medium importance; 17 questionees or 12% thought it was important; and 45 people or 30% believed it to be very important.

From that, one can conclude that the opinion of employees before the pandemic was distributed rather evenly, some considered the possibility to work from home not important at all, while others thought it was very important.

Figure 10 shows how important it was for employees to have a possibility to work remotely after the outbreak of Covid-19.

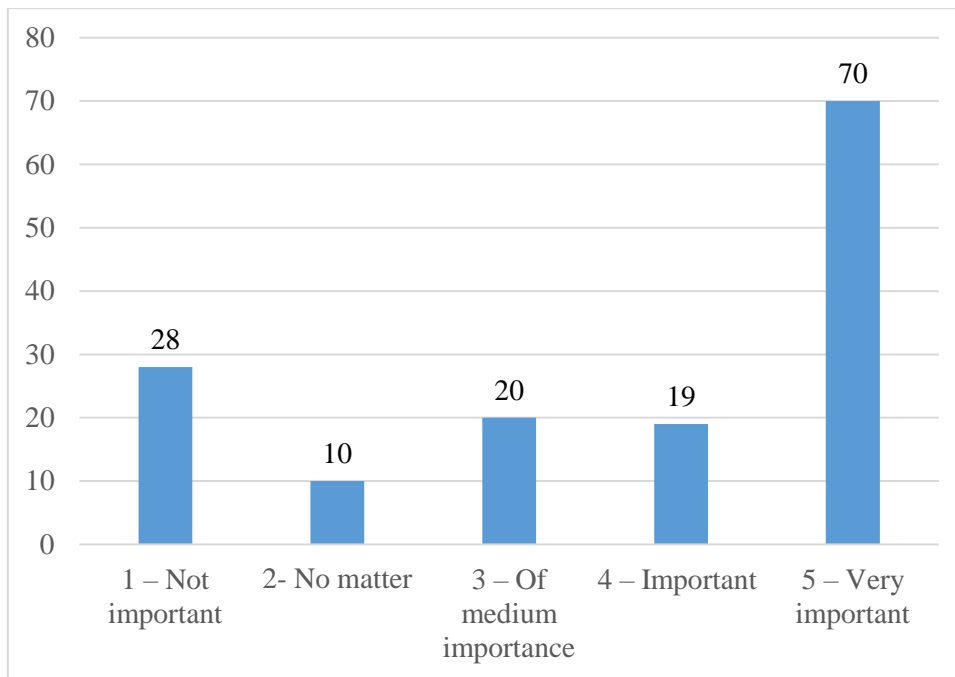


Figure 10. Employees' assessment of the importance of being able to work remotely after the start of the pandemic.

Source: Made by author

According to the data presented at Figure 10, 28 respondents or 19% of respondents answered that the possibility to work remotely is not important at all for them, which is 12% lower than assessment of the same criteria before the pandemic; 10 people or 7% responded that having an opportunity to work remotely is not that important for them, only 3% less than in the previous question; 20 questions or 14% admitted that working remotely is of medium importance to them, 6% lower than before the pandemic; 19 people or 13% answered that it is important to be able to work remotely now, 1% more than in the previous question. The vast majority (70 respondents or 47%) stated that it is very important to have the opportunity to work from home to them, which is 17% higher than before the pandemic.

From the aforementioned, one can conclude that the opportunity to work remotely has become significantly more important after the start of the pandemic.

Apart from that, it is worthwhile to consider the attitude of people that still work remotely towards working from home, as well as whether this fact influences their assessment of the importance of being able to work remotely after the start of the pandemic. To do this, data from table 6 will be examined.

Table 6. Answering the question of going to work after the start of the pandemic.

Remote work option	1 – Not important	2- Doesn't matter	3 – Of medium importance	4 – Important	5 – Very important
I go to work	10	3	14	7	23
I work remotely	1	0	1	6	16
My work is partly remote	1	0	0	3	8
Did not go to remote work	16	7	5	3	23

Source: Made by author

The data indicates that 10 respondents or 18% consider the opportunity to work from home not important at all; 3 people or 6% think it is not important; 14 respondents or 24% state it is of medium importance to them; 7 respondents or 12% consider it important; and 40% think it is very important.

From the group of employees that still work remotely, 1 person or 4% considers being able to work remotely not important at all; no person thinks it's of medium importance; 1 respondent or 4% considers it to be of medium importance; 6 people or 25% think it is important; and 16 questionees or 67% answered that the possibility is very important to them.

Out of those that work remotely in part, 1 person or 8% consider being able to work remotely not important at all; no person considers it to be not important or of medium importance; 3 people or 25% think it is important; 8 respondents or 67% answered that it is very important to them.

Out of the respondents that did not work remotely, 16 people consider being able to work remotely not important at all; 7 people or 13% think it is not important; 5 respondents or 9% consider it to be of medium importance; 3 respondents or 6% think it is important; and 24 people or 42% answered it is very important to them.

From the aforementioned, one can conclude that even though people found themselves in different conditions, – some worked remotely, some did not work at all, some worked remotely in part – the majority of employees consider the possibility to work remotely to be very important after the start of the pandemic.

Only one group has provided dramatically different results. A big percentage of employees who did not work remotely during the pandemic consider having that possibility not important at all.



This could be explained by the fact that their health-related necessities were sufficiently fulfilled by their companies, and they did not wish to transfer to remote work.

Answering the question “Is the CSR aimed at increasing workplaces in a company beneficial for employees of the following branches/industries: online, logistics, manufacture of goods with higher demand during the pandemic?”, one can conclude – definitely yes.

The research has shown that employees highly value the possibility to work remotely after the beginning of the pandemic. From that one may conclude that the CSR policy to have an opportunity to work remotely is a very important benefit for employees during the time of pandemic.

The third question put forward in the theoretical part was as follows: Is the following list of benefits that employees received due to Covid-19 complete and relevant? The list of benefits includes: additional funds, paid leaves or quarantines, investments into leisure of employees’ children, additional health insurance and investments into mental health.

In order to answer this question, the author added the fourth block to the questionnaire, which consisted out of three questions. In the first question, employees were asked to specify the benefits offered to them by their companies at the beginning of the pandemic. The benefits inferred in the theoretical part and mentioned in the third question were included in the list, namely: additional funds, paid leaves or quarantines, investments into leisure of employees’ children, additional health insurance and investments into mental health. Respondents could choose several options if they wished, and also add their own. Figure 11 demonstrates the data in regards to the benefits that employees received during the pandemic.

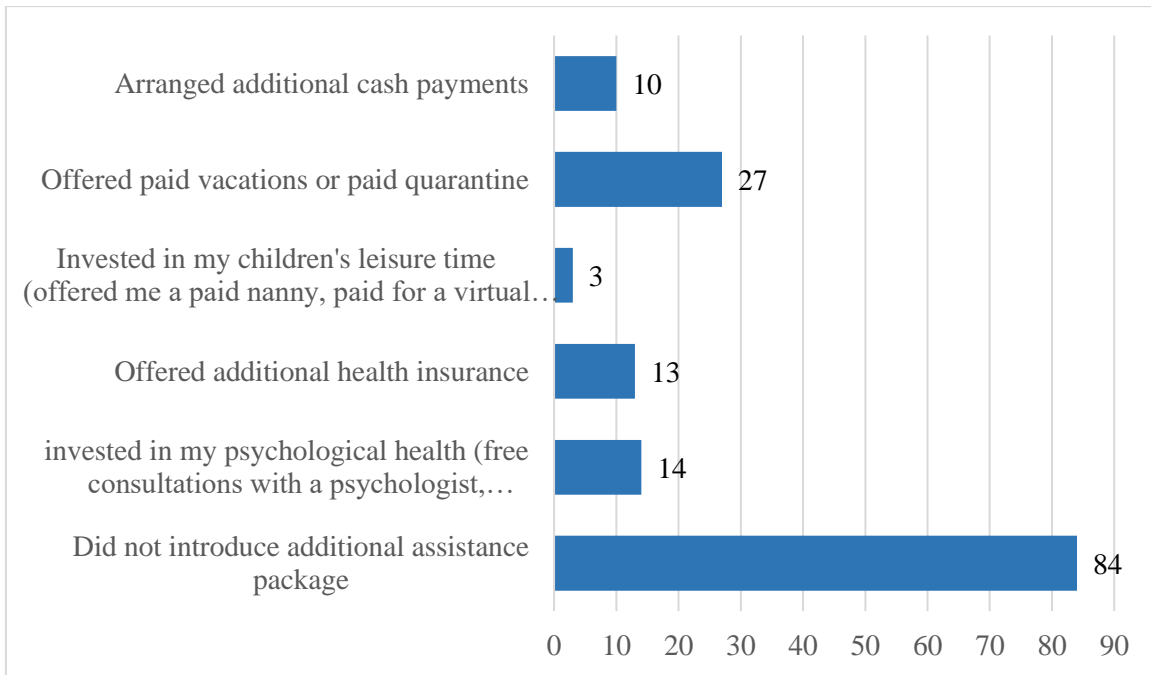


Figure 11. Benefits received by employees in connection with the pandemic.  
Source: Made by author

The absolute majority – 84 people (out of 147) or 57% answered that their company didn't introduce an additional care package; 14 respondents or 9% stated that their company invested in their psychological health; 13 respondents or 8% noted that their company offered them supplementary health insurance. Only 3 respondents (3%) answered that their company invested in their children's leisure. 18% or 27 people stated that they have been offered paid leave or quarantine; and 10 respondents admitted that additional funds were given to the employees.

Following benefits were mentioned in custom options by questionees:

1. The company provided employees a safe working environment (gave out sanitizers, masks, disinfected surfaces and rooms and introduced additional breaks for workers to provide more opportunities for social distancing) – this benefit was received by four people or 3% of respondents.
2. The company paid for the road to and from work in cases when it was impossible to work remotely – 1 person.
3. 5 people or 3% stated that they were provided with everything necessary to work from home, remotely.

After analyzing the answers given to the first question of the fourth block, one can conclude that Estonian companies were not socially responsible enough in most cases and did not introduce additional care packages for their employees.

However, the author does not consider this an extensive conclusion and believes it to be important to analyze how employees evaluate companies' attitude towards them.

Figure 12. demonstrates how employees evaluate the assistance provided to them by the company the work in.

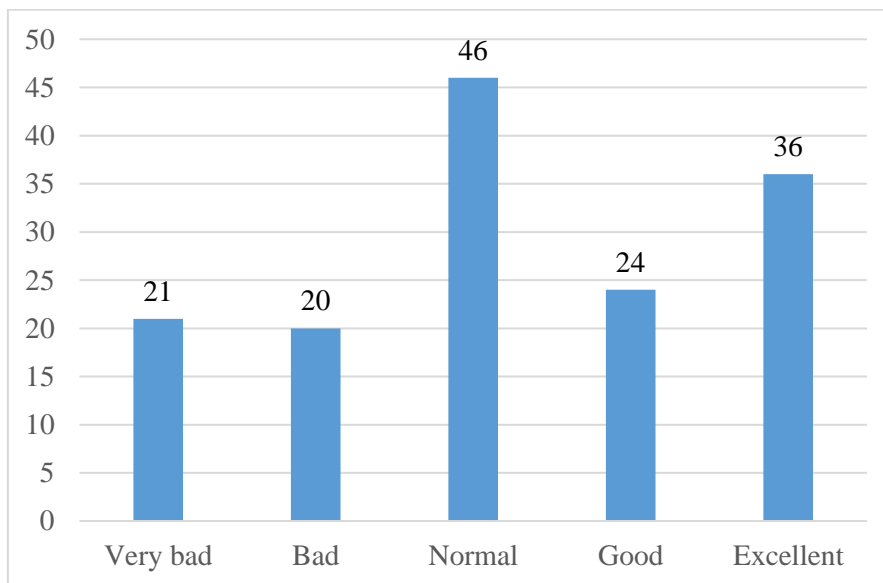


Figure 12. Evaluation in the assistance the company provided to workers during the pandemic. Source: Made by author

21 employees or 14% consider the aid provided by their company to be very bad; 20 workers or 13% think it was bad (insufficient); 46 people or 32% believe that the aid was normal (appropriate); 24 employees or 16% think that their company provided them with sufficient assistance; and 36 respondents or 25% consider the aid to be excellent.

Even though most of the respondents answered that their company didn't introduce any care packages, most of them nonetheless consider the aid their company provided them as "normal", "good" or "excellent".

Due to that fact, the author decided to examine how employees would evaluate the aid of companies that didn't introduce an additional care package. The data is demonstrated on the Figure 13.

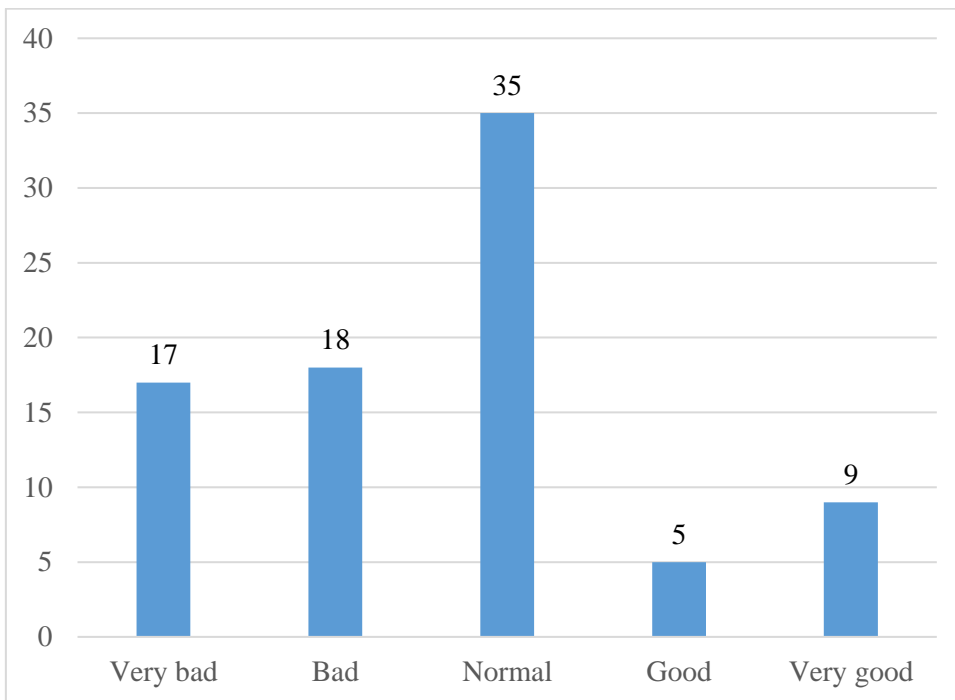


Figure 13. How do those employees who noted that their firms did not introduce an additional assistance package evaluate the assistance provided by firms to employees?  
Source: Made by author

According to the data shown in the table, 17 respondents or 20% of respondents whose companies did not introduce any care packages consider the aid of their company to be “very bad”; 18 people or 21% value it as “bad”; 35 respondents answered that it was appropriate (normal); 5 people or 6% considered it good; and 9 employees or 6% think that it was excellent.

From the aforementioned, one can conclude that the employees were not expecting to receive help from their companies in the first place and were content with the fact that no care packages were introduced.

To answer the third question, the author considered it important for employees to separately evaluate every option available in the third question. The data is shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Employees' Assessment of the importance of certain types of employer assistance are to them during the pandemic.

Types of assistance provided by companies for workers during the Covid-19 pandemic	1 – Not important	2- No matter	3 – The medium is important	4 – Important	5 – Very important
Arranged additional cash payments	28	19	35	18	47
Additional paid leave or paid quarantine	17	13	37	21	59
Financial or non-financial assistance, due to the fact that your child is forced to be home-schooled	57	20	29	9	32
Additional health insurance	37	19	34	20	37
Investing in your mental health	37	25	38	14	33

Source: Made by author

According to the data shown in this table, additional funds are evaluated by 28 employees or 19% as not important at all; 19 respondents or 13% consider them not that important; 35 people or 24% think they are of medium importance; 18 employees or 12% answered they were important; and 27 questions think they are very important.

17 employees or 12% consider additional paid leave or quarantine not important at all; 13 people or 9% do not think they are important; 37 respondents or 25% answered they were of medium importance; 21 respondents or 14% consider them important; and 59 questionees or 40% think they are very important.

57 employees or 38% consider financial or non-financial assistance due to the fact that their children are forced to be home-schooled not important at all; 20 respondents or 14% answered it was not that important; 29 people or 20% think it is of average importance; 9 respondents or 6% answered it was important; and 32 respondents stated that it was very important to them.

37 employees or 25% consider supplementary insurance not important at all; 19 people or 13% think it is not that important; 34 respondents or 23% answered that its importance was average; 20 respondents or 14% consider it important; and 37 people or 25% think it is very important.

37 employees or 25% consider investment in their mental health not important at all; 25 people or 17% think it is not that important; 38 respondents or 26% answered that it was of medium importance to them; 14 people or 14% consider it important; and 33 respondents or 22% think it is very important.

According to the employees' opinion, the most important benefit was paid leave or quarantine, the least important was financial or not financial assistance due to the fact that employees' children were forced to home-school. Additionally, supplementary health insurance has received the same amount of 'very important' and 'not important at all' answers, which means that employees do not have a clear opinion on this benefit. Investments in mental health were marked as of average importance by respondents.

Based on the analysis of the fourth block of the questionnaire, one may answer the third question of the research: Is the following list of benefits that employees received due to Covid-19 complete and relevant? The answer would be: Yes, the list is complete. However, after questioning the employees it became clear that they do not consider financial or non-financial assistance, due to the fact that their child is forced to be home-schooled to be important, the author proposes to exclude it from the list. Additionally, the author considers it impossible to regard the list as relevant, as most of the companies, according to their employees, did not offer a care package to them and were not socially responsible during the pandemic.

In the previous parts of the research, the answers of 147 people, or those who marked themselves as 'hired workers' in the beginning of the questionnaire, were analyzed. However, 210 respondents took part in the questionnaire and it would be beneficial to analyze the answers of those who marked themselves as 'students', 'entrepreneurs' or 'unemployed'. Because of that, an additional question regarding the benefits from corporate social responsibility policy that people in Estonia consider to be important has been added. The respondents were asked to choose the benefits companies should include in their corporate social responsibility policy. There were 11 options and respondents could choose one or more of them. The options were the same as those mentioned in the theoretical part by the author, namely creation of additional positions, possibility of remote work, additional funds, additional paid leave, paid quarantine if needed, financial assistance to hire a babysitter for children who are forced to be home-schooled during the quarantine, organization of virtual camps for children, supplementary health insurance, possibility to contact a support centre 24/7, free consultations with a psychologists, investment in mental health. Table 8, with answers to this question, is shown below.

Table 8. Data for all respondents on what the company should implement in the CSR policy during the pandemic.

CSR related policy	Number of respondents	%
Creation of new workplaces	51	24
Providing remote work opportunities	164	78
Additional cash payments	95	45
Additional paid leave	67	32
Paid quarantine if needed	154	73
Financial assistance for hiring a nanny for a child who does not attend kindergarten or school during the time when they are closed for quarantine.	86	41
Organization of virtual camps for a child or other useful online pastime	49	23
Supplementary health insurance	76	36
Possibility to contact the employee support center 24/7	64	30
Providing free consultations with a psychologist	60	29
Investing in mental health through relaxation (yoga, meditation or massage course)	73	35

Source: Made by author

According to the data presented in this table, 51 people or 24% of respondents consider that additional workplaces should be created during the pandemic; 164 respondents or 78% believe that companies should offer a possibility of remote work; 95 respondents or 45% consider that additional financial aid should be provided to employees; 67 people or 32% think that companies should offer their employees an additional paid leave; 154 respondents or 73% believe that paid quarantine should be integrated into the CSR policy; 86 respondents or 41% consider that companies should provide financial assistance for hiring a babysitter; 49 people or 23% would like companies to organize some kind of virtual entertainment for their children; 76 respondents or 36% claim that they would like to receive supplementary health insurance; 64 respondents or 29% would like to have the opportunity to contact a support centre; 60 people or 29% consider providing free consultations with psychologists important; 73 respondents or 35% propose investing in mental health of employees.

According to respondents, the absolute favorites of the possible options were: the opportunity to work remotely and paid quarantine. From that one can conclude that Estonian employees do not expect financial aid from their companies, but rather logical fulfillment of their duties in the pandemic.

Financial benefits are also placed quite highly in the ranking, namely additional financial aid and financial assistance for hiring a babysitter. One may conclude that Estonians also expect companies to provide them financial aid, but only after their basic health-related needs are fulfilled.

The least popular options were organization of virtual camps and creation of additional jobs. In other words, Estonian workers are not interested in these benefits..

### **2.3. Conclusions based on the survey results**

In the process of composing the theoretical part of the thesis, 3 main questions were put forward and researched later during the analysis. The questions have been answered in the conclusion.

The first question was: Is the CSR aimed at increasing workplaces in a company beneficial for employees of the following branches/industries: online, logistics, manufacture of goods with higher demand during the pandemic?

After analyzing the data, the author reached the conclusion that The employees in fields of online, logistics and manufacture of goods with higher demand during the pandemic consider an increase of jobs to be a benefit, yet sadly Estonian companies working in these fields decided to not add additional jobs, despite increased demand.

The second question was as follows: Does the CSR policy to have an opportunity to work remotely remain a benefit for employees during the time of pandemic?

The research has shown that employees valued the possibility to work remotely after the pandemic had begun. This leads to the conclusion that the corporate social responsibility policy to be able to work remotely during the pandemic is considered to be a great benefit by employees.

The third question: Is the following list of benefits that employees received due to Covid-19 complete and relevant? The list of benefits includes: additional funds, paid leaves or quarantines, investments into leisure of employees' children, additional health insurance and investments into mental health.



After analyzing the data from the questionnaire, the author concludes that this list of benefits is relevant. However, according to the majority of respondents, material and non-material aid in connection to the being forced to homeschool children due to the pandemic is not considered to be important by the respondents and the author proposes to exclude it from the list. Additionally, the author believes that the benefits were not fully granted to the employees, as according to the opinion of respondents, their companies did not offer any additional packages and were not socially active in this issue.

Apart from that the author has reached following conclusions:

1. The majority of employees (72%) considers an increase of workplaces a benefit and regards its importance to be above average.
2. According to the opinion of employees of Estonian companies, the branches that should have an increase in demand during the pandemic (online, certain goods like masks and sanitizers) did have an increased demand for its products/services, but at the same time no additional work places have been created.
3. According to the opinion of employees of Estonian companies, increased demand for goods/services does not lead to an increase of workplaces.
4. Before the pandemic, the opinion of employees of Estonian companies was divided approximately in half: some considered the possibility of working from home not important at all, while others considered it very important.
5. A possibility to work remotely after the outbreak of the pandemic has become significantly more important.
6. Even though people found themselves in different conditions at the time of the survey: some were working remotely, some were not working at all, some were working remotely in part, the majority of employees considered the opportunity to work remotely to be very important after the beginning of the pandemic.
7. A huge number of employees that did not work remotely during the pandemic consider the possibility of remote work not important at all.
8. Estonian companies were not socially responsible enough and in most cases did not introduce any additional care packages for their employees.
9. The employees of responding companies were not expecting aid from the companies they worked in, and are completely comfortable with companies not introducing additional care packages.

The aim of this thesis was: to formulate benefits of employees of Estonian companies due to the fact that their employers were socially responsible for them during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Sadly, after conducting the research it was concluded that Estonian companies were not socially active, did not introduce additional care packages for their employees and the employees did not receive any benefits apart from the possibility to work remotely.

Due to that it was deemed impossible to formulate the benefits of employees of Estonian companies, as their employers were not socially active during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the author has identified the benefits that Estonian employees would like to receive during the Covid-19 pandemic as follows: opportunity to work remotely, paid quarantine if needed, additional funds, financial aid to hire a babysitter.

## CONCLUSION

The topic of corporate social responsibility during the pandemic has proved to be very extensive and multidimensional. Of course, the scope of bachelor thesis makes it impossible to talk about every aspect of corporate social responsibility and all the benefits received by employees. However, it is important to note that all the objectives put forward in the thesis have been completed, its aim was met and the author answered every question introduced in the thesis.

In the process of composing the theoretical part of the thesis, 3 main questions were put forward and researched later during the analysis. The questions have been answered in the conclusion.

Research questions:

1. Is the CSR aimed at increasing workplaces in a company beneficial for employees of the following branches/industries: online, logistics, manufacture of goods with higher demand during the pandemic?
2. Does the CSR policy to have an opportunity to work remotely remain a benefit for employees during the time of pandemic?
3. Is the following list of benefits that employees received due to Covid-19 complete and relevant? The list of benefits includes: additional funds, paid leaves or quarantines, investments into leisure of employees' children, additional health insurance and investments into mental health.

In order to answer the research questions, following research objectives were completed:

T1: Previous research on the topic of CSR has been outlined and reviewed

T2: Examples of corporate social responsibility all across the world during the Covid-19 pandemic have been examined

T3: A questionnaire has been composed and employees of Estonian companies have been questioned regarding the benefits they received from the corporate social responsibility policy.

T4: The data received from the survey has been analyzed.

T5: Benefits that the employees would like to received from the corporate social responsibility policy during the Covid-19 pandemic have been defined in the conclusion

Additionally, following conclusions have been made during the research:

1. The majority of employees (72%) considers an increase of workplaces a benefit and regards its importance to be above average.
2. According to the opinion of employees of Estonian companies, the branches that should have an increase in demand during the pandemic (online, certain goods like masks and sanitizers) did have an increased demand for its products/services, but at the same time no additional work places have been created.
3. According to the opinion of employees of Estonian companies, increased demand for goods/services does not lead to an increase of workplaces.
4. Before the pandemic, the opinion of employees of Estonian companies was divided approximately in half: some considered the possibility of working from home not important at all, while others considered it very important.
5. A possibility to work remotely after the outbreak of the pandemic has become significantly more important.
6. Even though people found themselves in different conditions at the time of the survey: some were working remotely, some were not working at all, and some were working remotely in part, the majority of employees considered the opportunity to work remotely to be very important after the beginning of the pandemic.
7. A huge number of employees that did not work remotely during the pandemic consider the possibility of remote work not important at all.
8. Estonian companies were not socially responsible enough and in most cases did not introduce any additional care packages for their employees.
9. The employees of responding companies were not expecting aid from the companies they worked in, and are completely comfortable with companies not introducing additional care packages.

The aim of this thesis was: to formulate benefits of employees of Estonian companies due to the fact that their employers were socially responsible for them during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Sadly, as the Estonian companies were not socially active during the pandemic, it was not possible to formulate employee benefits. Nonetheless, the author continued to make the list of benefits the employees would like to receive from the corporate social responsibility policy of their companies.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1. Questionarie

Добрый день,

Меня зовут Георгий Монтик и я студент Таллиннского Технического университета. (TalTech). В этом году я пишу свою бакалаврскую работу на тему: BENEFITS OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN COVID19 PERIOD – OPINION OF EMPLOYEES. В связи с чем, хочу попросить Вас о помощи и принять участие в опросе для сбора данных к исследованию в моей работе. Это не займет у Вас более 5 минут.

Можете быть уверены, что ваши ответы останутся анонимными.

С Уважением,

Георгий Монтик

### 1. Блок:

#### 1.1. Ваш пол:

Мужчина

Женщина

#### 1.2.Возраст:

Меньше 18

19-25

26-35

36-45

Старше 46

#### 1.3.Ваша занятость:

- а. Безработный (переходит на следующий блок),
- б. Студент (переходит на блок 5),
- в. Частный предприниматель (переходит на блок 5),,
- г. Наёмный работник (переходит а блок 2).

**Блок для тех, кто в предыдущем вопросе ответил «безработный»**

Потеряли ли вы работу во время пандемии (с марта нынешнего года)

Да

Нет

(в обоих вариантах человек переходит на 5 блок)

**2. Блок (Только для тех, кто в вопросе 1.3. ответил «наемный работник»)**

2.1. Сфера деятельности компании, в которой вы работаете:

- а. Онлайн технологии (стрименговые площадки, онлайн магазины, площадки онлайн конференций и т.д.)
- б. Логистика
- в. Производители товаров, чей спрос вырос во время пандемии (маски, санитайзеры...),
- д. Свой вариант

2.2. Повысился ли спрос на продукцию или услуги вашей компании:

Да

Нет

2.3. Увеличилось ли количество рабочих мест в вашей компании за время пандемии

Да

Нет

2.4. Считаете ли вы, возможность создания дополнительных мест в компании во время пандемии важным. Отметьте на шкале число от 1 до 5, при условии, что 1 – не важно, а 5 – очень важно.

1 2 3 4 5

### 3. Блок

3.1. Были ли вы переведены на удаленную работу во время пандемии Covid -19

Да

Нет

Частично

3.2. Вышли ли вы в данный период на работу или так и остаетесь на удаленке?

Вышел на работу

Остаюсь на удаленке

Остаюсь на удаленке частично

Не выходил на удаленную работу

3.3. Является ли для вас важным наличие возможности работы из дома до начала пандемии Covid–19. Отметьте на шкале число от 1 до 5, при условии, что 1 – не важно, а 5 – очень важно.

1 2 3 4 5

3.4. Является ли для вас важным наличие возможности работы из дома после того как началась пандемия Covid–19. Отметьте на шкале число от 1 до 10, при условии, что 1 – не важно, а 5 – очень важно.

1 2 3 4 5

### 4. Блок

4.1. Отметьте один или несколько вариантов, можно так же добавить свои

В связи с пандемией и сложной экономической ситуацией моя фирма:

А. Организовала дополнительные денежные выплаты,

- Б. Предложила оплачиваемые отпуска или оплачиваемый карантин,
- В. Инвестировала в досуг моих детей (предложила мне оплачиваемую няню, оплатила виртуальный лагерь и т.д)
- Г. Предложила дополнительное страхование здоровья
- Д. Инвестировала в мое психологические здоровье (бесплатные консультации с психологом, курс медитаций, центр поддержки работников)
- Е. Не ввела дополнительный пакет помощи
- Е: Свой вариант:

4.2. Оцените помощь, которую предоставила вам фирма во время пандемии Covid-19 по 5-ти бальной шкале, где (1 – очень плохо, 5 – отлично)

1 2 3 4 5

4.3. Оцените, на сколько лично вам важны следующие виды помощи от компании во время пандемии Covid-19 (1 – не является важным, 5 – очень важно)

	1	2	3	4	5
Дополнительные денежные выплаты					
Дополнительный оплачиваемый отпуск или оплачиваемый карантин					
Материальная или нематериальная помощь, в связи с тем, что ваш ребенок вынужден находиться на домашнем обучении (к примеру: инвестирование в нянь, организация виртуальных лагерей...)					
Дополнительное страхование здоровья					
Инвестиции в ваше психологическое здоровье (к примеру: бесплатные консультации с психологом, курс медитаций, возможность обратиться в центр поддержки работников...)					

## 5. Блок

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) - это концепция, при которой корпорации несут обязательства не только перед акционерами, но и перед обществом, а именно перед клиентами, сотрудниками, поставщиками и соседними сообществами (Jones, 1980)

5.1. Отметьте один или несколько вариантов.

Что, по вашему мнению, должна внедрить компания в политику CSR во время пандемии:

- А. Создание новых рабочих мест
- Б. Предоставления возможности удаленной работы
- В. Дополнительных денежных выплат
- Г. Дополнительный оплачиваемый отпуск
- Д. Оплачиваемый карантин при необходимости
- Г. Материальная помощь на найм няни для ребенка, который не посещает сад или школу во время, когда они закрыты на карантин.
- Д. Организация виртуальных лагерей для ребенка или другого полезного времяпрепровождения онлайн
- Е. Дополнительное страхование здоровья
- Ё. Возможность обратиться в центр поддержки работников 24 часа в сутки
- Ж. Предоставление бесплатных консультаций с психологом.
- З. Инвестиции в ментальное здоровье, через расслабление (курс йоги, медитаций или массажа)
- И. Свой вариант

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