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**SOCIAL WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN COVID-  
19 PANDEMIC SITUATION: MEMORIES OF SOCIAL  
WORKERS**

**Master thesis**

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## INTRODUCTION

Social work deals with inherently complex and ambiguous situations, for which no known, predefined solutions exist, but it requires active use and reflective reevaluation of the knowledge, skills, and values (Zegarac et al, 2018). The field of social work involves complex, competitive practice approaches in different service and practice settings with procedures and norms applied in different sub-systems and social sectors relevant for a child's and youth wellbeing (Zegarac et al, 2018). Despite of all kind of complex situations in everyday life and social workers' peculiarities, the entire world is facing a crisis with the pandemic associated with the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Unprecedented policies and strategies are being implement to contain the spread of this disease, that have resulted in around a third of global population being subjected to COVID-19 lockdown. The social impacts of pandemics were severe, moving around was strictly limited, schools closing, day care centers and youth centers were closed. This fact had affected social workers working with children and youth activities. Fear and anxiety about a new disease and what could happen can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Public health actions, such as social distancing, can make people feel isolated and lonely and can increase stress and anxiety. Recounting the professional values (service, human rights and social justice, dignity and worth of people, privacy and confidentiality, and importance of human relationships, and integrity), which COVID-19 has undermined and, in some instance overturned, it has become increasingly notable that if any profession is most hurt by the pandemic, it is the social work profession. Alternatively, as a practice-based profession, social work has a crucial role to play given its stated goal of (1) advancing social cohesion and stability, (2) promoting social change and development through the liberation and empowerment of people, and (3) restoring social functioning while enforcing respect for the sanctity of life, drawing on ideals of social justice and human dignity (Amadasun, 2020). Social workers are committed to realizing social values like diversity, inclusion, justice and equality in often complex circumstances. Usually, they do so in direct contact with service users. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, this physical proximity was accompanied with risks for physical health, for service users and their social network as well as for professionals, their colleagues and their loved ones. Direct contact, an important basis for social work, could no longer be taken for granted and had as a matter of fact become a source of ethical tensions. Social workers talked about lacking sufficient support for making conscious and responsible choices regarding physical proximity, especially since sufficient protective devices were lacking or unsuited for their work (based on the Dutch findings of the research performed by Banks et al, 2020a; Banks et al, 2020b). Social workers report that all the services they work in, are facing increased demand: most notably mental health, housing and family violence services.

All areas of the community sector are experiencing added pressure through this increase in demand for services, in costs incurred for delivering those services and in working through the restrictions as they perform their work. For example, many organizations have had to suspend group-based services and close community ‘drop-in’ facilities, finding innovative ways to deliver these functions. Similarly, organizations which supplement their income through social enterprises such as culturally specific catering services, have been forced to close or reduce the enterprise through a combination of social restrictions and cancellation of orders.

This pandemic situation is a new thing for society and they meet challenges in everyday and working life. Not exception there is social workers working with children and youth who had to adjust to different working conditions.

**Novelty of the topic.** There are no researches done how this pandemic situation effected social workers work with children and youth. Literature review shows that only pandemic situation as a factor had been analysed. It was done by Droit-Volet et al (2020), Pitlik (2020) and others. There are already some researches made about the impact of pandemic on doctors, nurses, social workers working with adolescents, other professions (Banks et al, 2020; Carlucci, 2020; Dauti, 2020), but not about social workers who work with children and youth at youth centres, orphanages, community houses. Social workers in different countries experienced new memories while working during the pandemic situation. This research will try to find out what memories social workers working with children and youth in Lithuania during the pandemics have got. The analyses of memories of social workers work with children and youth before and during the pandemic will help to understand what is the difference of work before and during the pandemics, what challenges or positive things have the social workers met during the pandemics, what should be improved in their education.

**Practical value of the paper.** It will show what social workers working with children and youth in Lithuania experienced during pandemics, were they ready for that, how did they cope with that situation and what kind of knowledge did they miss and all this experience could be used for preparing future social workers.

**The object of the research** – Social workers memories while working during the pandemic COVID-19

**The goal of the research** - To analyse the memories of the social workers working with children and youth during the pandemic situation COVID-19 in Lithuania.

### **The objectives of the research:**

1. To overview the literature on social work with children and youth in normal situation and how pandemic situation influence people everyday life and social workers activities
2. To investigate social workers working with children and youth memories before and during the pandemic situation

**Research questions.** Social workers in different countries experienced new challenges while working during the pandemic situation. This research will try to find out: what are social workers memories working with children and youth in Lithuania before and during the pandemics? What new challenges have they met during the pandemics and how have they coped with them? What positive aspects have they found out of working during the pandemics?

**Research methods.** First of all, the scientific literature review is done in order to understand social workers everyday activities, how do social workers working with children and youth differ from other social workers in daily activities, what does it mean to work in pandemics, what researchers are already made in the world. For the empirical part in-depth interview is used as the research is based on memories analyses. It is useful when a detailed information is needed about a person thoughts and behaviours or want to explore new issues in depth. This paper analysis workers memories in their work with children and youth during the pandemic situation. Qualitative content analyses are done with categories and subcategories.

This Master thesis consists of 84 pages, introduction, three structural parts, discussion, conclusions, recommendations, summary, three tables, 93 references.

## MAIN CONCEPTS

- Social work** - social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Values and principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work (International Federation of Social Work, 2014).
- Pandemic** - the word is commonly taken to refer to a widespread epidemic of contagious disease throughout the whole of a country or one or more continents at the same time (Honigsbaum, 2009).
- COVID-19** - Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a contagious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The first known case was identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. The disease has since spread worldwide, leading to an ongoing pandemic (Wikipedia, 2020).
- Memory** - memory, the encoding, storage, and retrieval in the human mind of past experiences. The fact that experiences influence subsequent behaviour is evidence of an obvious but nevertheless remarkable activity called remembering. Memory is both a result of and an influence on perception, attention, and learning (Encyclopedia Britannica).

# 1.THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL WORK

## 1.1. The Understanding of Social Work

Social work has a deep historical background from different countries all over the world. It was born because of the fact that society is not perfect and there are parts of the population who are suffering because of poverty, social injustice, deprivation of rights, and the like. There are a lot of social problems present in society and this is what every social worker has to face in his/her profession.

While analysing the understanding of social work it is possible to find a lot of definitions and ideas of its meaning presented by different scientists, researchers or specialists. According to Thompson (2020) how particular writers or organizations define social work will depend, to a large extent, on their view of what social work should be. For example, Payne (2005) (Thompson, 2020) describes three different approaches to social work:

1) Individualism–reformism (refers to a view of social work as an activity geared towards meeting social welfare needs on an individualized basis);

2) Socialist–collectivist (social worker seeks to promote co-operation and mutual support in society);

3) Reflexive–therapeutic (promotes and facilitates personal growth in order to enable people to deal with the suffering and disadvantage they experience).

Concerning different approaches global definition of the social work was approved by International Federation of Social Work (IFSW, 2014) and International Associations of Schools of Social Work (IASSW, 2014) which says that social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Values and principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work.

Concerning the main core values of social work as social justice, human rights and service, mentioned above by IFSW and IASSW (2014) it is possible to say that social work is based on respect for the inherent worth and dignity of all people, irrespective of individual and cultural diversity. It primarily ensures the protection of people in vulnerable situations, within the limits of respecting the rights of others. Social work is committed to the promotion of social justice in relation to its service users and to all members of society. It promotes service to others above self-interest and provides service in the interest of human well-being and assists people in need to address personal and social problems. These values determine the principles to which each social worker should aspire. There have been a variety of principles of social work put forward by various

authors like Wiles (2012), Banks (2015), Tzafestas (2016), etc. However, the following are the most common to many authors (Madhusudanan, 2015; Banks, 2015; Houston, 2018):

1. Principle of Acceptance;
2. Principle of Individualization;
3. Principle of Self-Determination;
4. Principle of Non-judgmental Attitude;
5. Principle of Confidentiality;
6. Principle of Purposeful Expression of Feelings.

In order to understand all values and principles of social work and keep them, first of all social workers need to have certain competencies.

Competence, in everyday language, is the ability of an individual to perform a task according to Oxford Dictionaries (2016). Some definitions add that the task must be performed fully and properly. Still other definitions add that the task should be performed efficiently. At the heart of the competence is the ability to do a task effectively. According to Drisko (2015), competence refers to “the ability of an individual to perform a task,” further adding that “the task must be performed fully and properly”. McKnight (2015) proposes that competence is an “ongoing ability” to “integrate knowledge, skills, judgment, and professional attributes in order to practice safely and ethically” within one’s professional scope. Simply, competence refers to the ability of the individual to complete tasks related to real life situations within his or her profession (Blomeke et al, 2015). According to Zeer (2003), a professionally competent worker is a specialist who “has knowledge, skills, qualities, experience and individual style of activity which are necessary for the qualitative and effective work”. According to Davletkaliev et al (2015) social workers need these competencies:

1.Special competence includes professional skills, understanding of the essence of purpose of the work of social work specialist, mastering norms of professional activity and high effectiveness.

2.Communicative competence includes mastering norms of professional communication, ability to communicate thoughts clearly, pursue, transfer information, ability to collaborate, readiness for changes in interpersonal relations and ability to influence these processes, arrange and carry out the dialogue, ability to awake society’s interest to the profession and aim it to the solving of a client’s needs.

3.Organizational competence includes: mobility, activity, skill of planning, adequately assess the results of activity, skill of control one’s behaviour and organize work on one’s own.

4.Analytical competence includes: analysis, synthesis, comparison, generalization, concretization as an intellectual quality as well as professional thinking, independent solving of a



client's problems, ability to analyse and generalize foreign, regional and one's own experience of the social work.

5. Reflexive competence is revealed in the presence of the positive Me-concept, self-value, ability to adequately assess the results of one's own activity and level of one's own professional-personal development, as well as such qualities as creativity, imagination and determination for the collaboration. Reflexiveness performs the role of controller of personal achievements, professional development and self-improvement.

6. Motivational-personal competence includes: presence of the stable professional motivation, readiness for study, self-education and self-development, creative self-realization, formedness of personal qualities, thinking and axiological orientations, ability to set goals, plan and perform personal development, presence of spiritual and moral values, empathy, respect to the representatives of the other cultures.

7. Social competence is an integrative, personal quality which is revealed in adequate solving of professional and social tasks, social responsibility, ability to take responsibility, cooperative performance of decisions and participation in their implementation, tolerance as well as ability to forecast, control and solve conflict situations.

8. Individual competence includes: knowledge of job description of one's own profession, comprehensive professional self-consciousness, acceptance of oneself as a professional, adequate self-assessment, internality as the vision of reasons for success/failing oneself, support by one's own past experience of professional activity, usage of the results of one's own professional development for the clients' benefit.

The mentioned competences cannot be considered separately since they are of integrative, whole character while being the product of professional training in general. In order to guarantee the level of competence, some countries (Great Britain, Germany, Lithuania, etc.) apply competencies assessment system, accreditation of qualification system or at least require social work education degree. Competence may be broken down into component parts. In social work and in many related professions, competence is widely viewed as including knowledge, values, and skills. This trio has been formalized in the accreditation requirements set by CSWE (2008) and in the core ethical values established by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW, 2008). Specific knowledge is a vital part of professional competence. Skills are abilities to act, acquired or developed through training or experience. Skills (Drisko, 2015) may be defined in ways that overlap with definitions of competence. For example, skills may be defined as the ability to do something well, based on one's knowledge, practice, or aptitude. Knowledge is often a key part of skill, as are training and experience. In social work, skills are evident in the application of knowledge, integrated with core values, to a specific client in a specific situation. Identifying what

is important to the client in a particular situation requires both knowledge and judgment. Judgments about priorities, and how best to intervene, are recursively shaped by knowledge and values. Client dignity, needs, and goals; agency context and purposes; and larger issues of social and economic justice all form the context in which skills are applied. The importance of relationship always frames how professional social workers act skilfully.

It is important for a social worker to constantly improve his/her professional qualifications. Improvement benefits the employee because it helps to find solutions to various problems, increases the value of work activities and work productivity, strengthens the employee's self-confidence, creates wider career prospects, and creates a better organizational climate. According to Indrasiene et al (2007) the training and professional development of employees is beneficial for the organization, as it promotes the growth of motivation, increases flexibility and guarantees the maintenance of the level of qualification required for the organization. So, in Lithuania in order to organize the professional development of social workers, a training centre for social workers was established in 1994 under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. Since 1 January, 2006 reorganized as a division of the Lithuanian Labour Market Training Service. The Centre for the Training of Social Workers, in cooperation with the Lithuanian Association of Social Workers nationwide, studies the need for in-service training programs for social workers, initiates and coordinates the preparation of these programs and their implementation. The centre provides all the necessary information to a social worker who wants to improve his / her professional qualification. In addition to this institution, in-service training programs for social workers are prepared and implemented by social work methodological centers, social work training institutions and other institutions, enterprises, organizations. The aim of the training program is to provide opportunities for social workers to acquire the necessary basic knowledge and skills and apply them in practical work. Thus, in Lithuania, conditions are created for social workers of various institutions to study, expand theoretical and practical knowledge, thus increasing the methodically and professionalism of social work which is needed in different areas of social work.

Social workers work in different areas. Social workers work with people with disabilities, the elderly, families at social risk or people with various dependencies, and other people who find themselves in difficult life situations, with children and youth. Lithuania classifies more than fourteen Social work occupations: Social worker, Community Centre social worker, Cultural centre social worker, Small offenders social worker, Enterprise Social Worker, Family planning social worker, Institution of health social worker, Probation social worker, Mentally disabled people social worker, Consultant social worker, Care institutions social worker, Department of Prisons institution social worker, Educational institutions social worker, Religious community

social worker and so on (Lithuanian professions classificatory LPK). These occupations confirm how important is for social worker to have good knowledge, skills and values. Social work deals with inherently complex and ambiguous situations, for which no known, predefined solutions exist, but it requires active use and reflective reevaluation of the knowledge, skills, and values (Zegarac, 2018). The understanding of social work shows how serious this sector is and it helps to understand what values and principles should the social worker possess. There is no way not to agree with Zegarac (2018) who defined that the field of social work involves complex, competitive practice approaches in different service and practice settings with procedures and norms applied in different sub-systems and especially for social sectors relevant for a child's and youth wellbeing (Zegarac, 2018).

To sum up, social workers need a special education in order to work as a social worker. Social worker provides service in the interest of human well-being and assists people in need to address personal and social problems. These values determine the principles to which each social worker should aspire. In order to aspire it social worker should contain the required competencies and skills as well as qualification in order to work in different sectors. There are more than fourteen sectors in Lithuania where social workers are needed. The next chapter will analyse the concept of social workers working with children and youth.

## 1.2. Social Work with Children and Youth Concept

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), which has been ratified almost throughout the world, guarantees children civic, political, economic, social and cultural rights: the right to health, education, cultural identity and freedom of expression; the right to protection from violence, exploitation and abuse. Whenever actions are taken that affect children, it is their interests that should be given priority. For example, in Portugal, (Fernando et al, 2019) following the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989, the system was reconfigured, in order to reinforce the principle of "best interests of the child", and calling for the active participation of the community in co-responsibility between the State and community organizations to protect and promote the rights of children and young people. Under this new vision the *Commissions for the Protection of Children and Youth* (CPCJ) were created. While the NGO Shadow report done in Portugal (NGO Shadow report on the Convention on the rights of the child, 2018) tells that although Convention on the rights of the child mentioned in the State report, on the period 2014-2017, there was no national strategy and/or a national plan of action in Portugal. The National Strategy only appears on the Report of the Annual State Budget 2019 as one of the measures to be implemented in 2019-2022. According to the information of the Ministry of Social Affairs of the

Republic of Lithuania (2021) Lithuania ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1992. The Seimas ratified the Convention in 1995. The Inception Report of the Republic of Lithuania on implementation of the Convention's provisions in Lithuania was drawn up in 1998. The Second and Third Joint Report on implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was approved in 2004. There are a lot of different specialists such as educators, lawyers, health care specialists, social workers, youth workers, psychologists, etc. working with children and youth under these regulations and one of them is a social worker, who has interventions, contacts with children and youth and has to guarantee the rights of the child and youth (Fernando et al, 2019). Social workers working with children and youth need to cooperate with other different units like families, various groups, other institutions and most important intervene with children and youth in order to develop a personality.

Intervention with children, young people and their families is a complex and challenging area for social workers (Carvalho, 2015) (Fernando et al, 2019). Practitioners working with children and youth are involved in working groups and institutional networks in order to give the help to children and youth. They assess the risk and define the strategies that must be ensured to protect children in the light of their best interests (Melo et al, 2011). Social workers have a social responsibility to society and to the people with whom they intervene. In their advocacy, they have to challenge unjust policies. For example, criticizing the policies and organizations that house and protect children, but which hold them hostage to their services, making it impossible for children to experience the environment of a foster or adoptive family. Many interventions at this level give primary rights to the biological family undermining the fundamental principle of children that is the right to a family (Fernando, 2019). Social workers working with children and youth provide services in a variety of settings. They are found in offices, community clinics, client homes, hospitals, community centers, schools, orphanages, shelters and in the streets. This shows that social work with children and youth is something different from just being a social worker.

According to Anglin (2012) child and youth care is work with children and youth, as whole persons, in order to promote their social competence and healthy development, by participating in and using their day-to-day environments and life experiences, and through the development of therapeutic relationships, most importantly the relationship with the particular child or youth who is the focus of attention. In order to implement it social workers wrking with children and youth need different knowledge how to develop a child or a youth as a whole personality. So, obviously, social worker working with children and youth from the ones who work in other sectors. It is confirmed by Anglin (2012) who states that it is possible to define some differences between general social work and social work with youth and children, e.g.:

1. Social work focuses more on the social and community networks, child and youth care more on individual and interpersonal dynamics.

2. Social work focuses more on social problems, child and youth care more on human development.

3. Social work focuses more on organizations and policies, child and youth care more on people and relationships.

4. Social work focuses more on knowing about children and families, child and youth care more on living and working with them.

5. Social work focuses more on a wide variety of societal groups and issues, child and youth care on the needs of children and youth.

6. Social work focuses more on problem solving, child and youth care more on the helping and growth process.

7. Social work focuses more on gaining power and societal influence, child and youth care more on gaining self-awareness and personal growth.

The listed differences show that relationship between social workers and children or youth is necessary in order to develop personality day-to-day. It requires knowledge and awareness of the children and teenagers surrounding.

Social worker working with children and youth need a lot of knowledge of child development process and be aware of teenager problems. They must have relational and resilience skills to work with children, families and those who host these children – families and institutions. In this context, ethical sensitivity is a crucial professional competence (Ferreira, 2011) (Fernando et al, 2019). Social workers working with children and youth cooperate with a lot of units and need to be ethically sensitive, resilient and cooperative in order to help a child or youth. According to Colton et al (2015) social worker working with children and youth must be able to: maintain a clarity of focus; recall the experience of being a child and relate that to the work at hand; encourage children to talk or express themselves; feel comfortable in the presence of children and to have them feel comfortable with them; facilitate children's play; decentre from an adult perspective to engage the child; continue working uninterrupted despite the emergence of painful and disturbing material; respond to the different vocabulary, idioms, and expressions of children; and be the diplomat. Social workers work with children and young people who are struggling socially, educationally or with health concerns. The aim of the role is to intervene early with issues before they escalate, which may lead to problems with social and educational development. Withdrawal from society, suicide, and basic coping skills are reasons why youth social workers are needed. Teens deal with depression, authority issues, and having a low self-esteem. The role of the social worker is to develop a supportive relationship with a child or young person who appears to be

struggling with the aim of uncovering the underlying problems they face and helping them to overcome or deal with these problems. It is hoped that by forming these relationships, the young person then has a secure basis for forming healthy relationships with others moving forward (Zegarac et al, 2018).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets an important legal standard for how we consider children and young people and the significance of social workers' communication with them. Article 12 establishes the child's right to express their views in all matters that affect their lives and for these views to be given weight according to the child's age and maturity. The key question social workers must be able to answer is: 'How is the child?' (Butler et al, 2003). In order to answer this, they have to be able to communicate with children and young people. Of course, children do not all communicate in the same way. They may have their own preferred style of communication or have a particular communication need. The different ages and stages of childhood, the specific needs and the particular circumstances of different children and young people, together highlight how important it is for social workers to have broad and strong communication skills on which to draw. But communication goes well beyond just talking and listening to children and young people. It also involves social workers using a range of methods and techniques like touch, play, signing, body language, writing, drawing, activities, using symbols and other specialist tools to engage and communicate with children and young people (Winter et al, 2016).

To sum up social worker working with children and youth differ from general social workers as they have to develop a personality from childhood or solve teenager problems. Therefore, they need to care more on relationship, day-to-day communication and personal growth as the Convention on the Rights of the Child guarantees children civic, political, economic, social and cultural rights. The next chapter will analyse what challenges social workers working with children and youth meet in their everyday life.

### 1.3 Challenges of Social Work with Children and Youth

The field of social work involves complex, competitive practice approaches in different service and practice settings with procedures and norms applied in different sub-systems and social sectors relevant for a child's and youth wellbeing (Zegarac et al, 2018). Social workers working with children and youth meet different challenges such as working with vulnerable children and youth, unpredictable schedule, time spent doing administration work is time spent from the communication with a child or youth, transformation of society, etc. Being exposed to

these highly emotional situations can lead to compassion fatigue. It can be unaffected by distressing cases, especially when they are dealing with them on a daily basis. Social workers may suffer from depersonalization, emotional exhaustion and other more easily identifiable symptoms such as headaches.

According to the research conducted by UNISON (UNISON, 2014) social workers interact with both children and adults on the individual level who may be facing physical disabilities or mental health issues or children or youth from poor families or from social exclusion families or families using alcohol. Their job also includes working with those families, teachers and communities of those vulnerable children and youth. The practice of social work, of course, arouses emotions in social workers as social workers witness emotionally tense situations which bring emotional reactions to them (Dore, 2016). A frequent phenomenon in social work is meeting people who need a certain support of the workers when handling their own (strong) emotions (Ikenbuchi, 2015). These repeated working conditions, alongside the contact with the person's suffering, have repercussions on the professionals' well-being, causing stress, emotional discomfort, and even vicarious trauma, defined as "those emotions and behaviours resulting from the interaction with traumatic events experienced by others" (Beder, 2016). This is known as the cost of the emotional impact of caring (Pearlin, 2010), that is, the price professionals pay in the process of helping people in situations of intense suffering or trauma. According to the stress process models, some of the resources that potentially serve as a protective barrier include social support, the repertoire of confrontations, and some self-concepts such as self-esteem (Kohler et al, 2018). Other protective resources with the ability to significantly reduce the harmful consequences of existing stressors are the mastery and control of existing circumstances and mutual support among the professionals themselves (Stanhope et al, 2015). It shows that working with vulnerable children and youth is a real challenge for social worker's personality.

The other challenge is unpredictable schedule at work. Many social workers usually work traditional working hours from Monday to Friday. There are also social workers who work other working hours according to their contracts. Unfortunately, the 9-5 working day is no longer a suitable model for a lot of organizations as the needs of our society have changed. UNISON (2014) says that the schedule of a social worker may change depending on client scheduling, paperwork, staff meetings, and other factors. According to UNISON (2014) research overtime figures were highest among children's social workers, who are working an average of nine and a half extra hours each week. According to Kohler et al (2018) excessive overtime can lead to a poor work-life balance, but it can also cause stress or burnout. This is especially true in a career such as social work, which can be emotionally draining at the best of times. Stress, if left unchecked, can escalate and pose a risk to your physical and mental health. This will affect your ability to practice

effectively and the safety of children and vulnerable people may be placed at risk as a result. So, it is clear that it is dangerous for social worker to work overtimes as it may influence poor quality of services.

Furthermore, one more challenge met by social workers working with children and youth is a lot of time spent of administrative paper works instead of spending time with children and youth. According to Christopher (2020) administrative tasks such as completing forms is part and parcel of social care. It's how professionals 'get to know' every person in need and build files on each client. But when a trained professional is overworked with mountains of documents to finish, it takes away from their time to provide meaningful social care. It is time-consuming and, often, frustrating for people who went into the industry to help other people out. According to Tipping (2017) the amount of time social workers is required to spend on paperwork is frustrating and discouraging to workers who have a passion to serve and want to be doing all they can to help children and youth. Time-consuming processes limit these workers' ability to engage clients, build trust, and do actual work. Administrative work reduces time spent with children and youth.

What is more, social work practice in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is continually changing. Contemporary practitioners work in complex areas and have to do everything quickly and competently. The social worker is seen as counsellor or caseworker, as an advocate, as a partner, as assessor of risk and of need, as care manager, as an agent of social control. Social workers may play all of these different roles in varying degrees of mix at any time in their career. The difficulty for many social workers and social work commentators is that the mix may have swung more away from the casework or counselling role involving direct work with clients to one in which there is less and less such direct involvement. Social workers may have become more social care managers, risk assessors and controlling or surveillance agents (Jordan et al, 2000) (Jones et al, 2004). One of the difficulties for social workers is that there may well be conflict between these different ideal types because they make very different assumptions about the function of social work; what should be expected of social workers working with children and youth and because social workers may well be asked to fulfil conflicting roles at any one time.

The trick that twenty-first century problems require social work educators and practitioners to achieve is to link global challenges and opportunities to locality specific ones that acknowledge the interdependency between these two realms and between people and their social and physical environments (Dominelli, 2012). And that is not enough. Social workers working with children and youth in the 21st century need to go hand in hand with time. Children and youth use technologies and different social nets, so if the social worker wants to find a contact with them, he/she needs to be up-to-date.



To sum up, social workers working with children and youth meet different challenges such as working with vulnerable children and youth what may cause stress and traumas for themselves. Unpredictable schedule or overtimes at work may reduce service quality. Time spent doing administration work is time spent from the communication with a child or youth and what is more, social worker working with children and youth need to go hand in hand with time in order to be up-to-date. So, it means they have to be interested in IT programs, in different apps, in activities happening around for children and youth. The next chapter will analyse social work with children and youth in Lithuania.

#### 1.4. Social Work with Children and Youth in Lithuania

The Law on Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of the Child in Lithuania (passed 14 March 1996; last amended on 1 March 2021) ensures the implementation and protection of the rights and freedoms of the child, to strengthen the responsibility and ability of parents and other child representatives to take care of the child, to ensure the child's interests, to establish the basis for organizing assistance to the child and his/her family. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959) and The Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania (1992) define mechanisms for ensuring and protecting the rights of the child, institutions of the child protection system, legal bases for their activities and general provisions on liability for violations of children's rights. The focus of the law is on how to prevent domestic violence and child neglect. In other words, all three above mentioned documents are about how to take good care of a child and how to provide the necessary support / assistance when needed. Parents are first and foremost those who raise and care for their children. More broadly, other people, including relatives, teachers, careers and others in contact with the child, are more or less involved in this complex process of helping the child to become an adult. Raising a child has certain standards / rules, but at the same time it is a very individual process related to the child's opportunities, his / her life circumstances and his / her experience in the world around him / her. When this process is severely disrupted The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) describes the processes that must be initiated to resolve problems and overcome difficulties. It is a very complex process as it involves many professionals with different competencies, educations, tasks and working in different organizations.

In Lithuania social workers work with children in families, at schools, at children day care centers, at community houses, youth centers, etc. The biggest attention in Lithuania is paid to establishing Children Day Care Centers all over the Lithuania, in big and small communities. According to the Ministry of Social Secure and Labour there are more than 400 Children Day Care

Centers in Lithuania (Statistics of Ministry of Social Security and Labour, 2021). Children's day care centers develop children's daily life skills, such as teaching hygiene, healthy living, social and communication skills, providing psychological assistance, and organizing employment. Children who visit day care centers talk to their employees about their difficulties and experiences, they are taught to know themselves and to solve problems. Children Day Care centers were started to be opened in Lithuania because they have a lot of advantages. Children Day Care Centers work on reducing social exclusion, it makes a significant contribution to gender equality, it makes a significant contribution to the well-being of the child, their family, the community and the country. Children Day Care Centers work is relevant in ensuring not only the individual but the country as a whole social welfare. In general, when evaluating the services provided by children's day care centers, it is noticeable that the services are focused on three main activities - the development of educational and social skills and the organization of children's leisure time. These services largely complement the missing activities in the family environment for children (Research on Day Care Centres' activities, 2015).

The other sector where social workers are very important is work with youth. Open youth work is a form of youth work that aims to enable all young people, regardless of their social status, to spend their leisure time safely, to engage in activities that interest them. Open youth work is unique in that participation in the proposed activities is not bound by "compulsory": a young person wishing to participate does not have to commit to a regular and fixed-term activity - the young person decides how to use his or her time (Youth Affair Department data, 2021). The Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Minimum and Universal Child Care (2007) - the first mention in a public document of an open youth centre and identifies its importance in providing social, pedagogical, psychological services to young people and implementing minimum care measures for children aged 14 to 18. This step marks the open the beginning of the recognition of youth work, as well as the expansion of the functions of children's day care centers, starting to work not only with children but also with teenagers who have hitherto lacked attention. Open youth work is aimed at young people who: seeks a safe environment, new forms of togetherness, coexistence; has free time, but does not know how and where to spend it meaningfully; stands out with his/her clothes, language, behaviour, thus expressing his/her otherness. Particular attention is paid to young people who: does not fit into a peer or adult society because of his or her behaviour or appearance; sees no purpose in his life; lacks motivation to learn and the strength to manage one's daily life creatively; prone to crime, use alcohol and other intoxicants (the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Minimum and Universal Child Care, 2007). Activities in the Centers and Spaces are not taxed, thus giving the opportunity to get involved to anyone who wants to. According to the

data of the Statistics Department (2020) there are 45 Open Youth Centers and 75 Open Youth spaces in Lithuania.

The Open Youth Centre is an institution that carries out open youth work with young people and is guided by its principles, which may be established by municipalities, non-governmental organizations, local or religious communities (individually or jointly). An open youth centre is distinguished by the fact that it has more than one room (space) where various activities for young people can take place (Open Youth Centers and Spaces Conception, 2015). While according to the same Conception (Open Youth Centers and Spaces Conception, 2015), an Open Space is a space or room designed and adapted for carrying out open youth work with young people, it can be in an institution (cultural, educational, sports or social), without changing the legal status of the institution and adapted to open work with young people using the existing tools or methodological framework. Social workers in Open Youth centers are on hand to talk to young people about their problems, to counsel and, if more serious help is needed, to direct and mediate. The same staff helps young people to formulate ideas, encourages and helps to implement them, helps to discuss the experience gained. They maintain regular contacts and co-operates with institutions operating in that residential area and related to youth affairs: schools, parishes, police, youth organizations, elderships or communities, libraries, non-formal education and other institutions. Also, if necessary, communicates with youngsters' families: send information, organizes campaigns, celebrations, consult (The description of the Activities of the Youth Worker by the Ministry of Social affairs and Labour, 2013). Open Space is used as a contact field for social workers to establish and maintain relationships with young people, their groups, offer help and counselling, as well as inform about targeted events (leisure activities, exchanges, trips, projects, group sessions, etc.); it is also a safe space for young people to live their desired daily lives, taking into account the public interest and order, social and legal norms and agreed local possibilities and restrictions (rules) (Open Youth Centers and Spaces Conception, 2015). Open work with young people complements the already established activities of youth organizations and other services, the activities of which are aimed at the purposeful, diverse and educational leisure time of a young person, it is understood not only as activities, but also as social, cultural (in a broad sense) employment and education, social assistance and preventive services (Open Youth Centers and Spaces Conception, 2015).

One more sector of working with youth popular in big cities is work with youth in the street. The aim of working with young people on the streets is to reduce the social exclusion of young people who spend time on the streets and to increase their opportunities to participate fully in society. According to the descriptions of the Procedure For Working With Youth On The Street approved by the Minister of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania (2019) the

tasks of working with young people on the street are to establish relations with young people in difficulty who spend time on the street who need help and support and who are unable to participate in and / or do not participate in the activities of the youth work organization; to increase the motivation of young people who spend time on the streets to change and to build strong, respectful, mutually trusting relationships between young people and those working with young people on the streets; to help young people who spend time on the street to restore or establish contacts with the social environment, to enable them to use various services provided to young people in the territory of the municipality; to strengthen the personal and interpersonal communication skills of young people spending time on the street in their environment; to provide information, organize and implement activities to raise young people's awareness of criminal behaviour, tobacco, alcohol, narcotic drugs or other psychotropic substances; to mediate between young people spending time on the street and state and municipal institutions, establishments and / or organizations, to represent the interests of young people spending time on the street, solving issues related to the improvement of their quality of life. Staff working with young people on the street must have experience of working with young people in social exclusion and difficulties. In order to achieve the specific goals of youth work on the street, the team of employees working with youth on the street can be supplemented by specialists with medical, legal and sociological education.

Furthermore, there is one more area for youth – Mobile work with youth. Mobile work with young people is carried out in three forms of social work separately or in combination: individual work with youth; working with youth groups; working with the community. According to the descriptions of the Procedure For Mobile Work With Youth approved by the Minister of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania (2019) the tasks of mobile work with youth are to create conditions for a safe, open, informal, non-binding environment in which a young person can be with friends and communicate with peers; to help young people to get involved in the infrastructure of youth work closest to them (open youth centers, open youth spaces, etc.), voluntary activities and the activities of youth organizations; to create conditions for the young person to get involved in community activities by promoting mutual trust between the young person and the community; to develop social skills of youth; counselling young people or mediating between different organizations, institutions and individuals in different life situations; to introduce young people to positive leisure activities, learning opportunities through outreach activities (e.g. training, camps, seminars), to involve them in intercultural education, prevention activities (e.g. prevention of bullying or activities to raise awareness of criminal behaviour, alcohol, tobacco, drugs or other psychotropic substances). It helps youngsters to solve their problems and find interesting activities for them.

To sum up the whole chapter it is possible to state that there is quite a wide range of areas of social work with children and youth. There are Children Day Care Centers, Open Youth Centers, Youth Spaces where children and youth can go after the lessons, where to apply if they need help or if they want to meet their friends. There they can meet professional social workers who can give them a piece of advice, organize a mediation or supervision, arrange a meeting with different specialists.

Overall, the first part of scientific literature analyses shows what does it mean to be a social worker, what are the differences between social workers and social workers working with children and youth, what competencies social worker should contain, what education should they get and main places and forms of work where social workers working with children and youth can be found.

The second part of scientific literature will analyse social work in a time of pandemics, pandemics impact on society and social workers place during the pandemic, challenges and issues met.

## 2. SOCIAL WORK IN A TIME OF PANDEMIC

### 2.1. Pandemic Social Impact on Society

The word “Pandemic” comes from the Greek “pan” meaning “all” and demos - “the people”, and the word is commonly taken to refer to a widespread epidemic of contagious disease throughout the whole of a country or one or more continents at the same time (Honigsbaum, 2009). Dictionary of Cambridge (2019) defines the word “pandemics” - (of a disease) existing in almost all of an area or in almost all of a group of people, animals, or plants. According to Britannica Encyclopaedia (2020) Epidemic is an occurrence of disease that is temporarily of high prevalence. An epidemic occurring over a wide geographical area (e.g., worldwide) is called a pandemic. To sum up in short, the pandemic is for the most part disease outbreaks that become widespread as a result of the spread of human- to-human infection.

A lot of generation experienced one or other pandemic during the centuries. Some human being had to cope with cholera, some with plague, some with different kind of dangerous flue. Each pandemic was met with fear and stress. Each pandemic harmed human life and economic development. For example, the influenza pandemic of 1918-1919, which killed more than 20 million people in the world and has been cited as the most devastating epidemic in recorded world history (Liritzis, 2020). Nevertheless, a lot of years have passed form the last pandemic and worldwide society has forgotten about that, but the 21st century gave the world new pandemics COVID-19. Similar to all known pandemics throughout history, COVID-19 has been accompanied by a large degree of fear, anxiety, uncertainty, and economic disaster worldwide (Pitlik, 2020). People today know much more about COVID-19 than those in the Middle Ages knew about plague, cholera or flue, but according to Carol Symes (2020) history still repeats itself in many disturbing ways.

Infectious disease outbreaks can easily cross borders to threaten economic and regional stability, as has been demonstrated by the HIV, H1N1, H5N1, and SARS epidemics and pandemics (Verikios et al, 2015). Beyond the debilitating, sometimes fatal, consequences for those directly affected, pandemics have a range of negative social, economic and political consequences (Davies, 2013). As an example, “The impact of pandemic influenza i.e., H1N1 in 2009 was not just on mortality, but also on health-care systems, animal health, agriculture, education, transport, tourism and the financial sector. In short, a pandemic event threatens all aspects of the economic and social fabric” (Drake et al, 2012). For another example, the SARS in 2003 and the Ebola pandemics, in 2013 and 2015 respectively, disrupted the economies and social order in China and West Africa as well as causing death and illness. Ebola and other pandemics have reduced the life quality of families and communities, and Ebola has disrupted essential services such as education, transport,

and tourism, reduced the West African economies and isolated populations, which had impacts beyond Africa too due to the global effort of containing the outbreak (Nabarro et al, 2016).

Despite all different impacts, the social impacts of pandemics were the most severe during all pandemics: travel was strictly limited, and schools closing, markets and sporting were closed. Population mobility was also a key factor. Movement was difficult and the travel including visiting families, carrying goods to markets were restricted by military check points. The closure of airports and cancellation of flights affected many people's travel, livelihood, and family life. With the rapid development in worldwide aviation over the last two decades, the risk of global pandemics has escalated with increased passenger traffic. With modern and efficient air travel, SARS, which originated from southern China was rapidly transmitted to more than 30 countries in early 2003 (Wong et al, 2007). Closing the airports harmed the economy of the affected regions. School closure was often considered the first non-pharmaceutical intervention for implementation in a pandemic, as students are effective in spreading the virus. Timely school closure and cancellation of public gatherings was significantly associated with reduced mortality related to influenza epidemics during the 1918 influenza epidemic (Chiu et al, 2016). School closure raised a range of ethical and social issues, particularly since families from underprivileged backgrounds were likely to be disproportionately affected by the intervention (Chiu et al, 2016). Different pandemics affected different countries and had different impacts each time, but this new pandemic - Covid-19 affected not only separate continents as it used to be earlier, but the whole world: Africa, Europe, America, Asia, etc. and the social impact on society was very severe.

According to Bhattacharya (2020) COVID-19 has had a massive impact. For example, social distancing, self-isolation and travel restrictions have led to a reduced workforce across all economic sectors and the loss of jobs. Schools have closed down, and the need for commodities and manufactured products has decreased. In contrast, the need for medical supplies has significantly increased. The food sector is facing increased demand due to panic-buying and stockpiling of food. Furthermore, Nicola et al (2020) define a whole range of social impact on society:

- Social distancing and self-isolation
- Travel restrictions
- Reduced workforce across all economic sectors
- Job loss
- School closure
- Disruption of normal life of children
- Decreased demand for commodities and manufactured products
- Increased need for medical supplies

- Increased demand in food sector
- Panic-buying and stockpiling of food products.
- Domino effect on health, healthcare and nutrition
- “Infodemic”: spread of panic and fear through social media
- Xenophobia against specific ethnic/geographic groups
- Poor people, homeless people, refugees, migrants are disproportionately affected by the health and economic impacts of COVID

According to Ahmad (2020) all these factors lead to acute panic attack, significant positive statistical correlation between self-reported social media use and the spread of panic related to Covid-19, stress, fear and anxiety during physical distancing seen in children and adults, obsessive behaviour, hoarding, paranoia, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in the long run and many other problems. What is more, COVID-19 outbreak affects all segments of the population and is particularly detrimental to members of those social groups in the most vulnerable situations, continues to affect populations, including people living in poverty situations, older persons, persons with disabilities, youth, and indigenous people.

According to the United Nations (2020) the global COVID-19 pandemic is having an unprecedented impact on education systems all over the world with far-reaching social consequences. According to UNESCO data (2020), one hundred sixty-five countries have implemented nationwide closures of educational institutions, and several more have implemented localized ones, in total affecting 1.52 billion of children and youth. This number represents over eighty seven percent of all enrolled learners and is expected to increase further as the pandemic spreads and more countries enforce nationwide closures. Moreover, the duration of these closures is highly uncertain. The situation can be expected to have severe consequences in terms of interrupting learning, compromising nutrition, and elevating drop-out rates. In particular, the closures are disproportionately impacting disadvantaged and underprivileged children and youth who have fewer educational opportunities outside of school, a lack of access to remote learning tools and the Internet and rely on free or discounted school meals for healthy nutrition.

To sum up, social impact on society is very severe and will have consequences for a long time. Especially on children and youth because of the closure of schools and extracurricular activities after lessons. For some of the children and youth it is a place where they can get hot food, knowledge and supportive word. That’s is a situation where social workers working with children and youth are in deep need. The next chapter will analyse challenges met by social workers around the world in pandemic situation.



## 2.2 Social Workers' Challenges Around the World in Pandemic Situation

Recounting the professional values (service, human rights and social justice, dignity and worth of people, privacy and confidentiality, and importance of human relationships, and integrity) which COVID-19 has undermined and, in some instances, overturned, it has become increasingly notable that if any profession is most hurt by the pandemic, it is the social work profession. Alternatively, as a practice-based profession, social work has a crucial role to play given its stated goal of (1) advancing social cohesion and stability, (2) promoting social change and development through the liberation and empowerment of people, and (3) restoring social functioning while enforcing respect for the sanctity of life, drawing on ideals of social justice and human dignity (Amadasun, 2020). Social workers are committed to realising social values like diversity, inclusion, justice and equality in often complex circumstances. Usually, they do so in direct contact with service users.

When the pandemic COVID-19 started the working conditions for social workers have changed due to pandemic. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, physical proximity was accompanied with risks for physical health, for service users and their social network as well as for professionals, their colleagues and their loved ones. Direct contact, an important basis for social work, could no longer be taken for granted and had as a matter of fact become a source of ethical tensions. According to Banks et al (2020) social workers felt lacking sufficient support for making conscious and responsible choices regarding physical proximity, especially since sufficient protective devices were lacking or unsuited for their work. Furthermore, all the services they work in, are facing increased demand: most notably mental health, housing and family violence services. All areas of the community sector are experiencing added pressure through this increase in demand for services, in costs incurred for delivering those services and in working through the restrictions as they perform their work. For example, many organizations have had to suspend group-based services and close community 'drop-in' facilities, finding innovative ways to deliver these functions. Similarly, organizations who supplement their income through social enterprises such as culturally specific catering services, have been forced to close or reduce the enterprise through a combination of social restrictions and cancellation of orders (Banks et al, 2020). As people were closed in their homes, social workers had to find out new ways of communicating and helping those who need social services. Social workers have a flexible attitude to adapt to the situation at every moment and can be the best examples of Charles Darwin's survival of the fittest theory. Social workers at every level have the skills and capability to not only address safety for today but to translate fear, grief, and loss into empowerment and social transformation. According to Carlucci (2020), with resilience, stamina, self-direction, flexibility, and self-confidence, social

workers easily inculcate the adaptability skills required in this demanding profession. Countries of the whole world tried to find out the solutions in different sectors as well as in social work sector. Social workers had to find their ways of work in pandemics through their own experience.

All countries faced pandemic challenges and some of them have already surveyed their experience and shared with the world. According to the Bank et al (2020) in Netherlands, in the social domain on a large scale the switch was made to digital contact like video conferencing. A complicating factor was that privacy legislation in the Netherlands had recently been tightened up, as a result of which common means of digital communication such as Skype, ZOOM and WhatsApp could not be used for professional contact. Also, many professionals had little or no experience with digital assistance. Many professionals experienced that digital contact sometimes works well and can even have advantages, but often has too many disadvantages. It is more difficult and sometimes even impossible to establish or maintain contact. Some service users disappeared out of sight of the counselling services. Assessments also turned out to be less successful. On the one hand it was easier for service users to keep up appearances, on the other hand professionals lacked sensory information, like non-verbal behaviour or the condition of the housing. It was hard for social workers to assess risks like domestic violence. Counselling from a distance was also more difficult. More often it was not possible to realise sufficient depth in conversations and to maintain focus during counselling. Professionals were therefore concerned about the quality of their services, both for the benefit for their clients and for their own.

In Albania during the pandemic, non-governmental agencies shifted the provision of services online. According to Dauti (2020) social workers involved in non-governmental agencies have offered online support to persons with disabilities, counselling services to victims of domestic violence, and online classes to children in disadvantaged communities, among others. Social workers have also engaged in online platforms established to support individuals and families during the pandemic. Online platforms such as Better Together were established by civil society organizations and human rights activists to provide information on how to address concerns over health and mental health during the pandemic. Meanwhile, existing platforms such as the Child Protection Hub of Terre des hommes (2020) and Porta Vendore (2020) tailored their services to address the needs that emerged during the pandemic. For instance, Porta Vendore (2020) provided information on the legislation enacted during the pandemic and invited citizens to report the challenges they faced. The Child Protection Hub organized a series of webinars on working with children and families during the pandemic. Numerous challenges have emerged with the provision of online services. Access to online services has been restricted only to a minority who could afford it. Families have faced difficulties in meeting Internet costs, let alone in accessing expensive equipment (World Vision, 2020). For social workers, the coordination of online services became

a challenge, especially in large, interdisciplinary teams. Often, they lacked protocols to guide their work. Social workers also struggled with addressing ethical issues during the provision of online services. Reports from the field revealed that social workers faced difficulties obtaining permits to leave the house and they have even been interrogated by police officers when traveling to support victims of domestic violence. Social workers have raised the concern that, compared to other essential workers, they have had lower access to safety supplies (Dauti, 2020). The examination of the social work response to COVID-19 in Albania suggests that social workers, despite the context, share some common challenges in times of pandemics such as COVID-19. The groups that social workers serve are affected the most, and social workers struggle to provide adequate services (Dauti, 2020).

In Lithuania a survey “Social Workers in Covid-19 Pandemic Situation” was initiated by the Lithuanian Association of Social Workers, conducted by Doctor of the Department of Social Work and Social Welfare, Institute of Sociology and Social Work, Vilnius University (2020). The aim of the study was to find out the needs of the social work community and the problems that arise when providing social services under COVID-19 quarantine conditions. The analysis of the lack of assistance to employees in working in quarantine conditions revealed that financial support due to increased workload, stress at work, as well as public support and evaluation of the work performed would help the participants the most. Social workers expressed that they experienced problems and fears like these: the fear of being isolated at work is a combination of family and work responsibilities, it is difficult to control customers' emotions and behaviour, it is difficult to ensure that customers comply with quarantine, the workload of family workers or childcare workers has increased significantly due to distance learning and helping children prepare lessons, psychological stress at work due to working conditions (own safety), new requirements, tensions between clients and co-workers / managers, high congestion in retail chains makes it difficult to order goods in e-shops, delivers live shopping, especially in small towns, and increases the workload, lack of personal protective equipment, there is no cooperation between the institutions. Social workers working remotely spend more of their working time on document management and individual consultations. Group consultations, self-help group activities, employment services are almost non-existent. According to the research only 18.9 percent participants use on-line, i.e., live video tutorials. Most communicate via email or phone calls. This suggests that there is a lack of equivalent counselling, mediation and information services. In addition, employees are likely to lack knowledge about the use of technology in social work practices. Prior to the announcement of the pandemic and quarantine, there was no need to provide remote social services, and no good practice had emerged. Another reason may be the lack of technical means. Teleworking is a challenge, both in terms of technological knowledge and in terms of the psychological readiness

of clients and employees. At present, social workers have no knowledge of how to provide distance services, although their need is high, and restricting these services can have long-term social consequences (relapse, addiction, growing domestic violence, online exploitation and growing online trafficking, etc.).

The given information of different countries (Netherlands, Albania, Lithuania) social workers' experience and challenges met during the Covid-19 pandemics show that they all experienced online working, lack of knowledge of using new technologies, safety, etc. But according to Farkas (2020) social workers practice across many settings and with many different types of population and social problems. And despite all inconveniences due to pandemic, the relationship with client is the central method of work, and social workers all around the world tried to find the ways to give services. As a way to mitigate the infection rate and to prevent serious illness, public health advisories have included the practices of social distancing, self-quarantine and self-isolation. In times when personal contact is limited by public health practices, social workers must be innovative to maintain their work with clients and find ways to balance personal health with client services. Social workers in all countries are turning to on-line options, social distancing in open settings, phone contacts and written communication to stay connected with their clients, knowing the importance of human relationships for wellbeing.

To sum up, social workers all around the world experienced similar challenges at work while giving services to others. The given research data from Netherlands, Albania and Lithuania show that social workers met similar issues like working online with clients, lack of knowledge of work with new technologies, the feeling of safety, but they had to continue with services and balance between personal health and creating a close relationship with a client mainly through online work. The online work was something they had to learn or develop the knowledge they already had. They started using different IT programs and online services were the main part of their job. The next chapter will analyse what challenges pandemic has brought to social workers working with children and youth.

### 2.3. Social Workers' Challenges Working with Children and Youth in Pandemic

The coronavirus pandemic has had a major impact on the situation and well-being of children and their families, while simultaneously affecting the ability of welfare services for children and youth to support vulnerable families. According to the Jentsch et al (2020) at the beginning of lockdown in March 2020, actors in the social and medical fields as well as in politics quickly raised concerns about the welfare of children in families who were strained by multiple burdens, were anxious about their future and who lived in confined space. At the same time, it

became apparent that social work professionals, including those responsible for child protection, were no longer able to rely fully on established measures and strategies during lockdown in order to fulfil their responsibilities. Instead, new approaches had to be tried out in difficult circumstances, characterized by uncertainty. Social workers working with children and youth had to find the best ways how to give good services.

According to the research of Cook (2020) social workers working with children in England was a big challenge. Following lockdown, the way that social workers engaged with children and families changed overnight. All but the most urgent home visits were replaced by virtual interactions:

1) FaceTime and WhatsApp were the most commonly identified platforms for engaging with families. Social workers also described using Skype and Google Hangouts. Microsoft Teams and Zoom were primarily used for meetings and reviews;

2) A combination of video calls and text/instant messaging were used to keep in touch with parents and carers;

3) Emails were regarded as a 'slower' and more impersonal mode of communication, and were generally only used to share paperwork;

4) WhatsApp video and instant messaging services were typically used to keep in touch with older children;

5) Virtual working encouraged 'little and often' contact with families as opposed to less frequent, longer interactions. Virtual engagement with children was challenging, particularly for younger children.

Social workers needed to find creative ways to bridge the physical and psychological distance between them and the child/young person during video calls. Capturing and holding the child's interest was key. Cook (2020) defined several challenges of social workers working with children in pandemics:

1) Social workers with caring responsibilities (including childcare and home schooling) had to juggle these alongside often emotive and challenging work with families;

2) A minority of social workers described these demands as unmanageable. Some had considered whether they wanted to stay in the profession as a result;

3) Having a workspace at home, and contact with colleagues via WhatsApp after hours could erode the boundaries between work and home life. For some workers, this meant that home no longer provided respite from work;

4) Loss of travel time could reduce social workers' opportunities to reflect and pause between tasks. This could result in an extremely intensive working day of back-to-back virtual visits and meetings;

5) Loss of face-to-face interaction could make it difficult for social workers to recognise when a team member was struggling and needed support;

6) Informal peer discussions would have naturally taken place in the office. Now a conscious choice was required to phone a colleague – over time this could lead to a sense of isolation;

7) Informal ways of keeping in touch could emphasise difficult dynamics within the team and could silence marginalised team members. Some workers spoke of ‘in groups’ and ‘out groups’ reflected in the teams’ WhatsApp interactions.

According to the professor Ferguson (2021) social distancing hasn’t stopped social workers and family support workers from being relational and finding ways of being effective and achieving what might be called non-physical closeness to some families. Social workers generally feel they have been able to be helpful to families in need and the welfare and support dimension of their work has increased. The pandemic has brought to the fore power relations and structural inequalities and opened up possibilities for a social model of child protection and an ethics of critical practice that tackles head on the effects of poverty, racism and other injustice (Featherstone et al, 2018; Keddell, 2020).

To sum up, pandemic situation had impact on social workers working with children and youth. They had to find new ways of working with children and youth in remote distance and give them as many as possible services. The research on how social workers working with children and youth during the pandemics was found only one which was done in England by Cook (2020). It tells the common ways of work, programs used and the need of creativity.

In conclusion, the analyses of literature and different researches show that social work on the whole is full of various activities, there are different services and different areas where social workers work such as senior people houses, social services home, prisons, hospitals, schools, youth centers, community day care centers, etc. Social work ensures the protection of people in vulnerable situations and it is committed to the promotion of social justice in relation to its service users and to all members of society. Social workers working with children and youth meet in their work challenges and problems of different age children and youth what requires to be up-to-date with children and youth issues if they want to help them in everyday activities. Nevertheless, social workers of the 21<sup>st</sup> century experienced work in pandemic COVID-19 situation, which was severe as schools, sport clubs, art schools and other institutions were closed and social workers had to find the ways of working and helping their clients further. There are done several researches on the impact of pandemic to social work sector around the world (Albania, Netherlands, Lithuania), but only one research was found done on the pandemic COVID-19 impact on social workers working with children and youth. The research was done by Cook

(2020) in England presented the deep experience of social workers working with children and families such as loss of face-to-face interaction between social workers and children or youth, using IT technologies, no time limits of work, etc. There is a lack of such researches around the world as well as in Lithuania. There are more than five thousand social workers (Statistics Department, 2021) in Lithuania working in different areas of social work. More than half of them work with children and youth in different areas. There is a probability that during the Covid-19 pandemics they met different challenges and gained different experiences.

This practical research will focus on memories experienced by social workers working with children and youth in different areas in Lithuania as by now there are no such researches done.

### 3. MEMORIES OF SOCIAL WORKERS BEFORE AND DURING THE PANDEMIC

#### 3.1. Research methodology

A qualitative research methodology is used in this work as it is about new topic and there are not many researches made at all. The Covid-19 pandemic situation is quite a new thing, so little is known about social work in this pandemic. This methodology is used when there is a need to know the participants reactions to natural setting or process to determine their experience of it, the meaning they ascribe to it. The purpose is to cultivate a deep understanding of certain human phenomenon – in this case, the work situation of social workers in Covid -19 pandemic situation. Qualitative research aims to reveal the entirety of the research thing in its usual context; therefore, the space of qualitative research is often a daily, normal life with various activities and social interactions taking place in it. Qualitative research does not aim to test theories (test known statements), but develops theories based on empirical facts (they are developed from the obtained data). Qualitative research appreciates the fact that attitudes and practices differ due to the discrepancy between subjective perspectives and the social and biographical contexts associated with them (Flick, 2014).

The Qualitative data collection methods play an important role in impact evaluation by providing information useful to understand the processes behind observed results and assess changes in people's well-being (Kabir, 2017). For this type of qualitative research as the thesis itself defines the best instrument for collecting data is interview. According to Alvesson (2011) Gaizauskaite (2016) interviews are a key element of qualitative research, one of the most commonly used methods for gaining knowledge about individuals, groups, and organizations.

Qualitative interviews are based on open-ended questions, which are expected to be as broad, comprehensive, open as possible, formulated and presented by the research participant himself / herself, reflecting his / her perspective. There are different types of interviews: structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, in-depth interviews, but the most suitable to get a good research data in this paper is in-depth interview. According to Boyce et al (2006) in-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of participants to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation. In-depth interviews are useful when a detailed information is needed about a person's thoughts and behaviours or want to explore new issues in-depth. This paper analyses social workers memories in their work during the pandemic situation. So, an in-depth interview is a one-on-one conversation, so it lets the research participant to talk freely. Generally, questions are open-ended questions and can be adopted for particular situation. The interviewer gets an opportunity to develop an interview with the participant, thereby making him/her feel comfortable.



Thus, they can bring out honest feedback and also note their expressions and body language. Such cues can amount to rich qualitative data (Boyce et al, 2006). With surveys, there are chances that the participants may select answers in a rush, but in case of in-depth interviews it's hardly the worry of researchers. In-depth interviews are aimed at uncovering the issues in order to obtain detailed results. This method allows to gain insight into the memories of the interviewees.

In this case non-probability or non-random sampling should be used as the aim is not to test a hypothesis about a broad population, but to develop an initial understanding of a small population number in depth i. e. to examine real-life activities. According to Taherdoost (2016) a sample of participants or cases does not need to be representative, or random, but a clear rationale is needed for the inclusion of some cases or individuals rather than others. There are four ways of non-probability sampling, but in this case the most suitable is purposive sampling. According to Maxwell (1996) (Taherdoost, 2016) purposive sampling is a strategy in which particular settings persons or events are selected deliberately in order to provide important information that cannot be obtained from other choices. It is where the researcher includes cases or participants in the sample because they believe that they warrant inclusion. In this research social workers working with children and youth in Covid-19 pandemic situation.

**The process of the research.** The course of this study, which is based on the in-depth interview method, can be divided into the following essential stages:

*1. Selection of research participants.* In order to conduct the study as thoroughly as possible, it was decided to look for potential participants in a targeted manner in various institutions where social workers work with children and youth. So, there were eight research participants who took part in the research. They were social workers working with children and youth in Day care centers (3), in Youth Centers (3) and in Children Community house (2). The researcher visited the mentioned institutions and presented the research, and invited social workers working with children and youth interested in research to take part in it. The ones who were interested came and expressed their wish to the researcher. Later the researcher called them and agreed upon suitable time for interview. First, the research was conducted in order to create a suitable environment for this. To achieve this goal, the participants' workplaces, zoom platform or other suitable places (e.g., home, relax room at work) were chosen. The interview was conducted between two people (research participants and interviewer). Interviews were conducted where research participants could not be distracted and prevented from answering the questions independently, remaining in the room only with the interviewer.

During the interviews, research participants were given every opportunity to express their memories. It was avoided to turn the interview into a personal conversation. During the interviews it was important to find out the research participants' daily activities and memories, but

did not assess the pandemic as a bad or good thing medically. Because the interview consisted of open-ended questions, the interviewer was required to write down the research participants' responses exactly as they were worded. The research participants were asked two questions related to the topic. For more accurate answers, additional, clarifying questions are provided to social workers during the interview in order to clarify the purpose of the research.

After the interviews, it can be stated that all selected research participants kindly agreed to answer the questions asked and they considered this study to be important and serious. The interviews lasted on average about 45-50 minutes.

2. *Interview.* Each research participant got two main questions (See Table 1):

Table. 1 Main and supportive questions

<b>Main questions</b>	<b>Supportive questions</b>
<b>What are Your everyday activities at work when there is no pandemics, what you do?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Could you describe one of your typical working days from the morning till you go home?</li> <li>* Could you describe your weekends at work?</li> <li>* Could you describe extracurricular activities?</li> </ul>
<b>Could you describe your everyday activities during the pandemics period?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Could you describe communication with other specialists?</li> <li>* Could you describe extracurricular activities?</li> <li>* Could you tell what knowledge or information did you lack?</li> </ul>

3. *Data processing and analysis.* Eight interviews were recorded and later transcribed. Content analyses of the collected data was performed. Five categories (responsibilities, organizational works, challenges, positive things, new ways of working) and twenty-six subcategories ( accompanying, contacts with other institutions, work with documents, good behaviour skills, cultural skills, artistic and sport skills, learning skills, communication skills, everyday social skills, limitations, organizational works, teaching, cooperation with other institutions, filming, IT knowledge, psychological aspects, activeness and tension at work, spending more time together, improved competencies, closer communication with other

institutions, closer communication among social workers, courses and seminars, volunteers, IT programs, various types of consultations, creativity) were distinguished. The analyses of the social workers' memories are discussed in the section of discussion. Conclusions and suggestions are presented.

4. *Ethics.* According to Gaizauskienė et al (2016), the entire research process must be based on ethics in order not to violate the rights of research participants. Goodwill is one of the ethical principles of a researcher, the goal of which is respect for individual privacy. In order to ensure the principles of autonomy and awareness, the social workers were informed about the purpose of the research, acquainted with the topic of the final work and the use of the obtained results. Research participants were informed about the confidentiality of the interviews. Since there were no problems with the recording, the interviews of the research participants were successfully recorded. In order to maintain the trust of social workers, the principles of confidentiality and fairness presented by Gaizauskienė et al (2016) are followed, when the names of research participants are not disclosed and the provided data are not made public. In the analysis of the study, research participants are presented as: (R1) – research participant first, (R2) – research participant second, (R3) - research participant third, (R4) – research participant fourth, (R5) - research participant fifth, (R6) - research participant sixth, (R7) – research participant seventh, (R8) - research participant eight. Ethics when applied to social research is concerned with the creation of a trusting relationship between those who are researched and the researcher. To ensure that trust is established it is essential that communication is carefully planned and managed, that risks are minimised and benefits are maximised. The five main ethical principles were applied in this research: (a) minimising the risk of harm; (b) obtaining informed consent; (c) protecting anonymity and confidentiality; (d) avoiding deceptive practices; and (e) providing the right to withdraw.

5. *Limitations.* According to Creswell (2018) in-depth interviews provide very rich information and it offers the opportunity to ask follow-up questions, probe additional information, justify previous answers, and establish a connection between several topics. It also offers a comfortable atmosphere in which people may feel more comfortable to establish a conversation. Even though Creswell (2018) says that in-depth interviews give rich information, there is limitation anyway. In this research the limitation is that interviews were done in Lithuanian language, so there could be some meaning lost while translating into English and it can affect the validity of the research. Some sentences or phrases could lose their identical meaning while doing the translation into English.

### 3.2. Everyday activities of social workers working with children and youth when there is no pandemic

**Everyday activities of social workers working with children and youth.** The participants of the research were asked first of all to describe what do they do in their job usually when there is no pandemics. It was done purposefully in order to understand what do they do every day and later it would help to understand the similarities and differences of everyday work in pandemics. The given answers let to distinguish everyday activities of social workers in two categories: responsibilities and organizational works. Both categories have some subcategories. Category *Responsibilities* consists of subcategories: *everyday social skills, communication skills, learning skills, artistic and sport skills, cultural skills, good behaviour skills*. The second category *Organizational works* consists of subcategories: *work with documents, contacts with other institutions, accompanying* (See Table 2, See annex II with proving statements).

Table 2. Categories and subcategories of social workers memories' work when there is no pandemics

Category	Subcategory
Responsibilities	Everyday social skills
	Communication skills
	Learning skills
	Artistic, sport skills
	Cultural skills
	Good behaviour skills
Organizational works	Work with documents
	Contacts with other institutions
	Accompanying

**Responsibilities.** Research participants told what do they do every day when there is no pandemic situation. The answers show what kind of responsibilities social workers working with children and youth have. One of them is educating *everyday social skills*. Here research participants mentioned many kinds of everyday social skills, starting from day regime “...to guarantee in the morning that children would reach schools, to leave on time, take part in the

*lessons, in extracurricular activities....*” (R1), “*...get up at 7.00, wash ourselves, have breakfast, tidy the rooms...*” (R3), continuing with planning food shopping list, buying food and making food “*...go together with children to buy food...*” (R1) (R3), “*...children make dinner themselves...*” (R1), “*...make food...*” (R7) and finally cleaning and tidying skills “*...learn to clean surrounding... learn to use washing machine, vacuum cleaner...*” (R7). Effective social skills are learnt from positive interpersonal communication between the child and the individuals interacting with the child (Gresham et al, 2011) (Mukhtar et al, 2021) while poor social skills are associated with impaired social cognitive capacity along with adjustment problems in children. According to Mukhtar et al (2021) effective social skills help the individuals to cope with the environmental challenges. A child with effective social skills learns to behave in normal or in emergency situations. So, social workers have to pay attention to developing these skills as they are needed in life. Through simple everyday activities they encourage children and youth to be always on time, to be tidy and make food.

The other skill is **communication**. Social workers pay spend energy to develop this skill and even the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets a legal standard for the significance of social workers communication with them. Communication with children and young people can take many forms including: direct talk, listening, writing, touch, facial expressions and body language, signing, and using specialist tools or techniques. Social workers, research participants, communicate with children and young people for a range of reasons: “*...can communicate, can watch films together and discuss...*” (R2), “*...art therapy “Pyramids of trust” in order to communicate and get acquainted with others...*” (R7), “*...try to communicate with youth as much as possible, to listen to their problems...*” (R5), “*...discussions on various topics...*” (R4), “*...talk how was the day at school...*” (R8). They communicate directly with children and young people to learn more about them and their families’ circumstances. They also communicate with children and young people to ascertain their views about decisions and matters that affect their lives. Put simply, social workers have to be able to connect, engage, support, talk and listen to children and young people if they are going to make a positive difference in their lives (Morisson, 2016). According to Anglin (2016) child and youth care is work with children and youth, as whole persons, in order to promote their social competence and healthy development, by participating in and using their day-to-day environments and life experiences, and through the development of relationships, most importantly the relationship with the particular child or youth who is the focus of attention. In order to reach it social worker has to make a close relationship with a child through different forms of communication and find the most suitable for that child or young person, only then the communication skills start developing for a child himself/herself. As it was mentioned in Theoretical part 1.2 according to Colton et al (2001;

2015) social worker working with children and youth must be able to: encourage children to talk or express themselves; feel comfortable in the presence of children and to have them feel comfortable with them; facilitate children's play; decentre from an adult perspective to engage the child; continue working uninterrupted despite the emergence of painful and disturbing material; respond to the different vocabulary, idioms, and expressions of children; and be the diplomat. Communication skills are necessary and research participants as it is seen use different methods for developing that skill.

Furthermore, social workers help to do homework and so develop their *learning skills*: "...help to learn Russian poem..." (R7), "...teach to read text good..." (R6), "...teach mathematics..." (R7). These proving statements show how much different knowledge should social worker working with children and youth have. Some children need help in Russian language, some in mathematics, some in just learning to read correctly. According to Li (2019) and other experts helping with homework cultivates positive learning behaviours, reinforces class material and signals to children that their education is important. So, if there is no help from parents, social workers are the ones who can help children and youth with homework and motivate them to learn and at the same time develop learning skills.

What is more, social workers develop *sport and artistic skills*, as they either are responsible for taking children to different extracurricular activities: "... take children to extracurricular activities..." (R1), "...singing, dance activities..." (R1) or they organize different art or sport activities themselves for children: "...teach children to express themselves through art..." (R6), "...sport games..." (R5) or organize active summer camps: "...summer camps..." (R4). According to Butcher (2021) social workers recognize that sport has the potential to impact individuals, teams, families, and communities. Active lifestyle like sport or other active activities (singing, acting, playing, dancing) help children and youth be busy and develop different competencies of a personality. Furthermore, according to Mishna et al (2014) camps are great social work interventions. Mishna et al (2014) state that camp program can enhance campers' social competence, self-confidence and self-esteem, and decrease their sense of isolation. These programs give possibilities for children and youth from families of social risk to take part in them. Summer camps organized by various institutions let social workers working with children and youth to involve children and youth into activities which are needed for children and youth. The more active activities for children the better it is for their development. Research participants show that they are active in organizing camps, involving children and youth into singing, dancing, playing.

*Cultural skills* are also needed for children and youth, so according to the research participants social workers go to excursions, theatre, concerts: "...museums, theatres, cinemas,



*excursions, festivals, camps...*”(R6), “...*take part in State events...*”(R1), “...*for a walk around the city in order to see places around...*”(R1), “...*project activities, excursions...*”(R2), “...*museums, concerts, museums, libraries, camps...*”(R2), “...*excursions, game shows, art therapies, films, educations...*”(R5). Social worker has to be aware what do children and youth like, how to make them love theatre, museums. The places for visits and excursions have to be chosen purposefully in order to teach some history, geography, traditions and culture. Social workers have an impact on communities and the people that occupy them. They are the ones who develop children and youth’s attitude towards their native country, customs, traditions, love to books, native writers, etc. A social worker working with children and youth takes on an important role in society as they help shape the lives of youth who will be leading communities into the future (Zegarac et al, 2018).

And finally, the last found out skill is **good behaviour skill**. Research participants mention: “...*teach how to behave in public...*” (R1), “...*how to behave at the table...*” (R4). These skills enable children to know what to say in various situations, how to communicate with friends, teachers, adults, how to ask for help. During summer camps children and youth can get various skills while taking part in educational programs which are planned there, learn to keep to daily routine skills which are needed in life. According to Preston (2018) the best thing for gaining good behaviour skills is practice. The best way to practice having great manners is to be nice to other people. Developing, demonstrating and teaching good manners are lifelong lessons. There is need to be patient with child’s developmental limits. Preschool children are just beginning to develop empathy and understanding that the world involves some pretty complicated rituals. Young school-age children are still sorting through what is rude and what is exuberant. Refinement of social skills can take years to master.

The given data by the research participants show how many activities social workers have to organize in order to develop different social skills and it helps to understand the necessity to meet children every day personally and necessity to go to public. Research participants described their aims at work: “...*to educate, to teach to solve social problems individually...*” (R1), “...*to improve their social life, reduce social exclusion...*” (R3), and “...*to encourage social integration into society, educate main social skills...*”(R2). These answers show that research participants feel responsibility for the work they do and they know what do they have to seek in their job. These answers correspond Zagreb et al (2018) idea, that a social worker working with children and youth takes on an important role in society as they help shape the lives of youth who will be leading communities into the future. Youth social workers work with children and youth who are struggling socially, educationally or with health concerns. So, it is good to have qualified workers who will have knowledge how to work with children and youth, who will be aware about

peculiarities of developmental and psychological well-being, as working with children and youth requires more time and better readiness than working with adults (Liobikiene et al 2016). Children and youth should feel safety and social workers have to provide them with healthy and suitable surrounding for education and nurturing, help to acquire skills for adult life, improve communication and develop social networks with community and society in general, also, provide children and youth with resources for better quality of life, therefore, social workers also should have knowledge about children and youth developmental peculiarities (The parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, 2006).

**Organizational works.** Research participants told what kind of other activities do they normally do when there is no pandemics. The proving statements show that social workers working with children and youth do many other activities especially when children and youth are at schools. So, as it was mentioned in the above the category *Organizational works fall into three subcategories: work with documents, communication with other institutions, accompanying.*

**Work with documents.** The answers of the research participants help to understand that they have work with documents, they have to fill in different form, to write projects, etc.: “...make plan for the whole year...” (R1), “...we prepare material, work with documents, write projects...” (R2), “...till lunch we work with documents...” (R7), “... make individual plans...collect material for activities...” (R6). They can do that job only when children and youth are at schools and usually it is from the morning till lunch time. The Ministry of Social affairs and Labour has prepared a description of social worker’s position activities working in children community houses, or Children Day Centre or Youth centers (The Order by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, No. A1-208, passed in 2013). All of them include planning, making individual plans, writing projects.

Then research participants mentioned that they have to **communicate with other institutions**. They need to talk to teachers and find out what problems children have and youth, they have to organize meetings for children with dentists, psychologists, speech therapists, visit families: “...visit families...” (R6), “...communicate with other institutions...” (R8), “...visit doctors...” (R1), “...visit social partners...” (R2), “...visit interinstitutional specialist, meet social workers...” (R2). These activities take time, but they are necessary in order to give a complex service for a child or youth. There is a huge need of communication of all specialists working with children and youth, starting from teachers and finishing with doctors and usually social worker is the one who keeps that contact. The social work literature (Carnwell et al, 2009; Loughran et al, 2013) emphasizes that in order to effectively solve social problems and provide social assistance to a client or client groups, inter-institutional cooperation and / or interdisciplinary cooperation is necessary. Cooperation between different institutions and specialists in different fields becomes



needed when the client's situation is complex or the problem to be solved is complicated and the efforts of one organization providing social assistance are not enough. So, it is possible to say that cooperation of social workers with other aid institutions and specialists help to solve problems more effectively, at the same time to achieve the set goals, to increase the quality of social services provided. According to Primm (2018) for social workers, there are a number of advantages to working collaboratively:

1. Greater knowledge. Different team members can bring their individual expertise to the group, ensuring that any problems are addressed from all angles and there are no blind spots when considering how to tackle a challenge. Allowing various professionals to contribute ideas creates opportunity for innovation.
2. Shared responsibility. Social work is challenging. Being able to rely on others to help shoulder the responsibilities of the job ensures that individuals don't burn out. Clients also benefit from having a larger support system.
3. Greater resources. Partners have access to different tools. Pooling resources can reduce costs for individuals and ensure that teams work efficiently.
4. Fewer professional barriers. Bureaucracy, protocols and procedures are easier to navigate with team members who have existing relationships with agencies and organizations.

While working in a team better complex help can be given to a child or youth and here social workers working with children and youth plays the main role.

Finally, research participants give the service of **accompanying**. They help smaller children to go to their extracurricular activities, go together for shopping, go together to the concerts, etc.: “...we take the smaller ones to activities and back” (R1), “...I accompany children to different events.... (R3), “...go together shopping...” (7), “...we go together to work in the garden...” (R6). Social workers are like a gate to the world for smaller ones, otherwise small ones should stay closed without any extracurricular activities, no concerts, no help from other specialist. The proving statements describe how social workers help smaller ones to reach different activities. The accompanying service let children experience the world around them what is necessary for their development.

According to the research participants, they work with not one, but with five, eight or even ten children or young adolescents at a time. In addition to various activities, there is an ongoing educational process that requires a lot of effort. According to Anglin (2012), caring for children and young people is working with children and youth as a whole to promote their social competence and healthy development through participation in and use of their daily environment and life experiences, and the development of relationships the specific child or young person being addressed. The social worker is seen as counsellor or caseworker, as an advocate, as a

partner, as assessor of risk and of need, as care manager, as an agent of social control. Social workers may play all of these different roles in varying degrees of mix at any time in their career.

The first question of the in-depth interview was to find out the daily activities of a social worker working with children and youth. The analysed memories of social workers working with children and youth when there is no pandemics show everyday activities such as work with documents, educating good behaviour skills for children and youth, accompany them to doctors, extracurricular activities, develop cultural, sport and learning, every day social skills. Only when this is clarified it is possible to analyse what has changed during the COVID-19 pandemic, what memories social workers working with children and youth bring from pandemic period. So, the next part will present the analyses of social workers memories while working with children and youth during the pandemic COVID-19.

### 3.3. Everyday activities of social workers working with children and youth in pandemic

**Everyday activities of social workers working with children in pandemic.** According to the memories of the research participants the categories and subcategories are distinguished. In this topic there are three categories: *Challenges of work during pandemics*, *Positive facts of work during pandemics* and *new methods used at work*. All three categories consist of subcategories. Category *Challenges of work during the pandemics* consists of subcategories: *adaptation to restrictions*, *organizational work*, *teaching*, *cooperation with other institutions*, *filming and video making*, *lack of ICT knowledge*, *psychological aspects*, *activeness and tension at work*. The second category *Positive aspects of work during the pandemics* consists of subcategories: *spending more time together*, *improved competencies*, *closer communication with other institutions*, *closer communication with other institutions*, *courses*, *seminars*, *volunteers*. The third category *Ways of working during the pandemics* consists of subcategories: *ICT programs*, *various types of consultations*, *creativity* (see Table 3, See annex III with proving statements).

Table 3. Categories and subcategories of social workers memories' work during the pandemics

Category	Subcategory
Challenges of work during the pandemic	Adaptation to restrictions
	Organizational work
	Teaching
	Cooperation with other institutions
	Filming and video making
	Lack of IT knowledge
	Psychological aspects
	Activeness and tension at work
Positive factors of work during the pandemic	Spending more time together
	Improved competencies
	Closer communication with other Institutions
	Closer communication among social workers
	Courses, seminars
	Volunteers
Ways of working during the pandemic	IT programs
	Various types of consultations
	Creativity

**Challenges of work during the pandemics.** Research participants said that they met challenges during the pandemics period. They have never before experienced such a phenomenon to work in pandemics. According to Pitlik (2020) COVID-19 has been accompanied by a large degree of fear, anxiety, uncertainty, and economic disaster worldwide. Social worker's profession was the one which usually work with vulnerable groups of people, in this case the smallest one: children and youth. The first and most widely described topic by research participants was different kind of limitations at their work, so the first subcategory is called adaptation to restrictions.

**Adaptation to restrictions.** Social workers working with children and youth in community children houses experienced the severe pandemic restrictions. The research participant tells: “...limited going outside for children...<>...children had to be in a flat among four walls, there are four rooms and a kitchen for six children and social workers, this of course gets friction to be closed all the day together...” (R1). Furthermore, she tells with sad voice her memories of how she has tried to explain these restriction rules to children: “...the hardest part was, especially for the young children, to explain, of course we had been given instructions, we had consultations, we tried to find out how to give it to the children first...” (R1). She remembers sitting down the children round the table and talking with them: “...we had such meetings with the children at the round table, we just tried to tell them that we wouldn't be able to go outside so much, of course the children were very upset about it, but we explained that it was security, that we had to be careful, a lot of talk was needed” (R1). In order to explain the children new rules, the research participant remembers consulting with psychologists: “... a lot of consultations, and we consulted with psychologists, called, asked how to treat children...” (R1). The research participant even remembers the reaction of children and tells one story: “...of course, the big ones are very upset because they have a lot of friends, very eager to make friends, very eager to communicate. A girl has a friend and is very eager to meet him, but we tried to solve the problem by talking on the phone. Of course, when we see that it is difficult for someone we try to communicate, let them spill. It was a difficult situation...” (R1). Some research participants shared their memories about restrictions and the memories show that it was difficult to work under different kind of limitations during the pandemic: “...pandemic situation was very difficult for us, as everything has closed, schools have closed, children were nor used to study online...”(R3), “...when the strictest quarantine began and we started working remotely, it was quite difficult to adopt...”(R4), “...sometimes we didn't know what recommendations to follow because they changed very quickly, we had to adapt quickly to the changing order...”(R6). The restrictions and limitations were sudden and new to social workers, they have never experienced that before, that's why it was difficult for them not only to adjust themselves to different situation, but also to explain that to children and youth. Usually, people feel fear to the things which they do not understand clearly. In this case as Amadasun (2020) says it has become increasingly notable that if any profession is most hurt by the pandemic, it is the social work profession. They quickly had to find the way how to help children and youth, there was no time to sit and wait. They had to be flexible and adapt to the new regulations. While implementing the safety requirements they had to help children and youth to learn. This challenge will be described in the next subcategory.

**Teaching.** As the analyses of the everyday social workers activities show one of their main activities is to help children with homework. If children do not understand the topic learnt at

school, they ask social workers to help with their homework. So, while analysing social workers memories of working during the pandemics it is possible to see that for most of them teaching and helping with studies was the main activity. Research participants tell: “...you have to work with all six children at once as all of them have special needs for education. You have to look at each computer if they got the information right or not, what each of them have to do as homework...<>... I was just saying, just wait, do not hurry me up, it is impossible to get around all of them at once...” (R1), “...children were not used to learn online, so we had to be together with them all the time. They were not able to connect, we had to sit together, they were afraid to switch on cameras...<> the first months were very difficult...” (R3). Social workers had to become teachers and explain material to the children: “...what the teacher sends I need to analyse, present to the child. If the teacher gets sick, I also have to analyse it and give it to the child. I have to prepare the material according to the level of those children so that they do not lag behind too much, I have to print it out, put everything together, put it together...” (R1), “.... I had to do the work of speech specialist for children who have clear speaking problems. The speech specialist has just sent me the material and guidelines and I had to work with children...” (R1), “...I helped to prepare for lessons, to make homework...” (R8), “...I prepared tasks which children had to do...” (R6), “...my main activity then was to sit together with children in the lessons...<> it is difficult for children to do exercises quickly and teacher goes on, so I had to explain everything later...<>so I was like a teachers’ helper...” (R3). These memories show that social workers had to put main efforts on teaching children the subjects which are usually taught at schools by teachers. It does not matter where the social worker works at community children house, at day centre or at youth centre, all of them had to work as teachers: “...when lessons have finished, we connected with children and asked if they need help with homework, if yes, then we helped them online...” (R4). What is more, for some of research participants it was really difficult as they do not have that kind of knowledge. Not everyone can teach chemistry or Physics: “...it was difficult to help children to learn online, we do not understand ourselves everything, chemistry, physics, we do not understand.... <> ...the grades went down, children angry...” (R3). As it is seen from this memory it can even put a social worker in a conflict situation with a child as he/she is not able to help with Chemistry or Physics. As Amadasun (2020) said, social workers have the responsibility of playing crucial and frontline role of helping and supporting communities that are affected by COVID-19 and that responsibilities of social workers are not limited to the fight against the spread of COVID-19, he most probably did not have in mind that social workers also have to be teachers at pandemics. So far, it is one of the biggest challenges for research participants, but not the last one. There is a need to look at other challenges. Social worker had to be organized during the pandemics.

**Organizational works.** Some research participants mentioned that they had to do a lot organizational works, to take care that everyone would have a computer or a tablet or some other material: “...enough computers for everyone, share the rooms, connect everyone to lessons...”(R1), “...my work was mostly organizational...”(R2), “..I gathered the information about children if they have all required materials, do the family needs help...”(R6), to be sure that children and youth would have what to do when the lessons and homework are over: “...we as employees need to have as many thoughts as possible, ideas on how to occupy them. It lacked where to read, where to find something new to do with them. It clearly required a lot of effort because of all the things to do with the children, just so that they would not get bored, because if you get bored you know it .... and not to lie in bed. act on them so as not to crave in bed...” (R1), “...I had to use more time for thinking what activities to use...” (R6), “...social worker has to foresee several steps of work forward...” (R7). At the same time social workers also had to do paper works as they did before pandemic. Before pandemics they usually did paper works from the morning till lunch when children were at schools, but during the pandemics the situation was different, most of them had to sit together with children in the lessons online, so they had to reorganize their day work and find time for making plans, filling in documents or preparing new project or preparing reports: “...during the pandemic, we had a weekly plan of what activities would take place each day. Those activities usually recurred every week. As before, we have been working on paperwork since the morning...” (R5). Research participants memories show that social worker has to be well organized person in order to do many different activities. Good organization skills allow social workers to stay on top of their clients' needs and ensure that nothing “falls through the cracks.” They also have to be flexible as they have to change organizational things during the pandemics. Sometimes they get help from other institutions too as it is seen in the next subcategory.

**Cooperation with other institutions.** While doing the analyses of the first research question it was noticed that research participants mentioned cooperation with other institutions and how requirable it is in order to give full required support and help to children and youth. While analysing the memories of pandemics period it is seen that some research participants felt a lack of communication with other institutions during the pandemics or they felt that they do somebody's else job: “...relations with teachers were complicated as we had to do their work. Sometimes it seemed that we do not find the same language to speak...” (R3), “... I had to work instead of speech specialist...” (R4), “...doctors gave consultations only by telephone...” (R6). But some of the research participants remembered that they had good relationship with other institutions: “...we worked a lot with schools where to get a computer or tablet as we do not have so many. And you know for special education there are special requirements, the lessons are



*special too...* (R1), “...we had a lot of communication with class teachers...” (R7). So, this subcategory shows that experiences of research participants are different, it depends on what relations do they have with other institutions, if other institutions were willing to help. This situation shows that maybe the relationship was not closed before the pandemics and pandemics situation showed that problem and gave ideas to think what can be improved and what they can expect. Despite some challenges with other institutions, research participants described one more challenge like *Filming and video making*.

***Filming and video making.*** There was time when to film some dance and send to the teacher was like something interesting and innovative method, but with the pandemics the situation has changed. From the memories of research participants it can be seen that during the pandemics everything was supposed to be filmed and sent to the teachers: “...we had to film sport trainings, everything was going on just with constant filming in the room or outside...” (R1), “...I had to film how children do speech exercises and send to speech specialist...” (R6), “...“...we were asked to film children how they tell a story in English, how they dance for dancing lesson, how they do sport exercises for Physical education lesson...” (R5). Even the extracurricular activities had to be filmed: “...extracurricular activities also had to be filmed. One of the child visits dance group activities, so I had to film her dance exercises. Also, children took part in different competitions, so I had to film their dances and send to the teacher or organizers of the competition. Trainings also had to be filmed and sent to the teacher to show how a child does the exercises with a ball...” (R1). The faces of research participants were not happy when they shared this memory. It was exhausting for them to do the filming all the time and sometimes they had to film the same thing for several times as the child made a mistake: “...that filming was something terrible...” (R3), “...it took really much of my time and a lot of effort...” (R4). Given memories show that using technologies was not so easy thing and quite tiring activity. It may be because of too much computers, laptops and telephones during that period. Also, as the next subcategory shows there was a lack of knowledge while using IT technologies.

***Lack of IT knowledge.*** It is quite normal that during the pandemics most of people experienced the lack of IT knowledge. The coronavirus pandemic and its wide-ranging implications have accelerated digital skills demand in many occupations. Effective use of digital skills has proven to be a driver of resilience, helping workers and entire organisations adapt to the new realities shaped by the pandemic. This research reveals what kind of memories do social workers working with children and youth have. Research participants tell: “...information technology, this is a variety of knowledge...<>... we had very little to deal with just before quarantine. We still used only the simplest ones available, it's Messenger or skype apps, but already during the quarantine we had to move to Zoom, Teams, and completely new to find out,

*which we hadn't even heard before, even the most elementary Kahoot. This was certainly a huge lack of competence in the field of information technology...*” (R2), *“...for us Zoom was also a new thing, so we asked teachers at first to teach us that we could help children...”* (R3), *“...gaps of innovative ways of working were really a trouble at work...”* (R8). Memories show that social workers met challenges with starting suddenly to use so many different programs which were not common before. Especially, it was complicated for those who had to join together with children lessons and extracurricular activities, they had to remember all passwords, to use different programs, to learn themselves and to teach then children: *“...we had to learn to work with many computer programs, to learn all login names and passwords, we had to teach children to work with different programs. We had to learn how to submit video material, different extracurricular activities, different programs, different ways of submitting, different downloading, different programs...”* (R1), *“...it was clear that there were a lot of fears, we looked for information ourselves, we learned a lot, we took part in seminars: how to communicate, how to set the camera, how to use Zoom and Meetings, how to manage them...”* (R2). The last cited memory shows that some social workers experienced even fear as using so many new programs and video meetings were a new thing, never experienced before. The research participants’ memories confirm the research of Cook (2020) who said, that social workers working with children in England was a big challenge. Following lockdown, the way that social workers engaged with children and families changed overnight. All but the most urgent home visits were replaced by virtual interactions: 1) FaceTime and WhatsApp were the most commonly identified platforms for engaging with families. Social workers also described using Skype and Google Hangouts. Microsoft Teams and Zoom were primarily used for meetings and reviews; 2) A combination of video calls and text/instant messaging were used to keep in touch with parents and carers. The memories of social workers taking part in this research supplement Cook’s research done in England. It is possible to state that working conditions of social workers changed suddenly, almost in one night and IT technology usage was a real challenge, but not the last one.

***Activeness and tension at work.*** Changed working conditions obviously may call out active work and tension at work. The research participants shared how busy they were during that pandemic period: *“...I can say that there is no time left to rest during a pandemic completely. I can tell you that I come and get a wet back until I get around everyone, until everyone is alright. Also, everything has to be filmed, sent. I don’t want anyone to be harmed, I want everyone to be bypassed, inspected, with everyone being properly treated. It really gave a lot of work to each worker...”* (R1), *“... our goal was not to lose our children and youth because a visitor can be lost very quickly, and if we had lost that contact it would really be very difficult to get them back, so we tried to adjust to new working conditions very hard...”* (R2), *“...during the quarantine, I felt*



*an intensified rhythm of work. I wanted to do my job as well as possible in such conditions, so without counting time and energy, I kept looking for new ideas and tools. Whether in the morning or evening, having found or come up with something, I rushed to make it happen...*” (R5). From the above written proving statements, it is seen that the research participants remember that pandemic period as intensive working period. They tried to do their work as good as possible during the pandemics, but many things for them were new, so they had to learn a lot themselves, to teach children, to create new activities, to take part in seminars, to do documentation work. Three research participants even presented their day in hours and explained what was the difficulty: “...it seems that I no longer feel the boundaries, it seems that I will still connect here, let's say our working hours started from 11.30, so now that we started connections from 8.00 to the meetings, seminars, supervisions... <> ...in the evening someone writes from the youth and we have to answer to them at 20.00 or even at 22.00. And there are times when working hours expand to a very large number of hours...” (R2), “...the work of the day centre changed places when there was more work before the pandemic from 1 p.m. to 4.30 pm, which is the full intensity of work, during the pandemic from 7.45 am. lasted until 3.30 p.m. Yes, more energy was needed because I had more than one class to observe and attend seven lessons every day...” (R7), “...most of children, youth wanted consultations at a time when the official working hours of the centre had already ended, i.e., after 20.00...” (R8). It shows that for some social workers the number of working hours has expanded and it was difficult to make boundaries and decide when the working day is over. It leads to the situation when person does not get enough relax time from work and that is not good. One of research participants says: “...but it is very important to protect workers from burns at this time. Because distance work still remains a big challenge...” (R8). The survey “Social Workers in Covid-19 Pandemic Situation” initiated by the Lithuanian Association of Social Workers, conducted by Doctor of the Department of Social Work and Social Welfare, Institute of Sociology and Social Work, Vilnius University (2020) also tells that the workload of family workers or childcare workers has increased significantly due to distance learning and helping children prepare lessons, psychological stress at work due to working conditions (own safety), new requirements. If to analyse deeper there come one more subcategory: psychological aspects.

**Psychological aspects.** Tension and uncertainty bring psychological aspects, especially when a person meets what is unknown for him/her. Research participants talk about themselves: “...the psychological tension was clear, the friction on the employee was clearly very responsive...” (R1), “...fear to lose visitors of the centre and constant fear that they will not come back after the pandemics...” (R2), “...it wasn't easy at first, there was such a slight shock: "And what to do now?" ...there was a lack of clearness and it made me feel unsafe and difficult...” (R5).

When they talk about children it shows how they feel bad themselves as they see children and youth bored and they have to think all the time what kind of activities to offer them: “...*what’s more, our kids got stuck, basically they were just between the four walls, they became so passive, no one wondered anymore, computers got bored because everything was up to them and homework and lessons. For us it was psychologically difficult to help them. You think of one activity, children tell it’s not interesting, then you have to think of something more interesting...*” (R3), “...*the hardest part was seeing the declining motivation of the children and feeling that the connection with the child could quickly disappear, which is why we worked hard and worked hard before the quarantine to both earn the trust and establish that connection...*” (R5). What is more, the research participant says, that in this pandemic situation they became lazy themselves: “...*we got used to working online, just helping with studies, no free time activities to be organized, we became lazy ourselves...*” (R3). The other research participants even talk about patience and anger: “...*it took patience, not to show anger, when the child maliciously refused to learn...*” (R7). The research participant says that the hardest part of the pandemics was communication not face -to-face: “...*I would like to have more trainings on how to maintain or make contact with children and youth when communication is mostly not face-to-face, because it's the hardest part of a pandemic...*” (R5). According to Lutzenkirchen (2017) social workers, communicating with clients in their environment and other institutions, experience emotional, physical and psychological overload. Pressure from the environment and internal discomfort, which they experience, causes stress and anxiety.

The research participants’ memories analysed in this category show what kind of challenges did they experience in every day work with children and youth in COVID-19 pandemic situations. They talked about adaptation to restrictions, organizational works, teaching activities, cooperation with institutions, filming and video making, lack of IT knowledge, psychological aspects, activeness and tension at work. Proving statements show what they did during the pandemics, how did they organized the work, what did they experience and what was the most difficult to cope with. On the other hand, their memories show that there were also some positive factors of working during the pandemics. So, the next category is positive factors of work during the pandemics.

**Positive factors of work during the pandemics.** Research participants memories allowed to distinguish a category about positive factors and it was interesting to analyse not only challenges, but also positive things. What social worker working with children and youth told as positive things. According to Nelson (2021) pandemics has taught people to be flexible and adaptable in finding new ways and places, people find more time to be together, more time for reflection, accelerate life changes, not to hurry to judge or suspend others, etc. Participants of this

research talk about finding more time to spend together. So, the first subcategory to be analysed is about time together.

***Spending more time together.*** Research participants remember that during this pandemics they managed to make closer relationship with children and youth as they had to share the same space together, played games together, had more time to make food together, to read books to paint and decorate the rooms: “...during the pandemic, we had a close relationship with the children, we had stronger communication because we are with them all day together...” (R3), “...we started to play more table games together, all the time all together in one place, we started to collect more recipes, we started to make more new dishes, children get more involved into making food...<> they started to read more books and after that we had discussions about the heroes of the books...<>... we started to paint more, to decorate the rooms together for birthday parties. We had somehow to be in one place all together, so we had to think of something interesting...” (R1), “...closer relationships with children and among social workers themselves. We have learnt to share the same space; we have learnt to behave well at the table. Discovery of commonality, closeness, that we can do together with small and big ones many interesting things...” (R1). The last proving statement shows that social workers had not only closer relationship between them and children, but also among social workers themselves. The research participant pays attention to the fact that they talked more with children in that period, the other one shares that they tried to use Zoom and talk with each child in order to show that he is not left alone: “...we talked about difficulties at school, about free time...we just talked more...” (R6), “...we tried to use Zoom for individual talk with every child in order to give motivation and show we really take care of them...” (R5). Time for being together and doing different activities is one of the ways to build closer relationship among them and children and youth. Nevertheless, during the pandemic period the research participants not only spent more time together, but there was a time for improving their competencies.

***Improved competencies.*** This subcategory analyses what social workers working with children and youth have learnt during the COVID-19 pandemics period. According to Beaunoyer et al (2020) COVID-19 has highlighted the digital inequalities that exist in our society. Digital tools and digital skills were at the core of social workers’ worries, with reference to two main issues: their own and service users’ attitudes, particularly those without digital tools (laptop, smartphone, or tablet), without an Internet connection, or with limited skills; and the difficulties of creating safe and meaningful spaces online. The research participants through their memories told that it was a time when they improved their ICT competencies: “...I learnt to use a lot of different computer programs, to download and submit video or simple material...” (R1), “...we really have improved our knowledge in IT usage, if not pandemics maybe I have never used some

*programs in my life...*” (R5), “...thanks to pandemics I have discovered many different apps that still help in working with children. Of course, computer literacy has improved. Before quarantine, I really didn’t use as many different programs as I do now. First of all, I had to learn to use them...” (R4), “I can say I improved my competencies which I need at work...” (R6). They even mentioned the programs that they learnt to use: “...we quickly learned to use Facebook private groups, Instagram, Discord in order to reach more young people...” (R2), “...the ones who didn’t know how to work with telephone also have learnt not only to use telephone just for calling and writing a message, but also to make video, to use Zoom, to use Viber, Messenger, WhatsApp...” (R1). What is more, one of the research participants remembers how she improved her creativity competences, she tried to use her imagination as much as possible in order to think what interesting they can do with children and youth and not to feel them bored: “...we have learnt to use our imagination as we had to think of something interesting to do with children, e.g. we have made a month calendar with dates which we are going to celebrate that month and then we share who responsible for what and prepare for it. We have made our webpage. We have learnt to make video, choose the music, dance more, make discos, karaoke. We try to change activities in order not to get bored e.g., we tidy rooms for some time, then we tell interesting story each, then we present our rooms in interesting way. We also made a green window-sill and grow green onions...” (R1). Proving statements in this subcategory show that social workers working with children tried to improve their different competencies in order to help children and youth, they were not just sitting and waiting, they were learning and attending different seminars and courses. That is not all, research participants remembered more positive aspects, the next subcategory is closer communication with other institutions.

***Closer communication with other institutions.*** For every day work at social sector, it is necessary to apply comprehensive assistance in order to reach the common goal – to help child’s development. While analysing the everyday activities of social workers before pandemics it was mentioned that social workers cooperate a lot with teachers at schools, speech specialists, dentists, doctors, etc. According to the research participants memories communication with other institutions during the pandemics has increased. They remember: “...we started working more closely with other institutions, although as an employee I felt that we started working more closely with schools, with the teachers closer to communicate, teachers started to get to know our children more, to understand our institution, to dig deeper into our children. I am really happy about that. The teachers helped, we contacted more...” (R1). The research participant expressed that during the pandemics the school started to pay more attention to children who belong to social inclusion group and it makes social workers working with children and youth feel better. They are not alone. The other respondent also noticed the bigger help from schools: “...we received all the

*information, all the tools, and anyway we could call anyone, they said everything at once, the schools were very informative, the teachers talked to the children online, there were lectures especially for both the child and the staff. And even after this day there are more lectures, and the school can connect, we get information, we participate...*” (R4). Research participants’ memories show that cooperation among different institutions is needed and especially during pandemics when help is really necessary. According to Dominelli (2020) the art of helping others involves giving and receiving help as people, as professionals, and as members of a community. Furthermore, not only communication among institutions is necessary, but also the closer communication among social workers themselves.

***Closer communication among social workers.*** This subcategory shows that social workers noticed themselves the need for closer communication among themselves: “...well, it's better anyway when more people go online to consult and share experiences...<>... suddenly you can get an answer to the problem you have just by talking with other social worker....” (R1), “...general group of workers and visitors for communications...<>...we communicated more with each other to share idea what to do, shared interesting activities...” (R8). The other research participant says that they had to change their way of communication among themselves during the pandemics in order to get the information right from each other:” “...we had to mobilize social workers and volunteers...<>...first we tried to communicate among themselves just with messages, but we saw that we do not broadcast the required information among ourselves, so we started to use Zoom for communication, more telephone calls among themselves...” (R2). One more research participant explains why it is good to communicate closer among social workers themselves: “...it was good that we started to communicate more with our colleagues at work, we took part in different seminars and shared the material among us, we connected with social workers from other regions and shared our experience or interesting activities.... <>... finally, we talked more with each other...” (R7). The memories of social workers working with children and youth show that pandemic situation allowed to find time to share their ideas and experience among themselves what has made the closer communication among social workers.

***Seminars, courses.*** According to research participants’ memories during the pandemics they had a possibility to take part in seminars: “...enough seminars, there were more than there were at the time before pandemics. But I am very glad that there were so many seminars because it is quite difficult to find everything, to explore everything...” (R1), “...courses for Covid challenges at work, course to improve computer competencies...” (R8), “...I had a possibility to take part in many online seminars. I had more possibilities to take part in seminars, conferences...” (R1), “...I have attended many online seminars on different topics, e.g., creative activities for children, how to help children, psychological seminars...” (R6). One of the research



participants mentions that during the pandemics for remote territories it was good as all seminars were online, then it does not matter where the participant lives, everyone can attend it.: “...we are in the most geographically inconvenient location, really far from the big cities, and now we had every opportunity to attend the best seminars, conferences, and meet other centers virtually, meet other colleagues, something we didn't have before the pandemic due to lack of finance and lack of time. There are pluses as well...” (R2). Social workers working with children and youth were glad that there is much information and seminars offered by Lithuanian Youth Department: “...the Youth department constantly offered various distance trainings on forms of telework, so we had methodological support, we just had to register and participate in them...” (R8). One of the research participants even noticed that it was too much of seminars and she had to learn to choose the right one, the one she really needs: “...there was no lack of information, sometimes it seemed that there is too much, different courses, conferences, sometimes it was too much, but later I learnt to take only the one I really need ...” (R4). The proving statements show that there were enough of seminars and courses for social workers working with children and youth. It means that they were not left alone and online seminars and courses even helped to reach social workers who usually do not want to travel long distance or have no possibility to attend seminars or courses physically. Furthermore, The National Association of Social Workers (2017) views continuing education as an essential activity for ensuring quality social work services for clients. By consistent participation in educational opportunities beyond the basic, entry-level professional degree, social workers are able to maintain and increase their proficiency in service delivery: new knowledge is acquired, skills are refined, professional attitudes are reinforced, and individual's lives are changed. Continuing education further provides the social worker with the opportunity to acquire new and necessary information; demonstrate a conscious self-directed and continuous effort toward personal and professional development; strengthen qualifications for professional licensure, certification, or registration; meet changing career demands; and explore new careers in social work. In order to give qualitative services social workers are encouraged to attend seminars, courses, workshops and pandemics helped them to get them on-line.

**Volunteers.** At the heart of the COVID-19 pandemic, volunteers have demonstrated an exceptional display of solidarity across the world. Volunteers have been assisting vulnerable groups, correcting misinformation, educating children, providing essential services to the ones who needed it the most. During COVID-19 pandemics volunteers were invited to help in different sectors, not exception were youth centers, children day care centers, community houses. On the one hand volunteers helped social workers to do various activities: “...a lot of added value with young people and children was given to us by volunteers, as they are exactly the same as their peers and really know how to attract youth, they started to organize various quizzes, crazy virtual

*shows. In this way, we improved and organized orientation competitions for families, where one family can participate and walk to collect objects in winter to get up a little from those screens...*" (R2). Usually volunteers in youth centers and day care centers are young people, so they are the ones who are quite good in IT technologies and as it is seen from previous proving statement, they were a real help for social workers working with children and youth. They created quizzes, virtual shows, orientations, etc. Volunteers have made presentations about their culture and traditions, countries and presented online for children and youth in order to expand their cultural view: "...each of our volunteers made their own virtual presentation, which was about what area the volunteer is strong in, say, whether he knows more languages or science, whether he knows how to draw well...<> he/she also helped to write essays and solve math problems on line..."(R5), "JST volunteers were also strongly involved in the work during the quarantine - each of them offered help with homework, preparation for settlements or just their friendship if our visitors felt lonely..."(R4). Some volunteers filmed and prepared presentations of making some different dishes and they offered to do the same to children and youth and they were the helpers who brought home to children some material if they needed: "...volunteers filmed how to make a certain dish, or some kind of toy or gifts for Christmas there and that content was brought to our channels, and children could try at home, to do the same. The ones who had no materials got a help from volunteers too, they delivered the required material to their houses..." (R2). On the other hand there were volunteers youngsters who took part in the official accredited volunteering and they did volunteering also in youth centers and day centers, so one research participant remembers, that they decided to continue working with young volunteers in order to help them and finally they all were happy in this situation, helping each other during the pandemics: "...if we had given up volunteering during the quarantine, our volunteers would not have completed the program, and the non-completion of the program means that our volunteers receive nothing, he receives only a bare certificate, no certificate, no code, where he is entitled to additional points. We discussed this and decided that we are not stopping volunteering, we are moving to online...<>...our expectations have come true 100 percent because our volunteers have always been at the forefront of both initiative and new methods...<>...volunteers have contributed a great deal to our success..." (R2). Research participants and volunteers complemented each other activities during the pandemics. They helped each other in everyday activities. Volunteers helped to make various activities for children and youth, social workers helped them to finish their accredited volunteering and get points for entering University. Volunteers are needed in many social sectors as volunteers build the resilience of communities and help to develop a sense of ownership of development interventions. The nature of the COVID-19 crisis with its need for social distancing, accelerated the utilization of online volunteering services, enabling volunteers to support communities

remotely (UN Volunteers, 2020). Social workers memories express the advantage of volunteers in their work with children and youth as they can help with online contact and activities with children and youth.

**Ways of working during the pandemics.** It is the third category found out in this research. The research participants talk about ways of working they started to use more or found out during the pandemics. Their memories in this category can be divided into three subcategories: IT programs, Individual consultations and group work, Creativity.

**IT programs.** Even if earlier the research participants mentioned how challenging it was suddenly to learn to work with many new programs, later they tell what they have learnt and new programs they use in order to interact with children and youth such as Kahoot, Discord, Zoom, Salto-youth: “...every day, we posted quizzes on social media like Kahoot, used the Discord platform, and played a variety of games with young people, during which we were able to interact with the sound. We also had conversations, discussions on various topics with young people through Zoom...” (R5), “...found new communication programs where all children can connect together at the same time...” (R6), “... Salto-youth platform.” (R8). One of the research participants says that they even looked for interesting websites and programs and sent to children and youth as suggestion what they can do: “...we shared various websites that could help students learn and ideas on what could be done useful during a quarantine ...” (R4). These new learnt programs can be used not only during the pandemics, but will be used later too. According to several scientific authors, social service providers have demonstrated a great deal of creativity in their use of technology to deliver services and maintain relationships with clients, and to provide continuity of care, necessary emotional support and communication during the COVID-19 pandemics (Boahen, 2020; Farkas et al, 2020; Galea et al, 2020).

**Various types of consultations.** The research participants mention that they have used during the pandemics various consultations such as individual work or group work: “...we had more individual consultations...” (R5), “...individual consultations...” (R8), “...group works online...work in a team...” (R8), “...I tried to do more individual consultations online...” (R3), “.... children wanted me to call them more often, so I used video programs to see them and I did a lot of group connections...” (R5). It shows that social workers working with children and youth paid more attention to communication with children or youth in order not to let them to feel alone. They had more time to listen to each child or youth, to hear their hobbies, to talk individually on topics which are interested for an individual child or youth. This situation helped them to show every child that they care about them. It was a time when social workers planned to have more individual consultations and it was good for children and youth.



**Creativity.** This subcategory shows that pandemics period required creativity from social workers working with children and youth. The research participants remembered that they had to be more creative in order to organize activities for children or youth in pandemics period: “...I had to use more creative ways, to think of new activities...” (R6), “...I created activities myself, I reached for them online, took part in courses and was learning myself how to create games online...” (R4). One of the research participants remembered how she liked to be involved with creativity and told that she created the games according to children’s interests herself: “...I had to think what to do for children during the day, it was really challenging, but I attended seminars and learnt new games, I tried to create myself games according to the interests of children...” (R7). The other two research participants express joy of being able to discover many other alternatives at work “...I have discovered a great many new alternatives to how things can be presented differently, perhaps with so much more interest from children and young people themselves. I still use discovered sites and apps...” (R5), “...I liked to prepare a lot of creativity activities, I learnt myself to prepare simple games online, I looked for painting programs online, I also, I created different games...” (R1). The memories of the research participants show that creativity during the pandemics period was a useful factor. Social workers have to be creative as they are continually engaged in trying to find imaginative solutions to difficult problems. One participant expressed that creativity tasks helped her to relax herself from tense work: “,... sometimes creative tasks helped me myself to relax...” (R5). Two participants mentioned that they started using art therapy in their work with youth and children and even for themselves to relax: “,...during pandemic period I found out art therapy, it was something new for myself, but helped me to think of new activities, I noticed that it helped to reduce children ‘s tension...” (R6), “,...I got interested in painting mandalas myself and recommended it for children, we painted together...” (R7). According to Van (2016) Art therapy is a technique rooted in the idea that creative expression can foster healing and mental well-being. The goal of art therapy is to utilize the creative process to help people explore self-expression and, in doing so, find new ways to gain personal insight and develop new coping skills. The creation or appreciation of art is used to help people explore emotions, develop self-awareness, cope with stress, boost self-esteem, and work on social skills. According to Kaimal et al (2016) less than an hour of creative activity can reduce your stress and have a positive effect on your mental health, regardless of artistic experience or talent. An art therapist may use a variety of art methods, including drawing, painting, sculpture, and collage with clients ranging from young children to older adults. People do not need to have artistic ability or special talent to participate in art therapy, and people of all ages including children, teens, and adults can benefit from it. Some research suggests that just the presence of art can play a part in boosting mental health (Farokhi, 2011). The goal of art therapy is to utilize the

creative process to help people explore self-expression and, in doing so, find new ways to gain personal insight and develop new coping skills. The creation or appreciation of art is used to help people explore emotions, develop self-awareness, cope with stress, boost self-esteem, and work on social skills. Techniques used in art therapy can include: Collage, Colouring, Doodling and scribbling, Drawing, Finger painting, Painting, Photography, Sculpting, working with clay, Mandalas, Making Fractals, etc. As people create art, they may analyse what they have made and how it makes them feel. Through exploring their art, people can look for themes and conflicts that may be affecting their thoughts, emotions, and behaviours (Van, 2016).

To sum up, for social workers working with children and youth this COVID-19 pandemic has been a test to prove their creativity, resilience, and flexibility. According to Dominelli (2020) social workers have the opportunity to renovate their commitment towards the most vulnerable people in society, discovering unusual ways of helping, together with solidarity with other practitioners, citizens, volunteers, and local communities. According to the participants' memories of this research, social workers working with children and youth experienced different challenges at their work concerning adaptation and restrictions, organizational works, educating, cooperation with other institutions, filming and video making all the time, lack of ICT knowledge, some psychological aspects, activeness and tension at work, but there were also some positive factors of working during the pandemics like spending more time together, improving competencies, closer communication with other institutions, closer communication among social workers, possibility to take part in various seminars online, work with volunteers and of course they have learnt to use new methods at work such as net IT programs, different consultations and to use their creativity. The memories of the research participants show everyday activities of their work before pandemic and during pandemic COVID-19 have changed. They had to adapt to new situation and find the ways of working in order to reach their clients and help them with educating everyday life skills.

### 3.4. DISCUSSION

According to Zegarec et al (2018) social worker working with children and youth takes on an important role in society as they help shape the lives of youth who will be leading communities into the future. Social workers work with children and youth who are struggling socially, educationally or with health concerns. The memories of research participants working with children and youth show that they feel responsibility for the work, they educate and teach children and youth to solve their social problems, they improve their social life, try to reduce social exclusions, encourage social integration into society and educate their main skills, communication skills, develop cultural skills and try to cooperate with other institutions in order to help a child or a young person. It corresponds the ideas of Anglin (2016) who says that child and youth care is work with children and youth, as whole persons, in order to promote their social competence and healthy development, by participating in and using their day-to-day environments and life experiences, and through the development of relationships, most importantly the relationship with the particular child or youth who is the focus of attention.

The research participants shared their memories of work during the COVID-19 pandemics what let to analyse their challenges and positive aspects of their work during the pandemics. The pandemic situation brought many restrictions and limitations what according to Pitlik (2020) has been accompanied by a large degree of fear, anxiety, uncertainty. This research shows that social workers working with children and youth met a set of restrictions to be applied in their work and at the beginning they felt fear and despite that they had to find the ways how to explain that to children and youth and continue their work by finding the best ways how to adapt to restrictions.

Amadasun (2020) said, social workers have the responsibility of playing crucial and frontline role of helping and supporting communities that are affected by COVID-19 and that responsibilities of social workers are not limited to the fight against the spread of COVID-19. And he was right, the research shows that social workers working with children and youth had to become teachers and help children and youth with lessons and homework of different subjects as it was difficult for children to learn online without help.

The workload of childcare workers has increased significantly due to distance learning and helping children prepare lessons, psychological stress at work due to working conditions (own safety), new requirements. Social workers express activeness and tension at work as well as psychological difficulties. According to Banks et al (2020) social workers at every level have the skills and capability to not only address safety for today but to translate fear, grief, and loss into

empowerment and social transformation. But while analysing these memories it is seen that social workers experienced psychological challenges themselves.

The pandemic has stimulated social innovation for social workers (Schiavo, 2015) by facilitating a rapid and broad uptake of synchronous virtual care telephone and video appointments. Research participants had to learn to work with different ICT programs, to film, to make videos. In some ways, the pandemic has brought social work closer to the goals of integrating innovative technologies in practice (Berzin et al, 2015). Online services allowed to reach children and youth who live in remote places. These benefits were noted in the research even though at first it sounded like a challenge to work with the ICT programs which have not been applied before. Social workers describe it as increase in their competence. Other competencies such as creativity, professional knowledge was also improved due to a quantity of seminars and courses online. According to several scientific authors, social service providers have demonstrated a great deal of creativity in their use of technology to deliver services and maintain relationships with clients, and to provide continuity of care, necessary emotional support and communication during the COVID-19 pandemics (Boahen, 2020; Farkas and Romaniuk, 2020; Galea et al, 2020). It allowed social workers to apply new methods in their work such as ICT programs, different kind of consultations, more creative activities.

According to Nelson (2021) pandemics has taught people to be flexible and adaptable in finding new ways and places, people find more time to be together, more time for reflection, accelerate life changes, not to hurry to judge or suspend others, etc. Research participants remember that during the pandemics they managed to make closer relationship with children and youth as they had to share the same space together, played games together, had more time to make food together, to read books to paint and decorate the rooms.

Cooperation among different institutions is needed and especially during pandemics when help is really necessary. According to Dominelli (2020) the art of helping others involves giving and receiving help as people, as professionals, and as members of a community. Social workers cooperate with schools, doctors, speech specialists, etc.

Research participants and volunteers complemented each other activities during the pandemics. Volunteers helped social workers with organizing activities for children and youth, helping to do homework, bringing the required things to children and youth sitting at home, preparing different shows for online games. Social workers helped volunteers to fulfil accredited volunteering during pandemics. Volunteers build the resilience of communities and help to develop a sense of ownership of development interventions. The nature of the COVID-19 crisis with its need for social distancing, accelerated the utilization of online volunteering services, enabling volunteers to support communities remotely (UN Volunteers, 2020).

Social workers are experiencing and adapting to a new normal and this includes increasing influence on well-being and community (Ashcroft, 2021). In addition, the profession contributes to the fabric of societal functioning and caring about children and youth, so the memories shared in this research could be a great help to formulate what support do they need in order to help them to feel comfortable in their working place or what competencies should future workers contain.

Researcher's reflection: It was worth topic to be analysed as it was a new thing in the world. The analyses of social workers work with children and youth showed that there are not many researches done on challenges met by social workers working with children and youth around the world. What is different between social workers working with children and youth and the ones who work with adults and seniors. Although, this paper analysed the memories of working in COVID-19 pandemic situation, a completely new thing. The meetings with the research participants allowed to understand their feeling and understanding of the whole situation going on in pandemic.

Me as researcher have learnt how to look for research participants, how to make interview questions, how to organize an interview, how to analyse the collected data, etc. The difficulties experienced: finding the right scientific literature on pandemic influence on social workers, structure the whole master thesis into the right order, formulating suggestions.

This master thesis could be developed further about the work with children and youth in the after-pandemic period and what should be future social worker working with children and youth.

## CONCLUSIONS

1. Literature analyses shows that social workers work with children and youth who are struggling socially, educationally or with health concerns. They are responsible for educating and teaching children and youth to solve their social problems, they improve their social life, try to reduce social exclusions, encourage social integration into society and educate their main skills, communication skills, develop cultural skills and try to cooperate with other institutions in order to help a child or a young person in fullest. Pandemic situation influenced their job in various aspects.
2. The analyses of the research shows that social workers experienced challenges and positive aspects while working during the COVID-19 pandemic. Challenges: adaptation to restrictions, organizational works, teaching children and youth, cooperation with other institutions, filming and video making, lack of IT knowledge, activeness and tension at work, psychological aspects. Positive aspects: more time together, improved competencies, closer communication, volunteering, started to use more different IT programs, apps, various types of consultations and their own creativity as a method for working with children and youth. The found out challenges and positive aspects while investigate the memories of the research participants working during the COVID-19 pandemic show that social workers are looking for the ways to adapt to new working conditions and they have experienced different working conditions and they are ready to overcome challenges in order to help their clients and look for the ways to improve their knowledge.

## SUGGESTIONS

1. There should be more seminars and courses for social workers working with children and youth teaching them to use different kinds of IT programs and how to use the apps popular among children and youth. It could be organized by the Universities;
2. To organize art therapies for social workers in order to help them to get of the tension gained at work during the pandemic. It could be done by the initiative of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour;
3. In order to make social workers working with children and youth work easier there could be prepared manual of tools of activities which can be done with children and youth online if there is pandemic situation again. The associations of social workers;
4. Social workers educating program at universities should include more activities of using IT programs;
5. To encourage volunteering at institutions working with children and youth;
6. To organize social workers working with children and youth experience gained during the pandemic situation sharing seminars, meetings. The associations of social workers;
7. To organize more seminars with presenting up-to-date activities which could be used in social work everyday activities with children and youth. It could be done by universities, colleges, social workers associations.
8. Government should pay more attention to cooperation among institutions in order to help social worker while developing a child or a youth.

## SUMMARY

Aleknavičienė, V.: *Social Work with Children and Youth in COVID-19 Pandemic Situation: Memories of Social Workers*. Final Master Thesis of Social Work with Children and Youth. Supervisor Assoc. Prof. dr. J. Pivorienė. – Vilnius: Mykolas Romeris University, Faculty of Human and Social Studies, Institute of Educational Science and Social Work. 2021.

**The goal of the research:** To analyse the memories of the social workers working with children and youth during the pandemic situation COVID-19 in Lithuania. **The object of the research:** Social workers memories while working during the pandemic COVID-19. **The objectives of the research:** 1) to overview the literature on social work with children and youth in normal situation and how pandemic situation influence people everyday life and social workers activities; 2) to investigate social workers working with children and youth memories before and during the pandemic situation. **Research methods:** the scientific literature review on social workers everyday activities, differences between social workers working with children and youth and social workers in common in daily activities, work in pandemic. For the empirical part in-depth interview is used as the research is based on memories analyses. Qualitative content analyses are done with categories and subcategories. The participants of the research are eight persons working with children and youth. **Results:** Social workers work with children and youth who are struggling socially, educationally or with health concerns. They are responsible for educating and teaching children and youth to solve their social problems, they improve their social life, try to reduce social exclusions, encourage social integration into society and educate their main skills, communication skills, develop cultural skills and try to cooperate with other institutions in order to help a child or a young person in fullest. Pandemic situation influenced their job in various aspects. The analyses of the research shows that social workers experienced challenges and positive aspects while working during the COVID-19 pandemic. Challenges: adaptation to restrictions, organizational works, teaching children and youth, cooperation with other institutions, filming and video making, lack of IT knowledge, activeness and tension at work, psychological aspects. Positive aspects: more time together, improved competencies, closer communication, volunteering, started to use more different IT programs, apps, various types of consultations and their own creativity as a method for working with children and youth.

Key words: Social workers, COVID-19 pandemic, children, youth



## SANTRAUKA

Aleknavičienė, V.: Socialinis darbas su vaikais ir jaunimu COVID-19 pandemijos metu: socialinių darbuotojų prisiminimai. Socialinio darbo su vaikais ir jaunimu magistro baigiamasis darbas. Vadovė doc. dr. J. Pivorienė. – Vilnius: Mykolo Romerio universitetas, Socialinių technologijų fakultetas, Edukologijos ir socialinio darbo institutas. 2021.

**Tyrimo tikslas:** Išanalizuoti socialinių darbuotojų, dirbančių su vaikais ir jaunimu, prisiminimus COVID-19 pandemijos metu Lietuvoje. **Tyrimo objektas:** Socialinių darbuotojų prisiminimai dirbant COVID-19 pandemijos metu. **Tyrimo tikslai:** 1) apžvelgti literatūrą apie socialinį darbą su vaikais ir jaunimu normalioje situacijoje ir kaip pandeminė situacija įtakoja žmonių kasdienį gyvenimą ir socialinių darbuotojų veiklą; 2) ištirti socialinius darbuotojus, dirbančius su vaikų ir jaunimo prisiminimus prieš pandemiją ir jos metu. **Tyrimo metodai:** mokslinės literatūros apžvalga apie socialinių darbuotojų kasdienę veiklą, skirtumus tarp darbuotojų dirbančių su vaikais ir jaunimu ir dirbančių kitose srityse, darbą pandemijos metu. Empirinei daliai naudojamas giluminis interviu, nes tyrimas paremtas prisiminimų analize. Kokybinė turinio analizė atliekama su kategorijomis ir subkategorijomis. Tyrime dalyvauja aštuoni tyrimo dalyviai. **Rezultatai:** Socialiniai darbuotojai dirba su vaikais ir jaunimu, kurie susiduria su socialinėmis, švietimo ar sveikatos problemomis. Jie yra atsakingi už vaikų ir jaunimo auklėjimą ir mokymą spręsti socialines problemas, gerina socialinį gyvenimą, stengiasi mažinti socialinę atskirtį, skatina socialinę integraciją į visuomenę ir ugdo pagrindinius įgūdžius, bendravimo įgūdžius, ugdo kultūrinius įgūdžius ir stengiasi bendradarbiauti su kitomis institucijomis, siekdamas visapusiškai padėti vaikui ar jaunuoliui. Pandemijos situacija turėjo įtakos jų darbui įvairiais aspektais. Tyrimo analizė rodo, kad socialiniai darbuotojai, dirbdami COVID-19 pandemijos metu, patyrė iššūkių ir teigiamų aspektų. Iššūkiai: prisitaikymas prie apribojimų, organizaciniai darbai, vaikų ir jaunimo mokymas, bendradarbiavimas su kitomis institucijomis, filmavimas ir fotografavimas, IT žinių trūkumas, aktyvumas ir įtampa darbe, psichologiniai aspektai. Teigiami aspektai: daugiau laiko praleista kartu, patobulintos kompetencijos, glaudesnis bendravimas, savanorystė, pradėta naudoti daugiau įvairių IT programų, programėlių, įvairių konsultacijų ir savo kūrybiškumo kaip darbo su vaikais ir jaunimu metodų.

Raktiniai žodžiai: socialiniai darbuotojai, COVID-19 pandemija, vaikai, jaunimas

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## ANNEX I

In depth interview questions:

TYRĖJAS: Laba diena, Labai ačiū, kad sutikote dalyvauti tyrime, kuriuo siekiama išanalizuoti socialinių darbuotojų dirbančių su vaikais prisiminimus dirbant COVID-19 pandemijos metu. Jūsų dalyvavimas tyrime yra savanoriškas. Jūs galite sustoti bet kuriuo metu ir atsisakyti dalyvauti tyrime. Interviu užtruks apie 40-60 minučių. Informacija, kurią atskleisite dalyvaudami tyrime bus konfidenciali, koduojama. Tyrimo rezultatai bus pateikiami tik aptariant visų dalyvių suteiktą informaciją bendrai ir jokia informacija, kuri padėtų identifikuoti individualius asmenis nebus atskleista. Informacija, kurią atskleisite dalyvaudami tyrime nebus naudojama jokiais kitais tikslais, išskyrus edukacinius ginant mano diplominį darbą. Visa surinkta informacija bus sunaikinta iki 2022 metų vasario 1 dienos. Dalyvavimas tyrime gali turėti minimalią riziką: interviu metu užduodami klausimai gali sukelti pamąstymus apie save ir savo darbą vaikų namuose, taip pat sukelti jautrius prisiminimus ar jausmus. Dalyvavimas šiame tyrime nieko nekainuoja. Jeigu turėsite man klausimų vėliau, tai visuomet galėsite su manimi susisiekti duotais kontaktais sutikimo formoje, kurią pasirašėte.

Taigi, galime pradėti. Kaip jau supratote, mano tyrimo tikslas yra išanalizuoti socialinių darbuotojų dirbančių su vaikais prisiminimus dirbant COVID-19 pandemijos metu. Šiam tyrimui aš taikau giluminį klausimyną, kurį sudaro du klausimai.

Taigi pirmas klausimas:

Papasakokite kokią Jūsų kasdieninę veiklą darbe ne pandemijos metu?

Antras klausimas:

Pasidalinkite prisiminimais apie kasdienę veiklą darbe pandemijos metu?



ANNEX II

Table 2. Categories and subcategories of social workers memories' work when there is no pandemics with proving statements

Category	Subcategory	Proving statements
Responsibilities	everyday social skills	<p>“...to guarantee in the morning that children would reach schools, to leave on time, take part in the lessons, in extracurricular activities...” (R1)</p> <p>“...get up at 7.00, wash ourselves, have breakfast, tidy the rooms...”(R3)</p> <p>“...practical activities in order to educate social skills... (R2)</p> <p>“...wash hands...”(R7)</p> <p>“..wash hands,plates, tide the playing place..”(R6)</p> <p>“... baking cakes, pancakes, make salad...” (R2)</p> <p>“...children put in places their toys, tidy working place...” (R2)</p> <p>“...learn to clean surrounding... learn to use washingmaschine, vacuum cleaner..”(R7)</p> <p>“...tidy together wardrobes..”(R1)</p> <p>“...wash clothes...(R1)</p> <p>“...plan with children what food to buy...”(R1)</p> <p>“...go together with children to buy food...”(R1) (R3)</p> <p>“...children make dinner themselves...”(R1)</p> <p>“...make food...”(R7) (R6) (R5)</p> <p>“...make dinner themselves”(R3)</p> <p>“...go to Akropolis to choose and buy clothes...”(R1)(R3)</p> <p>“...involve parents in social skills activities...”(R6)</p> <p>“...every day skills...”(R4)</p> <p>“...make food...”(R4) (R8)</p>
	Communication skills	<p>“...can communicate, can watch films together and discuss...” (R2)</p> <p>“...we let children to rest, to communicate with friends, to play...”(R2)</p> <p>“...art therapy “Pyramids of trust” in order to communicate and get acquainted with others...”(R7)</p> <p>“...communicate...”(R7)</p> <p>“...table, outside games...”(R7)</p> <p>“...games...express of feelings by art...”(R6)</p> <p>“...watch films and discuss them..”(R6)</p> <p>“...try to communicate with youth as much as possible, to listen to their problems...”(R5)</p>



		<p>“...discussions on various topics...”(R4)</p> <p>“...talk how was the day at school...”(R8)</p>
	Learning skills	<p>“...take children to speech therapists...”(R1)</p> <p>“...helping with homework...”(R2) (R6)</p> <p>“...do homework...”(R7) (R4) (R8)</p> <p>“...help to learn Russian poem...”(R7)</p> <p>“...teach to read text good...”(R7)</p> <p>“...teach mathematics...”(R7)</p>
	Artistic, sport skills	<p>“... take children to extracurricular activities...” (R1)</p> <p>“...4 children attend football...”(R1)</p> <p>“...sport competitions all around Lithuania...”(R1)</p> <p>“...music school...”(R1)</p> <p>“...singing, dance activities...”(R1)</p> <p>“...make works from wool, clay...”(R7)</p> <p>“...in summer go to summer camps...”(R7)</p> <p>“...do work “Indian”..”(R7)</p> <p>“...play outside...”(R3)</p> <p>“...teach children to express themselves through art”(R6)</p> <p>“...sport...”(R6)</p> <p>“...sport games...”(R5)</p> <p>“...summer camps...”(R4)</p> <p>“...art therapies...”(R8)</p>
	Cultural skills	<p>“...visit famous places...”(R1)</p> <p>“...what concert...”(R1)</p> <p>“...take part in State events...”(R1)</p> <p>“...Christmas Eve at church...”(R1)</p> <p>“...go to the concerts, exhibitions, educational programs...”(R1) (R4)</p> <p>“...for a walk around the city in order to see places around...”(R1)</p> <p>“...project activities, excursions...”(R2) (R8)</p> <p>“...museums, concerts, museums, libraries, camps...”(R2)</p> <p>“...museums, theatres, cinemas, excursions, festivals, camps...”(R6)</p> <p>“...excursions...”(R6)</p> <p>“...excursions, game shows, art therapies, films, educations...”(R5)</p> <p>“...excursions...”(R4)</p>
	Good behaviour skills	<p>“...learn how to behave in public...”(R1)</p> <p>“...make Christmas gifts for senior people...”(R7)</p> <p>“...invite guests and teach children to behave well...”(R5)</p> <p>“...how to behave at the table...”(R4)</p>

Organizational works	Work with documents	<p>“...make plan for the whole year...”(R1)</p> <p>“...we prepare material, work with documents, write projects...”(R2)</p> <p>“..till lunch we work with documents...”(R7)</p> <p>make individual plans...collect material for activities...”(R7) (R6)</p> <p>“...fill in documents in the morning..”(R6)</p> <p>“...write projects”(R5)</p> <p>“...documents...plan activities...”(R5)</p> <p>“...write plans...”(R4)</p> <p>“..writing letters..”(R4)</p> <p>“...making plans, filling in tables...&lt;&gt;letters..”(R8)</p>
	Contacts with other institutions	<p>“...communicate with teachers, directors of schools, interinstitutional institutions...” (R1)</p> <p>“...visit dentists...”(R1)</p> <p>“...visit doctors...” (R1)</p> <p>“...visit social partners...”(R2)</p> <p>“...visit interinstitutional specialist, meet social workers...”(R2)</p> <p>“...visit families...”(R6)</p> <p>“...communicate with other institutions..”(R5) (R8)</p> <p>“...coordinate volunteers...”(R5)</p> <p>“...meet with volunteers, other institutions...”(R4)</p> <p>“...contacting psychologist, meeting with them...”(R8)</p>
	Accompanying	<p>“...we take the smaller ones to activities and back” (R1)</p> <p>“take children to the speech therapist...”(R1)(R3)</p> <p>“...go together shopping..”(R1) (R3) (7)</p> <p>“..go together to the concerts..”(R1)(R3)(7)</p> <p>‘...I accompany children to different events...” (R3)</p> <p>“...take smaller ones to football activity”(R1)</p> <p>“...we go together to work in the garden...”(R6)</p>

ANNEX III

Table 3. Categories and subcategories of social workers memories' work during the pandemics with proving statements

Category	Subcategory	Proving statements
Challenges	Limitations	<p>“...limited going outside for children...&lt;&gt;...children had to be in a flat among four walls, there are for rooms and a kitchen for six children and social workers, this of course gets friction to be closed all the day together...”(R1)</p> <p>“The hardest part was, especially for the young children, to explain, of course we had been given instructions, we had consultations, we tried to find out how to give it to the children first. We had such meetings with the children at the round table, we just tried to tell them that we wouldn't be able to go outside so much, of course the children were very upset about it, but we explained that it was security, that we had to be careful a lot of talk was needed. Many consultations, and we consulted with psychologists, called, asked how to treat children. Of course, the big ones are very upset because they have a lot of friends, very eager to make friends, very eager to communicate. A girl has a friend very eager to meet, but we tried to solve the problem by talking on the phone. Of course, when we see that it is difficult for someone we try to communicate, let them spill. It was a difficult situation.”(R1)</p> <p>“...there was a huge fear that the projects will stop, the ones which we can not implement in pandemic limitations..”(R2)</p> <p>“...pandemics situation was very difficult for us, as everything has closed, schools have closed, children were nor used to study online...”(R3)</p> <p>“...the most difficult it was to sit at home, not to go out, we need active activities...”(R3)</p> <p>“When the strictest quarantine began and we started working remotely, it was quite difficult to adopt..”(R4)</p> <p>“..we checked the temperature of the children, disinfected the building, we had to be with masks inside...”(R6)</p> <p>“...sometimes we didn't know what recommendations to follow because they changed very quickly, we had to adapt quickly to the changing order...”(R6)</p>
	Organizational works	<p>“...enough computers for everyone, share the rooms, connect everyone to lessons...”(R1)</p> <p>“...we made a time schedule when and who goes outside for a walk, in order not to be with many children at the same time in the playing ground...”(R1)</p> <p>“...we as employees need to have as many thoughts as possible, ideas on how to occupy them. It lacked where to read, where to find something new to do with them. It clearly required a lot of effort because of all the things to do with the children, just so that</p>

		<p>they would not get bored, because if you get bored you know it .... and not to lie in bed. act on them so as not to crave in bed.”(R1)</p> <p>“...my work was mostly organizational, making projects, preparing reports, making individual consultations online...”(R2)</p> <p>“Working hours were allocated for searching useful programs, various movies and recipes.”(R4)</p> <p>“During the pandemic, we had a weekly plan of what activities would take place each day. Those activities usually recurred every week. As before, we have been working on paperwork since the morning, writing projects in the hope that we will soon be able to return to a normal life. It was a little harder with planning activities, implementing them, and finding ways to do that.”(R5)</p> <p>“..I gathered the information about children if they have all required materials, do the family needs help...”(R6)</p> <p>“...I had to use more time for thinking what activities to use...”(R6)</p> <p>“...social worker has to foresee several steps of work forward...”(R7)</p> <p>“During my work, when I was not communicating with young people, I reviewed relevant information, supervisor's letters, while working at the center, I performed various manager's assignments related to the preparation of projects and project reports.”(R8)</p>
	Teaching	<p>“...connections to the lessons, sharing the rooms..&lt;&gt;... till we managed to adjust everything, it required a lot of psychological efforts...”(R1)</p> <p>“...you have to work with all six children at once as all of them have special needs for education. You have to look at each computer if they got the information right or not, what each of them have to do as homework...&lt;&gt;... I was just saying, just wait, do not hurry me up, it is impossible to get around all of them at once”(R1)</p> <p>“... I had to do the work of speech specialist for children who have clear speaking problems. The speech specialist has just sent me the material and guidelines and I had to work with children...”(R1)</p> <p>“What the teacher sends I need to analyze, present to the child. If the teacher gets sick, I also have to analyze it and give it to the child. I have to prepare the material according to the level of those children so that they do not lag behind too much, I have to print it out, put everything together, put it together.”(R1)</p> <p>“...we have compiled a list of useful programs for children and youth where they can get help: Youtube channels, which broadcast a variety of research films by researchers, adapted to present to the child in an interesting, childish, purposeful way. There are also certain things that help in preparing lessons. Young people compiled a list of films for children and peers that would both motivate and have a social meaning</p>

		<p>for reflection, virtual discussions after film screenings...”(R2)</p> <p>“...children were not used to learn online, so we had to be together with them all the time. They were not able to connect, we had to sit together, they were afraid to switch on cameras...&lt;&gt; the first months were very difficult...”(R3)</p> <p>“...my main activity then was to sit together with children in the lessons...&lt;&gt; it is difficult for children to do exercises quickly and teacher goes on, so I had to explain everything later...&lt;&gt;so I was like a teachers’ helper...”(R3)</p> <p>“...it was difficult to help children to learn online, we do not understand ourselves everything, chemistry, physics, we do not understand....&lt;&gt;...the grades went down, children angry...”(R3)</p> <p>“Children were also provided with assistance in preparing homework remotely, counseling and information were provided”(R4)</p> <p>“...The children sat in the three rooms of the day center according to classes so as not to interfere with each other’s work. They were sitted so that I could enter the room at any time, as they mostly worked with the cameras turned on. I also watched the children attend the lesson and heard how the other children in the day center at home were doing...”(R7)</p> <p>“...when lessons have finished we connected with children and asked if they need help with homeworks, if yes, then we helped them online..”(R4)</p> <p>“...I prepared tasks which children had to do...”(R6)</p> <p>“...I called those kids I saw watching the lessons need help..”(R7)</p> <p>“...I helped to prepare for lessons, to make homeworks...”(R8)</p>
	Cooperation with other institutions	<p>“...we worked a lot with schools where to get a computer or ipad as we do not have so many. And you know for special education there are special requirements, the lessons are special too... (R1)</p> <p>“...we had a lot of communication with class teachers...”(R7)</p> <p>“...relations with teachers were complicated as we had to do their work. Sometimes it seemed that we do not find the same language to speak...”(R3)</p> <p>“... I had to work instead of speech specialist...”(R4)</p> <p>“...doctors gave consultations only by telephone...”(R6)</p>
	Filming	<p>“...we had to film sport trainings, everything was going on just with constant filming in the room or outside...”(R1)</p> <p>“...I had to film how children do speech exercises and send to speech specialist...”(R6)</p> <p>“...we were asked to film children how they tell a story in English, how they dance for dancing lesson,</p>

		<p>how they do sport exercises for Physical education lesson...”(R5)</p> <p>“Extracurricular activities also had to be filmed. One of the child visits dance group activity, so I had to film her dance exercises. Also children took part in different competitions, so I had to film their dances and send to the teacher or organizers of the competition. Trainings also had to be filmed and sent to the teacher to show how a child does the exercises with a ball”(R1)</p> <p>“...that filming was something terrible...”(R3),</p> <p>“... it took really much of my time and a lot of effort...”(R4)</p>
	IT knowledge	<p>“ We had to learn to work with many computer programs, to learn all login names and passwords, we had to teach children to work with different programs. We had to learn how to submit video material, different extracurricular activities, different programs, different ways of submitting, different downloadings, different programs”(R1)</p> <p>“...it was clear that there were a lot of fears, we looked for information ourselves, we learned a lot, we took part in seminars: how to communicate, how to set the camera, how to use Zoom and Meetings, how to manage them...”(R2)</p> <p>“...information technology, this is a variety of knowledge...&lt;... we had very little to deal with just before quarantine. We still used only the simplest ones available, it's Messenger or skype apps, but already during the quarantine we had to move to Zoom, Teams, and completely new to find out, which we hadn't even heard before, even the most elementary Kahoot. This was certainly a huge lack of competence in the field of information technology”(R2)</p> <p>“...for us Zoom was also a new thing, so we asked teachers at first to teach us that we could help children...”(R3)</p> <p>“...gaps of innovative ways of working was really a trouble at work...”(R8)</p>
	Psychological aspects	<p>“...the psychological tension was clear, the friction on the employee was clearly very responsive...”(R1)</p> <p>“...fear to loose visitors of the center and constant fear that they will not come back after the pandemics...”(R2)</p> <p>“What’s more, our kids got stuck, basically they were just between the four walls, they became so passive, no one wondered anymore, computers got bored because everything was up to them and homework and lessons. For us it was psychologically difficult to help them. You think of one activity, children tell it’s not interesting, then you have to think of something more interesting”(R3)</p> <p>“...we got used to working online, just helping with studies, no free time activities to be organized, we became lazy ourselves...”(R3)</p>

		<p>“The hardest part was seeing the declining motivation of the children and feeling that the connection with the child could quickly disappear, which is why we worked hard and worked hard before the quarantine to both earn the trust and establish that connection.”(R5)</p> <p>“...it wasn't easy at first, there was such a slight shock: "And what to do now?"...there was a lack of clearness and it made me feel unsafe and difficult...”(R5)</p> <p>“...I would like to have more trainings on how to maintain or make contact with children and youth when communication is mostly not face-to-face, because it's the hardest part of a pandemic.”(R5)</p> <p>‘...It took patience, not to show anger, when the child maliciously refused to learn...’(R7)</p>
	<p>Activeness and tension at work</p>	<p>“I can say that there is no time left to rest during a pandemic completely. I can tell you that I come and get a wet back until I get around everyone, until everyone is alright. Also, everything has to be filmed, sent. I don't want anyone to be harmed, I want everyone to be bypassed, inspected, with everyone being properly treated. It really gave a lot of work to each worker.”(R1)</p> <p>“...the intensity is very high, the lack of means is not big, but the printer is one, where the computer also prints alone, we try, with the tablet sometimes or the phone does not get, well it needs a lot of effort. The children then try to exchange means of IT. Well, you have to be in the standby mode whenever someone needs something, maybe the teacher will say, maybe something will happen to someone someday, turn off, break down, the internet will disappear ....”(R1)</p> <p>“There was a lot of work to be done with the children, a lot of was necessary for them to explain, to talk all the time, all the time. It was very tense period....”(R1)</p> <p>“There are high school students where they attended PUP exams, it had to be guaranteed to be quiet, calm. We came up with the idea that a STOP should be put on the door, that the children would not interfere, that they would understand, that it was important that it was important when others were studying online with the teacher, that it was important not to disturb or make noise. Quietly go to the toilet, eat quietly ....&lt;&gt; it is difficult to think of that period...”(R1)</p> <p>“...Our goal was not to lose our children and youth because a visitor can be lost very quickly, and if we had lost that contact it would really be very difficult to get them back, so we tried to adjust to new working conditions very hard...”(R2)</p> <p>“...it seems that I no longer feel the boundaries, it seems that I will still connect here, let's say our working hours started from 11.30, so now that we started connections from 8.00 to meetings, seminars, supervisions...&lt;&gt;...in the evening someone writes</p>

		<p>from the youth and we have to answer to them at 20.00 or even at 22.00. And there are times when working hours expand to a very large number of hours...”(R2)</p> <p>“During the quarantine, I felt an intensified rhythm of work. I wanted to do my job as well as possible in such conditions, so without counting time and energy, I kept looking for new ideas and tools. Whether in the morning or evening, having found or come up with something, I rushed to make it happen.”(R5)</p> <p>“...the work of the day center changed places when there was more work before the pandemic from 1 p.m. to 4.30 pm, which is the full intensity of work, during the pandemic from 7.45 am. lasted until 3.30 p.m. Yes, more energy was needed because I had more than one class to observe and attend 7 lessons every day...(R7)</p> <p>“It was a very chaotic job and a big challenge for both the staff and the visitors.(R8)</p> <p>“the tempo of work was much slower and the intensity stronger, as many young people were very eager for increased attention and even sometimes resorted to various manipulations just to keep my attention for as long as possible.”(R8)</p> <p>“most of children, youth wanted consultations at a time when the official working hours of the center had already ended, i.e. after 2.00...”(R8)</p> <p>“..bigger tense at work. We wroked using our intuition...’(R8)</p> <p>“...But it is very important to protect workers from burns at this time. Because distance work still remains a big challenge”(R8)</p>
Positive things	Spending more time together	<p>“We started to play more table games together, all the time all together in one place, we started to collect more recepies, we started to make more new dishes, children get more involved into making food...&lt;&gt; they started to read more books and after that we had discussions about the heroes of the books...&lt;&gt;... we started to paint more, to decorate the rooms together for birthday parties. We had somehow to be in one place all together, so we had to think of something interesting.”(R1)</p> <p>“Closer relationships with children and among social workers themselves. We have learnt to share the same space, we have learnt to behave well at the table. Discovery of commonality, closeness, that we can do together with small and big ones many interesting things.”(R1)</p> <p>“But what I also noticed was that there was also closer cooperation between the employees themselves, we also connect to meetings remotely via Messenger or Zoom. You can also communicate, learn to communicate through apps.”(R1)</p> <p>“Then what else did we discover? .... that children know how to spin in the kitchen, we are not afraid to let them make a cake themselves. They themselves</p>



		<p>just want to get involved because they couldn't go out so much, then automatically they express that desire to act inside themselves." (R1)</p> <p>"During the pandemic, we had a close relationship with the children, we had stronger communication because we are with them all day together"(R3)</p> <p>"...we tried to use Zoom for individual talk with every child in order to give motivation and show we really take care of them..."(R5)</p> <p>"...we talked about difficulties at school, about freetime...we just talked more..."(R6)</p>
	Improved competencies	<p>"I learnt to use a lot of different computer programs, to download and submit video or simple material."(R1)</p> <p>"I had a possibility to take part in many online seminars. I had more possibilities to take part in seminars, conferences"(R1)</p> <p>"The ones who didn't know how to work with telephone also have learnt not only to use telephone just for calling and writing a message, but also to make video, to use Zoom, to use Viber, Messenger, What'sApp"(R1)</p> <p>"We have learnt to use our imagination as we had to think of something interesting to do with children, e.g. we have made a month calendar with dates which we are going to celebrate that month and then we share who responsible for what and prepare for it. We have made our webpage. We have learn to make video, choose the music, dance more, make discos, karaoke. We try to change activities in order not to get bored e.g. we tidy rooms for some time, then we tell interesting story each, then we present our rooms in interesting way. We also made a green window-sill and grow green onions"(R1)</p> <p>"We really have improved our knowledge in IT usage, if not pandemics maybe I have never used some programs in my life"(R1).</p> <p>"...we quickly learned to use Facebook private groups, Instagram, Discord in order to reach more young people..."(R2)</p> <p>"Thanks to pandemics I have discovered many different apps that still help in working with children. Of course, computer literacy has improved. Before quarantine, I really didn't use as many different programs as I do now. First of all I had to learn to use them"(R4)</p> <p>"I think I have really improved my knowledge of IT, which is very useful because technology will not go away and our society will continue to be modern."(R5)</p> <p>"...I have attended many online seminars on different topics, e.g. creative activities for children, how to help children, psychological seminars...◇...I can say I improved my competencies which I need at work..."(R6)</p>

	<p>Closer communication with other institutions</p>	<p>“We started working more closely with other institutions, although as an employee I felt that we started working more closely with schools, with the teachers more close to communicate, teachers started to get to know our children more, to understand our institution, to dig deeper into our children. I am really happy about that. The teachers helped, we contacted more.”(R1)</p> <p>“We received all the information, all the tools, and anyway we could call anyone, they said everything at once, the schools were very informative, the teachers talked to the children online, there were lectures especially for both the child and the staff. And even after this day there are more lectures, and the school can connect, we get information, we participate.”(R4)</p> <p>“..there are a lot of courses...’(R7)</p>
	<p>Closer communication among social workers</p>	<p>“Well, it's better anyway when more people go online to consult and share experiences...&lt;... suddenly you can get an answer to the problem you have just by talking with other social worker...”(R1)</p> <p>“...we had to mobilize social workers and volunteers...&lt;...first we tried to communicate among themselves just with messages, but we saw that we do not broadcast the required information among ourselves, so we started to use Zoom for communication, more telephone calls among themselves...”(R2)</p> <p>“...general group of workers and visitors for communications...&lt;...we communicated more with each other to share idea what to do, shared interesting activities...”(R8)</p> <p>“...it was good that we started to communicate more with our colleagues at work, we took part in different seminars and shared the material among us, we connected with social workers from other regions and shared our experience or interesting activities....&lt;... finally we talked more with each other...”(R7)</p>
	<p>Courses, seminars</p>	<p>“Enough seminars, there were more than there were at the time before pandemics. But I am very glad that there was so many seminars because it is quite difficult to find everything, to explore everything...”(R1)</p> <p>“We are in the most geographically inconvenient location, really far from the big cities, and now we had every opportunity to attend the best seminars, conferences, and meet other centers virtually, meet other colleagues, something we didn't have before the pandemic due to lack of finance and lack of time. There are pluses as well”(R2)</p> <p>“...took part in many online seminars, supervisions...”(R3)</p> <p>“there was no lack of information, sometimes it seemed that there is too much, different courses, conferences, sometimes it was too much, but later I learnt to take only the one I really need”(R4)</p>

		<p>“...The Youth department constantly offered various distance trainings on forms of telework, so we had methodological support, we just had to register and participate in them.”(R8)</p> <p>“..courses for Covid challenges at work, course to improve computer comtetencies..”(R8)</p>
	Volunteers	<p>“...a lot of added value with young people and children was given to us by volunteers, as they are exactly the same as their peers and really know how to attract youth, they started to organize various quizzes, crazy virtual shows. In this way, we improved and organized orientation competitions for families, where one family can participate and walk to collect objects in winter to get up a little from those screens...”(R2)</p> <p>“...volunteers filmed how to make a certain dish, or some kind of toy or gifts for Christmas there and that content was brought to our channels, and children could try at home, to do the same. The ones who had no materials got a help from volunteers too, they delivered the required material to their houses...”(R2)</p> <p>“...each of our volunteers made their own virtual presentation, which was about what area the volunteer is strong in, say, whether he knows more languages or science, whether he knows how to draw well...&lt; he/she also helped to write essays and solve math problems on line.”(R5)</p> <p>“If we had given up volunteering during the quarantine, our volunteers would not have completed the program, and the non-completion of the program means that our volunteers receive nothing, he receives only a bare certificate, no certificate, no code, where he is entitled to additional points. We discussed this and decided that we are not stopping volunteering, we are moving to online...&lt;...our expectations have come true 100 percent because our volunteers have always been at the forefront of both initiative and new methods...&lt;...volunteers have contributed a great deal to our success.”(R2)</p> <p>“JST volunteers were also strongly involved in the work during the quarantine - each of them offered help with homework, preparation for settlements or just their friendship if our visitors felt lonely.”(R4)</p>
New ways of working	IT programs	<p>“Every day, we posted quizzes on social media like Kahoot, used the Discord platform, and played a variety of games with young people, during which we were able to interact with the sound. We also had conversations, discussions on various topics with young people through Zoom”(R5)</p> <p>“...we had discussions about various topics on Zoom platform...”(R5)</p> <p>“we shared various websites that could help students learn and ideas on what could be done useful during a quarantine...”(R4)</p>

		<p>“...found new communication programs where all children can connect together at the same time...” (R6)</p> <p>“..Salto-youth platform..”(R8)</p>
	Various types of consultations	<p>“...we had more individual consultations”(R5)</p> <p>“...individual consultations...”(R8)</p> <p>“..group works online...work in a team...”(R8)</p> <p>“...I tried to do more individual consultations online...”(R3)</p> <p>“...children wanted me to call them more often, so I used video programs to see them and I did a lot of group connections...”(R5)</p>
	Creativity	<p>“I have discovered a great many new alternatives to how things can be presented differently, perhaps with so much more interest from children and young people themselves. I still use discovered sites and apps.”(R5)</p> <p>“...I had to use more creative ways, to think of new activities...”(R6)</p> <p>“...I liked to prepare a lot of creativity activities, I learnt myself to prepare simple games online, I looked for painting programs online, I also, I created different games...”(R1)</p> <p>“...I had to think what to do for children during the day, it was really challenging, but I attended seminars and learnt new games, I tried to create myself games according to the interests of children...”(R7)</p> <p>“..I created activities myself, I reached for them online, took part in courses and was learning myself how to create games online...”(R4)</p> <p>„...sometimes creative tasks helped me myself to relax...” (R5)</p> <p>„...during pandemic period I found out art therapy, it was something new for myself, but helped me to think of new activities, I noticed that it helped to reduce children’s tension...” (R6)</p> <p>„...I got interested in painting mandalas myself and recomended it for children, we painted together...” (R7)</p>