

# REMOTE WORKING IN GREECE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: HOW IT AFFECTED EMPLOYEES AND BUSINESS

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**Abstract.** The covid-19 pandemic has created the necessity for quick and robust solutions to help professionals and businesses survive the lockdowns. Remote working was one of these solutions and played a crucial role for both employees and businesses to help them overcome the challenges that the pandemic posed. This research attempted to shed some light on special issues that have to do with remote working and its impact on both employees and businesses by unveiling specific problems that the participants faced during this stressful period. The research followed the survey method using a random and convenient sample of respondents. The questionnaire was filled with open-ended questions and disseminated via email. Qualitative analysis was applied to process the collected data. The results showed that remote working had a mainly positive impact on people during the pandemic. However, both the employees and the business faced several challenges. Most businesses and people were unprepared to face such a situation. Thus, many problems occurred.

**Keywords:** remote work, covid-19, challenges, greek society.

## Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic hit the whole planet hard. One of the consequences on a global scale was the increase in remote working. Although countries like Sweden, Norway, the USA, etc. were quite familiar with this kind of working conditions, several other countries, Greece too, were quite surprised by such evolvement and had to change their attitude mentally, socially and from a business perspective to be able to cope with that new reality.

This is a very important issue that needs to be addressed, as remote working can be seen as a life changer, an evolvement of the last years, propelled due to the advent of the pandemic.

The scope of this research is to shed some light on the topic of remote working in Greece during the pandemic period and its impact on the lives of employees and businesses. In other words, an attempt will be made to understand whether remote working has changed the vocational environment and the whole entrepreneurial perspective in a specific area of the world, Greece.

Since Greece was coming from a huge financial crisis that devastated its economy and had huge societal implications, the pandemic crisis was a second, for many, bigger hit as it found the country not ready to face it, counting many wounds from its recent mortal fight with another, financial this time, invisible enemy.

The problem this research addresses is whether remote working in Greece during the Covid-19 pandemic had a positive or negative impact (or both) on employees and businesses (or both).

The article aims to shed some light on how remote working during the Covid-19 pandemic has affected the lives of employees and businesses.

## Literature review

This chapter reviews the existing literature on the Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on Greek businesses and other relevant topics that play a very important role in the research, like the impact of remote working on people's lives and business performance.

## The Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on business in Greece

Greece is a member country of the European Union (EU). According to World Health Organisation (WHO), Greece has a population of 11,184,000 (as of 2016), while in 2019, the country's life expectancy at birth was 78 years for males and 83 years for females. The country's total expenditure on health, as part of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), was, as of 2014, 8.08 per cent (World Health Organisation, n. d.). These facts are provided in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Key statistics from WHO regarding Greece (World Health Organisation, n. d.)

<b>Total population</b>	2016	11 184 000
<b>Life expectancy at birth m/f</b>	2019	78/83
<b>Total expenditure on health as per cent of GDP</b>	2014	8.08

According to WHO (n. d.), on 15 May 2021, Greece had 2,169 new cases of Covid-19, 373,881

confirmed cases in total and 11,322 confirmed deaths (Table 2).

**Table 2.** The Covid-19 situation in Greece (WHO, n. d.), June 2021

<b>New cases</b>	<b>Confirmed cases</b>	<b>Confirmed deaths</b>
2 169	373 881	11 322

According to PWC Greece (n. d.), the pandemic had a vast negative influence on the overall

country's economy, which is vividly depicted in Table 3, coming from the same source:

**Table 3.** Main comparison indices of the economic crisis of 2009 with the country's situation before the health crisis in 2020 (PWC, n. d.)

<b>Comparison indices</b>	<b>Economic crisis</b>	<b>Before the pandemic</b>
GDP	175.2 € bn	183.6 € bn
Economic Climate Index	79.3 points	110.4 points
Exports of Goods & Services	20 per cent of the GDP	38.1 per cent of the GDP
Fiscal Deficit (-)/Surplus (+)	-15.1 per cent of the GDP	1.5 per cent of the GDP
Unemployment	27.5 per cent	17.3 per cent
Yield of the 10-year Greek Bond	29.2 per cent	1.1 per cent
Non-performing loans	49.1 per cent of total loans	40.1 per cent of total loans
Index of infrastructure	49 points	78 points

Table 3 justifies that several important economic factors, such as infrastructure, exports of goods and services, the unemployment rate, etc., were hit hard. In addition, other parameters severely affected negatively were the non-performing loans, the economic index climate and, of course, the country's GDP, which was reduced by about 9.5 per cent. (PWC, n. d.).

### **Impact of remote working on people's lives**

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, remote working is "the practice of an employee working at their home, or in some other place that is not an organisation's usual place of business" (dictionary.cambridge.org, n. d.). As people gradually entered the remote working space, they observed several developments in their personal and professional lives. According to the research conducted by Felstead and Henseke (2017), remote working has rather taken the form of a trend than one of a necessity. Only one-third of the increase in remote working can be explained under the prism of compositional factors such as the societal movement to the knowledge economy or the growth in flexible employment (Felstead & Henseke, 2017).

According to the above-mentioned study, a huge difference between the before and the during pandemic remote working situation is that during the pandemic, workers were forced to get into remote

working mode without having any other choice, while in the pre-Covid-19 era, it usually was their choice, and they usually had the opportunity to visit their brick-and-mortar workplace at least once a week, something that was out of the question during the pandemic (Mirela, 2020).

Another important research by Eddleston and Mulki (2017) investigated how remote workers or employees who work solely from their homes manage their work-family environment. The research was a multi-method one, and the researchers' qualitative study found that working from home is something that creates unique challenges for workers (Eddleston and Mulki, 2017). They underline that working from home can lead to the work role being embedded one way or another in the workers' family domain. In that wavelength, their home becomes associated with their work role, while their physical and psychological work intrudes upon their family, habits, and norms (Eddleston and Mulki, 2017).

Vonberg and Kyiv (2020) argue that remote working during the Covid-19 lockdown was the only acceptable form of functioning and possible development regarding companies. The authors argue that considering the importance of the situation, due to the Covid-19 emergency, remote working needed to be achieved via a specific programme which would gradually introduce the main stages of implementing remote working. They

also argued that the most important step towards that implementation is the acceptance and approval of the programme from the company's management. Of course, the programme needed to be also known to the company's employees and crystal clear to all team members. Therefore, the role of the Human Resources Department is huge, especially in terms of the socio-psychological climate that needs to be created, and part of the programme has to do with communication among working groups (Vonberg and Kyiv, 2020).

According to mixed-method research by Wang et al. (2020, 2021), "existing knowledge on remote working can be questioned in an extraordinary pandemic context". The study explored the challenges experienced by people working remotely during this dreadful period. At an early research stage, the authors conducted semi-structured interviews with Chinese workers working remotely during the early phase of the pandemic (Wang et al., 2021, 2020). These interviews revealed that four main features interfered with the workers' daily working runtime and their performance in multiple ways (Wang et al., 2021, 2020). These characteristics were work-home interference, ineffective communication, procrastination, and loneliness, as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4.** The four key remote work challenges (Wang et al., 2021, 2020)

The four key remote work challenges
Work-home interference
Ineffective communication
Procrastination
Loneliness

In the same research, Wang et al. (2021, 2020) identified four virtual work characteristics that affected the experience of these challenges, i. e., social support, job autonomy, monitoring and workload, as presented in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Four virtual work characteristics that affected the experience of the key remote work challenges (Wang et al., 2021, 2020)

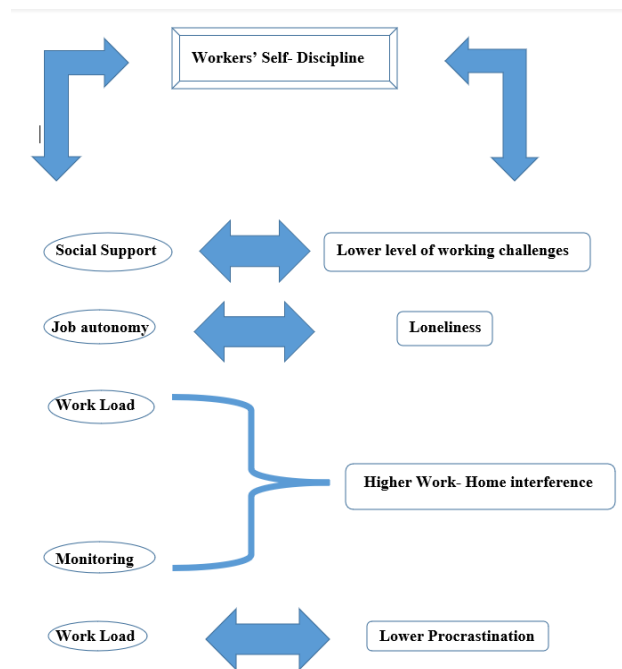
Four virtual work characteristics
Social support
Job autonomy
Monitoring
Workload

Another important finding of this research was that the virtual work characteristics were linked to workers' performance and well-being via the above-mentioned challenges they faced throughout their everyday remote working experiences (Wang et al., 2021, 2020). Social support was positively linked to lower levels of the above-mentioned

working challenges, while job autonomy was negatively correlated with loneliness (Wang et al., 2021, 2020). In addition, workload and monitoring were both linked to higher work-home interference, while the workload presented some correlation with lower procrastination (Wang et al., 2021, 2020).

Wang et al. (2021, 2020) concluded that the paragon that played a very important role in all these correlations was the workers' self-discipline.

The findings are presented in Figure 1.



**Fig 1.** The findings of Wang et al. (2020, 2021) research

### Impact of remote working on business performance

The Covid-19 pandemic, in many ways, forced remote working to become a daily part of the big majority of employees around the world. For millions of employees, it was the opportunity to seize some flexibility they absolutely needed to continue their business operations. At the same time, it was a huge opportunity to help them show their public health responsibility by prioritising staff and customer health and well-being (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

According to the same source (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.), remote work has several advantages and disadvantages, especially for working from home. Therefore, the advantages that businesses face as a result of this new form of working for their employees can be summarised as follows:

**Flexibility and agility.** The fact that employees now are not bound to their office, per se, makes them more flexible, something that can make them work earlier, later hours, or even during weekends, something that can be seen as quite beneficial,

especially for businesses that have to work with customers from different time zones (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Improved employees' retention.** As employees need to work from a remote position (their home space), they feel more responsible and more bound to the trust of their employers, something which increases loyalty and creates a more solid team. Employees feel more balanced as they can spend more time with their beloved ones, which increases their retention in the long run. Employees who feel trusted and respected and can be flexible and spend more time with their families have little or no reasons to leave the company (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Attraction of new talent.** Since many people searching for their next career step will have the opportunity to work from home, by offering *them such an option, companies* can be very competitive against other companies that do not offer that option (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Increased productivity.** Employees who work from their homes will be able to protect themselves from office distractions as they can work in a "sound insulated" environment in their homes by saving a lot of commuting time. They can use that saved time to work even longer hours if needed (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Increased staff motivation.** As employees work from their homes, they will feel more trusted and responsible for their actions as they will not be monitored as much as working from their office. In addition to their ability to create personal working routines during the day, this will most likely make them more motivated (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Improved staff health and well-being.** One very important part of our everyday lives is commuting. Commuting can be time-consuming and quite stressful sometimes. Employees who work from home have zero commuting to work time, something which helps them increase their health and overall well-being as they save a lot of time which they can use for more sleep, exercising, preparing healthier meals and spending more quality time with their family (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Financial benefits.** Companies can reduce their everyday expenses that have to do with retaining their office facilities. Such expense reduction can come via reductions in terms of the needed office space, office supplies, utility bills, etc. (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.). This is why many companies started thinking they might permanently switch to remote work even after the pandemic. Also, in some countries, many companies that turned their operations into remote working during the pandemic had the opportunity to benefit from tax reductions that came as additional help from the

government to support them during such a difficult time (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Convenience.** As employees had to work from their homes, it became inevitable to stop visiting customers, especially during the pandemic, when social distancing was at the forefront of the policies used to control the spread of the virus. Working from home and holding virtual meetings with customers decreased time spent on the road and expenses related to visits (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Better work-life balance.** As employees can work from home and not commute to work, they gain valuable time that can be used to improve their work-life balance (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.). They can increase their family quality time, adopt healthier habits, etc. (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Technology makes it easier.** Due to the wide use of technology and especially the internet, it is made easy for employees to be connected to the office continually. Via the use of tools such as Skype or Zoom, etc. communication between colleagues, customers, team members or the company's headquarters is made easy and can lead to efficient and effective meetings (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Less sickness absence.** Employees working from home usually feel happier and, therefore, more energised, which can only positively impact their immune system and help them avoid situations like burnout, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. As a general rule of thumb, employees who work isolated have less chance of being infected or even spreading an infection, something that can be seen as very common in an office environment (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Less need for regular holidays.** Working from home usually gives the employees the impression that they are having a break from office work, although they continue to work and produce. They work from their homes, have more time to spend with their family, follow their family's daily routines, and share theirs with them, which makes them need fewer days off work. Of course, employees must ensure that their personnel will get the days off they are entitled to (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

According to nibusiness.co.uk (n. d.), there are also possible disadvantages.

#### **Disadvantages:**

**Working from home doesn't suit everyone.** Not everything is for everybody. This is why working from home for several reasons might create problems for many employees. For many reasons, like, e. g., interacting with colleagues, getting help from supervisors or managers, etc., working from home can be negative for the employees using their office structure and environment. Also, some employees with disabilities might encounter

problems while working from home due to the support they might need to complete their tasks. Another issue is that many might not have the space needed in their homes to establish a new office, or their kids might be too young and noisy, which distracts them and creates many problems in their working routine (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Staff feeling isolated.** The employees who used to interact with their colleagues and customers might feel a bit isolated working remotely, which usually negatively impacts their mental health and performance. This issue needs to be addressed by the company and can be solved using technologies like Skype or Zoom to connect employees and strengthen the bond between team members (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Difficulty monitoring performance.** Working remotely, managing employees and monitoring their performance could be quite challenging. It is important for the company to understand that different personalities may react differently to monitoring, sometimes more and sometimes less positively. Companies need to set easily measured goals and targets with their workers. If the targets are not met, managers will be able to identify and correct any performance issues at an early stage (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Home distractions.** The employees working from home are less distracted as they can avoid the daily distractions in the office. On the other hand, working from home can be equally distractive as employees must deal with house noises, especially when they have youngsters around them and no suitable workplace (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Potential burnout.** One problem that working from home can create for employees is that they cannot distinguish between work and home life. Employees sometimes cannot differentiate between work and home life, so they might find it quite difficult to switch off from work, which can lead to potential burnout. This is why employers must remind employees to take regular breaks and remember their days off (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Cost of working from home.** Although remote working can decrease commuting costs for employees, other important costs can take place, like initial costs of training and providing the equipment needed for operating on a remote basis like laptops, mobile phones and other IT equipment, not to mention possible adaptations to meet health and safety standards (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Problems with staff development.** Another important part of the employees' working life is that they need to improve their skills and develop to be better in what they are doing. Without physical proximity, this might not seem easy to be achieved. However, companies can encourage employees to grab

the opportunity and learn new skills through online events and courses (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Information security risk.** It is usual to monitor increased security problems when working from home. The risks towards such problems usually involve using the laptops taken home or access to remote servers. This is why employees must ensure they have taken all necessary measures to avoid such security breaches (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Negative impact on mental health.** If the employees who work from home cannot establish a daily routine that suits them, struggle to separate their work from their home life, or feel isolated, they are more likely to suffer from bad mental health. This is why home workers need to establish a dedicated workspace in their homes and set boundaries for the rest of their household members. Also, it is important for remote workers not to feel isolated; this is why companies need to establish virtual communication paths and team catch-ups (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Decreased staff morale.** Sometimes it can be harder to maintain high staff morale when your employees work remotely (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Not all jobs suit home working.** Some personalities are more suitable for remote working than others. The same goes for companies. Not all companies are suitable and can benefit equally from remote working (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

**Poor broadband speeds.** Another problem employees usually face is the poor broadband speed in their homes, which can negatively affect their performance. Therefore, companies must consider this before switching to remote work (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.).

Table 5 presents the advantages and disadvantages of working from home.

**Table 5.** Advantages and disadvantages for companies that work on a remote basis (nibusinessinfo.co.uk., n. d.)

ADVANTAGES OF HOME WORKING	DISADVANTAGES OF HOME WORKING
Flexibility and agility	Working from home doesn't suit everyone
Improved employees' retention	Staff feeling isolate
Attracted new talents	Difficulty monitoring performance
Increased productivity	Home distractions
Increased staff motivation	Potential burnout
Improved staff health and well being	Cost of working from home
Financial benefits	Problems with staff development
Convenience	Information security risk
Better work-life balance	Negative impact on mental health
Technology makes it easier	Decreased staff morale
Fewer sickness absences	Not all jobs suit home working
Less need for regular holidays	Poor broadband speeds

The coronavirus crisis brought devastating results for companies on a global scale. A recent Deloitte survey conducted among more than 1,000 respondents who worked in companies based in China when the survey was conducted shows that the pandemic negatively affected the sales volume and cash flows, the ability of companies to serve their clients and consumers in general and finally, but equally importantly, manage their business effectively (Deloitte, n. d.).

In the survey of business owners during the Covid-19 pandemic in the spring of 2020 and before the pandemic, in the fall of 2019, businesses were divided into several categories regarding their age (Looze, 2020). The findings of that survey were extremely indicative. They underlined that for entrepreneurs of all business ages, the most common challenge that was reported was that they had difficulties in finding new customers (Looze, 2020).

According to Sam and Rakatomanga (2020), a critical part of businesses negatively affected during the Covid-19 pandemic was their supply chains. Companies suddenly faced severe problems procuring goods and raw materials, transporting them to production facilities, and delivering goods. At the same time, they always had to have in mind and never forget the human factor (Sam and Rakatomanga, 2020).

According to Boosalis (2020), during the pandemic, small businesses have to face their traditional problems in even bigger doses. Problems like work-life balance, money management during periods of low demand, creating and increasing a strong client base, etc., have been exacerbated and increased the already high uncertainty due to the situation (Boosalis, 2020).

According to Randstad (2020), during the Covid-19 pandemic, businesses had to deal with four major challenges that negatively impacted their operations and threatened their survival:

1. Employees' safety;
2. Staying competitive;

3. Effectively leveraging HR technology;
4. Coping with change and unpredictability.

To implement remote work successfully, companies need to lean on three main pillars described by Wiles (2020):

- Communicate openly and often;
- Trust in employees to be productive;
- Bolster technology enablement.

### Research methods

This chapter discusses the methodology this research follows in terms of the method used: survey, strategy, data collection etc.

### Research Strategy

The survey method was chosen against other popular methods due to the following reasons:

An experiment is a method that is used to help the researcher to enable her to undertake an empirical investigation under specific and control conditions, which are designed in a way that they can outline the relationships between specific factors. This approach has nothing to do with the aim of this specific research which has to investigate a specific phenomenon which takes place in a specific period (Denscombe, 2010, cited in Karaoulanis, 2017).

Ethnography (Malinowski, 1992, cited in Denscombe, 2010, cited in Karaoulanis, 2017) deals with the totality of social, cultural and psychological parameters of the community in which the phenomenon occurs. In this research, this was not feasible and out of scope due to the constraints in terms of time and budget. Of course, the research will deal with social and psychological implications but not to a totality extent.

Phenomenology is another research method which, according to Denscombe (2010, cited in Karaoulanis, 2017), is basically associated with description and analysis, which is not relevant to the

aims of this research, which are to shed some light on a phenomenon/problem/situation and analyse the findings.

The grounded theory method is strongly connected with a qualitative analysis used in this research. Although it seems quite relevant to the case, it faces specific problems like the lack of precise planning, as it is quite difficult to predict from the beginning the nature of the sample, the danger that the theory to be created as a result of the data analysis might not address the issues that can be situated in the area of the influence of social-economic and political factors, or the possible complexity of the analysis (Denscombe, 2010, cited in Karaoulanis, 2017). As this research is mainly focused on social and economic factors and has restrictions in both time and budget, it cannot be based upon a very complex analysis like the one that grounded theory needs (Karaoulanis, 2017).

A case study methodology is an approach that is mainly used to illuminate a decision or even a set of decisions in terms of why they were taken in the first place, how they were implemented, and the outcome (Schramm, 1972, cited in Yin, 2014, p. 15, cited in Karaoulanis, 2017). The case study method was unsuitable because it restricted the research to only one company, which could not give us a representative sample and a clear picture of what takes place in a specific place in a specific period. Certain dimensions to be unveiled need a more holistic and representative researcher's approach.

Another possibility that was examined was the multiple case study approach. However, it was rejected from the beginning as unsuitable due to its magnitude, time, and resource-consuming potential (Denscombe, 2010, cited in Karaoulanis, 2017).

It is imperative to underline that by selecting people from different industries, sexes, and social and cultural backgrounds and using the survey method, this research achieved a more holistic picture of the situation in question. However, the sample was random, which created an additional bias.

Another important aspect regarding the data is "data saturation", or, in other words, the degree to which the gathered data was repeated. It should be noted that data saturation, considered a quite controversial and abstract issue, is an area of data analysis that does not operate under specific rules (Bowen, 2008, cited in Karaoulanis, 2017). This research adopted a value saturation index of 80 per cent arbitrarily due to the small scale of the research and time restrictions.

## **Data Collection Method**

The data were gathered via questionnaires with open-ended questions. The questionnaires were

disseminated via emails as attachments. The participants answered the questions under an anonymity scheme due to sensitive personal data safety precautions. Emailing as a method of dissemination was chosen due to security (spread of the virus) and financial reasons (dissemination that involves almost zero expenses). The open-ended questions were chosen to let the respondents free to express all their feelings, ideas, and experiences without the researcher's guidance.

The questions asked were about the adversities that the Covid-19 pandemic imposed on personal and professional lives, the challenges that they faced throughout that period in terms of their daily routines on both personal and professional levels, whether their business was ready to deal with such a situation, whether remote work as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic had a positive impact in both their business and lives etc. Their formulation is provided beneath.

1. *Did remote work during the pandemic have a positive or a negative impact on your personal life? Please elaborate and state the reasons why, in both case;*
2. *Did remote work during the pandemic have a positive or a negative impact on your professional life? Please elaborate and state the reasons why, in both cases;*
3. *Was your business prepared to implement remote work? Please elaborate;*
4. *Please note some obstacles you encountered during the Covid-19 pandemic while working remotely;*
5. *Were you prepared as a person and a professional to start working remotely?;*
6. *Did remote work during the pandemic affect your company/the company in which you were working positively or negatively? Please elaborate and state the reasons why.*

The purpose of the questions was to help the researcher to reach the aim of this study and pinpoint the impact the remote work approach adopted by many companies in Greece during Covid-19 had on people and companies.

A very important part of data collection is the data response rate from the participants. To achieve higher response rates, the researcher used a prior notice approach, which created the foundations upon which a good response rate could be achieved (Denscombe, 2010, p. 20, cited in Karaoulanis, 2017). Anonymity was also a big advantage in achieving a high response rate. Finally, it should be stressed that free speech was a prerequisite for people who participated in the survey.

The number of survey participants was fifteen (15) persons chosen conveniently as the researcher approached people he knew and had access to.

In terms of the data analysis, this research follows a qualitative analysis. This approach was chosen against the quantitative one so that all the participants' concerns, thoughts, and experiences could be heard freely and clearly via their answers to the open-ended questions. In such research, the use of a quantitative approach was not that useful because although such methods can provide useful results, this does not help the survey participants to express all of their thoughts and concerns freely as they only have to tick specific propositions/suggestions/answers posed by the author. In other words, this research had to let the participants freely express their thoughts and experiences and not choose between given options like those of the Lickert scale.

The data were also collected via literature analysis, which took place online using many internet-based libraries and databases. The analysis was focused on the role of remote work, its consequences in terms of employees' work-life balance and business in general, impediments and benefits that arise, and the perspectives that might exist.

## Data Analysis

This research used the qualitative approach instead of the quantitative one mainly due to the following reasons:

- This is small-scale research to help achieve a more holistic result regarding the answers received from the addressed research question. On the other hand, quantitative analysis allows analysing specific variables of the researcher's interests and is addressed to large-scale research (Denscombe, 2010, cited in Karaoulanis, 2017).
- According to Denscombe (2010, p. 304, cited in Karaoulanis, 2017), the qualitative approach in data analysis is an approach chosen for this research because the researcher aimed to achieve rich and detailed content in terms of his gathered data to get a thorough and deep enough understanding of the situation and the ideas expressed by the research participants.
- Many can argue that the quantitative approach has many advantages as well, but despite them, its very nature prohibited the researcher from adopting it. More specifically, the "problem" with the quantitative approach is that although it might be able to shed some light on the variables examined, it was out of the scope of this research to only present data. On the contrary, the author of this research was convinced from the beginning that it was impossible to reach high

levels of understanding regarding the problem with the presentation of numbers. Therefore, it was decided not only to address the participants with open-ended questions but also analyse their answers more openly and analytically using a qualitative approach (Karaoulanis, 2017).

Another important part of the data analysis is that the data in question were protected using several backups.

Also, the analysis followed an inductive way via which the researcher moved from particular towards general (Denscombe, 2010, p.273, cited in Karaoulanis, 2017). That way, more generalised statements about the topic were achieved (Denscombe, 2010, cited in Karaoulanis, 2017). In the first stage, the data collected were analysed, and the researcher could generalise them.

The main stages of the data analysis are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6.** Main stages of data analysis (Denscombe, 2010, cited in Karaoulanis, 2017)

Stage 1	DATA INDEXING
Stage 2	ADDING MEMOS AND NOTES
Stage 3	DATA CODING
Stage 4	WRITTEN INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS
Stage 5	COMPARISON OF FINDINGS

The Table 6 reveals that the first stage involves the data being catalogued and indexed. The indices "E" for the employee and "O" for the owner, etc., were created.

During the second stage, the researcher looked for at least obvious recurrent themes and issues (Karaoulanis, 2017). That way, memos and notes on the collected data were added, like "the respondent didn't have a positive opinion on the matter X" or "the participant was working in a small enterprise of ten employees in the area of ...." etc.

In the third process stage, the researcher coded the data under a specific pattern (Denscombe, 2010, p. 240, cited in Karaoulanis, 2017), using codes and categories to reach them more easily.

In the fourth data analysis stage, the findings were interpreted in writing (Denscombe, 2010, p. 240, cited in Karaoulanis, 2017). This written interpretation was based on several quotes that transferred respondents' original words. This is crucial as it can assist the reader in better understanding what the respondents argued about or, in other ways, depict the whole picture in terms of the real-life situations that the respondents faced in the field.

Finally, in the fifth stage, the researcher compared the research findings with the scientific base, which is what was known about the topic before the research.



This research was performed between 1/5/2021 and 31/6/2021 in Greece and involved people from different industries like academia, construction, office work, medical services etc.

### Results' limitations

As with every other research, this one faced many limitations due to its nature and constraints. These limitations include the following:

- The sample used was not representative enough as the researcher could only choose his respondents from the people who were easily reachable among personal acquaintances. In that way, the sample used was not systematic (Queensland Health, 2007, cited in Karaoulanis, 2017), which resulted in increased bias.
- The researcher was unable to catch the whole picture as he could not reach bigger companies, like multinational ones and mainly targeted the people and companies of small and medium enterprises. In that way, it was impossible to escape specific biases that had to do with the size of the company, the fact that not a majority of industries were represented in the sample and even not all areas of Greece were represented by the research participants (Karaoulanis, 2017).
- Another important constraint was the time and budget limitation, which impacted the research regarding the number of questionnaires disseminated. Although it was possible to disseminate many questionnaires via the internet, analysing a huge data sample was impossible due to time constraints (Karaoulanis, 2017).
- Another factor that might have affected the validity of the results was that the researcher couldn't consider specific demographics like age, educational level, etc. Such demographics could not be addressed, and although their analysis would be insightful, it was not feasible to achieve such analysis due to time restrictions. In future research, such parameters should be considered as they can shed more light on how employees and entrepreneurs perceive changes in their situation and whether they are ready to adapt to such changes and thrive (Karaoulanis, 2017).

A very significant part of every research is its reproducibility, which is its ability to be reproduced and used in numerous other similar situations. The result of the above-mentioned limitations was that this research couldn't achieve a high reproducibility result. However, it can be used as a yardstick for much similar research that can be conducted in the future.

Finally, it should be added that, as already stressed, the sample was not very large and only fifteen (15) persons participated. Of course, such a

sample reduces the reproducibility issues the research faced from the beginning.

### Research Ethics

One of the most important parts of this research is its ethics. This research took all the necessary precautions to be ethical. According to Denscombe (2010, p. 7), there are certain standards that researchers need to follow to minimise or even eliminate, if possible, the risk of harm for any of the participants. The standards that are followed in this research are the following:

- Participants remained anonymous;
- Data were treated as confidential;
- The nature of the research and the extent of their involvement were made clear to the participants
- Participants voluntary consent to being involved;
- The researcher operated within the legal limitations;
- The researcher dealt with the participants in an honest and straightforward way;
- The researcher did not expose the participants or other people involved in the research to any danger in pursuing data (Denscombe, 2010).

It was imperative from the beginning that such standards needed to be followed. What is extremely important in science is to go hand in hand with ethics; otherwise, many problematic situations that can harm people may arise. Human history is full of such paradigms, especially during turbulent periods like World War II.

### Research results

Several trends were developed because of the answers given by the respondents to each of the questions.

The first question was, *“Did the remote work during the pandemic have a positive or a negative impact on your personal life? Please elaborate and state the reasons why in both cases.”*

All the respondents underlined that remote work had a very positive impact on their lives, which was a huge increase in their work-life balance: *“I had more time to spend with my family and kids”*, or *“I had no commuting time to spend, so more time for myself and my family”*.

Also, some underlined that the positive impact was because, with remote working, they suffered less “working environment stress” or had the opportunity to be more flexible and stretch their workload throughout the day.

Finally, some stressed that they felt more comfortable working from their sofa in front of their personal computer wearing comfortable clothes,

which increased their performance and overall psychology.

On the antipodes, less than one-third of the respondents noted that remote work negatively impacted their personal lives. Most of them stressed that this negativity came from decreased socialisation as they had much less or no time to spend with their customers, colleagues, and friends. They felt trapped in a digital environment, which, at the end of the day, was demoralising them and created a bad psychological condition, especially in combination with the posed lockdown they were suffering due to the coronavirus pandemic.

A few of them underlined that although many positive issues entered their personal lives, they were accompanied by some negative ones as well, as they felt that remote work was a *“radical and violent change in the used way of working”*.

Also, some argued that they had to work longer hours as their companies pushed them to be online almost all day long.

Finally, one of the respondents argued that due to remote work, she developed a not-that-good level of communication with all people involved in one way or another with her work, which also negatively impacted her psychology.

This fact, per se, is related to the research result regarding the first question. It can be said that it is characteristic and strongly underlines the positive part of the impact of remote work on the respondents' lives.

The second question was, *“Did the remote working during the pandemic have a positive or a negative impact on your professional life? Please elaborate and state the reasons why in both cases.”*

The answers to the second question were divided into three main categories, the impact was positive, the impact was negative, and both positive and negative.

The respondents who weren't quite familiar with working in a totally digital environment stressed that remote work had a positive impact on their working lives and claimed that *“remote work improved my digital skills drastically”*. Others who were familiar stressed that their experience was positive since their *“working habits didn't change a bit”*. The ones who claimed that remote work positively impacted their professional life also stressed that they learned *“how to use new ways of professional interaction,”* and it was very important as, although the whole country was under a very strict lockdown, remote work allowed them to continue sustaining and growing their business.

Finally, they experienced remote work positively because, as they said, they could see digitalisation through a different prism.

Of the respondents who experienced the interference of remote work in their professional lives negatively, the majority argued that they missed the interaction between colleagues and customers, which negatively impacted their performance and made it more difficult to solve everyday issues. Also, some stressed that the very negative point was that they had to participate several times in *“meetings in the afternoon”*, which wasn't the case before the shift to remote work. This wasn't received well because it created a lack of rest and quality family time. Finally, one respondent stressed that what negatively impacted her professional way of doing things was that she couldn't access all the documents stored on her company's premises.

Regarding the portion of the respondents who answered that remote working had both a negative and positive impact on their professional lives, the majority answered that the negative part was related to the lack of communication with colleagues. One respondent argued that *“the lack of visual contact with the receiver was not good for both sides”*. It is important to add that all the respondents who argued that they faced both positive and negative results agreed that due to the circumstances, they had to learn new digital skills, which they found very positive and useful for both their work and future career.

In general, the answers to the second question about the impact of remote work on respondents' professional lives were split between the three options presented in the previous paragraphs.

The third question was, *“Did the remote work during the pandemic impact the company/ the company in which you were working in a positive or in a negative way? Please elaborate and state the reasons why?”*

Although the majority stated that remote work during the pandemic had a negative result for the companies where the respondents were working, this head start was very small. Almost half of the respondents argued that the company in which they worked during the pandemic was affected positively.

So, it can be said that there was an overall balance between the two approaches with a little head start in favour of the negative one.

The respondents who argued that their company had a negative impact due to remote work said that this happened because of communication problems among employees. At the same time, there was a deficiency in the level of customer service.

Only one argued that due to the nature of his job, his company faced many difficulties as its designated employees had to visit various field stakeholders.

Another thing that harmed their companies was that “many teamwork issues” arose while working remotely.

Finally, some respondents argued that the overall level of the company’s customer service decreased due to the lack of interaction between the company’s employees and its customers.

In juxtaposition, the respondents who found a positive impact of remote work during the pandemic on their companies argued that this impact was the result of the “cost reduction in terms of office space”, the “non-existent employee training” during this period, and the reduced absenteeism rate as people were working from home.

Another important paragon that justified an extremely positive impact was that although most of the companies in Greece did not operate during the strict lockdown, their company had the opportunity to continue working and sustain.

In general, it can be said that according to the respondents, there were fewer positive results than negative ones.

The fourth question was, “*Was your business prepared to work remotely? Please elaborate on why.*”

Most respondents argued that their company was not prepared to work remotely. Only a couple of respondents argued that their company was ready, while only one said “somehow ready”, although most of its employees were not.

Of the respondents who argued that their company was prepared, one argued that it was not only prepared but “fully prepared actually” through daily experience and immense training over the last years.

Among the employees who argued that their company was not prepared, some argued that there was a lack of equipment and training regarding the employees.

Others argued that their company was taken by surprise and didn’t have the time to prepare, although they underlined that in the last years, they did not invest in training and equipment to be prepared when the time comes, either.

Other issues the respondents underlined were the “lack of planning and guidance” and suitable equipment. The company was based mainly on “employees’ efforts and equipment. “Many of the employees had to become digitally literate overnight”.

It should be underlined that it was almost unanimous that the respondents’ companies were not ready to face the pandemic challenge by implementing a remote working culture.

The fifth question was, “*Were you prepared as a person and a professional to start working remotely?*”

Most respondents said they weren’t prepared to enter a remote work phase. They argued that their companies didn’t expect this turn and never prepared their employees via specialised training.

Some argued that their companies didn’t invest in remote work to provide their employees, apart from training, the hardware needed. Therefore, employees had to use their own equipment or, in some cases, even buy the equipment needed to perform the assigned tasks on their own.

One respondent stated, “*I had basic digital competencies, but I didn’t know how to use specific applications/software*”.

Almost all respondents who said they weren’t prepared worked in small companies or public service (e. g., high school lecturers, etc.). The ones working in multinational or bigger companies were prepared in multiple ways as their companies trained them to work remotely, equipping them with the needed hardware. The characteristic phrase from one respondent underlines, “*I was fully prepared due to training and the way the company operates*”.

The sixth question was, “*Please stress some obstacles you encountered during the remote working period. Please elaborate a bit*”.

Most of the respondents argued that they had technical problems. What is important is that most of the received answers were extensions of the previous question. As they weren’t prepared, they faced many challenges.

Under this prism, there were answers like “*I had difficulties in connecting to the distance learning platform*” or “*everybody was pre-occupied with their online tasks, and it was difficult to schedule a meeting during working hours, something which resulted in longer working hours and increased fatigue*” and “*not ready to work so many hours in front of a computer and especially using a camera*”, etc.

Some respondents argued that they faced different kinds of issues, like “*I had problems with my internet connection*”, and one respondent said that he faced a decrease in collaboration interest among his colleagues due to the lack of communication and interaction.

Another respondent stressed that she had multiple hardware problems regarding sound, image, and internet connection.

A respondent argued that a major problem she faced was that she didn’t have access to much of the paperwork she had in her office.

Another respondent also argued that she had difficulty concentrating with all the family members in the same space.

Finally, a respondent argued, “*I had to buy the equipment because my company didn’t provide it to me*”.

The seventh question was, “*Do you believe that your business needs to return to remote working after the pandemic? If yes, why? If no, why?*”

Only one of the respondents said that his company could return to remote working after the pandemic, but only if this was a free option for all employees without facing any consequences. Even this respondent didn't say that his business “needs” to return to remote working, but only “can”.

The rest of the respondents argued that their companies don't need to return to a remote mode after the pandemic, and the reasons stressed were the following:

- Education needs physical contact (lecturer);
- Our business is heavily based on physical contact with customers;
- We faced many delays while we were in the remote mode;
- No financial or operational difference from such returns;
- We need to interact with our colleagues and customers.

The eighth question was, “*Do you believe a blended form of remote and in-office work could be more favourable for employees and business? If yes, why? If no, why?*”

Most of the respondents said that blended working conditions could work in a positive way for most companies and employees.

Some argued that work-life balance could be achieved via the blended form, while some others argued that the fact per se that people need to work from home, even partially, can diminish their free time as there is a thin red line between work and free time.

Some argued almost the same by underlying that there are blurred limits between the working space and the personal one while working at home, which can offer a “higher quality of personal and professional life, diminish stress” or create problems. Therefore, they argued that only remote would not work properly, while the blended form has better possibilities for successful implementation.

A few respondents argued that the blended form of working is important and needs to be implemented only during the pandemic or similar circumstances. In that way, fewer people will contact each other, which will help stop the spread of the virus.

A respondent also argued that blended working could be important and useful only during specific circumstances and needs. She also argued that in such cases, it is important to have someone responsible for judging clearly and successfully that the situation requires a blended form of working.

One of the respondents argued that the blended form of working could decrease the importance of the company's headquarters.

## Discussion

As Felstad & Henseke (2017) stressed in their research, remote working has dramatically improved their work-life balance, whereas workload and intensity have increased. What decreased was employees' ability to switch off from work. These findings aligned with the results of this research, which found that all respondents agreed that remote work indeed improved their work-life balance, although some negative results occurred like decreased socialisation, radical and violent change into remote working, longer working hours, decrease in communication levels.

Previous mixed-method research (Wang et al., 2021, 2020) also found that other paragon that negatively impacted people's lives after the shift to remote working were home interference from family members, procrastination, loneliness, and ineffective communication. The last two were also aligned with the findings of this research.

The main point regarding the first research question is that the findings were completely aligned with previous research findings regarding the positive results of remote work, which mainly focused on work-life balance for all respondents. At the same time, it was also possible to monitor accordance regarding several negative outcomes but not the magnitude of the work-life balance.

Regarding the second question (“*Did the remote work during the pandemic have a positive or a negative impact on your professional life? Please elaborate and state the reasons why in both cases*”), the research results coincided in accordance and deviation with the previous research.

Based on their responses to this second research question, the respondents were divided into three distinct categories, those who faced remote working under a positive prism, those who faced it under a negative prism, and those who experienced both positive and negative outcomes from the shift to remote working during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Some respondents argued that due to the shift to remote work, they managed to improve their digital skills. However, many who were digitally literate didn't change their habits, some learned new ways of professional interaction, and others mentioned that they experienced a lack of communication with both their employees and customers as a drawback that decreased their overall performance. Another negative impact was that they often had afternoon meetings, which only negatively impacted their

work-life balance. At the same time, it was also a paragon of tiredness and frustration.

Based on the previous research, Cook (2019) stressed that no face-to-face meetings, no distraction from co-workers, and no annoying managers to boss around were positive results of remote work, which juxtaposes the research findings. The respondents found that lack of interaction and communication is a negative result of remote work and not a positive one. Also, no one mentioned that they had to commute less time now.

Mirella (2020) argued that remote work decreased employees' productivity, which partially complies with the answers that our respondents gave, as they argued that late afternoon meetings decreased their performance, made them tired, and decreased their work-life balance.

Regarding the third question, (*"Did the remote work during the pandemic affect your company/ the company in which you were working in a positive or in a negative way? Please elaborate and state the reasons why?"*), the respondents had to indicate both the positive and negative results of remote working in their business.

As prevalent disadvantages, they stressed a lack of communication between employees and customers, a decrease in the quality of customer service, and some issues that had to do with teamwork.

On the antipodes, the respondents noted that the two major benefits for their business due to remote work were the possibility to continue to operate even during the lockdown when a majority of businesses were closed and an opportunity to achieve substantial cost reductions as they worked remotely.

These findings differed from the ones that the bibliography and previous research indicate. According to nibusinessinfo.co.uk (n. d.), the positive results were flexibility and agility, improved employees' retention, the attractiveness of new talents, increased productivity, improved staff well-being that positively impacts their performance, use of technology, etc.

According to the same source (nibusinessinfo.co.uk, n. d.), the negative results had to do with staff feeling isolated, difficulties in performance monitoring, employees' potential burnout, decreased performance, negative mental health conditions etc.

Interestingly, the research results and previous research agree that there might be both positive and negative impacts on business due to remote working.

The fourth question deals with how much businesses were prepared to deal with such a situation that led to the remote working mode (*"Was your business prepared regarding the*

*implementation of remote work? Please elaborate why"*).

The respondents had an almost unanimous opinion that their company was not ready to face the pandemic and shift successfully to work remotely. Only a couple of them argued that it was ready, while the majority stressed that not only was it not ready, but there was a lack of equipment and training.

The research findings were aligned with the bibliography and previous research, which stated that before the pandemic, only a very low percentage of American workers worked remotely, and the pandemic forced them to shift to the remote working mode, although they were almost completely unprepared (Valet, 2020).

Question five was related to how prepared the respondent was to shift towards remote working (*"Were you prepared as a person and a professional to start working on a remote basis?"*).

Almost all respondents argued that they faced many difficulties during the shift as they were not prepared, and their companies were unprepared too. This was because companies didn't bother to train employees towards that direction or give them the right tools to cope with this shift successfully.

These findings comply with previous research conducted by Deloitte (n. d.). Employees encountered many problems and deficiencies regarding the tools needed to successfully cope with the remote work situation that arose, which directly implies that both companies and employees were not prepared for such a difficult shift (Deloitte, n. d.).

The sixth question is related to the obstacles that employees faced during the remote work period (*"Please stress some obstacles you encountered during the remote working period. Please elaborate a bit"*).

The respondents argued that they had to face multiple problems, most of which had to do with hardware and devices. They stressed that they had issues related to the internet connection, low broadband speed, sound and image, etc.

Some of them also argued that they had problems that sprung from the decreased levels of communication inside the team. All the above-mentioned problems were discussed in the previous answers. The respondents and their companies were unprepared to deal with such a situation.

These results partially coincided with previous research. For instance, some of the problems employees faced working remotely during lockdown were a deficiency in the tools used (Deloitte, n. d.) and the fact that they suffered from the Covid-19 illness and even got hospitalised. They had to stay at home, attend to their elders and (or) children, had space problems in their homes as their

children were studying in the same place as schools were closed, and their partners worked online too, etc. (Sama and Rakatomanga, 2020).

The seventh question is about the period after the pandemic in correlation with the remote working mode (*“Do you believe that your business needs to return to remote working after the pandemic? If yes, why? If no, why?”*).

Regarding that question, almost all respondents argued that their company does not need to return to remote working mode after the pandemic for numerous reasons, such as their job is based on physical contact with their customers, and their business faced many delays during remote work. The new shift to brick-and-mortar offices will be better in financial and operational terms. It is extremely important for their business to re-establish valuable interaction with their customers and colleagues.

These findings differ from those of previous research. According to Molla’s (2021) research, many employees said they want to be allowed to work remotely some or even all of the time. According to this research, employees are ready even to quit their jobs if their employer does not fulfil this wish (Molla, 2021).

The answers to question seven can serve as the basis for answering question eight, the last question of this research (*“Do you believe that a blended form of remote and in-office work will be more favourable for employees and business? If yes, why? If no, why?”*).

Some respondents argued that the blended way of working remotely, which means working partially from the office and home, can positively impact both employees and businesses as this would make them achieve work-life balance, increasing their performance. Also, some others argued that a blended way of working would negatively impact their personal and professional lives because it might diminish their free time and decrease the importance of the existence of the company’s headquarters. Therefore, they argued that such working modes should only be used during difficult situations like the pandemic.

On the other hand, previous research indicated that the blended working model could be quite attractive as they could support their employees’ safety and well-being while sustaining their headquarters (McCann, 2021), etc.

It should be noted that the research findings coincide in terms of the headquarters of the company, whereas the previous and current research coincide in terms of the employees and well-being that might be achieved by applying a blended model of working.

## Conclusions

Remote working is very important and can positively impact the lives of employees and businesses. On the other hand, this research underlined that remote work is not a panacea and many challenges need to be dealt with, like lack of communication, overworking, and mental health issues that might arise from the lack of socialisation, etc.

Working remotely can be extremely valuable for both workers and businesses, especially during stressful and dangerous periods. This pandemic was an opportunity for everybody to prepare and organise their business and training towards similar situations that might arise in the future.

Work-life balance was the biggest earning for individuals because of the remote working shift during the pandemic. The result vividly reminded how important it is to maintain a balance in our lives, which always positively impacts business.

Finally, companies and people were not prepared to deal with such a difficult unprecedented situation, and therefore they encountered so many challenges that they had to deal with. This is very important as it is almost certain that humanity will deal with similar situations, even worse, in the future and therefore need to be prepared and ready to cope with them successfully, avoiding being surprised and losing valuable time.

## Recommendations

Future researchers can use the results of this research as the cornerstone upon which their research can be based. As this research deals with many issues, future researchers can choose between many topics and dig deeper and more holistically to help us understand many parameters that this pandemic brought to light.

Since the pandemic and the shift to remote working combined some extremely important elements that societies had to face for the first time throughout history, many aspects of such combination can be the topics of future research. Such topics can involve societal, psychological, mental health, economic and practical issues that are extremely important.

Future societies need to shed some light on remote working, especially during situations that create high stress for workers. Therefore, researchers need to consider the opinions of psychologists and sociologists because as, despite its magnitude, the research indicated via its results, people who suddenly had to involve with remote working had to live under circumstances that were very marginal and made them decrease their socialisation, which harmed their overall quality of life.

Another important point regarding future research is that it is important to investigate whether societies are ready to face difficult and dangerous situations like the pandemic related to business sustainability and the whole societal function. This research can be the springboard for future researchers helping to discover the ways businesses must use to cope successfully if a similar situation arises.

This research did not investigate the implications of remote work to all the stakeholders of the companies in question and additionally check economic paragon that have impacted the companies in question and how these companies managed or failed to deal with such situations. These can be the topics of future research as well.

Finally, future research needs to dig deeper into a subject that tends to get more and more attention as years go by, the issues of work-life balance. Remote work has unveiled that people had the

opportunity to be closer to their family members, spend more time with them, commute less, and feel relaxed and less stressed, even while working. Research can try to correlate the new balance that working remotely brings to workers' lives with possible higher working performance. If this is proved to be the case, arguments may arise on how workplaces need to change and how business owners must treat their employees in the future.

This research aims to become one of the sparks to light a bigger fire that will shed light on such controversial, new, and important phenomena in people's lives in Greece and the whole world as we are all together in such situations. The research aims to leverage the opportunity that the pandemic brought into our lives and turn something negative, the pandemic, into something positive, remote work or (and) and work-life balance etc.

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#### **NUOTOLINIS DARBAS GRAIKIJOJE COVID-19 PANDEMIJOS METU: KAIP TAI PAVEIKĖ DARBUOTOJUS IR VERSLĄ**

##### **Santrauka**

Kilus Covid-19 pandemijai, prireikė greitų ir patikimų sprendimų, kurie padėtų darbuotojams ir įmonėms išgyventi karantino laikotarpį. Vienas iš tokių sprendimų buvo nuotolinis darbas, suvaidinęs lemiamą vaidmenį ir padėjęs tiek darbuotojams, tiek įmonėms įveikti pandemijos keliamus iššūkius. Straipsnyje pristatomas tyrimas, susijęs su nuotoliniu darbu ir jo poveikiu darbuotojams bei įmonėms, atskleidžiant konkrečias problemas, su kuriomis tuo įtemptu laikotarpiu susidūrė respondentai. Atliekant tyrimą taikytas apklausos metodas. Klausimyną, kuris buvo išplatintas elektroniniu paštu, sudarė atviri klausimai. Surinktiems duomenims apdoroti taikyta kokybinė analizė. Rezultatai parodė, kad nuotolinį darbą per pandemiją darbuotojai vertina teigiamai; jie išmoko naudotis technologijomis, pagerėjo darbo ir asmeninio gyvenimo pusiausvyra, atsirado daugiau laiko šeimai. Vis dėlto tiek darbuotojai, tiek įmonės susidūrė su keliais iššūkiais, nes dauguma jų nebuvo pasirengę tokiai situacijai. Tyrimu siekiama paskatinti tirti prieštarigus, naujus ir svarbius reiškinius, pasinaudoti pandemijos atneštomis galimybėmis, ir iš kažko neigiamo, pvz., pandemijos, išmokti kažką teigiamą, pvz., kaip organizuoti nuotolinį darbą ir (arba) atrasti darbo ir asmeninio gyvenimo pusiausvyrą.

**Reikšminiai žodžiai:** nuotolinis darbas, Covid 19, iššūkiai, Graikijos visuomenė, verslas.

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