

# CHANGES IN PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR AFTER THE ONSET OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC RELATED TO THE APPLICATION OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Peter UŠÁK – Jaroslav BEDNÁRIK

## ABSTRACT:

The issue of social responsibility is getting more and more attention nowadays. In connection with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, we identified that consumers began to prefer the purchase of products whose production and consumption are socially responsible over products not meeting these characteristics. Our research shows that companies have experienced this behaviour and perceive the application of CSR principles as a competitive advantage. The study focuses on changes in consumer purchase behaviour in terms of social responsibility during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study aims to identify how the corona crisis has affected consumers' purchase behaviour concerning social responsibility and to point out that adhering to the principles of social responsibility means increasing competitiveness for businesses in a market environment. To achieve the goal, we conducted a survey of the primary issue as a questionnaire in July 2021 and August 2021, with a quantitative and qualitative evaluation of responses obtained from respondents. The results suggest that marketing communication plays a significant role in applying the principles of social responsibility and, at the same time, comes along with a competitive advantage.

## KEY WORDS:

competitiveness, corona crisis, corporate social responsibility, consumer purchase behaviour, social responsibility.

## 1 Introduction

In the context of the significant changes companies have faced to survive in a competitive environment, the issue of social responsibility is becoming more and more critical. Nowadays, corporate social responsibility has become a competitive strategy for corporations to increase profits, customer satisfaction, customer



Mgr. Peter Ušák  
Faculty of Mass Media Communication  
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava  
Nám. J. Herdu 2  
917 01 Trnava  
Slovak Republic  
usak1@ucm.sk

Peter Ušák is a graduate of the Faculty of Mass Media Communication UCM in Trnava. Since 2019 he has been active at FMK UCM in Trnava as a full-time doctoral student. As part of his scientific activities, he deals with topics such as social responsibility and sustainability while considering the impact of the current pandemic crisis. His published theses and articles focus on topics related to the issue of social responsibility. Currently, he deals with changes in consumer behaviour concerning social responsibility in the ongoing crisis period.



Assoc. Prof. Ing. Jaroslav Bednárík, PhD.  
Faculty of Mass Media Communication  
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava  
Nám. J. Herdu 2  
917 01 Trnava  
Slovak Republic  
jaroslav.bednarik@ucm.sk

Jaroslav Bednárík is a Vice-Rector for Development at UCM in Trnava. He graduated from the Faculty of Materials Science and Technology of the Slovak University of Technology in Trnava. In 2009, he obtained a PhD. degree at the same university. Since 1997, he has worked as a lecturer at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication of the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, becoming Associate Professor in 2012. He deals with issues of personal management, sustainable development and corporate social responsibility. He favours teamwork, efficient communication and solid presentation skills.

loyalty, company reputation and a positive brand approach.<sup>1</sup> Matten and Moon state that corporate social responsibility confirms social contract, institutional commitment, morality, legitimacy and consumer focus, increasing the company's positive image.<sup>2</sup> Based on the above, it can be said that we notice many indications that specific consumers perceive these topics as necessary and behave more responsibly towards nature, but also towards society. In this context, we assume that they also apply socially responsible behaviour in their purchasing decisions and change some of their purchasing habits. Furthermore, we assume that many consumers recognise brands that behave socially responsibly and prefer them in their purchasing decisions over those brands that do not deal with social responsibility at all or only to a minimal extent.

We will further evaluate these assumptions in the next part of the study. The results can be beneficial to businesses. Indeed, confirming the hypothesis that consumers adopt socially responsible behaviour when purchasing will signal businesses to respond. Currently, many large and medium-sized companies already apply the concept of "social responsibility". However, the situation is often challenging because the company thinks primarily of profit, which may be in conflict with its socially responsible activities. In this situation, the role of marketing communication is to harmonise corporate activities so that social responsibility is process-driven while achieving stable profits. Social behaviour will increasingly be a decisive factor in the competition and the ultimate success in the market. An example: in 2020, during the initial phase of the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, commercial banks, for example, changed their communication with clients. Their advertising spots drew attention to stability and support in difficult times. It was related to uncertainty and fear in the company, and this change in marketing communications brought successful results. In times of uncertainty, it turned out that clients did not mind advertising activities and welcomed them positively, mainly because they considered their funds to be safely stored in these institutions, and if there was a long-term crisis, they promised to help. This change in communication in connection with the crisis was only the beginning of further changes in communication and the overall reassessment of business strategies. When we mention rapidly changing market conditions before the onset of COVID-19, current trends in the European Union point to reforms and the necessary transition to a green economy. If a company wants to be successful today, it must take its own social responsibility very seriously, as it will have an increasing impact on overall market competitiveness soon.

## 2 The Corona Crisis and Its Effects on Changes in Social Behaviour

Social responsibility is a severe issue nowadays. The need to be responsible for nature and each other is constantly growing. We can mention man-made climate change and the corona crisis, which keeps the whole world in uncertainty. Society thus creates a gradually increasing pressure on companies to behave responsibly in their business activities. This pressure means that businesses are aware that they could lose customers if they produce their products regardless of social responsibility. In fact, the concept of "corporate social responsibility" (CSR) has existed for more than 60 years. The theory of social responsibility is being researched, developed and implemented in practice worldwide, but there is still no universally accepted definition. CSR needs to be understood in a broad context and includes many concepts and ideas known under different names, such as corporate responsibility, business ethics, responsible business, sustainable development, the environment, etc.<sup>3</sup>

We identify with the statement that corporate social responsibility is becoming a part of any successful business strategy and is even a necessity today. Corporate social responsibility affects companies' financial

1 CALABRESE, A., COSTA, R., ROSATI, F.: Gender Differences in Customer Expectations and Perceptions of Corporate Social Responsibility. In *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 2016, Vol. 116, p. 141.

2 MATTEN, D., MOON, J.: Reflections on the 2018 Decade Award: The Meaning and Dynamics of Corporate Social Responsibility. In *Academy of Management Review*, 2020, Vol. 45, No. 1, p. 10.

3 HE, Y., LIN, W., STREIMIKIS, J.: Linking Corporate Social Responsibility with Reputation and Brand of the Firm. In *Amfiteatru Economic Journal*, 2019, Vol. 21, No. 1, p. 13.

results and becomes a relevant part of management processes.<sup>4</sup> COVID-19 poses significant challenges for businesses, the economy, governments, and society as a whole. In addition to 'fair' companies, with the onset of the pandemic, those that sought to profit from the crisis emerged as well. In order to limit such profit gain, for example, in the United Kingdom, a special working group has been set up within the Competition and Markets Office to take action against companies that benefit from the pandemic through misleading claims about their products or artificially increased prices.<sup>5</sup>

The crisis has affected society at multiple levels. It could be argued that society today is, in many ways, quite different from the 'mass society' as it existed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and it would be hard to argue that in today's interconnected world of digital media people still can be seen as atomised individuals. On the other hand, we live in a media universe where people are sending more than that they are receiving, so a "reverse atomisation" of the public can be said to be taking place, as no one truly listens to other people when they speak.<sup>6</sup>

The concept of "social responsibility" is based on the principle of voluntariness, and in practice, it often happens that the company presents itself as responsible, and yet it consciously does not adhere to or violates these principles. In his study, Bednárík says that it is essential for companies to take corporate social responsibility seriously: "a socially responsible company aims not only to maximise profits in the short term but its goals are based on the needs of the internal and external environment and also include the social and environmental aspects of its activities. Such a company has long-term goals that contribute to society's long-term profit generation and long-term development. The goal of such a company is not just to make a profit. Considering the growing importance of human resources, which are the company's core capital, efforts to harmonise workplace relationships are becoming more important, and securing such tasks is becoming a priority for companies that are serious about socially responsible business".<sup>7</sup>

If we want to better understand the changes in consumer purchase behaviour, we have to focus on several areas of life that have been affected by the corona crisis and are related to our topic. We have taken data from research by the Kantar agency, which has been dealing with this issue for a long time and is a leader in its field, researching the feelings and expectations of people worldwide since the beginning of the pandemic. For our study, we use data from Kantar's research related to April 2021. This data shows that the global crisis has affected most people around the world. As many as 42% of all people have been affected by the corona crisis. 8% of people have been infected with the virus, 23% say that their family members have been infected and 23% say their close friends have been infected. The given effect is most extreme in Brazil, where 87% say that they or their close relatives have contracted the virus.<sup>8</sup>

A study by the research agency Kantar further deals with satisfaction with the government's reactions. Government support is declining worldwide. The results were compared with the research period in April 2020. In April 2021, more than half (55%) agreed with the measures taken by their government, compared to a share of 61% in 2020. Moreover, 28% disagreed with their government's actions, compared to 23% in April 2020. Dissatisfaction was significantly higher in 'developing' countries, including Brazil (59% dissatisfaction in April 2021 vs. 38% in April 2020), Colombia (44% vs. 23%), Argentina (40% vs. 13%) than in EU countries such as Belgium (43% vs. 27%) and France (41% in both waves). It turns out that the invention of the COVID vaccine increases the satisfaction waves towards the government and its support. The U.S. government has seen support increase by 20 percentage points from 35% to 55% since August 2020, while the UK government has seen an increase of 13 percentage points from 37% to 50%.<sup>9</sup>

4 GALAN, J., MELO, T.: Effects of Corporate Social Responsibility on Brand Value. In *Journal of Brand Management*, 2011, Vol. 18, No. 6, p. 428.

5 BUTLER, S.: *New UK Taskforce to Crack Down on Coronavirus Profiteers*. Released on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020. [online]. [2021-08-02]. Available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/mar/20/new-uk-taskforce-to-crack-down-on-coronavirus-profiteers>>.

6 DEUZE, M.: No One Listens When Everyone Speaks: On the Future of Media in Media Life. In *Mediapolis: Revista de comunicação, jornalismo e espaço público*, 2017, Vol. 4, p. 11-37.

7 BEDNÁRIK, J.: Change of Paradigm in Personnel Strategy – Corporate Social Responsibility and Internal Communication. In *Communication Today*, 2019, Vol. 10, No. 2, p. 49.

8 *COVID 19 Barometer: Consumer Attitudes Habits and Expectations Revisited*. Released on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2021. [online]. [2021-08-14]. Available at: <<https://www.kantar.com/inspiration/coronavirus/covid-19-barometer-consumer-attitudes-habits-and-expectations-revisited>>.

9 *COVID 19 Barometer: Consumer Attitudes Habits and Expectations Revisited*. Released on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2021. [online]. [2021-08-14]. Available at: <<https://www.kantar.com/inspiration/coronavirus/covid-19-barometer-consumer-attitudes-habits-and-expectations-revisited>>.

Research also shows that more than half of people (54%) have felt the impact on their income. Another 18% still expect it to be decreased due to the pandemic. It has affected more young people (aged 18 – 34), with 62% of them already experiencing a loss of income. Most people expect a long-term economic impact. One in three (33%) believe that the economy will recover quickly when the pandemic is under control, increasing 30% in comparison with April 2020. The same optimism is expressed by only 28% of people in the ‘leading’ countries. Regarding price sensitivity, 70% of people continue to pay more attention to prices in shops, supermarkets and shopping malls, compared to 64% in April 2020 and 58% (+ 10%) prefer more products on sale.<sup>10</sup>

We also responded to this data from external sources with our research in the given area of interest. We deal with the issue of socially responsible marketing in the environment of medium-sized companies in Slovakia. In April 2021, we developed a pilot project to find out to what extent companies apply the principles of socially responsible behaviour in their business, whether they perceive such activities as a competitive advantage and whether the principles of social responsibility communicate inwards but also out of the company professionally, through an employee or a department designated to do so. For the pilot research, we contacted 10 companies that provided us with necessary information. Indeed, businesses must understand consumer purchasing behaviour changes and apply the necessary procedural procedures to put CSR into practice.

The answers show that companies perceive themselves as socially responsible; many professionals manage these activities and perceive social responsibility as a competitive advantage. Nevertheless, they often encounter problems in their application, for example, due to high input costs and a comprehensive and complex principle of implementing social responsibility instruments. Companies also perceive consumer purchase behaviour changes towards different purchasing decisions based on the social responsibility principles. The main task of our study is to point out these specific changes in consumer behaviour, which will serve as a signal for general changes in business strategies.

### 3 Methods

In the first part of the study, we focused on mapping the current situation related to the issue of social responsibility concerning the ongoing corona crisis. In addition to that, we are concerned with the changes in consumer purchase behaviour during the pandemic, mainly in connection with social responsibility. In addition to scholarly literature, we use the data provided by the agency Kantar and at the same time, we also present empirical data drawn from our own pilot survey. The empirical part of the study focuses on the changes brought by the corona crisis concerning socially responsible behaviour. We monitor behavioural changes for both businesses and consumers.

The pilot survey’s results show that companies have responded to the crisis and see compliance with the principles of social responsibility as their competitive advantage. The research aims to find out how the corona crisis has affected consumers’ purchase behaviour concerning social responsibility and to point out that compliance with the principles of social responsibility means increasing competitiveness for companies in a market environment. To achieve the goal, we conducted a survey using a questionnaire. Before carrying out the survey itself, we set the following assumptions (A):

A1: More than 50% of consumers have been affected by the corona crisis regarding their socially responsible behaviour.

A2: More than 50% of consumers make their purchasing decisions based on socially responsible behaviour (they prefer recyclable packaging, for example).

A3: More than 50% of consumers consciously recognise and prefer brands that promote and use social responsibility.

A4: Younger consumers prefer socially responsible behaviour compared with older consumers.

<sup>10</sup> COVID 19 Barometer: Consumer Attitudes Habits and Expectations Revisited. Released on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2021. [online]. [2021-08-14]. Available at: <<https://www.kantar.com/inspiration/coronavirus/covid-19-barometer-consumer-attitudes-habits-and-expectations-revisited>>.

We use different kinds of questions in the questionnaire to identify whether our assumptions can be confirmed or should be rejected. First, we identify what age category a particular respondent belongs to. The reason is that younger consumers generally prefer products offered by socially responsible producers. We also identify the extent to which the corona crisis has affected consumers’ purchase behaviour concerning social responsibility and, consequently, whether these consumers perceive changes in responsible behaviour within their surroundings. Then we focus on finding out whether consumers would prefer a sustainable product to one that is not (we use eco-packaging as an example). A very interesting factor in connection with social responsibility is the price. Therefore, in the next part of the questionnaire, we asked whether consumers would be willing to pay a higher price for sustainable products. In practice, the price is the decisive factor in the purchase and it will be interesting to find out, as it is in the context of social responsibility.

Another subtopic is companies’ reaction to the onset of the corona crisis. We pay attention, among other things, to how companies respond to these circumstances, whether they understand the situation and perceive the application of CSR principles as their competitive advantage. Furthermore, we are also interested in exploring how consumers perceive such corporate social responsibility efforts. Specifically, whether they have noticed any changes in the social behaviour of companies or whether they have their favourite brand, which they know is socially responsible and sustainable. We focus on finding out whether consumers monitor CSR activities outside the store area (or during the sales process) by the remaining questions. We are also interested in whether consumers have changed their shopping behaviour during the pandemic and, for example, stopped buying products from producers not acting in accordance with the principles of social responsibility. The answers were obtained during the questionnaire survey conducted via the online service *survio.sk*, carried out in July 2021 and August 2021.

We addressed the respondents in the form of a questionnaire in order to find out their attitudes and opinions on the issue of social responsibility. Using a convenient sample, we contacted 150 respondents. The questionnaire contained both open and semi-closed questions, while the introductory questions provided us with information about the respondents’ age, gender and residence. After completing the survey, we proceeded to evaluate it. We summarised the obtained data and processed it visually.

### 4 Results

The following section confronts our assumptions with the questionnaire results, offering interesting findings suitable for further processing. We assumed that more than 50% of consumers have been affected by the corona crisis regarding their socially responsible behaviour. It turns out that society seems to be thinking more about social issues during this crisis than ever before. We asked if people had noticed a change in CSR around them, and as many as 67% had experienced such changes, compared with 33% who had not experienced similar changes in behaviour. We also tried to determine whether people felt more responsible for sorting waste in connection with the pandemic or whether they had started to prioritise buying eco-products. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest level of agreement, we recorded a value of 6. It is also interesting that the younger age group either changed their attitude towards high-level social responsibility or stuck to and preferred such values before the pandemic. Our assumption is therefore confirmed.

Furthermore, we assumed that more than 50% of consumers make their purchasing decisions based on socially responsible behaviour (for example, recyclable packaging is preferred). The following table shows the related results.

Table 1: To what extent does the product's sustainability determine the purchasing decision?

**To what extent does the sustainability of the product determine the purchasing decision?**

the answer (10 is full consent)	answers	%
10/10 ★★★★★★★★★★	18	20 %
9/10 ★★★★★★★★★☆	8	8,9 %
8/10 ★★★★★★★★☆☆	8	8,9 %
7/10 ★★★★★★★☆☆☆	16	17,8 %
6/10 ★★★★★★☆☆☆☆	4	4,4 %
5/10 ★★★★★☆☆☆☆☆	22	24,4 %
4/10 ★★★★★☆☆☆☆☆	8	8,9 %

Source: Own processing

In the question itself, we explained to the respondents what they should think of under the terms “social responsibility” and “purchasing decisions”. This data shows that almost 75% of involved people make purchasing decisions based on social responsibility. However, the most significant representation is associated with the option of 5/10, so there is a considerable group of people who neither agree, nor disagree. This opens up a space for marketing communication of corporate activities focused on social responsibility. The assumption is confirmed as well. In addition to consumer purchasing decisions, we were interested in whether consumers perceive changes in the behaviour of companies (brands) in connection with social responsibility and the current crisis. 75.6% of respondents claim that they have experienced either change in companies’ behaviour in general or any positive changes, but only in relation to some companies, not all of them. In contrast, 24.4% of respondents have not noticed any changes in the behaviour of companies.

Our last assumption was that more than 50% of consumers consciously recognise and prefer brands that promote and use social responsibility. The following figure (Figure 1) shows the percentage of each answer to the question concerning the above assumption.

**Do you have your favorite brand that you know is sustainable and socially responsible and you buy from it?**

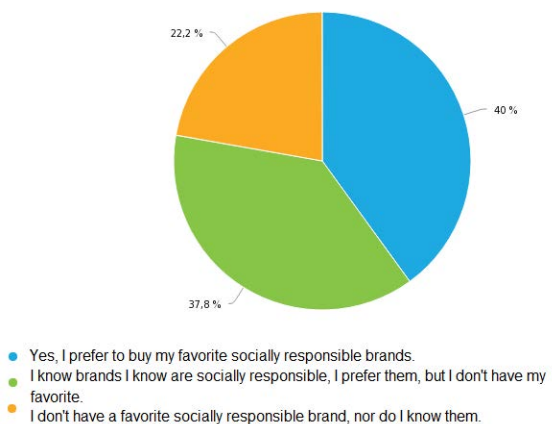


Figure 1: Do you have your favourite brand that you know is sustainable and socially responsible and you buy from it?

Source: Own processing

We also focused on whether the respondents have their favourite brands in this question, and 40% confirm this statement. Another almost 38% say that they know socially responsible brands and prefer them when buying. The assumption is confirmed because only 22% of the answers mention that the respondent does not know any socially responsible brand.

In addition to the assumptions we set and confirmed, we found out to what extent consumers are willing to pay a higher amount of money for socially responsible products. 66% of the answers were either ‘definitely yes’ or ‘rather yes’, while the answers ‘rather no’ or ‘definitely no’ represent 34% of the research sample. Interestingly enough, 40% of all answers is ‘definitely yes’. The transition to a greener economy and the overall change in the attitude of the whole society will not be for free, so we take this result as a positive indicator for the near future and upcoming periods. The following figure (Figure 2) shows the processed results of the survey on this issue.

**Did you stop buying products from irresponsible brands during the pandemic?**

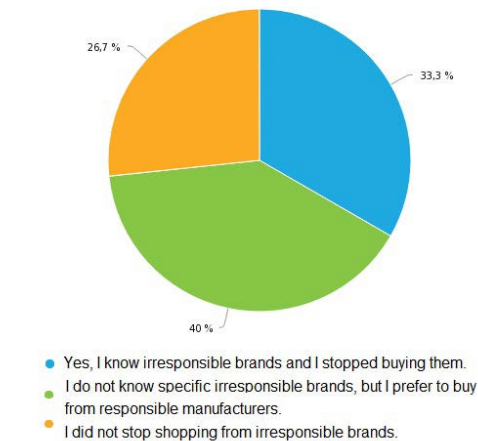


Figure 2: Did you stop buying products from irresponsible brands during the pandemic?

Source: Own processing

We investigated how social responsibility affects the shift of consumers to competitors. We asked whether consumers have stopped buying products from specific irresponsible companies due to socially irresponsible behaviour during the current crisis. The data shows that 33.3% of respondents have stopped buying such products, 40% say they have sought them to a lesser extent and 26.7% claim their purchase behaviour has not changed in relation to the given matter.

## 5 Conclusion

The results of the study could be used as several recommendations for practice. New trends in marketing communication show the ever-increasing importance of social responsibility. One can only agree with the statement that accepting social responsibility as a part of its own business strategy is not only beneficial for a company’s employees and customers, but also for the company itself. Socially responsible companies primarily receive non-financial benefits. Social responsibility is an excellent way to increase their credibility and build their reputation. From a company’s internal point of view, thanks to social responsibility, employees will reward the company with their loyalty and increased productivity because they might be happier.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> WERTHER, B., CHANDLER, D.: *Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility: Stakeholders in a Global Environment*. Los Angeles: SAGE, 2011, p. 224.

The transition to process management of socially responsible activities must include the overall change in the thinking of the entire company. Social responsibility is primarily about voluntariness, and in practice, it often happens that a company declaring its responsibility and sustainability does the opposite. As Porter and Kramer state in their article *How to Fix Capitalism? Creating Shared Value*, published in the prestigious *Harvard Business Review*: "A fundamental change in the business behaviour of any organisation must be a systemic change, new mechanisms must be found, which move the causality of the behaviour of individual business entities (by their open nature systems) to a qualitatively different level. It means consistently applying the principles of entrepreneurial thinking in the decision-making processes of managers of today's organisations."<sup>12</sup>

Within the defined assumptions, we determine that the corona crisis has affected at least 50% of the involved consumers in terms of social responsibility. The results show that this is the current reality. Interestingly but not quite surprisingly, younger people are more open to social responsibility topics, while this interest decreases with increasing age. This is logical and natural because older people have their shopping habits strictly set and thus, they are more difficult to change (for example, they might not accept a receipt which deteriorates relatively quickly because it is made of sustainable material). Older people are taught to set aside receipts; they have been archiving them for years, and they can no longer do so.

Furthermore, we assumed that more than 50% of consumers recognise and consciously buy products offered by socially responsible companies. About a fifth of respondents are not aware of and do not buy such products, so there is a considerable space for marketing communication aimed at this group of people. In addition to the assumptions, we also offer some other results interesting for practice. We wanted to prove that social responsibility is a competitive advantage. Up to 73% of the surveyed consumers have either completely stopped buying products from irresponsible businesses or at least are aware of these businesses and more often reach for sustainable products. Moreover, up to 78% of our respondents know and prefer sustainable and socially responsible brands. This data clearly shows a strong impact of social responsibility on the competition. Kaufland and Lidl, for example, tend to respond to similar surveys and data obtained in Slovakia. By 2030 at the latest, Kaufland plans to reduce emissions from its operations by 80% in all countries where it operates. Lidl Slovakia plans to achieve carbon neutrality in its operational activities in 2022.<sup>13</sup> The results of our research also show that, for example, 22% of respondents do not know socially responsible and sustainable brands, 27% have not addressed the issue of social responsibility yet and do not see any difference between sustainable products and products that do not meet such parameters. The results of finding out whether people follow socially responsible activities that companies run (for example, Lidl builds playgrounds) are inconclusive – 51% follow such activities and 49% do not. These results show how much marketing communication can change; a suitable communication strategy can achieve wider awareness within society and ultimately even higher profits.

The European Union is currently preparing for the environmental reforms for which it has allocated the highest amount of budget ever in history. Therefore, it is clear that the transition to a green economy will not be smooth and without its price. This will mean enormous challenges for privately owned companies that they will have to face to survive and thrive. As an example of how changes in the production processes could be introduced, we will mention an interesting article from the prestigious *Forbes* magazine. Affordable, sustainable products are specified as a new trend in this article. We should focus on a process during which the individual steps in the production chain are analysed, from raw materials, through distribution to sales, while monitoring the sustainability of individual factors (for example, if it is found that raw materials do not meet the sustainability requirements, they should be replaced by different resources that meet the given requirements; however, the final retail price should not increase). This principle explains that if a company wants to take social responsibility seriously, there are ways to achieve sustainability, responsibility and profit, and at the same time, there is no need for high initial investment. We conclude that soon, companies will have to face the challenges of social responsibility. This is related to climate change and pressure from the state on businesses

<sup>12</sup> PORTER, M., KRAMER, M.: Creating Shared Value. In *Harvard Business Review*, 2011, Vol. 89, No. 1-2, p. 65.

<sup>13</sup> *Lidl a Kaufland si stanovili ambiciozne ciele na ochranu klímy*. Released on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021. [online]. [2021-07-11]. Available at: <<https://www.ta3.com/clanok/206269/kaufland-a-lidl-si-stanovili-ambiciozne-ciele-na-ochranu-klimy>>.

and the business environment as a whole. On the other hand, the pressure is often exerted by consumers themselves; they are better educated than ever before, interested in their surroundings and in finding out whether businesses focus not only on their profit, but also on sustainability and social responsibility.

*Acknowledgement: The study was elaborated within the national research project supported by the Grant Agency of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic and the Slovak Academy of Sciences (VEGA) No. 1/0606/21, titled 'Change of Preferences in Consumer Purchase Behaviour in the Dynamics of the Development of Marketing Communication Tools'.*

## BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- BEDNÁRIK, J.: Change of Paradigm in Personnel Strategy – Corporate Social Responsibility and Internal Communication. In *Communication Today*, 2019, Vol. 10, No. 2, p. 42-56. ISSN 1338-130.
- BUTLER, S.: *New UK Taskforce to Crack Down on Coronavirus Profiteers*. Released on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020. [online]. [2021-08-02]. Available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/mar/20/new-uk-taskforce-to-crack-down-on-coronavirus-profiteers>>.
- CALABRESE, A., COSTA, R., ROSATI, F.: Gender Differences in Customer Expectations and Perceptions of Corporate Social Responsibility. In *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 2016, Vol. 116, p. 135-149. ISSN 0959-6526.
- COVID 19 Barometer: Consumer Attitudes Habits and Expectations Revisited*. Released on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2021. [online]. [2021-08-14]. Available at: <<https://www.kantar.com/inspiration/coronavirus/covid-19-barometer-consumer-attitudes-habits-and-expectations-revisited>>.
- DEUZE, M.: No One Listens When Everyone Speaks: On the Future of Media in Media Life. In *Mediapolis: Revista de comunicação, jornalismo e espaço público*, 2017, Vol. 4, p. 11-37. ISSN 2183-5918.
- GALAN, J., MELO, T.: Effects of Corporate Social Responsibility on Brand Value. In *Journal of Brand Management*, 2011, Vol. 18, No. 6, p. 423-437. ISSN 1479-1803.
- HE, Y., LIN, W., STREIMIKIS, J.: Linking Corporate Social Responsibility with Reputation and Brand of the Firm. In *Amfiteatru Economic Journal*, 2019, Vol. 21, No. 1, p. 1-26. ISSN 2247-9104.
- Lidl a Kaufland si stanovili ambiciozne ciele na ochranu klímy*. Released on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021. [online]. [2021-07-11]. Available at: <<https://www.ta3.com/clanok/206269/kaufland-a-lidl-si-stanovili-ambiciozne-ciele-na-ochranu-klimy>>.
- MATTEN, D., MOON, J.: Reflections on the 2018 Decade Award: The Meaning and Dynamics of Corporate Social Responsibility. In *Academy of Management Review*, 2020, Vol. 45, No. 1, p. 7-28. ISSN 1930-3807.
- PORTER, M., KRAMER, M.: Creating Shared Value. In *Harvard Business Review*, 2011, Vol. 89, No. 1-2, p. 63-67. ISSN 0017-8012.
- WERTHER, B., CHANDLER, D.: *Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility: Stakeholders in a Global Environment*. Los Angeles: SAGE, 2011.