

Corporate Social Responsibility

Policy Overview and Implementation Results
(2020/2021)

ABOUT US

We are an international software developer with offices in the UK, the US, Estonia, Russia, and Belarus. Back in 2000, we started as a software testing and QA consulting agency, but now Qulix Systems is a reliable partner for those seeking quality software tailored to their business needs. Currently, there are 460+ employees at Qulix Systems, including software developers, QA engineers, business analysts, DevOps engineers, and many other professionals.

Areas of Business Expertise

- **Custom software development**
- **Mobile/web apps**
- **Back-/front-end development**
- **DevOps services**
- **Software testing and QA services**
- **Software integration/migration**
- **UI/UX services**
- **RDI**

We develop software solutions for all types of customers, from local small businesses to international corporations.

Industries



Finance



Banking



E-Commerce



Telecommunications



Insurance



Health



Social Care



Manufacturing



Entertainment



etc.

OUR MISSION

Our company's mission is to convert customers' ideas into profitable and innovative solutions. This mission outlines our top priorities within the company's activities.

CORE VALUES

What are they?

Corporate values are guidelines for employees they are encouraged to follow in their everyday activities, irrespective of job titles and work experience. They define critical aspects in building and maintaining relationships with colleagues, clients, and business partners.

Best employees

We hire, develop, and maintain the best talent for our business. We regularly upgrade our expertise and skillsets to deliver only the best to our clients.

Deliver value to our clients

We are committed to delivering value to our clients. We have a passion for detail and strive to provide result-oriented services to make our clients successful.

Respect for the individual

Qulix Systems values men and women of diverse age groups, religions, and ethnic backgrounds. We value diversity and the unique contribution of all our employees.

Communications

The welcoming and friendly atmosphere in the company lies in the foundation of our success. Our communication policy implies no formality. We are on a first-name basis with one another regardless of the job position.

Integrity

For us, integrity means being ethical and honest. We say what we mean, stand behind our words, and take responsibility for our actions.

Collaboration and teamwork

Our company is not only a group of professional individuals — we are a team. We encourage an approach of mutual support and cooperation. The results we achieve are based not just on exceptional individual skills but instead on collaboration and teamwork.

Education and skills upgrade

Here at Qulix Systems, we make every effort to develop educational programs and partnerships. We seek to improve students' knowledge base using our expertise in technology and aim to build skills and technological knowledge at universities.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The most vivid manifestations of how we implement our core values in real life can be traced via our corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. These are aimed at social, economic, and environmental benefits for all parties involved, including our employees, broader communities, educational institutions, public projects, etc.

TARGETED AREAS

Qulixers & Corporate Culture

Corporate Social Program

Governance & Ethics

Community Contribution

Green Initiatives



1 QULIXERS & CORPORATE CULTURE

We are fully aware that as an innovation-driven company, our success immensely depends on hiring the most talented employees in the industry as well as maintaining and upgrading the overall level of expertise and the motivation to identify with the company and work for the common good.

We are committed to respecting global human rights and labor standards. We maintain a corporate culture where all employees and visitors are treated with dignity, fairness, and respect and reassure everyone that their political and civic engagements have no impact on their relationships with the company.

2000

DATE OF BIRTH

460+

EMPLOYEES

Our Responsibility as an Employer

- **Staff development programs**
- **Well-adjusted and tested onboarding procedures**
- **Individual development plans and career paths**
- **Wide variety of training options**
- **Employee benefits**
- **Team-building activities**
- **Sharing information on social media**

Communication of news about current events in the company is ensured via regular corporate **newsletters, social media accounts** (e.g., our Instagram account [@qulixsystems](#)), messenger chats, printouts, and the corporate magazine “**SUBJ**”. We try to create the most relevant content for employees and not only inform them about the company’s news but entertain them as well.

What you may find on our social media

- News about the company’s life (achievements, activities, projects, holidays, etc.)
- Tips on how to organize work and stay productive when at home
- Selections of online resources for self-learning and self-development
- Selection of entertainment resources (series, books, etc.)
- Online seminar about travel in Belarus (of special relevance since the borders are closed in Belarus)
- Qulixers’ travel experience during the pandemic
- Some fun material

To reiterate the idea that we all are one big team, we dispatch regular newsletters congratulating our colleagues on such happy life events as birthdays, weddings, becoming parents, etc. In addition, updates on Qulixers' promotion are also shared with the company employees so that everyone can congratulate his or her colleague on their achievements. Newcomers are also welcome to share some intriguing information about them via our corporate newsletters.

We've also introduced a nice tradition to celebrate **professional holidays** and other remarkable dates together. This is mainly implemented in the form of a newsletter and a video with the company's employees congratulating their colleagues (International Volunteer Day, Lawyer's Day, System Administrator's Day, Day of the Programmer, QA Day, etc.).

The winter corporate party (Qulix Party. Home Edition) was held online so that we could still gather together, be it only in front of our monitors. The summer corporate party (BIG PIQ NIQ) took place outside in an entertainment center. The employees were looking forward to this event since because of the pandemic we have few chances of gathering together. However, the decision to hold such an event was made with due consideration to the epidemiological situation in the country and with all necessary precautions during the event. No COVID-19 outbreaks were detected in the company thereafter.



To optimize the organizational process of such activities, the dedicated **HR Brand** unit was established within the broader administrative department. It includes a team of professionals managing such tasks as training projects, conferences, work with educational institutions, SMM, issuance of the corporate magazine SUBJ, corporate merchandise and souvenirs, social program (medical insurance, benefits, English classes, discounts for partnering companies), corporate events (team-building activities, company-level parties, meetups, seminars), volunteering projects, eco-initiatives, etc.



1.1 Working Conditions

We develop our infrastructure by equipping and upgrading buildings and facilities, including office space, sports and rest and recreation facilities. Our office managers care about the atmosphere at workplaces and employees can always send their requests and proposals on how to improve our offices in general and their workplace in particular.

Our health and safety policy promotes occupational health, safety, and accident prevention to ensure the best possible welfare in every corner of the workplace. Management accepts responsibility for providing a safe working environment and employees are expected to be responsible for performing work in accordance with our safety standards and policies.

1.1.1 Work from Home and COVID-19

The reported period is marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, which made many employees work from home. However, we must underline that everybody has a choice — to work at home or to continue working at office premises. Those who don't have the necessary equipment at home could take their workstations with them and be provided with all the necessary tools. The previous year proved to be a success in terms of adjusting to the changed reality, so the company leaders made a decision to continue this practice.

For those who work in the office, we ensure that all office premises are cleaned on an hourly basis with disinfectants, including door handles and surfaces in common areas. Hand sanitizers are in abundance at office premises, as are disposable face masks. If employees feel unwell, they are strongly advised to stay at home.

1.1.2 Work/Life Balance

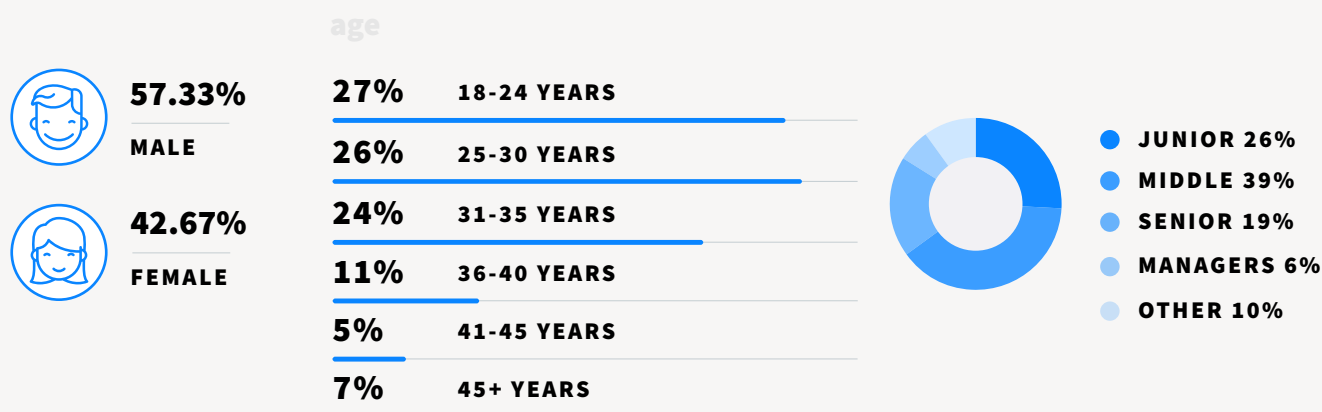
To maintain qualified employees with the company in the long run, we not only offer a variety of training and further education options but emphasize a good work/life balance and a family-friendly work situation. Our flexible working hours and home-office option embrace this priority.

1.2 Diversity

We maintain a strict non-discrimination policy and ensure fair and equal treatment to everyone regardless of race, gender, nationality, or religion. Discrimination and harassment have no place at Qulix Systems.

Our adherence to the principle of diversity is well illustrated by our staff. Although our main development offices are based in the Belarusian capital, we employ people from all over Belarus and from abroad, including 14 foreigners.

We strive to achieve a more balanced gender ratio and attract female applicants from the fields of mathematics, IT, science, and technology. Currently, our gender distribution shows 42.67% females in the labor force.



1.3 Education and Training

We at Qulix Systems follow the idea that knowledge is the only raw material that multiplies when consumed.

When new hires join the company, they become part of the **mentorship program**, where a senior employee monitors their progress and performance and helps in adapting to a project and further developing.

Also, after a certain period of time, we hold **Newcomers' seminars** which introduce employees to the company, its corporate culture, values, rules, and mission. Also, we have a tradition of newcomers' interviews when they share some personal information available for Qulixers.

Surely, there is an abundance of internal training courses, programs, meetings, workshops, etc., and professional communities (BA, QA), which creates favorable conditions for further development on the professional track within the company. There are also training programs for specific areas of expertise if the employee wants to swap jobs within our company.

Aside from the personal development of our staff, sharing knowledge with a broader audience is another focal point of our sustainable and responsible human resources approach. We implement these principles by creating and developing IT communities, profile events, and diverse publications both on our website (blog), social media, and in external sources (Forbes, Medium, Finextra, Twea-kYourBiz, DZone, etc.).

The COVID-19 pandemic has had its toll on educational and training activities usually conducted in abundance at our company's premises. However, we've managed to adapt to the new normal and arrange several meetups for our employees. They were held in the hybrid mode when participants could come to office premises or connect from home via our secure channels and watch live streaming. Some of the topics covered were development in Swift, modification of Push data, QA practices, soft skills, AR, etc.

More info is in the [*4.3 Participation in IT Events*](#) section.

1.4 Employees Growth and Retention Strategy

We have developed our corporate Staff Retention Processes and Procedures and Internal HR Practices to address the staff development/retention issues. The retention rate in 2020–2021 was **88.5%**.

The year 2021 continues to pose certain challenges for businesses all around the globe as did its predecessor. The COVID-19 pandemic and the internal situation in Belarus certainly impacted our company, and we still maintain some crisis response measures to optimize expenses and preserve jobs. Below are some examples:

- The corporate social program was partially suspended (more info in the relevant section). However, this does not concern health insurance and English classes.
- We optimized our sales strategy looking for new projects so that our teams would be busy to the fullest extent possible. Our sales specialists are actively searching for new opportunities for cooperation so that no one is in standby mode in the company.
- We paid for all business trips of our employees so that they could feel comfortable and do their job. Due to travel limitations, the range of countries was not so impressive this time (Russia, Poland, Ukraine), since many negotiations and meetings took place online.

The measures were favorably welcomed by the employees because they fully understand that they are temporary while the main goal is to keep things going. We successfully survived the crises of 2008 and 2014, and are no newbies when it comes to rapid response to the situation. So far we may proudly say that all our efforts have not been in vain.

1.5 Awards and Recognitions

Nothing keeps team spirit alive better than knowing that your team is really the best. And nothing contributes to that knowledge more than being recognized by a third party.

Team members always share with each other positive feedback from clients, interns, colleagues from other departments, etc. Of special pride for us are our recognitions and awards from the international community and global organizations. Below are some examples:

- The European Software Testing Awards 2020 — Best Overall Testing Project in Finance
- Included in the list of the top software developers by softwareworld.co
- Included in Top Mobile App Developers in the UK by TopDevelopers.co
- Finalists of European IT & Software Excellence Awards 2020/21
- Included in the 2021 Global Outsourcing 100 rankings by the IAOP
- Excellence in Strategic Partnership award from the IAOP



2 CORPORATE SOCIAL PROGRAM

The most vivid manifestation of our care about the wellbeing of our employees is our corporate social program, which covers several major aspects of our staff's social activities. In the reporting period, some of its components were reduced or canceled due to the work from home mode and the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.1 Health Insurance

We care about our employees' health and provide them with the opportunity to become participants in a corporate agreement on voluntary health insurance. All expenses are covered by the company.



370 insured employees

IN 2020-2021

2.2 Monthly Reimbursement of Expenses

Qulix Systems offers a fixed amount of money in reimbursement to each employee on a monthly basis. It can cover three main options:

→ **Sports**

Canceled for the work-from-home period.

→ **Season tickets for public transportation**

Canceled for the work-from-home period.

→ **IT Massage Project**

Mainly canceled due to the COVID-19 situation.

2.3 Events for Qulix Kids

Family values are one of our company's most important priorities. Throughout the years, we have been organizing various events for kids of different ages, trying to find the perfect balance between activities being entertaining and educational.

Due to the pandemic concerns, we limited our usual engagement to sending corporate presents for kids instead of organizing visits. These activities were dedicated to the new year's holidays and Knowledge Day.



2.4 Birthdays, Family Events

It is an established tradition within Qulix Systems to celebrate birthdays together. In addition, if someone has a baby or gets married, it becomes known (if the employee gives his or her permission to share such information) to all Qulix members via corporate emails, and those willing to congratulate the respective person are very welcome to do so.

However, in the reporting period, this tradition was considerably down, and we congratulate our colleagues mainly in the virtual world.

2.5 Financial Aid

Provided in case of close relatives' death.

2.6 English Classes

Classes are available to all employees, including both those who want to maintain the current level and those who want to see some improvements. During the pandemic, the mode of teaching switched from offline to online to enable our employees to continue education while working from home.



43 employees attended

**ENGLISH CLASSES
IN 2020-2021**

2.7 Discounts

Qulix employees are entitled to corporate discounts at a number of partner companies, with the number of options constantly rising:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| → Cafes and bars | → Services | → Health care |
| → Shops | → Gyms | → Training, educational programs |
| | → Entertainments | |

2.8 Paid Time-Off / Personal Days

A Personal Day is a paid extra day-off. Employees may choose this option in case of important life situations such as university graduation, short illness, visit to a doctor, etc.

2.9 Fruit in the Office

Fresh fruit is regularly delivered to the office and distributed among employees to boost up their immune system and promote healthy food.

2.10 Rewards for Long-Term Employment at the Company

The company values its long-term employees and issues gifts to those who have been working at Qulix Systems for 5, 10, and 15 years. Gifts are presented at major corporate events in winter and summer.

2.11 Bonuses for Vacancy Recommendations

Our company has introduced a reward scheme for employees if they invite applicants for open vacancies. An employee receives his or her bonus if the recommended applicant has successfully passed the trial period.



3 GOVERNANCE & ETHICS

A central aspect of responsible corporate management is open, transparent, comprehensive, and timely communication. The Qulix Systems management team is always open to direct and unbiased dialog with employees, mass media, or representatives of the community.

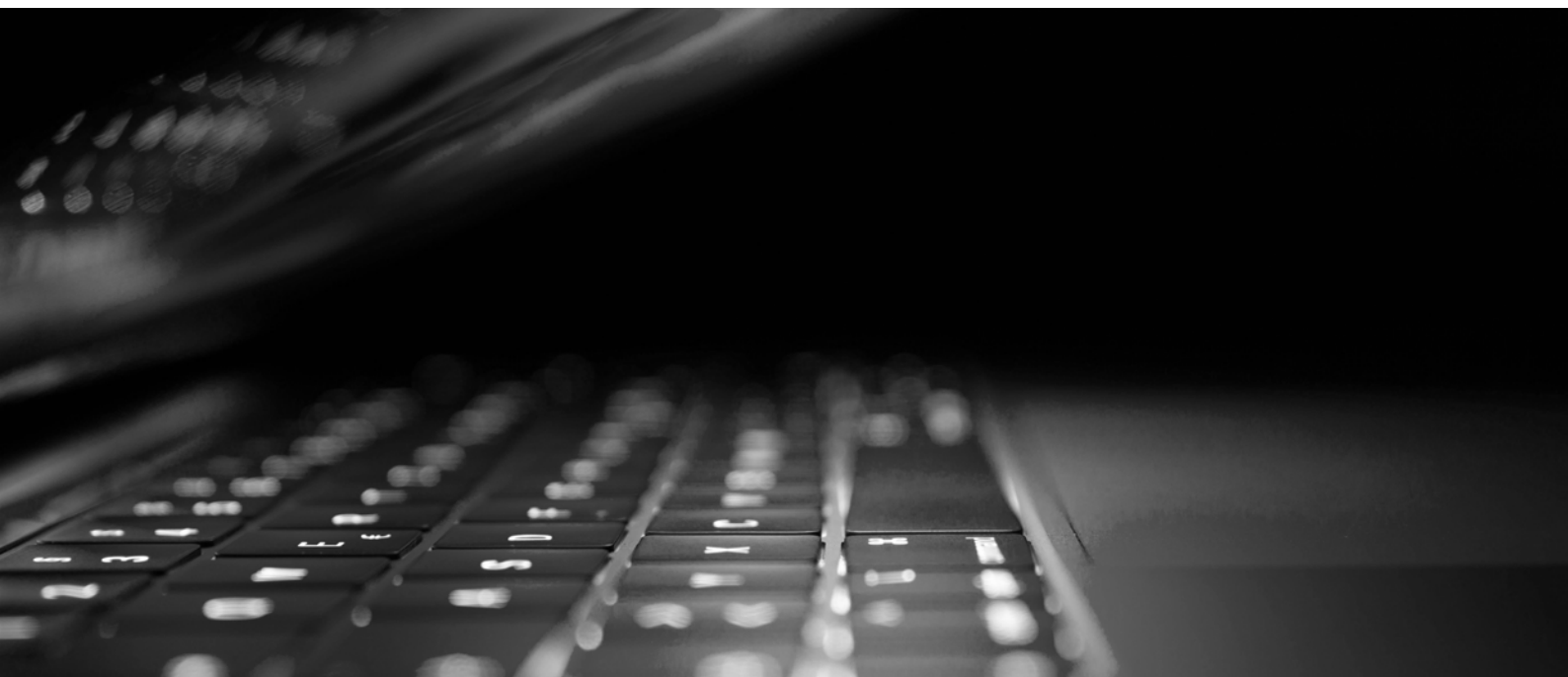
We comply with relevant laws where we do business, including those concerning bribery, money laundering, securities, trade, fair competition, confidentiality and data privacy, intellectual property, employment rights, and immigration, among others.

We treat our clients with care, try to be flexible in response to their situation, and maintain a high quality of work and good relations. We think that in the current global crisis we all should do a bit more than usual for clients.

3.1 Data Security

We are a company that develops software, and no wonder that electronic information is an extremely valuable asset for us. Its security is therefore an essential component of our business practice. Our information security manager ensures that global security requirements and our in-house security standards are met. These requirements and standards apply to all employees and anyone with access to our intranet or connected systems.

To prove our commitment to a cyber-safe environment, we obtained a **certificate of assurance** under the **Cyber Essentials information assurance scheme**, which was granted to our company on February 5, 2020 by Capula, a British certification body with years of experience in developing, engineering and implementing advanced systems and integration solutions. The Cyber Essentials scheme covers such key areas as effective management of internet gateways and boundary firewalls, secure configuration of software and hardware, strict control of access to data and services, protection against viruses and malware as well as patch management. As we are certified in accordance with this scheme, our clients can rest assured that basic cyber security controls have been implemented correctly.



4 COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION

Qulix Systems is fully aware that our company and its employees are an integral part of society and we adhere to the principles of corporate citizenship. To implement our responsibility towards society, we strive to enter into effective partnerships with local authorities, NGOs, educational establishments, etc., and support public initiatives within our possibilities.

4.1 Involvement in Professional Organizations, Associations, and Communities

Qulix Systems is a resident (since 2008) of **Belarus High Tech Park** which creates a special business environment for IT businesses. We are working with the HTP on several initiatives.

In the same year of 2008, we also became a member of the Science and Technology Association “**Infopark**”. Infopark is a voluntary community of top IT development companies in Belarus created to stimulate progress by developing a favorable environment in the IT sphere.

In addition, our employees are actively engaged in activities of **Analyst.by**, a BA community, where they are responsible for creating expertise content and are regular speakers at the community’s events, with videos available on the website.

Our employee Natallia Iskortseva, QA project manager, is President of **BySTQB** (Belarus Software Testing Qualifications Board) and an active speaker at various events related to the organization’s activities.

We are also proud signatories of the **United Nations Global Compact** and the **Agreement on the Cooperation of Socially Responsible Companies**.

4.2 Partnerships with Educational Institutions

We strongly believe that knowledge is power and one of the most valuable assets of the future. That is why, apart from the internal training of our employees, we try to share our expertise with the outer world and support educational initiatives.

Our activities include:

- Technological support for universities, classrooms, and laboratories
- Organization of internships
- Participation in university programs of Qulix partners
- Teaching and holding seminars at universities
- Participation in and sponsorship for conferences, workshops, student meetings, university events, etc.
- Partnerships with training centers

We collaborate with the leading Belarusian universities such as the Belarusian State University, the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics (BSUIR), the Belarusian National Technical University, etc. We **hire young professionals after graduation**, invite students to have their internship period with us, and participate in their competitions as a sponsor or part of the judging panel. At the BSUIR, the university where most of our future candidates work, we have a dedicated information stand where students can find all the necessary information to join the Qulix team.

In addition, our HR specialists invite students to have a tour around our offices and get first-hand information about our IT projects, IT professions and feel the vibe in general (**Insiders Day**). This year, we welcomed students who showed special interest in .NET, Android, and QA services.

4.3 Participation in IT Events

Our company's employees are frequent visitors at various local and international conferences, seminars, training courses, and other IT events. During the reporting period, many of them were unfortunately canceled or postponed with an indefinite date. However, some of the organizers resorted to the online mode, which found wide support among those who strove for such things, since work from home should not stop us from self-developing and communicating with peer specialists.

Where we were:

- During **TechWeek Autumn 2021 at the BSUIR**, two Qulixers presented their reports on soft skills and iOS mobile development.



- We elaborated tasks on .NET development for **BSUIR Bit Cup**, a competition on programming among universities.
- At the **Open IT Conference**, our renowned speaker and senior QA engineer delivered a presentation on soft skills and time management.
- Our HR Manager participated in the **Career Day Online Conference** where she shared tips and lifehacks on how to remain productive while working from home.
- **RDI Meetups**. These traditional meetups take place on a regular basis on the premises of our RDI department. Topics vary — from soft skills to the best development practices. Now held primarily via Zoom functionality.
- **iOS Meetups** were hosted both in the online and offline modes. Team members of our Comprehensive Solutions department shared their expertise in Swift development and Push data modification using Notification Service Extension, work with large navigation bars, automation tests in mobile development, etc. All Qulixers were invited to join in person or remotely using streaming services provided by our HR Brand unit.

- The **Agile Scrum online seminar** was held by our senior business analyst.
- The **Emotional Burnout seminar** was held by our HR Manager in the online format with the recorded video available for all employees.
- On January 16, Qulixers participated in the **5th Startup Talent Festival**, a competition of business ideas and startups designed by children and teenagers. Our role was to mentor the process and assess the projects.
- **Fintex Summit Online 2021**. Our Director for Business Development delivered the report “E-Invoicing & B2B Payments Service as Part of the Banking Ecosystem (based on www.kasssa.com service)”. The summit is one of the most prominent Asian events of this type uniting over 60 speakers and attended by +3,000 visitors in the online mode.

Recordings of events that took place on the company’s premises are available for all employees in the Confluence space.

4.4 Volunteering and Charity Work

Two major directions of our charity activities are orphans/children from dysfunctional families and an animal shelter.

Within their possibilities, Qulix volunteers provide help to **children** residing at a **social shelter** in our care. We collect money to arrange New Year celebrations and make their wishes come true. Traditionally, we also organize events dedicated to various holidays or no special occasion and try to make our shared activities both inspiring, socializing, and recreational. It can be board games, drawing lessons, some educational activities, or just warm talks — all will do for a real team-building event.



On New Years' Eve, we launched a whip-round and collected money which was later allocated between two of our projects — some part was spent for the needs of the animal shelter, with the remaining amount going for NY gifts for adopted children.

On International Children's Day, we offered our colleagues to raise money for the charity fund '**Vmeste**' which helps cancer patients among children to go through rehabilitation programs.

As for the **animal shelter**, our CSR coordinator arranges regular trips to the premises where Qulix-ers can walk and play with animals, feed them, help volunteers with cleaning and other tasks. Apart from that, we try to raise money and buy medication, accessories, and food for pets residing in this shelter.



30 active volunteers

**ENGAGED IN OUR ANIMAL
SHELTER PROJECT**



15 active volunteers

**ENGAGED IN OUR
ORPHANAGE PROJECT**



5 GREEN INITIATIVES

Our vision of a better tomorrow includes a healthy and vibrant environment. Through various campaigns within the company, we try to inspire our employees to become eco-aware and adhere to green thinking. Since most of our employees worked from home this year, we managed to save much more paper in offices, limit the number of consumed paper cups and waste in general and reduce car emissions since much fewer Qulixers rode their cars to work.

5.1 Eco-Friendly Offices

As part of our environmental goals, we are trying to encourage our employees to reduce plastic consumption and switch to a more eco-friendly option when it comes to disposable cups and dishes. For that purpose, we have fully-equipped kitchens where employees can enjoy their food and use quality glass and ceramic kitchenware.

We try to limit the consumption of paper through workflow automation and installing common printers for several rooms. We use the existing equipment efficiently and replace outdated hardware with new and more effective on schedule.

We also collect used batteries for further recycling in accordance with applicable practices.

5.2 Our Campaigns

On November 6, 2020, we joined the **World Paper Free Day** movement. In our post on social media, we provided a detailed insight on how working from home helps save the planet and shared life hacks on how to contribute to a safer environment both when in the office and at home. The World Paper Free Day 2021 is intended to cover the issue of using plastic cups in offices.

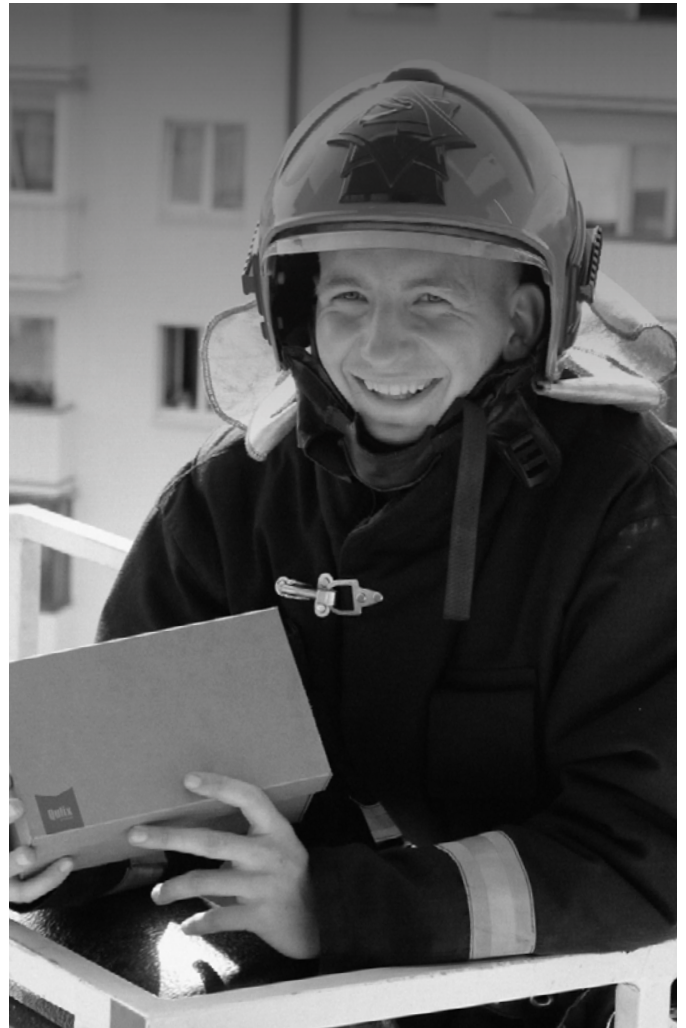
We also joined a new project for us — ‘**A New Life in Exchange for Plastic Caps**’ ([Kryshariki](#)). The idea is to collect plastic caps at office premises (or you can collect them at home and bring them to the office once a month, for example) which are then sent to a dedicated processing organization. Money received in exchange for the collected plastic waste is sent for rehabilitation of ill people in need.

And we tried something unconventional as well. Thanks to the initiative of our employees, we encouraged Qulixers to collect **pharmaceutical drugs with expired shelf life** and bring them to the office. Later, we handed them in to a specialized medical institution that deals with the processing of such drugs. The project was accompanied by an educational video on our social accounts.

Also, we do not forget to enlighten our public as well. Our social media accounts are widely utilized by the HR Brand unit to provide information on environmental issues. For example, we invited a famous Belarusian blogger ([@ecoblogiya](#)) to take part in an online seminar covering the topic of waste management. The recording of the seminar is publicly available on our YouTube channel.

In April 2021, we joined the **Earth Day** movement and arranged a **voluntary community work trip** to the small town of Semkovo where we helped local residents to clean up garbage in a park adjacent to what once was an old mansion but now are picturesque ruins. Qulixers got rid of huge piles of trash thrown away by local residents and even sometimes meticulously hidden among the trees. In the end, we did not only learn new things about the history of the place but also helped make nature a bit cleaner.

And all of a sudden we even managed to save a bird that got trapped under the curtain rail in one of our offices. Well, thanks to the emergency service that we called, of course.



For us, being a successful company means being responsible.

How we define success:

- We deliver success to our clients globally.
- We research and develop our own solutions.
- We are a recognized credible and reliable partner.
- We grow and make a profit.
- We deliver benefits to our society.
- We maintain exemplary values and social standards in our daily business operations.
- We promote education and innovation at our locations.
- We help Qulixers grow together with the company.