

From tourists to nomads: unveiling the transformative potential of digital nomads in travel and tourism

From tourists
to nomads

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Abstract

Purpose – The primary objective of the current study is to unveil this relatively new phenomenon in the context of travel and tourism. In line with this purpose, the study provides a comprehensive overview of the concept of digital nomadism through a tourism perspective, discusses the relationship between digital nomadism, travel and tourism, examines the opportunities and threats of digital nomadism, and finally uncovers its transformative impact.

Design/methodology/approach – This conceptual study examined secondary data, i.e. existing literature. In this data, the focus has been on the tourism aspect of the digital nomad phenomenon.

Findings – The results suggest that digital nomadism introduces a novel perspective on the nature of travel and tourism mobility, along with a distinct tourist typology characterized by unique traits. Moreover, the results indicate that, while digital nomadism contributes to the local economy and cultural change on the one hand, it poses challenges in terms of regulations and taxation on the other. In this context, one can conclude that legislators should establish regulations for the employment of digital nomads, while managers should engage in activities that attract potential digital nomads on an international scale.

Originality/value – The study comprehensively reviews relevant literature in various ways, conducts a conceptualization of digital nomad tourists and makes a noteworthy theoretical contribution within the context of tourism. It addresses the gaps in the existing literature, particularly in specific contexts such as the legal status of digital nomads, taxation, prevention of gentrification, cultural exchanges, identity transformation and the impact on travel and tourism.

Keywords Digital nomadism and tourism, Digital nomad motivations, Travel and tourism, Digital nomad, Gentrification

Paper type Conceptual paper

Introduction

Lifestyles and technological developments have had a significant impact on travel and tourism industry activities in the post-modern period, as in every period of history (Prabawa and Pertiwi, 2020), and the conditions of each period have created their own tourism types and tourists. For instance, while industrialization and developments in transportation technologies created mass tourists, the hippie movement that emerged in the context of new social movements in the 1960s created a new type of tourist (Türkutarhan *et al.*, 2022). The social history of travel suggests people travel for several valid reasons, such as being independent (Müller, 2016), the desire to travel continuously (Reichenberger, 2018; Thompson, 2019), cultural exchange (Wang *et al.*, 2018), novelty seeking (Bartosik-Purgat, 2018), in search of a new lifestyle (Mancinelli, 2020), having suitable leisure time (Thompson, 2019), being together with like-minded (Hall *et al.*, 2019) and experiencing the daily life practices of different societies (Betre, 2022).

Although the digital nomad concept emerged in the first half of the 1980s, it gained popularity towards the end of the 1990s. It aroused the interest of academic environments with the pandemic outbreak, in which remote working was mandatory. The subject, which



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received limited attention in the literature until 2018, has taken its place noticeably in the literature after 2019. However, it is still the focus of a limited number of tourism studies (Prayana and Darma, 2023) despite having a high degree of relationship with travel and tourism. Considering the related studies, the most frequently emphasized themes include online presentation of self, authenticity and space (Willment, 2020); work, mobility, self-governance and social contract (Cook, 2022); lifestyle mobility and location independence (Hannonen, 2020); digital lifestyle and taxation (Tyutyuryukov and Guseva, 2021); entrepreneurial responsibility and self-sufficiency (Mourato *et al.*, 2023); holism, leisure and self-efficacy (Mourato *et al.*, 2023); digital lifestyle and taxation (Tyutyuryukov and Guseva, 2021); entrepreneurial responsibility and self-sufficiency (Mourato *et al.*, 2023); holism, leisure, work and lifestyle (Reichenberger, 2018; Almeida *et al.*, 2021); working practices and technology (Ciolfi and Carvalho, 2014); destination selection criterion (Kocaman, 2021); telework, factors of production and life hacking (Wang *et al.*, 2018). Considering both theoretical and empirical studies, it is evident that these works heavily emphasize lifestyle, work, independence from place and space, and mobility. When the studies are examined comprehensively, it becomes apparent that there is a significant need for research focused on the digital nomad phenomenon from a travel and tourism perspective.

The emergence of digital nomadism

The first person to be characterized as a digital nomad (who presented himself as a technomadic) in the literature is Steve K. Roberts. He travelled across America by building a recumbent bicycle with a portable computer and called this lifestyle technological nomadism (Roberts, 1984). However, Makimoto and Manners (1997) were the first researchers to popularize the digital nomad concept, presenting their manifesto named the Digital Nomad as the beginning of a new era when the internet and computer technologies were gaining popularity. In this leading work, the authors speculate on the potential for liberating individuals from the constraints of traditional office environments. The authors envisioned a scenario, seemingly impossible for the time, in which individuals, empowered by technological advancements, could perform their work anywhere they desired – whether in a hotel room, on a beach, etc. – free from the constraints of a supervisor. In the following years, a sub-culture emerged, embracing the “digital nomad” concept (Makimoto and Manners, 1997), working with laptops on the beach and embodying the lifestyle envisaged by the authors. Among the core values summarized in the authors’ terminology are technology, freedom, and travel. The notion of freedom, a concept predominantly emphasized by the authors, can encompass various meanings. For example, while for some people it may be considered freedom to work without being dependent on a workplace located in a certain place, for others, it may be considered freedom to work without working at a 9:00 to 5:00 pace, without having to report to an authority, without expecting to be paid on a certain day of the month, etc.

The digitalization of the production factors provides digital nomads with an independent life free from time and space, in which travel, tourism and working life are intertwined. Digital nomads are professionals who are “not restricted to work 09:00–17:00 in a traditional office; instead, they are free to decide when and where to work” (Müller, 2016). Being independent and free refers to living without being tied to a job, a workplace or a specific residence, being exempt from working at certain hours and designated times, and fulfilling certain daily routines. Reichenberger (2018) conceptualizes digital nomads on three levels from zero point, stating that digital nomads are individuals who achieve location independence by conducting their work online (0), transfer this independence to mobility by not working in a permanently designated personal office space (1), and use the opportunity to work and travel at the same time (2) in the case of the non-existence of permanent residence (3).

In the literature, digital nomadism differs from similar concepts with slim lines. Due to the transitional terminology related to the concept and the fact the concept has a constantly evolving structure that is influenced by various developments or changing mobility related to work, it leads to an ambiguous definition (Stickel, 2020). In order to provide a more holistic perspective, Table 1 presents brief descriptions of the development process of the digital nomad in the context of the key concepts and focal points emphasized in various studies.

Given the descriptions above and the key concepts in the table, it is clear that the concept is mainly associated with being independent of a workplace (working) (Müller, 2016; Reichenberger, 2018; Thompson, 2019; Hannonen, 2020; Stickel, 2020); working style (Nash et al., 2018; Thompson, 2019; Stickel, 2020); employment (Müller, 2016) and travelling (Nash et al., 2018; Reichenberger, 2018; Thompson, 2019; Stickel, 2020). This indicates that, while characterizing the concept of the digital nomad, researchers emphasize working forms, being digital nomad concept, researchers emphasize working forms as an economic activity, lifestyle and freedom. Although the concepts mentioned above and digital nomadism are closely related to travel and tourism, the lack of a conceptualization in this context may be regarded as a significant gap. An indicator of such a relationship is that digital nomads, who are referred to as modern nomads (Ciolfi and Carvalho, 2014), prefer warm or mild climates apart from their places of residence and participate in a series of touristic activities, including accommodation, food and beverage and entertainment during their travels. Based on these considerations, one could describe the digital nomad, from a travel and tourism perspective, as “a person leaving his/her permanent place of residence and travelling to destinations where work can be carried out with the opportunities offered by technological developments, free from space while earning money and spending money through temporary accommodation, participating in relaxation, leisure and recreational activities”.

Digital nomads with different nationalities, cultural backgrounds and capacities (Betre, 2022) often desire to be independent and live independently in different parts of the world. They are highly compliant to unknown and changing conditions, innovation, rational actions

Authors	Key concepts	Focus
Müller (2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location independent freelancers • Young entrepreneurs • Online self-employed 	Employment
Nash et al. (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gig work • Nomadic work • Digital work • Global travel and adventure 	Work
Reichenberger (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location independence • Online environment • Mobility, work, and travel 	Freedom
Thompson (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remote work • Office free • Travel 	Lifestyle
Wang et al. (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technological phenomenon • Economic phenomenon • Cultural phenomenon 	–
Hannonen (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile professionals • Location-independent workers 	Work
Stickel (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital work • Location independence • Wanderlust 	Lifestyle

Source(s): Own work

Table 1.
Characterization of
digital nomads

and efficiency (Bartosik-Purgat, 2018). Although the factors motivating individuals (see Figure 1) with different characteristics to digital nomadism vary, the relationship between these concepts and the basic elements that make up the concept of digital nomad and other focal concepts is remarkable. In addition, the relationship between the factors driving individuals to digital nomadism and to travel for tourism (curiosity, culture, escape, search for novelty, etc.) is also highly notable. These include exploring the digital nomad lifestyle and different cultures; working independently and flexibly without being tied to a specific workspace while gaining a variety of job opportunities; moving away from a specific place of residence, in other words, escaping and leaving the comfort zone; being able to come together with others with similar interests to develop a network and be inspired by them; curiosity; and the opportunities offered by the destination to facilitate their visit (Mouratidis, 2018; Reichenberger, 2018; Hall *et al.*, 2019; Zumbusch and Lalicic, 2020; Prabowo and Pertiwi, 2020; Stichel, 2020).

Digital nomads, who can work almost anywhere as long as they have Internet access, work remotely using tools such as cloud computing and wireless digital technology (Jacobs and Gussekloo, 2016). Nomadism and remote working have many different forms, including corporate nomads, remote nomads, spiritual nomads and so forth. However, digital nomads are differentiated from others by travelling to new destinations, constantly moving, working in places with high-speed Internet access during the week, being technology-oriented, establishing start-ups and having fun on weekends (Poulaki *et al.*, 2023). Digital nomads, using their access to the internet as a catalyst to pursue their professional activities on the move, are not confined to specific localities. Instead, they are always on the move, blurring the boundaries between contrasting concepts, for example, home/abroad, inactivity/mobility, work/leisure and even isolation/sociality (Mouratidis, 2018).

Digital nomadism has emerged as a growing segment of the digital workforce, while digital nomads are teleworkers who have become geographically mobile enough to work from almost anywhere in the world (Wang *et al.*, 2018). Digital nomads have not only a different way of gig life, but a variety of online spaces where they share the lifestyle they have adopted. One of these, NomadList, is a virtual space where they share some key basic information on countries ranging from Asia to Europe. This shared information includes a digital nomad guide (average travel cost, climate, air quality, best accommodation neighbourhood, etc.), other digital nomads in the relevant country (who are there, who left

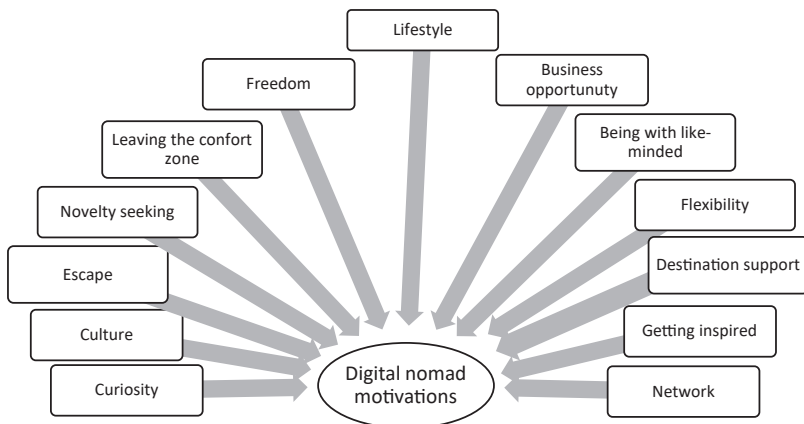


Figure 1.
Digital nomad
motivations

Source(s): Own work

and who will be), cost of living (Airbnb or apartment rents, food and beverage, education expenses, etc.), pros and cons, pictures, reviews, trending times, like statistics, demographics, instant correspondence and more (NomadList, 2023). Given the information it offers digital nomads from a tourism lens (which destination to visit, entertainment, accommodation, cost, etc.), NomadList is a similar but different variation of travel and tourism websites, i.e. Booking, Trivago or Skyscanner. Digital nomads do not purchase services from NomadList. Still, with the private memberships they purchase, it resembles an online tourism platform in terms of showing their users the destination they will travel to, the places where they can eat, drink and stay, the leisure and entertainment activities they can participate in, the level of security, in short, the extent to which the destination is suitable for travelling for them or to what extent it meets the desired features.

Travel, tourism and digital nomads

Digital nomadism appeals to people as it enables them to work anytime, anywhere and any way they please on projects they find engaging (Hall *et al.*, 2019). Digital nomads can work remotely, anywhere, using portable computer technologies and widespread Internet access, and using this freedom to explore the world. This newfound freedom extends beyond professional realms, blending tourism, leisure and professional activities to create a unique lifestyle based on remote working, global travel, and multiple residence (Mancinelli, 2020). The origin of the digital nomad concept is inherently intertwined with tourism. It is not a coincidence that when Makimoto and Manners (1997) presented their manifesto, they mentioned that digital nomads could conduct their work while relaxing or vacationing anywhere in the world (travel) in a destination they would be satisfied. The factors highlighted above are intricately linked to tourism. Recognized as a new trend in tourism, digital nomads (Prayana and Darma, 2023) manage their work without being confined to a specific office, sometimes utilize shared workspaces with individuals who share similar objectives, use the environment where electronic devices such as laptops and Internet connections are available and actively engage in tourism activities.

Unlike conventional tourists, the digital nomads, engage in work activities while traversing various destinations. Hence, it is crucial for them to balance their travel and professional productivity to ensure the fulfilment of the requirements inherent to this lifestyle. Productivity is a critical concern that digital nomads deal with on a daily basis, given their constant state of work. The seamless integration of perpetual travel and work creates formidable challenges for digital nomads. Their extensive favouring of tropical and subtropical climates might potentially influence their work motivation and productivity due to the dynamic lifestyles prevalent in these regions. Nevertheless, adhering to a well-defined plan can serve as an effective method to mitigate the risk of productivity and motivation loss. They frequently prefer working environments that are specially designed for teleworkers and offer a predictably shared working setting in the destination. On the other hand, conventional tourists are unlikely to avail themselves of such work-related resources when exploring a new destination (Nash *et al.*, 2018). Digital nomads have brought a novel perspective to both on-site and remote working with national and international mobilities, and their destination preferences are based heavily on their leisure and lifestyle activities rather than working (Thompson, 2019). Therefore, they often prefer cozy, warm, picturesque and budget-friendly destinations. Another factor emphasizing the relationship between digital nomadism and tourism is the visits to friends and relatives, which constitute a significant form of mobility in the tourism industry. It is widely acknowledged that tourists consider these connections when assessing the destinations they plan to visit. Similar to tourists, digital nomads also show interest in locations where they have personal connections, such as family or friends (Hall *et al.*, 2019), further confirming the relationship between the

phenomena. Considering these characteristics, the extent of the relationship between digital nomads and tourists' attraction factors influencing their destination preference is remarkable.

In contrast to the perspective mentioned above, [Nash et al. \(2018\)](#) argue that digital nomads cannot be classified as tourists, as they actively seek resources that enable their work. However, the current study, following the perspectives of [Prayana and Darma \(2023\)](#) and [Vagena \(2021\)](#), supports the notion of digital nomads as distinct tourist groups or types. Besides, the extent of the intimate relationship between tourists and digital nomads is considerably high given their travel motivations (such as curiosity, culture, escape, search for novelty), destination preferences (such as tropical or sub-tropical destinations) and searched amenities (such as entertainment and leisure activities). Considering factors, including their participation in leisure and recreational activities in destinations ([Reichenberger, 2018](#)), contributing to the economy ([Betre, 2022](#)), and attempts of tourist hotspots such as Spain, Italy and Greece to attract digital nomads via providing visa facilities to them, one could argue that digital nomads represent a new type of tourist. However, considering these factors, digital nomads clearly possess different characteristics than the conventional tourist. While acknowledging that these assertions may spark discussions, the proposition that digital nomads are tourists gains support from their practice of departing from their place of residence, spending money during their stay and engaging in leisure and entertainment activities without establishing permanent residence in the visited destination. Although traditionally the nature of travelling without the aim of earning money is an ancient phenomenon for tourism movements, this perspective is not valid given that digital nomads do not earn money from the places they visit. For instance, a German digital nomad in Turkey can earn an income by doing gig work for a company in Germany or for a person, institution or organization anywhere in the world through online platforms that offer various job opportunities. In this case, the nomad is not employed in Turkey and does not earn income there, yet spends the earnings in Turkey for basic and luxury needs.

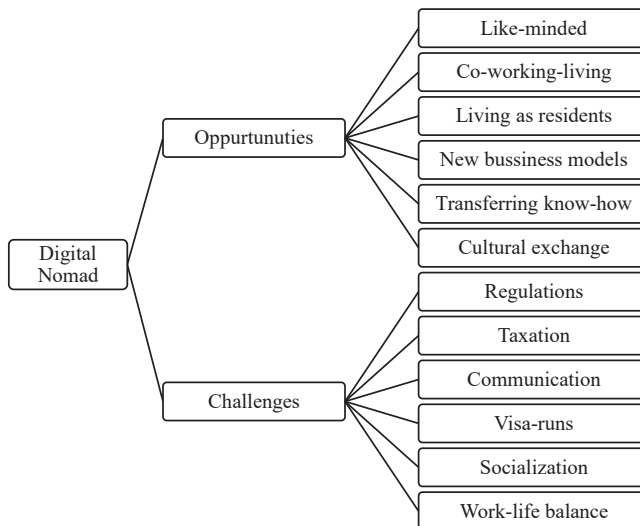
The current impact of touristic digital nomad movements, still in their early phases, on local economies may not be substantial enough to attract the interest of all potential countries. Given the increase in the numbers, it is crucial to recognize that digital nomads will likely gain increasing significance in the future. This emerging market demands attention, particularly for countries whose economies are predominantly reliant on tourism. Having anticipated the positive impact that digital nomad mobility could have on the travel and tourism industry, albeit limited in sample numbers, countries such as Bali, Thailand, Vietnam, Georgia, Estonia, Croatia, The Caribbean, Costa Rica, Portugal (where the first digital nomad town was created in 2021 to attract digital nomads), Mexico, Colombia, Bulgaria, Cape Verde and Malaysia ([Matilla, 2023](#)) have recognized this potential and introduced a number of facilities for them by adopting a digital nomad-friendly approach. When identifying tourist attractions offering a digital nomad-friendly approach, Matilla's criteria include; robust WIFI for digital nomads to conduct business efficiently, a good digital nomad community to socialize and make connections, affordability, a solid work-life balance and good weather conditions. Destination features attracting digital nomads include nature, entertainment, culture, sea-sand-sun and, finally, visa facilitation from three months to five years. These practices seem to have introduced a novel perspective within the travel and tourism industry, in addition to the fact digital nomad movements have activated destinations that are already distinguished in terms of tourism.

Challenges and opportunities

The cultural changes in society have encouraged visible adaptations in the labour market, giving rise to new working methods, flexible management practices and collaborative

entrepreneurship (Aroles *et al.*, 2020). Digital nomadism brings together like-minded professionals conducting their work online and also travel, leading a partially sedentary lifestyle in environments where they feel most productive and motivated. As the lifestyle of digital nomads is constantly shaped by international mobility and different cultural encounters, they provide an exploratory mirror of societies and make visible the norms and values of societies regarding mobility. Therefore, through them, one can deduce the current state and evolving nature of the world (Kulakhmetova *et al.*, 2019). Contrary to conventional tourists, digital nomads can see the staged authenticity or true authenticity and have the opportunity to experience the daily life of the locals as they stay longer in the destinations they visit (Betre, 2022).

The relationship between tourism and digital nomadism becomes evident in the context of travel and touristic consumption rather than the jobs provided to nomads. The labour-intensive nature of the tourism sector and the digital nomads' tendency to consume fundamental tourism components such as sea, sand, sun, climate, entertainment and accommodation delineates the limits of this relationship. In other words, digital nomads are tourism consumers, i.e. "nomatourists" who have the potential to consume the goods and services produced by the tourism industry. As both producers and consumers, digital nomads contribute to the local economy and inspire the development of new business models. For example, most of their accommodation is provided by Airbnb.com (Thompson, 2019); their transportation and travel are provided by the ride-sharing app Uber; and their work is provided by on-demand labour sites TaskRabbit and Freelancer Upwork (Sutherland and Jarrahi, 2017) platforms which operate within the sharing economy context. In order to be recognized as a digital nomad destination, basic requirements must be fulfilled. Accordingly, emerging favourite digital nomad destinations around the world, such as Chiang Mai, Thailand; Bali, Indonesia; Medellin, Colombia; and Buenos Aires, Argentina, which are successfully meeting the needs of these lifestyle travellers through co-working and living industries, continue to attract more digital nomads (Thompson, 2019; Wang *et al.*, 2019). While these countries offer many opportunities for digital nomads, challenges remain considerable in certain aspects (see Figure 2).



Source(s): Own work

Figure 2. Digital nomad opportunities and challenges

Digital nomads generate income from online blogs, online stores or casual work on major employment platforms such as Upwork and Fiverr. Some work full-time online in large international companies, which is different from the traditional office model (Kulakhmetova *et al.*, 2019). Yet, their regular involvement in new technologies, provision of non-traceable financial transactions for the government, and engagement in service production and consumption within what some economists commonly refer to as a grey market can pose challenges to the traditional economy (Almeida *et al.*, 2021; Wang *et al.*, 2019). Moreover, tax rules based on residence criteria assume that people living in a given territory contribute to local public goods. Hence, teleworking has the potential to disrupt the balance between budget revenues from income tax and budget expenditures on local infrastructure. Paying taxes in one region while utilizing the public infrastructure of another leads to increased budget expenditures in the second region, which are not offset by corresponding tax revenue (Tyutyuryukov and Guseva, 2021). Some countries, including Russia (regional commuting) and European Union countries (commuting between Nordic countries), are currently experiencing analogous challenges associated with commuting (Tyutyuryukov and Guseva, 2021).

In the lifestyles of digital nomads, being constantly on the move from one country to another and from one workplace to another are characterized as challenges encountered (Richter and Richter, 2020). These constitute the basic frameworks of digital nomadism. Nevertheless, a more significant challenge for the growing number of digital nomads is to deal with social isolation resulting from the lack of co-working and living spaces in destinations. Moreover, the high mobility inherent in the digital nomad lifestyle and the challenge of sustaining financial security while working remotely require creativity. At this point, entrepreneurial skills such as self-responsibility, adaptability to new conditions and the capacity to take risks and be productive should be employed (Mancinelli, 2020). The social lives of digital nomads are blended with online and offline interactions. Online sociality plays a significant role in establishing social and professional relationships, while offline sociality strengthens friendships and close relationships. Yet, community construction has been a major challenge for the individualized work of digital nomads, as their work makes it difficult to physically interact with colleagues, creates an increasing sense of isolation due to irregular and frequent relocations and encounters language and cultural barriers in destinations (Mancinelli, 2020).

Nomadism and transformation

The rapid advancements in digital technologies have not only facilitated the digitalization of conventional jobs, the extensive adoption of new media technologies and social media, the digital transformation of companies and their users but also the autonomous adjustment of working hours, workspaces and personal lives of digital nomads instead of working in fixed places and working hours (İli and Büyükbaykal, 2022). The obligation to carry out work remotely during the pandemic brought about remote working based on a specific location, and the post-pandemic period has made remote working visible by travelling without being tied to a specific location. The obligation to work remotely during the pandemic led to location-specific remote working; the post-pandemic period has further highlighted remote working, allowing individuals to travel without being bound to a specific location. Advancements in mobile devices, improvements in Internet access and the widespread use of social media have not only accelerated the digital travel revolution and digitally transformed the tourism industry in recent years (Nadda *et al.*, 2020; Adeola and Evans, 2019) but also impacted the way people travel and conduct business. These novel developments have given rise to a new generation of tourists known as digital nomads, who work while travelling.

Digital nomads have the potential to dramatically accelerate mobility in destinations and, thus, in the tourism industry. This increase can result in gentrification and alienation in destinations. Gentrification is a repopulation process characterized by the displacement of existing populations with newcomers of higher socio-economic status (Smith, 2002), while alienation refers to a sense of disconnection or separation from oneself, others or society (Boluda Chova and von Ehrlich-Treuenstätt, 2023). As international digital nomad movements reach levels that can transform the use of public space and result in socio-cultural, demographic and economic impacts, spatial restructuring and urban regulatory transformations are required (Milano *et al.*, 2023). Supporting these movements requires collaboration with leaders from academia, industry and government. In order to ensure that new developments benefit the local economy and residents, the support should be focused on integrating work with leisure activities through initiatives such as digital nomadism (Orel, 2021).

It is evident that digital nomads combine the phenomena of travel, tourism and online work, giving rise to a novel form of tourism mobility and triggering a series of transformations, including accommodation, transport, communication, culture, lifestyle and national and local regulations. Digital nomads transform, for example, the conventional concept of accommodation, the way of working, the practices of everyday life, the way of using transport services, the form and nature of interactions in a destination and the structure of tourism-related revenues. Digital nomads transform aspects such as the traditional notion of accommodation, the way of working, the practices of everyday life, modes of utilizing transport services, the form and dynamics of interactions in a destination and the structure of tourism-related revenues. These transformations are understandable as digital nomads typically stay in a destination for extended periods, work at their discretion, utilize shared transport services through online applications and adopt an independent lifestyle that involves tourism and travel activities. They engage in remote communication during work processes, interact with locals and like-minded people from diverse cultures, and contribute to destinations' economies through digital nomad visas and continuous consumption.

Implications and recommendations

Over the last 3 decades, radical technological changes have impacted transport systems, reducing travel costs. Simultaneously, globalization has not only made teleworking possible but desirable. This global transformation has unveiled digital nomads who use telecommunication technologies to earn while living, travelling and working, apart from their primary place of residence (Karasinska, 2022). Digital nomads challenge the traditional market economy with a new set of inherent resistances to established norms and regulations such as local taxation, border control or fixed routines. They contribute to the market economy through memberships in common workspaces (Wang *et al.*, 2019) and payments for local services, including accommodation, food and beverage, and shopping. These transactions generate tax revenue, albeit indirectly. Nevertheless, it is evident that establishing legal regulations is imperative to define the status of digital nomads.

Digital nomads are experiencing rapid global expansion, characterized by their distinctive working practices and lifestyles, as well as their continual pursuit of balance between leisure time, personal life and independence from the workplace (Almeida *et al.*, 2021). While the emergence of digital nomadism dates back several decades, it has become particularly evident during the global pandemic due to the imperative of ensuring continuity in various service sectors worldwide. One of the main characteristics of such forms of work, and knowledge-based work in particular, is the potential and/or need for nomadic practices. This is because workers are frequently involved in online tasks that can be performed or accessed from various locations (Ciofil and Carvalho, 2014). As a result, trends have emerged wherein

digital nomads actively participate in the market economy through interpersonal networking activities facilitated by digital environments, independent work practices supported by communication and collaborative creative consumption (Almeida *et al.*, 2021).

Despite being a multifaceted phenomenon, the digital nomad literature heavily concentrates on specific themes, including employment, work, location independence, freedom, movement, travel, economy, technology and culture (Müller, 2016; Nash *et al.*, 2018; Hannonen, 2020; Reichenberger, 2018; Thompson, 2019; Wang *et al.*, 2018; Stickel, 2020) with either limited or absent links to tourism. The comprehensive assessments in the current study offer a new conceptualization of the digital nomad through a tourism lens. This conceptualization provides an alternative perspective to the vague concepts of digital nomads used in tourism research through the numerous digital nomad concepts in the literature. Accordingly, a digital nomad tourist is conceptualized as “a person who leaves their permanent residence for travelling, earning and spending money simultaneously, working independently from any specific location using the opportunities provided by technological developments in destinations visited as well as engaging in temporary accommodations, participating in relaxation, entertainment and recreational activities”. Given the conceptualization covers the basic concepts of digital nomadism, travel and tourism, one could argue that this is a noteworthy theoretical contribution. Contrary to other studies that argue it is a fallacy to characterize digital nomads as a new type of tourist (Nash *et al.*, 2018; Christiansen *et al.*, 2023) as well as digital nomadism as a new type of tourism (Nash *et al.*, 2018; Christiansen *et al.*, 2023), in light of the comprehensive literature review conducted within the scope of current research and the indicators in emergence manifesto, this study considers digital nomadism as a new approach under creative tourism. The rapidly growing number of digital nomads, whose travel motivations are characterized by curiosity, culture, escape, novelty seeking, getting out of comfort zone, freedom, lifestyle, business opportunities, coming together with like-minded people, flexibility, inspiration, networking, have strong indicators to transform destinations, create new business models and encourage legal regulations in the future. In this context, the movement transforms destinations, brings a novel approach to travel and tourism and extends it beyond the well-known conventional patterns. In the last few years, digital nomads have been covered in various fields of research, including; social sciences (Cook, 2022; Thompson, 2019; Nash *et al.*, 2018); business, management and accounting (Pignatari, 2023; Orel, 2021); computer science (Arbutina *et al.*, 2023; De Almeida *et al.*, 2022; Willment, 2020); engineering (Tyutyuryukov and Guseva, 2021); psychology (Reichenberger, 2018); arts and humanities (Hong, 2023); and environmental sciences (Gretzel and Hardy, 2019), yet there is a notable gap in the literature in specific contexts. Among these, the legal status of digital nomads, whose numbers are increasing rapidly; their taxation due to their long stays in destinations they visit; measures that can be taken to prevent gentrification in destinations, given their increasing numbers; cultural exchanges with locals and like-minded; identity transformation and/or construction; and impact or influence on travel and tourism can be counted some of the main gaps identified in the literature. In order to fill this gap in the literature on digital nomads, which by nature are mainly related to tourism, future research can concentrate on the suggested themes.

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