# Digital Nomad Lifestyle

A field study in Bali

**JULIA HAKING**

# Digital Nomad Lifestyle
## A field study in Bali

## Julia Haking

Master of Science Thesis INDEK 2017:163
KTH Industrial Engineering and Management
Industrial Management
SE-100 44  STOCKHOLM

| | **Master of Science Thesis INDEK 2017:163** | |
|---|---|---|
| | **Digital Nomad Lifestyle**<br>A field study in Bali | |
| | Julia Haking | |
| Approved<br>2017-11-22 | Examiner<br>Anders Broström | Supervisor<br>Kristina Nyström |

**Abstract**

The digital age has unleashed limitless opportunities and transformed how we work, play and live. As a result, more people embrace the digital nomad lifestyle to fulfill both personal and professional goals. This research assesses the advantages and disadvantages that are associated with this lifestyle. In addition, I examine the digital nomad characteristics in Bali and how the digital nomad community in Bali supports professional development. Data were collected during a two-month field study in Bali, which is one of the world's most popular digital nomad hubs. The findings suggest that digital nomads are predominantly millennials from advanced economies who have different academic backgrounds. Freedom is the primary advantage, while overall job satisfaction and productivity dramatically differ. Overall, members of Bali's digital nomad community feel supported in their professional development.

*"Spend your days on a nine to five*
*You waste your time on a central line*
*What do you love?*
*Work two jobs tryin' stay alive*
*You spend your money on a Friday night*
*Tell me, what do you love?"*
*– Jacob Banks*

**Examensarbete INDEK 2017:163**

# Digital Nomad Lifestyle

A field study in Bali

Julia Haking

| Godkänt | Examinator | Handledare |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 2017-11-22 | Anders Broström | Kristina Nyström |

**Sammanfattning**

Digitaliseringen har skapat oändligt många möjligheter och förändrat hur vi arbetar, umgås och lever i dagens samhälle. Det har resulterat i att allt fler provar på en livsstil som digital nomad för att uppnå både personliga och professionella mål. Den här uppsatsen analyserar fördelar och nackdelar som är förknippade med en livsstil som digital nomad. Dessutom undersöker jag vad som karaktäriserar digitala nomader på Bali och hur gemenskapen bland digitala nomader på Bali kan gynna professionell utveckling. Insamling av data skedde under en två månaders fältstudie på Bali, vilket är en av världens mest populära digital nomad hubbar. Resultatet visar att digitala nomader är främst millenials från i-länder med olika akademisk bakgrund. Frihet är den främsta fördelen, medan generell arbetstillfredsställelse och produktivitet varierar dramatiskt. Medlemmar av Balis digitala nomadgemenskap känner att de utvecklas professionellt.

*"Spend your days on a nine to five*
*You waste your time on a central line*
*What do you love?*
*Work two jobs tryin' stay alive*
*You spend your money on a Friday night*
*Tell me, what do you love?"*
*– Jacob Banks*

**Nyckelord** Digital nomad, knowledge society, knowledge spillover, entrepreneurial mindset, virtual knowledge work, gig economy, freedom, digital nomad community, Bali

# *Acknowledgments*

## Table of Contents

## Figures

## Figures

## Tables

# 1. Introduction

*This chapter introduces the digital nomad lifestyle to provide context for the study, followed by the three research questions that this thesis seeks to address. This chapter ends with a discussion of the three dimensions of sustainability and the outline of the thesis.*

## 1.1 Background

In 1997, Makimoto and Manners predicted a revolutionary way of working, as the first digital nomad vision appeared in their book, *Digital Nomad*. Although it was virtually ignored by the public, Tim Ferriss revived the idea 10 years later in his no. 1 New York Times bestseller, *The 4-hour work week: escape the 9-5, live anywhere and join the new rich*. In an interplay of life hacks and business schemes, Ferriss painted an intriguing picture of unbridled travelling and automated income. However, neither Makimoto, Manners nor Ferriss predicted how the fourth industrial revolution of digitalization would affect flexible, on-demand work, social networking and the shared economy (Elgan, 2017). Currently, it is well known that digitally mediated information practices ensure access to information along temporal and spatial dimensions (Nelson et al., 2017). As the constraints of time and space gradually diminish, spatial networks unfold, which are both a cause and a consequence of the global socio-economic paradigm as well as transnationalism (Ballard, 2001). A revolutionary alteration that has enabled virtual knowledge work across the globe indicates an increase in the digital nomad lifestyle (Roseberry, 2007; Lloyd, 2014). Unsurprisingly, the global mobile workforce is set to increase from 38.8 percent (1.45 billion) in 2016 to 42.5 percent (1.87 billion) in 2022 (Luk, 2016).

Few authors in academic literature have acknowledged the digital nomad lifestyle and defined a digital nomad. Reichenberger (2017) defines digital nomads as location-independent, predominantly young professionals, entrepreneurs, freelancers and remote employees who have the ability to unite travel and virtual knowledge work. In addition to exploring the definition, she concludes that personal and professional freedom are the principal motivating factors behind the lifestyle. Richards (2015) claims that the digital nomad tries to escape *the system*. Location independence entails new constraints; however, the lifestyle makes it possible to choose where to engage with a system. According to Formica (2013), knowledge nomads are young talents and pioneers of the digital age who freely travel across the Pacific Ocean to create global businesses that are driven by new discoveries and applications. Lee (2017) highlights the importance of freedom and exploration in his TED talk, *Why jobs of the future won't feel like work*:

*"I believe that the jobs of the future will come from the minds of people who, today, we call analysts and specialists, but only if we give them the freedom and protection that they need to grow into becoming explorers and inventors."*

In the realm of knowledge work, new jobs are created, which supports Reichenberger's (2017) evidence on digital nomad professions. There is a trend that indicates an increasing number of startups and a growing gig economy, in which independent workers[1] assume part-time or temporary positions (Johnson & Houston, 2016; Collamer, 2017). This trend signals a need for entrepreneurial education and a mindset to prepare for new business establishments and independent work, which underscores the importance of student entrepreneurial ecosystems in universities (Johnson & Houston, 2016; Ridley, 2016; Bergmann et al., 2016; Wright et al.,

---

[1] Freelancers, consultants, independent contractors and on-call workers

2017). Moreover, the increasing number of entrepreneurial professions is connected to the redundant access to large financial sources and gatekeepers to accelerate business performance (Richter et al., 2017). Digital growth relies on the availability and reproduction of information; hence, motivation and opportunity have led to a new dimension that emphasizes work-life balance (Valenduc & Vendramin, 2016). Diminishing geographical and cultural barriers benefit an exploration of differences, the creation of innovative synergies and new business opportunities. Formica (2013) explains how *knowledge of others* will help the West and East to understand each other. This highlights the need for a deeper understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of the digital nomad lifestyle.

Despite visions that global labor platforms render location-dependent work, the differences between places encourages the development of specific networks of knowledge work (Graham, 2017). Digital nomad hubs have become paramount for forming knowledge sharing cultures and facilitate knowledge spillovers (Kachroo-Levine, 2017; Barsness et al., 2005). Hubs arise with co-working spaces and provide collaborative communities that are widely associated with Silicon Valley and San Francisco. These are often casual and trendy hotspots that mark a clear contrast between new and old work models (Johns & Gratton, 2013). Bali has become one of the hottest digital nomad hubs in the world, as co-working spaces are continuously opening to accommodate new and returning digital nomads (Kachroo-Levine, 2017; O'dell, 2017; Delaney, 2016). Bali is attracting aspiring digital nomads, artists and filmmakers, those who leave Silicon Valley, social media influencers and mindful yogis, among others (Woolsey, 2017). As such, it is noteworthy to examine how the digital nomad community in Bali can be a valuable source of professional development.

## 1.2 Research questions

Previous research has discussed subjects that have cultivated the digital nomad lifestyle: virtual knowledge work; global transformation and increased opportunities; the primary role of entrepreneurship in economic development; and how networks foster innovation based on shared knowledge and collective intelligence (Roseberry, 2007; Barsness et al., 2005; Fornahl et al., 2004; Hoisl, 2007; Nelson et al., 2017; Johns & Gratton, 2013). A few authors have raised the concept of and motivation for the digital nomad lifestyle (Reichenberger, 2017; Richards, 2015; Formica, 2013). Nevertheless, current research does not interpret digital nomad characteristics in a specific location or the advantages and disadvantages of the lifestyle. Based on a two-month field study in Bali, this paper aims to address the following questions:

1. *What are the characteristics of digital nomads in Bali?*

2. *What are the digital nomad lifestyle advantages and disadvantages?*

In this digital age, continuous learning and rebuilding social skills are crucial for professional development as well as innovation and economic growth. Digital nomads may stimulate economic activities due to an increased flow of knowledge spillovers. In addition to the above questions, this study examines how the digital nomad community can be supportive for professional development:

3. *How does Bali's digital nomad community support professional development?*

## 1.3 Sustainability

Remote work is increasingly common; however, the underlying objectives differ. The goal can be to combine work and travel, reduce commuting, improve work-life balance or elevate a business idea. For example, in 2017, 60 percent of US companies allowed for remote opportunities to reduce commuting, office space costs and to attract and retain worldwide talent (Bloomberg, 2017). This development is consistent with the formation of the Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD), which is a global hub of knowledge and policy expertise on migration and development issues. KNOMAD partnered with World Bank Group, which currently collaborates with the United Nations (UN), to meet the *2030 UN Sustainable Development Agenda*. Thus, it is crucial to highlight the three dimensions of sustainability that are related to the digital nomad lifestyle. Environmental sustainability is living within the means of natural resources and being aware of environmental scarcity. Economic sustainability requires that nations and businesses use financial resources in a sustainable manner while achieving operational profits for sustaining long-term activities. Social sustainability is the social system's ability to achieve long-term social wellbeing. Global sustainability is only achieved when environmental, economic and social sustainability are balanced in equal harmony, which is shown in Figure 1 (OECD, 2017).
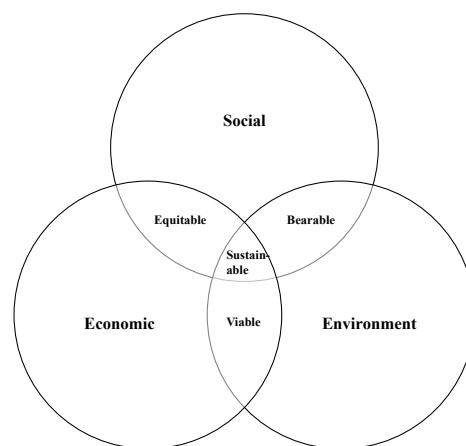


Figure 1. Sustainability (Circular Ecology, 2017)

Digital nomads may or may not support environmental quality due to travelling. Less commuting to work can reduce their carbon footprints and some digital nomads remain close to co-working spaces or cafés to avoid commuting. As such, digital nomads are frequent travelers and move across distance with more or less sustainable transportation methods. From an economic perspective, their income must be profitable to uphold viability and equitability. Remote work, in many cases, implies on-demand work and can have a positive impact on work-life balance. However, the revenue stream can be unpredictable due to fluctuations in demand. Moreover, gig workers often lack insurance, pensions and other social security contributions, which leads to more expenses and instability. According to Karbassi (2017), social sustainability includes identifying and managing business impacts on people. Companies directly or indirectly affect employees, workers in the value chain, customers and local communities. Digital nomads can proactively manage their impact to reduce inequality and poverty while harmonizing regulation discrepancies between nations. Because the majority of digital nomads spend time in foreign places, they can have a significant impact on social sustainability. Therefore, it is appropriate to act and think inclusively by supporting and implementing equality and diversity.

In contrast, Formica (2013) suggests that digital nomads from advanced economies can suffer from superiority complexes, which may result from previous European supremacy or a re-emergence of the spirit of colonialism. However, many digital nomads value social sustainability by learning the local language through participating in *Crash course Bahasa Indonesia* and events, such as *Dojo Hackathon – Build the bridge between coworking spaces and sustainable community projects* (Dojo Bali, 2017; Dojo, 2017).

## 1.4 Thesis Outline

This thesis is organized in the following manner: section 2 reviews the literature and assesses specific developments that have enabled the digital nomad lifestyle; section 3 introduces the exploratory methodology and data collection approach; section 4 analyses and discusses the empirical findings; section 5 presents a conclusion of the results and implications of the study and provides future recommendations for research. For reference, a digital nomad is defined as a location-independent entrepreneur, freelancer or remote employee, who performs virtual knowledge work. Virtual knowledge work is associated with the digital nomad lifestyle; however, not all workers in previous research live a nomadic lifestyle, and thus, they are referred to as virtual knowledge workers.

# 2. Literature Review

*This chapter briefly presents the structural and social developments that enabled the digital nomad lifestyle. It discusses several successive aspects that have made Bali one of the most popular digital nomad hubs in the world.*

## 2.1 From the first to the fourth Industrial Revolution

The digital nomad lifestyle derives from accelerations in technology development due to shorter product life cycles, politically driven deregulation and intensified global competition (Lundvall, 2017). Disparity between nations affects technology implementation and leads to unequal conditions for adopting a digital nomad lifestyle. Therefore, it is important to understand what drives technology development and how it contributes to global interconnectedness. First and foremost, it is critical to differentiate invention and innovation. Invention refers to an act of creating or developing new ideas, while innovation denotes the commercialization of an invention (Ahuja & Morris Lampert, 2001).

History has witnessed waves of global economic growth due to technology revolutions that began in Britain during the 18th century. Although the process of progress was not science-based, it relied on developing and applying established knowledge (Castells, 2000). At that time, Western Europe thrived beyond occasional innovative flashes (Ahuja & Morris Lampert, 2001). The flow of innovation was based on society's urban sector, as the middle class had an income level that was sufficiently above subsistence and supported professional development as more people became engineers, artists, scientists, merchants and professors. European institutional developments made it possible to expand useful knowledge and encouraged growth by focusing on executive constraints and securing property rights. Thus, progress became a rule rather than an exception (Mokyr, 2010). Approximately one hundred years later, the second revolution commenced, with electricity, internal combustion engines and efficient steel manufacturing. With research and development (R&D) laboratories that were initially in the German chemical industry, science began to foster innovation (Castells, 2000). Hence, learning by doing science-based innovations successively increased dynamics and became the principal source of knowledge and economic growth (Lundvall, 2017). It is important to note that developments in the West equipped the population with new technology tools as well as the skills and knowledge that new technology imposes to further inventions and innovations.

The first and second industrial revolutions turned agrarian into industrial societies, followed by service societies that resulted from telecommunication thus the third industrial revolution at the end of the 19th century (Helbing, 2015; Castells, 2000). Information and communication technology (ICT) became the new source of energy for fueling economic growth (Bell, 1973). Although there is no natural order for technology development, new technology arises when rapid growth slows, and is, thus, an indicator of productivity swings (Bresnahan, 2010). Furthermore, new technologies are often developed in clusters, as frequent interactions facilitate synergetic effects. Clusters reflect a certain *milieu* of ideas where exchanging problems and solutions is related to a given state of knowledge and skills. Clusters also denote selective functional and social technology diffusion (Castells, 2000). Accordingly, the national competitive advantage in technology development hinges on specific knowledge and skills that may reflect the nationalities of digital nomads in Bali.

**1. Water and steam**
Mechanized production

**2. Electric power**
Mass production

**3. Electronics and information technology**
Automated production

**4. Automation and data exchange**
Digitalization
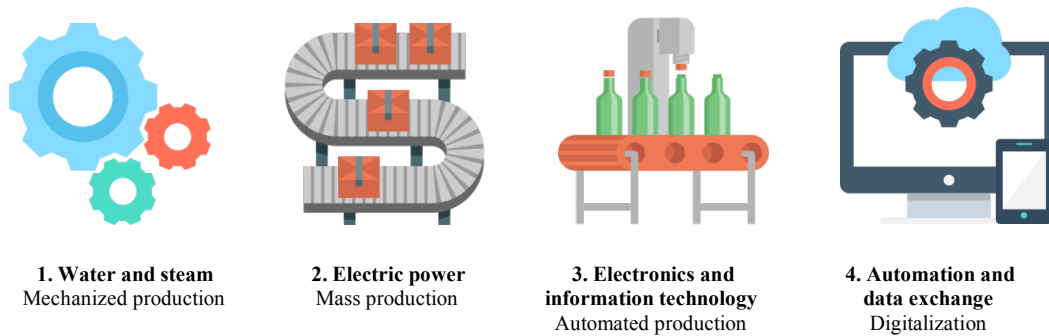
Figure 2. Four industrial revolutions

ICT spread across the globe in less than two decades and contributed to global interconnectedness (Castells, 2000). It resulted in geographic irrelevance, increased platform significance and an increasing importance of big data and networks (Charrié & Janin, 2015). According to Kramer et al. (2007), ICT transforms economies in the following ways:

- Lower transaction costs that increase productivity
- Immediate connectivity (visual, voice, data) that improves transparency, accuracy and efficiency
- Streamlining communication and execution e.g., less need for expensive business trips
- Increased access and choices in the marketplace with more available goods and services
- A broadened geographic scope that commences new channels of knowledge and information

These features underlie the positive impact of ICT on firms and macro-level growth in both industrial and developing countries (ibid). A fundamental assumption for investing in new technology and applications is anticipating improved productivity and performance (Davis, 2002). According to the World Bank, firms that use ICT have a faster sales growth, increased productivity and faster employment growth (Kramer et al., 2007). Nevertheless, due to ICT diffusion, Europe lost its traditional comparative advantage (Audretsch & Thurik, 2000).

In the 1980s, the ICT sector[2] aimed for global access even though it was landline-based and, in many cases, government owned and managed. Services were expensive and data networks were non-existent. Inefficient markets with poor infrastructures enabled rent-seeking and resulted in slow innovations in technology (Kramer et al., 2007). Regulatory regimes abilities to adapt and implement new technologies have a considerable effect on technology convergence or divergence, which underscores the regulatory discrepancies between nations (Freeman & Louca, 2001). Resistance to the adjustment process for a new techno-economic paradigm can cause a structural crisis, unemployment and may hinder global opportunities. Moreover, the pace of implementation by established firms is crucial for increased productivity and survival (Atkeson & Kehoe, 2001). Even when ICT intends to contribute to more productivity, imposed changes can be either a total success or failure for established firms (Bojanova, 2014). Firms and individuals that have the capacity to explore and implement new production processes, markets and knowledge are more likely to survive and thrive (Freeman & Louca, 2001).

---

[2] Post, telephone and telegraph firms

ICT can work around or completely eliminate obstacles, such as overcoming geographic isolation, increasing market access and using the internet as an empowering knowledge source (Castells, 2009). This is a development that made it possible to work 'anytime, anyplace,' and shaped the world of work in new and different ways while broadening the horizon of space and time (Nelson et al., 2017). Digital nomads utilize the freedom of ICT, and may contribute to ICT diffusion as well as increased productivity, performance and innovation in less developed parts of the world. Similarly, the acceleration of online resources and activities motivate the trend for decentralization and the spread of value creation, which make proximity and cities less relevant to the path for self-sufficiency (Kamphuis, 2017; Valenduc & Vendramin, 2016). This acceleration increases the probability of submerging in nature and improving work-life balance, vastly demanded among digital nomads (Johns & Gratton, 2013; Woolsey, 2017). MacKerron and Mourato (2013) reveal that happiness is greater in nature than in cities, which connects nature to wellbeing.

As internet access becomes standardized, the digital nomad lifestyle is more viable, which is a major contributor to achieving UN Sustainable Development Goal 9 – *Build a resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.* Deficiencies in internet access increases the discrepancies between poor and rich, men and women, and deprived communities and everyone else (United Nations, 2017). However, ICT alone is not the solution for underdevelopment and poverty but is part of a synthesis of sound government policies, infrastructure investments and enhanced workforce skills, which can actualize ICT's full potential. This explains why leading-edge technologies have enabled growth in countries with functional markets, supportive regulatory and policy frameworks, consistent and clean power, affordable and accessible connectivity networks, technical knowledge, support systems and skilled users (Kramer, 2007). These conditions are essential contributors for overcoming obstacles to economic opportunity and for individuals who want to embrace a digital nomad lifestyle.

## 2.2 Transitioning into a knowledge society

Narrowly defined jobs[3] that have careers that are formed around procedural and singular tasks are successively being replaced with robotics, while digital networking governs complex communication and advanced pattern recognition (Lee, 2017; Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2012). Nevertheless, humans dominate the physical domain, as well as problem solving[4] thus pure knowledge work (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2012). Digital nomads perform knowledge work and are often from societies that, according to Melnikas (2010), have the following conditions:

- Nurturing social, political, economic, cultural and mental assumptions that form a *critical mass* and ensure the *spread of values and domination* that are typical for a knowledge society. They foster a sufficient and high level of creativity to enhance innovation.
- High levels of social comfort and material welfare for triggering societal breakthroughs.
- Economic potential that is inevitable for knowledge discovery.

A knowledge society is a continuation of progress and change from previous areas of social, economic and technical development, which guide global transformation and sustainable development processes (Melnikas, 2010). Human capital is the core of a knowledge society that stimulates innovation, productivity and job creation (International Labour Organization, 2017).

---

[3] For example, cashier and chauffeur

[4] Forward thinking mental abilities and the creative scene

Subsequently, a knowledge society emphasizes that the advantages for individuals are to enhance skills and knowledge to qualify for better paying jobs, efficiently manage their own businesses and explore novel markets for goods and services (Kramer et al., 2007). Lundvall (2017) stresses that there is higher productivity when individuals engage in daily learning processes and incremental innovation. Likewise, the continuous application of knowledge and digital technologies support the potential for global productivity and reduce diffusion obstacles, such as lack of competence (ibid). Notably, education enhances the absorptive capacity of knowledge because innovations are indirect carriers of the most recent knowledge and, therefore, should be properly introduced. As a result, a regions innovativeness depends on the absorptive capacity (Melnikas, 2010; Perret, 2013), while favorable circumstances add to the ability to generate synergetic effects and foster innovation (Melnikas, 2010). Economic growth in advanced economies depends on shared knowledge and collective intelligence as the three traditional pillars of scale economics[5]; labor, land and capital are limited when knowledge is abundant (Parker, 2009; Audretsch & Thurik, 2000; Formica, 2013). This has raised the question about knowledge spillovers as an indicator of continuous ongoing growth. Knowledge and ideas are transferred and reflect the public good, which does not decrease in quantity when its used, or limit the user to specific knowledge when it is used by a third user (Perret, 2013). This suggests that knowledge spillovers can add to other agents' innovative efforts and advance knowledge creation (Parker, 2009).

A digital nomad must acquire the knowledge and skills to perform knowledge work and may benefit from knowledge spillovers through enhanced professional development. Knowledge creation is most prominent in universities or R&D by private inventors and enterprises (Perret, 2013). This type of knowledge is associated with *codified* knowledge, which is easily documented, transferred and reproduced via publications in scientific journals and can be globally diffused with digital access (Parker, 2009; Perret, 2013). Revenue that is invested in new products and processes as well as government support that is attributed to R&D and education[6] are indirect indicators of increased codified knowledge. Likewise, patents are codified knowledge that heavily rely on legislation because weak patent laws can decrease codified knowledge. Another limitation to codified knowledge is that it does not reflect the actual qualifications, or human capital (Perret, 2013).

In contrast to codified knowledge, *tacit* knowledge cannot be documented as it is bound to the human carrier, as individual knowledge and skills are usually context-specific. Tacit knowledge spillovers or the transfer of tacit knowledge results from face-to-face interactions and regularly repeated contacts. Because the cost of transmitting tacit knowledge increases with distance, it is often concentrated locally (Parker, 2009; Perret, 2013). Both codified and tacit knowledge can be acquired through licenses, foreign or interregional direct investments, trade, and imitation and via labor mobility through digital nomads. While codified knowledge spillovers are more prone to global diffusion, tacit knowledge is a crucial element of innovation. Geographic proximity is fundamental for increasing awareness and access to unique tacit knowledge. Although technology allows for transfers in tacit knowledge, labor mobility increases global tacit knowledge spillovers via collaboration and other interactive activities (Perret, 2013). This study examines tacit knowledge spillovers in Bali's digital nomad community to answer the third research question: *How does Bali's digital nomad community support professional development?*

---

[5] Large-scale productions decrease unit costs and contribute to mass production, and, thus, economic growth

[6] Codified knowledge outputs are measured as the number of graduates and level of qualifications

Knowledge and skills related to professional development should respond to future demand. Berger (2017) suggests that interpersonal skills, such as customer service and leadership, and basic technology skills, are important cross-functional skills across industries and job titles. Specializing in specific fields is becoming more popular, especially among the younger generation, for meeting the demand for specific skills (ibid). The World Economic Forum (2016) projected demands for skills in different industries for the year 2020. Table 1 ranks the overall core skill sets that will be required in 2020. In comparison, employers were asked about innovative workforce strategies to align future skill requirements with disrupted business models[7].

Table 1. Strategies and skills for thriving in the knowledge age

| Rank | Featured skills in 2020 | Future workforce strategies |
|------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | Complex Problem Solving | Invest in reskilling current employees |
| 2 | Critical Thinking | Support mobility and job rotation |
| 3 | Creativity | Collaborate, educational institutions |
| 4 | People Management | Target female talent |
| 5 | Coordinating with Others | Attract foreign talent |
| 6 | Emotional Intelligence | Offer apprenticeships |
| 7 | Judgement and Decision Making | Collaborate, other companies across industries |
| 8 | Service Orientation | Collaborate, other companies in industries |
| 9 | Negotiation | Target minorities' talent |
| 10 | Cognitive flexibility | Hire more short-term workers |

## 2.3 The key role of an entrepreneurial mindset

The digital nomad lifestyle provides many opportunities for digital nomads to use their unique and dispersed knowledge for professional development. The ability to recognize, exploit and promote ideas and opportunities requires an entrepreneurial mindset. As stated in the previous chapter, *economic growth depends on shared knowledge and collective intelligence*, which is why countries are experiencing a shift from a managed to an entrepreneurial economy (Audretsch & Thurik, 2000). Thus, economists have recognized the entrepreneurial role in exploiting and promoting knowledge spillovers and acting on innovative ideas to respond to the demand for superior products and services (Parker, 2009; Audretsch & Thurik, 2000). Therefore, countries that have strong scientific institutions, pioneering engineers and entrepreneurs are at the forefront of technology development (Bresnahan, 2010; Freeman & Louca, 2001). These pioneers and entrepreneurs meet at the global knowledge frontier and build bridges between the most recent innovations and thriving knowledge (Formica, 2013).

Audretsch et al. (2006) argue that regions that have a greater endowment of entrepreneurial culture have a higher propensity to discover, create and act on opportunities. In their approach, entrepreneurial culture facilitates knowledge spillovers and ideas, and ultimately generates superior economic performance for organizations, individuals and the entire region (ibid). Therefore, it is important to grasp the entrepreneurial culture in Bali's digital nomad community. Entrepreneurial culture is a *collective programming of the mind* towards entrepreneurial values, such as risk taking, proactiveness, the acceptance of failure, individualism, independence, achievement and openness (Hofstede, 2001).

---

[7] An insufficient understanding of resource constraints and disruptive changes may cause a mismatch between the transformative techno-economic paradigm and upcoming workforce strategies

Intellectual wealth, creativity and social capital are the foundation for entrepreneurial culture and communities. In fact, remote workers who introduce science across borders contribute to this foundation. This indicates that social networks that are clustered with unique knowledge can be alternatives for traditional trade associations. Moreover, a digital nomad who has an entrepreneurial mindset and novel ideas for untouched markets can create new jobs. However, the digital infrastructure must to be reliable to allow digital nomads to sort between endless resources and assess relevant and useful information. (Formica, 2013). Accordingly, digital nomads' knowledge and skills represent tacit knowledge that can be transformed into global standardized knowledge and ease the economics of scale for others due to information reproduction (Lloyd, 2014; Lundvall, 2017; Seidenfaden, 2006).

## 2.4 The impact of knowledge work on career flexibility

Becoming a digital nomad requires courage, as it is a unique path and that defies the status quo. For most people, a fear of failure reflects an acceptance of the status quo, which is frequently associated with unhappiness over uncertainty (Ferriss, 2011). As new ideas are intrinsically uncertain and may be disputed by colleagues and bosses, it has become important to move into new situations that accept trial and error processes, which are fundamental in a knowledge society and connect to the digital nomad lifestyle. To avoid rejection, more people are becoming self-employed and starting new firms to pursue and commercialize their ideas (Audretsch & Thurik, 2000). In addition, Lee (2017) argues that the work environment must become more attractive to enhance creativity and innovations to replace jobs that will be lost to technology, and to rediscover human talent and passions. Both the digital nomad lifestyle and community result from these developments and, therefore, are highly interesting to study.

Knowledge work allows for switching between and within sectors, to different locations and can improve living standards by moving from a bad to a better job (Jütting & Laiglesia, 2009). Flexible work, thus virtual knowledge work, is the de facto most significant driver of change in advanced economies, while emerging markets are driven by an increasing middle class (World Economic Forum, 2016). Widespread digital use by workers, bosses, clients and users of the end-products have made it possible to be located at different corners of the planet, and connected in different dimensions (Graham et al., 2017; Nelson et al., 2017). Immediate connectivity and the diminishing marginal cost of transferring and transforming information across geographic distances breeds' virtual knowledge work (World Economic Forum, 2016; Kramer et al., 2007; Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2012). However, the pressure on open economies to transform has made it difficult to maintain jobs in expensive locations. Consequently, there is a policy dilemma as to whether to choose between more jobs that have lower living standards or higher wages, but fewer jobs (Audretsch & Thurik, 2000). On the other hand, it can be more expensive to stay in an Airbnb and work out of a café, especially for someone who outsources *travel-while-working services* to facilitate the digital nomad lifestyle (Stoughton, 2017).

Increased professional freedom has made it possible to follow and fulfill visions and passions, and to *strive to chase excitement and happiness*. Ferris (2011) highlights the potential for living like a millionaire without being financially rich by introducing the *freedom multiplier,* where money is multiplied in practical value with the number of W's:

$Freedom\ multiplier = what\ you\ do * when\ you\ do\ it * where\ you\ do\ it * with\ whom\ you\ do\ it$

For example, an investment banker earns $500 000 per year and work 80 hours per week, while a digital nomad works 20 hours per week and earns $40 000. After calculating the lifestyle output with the freedom multiplier, the investment banker's $500 000 might be worth less than the digital nomad's $40 000, as the *freedom to choose reflects the real power*. In addition, travelling the world can be less expensive than paying rent in an advanced economy (Ferris, 2011).

There is no doubt that the fourth industrial revolution has revolutionized how, when and where workers address professional circumstances (Nelson et al., 2017). This dynamic explains why attitudes towards work have changed and work is less central than relationships, well-being and work-life balance (Laine, 2017). Increased job satisfaction is more important, both in terms of wages and personal fulfillment. Although the old saying, *work hard, get a good job, and you'll be rewarded,* has shifted to *work-from-wherever-you-are,* hard work is still required, though the idea of a career has transformed due to the inter alia normalization of self-employment (Clark, 2017). Table 2 ranks the top 10 factors that virtual knowledge workers consider when evaluating job prospects, based on a Flexjobs[8] survey (Weiler Reynolds, 2017).

Table 2. Top 10 factors for evaluating flexible job prospects

| Top 10 factors for evaluating flexible job prospects |
| --- |
| Work-life balance 72% |
| Flexible schedule and salary 69% |
| Telecommuting 60% |
| Meaningful work 57% |
| Work schedule 48% |
| Location 45% |
| Company reputation 40% |
| Health insurance 37% |
| Professional challenge 36% |
| Company culture 34% |

## 2.5 From a 9-5 workday to on-demand work

As an outcome of career flexibility, Stewart and Stanford (2017) argue that the economy of tomorrow consists of *gigs* rather than the jobs that were previously considered normal[9]. As the gig economy expands with its huge marketplace, workers satisfy customer's needs with tasks that are performed and coordinated on online platforms and are compensated with digital transfers. The authors conclude that there are several key features that gig workers often experience:

- Irregular work schedules that are driven by volatility in demand
- Providing some or all equipment for work tasks, such as computing equipment and bicycles for food delivery
- Arranging ones' own workplace
- Commission-based compensation based on specific tasks rather than work hours

---

[8] A job service website that provides flexible jobs

[9] Permanent employment and location dependence

Evidently, digital nomads often build upon personal technologies to perform work while travelling. For example, Nelson et al. (2017), interviewed a digital nomad who travels with both private and work laptops because organizational regulations restrict external drives and cloud storage services, which imposes file transfers via email between the laptops. Consequently, a firm's digital infrastructure can constrain personal and ubiquitous technology use and alienate the digital nomad (ibid).

Virtual knowledge work often requires self-employment[10], which increases market competition and may lead to a ruthless race to the bottom (Stewart & Stanford, 2017). Graham et al. (2017) confirms that there is a race to the bottom in wage rates due to disempowerment and an inability to exert significant bargaining power. These factors can have a negative impact on living conditions and may force the digital nomad to move to a less expensive location. Thus, acquiring a higher paid gig can be problematic if the digital nomad is tied to a long-term contract. Correspondingly, digital nomads who undertake gig work tend to feel anxious about unpredictable gigs and uncertain income in the future (ibid). Another drawback and common feature that is related to temporary positions is when the employer attempts to minimize outside regulations with unfavorable agreements, such as independent contractor agreements[11]. This type of agreement often precludes national labor laws, as the jurisdiction regulations may be ambiguous for the employer, especially when the worker is location independent (Graham et al., 2017). Appropriately, the discrepancy between gig work rights and traditional rights is increasing in importance (Stewart & Stanford, 2017). On the other hand, traditional retirement planning may be the worst-case-scenario insurance, in case one becomes physically incapable of working and must turn to a reservoir of capital to survive (Ferris, 2011).

The World Employment Social Outlook 2017 suggests that individuals should anticipate and be prepared for demand fluctuations (International Labour Organization, 2017). Clark (2017) recommends diversifying incomes and jobs for professional independence. This is analogous to minimizing risk with a diverse portfolio of stocks and funds while maintaining exposure to market growth, as having more than one income source can limit income volatility and create legitimate professional stability. Cultivating a side income stream provides additional protection against uncertainty and has other benefits, such as building skills to develop your own brand. Clark earns a living from seven sources: writing books, teaching at a business school, executive coaching, speaking, consulting, conducting online courses and generating affiliated income through her email list (ibid).

Gig work is not an option for everyone and switching jobs will not automatically increase ones' income (Jütting & Laiglesia, 2009). This requires low risk aversion and a desire to work autonomously to enrich professional development and self-esteem by moving from one job to another. Having several ongoing gigs indicates entrepreneurial guidance and it is suggested that one should learn to look for business opportunities at a young age (Formica, 2013). Consequently, a digital nomad needs specific competences to assume regular interdependent, knowledge-intensive and project-based work. Borg and Söderlund (2015) highlight several important skills that are related to gig work; however, their research is limited to those with an engineering background. In addition to technical and social skills, the authors stress *liminality competence,* which is the ability to simultaneously be involved with several organizations and continuous movement between projects and/or assignments. They conclude that a higher degree

---

[10] Associated with an entrepreneurial mindset

[11] An independent contractor agreement is commonly mistaken for employment, but this type of agreement often lacks insurance, pensions and other social security contributions

of liminality competence is preferred when working in the gig economy as it benefits leaning opportunities. Less liminality competence motivates work within particular areas of expertise or specializations in specific technical disciplines aside from the gig economy (Borg & Söderlund, 2015).

Katie McKnoulty, a digital nomad freelancer, demonstrates a high level of liminality competence, as she has been travelling for most of her career and acquired clients through connections in London, Bali and Paris. Self-discipline, a sense of responsibility and hard work have supported McKnoulty's financial independence and the potential for spending time in digital nomad hubs in Ho Chi Minh City, Chiang Mai and Ubud. In addition, she did not have an established client base before becoming a digital nomad (Kachroo-Levine, 2017). Shiffman (2017) suggests establishing both a business and client base before becoming a digital nomad. A trial period at home will ease the ability to manage work procedures while travelling. After deciding expertise, Shiffman recommends self-promotion via social media networks. An online presence on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and Quora can help build credibility in the field of expertise, while websites, such as Upwork and Freelancers, support connections and *busyness*. A personal website can impress potential clients with a portfolio, products and services, while a blog can further ones' role as a leader in a specific field. Finally, the aspiring digital nomad should consider affordable destinations that have high-speed internet connections, and should not forget about health insurance to maintain financial stability (ibid).

## 2.6 Motivation behind the digital nomad lifestyle

In the late 1960s, youth mobility increased due to higher living standards, improved infrastructure and weakening family ties. The aim was then to find one's inner purpose and to seek meaning in other global cultures. Subsequently, solo individuals defying the status quo of sedentary society were viewed as the pioneers of modern nomadism (Richard, 2015). In comparison to the pioneers in 1960, the incentive behind a digital nomad lifestyle is to escape societal structures and traditional location-dependent jobs. The most desirable incentive is the *freedom factor* in several contexts:

> *professional freedom* – the motivation to work autonomously, select and structure work that is related to one's passion and increases feelings of purpose

> *spatial freedom*[12] - the motivation to perform virtual work while learning about other lifestyles, cultures, norms and opinions

> *personal freedom* – the motivation to become more productive, creative, and, most importantly, self-development and increased happiness
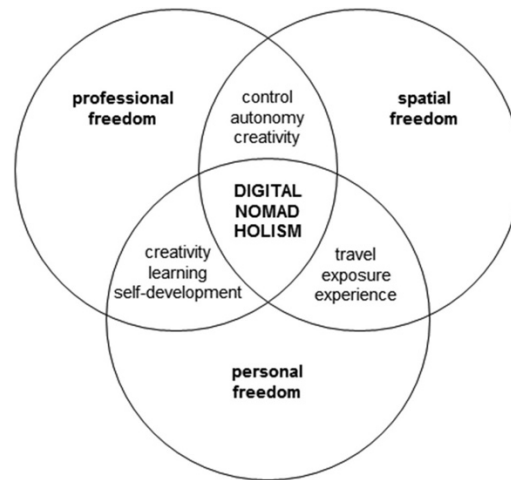
---

[12] Location independence

Figure 3. Digital nomad holism

Figure 3 shows the correlation between the three different aspects of freedom (Reichenberger, 2017). Several studies have shown that virtual knowledge workers are both happier and more productive in general (Bloomberg, 2017). According to a study of more than 5500 virtual knowledge workers, 66 percent believed that they were more productive working remotely due to less interruptions from colleagues, other distractions and reduced stress from commuting (Weiler Reynolds, 2017). Accordingly, location independence enhanced physical workspace conditions and can improve professional development (Perret, 2013). Richter et al. (2017) indicate that digital nomad entrepreneurs take advantage of the digital nomad lifestyle to add value to their business models and make them more accessible to potential and exciting users, such as a digital nomad elevating a travel app with a new dynamic lifestyle (InfoDev, 2017). Becoming a digital nomad can also unintentionally occur when a contract or visa terminates. Generally, the accidental digital nomad bootstraps and stays in less expensive locations to build a business while expanding global and online networks without worrying about money (Kachroo-Levine, 2017).

Tim Ferris (2011) coined the concept of geoarbitrage, which refers to the potential for using a modest Western income in a country that has weaker currency. For example, $2000 a month allows for a luxurious and comfortable lifestyle in Bangkok, but will not stretch far in San Francisco (ibid). The digital nomad lifestyle can be discouraged when employees are grouped into teams, such as in investment banking and real estate, which require face-to-face interactions (Bloomberg, 2017). However, virtual knowledge work is exponentially increasing, as entrepreneurial, freelance and remote employment opportunities become more controversial and in demand (Arruda, 2017)

Can the digital nomad lifestyle really improve work-life balance? Critics highlight an inability to distinguish between the status of being employed and self-employed; how to claim ownership and agree on contractual relationships when using new collaborative models[13] (Valenduc & Vendramin, 2016); and faulty digital infrastructures that can impede work due to the interdependence between knowledge work, travelling and technologies (Nelson et al., 2017). Table 3 shows several barriers that are coupled with the digital nomad lifestyle (Perret, 2013).

---

[13] Peer production and co-creation are partly responsible for a value chain

Table 3. Digital nomad lifestyle barriers

| Politics | Income | Culture |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Visa restrictions | Poverty gap | Migration attitudes |
| Migrations restrictions | Job uncertainty | Family ties |
| Regional development | Job qualification | |
| | Unemployment | |

Borg & Söderlund (2015) argue that the digital nomad lifestyle entails temporary jobs and uncertainty. Therefore, it is vital to stay abreast of organizations via social networks (Nelson et al., 2017). Laine (2017) confirms that effective communication is necessary for preventing misunderstandings and trust issues. In addition, virtual knowledge work often entails constant access, which blurs the line between professional and personal lives. Thus, a digital nomad is required to have the right skills, competencies and the ability to find motivation and social belonging while performing virtual knowledge work (ibid). Inconvenient work hours can be offset by an improved work-life balance, but only when there is flexibility. Subsequently, this lifestyle can reduce stress, specifically for workers without family duties (Galea et al., 2014; Laine, 2017). In contrast, autonomy can limit the amount of control that a worker has over the working environment and may result in stress and burn-out (Valenduc & Vendramin, 2016). It is important to note that there are two different types of stress. First, *distress* relates to harmful stimuli and makes the individual less confident, weaker and less capable. This type of stress can be caused by abusive bosses and destructive criticism that is preventable. Second, *eustress* relates to 'Eu-', the Greek prefix of healthy, which is used in the same sense as 'Euphoria'. An individual can experience eustress when pushing personal limits, such as doing something outside one's comfort zone – it is beneficial stress that stimulates personal growth (Ferris, 2011).

The implications of the digital nomad lifestyle on work-life balance are clearly equivocal. Meil (2015) accentuates general attributes that are associated with the digital nomad lifestyle and are positive and negative in certain respects:

- Sophisticated control and monitoring systems
- Performance-driven pay
- Social isolation
- Information overload
- Autonomy
- Ill-defined management
- Being theoretically available full-time
- Outsourcing responsibility vis-à-vis the employer

There is still no general time span for a digital nomad. Some perceive this position as temporary *workation* that ranges from two weeks to one year (Stoughton, 2017), while others believe that it is an enduring lifestyle for escaping societal structures and reducing unfulfilling activities. As familiar discomfort becomes replaced with foreign discomfort, it is often offset with the overarching goal of digital nomads: freedom (Reichenberger, 2017).

## 2.7 Innovation hubs

Knowledge flourishes in places where individuals frequently exchange unique knowledge and skills, which indicates that social networks are a source of innovation. Globalization results in new opportunities to innovate based on an increased knowledge flow. Digital nomads can contribute to tacit knowledge and spillovers when they move from one country to another. During the third industrial revolution, there was efficiency and optimal productivity in workspaces where workers had access to expensive technology and tools that were needed for output. Although virtual knowledge work does not require a physical presence, workspaces are being reconceived and re-established to optimize knowledge sharing and add to collective intelligence. Hence, the process of innovation has led to innovative hubs all over the world (Johns & Gratton, 2013). Nonetheless, current technical developments do not derive from the centrality of knowledge, but evolve through learning by *using,* which is followed with learning by *doing* and successively identifying a new feedback loop to connect new technology, user knowledge and development into a fast-moving new techno-economic paradigm (Castells, 2000). Feedback loops are accelerated in a shared workspace and are supported by teamwork, fellowship, which results in greater trust, idea generation and cultural alignment (Johns & Gratton, 2013).

Many digital nomads use hubs as their remote base to interact with other people and embrace an environment that encourages serendipitous discoveries (Johns & Gratton, 2013). Schumpeter introduced the concept of *new combinations*, which implies that innovative processes rely on new combinations of knowledge inputs from already established knowledge (Kurz, 2012). Similar to Schumpeter's theory, Melnikas, (2010) p. 527 highlights the *universal principle of new quality creation*:

*"New quality always forms itself or is formed on the ground of conjugation, when elements of different origins, which never before belonged to the same system, merge into a common interaction system. This principle expresses the abstraction and use of synergetic effects and shows that qualitative changes always require actions and means that are necessary for merging elements of a different origin into a common system."*

The universal principle of new quality creation is applicable to digital nomad hubs (Melnikas, 2010). Valenduc and Vendramin (2016) introduce the idea of *cooperative nomadism* and describe the relationship between the individual and the collective in individual working environments, and emphasize team projects to support professional aims and personal development (ibid). Yet entrepreneurial, freelance and remote employee work differs, as do the relevant resources, opportunities and challenges. Johns and Gratton (2013) suggest that there are four starting points for clarifying the objectives prior to entering collaboration[14]:

1. *"Goals are decided up front, along with key roles, commitments, and the rules of play.*
2. *Leaders define the vision, set boundaries, and then relinquish control. They understand that project leadership is not a power game.*
3. *Roles and commitments are measured against well-communicated metrics.*
4. *The culture mantra is to trust someone until he or she becomes unworthy of trust."*

---

[14] Learning-by-doing

Collaboration can promote a more balanced skill set due to comprehensive tasks and the potential for absorbing knowledge spillovers (Gast et al., 2017). Hubs that are clustered with talented digital nomads can also expand collaborative benefits by guiding and supporting individual decisions about work models, technology, talent sources and people practices (Johns & Gratton, 2013). Furthermore, it has become more compelling to move back and forth between academia and the business sector, as collaboration is more likely to occur between people with academic backgrounds (Lindvall, 2017). On the other hand, working from a different location can cause professional barriers, such as reducing in-person supervision[15] and face-to-face interactions, which can inhibit valuable relationships with colleagues, clients and customers. Consequently, an employee's benefits that are related to visible efforts can be affected due to the employer's inability to directly observe efforts. To solve this common problem, it has been suggested that employees receive training to communicate relevant performance[16], while supervisors establish positive expectancies and encourage self-fulfilling insights for their employees (Barsness et al., 2005).

Each hub serves specific communities that have distinct cultures, which translates into varying terms of use (Johns & Gratton, 2013). As such, it is necessary to consider which hub could elevate professional and personal goals, add value and create win-win situations (Richter et al., 2017). Differences between hubs depends on the interactions among members, as interactions generate perceived similarity, mutual acceptance and attraction. Demographic differences categorize people into groups, while the hub culture either drives or dissolves the categorization process. Categorization can be remedied with activities that are designed to increase interaction across differences, such as joint task dependencies, formal mentoring programs and retreats. In addition, social networking can create shared values and unity despite demographic attributes (Barsness et al., 2005). However, many digital nomads lack a sense of community and, therefore, lose the richness of collaboration and the social factor (Johns & Gratton, 2013).

A digital nomad lifestyle does not necessarily lead to isolation. Rather, the method for belonging has become more individual and relies on face-to-face interactions to strengthen emotional ties and impose belonging, while the community is an impersonal concept (Valenduc & Vendramin, 2016). Hubs that create a sense of community can provide the level of trust and comfort that is necessary for engaging in new opportunities (Barsness et al., 2005). In fact, it is common for digital nomads to reunite in specific hubs, as greater familiarity with one another increases interpersonal insights and the quality of information exchange (Johns & Gratton, 2013; Barsness et al., 2005). In addition, open-minded digital nomads with sustainable mindsets push the boundaries of the *sharing economy* when sharing digital content, physical goods and crowdfunding (Richter et al., 2017).

Cultural intelligence (CQ) is another positive outcome of joining a hub. CQ is based on the interaction between cultural knowledge, cultural metacognition and cross-cultural skills. These components do not operate in isolation but are developed in different ways. *Cultural knowledge* is how one processes the content in other cultures, such as understanding strategies to express disagreement and provide feedback based on cultural background. *Cultural metacognition* is sometimes referred to as cultural mindfulness and is the control and knowledge of one's thinking and learning activities in a specific domain of cultural strategies and experiences. Having an awareness of cultural context, engaging in interactive situations and planning for

---

[15] Primarily affects remote employees

[16] For example, via frequent progress reports and skype meetings

different cultural contexts is cultural mindfulness. *Cross-cultural skills* consist of a skillset for intercultural effectiveness:

1. *"Relational skills; whether you enjoy talking and interacting with people from other cultures.*
2. *Tolerance of uncertainty; whether you are able to tolerate uncertainties, ambiguities and unexpected changes in an intercultural interaction.*
3. *Adaptability; whether you can change your behavior according to the cultural demands.*
4. *Empathy; whether you can put yourself in a culturally different person´s shoes and imagine the situation from his or her perspective.*
5. *Perceptual acuity; whether you understand other people´s feelings and subtle meanings during intercultural interactions"*

People who have a high CQ connect the divides and knowledge gaps when collaborating with others by educating about different cultures, transferring knowledge between disparate groups, building interpersonal connections and easing interpersonal processes in a multicultural environment. Furthermore, high CQ people foster innovation and creativity due to their ability to integrate diverse resources and multiple perspectives in a multicultural hub (IESE Business School, 2017).

## 2.8 Bali as a digital nomad hub

Before the digital nomad lifestyle became a movement, *plug and play places,* specifically in major cities, highlighted the importance of eventful hotspots as future work environments (Richard, 2015). Digital nomad hubs are a continuation of urban hubs that assume that a deeper and broader pool of individuals and ideas enhance innovative opportunities (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2012). Nomadlist (2017) ranks the best places in the world to live and work remotely based on geoarbitrage,[17] current temperature,[18] internet speed and safety, including a low crime rate. This ranking also considers low racism, gay/LGBT friendliness, air quality, fun factors and nightlife. These fundamentals have lured the modern nomad to places that include Bangkok, Medellin, Chiang Mai, Ubud and Canggu, in Bali.

Bali's ravishing beaches and terraced rice fields make it an Indonesian paradise that feels like a dream. Balinese and other ethnic groups, especially the Javanese people, are friendly and eager to immerse foreigners into their religious[19] events, ceremonies and other activities, such as surfing and exploring the beauty of Bali. The Balinese acceptance of outside influences, including technology innovations, has cultivated the emergence of the digital nomad hub. Likewise, the welcoming and spiritual atmosphere is consistent with the local relationships that many digital nomads seek in their travels. The apparent digital nomad trend in Bali is also experienced by non-digital nomads due to the abundance of work friendly cafés that are crowded with digital nomads and their laptops. Not surprisingly, Bali was crowned the best destination in the world with the TripAdvisor (2017) Traveler's Choice Award.

---

[17] The possibility to use a modest Western income in a country that has a weaker currency and to have a more affordable lifestyle.

[18] Comfortable living conditions

[19] Bali is multi-religious and the predominant religion is Hinduism

Since 1970, Bali has been a spiritual haven for bohemian expats, followed by the millennial generation. In contrast to spiritual seekers, digital nomads are more likely to adapt the hipster lifestyle and seek personal reinvention, yet still believe that spirituality is an essential component of wellbeing (Woolsey, 2017). In 2013, the former CBC producer Peter Wall opened Hubud, which was the first co-working space in Bali. His intention was to meet the demand of entrepreneurs, and Hubud is known as one of best co-working spaces in the world. Dojo Bali is another popular 24-hour co-working space that is in Canggu, near Echo beach. It was opened in late 2015 by Michael Craig, an Australian who escaped to Bali for surf breaks and as a cure for office burnout (Woolsey, 2017). Hubud provides a professional and *yogi* atmosphere while overlooking the rice fields in Ubud, while Dojo offers a harmonized combination of surf, nightlife and work. Other co-working spaces in Bali include Outpost, Kumpul, Peppers Seminyak and Sprout. During the time of this study, almost no Indonesian digital nomads or virtual knowledge worker were seen in Hubud or Dojo, except for the workers. Nonetheless, both Hubud and Dojo provide discounts for Indonesians.

Digital nomads choose co-working spaces based on the community and local support system. In Canggu, the community is strengthened with weekly networking events; BBQ at Dojo; Pretty Poison, which is an empty swimming pool turned skate park; Old Man's Bar, which is a notorious bar; and Deus Ex Machina, which is a motorcycle/surf shop that hosts weekly gigs or events at other trendy hotspots in town. In the daytime, social circles are constructed when catching the best surf swells, taking a yoga class, enjoying a delicious plate of Nasi campur[20] or creative kaleidoscopic smoothie bowls in one of the many healthy cafés or watching the sunset while sipping on a Bintang beer.

Bali's digital nomad hub provides many opportunities to socialize and meet talented people from all over the world. According to Delaney (2016), "s*eed capital goes a long way and the cost of failure is very low"*. However, many digital nomads lack work visas because it is difficult to register foreign companies in Indonesia to prevent foreigners from filling jobs that can be performed by Indonesians. Indonesia has complex immigration rules and visas are expensive. Most digital nomads stay on a tourist visa and leave the country every 60 days, while some pay a visa agent to stay longer or apply for a six months social/cultural visa that becomes void after leaving Indonesia. In addition to the independent lifestyle, the visa issues may explain why most digital nomads in Bali are solo travelers. Consequently, it makes Bali a temporary place where people and relationships come and go. On the other hand, many digital nomads return and reunite in one of the many co-working spaces. Woolsey (2017) interviewed a digital nomad who explained his unwillingness to and the hardship of leaving Bali to face reality in the West:

*"It's not real life /.../Everyone here is beautiful, there are hormones flying everywhere. The minute you move away, you're in for a big wake-up"*

Western entitlement is a disadvantage, especially for digital nomads who are cannot adapt to the Balinese culture and connect with true locals. Some Westerners tend to forget that Indonesia is an emerging economy and that many locals have not had educational and learning opportunities. Craig, the founder of Dojo, said: "*Sometimes people come in and expect our staff to treat them like it's a five-star hotel when we're hiring village people and trying to upskill*

---

[20] A tTraditional Indonesian dish consisting that consists of rice with assorted vegetables, fish and a meat of choice.

*them. I just wish people would lose their entitlement"* (Woolsey, 2017). Many digital nomads experience bag snatching when they are commuting on their scooters as well as burglary. To accommodate for the increasing number of visitors, parts of Bali are undergoing rapid gentrification, which has increased rents and forced locals to move to other areas. Another consequence is that Balinese traditions, such as food, is being replaced with Western food concepts.

A lack of venture capital has hindered Bali's ability to compete with hubs in Silicon Valley, Singapore or Tel Aviv (Delaney, 2016). This may soon be an issue of the past, as venture capital associations, such as the Global Venture Summit, is connecting Silicon Valley to Asia. In April 2017, the Global Venture Summit held their first conference in Bali and attracted more than 30 venture capitalists, 50 international angel investors and more than one hundred corporations (Loubier, 2017). This type of conference aims to connect influencers of the highest growth startup ecosystems in the world to accelerate innovative startups with funding support, expertise, mentorship and collaboration (GVS, 2017). Loubier (2017) insists that the diverse population, different cultures and languages in Indonesia lead to successful ideas that accelerate growth. This growth suggests that Bali is a perfect location for these conferences and is more lucrative for investors.

## 2.9 Identifying a digital nomad

Backpacking has been suggested as a liminal state that marks young travelers' passage into adulthood. Upon their return, they are expected to mature and settle down in society. Digital nomads disrupt backpacking travel because they are unlikely to settle down to "normal life" and continue to explore while receiving income from their knowledge work (Richards, 2015). According to Reichenberger (2017), digital nomads are in their 20s and early 30s. She suggests that the age depends on the absence of family commitments and because this generation has developed an affinity to ICT and is, thus, a self-evident virtual knowledge worker. It is common to have completed at least a bachelor's degree to increase one's ability to work as an entrepreneur, freelancer or remote employee. Digital nomads often perceive a symbiotic relation between virtual knowledge work and travelling. Most digital nomads do not have a permanent residence or spend up to three months per year in their usual home (ibid). Reichenberger's identification of digital nomads corresponds to the millennial generation, which is also called generation X, and refers to those who were born between 1980 and the beginning of 2000. These are the true protagonists of innovation, as they are well-educated, motivated to exploit new knowledge and dare to try different jobs to enrich their personal portfolios of experiences and skills. The millennial generation is the elite of creative technologies, entrepreneurial guidance, potential serial entrepreneurs and knowledge nomads. In addition, generation Y will grow up with perpetual access to technology and will enter the arena of business creation at a very early age (Formica, 2013).

# 3. Methodology

*This chapter introduces the research method for the field study, data collection and presents the objectivity, validity and reliability in the last section.*

## 3.1 An exploratory approach

Social constructionism contends that anyone can be considered a *knower* due to a collective understanding and shared assumptions about reality. Social constructionism is based on the interaction between respondents and the researcher and aims to distil a more informed consensus as opposed to other research strategies. This approach guides the explanatory process of the research; hence, the concepts under investigation are assumed to be interactively connected to valid and reliable findings (Small, 1999). In the next step, qualitative and quantitative research were employed as complementary methods in an online survey that was a semi-structured questionnaire to allow for more extensive results and comparisons. A quantitative approach was used to investigate objective quantitative property and trends that were related to the characteristics of the digital nomads in Bali. A qualitative approach subjectively assesses the respondent in relation to behaviors, attitudes, opinions and impressions (Sahu, 2013). The choice of this method is based on its flexible and comprehensive features to address the research questions, discover hidden and underlying facts and obtain the non-scientific nature of the digital nomad lifestyle with ease. Nevertheless, an exploratory approach can be subjected to bias due to: *inadequate representation* of target population; *reactivity* - respondent's may provide socially or morally desirable responses; *mismatches with the sampling frame* – difficulties ascertaining the adequate numbers and types of people who represent the population; a *non-response rate* – people do not participate in the survey; and *measurement error*- failure to measure the desired attributes (Singh, 2007).

## 3.2 Procedure, respondents and coding

First, there was an extensive analysis of online content, including digital nomad pages on Facebook, co-working websites, news that featured digital nomads, articles and blogs. Additionally, informative podcasts, events, such as *Burning Man Week Stockholm* and frequent skype calls with the serial entrepreneur, Aaron Mashano, were inductively accounted for prior to designing the questionnaire. To address methodological limitations and obtain accurate results with the open-ended and multiple-response questions, there was a diverse focus group with three digital nomads in Bali. This focus group served to identify variations in language, questionnaire items, and the interpretation of pre-coded options or questions (Singh, 2007). The focus group produced insights and information that was relevant to the research questions. Moreover, to eliminate unqualified respondents, the first question asked whether the respondent was a location-independent entrepreneur, freelancer and/or remote employee and used technology to perform their job, which is referred to as a filter item (ibid). However, this self-selection approach is subject to self-selection bias that could have a positive or negative impact (Li & Hitt, 2008). To eliminate bias, the respondents were initially informed about the research purpose to decide which aspects of the digital nomad lifestyle were relevant to the thesis (Reichenberger, 2017).

Data were collected over the course of a two-month field study in Bali. The research was supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). SIDA's (2017) mission is as follows:

*"SIDA is a government agency that works on behalf of the Swedish parliament and government, with the mission to reduce poverty in the world. Through our work and, in cooperation with others, we contribute to implementing Sweden's Policy for Global Development."*

Accordingly, this research aims to assess the characteristics of digital nomads in Bali, the advantages and disadvantages of the lifestyle and how Bali's digital nomad community supports professional development. The empirical results reflect the digital nomad trend, and, thus, can be viewed as an indicator of globalization and global prosperity based on the increased flow of knowledge spillovers. From March to May 2017, approximately 400 digital nomads living in Bali were approached to participate in this study. 59 respondents completed the survey. The information was obtained through an online questionnaire that included open- and closed-ended questions. The data collection procedure was varied to reduce the risk for *non-response rate* and highlighted the importance of network centrality for accurately managing impressions and increasing the response rate (Barsness et al., 2005). The data collection strategy also relied on online communications via Facebook groups, such as *Bali Digital Nomads, Dojo Community* and the *Global Digital Nomad Network*. Aaron Mashano's advice and connections to co-working spaces in Bali primarily increased the response rate. As a result, the survey was posted on Hubud's member page. Networking events that were organized by the digital nomad community were opportunities to personally connect with potential respondents. To reduce selection bias, networking occurred in different places and venues in Bali, and thus, a variety of digital nomads were asked to participate in the survey. The networking was not completely limited to community members. However, this process was vital to maintaining a representative sample size.

To prepare for the analysis, the quantitative data were categorized while the qualitative data were coded and sorted. An open coding process is based on grounded theory and is a process for conceptualizing research data and sorting them into relevant categories that correspond with the purpose and interpretation of the data (Singh, 2007). The first coding step identified independent themes and structures based on questions about the digital nomad lifestyle and the digital nomad community in Bali. The second step compared the results from the first coding step with the literature review to create one cohesive and comprehensive data set. This process resulted in 7 core categories that are present in the results section. The coding process was appropriate, as the outcomes mirror central themes that were already identified in the literature.

## 3.3 Objectivity, validity and reliability

Objectivity refers to data that is unbiased from the researcher's perspective. Good and useful data are obtained with research designs that use instruments and measures that are precise; however, it is difficult to attain objectivity in research in general (Sahu, 2013). Validity and reliability are often used as synonyms but have different meanings in applied statistics. External validity is the extent to which the research can be generalized to extend the study or apply it to other situations, while internal validity is the true causes of an outcome and corresponds to the rigor and extent of the study. A questionnaire's validity is the ability to measure the intended results; hence, the choice of (valid) instruments is crucial for obtaining accurate results. Reliability is an instrument's ability to repeatedly measure the same thing with consistency. To assess reliability, three factors are considered; stability over time; internal reliability to assess whether the indicators that comprise an index or scale are consistent; and inter-observer consistency when more than one researcher are involved in the research and use an open coding process to categorize data (Singh, 2007; Sahu, 2013). Both concepts are important for interpreting the validity of the questionnaire and demonstrating reliability through repeated measurement (Sahu, 2013).

# 4. Empirical data

*The following chapter presents the demographics of the respondents for understanding the underlying conditions and resources that allowed for knowledge work in Bali. This is followed by the digital nomad lifestyles' advantages and disadvantages and professional development in Bali.*

## 4.1 Demographics

As stated in the literature review, regulatory regimes, institutions, established firms and individuals' ability to adapt and implement new technology have a considerable effect on the convergence or divergence of technology, which highlights regulatory discrepancies between nations (Freeman & Louca, 2001; Atkeson & Kehoe, 2001). Moreover, because technology development often occurs in clusters that have a functional market and a supportive system, it is expected that residents in advanced economies have an advantage in adopting the digital nomad lifestyle. Figure 4 shows the respondents' nationalities, which is consistent with the latter, as the vast majority of digital nomads in Bali were from advanced economies. Thus, a high level of social comfort, material welfare, knowledge and technical skills enabled this lifestyle. The top three representatives are the United States, Germany and the Netherlands, while Brazil, Indonesia, China and Uruguay represent emerging economies at 11 percent, with 58 percent men and 42 percent women in total.

It is important to note that most respondents are members of the digital nomad community. The previous chapter, *Bali as a digital nomad hub,* revealed that the most famous co-working spaces, Hubud and Dojo, lack Indonesian members. As suggested by Formica (2013), and confirmed by Craig (founder of Dojo), and as is generally evident in Bali, some Westerners suffer from a superiority complex that may provide a distant impression and make Indonesians feel less welcome in the digital nomad community. This finding may explain why so few Indonesians are members of the community. Indonesian digital nomads are also likely to be working from another location or may prefer a co-working space other than Hubud and Dojo. Moreover, as Indonesia is still a developing country, general societal values and assumptions differ from the values and assumptions in the West. Therefore, Indonesians may have different priorities and may not recognize the value of joining a digital nomad community.
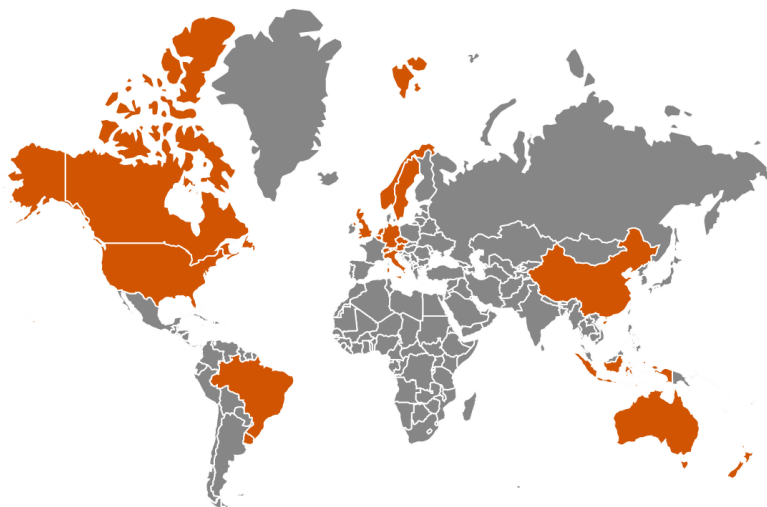


Figure 4. Digital nomad nationalities

Consistent with Reichenberger's (2017) definition of a digital nomad, the results show that the majority are young professionals/millennials: 72 percent are 25-34, 19 percent are 35-44, 7 percent are 18-24 and 2 percent are 45-54. Formica (2013) suggests that millennials are the true protagonists of innovation and are explorers and self-evident digital nomads. As computers infringe into territory that was previously governed by humans, Figure 5 shows that most digital nomads had an academic degree. Knowledge is the individual's comparative advantage, while an academic degree can facilitate the execution of entrepreneurial ideas and benefit negotiations in contractual agreements for more favorable conditions, among others.



■ Bachelor degree (56.70%)    ■ Master degree (17.53%)
■ Other degree (10.31%)        ■ Some academic credit, n.. (9.28%)
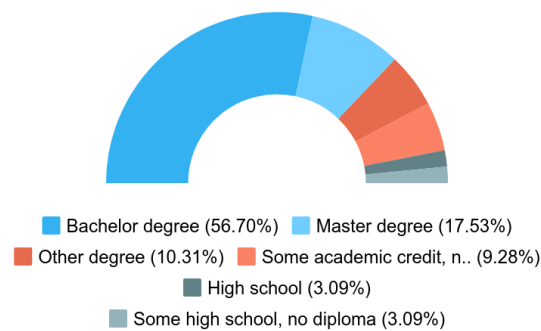■ High school (3.09%)
■ Some high school, no diploma (3.09%)

Figure 5. Level of education

Ferriss (2011) refers to entrepreneurs as bold movers who enter the realm of uncertainty and challenge the status quo. Although entrepreneurship is risky, the results in Figure 6 show that most digital nomads identify themselves as entrepreneurs and support Delaney's (2016) statement that *"Seed capital goes a long way and your cost of failure is very low."* However, only 2/3 claim that their company/employer is registered.



■ Entrepreneur (50%)    ■ Freelancer (32%)
■ Remote employee (18%)
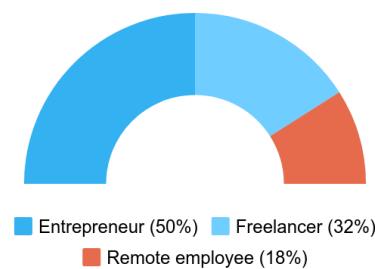
Figure 6. Professions

Bootstrapping[21] is the most common way to fund the initial phase of the digital nomad lifestyle, followed by immediate cash flow from a remote job, employer, support from family and bartering[22]. Different ways of funding are clearly related to job type, although it may be possible to start travelling with little money in one's pocket. Approximately 75 percent can cover all monthly expenses, including accommodations, food, transport, insurance, activities, and taxes, with a buffer for unexpected costs with their current income. Those who cannot cover their monthly expenses are primarily bootstrapping and/or obtaining support from family.

---

[21] Self-funding from savings

[22] Exchanging goods and services as a substitute for cash

Figure 7 shows that the digital nomad income is the same as having a traditional location-dependent job, which indicates economic sustainability. Respondents from countries with stronger currency than the Indonesian rupiah may enjoy more purchasing power[23], even with a lower absolute income.[24] Thus, they can utilize geoarbitrage for higher living standards while building a business and expanding one's network, which confirms Kachroo-Levine's (2017) article about starting a business without a client base. In addition, the freedom multiplier can generate a higher lifestyle output, as freedom may be the real power rather than a high monthly income.
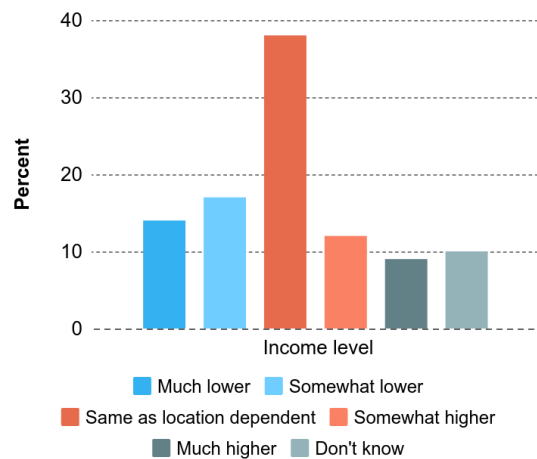


Figure 7. Digital nomad incomes

Location independence may be an advantage of entrepreneurship, freelancing and remote employment, or a desirable feature. The results show that respondents who are entrepreneurs became location-independent after starting their businesses, while location-independence is a strong impetus to work in freelance. Approximately 50 percent of remote employees were remotely employed because they wanted to be location-independent, and the others became location independent due to the nature of their employment. In contrast to Ferris's discourse on the 4-hour-work-week, Figure 8 shows that an average work week in Bali consists of 33 working hours. The number of hours is consistent with Clark's (2017) statement that hard work is still mandatory even though the idea of a career changed to include personal fulfillment.

---

[23] Purchasing power is the value of a currency that is expressed in terms of the amount of goods or services that one unit of money can buy.

[24] Relative income can be higher
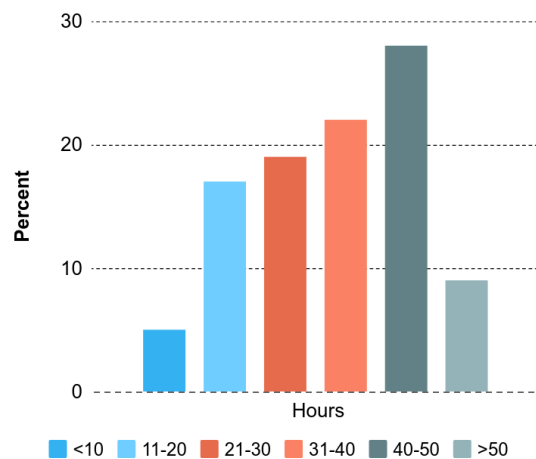
Figure 8. Working hours per week

Digital nomads must manage on-demand work that is related to their expertise and the growing gig economy. The most common areas of expertise are shown in Figure 9 and mirror the current demand for skills. Furthermore, becoming an expert within a field that allows for flexibility is associated with aspiring a digital nomad lifestyle, while possessing expertise led to the potential for embracing a digital nomad lifestyle. Bali's digital nomads ranked the top five motivational factors as (1) autonomous work, (2) exploring the world, (3) an improved lifestyle, (4) an opportunity to start a business, and (5) improved work conditions.



Figure 9. The top 10 areas of expertise

Time spent as a digital nomad differed, but most are new to the lifestyle and had less than one year of experience. Approximately 30 percent spent 1-5 years travelling, while 9 percent were digital nomads for more than 5 years. A total of 73 percent spent less than 3 months in Bali, which may be related to visa issues as well as the nature of the nomadic lifestyle.

## 4.2 Digital nomad lifestyle advantages and disadvantages

Location independence is advantageous for a thriving life, but constant travelling and cultural adjustments can also lead to feelings of rootlessness and isolation. Table 4 demonstrates the advantages and disadvantages of the digital nomad lifestyle to address the second research question: *What are the digital nomad lifestyle advantages and disadvantages?*
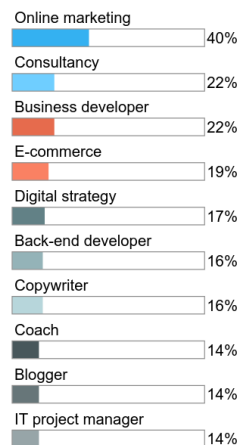
Table 4. Digital nomad lifestyle advantages and disadvantages

**DIGITAL NOMAD LIFESTYLE**

| | + | - |
|---|---|---|
| **Location independence** | Freedom to design your life | No sense of belonging or roots |
| **Travelling** | Exploring and experiencing the world | Cultural adjustments, travel fatigue and discomfort |
| **Overall job satisfaction, productivity** | • High focus<br>• Improved time management<br>• Fewer office distractions and informal obligations<br>• Low stress levels | • Low focus<br>• Poor time management<br>• More (often fun) distractions<br>• Bad internet connections<br>• High stress levels<br>• Less support from colleagues<br>• Unstable income<br>• No pension |
| **Innovation aspect** | • New inspiration improves creativity and stimulation<br>• Potential to exploit business opportunities – new markets, inputs and knowledge | • Less ability to influence employers and colleagues<br>• Different time zones than clients/colleagues/employees/employers<br>• Less physical meetings<br>• Difficult to build a company culture |
| **Social capital** | Meeting like-minded people through the digital nomad community and becoming part of a global network | Short-term relationships, difficult to date, loneliness, homesickness |
| **Law and finance** | Tax evasion (not socially sustainable) | Work permits, visas, managing tax obligations and finances |
| **Living conditions** | Improved living standards | Lower living standards and *"living out of a suitcase"* |

Freedom is the primary advantage of the digital nomad lifestyle, which is consistent with Reichenberger's (2017) *Digital Nomad Holism*. Having the freedom to choose an attractive location to achieve both professional and personal goals was emphasized by the respondents.

*"Choose the climate that makes you happiest, meet people from all over the world, there is constant stimulation from changing environments."*

*"Can travel to whatever country you want when you want to, flexibility in fitting your work into your life, don't have to be stuck in an office and subjected to office drama and gossip on a daily basis so you can focus better on your work."*

Valenduc & Vendramin (2016) stress that the digital nomad lifestyles rely on face-to-face interactions to strengthen emotional ties and impose belonging. Many respondents confirmed this and underline the advantage of meeting other digital nomads, to whom they could easily relate. Nevertheless, some respondents explain that the lifestyle can be stressful due to the constant effort in meeting new people. Reluctant interactions may also depend on the short-term relationships that are associated with the lifestyle and explain why some respondents are not part of the digital nomad community. However, engaging with others is essential for reducing feelings of loneliness as well as increasing personal and professional development.

Overall, job satisfaction and productivity dramatically differed. Because the digital nomad lifestyle is associated with autonomous and on-demand work, highly productive respondents may have a high level of liminality competence; hence, they have the ability to simultaneously be involved with several organizations, projects and/or assignments. Being an entrepreneur or having an entrepreneurial mindset is related to the capability for exploiting and identifying relevant and useful information to respond to the current demand for products and services. Similarly, a high absorptive capacity supports productivity and indicates a high academic degree and/or extensive work experience.

*"It affords high-performing individuals the option of minimizing work hours while maximizing experiences."*

Less ability to influence employers and colleagues, different time zones and the absence of physical meetings can impede job satisfaction and productivity. Remote employees may experience less job satisfaction because it is difficult to manage impressions, obtain supervision and receive benefits for visible efforts. Entrepreneurs and freelancers may experience high competition that reduces income and may advocate for a diversified income stream for financial stability. Moreover, some respondents struggle with unpredictable gigs and uncertain incomes due to unfavorable contractual agreements[25]. Having low liminality competence can also influence low job satisfaction and productivity. Other limitations include unreliable internet connections, and difficulties obtaining a work permit or a social/cultural visa to extend the stay. Travelling light can interfere with certain work improvements and personal fulfillment activities that require heavy equipment.

*"The business slightly suffers without a physical presence, being less contactable with different hours and poorer online and telephone connections, not being able to have in person meetings."*

*"Lack of routine, always want something different, endless opportunities"*

*"Lower income, no pension, no guaranteed income".*

Because the digital nomad lifestyle is still new to most social systems, it can be both costly and difficult to obtain a work permit, a long-term visa, to manage tax obligations and finances. However, the freedom to design a life and enjoy a higher living standard may offset general drawbacks that are connected to the lifestyle.

---

[25] Increasingly common in the gig economy

## 4.3 Professional development

In a constantly changing world, greater productivity and innovation requires reskilling and collaboration in the regular flow of work (Lundvall, 2017; Johns & Gratton, 2013). Barsness et al. (2005) highlight that demographic diversity and social networks can enhance professional development. Nevertheless, new situations affect how individuals perceive challenges and opportunities. The following section addresses the last reach question: *How does Bali's digital nomad community support professional development?*

A slight majority of the respondents confirm that Bali's digital nomad community supports professional development, but not all respondents feel that they are community members. As stated in the literature review, a community can provide trust and comfort for their members to engage in new opportunities. The results show that community members who spend time in co-working spaces benefit from shared knowledge and experiences that elevate professional and personal goals. Respondents confirm that co-working spaces in Bali create a sense of belonging, support and provide an enjoyable and productive environment. Thanks to workshops, informative presentations, conferences and networking events, members have been able to learn new methods, improve certain skills and develop insights and ideas.

*"I got so many great ideas from other people, it's insane. Being surrounded by likeminded people 24/7 allowed my business to grow exponentially"*

*"Just being able to meet talented people who can do the things in our business that we need to do but suck at...and we can meet them face-to-face and work with them. This truly is changing our business."*

Respondents who do not benefit from the community claim that the knowledge sharing is not applicable to their business or that they have not taken advantage of community benefits. The majority still value the community for expanding their networks. A large social network will support future professional development but is also based on the individual's absorptive capacity.

*"Although networking events are fun, the specific skill sets in attendance don't really apply to my business."*

*"I don't know if it's helped my professional development, other than extending my network very quickly. Also, the very fact that there are so many of us here to share experiences with (and not have to explain what we're doing) relieves some psychological strain."*

Bali's digital nomad community mirrors an international network[26] as well as various socioeconomic backgrounds, such as educational level, profession and income. Accordingly, respondents highlighted the pool of talented international people. Brynjolfsson and McAfee (2012) stress that a deeper and broader pool of individuals and ideas can enhance innovative opportunities. This finding explains why many of the respondents have connected with digital nomads from different sectors and have created new projects and collaborations. Appropriately, some respondents use social activities and curated events to expand their career paths. This strategy is based on Schumpeter's theory of *new combinations,* as innovation relies on new combinations of knowledge inputs from already established knowledge, and Melnikas's (2010)

---

[26] Respondents represent 20 countries

*universal principle of new quality creation,* which highlights the importance of different origins. Bali's diverse population can also add to CQ and improve an understanding of different demographics, which, in turn, eases interactions and collaborations that will advance innovation and creativity. Therefore, the digital nomad community has become an important bridge between digital nomads and the local community.

*"Digital nomads can also provide great connections into the local communities, etc. - invaluable for outsourcing when you're an entrepreneur working solo to develop your business. They also provide info on what the local market is, which is great cost wise, etc."*

Overall, respondents are profiting from the community because of interactions with *likeminded* people. Some digital nomads stated that less distractions from non-entrepreneurial friends and family increases their focus. Importantly, many of the respondents use the word *likeminded,* which is associated with an entrepreneurial mindset. Bali's digital nomad communality is related to entrepreneurial values, as respondents emphasize the importance of recognition and support from fellow digital nomads who encourage the execution of ideas. This concept is consistent with Hofstede's (2001) reference of entrepreneurial values as increased risk taking, proactiveness, failure acceptance, achievement, openness to new ideas.

The majority of the respondents are enthusiastic about their working situation over the next few years; 55 percent believe that their company/employer/freelance business will expand its market and customer/client base; 40 percent expect that they or their employer will hire more employees, while 19 percent are pleased with their current status and will continue as before. Figure 10 presents the factors that maintain the digital nomad lifestyle.
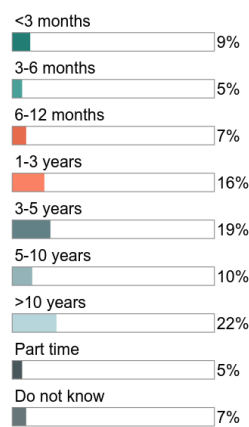


Figure 10. Expected future time as a digital nomad

# 5. Conclusion

*This concluding chapter summarizes the primary research findings and presents suggestions for future research.*

This study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the digital nomad lifestyle. In addition, this study examines the digital nomad demographics in Bali and how the digital nomad community in Bali can support professional development by addressing the following questions:

1. *What are the characteristics of digital nomads in Bali?*

2. *What are the digital nomad lifestyle advantages and disadvantages?*

3. *How does Bali's digital nomad community support professional development?*

The literature review assessed specific developments that have allowed the digital nomad lifestyle and emphasized the advantage of coming from an advanced economy. The transition from an industrial to knowledge based society emphasizes a nurturing social system, social comfort and material welfare for supporting creativity and fostering innovation. Moreover, an entrepreneurial mindset adds to the ability to identify relevant knowledge and skills for creating superior products and services. The entrepreneurial culture promotes shared knowledge and collective intelligence contributes to economic performance for individuals, firms and entire regions. Entrepreneurial culture is associated with hubs, while digital nomad hubs are often located in areas where digital nomads can benefit from geoarbitrage and improved living standards. Structural and social developments have affected both work and career flexibility, as that digital nomads perform virtual knowledge work and strive to achieve complete freedom and a work-life balance. However, knowledge work is associated with several drawbacks that can impede work-life balance and eliminate a future pension. A digital nomad lifestyle has enormous opportunities for fulfilling unique visions and has the potential for enjoying professional, spatial and personal freedom.

The empirical findings from 59 digital nomads in Bali clearly indicate the fundamental access to ICT from advanced economies. As a result, 89 percent of the respondents are from advanced economies and are equipped with skills and knowledge in digital expertise. The digital nomads are predominantly millennials from different academic backgrounds. They work for 33 hours per week, on average, and state that they receive an absolute income that is about the same as having a location-dependent job.

Advantages and disadvantages with the lifestyle are individual and depend on the mindset and competence of the digital nomad. Evidently, the lifestyle imposes the freedom to design one's life and the possibility to explore and experience the world while learning about different cultures and developing a global network. Nonetheless, it can also result in feelings of rootlessness, isolation and loneliness. Overall, job satisfaction and productivity dramatically differ, which indicates that digital nomads with liminality competence and high self-discipline are more likely to enjoy a work-life balance. Being in a different location makes it difficult to influence employers, colleagues, clients and customers, which, in turn, hampers work flow. Typical digital nomad work relates to the gig economy and is flexible on-demand work and may impose unfavorable contractual agreements and an unreliable income. Escaping the social system at home entails challenges, including visa issues, work permits, taxation and pensions.

Overall, members of Bali's digital nomad community feel supported in their professional development. This study was limited to digital nomads who are members of the Hubud and Dojo co-working spaces. Reskilling is easily achieved in one of Bali's many co-working spaces, where digital nomads can benefit from unique and dispersed knowledge, which reflects an entrepreneurial culture. Digital nomads who engage in daily learning processes, which are often provided in co-working spaces, can become more productive. Being a community member can unlock hidden talents and passions. Nevertheless, the ability to recognize, exploit and promote ideas and opportunities may require an entrepreneurial mindset. The community's social aspect favors new private and professional relationships.

To conclude, the digital nomad lifestyle is instinctively the future of work that can meet both personal and professional goals. In contrast to a location-dependent job, this dynamic lifestyle is more likely to stimulate *featured skills in 2020,* such as complex problem solving, critical thinking and creativity. The top 3 *future workforce strategies* are reskilling, mobility and collaboration, which are related to lifestyle attributes. However, the lifestyle advantages and disadvantages are individual, and not all digital nomads can achieve a work-life balance.

## 5.1 Future research

Disparities between nations affects technology implementation and leads to unequal conditions for adopting a digital nomad lifestyle. Most digital nomads are from advanced economies and stay in digital nomad hubs in developing countries due to geoarbitrage. Therefore, it is important to examine how digital nomads can interact more frequently with the local population to harmonize the digital knowledge gap.

It should be noted that increased interactions between people can generate perceived similarity, mutual acceptance and attraction. Demographic differences often categorize people into groups and emphasize the importance of inclusively acting and thinking by supporting and implementing equality and diversity. It is important to create activities that are designed to increase interactions across differences, such as joint task dependencies, formal mentoring programs and retreats. Socialization to increase interactions can enhance shared values and unity despite demographic attributes.

# 6. References

Arruda, W. (2017). *How Remote Work Is Changing And What It Means For Your Future*. [online] Forbes.com. Available at: https://www.forbes.com/sites/williamarruda/2017/02/16/how-remote-work-is-changing-and-what-it-means-for-your-future/#5fe34e49237a [Accessed 10 Dec. 2017].

Audretsch, D.B., Keilbach, M.C. and Lehmann, E.E., 2006. *Entrepreneurship and economic growth*. Oxford University Press.

Ballard, R., 2001. The impact of kinship on the economic dynamics of transnational networks. *ESRC Transnational Communities Programme Working Paper*.

Barsness, Z.I., Diekmann, K.A. and Seidel, M.D.L., 2005. Motivation and opportunity: The role of remote work, demographic dissimilarity, and social network centrality in impression management. *Academy of Management Journal*, *48*(3), pp.401-419.

Berger, G. (2017). *Jobs are changing. But two skills will always be in demand*. [online] World Economic Forum. Available at: https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/09/linkedin-job-skills-human-capital-report-2017/ [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

Bergmann, H., Hundt, C. and Sternberg, R., 2016. What makes student entrepreneurs? On the relevance (and irrelevance) of the university and the regional context for student start-ups. *Small Business Economics*, *47*(1), pp.53-76.

Bloomberg (2017). *Bad News, Your Boss Wants You Back in the Office*. [video] Available at: https://www.bloomberg.com/news/videos/2017-11-01/your-boss-wants-you-back-in-the-office-video [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

Bojanova, I., 2014. The Digital Revolution: What's on the Horizon?. *IT Professional*, *16*(1), pp.8-12.

Brynjolfsson, E. and McAfee, A., 2012. *Race against the machine: How the digital revolution is accelerating innovation, driving productivity, and irreversibly transforming employment and the economy*. Brynjolfsson and McAfee.

Circular Ecology. (2017). *Sustainability and Sustainable Development*. [online] Available at: http://www.circularecology.com/sustainability-and-sustainable-development.html#.Wim0aLbMx0s [Accessed 17 Dec. 2017].

Clark, D. (2017). *Entrepreneurial you*. 1st ed. Harvard Business Review Press.

Collamer, N. (2017). *Declare Your Independence With Gig Economy Work*. [online] Forbes.com. Available at: https://www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2017/07/03/declare-your-independence-with-gig-economy-work/#2ba6f4571f88 [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

Delaney, R. (2016). *Tech Entrepreneurs Flock to Bali*. [online] Techportfolio.net. Available at: http://techportfolio.net/2016/08/bali-tech-flocks-to-the-island-of-the-gods/#ixzz4y7QovnZv [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

Dojo (2017). *Dojo Hackathon - Build the bridge between coworking spaces and sustainable community projects.*. [online] Facebook.com. Available at: https://www.facebook.com/events/423832764628673/ [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

Dojo Bali (2017). *Crash Course Bahasa Indonesia*. [online] Dojo Bali. Available at: http://www.dojobali.org/en/events/view/494474111/crash-course-bahasa-indonesia [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

Elgan, M. (2017). *The Digital Nomad's Guide To Working From Anywhere On Earth*. [online] Fast Company. Available at: https://www.fastcompany.com/3068312/the-digital-nomads-guide-to-working-from-anywhere-on-e [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

Ferriss, T., 2011. *The 4-hour work week: Escape the 9-5, live anywhere and join the new rich*. Random House.

Formica, P., 2013. *Stories of innovation for the millennial generation: the Lynceus long view*. Springer.

Fornahl, D., Zellner, C. and Audretsch, D.B. eds., 2004. *The role of labour mobility and informal networks for knowledge transfer* (Vol. 6). Springer Science & Business Media.

Galea, C., Houkes, I. and De Rijk, A., 2014. An insider's point of view: how a system of flexible working hours helps employees to strike a proper balance between work and personal life. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *25*(8), pp.1090-1111.

Graham, M., Hjorth, I. and Lehdonvirta, V., 2017. Digital labour and development: impacts of global digital labour platforms and the gig economy on worker livelihoods. *Transfer: European Review of Labour and Research*, *23*(2), pp.135-162.

GVS (2017). *Global Ventures Summit | Silicon Valley Tours The World*. [online] Global Ventures Summit | Silicon Valley Tours The World. Available at: http://www.gvsummit.co [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

Hofstede, G., 2003. *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions and organizations across nations*. Sage publications.

Hoisl, K., 2007. Tracing mobile inventors—the causality between inventor mobility and inventor productivity. *Research Policy*, *36*(5), pp.619-636.

IESE Business School (2015). *Why You Need Cultural Intelligence (And How To Develop It)*. [online] Forbes.com. Available at: https://www.forbes.com/sites/iese/2015/03/24/why-you-need-cultural-intelligence-and-how-to-develop-it/#4898f2f217d6 [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

InfoDev (2017). *Digital Entrepreneurship Program | infoDev*. [online] Infodev.org. Available at: http://www.infodev.org/digital-entrepreneurship [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

Johns, T. and Gratton, L., 2013. The third wave of virtual work. *Harvard Business Review*, *91*(1), pp.66-73.

Johnson, L. and Houston, C., 2016. CREATING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET IN POST-MILLENIAL STUDENTS USING INTERACTIVE TECHNIQUES TO SUPPLEMENT PRACTICAL METHODS.

Kachroo-Levine, M. (2017). *How To Kick Start Your Life As A Digital Nomad (Even Without A Client Base)*. [online] Forbes.com. Available at: https://www.forbes.com/sites/mayakachroolevine/2017/10/17/how-to-kickstart-your-life-as-a-digital-nomad-even-without-a-client-base/#5712768a5377 [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

Kamphuis, Y. (2017). *Why I won't buy a house in any major world city – and neither should you*. [online] World Economic Forum. Available at: https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/10/end-of-cities-urbanization-housebuying/ [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

Karbassi, L. (2017). *Social Sustainability | UN Global Compact*. [online] Unglobalcompact.org. Available at: https://www.unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc/our-work/social [Accessed 17 Dec. 2017].

Kim, D. (2017). *3 Reasons Why College Is A Great Time To Start Up*. [online] Forbes.com. Available at: https://www.forbes.com/sites/ventureforamerica/2017/11/09/3-reasons-why-college-is-a-great-time-to-start- up/2/#7ed3cc125537 [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

Laine, I., 2017. MILLENNIALS AT WORK–INSIGHTS INTO FLEXIBLE WORK AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE AS PERCEIVED BY MILLENNIALS.

Lee, D. (2017). *Why jobs of the future won't feel like work*. [video] Available at: https://www.ted.com/talks/david_lee_why_jobs_of_the_future_won_t_feel_like_work/tr anscript [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

Lloyd, A., 2014. Following the red thread of information in information literacy research: Recovering local knowledge through interview to the double. *Library & Information Science Research*, *36*(2), pp.99-105.

Loubier, A. (2017). *Entrepreneurs And Investors At The First Global Venture Summit In Exotic Bali, Indonesia*. [online] Forbes.com. Available at: https://www.forbes.com/sites/andrealoubier/2017/05/07/first-global-venture-summit-in-bali-what-went-wrong-what-i-loved-and-how-it-can-be-improved/#2b2cdfa83b9a [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

Luk, G. (2016). *Global Mobile Workforce Forecast Update 2016-2022*. [online] Strategyanalytics.com. Available at: https://www.strategyanalytics.com/access-services/enterprise/mobile-workforce/market-data/report-detail/global-mobile-workforce-forecast-update-2016-2022#.Wi4ooCPMyL8 [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

Lundvall, B.Å., 2017. *The Learning Economy and the Economics of Hope*. Anthem Press.

MacKerron, G. and Mourato, S., 2013. Happiness is greater in natural environments. *Global Environmental Change*, *23*(5), pp.992-1000.

Melnikas, B., 2010. Sustainable development and creation of the knowledge economy: the new theoretical approach. *Technological and Economic Development of Economy*, *16*(3), pp.516-540.

Nelson, S.B., Jarrahi, M.H. and Thomson, L., 2017. Mobility of knowledge work and affordances of digital technologies. *International Journal of Information Management*, *37*(2), pp.54-62.

Parker, S.C., 2009. *The economics of entrepreneurship*. Cambridge University Press.

Reichenberger, I., 2017. Digital nomads–a quest for holistic freedom in work and leisure. *Annals of Leisure Research*, pp.1-17.

Reynolds, B. (2017). *2017 Annual Survey Finds Workers Are More Productive at Home, And More - FlexJobs*. [online] FlexJobs. Available at: https://www.flexjobs.com/blog/post/productive-working-remotely-top-companies-hiring/ [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

Richter, C., Kraus, S., Brem, A., Durst, S. and Giselbrecht, C., 2017. Digital entrepreneurship: Innovative business models for the sharing economy. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, *26*(3), pp.300-310.

Rokhim, R., Wahyuni, S., Wulandari, P. and Pinagara, F. (2017). Analyzing key success factors of local economic development in several remote areas in Indonesia. *Journal of Enterprising Communities: People and Places in the Global Economy*, 11(4), pp.438-455.

Roseberry, C. (2013). *Knovel - TOC*. [online] App.knovel.com. Available at: https://app.knovel.com/web/toc.v/cid:kpMMCSRWE2/viewerType:toc/root_slug:moving-to-mobility [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

Sahu, P.K., 2013. *Research methodology: A guide for researchers in agricultural science, social science and other related fields* (p. 432). Springer.

Shiffman, D. (2017). *How to Live Like a Nomad In a Digital Economy*. [online] business.com. Available at: https://www.business.com/articles/how-to-live-like-digital-nomad [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

SIDA. (2017). *Sida,* [online] Available at: http://www.sida.se/English/?epieditmode=true [Accessed 2 Nov. 2017]

Singh, K., 2007. *Quantitative social research methods*. Sage.

Stoughton, I. (2017). *Have Macbook, will travel*. [online] 1843. Available at: https://www.1843magazine.com/travel/the-daily/have-macbook-will-travel [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

Stuetzer, M., Audretsch, D.B., Obschonka, M., Gosling, S.D., Rentfrow, P.J. and Potter, J., 2017. Entrepreneurship culture, knowledge spillovers and the growth of regions. *Regional Studies*, pp.1-11.

TripAdvisor (2017). *Best Destinations in the World - Travelers' Choice Awards - TripAdvisor*. [online] Tripadvisor.com. Available at: https://www.tripadvisor.com/TravelersChoice-Destinations-cTop-g1 [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

Valenduc, G. and Vendramin, P., 2016. Work in the digital economy: sorting the old from the new.

Woolsey, B. (2017). *Why Young American Expats Flock to This Cheap Beach Paradise*. [online] Thrillist. Available at: https://www.thrillist.com/travel/nation/expats-in-canggu-bali-affordable-beach-town [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

World Economic Forum (2016). *The Global Human Capital Report 2017 Preparing people for the future of work.*. [online] Www3.weforum.org. Available at: http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Global_Human_Capital_Report_2017.pdf [Accessed 11 Dec. 2017].

# Digital Nomads and Job Creation in Bali

Hello,

My name is Julia Haking and I'm studying Economics of Innovation and Growth at KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm, Sweden. This survey is part of my master thesis exploring Digital Nomads and Job Creation in Bali. My aim is to analyse how globalization and digitalization contributes to new employment options and economic growth.

I'm contacting you since I have identified you as a Digital Nomad in Bali. By Digital Nomad I mean location independent entrepreneurs, freelancers and remote employees. Your response is very valuable to my research as it will help me to understand your role in the global economy and the future of location independent jobs. I would appreciate if you could spare ca 10 minutes of your time to answer each question carefully. The data is collected anonymously, which means that it cannot be traced back to you.

There are no right or wrong answers, respond to each question with a spontaneous and truthful answer. The collected data will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and will only be used for research purposes. With continuing with this online survey, you consent that your data will be used for this research project. Participation is voluntarily and you can end this online survey at any time.

The survey is divided into 3 sections. Section 1 focus on the beginning of your Digital Nomad journey, section 2 is about your digital experience in Bali followed by the last section emphasising on your future perspective.

Questions? Please send an email to haking@kth.se

I am truly grateful for your participation!
Julia Haking
Master student in Economics of Innovation and Growth
KTH Royal Institute of Technology

*Required

# Becoming a Digital Nomad
Section 1 of 3 focus on the beginning of your Digital Nomad journey.

1. **Are you a location independent Entrepreneur, Freelancer and/or Remote Employee and use technology to perform your job? ***
   **If no, please do not continue with the survey. Thank you for your time!
   *Mark only one oval.*

   ◯ Yes

   ◯ No**

2. **What is your nationality? ***
   *Mark only one oval.*

   ◯ Afghanistan

   ◯ Albania

   ◯ Algeria

- ( ) Andorra
- ( ) Angola
- ( ) Antigua & Barbuda
- ( ) Argentina
- ( ) Armenia
- ( ) Australia
- ( ) Austria
- ( ) Azerbaijan
- ( ) Bahamas
- ( ) Bahrain
- ( ) Bangladesh
- ( ) Barbados
- ( ) Belarus
- ( ) Belgium
- ( ) Belize
- ( ) Benin
- ( ) Bhutan
- ( ) Bolivia
- ( ) Bosnia & Herzegovina
- ( ) Botswana
- ( ) Brazil
- ( ) Brunei Darussalam ...
- ( ) Bulgaria
- ( ) Burkina Faso
- ( ) Burundi
- ( ) Cambodia
- ( ) Cameroon
- ( ) Canada
- ( ) Cape Verde
- ( ) Central African Republic
- ( ) Chad
- ( ) Chile
- ( ) China
- ( ) Colombia
- ( ) Comoros
- ( ) Democratic Republic of the Congo
- ( ) Republic of the Congo

- ( ) Costa Rica
- ( ) Cote d'Ivoire
- ( ) Croatia
- ( ) Cuba
- ( ) Cyprus
- ( ) Czech Republic
- ( ) Denmark
- ( ) Djibouti
- ( ) Dominica
- ( ) Dominican Republic
- ( ) Ecuador
- ( ) Egypt
- ( ) El Salvador
- ( ) Equatorial Guinea
- ( ) Eritrea
- ( ) Estonia
- ( ) Ethiopia
- ( ) Fiji
- ( ) Finland
- ( ) France
- ( ) Gabon
- ( ) Gambia
- ( ) Georgia
- ( ) Germany
- ( ) Ghana
- ( ) Greece
- ( ) Grenada
- ( ) Guatemala
- ( ) Guinea
- ( ) Guinea-Bissau
- ( ) Guyana
- ( ) Haiti
- ( ) Honduras
- ( ) Hungary
- ( ) Iceland
- ( ) India
- ( ) Indonesia

- ○ Iran
- ○ Iraq
- ○ Ireland
- ○ Israel
- ○ Italy
- ○ Jamaica
- ○ Japan
- ○ Jordan
- ○ Kazakhstan
- ○ Kenya
- ○ Kiribati
- ○ Kosovo
- ○ Kuwait
- ○ Kyrgyzstan
- ○ Laos
- ○ Latvia
- ○ Lebanon
- ○ Lesotho
- ○ Liberia
- ○ Libya
- ○ Liechtenstein
- ○ Lithuania
- ○ Luxembourg
- ○ Macedonia
- ○ Madagascar
- ○ Malawi
- ○ Malaysia
- ○ Maldives
- ○ Mali
- ○ Malta
- ○ Marshall Islands
- ○ Mauritania
- ○ Mauritius
- ○ Mexico
- ○ Micronesia
- ○ Moldova
- ○ Monaco

- ⬭ Mongolia
- ⬭ Montenegro
- ⬭ Morocco
- ⬭ Mozambique
- ⬭ Myanmar (Burma)
- ⬭ Namibia
- ⬭ Nauru
- ⬭ Nepal
- ⬭ Netherlands
- ⬭ New Zealand
- ⬭ Nicaragua
- ⬭ Niger
- ⬭ Nigeria
- ⬭ North Korea
- ⬭ Norway
- ⬭ Oman
- ⬭ Pakistan
- ⬭ Palau
- ⬭ Palestine
- ⬭ Panama
- ⬭ Papua New Guinea
- ⬭ Paraguay
- ⬭ Peru
- ⬭ Philippines
- ⬭ Poland
- ⬭ Portugal
- ⬭ Qatar
- ⬭ Romania
- ⬭ Russia
- ⬭ Rwanda
- ⬭ Saint Kitts & Nevis
- ⬭ Saint Lucia
- ⬭ Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- ⬭ Samoa
- ⬭ San Marino
- ⬭ Sao Tome & Principe
- ⬭ Saudi Arabia

- Senegal
- Serbia
- Seychelles
- Sierra Leone
- Singapore
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Solomon Islands
- Somalia
- South Africa
- South Korea
- South Sudan
- Spain
- Sri Lanka
- Sudan
- Suriname
- Swaziland
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Syria
- Taiwan
- Tajikistan
- Tanzania
- Thailand
- Timor-Leste
- Togo
- Tonga
- Trinidad & Tobago
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- Turkmenistan
- Tuvalu
- Uganda
- Ukraine
- United Arab Emirates
- United Kingdom
- United States of America

◯  Uruguay

◯  Uzbekistan

◯  Vanuatu

◯  Vatican City

◯  Venezuela

◯  Vietnam

◯  Yemen

◯  Zambia

◯  Zimbabwe

3. **Which gender do you identify as?** *
   *Mark only one oval.*

   ◯  Male

   ◯  Female

4. **What is your age?** *
   *Mark only one oval.*

   ◯  18-24

   ◯  25-34

   ◯  35-44

   ◯  45-54

   ◯  55-65

   ◯  65-74

   ◯  >75

5. **What is the highest level of education you have completed?** *
   *Mark only one oval.*

   ◯  Some high school, no diploma

   ◯  High school graduate, diploma or the equivalent

   ◯  Some college credit, no degree

   ◯  Trade/technical/vocational training

   ◯  Associate degree

   ◯  Bachelor's degree

   ◯  Master's degree

   ◯  Professional degree

   ◯  Doctorate degree

6. **What kind of digital nomad are you?** *

Tick all that apply
*Tick all that apply.*

☐ Remote employee

☐ Freelancer

☐ Entrepreneur

7. **What motivated you in becoming a digital nomad? Select the top three (3) factors** *

*Tick all that apply.*

☐ To be independent

☐ Higher income

☐ Better work conditions

☐ Capital, space, equipment opportunities

☐ Saw business opportunities

☐ I wanted to start a business

☐ Recently graduated and saw the opportunity to become a digital nomad

☐ I gained business ideas while working at my last company and pursued that opportunity

☐ Due to job loss/layoff and saw an opportunity

☐ Joined the family business

☐ Nature of occupation

☐ No jobs available locally

☐ I am a (full-time) traveller and wanted to become location independent

☐ I wanted to explore the world

☐ I wanted a better lifestyle

☐ Other: _____

8. **Please choose the answer that best fits your experience.** *
   *Mark only one oval.*

   ◯ I want to be location independent and therefore I became a freelancer.

   ◯ I am a freelancer who wants to be location independent.

   ◯ Being location independent is the nature of my occupation as a freelancer and I do not necessary want to travel.

   ◯ I want to be location independent and therefore I became an entrepreneur.

   ◯ I am an entrepreneur who wants to be location independent.

   ◯ Being location independent is the nature of my occupation as an entrepreneur and I do not necessary want to travel.

   ◯ I want to be location independent and therefore I became a remote employee.

   ◯ I am a remote employee who wants to be location independent.

   ◯ Being location independent is the nature of my occupation as a remote employee and I do not necessary want to travel.

   ◯ My employer assigned me to complete a specific task which requires travelling.

9. **I experienced fear to fail in becoming a digital nomad?** *
   *Mark only one oval.*

   |                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                              |
   |------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|------------------------------|
   | To an Extremely Small Extent | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ | To an Extremely Large Extent |

10. **What is your expertise/expertises?** *
    *Tick all that apply.*

    ☐ Account manager/executive

    ☐ Adjunct faculty

    ☐ Affiliate Marketing

    ☐ App Developer

    ☐ Attorney

    ☐ Back-End Developer

    ☐ Blogger

    ☐ Business Developer

    ☐ Coach

    ☐ Consultant

    ☐ Copywriter

    ☐ Corporate Travel Counsellor

    ☐ Crowdsourcing Manager

    ☐ Curriculum Developer

    ☐ Customer Service Management

- [ ] Digital Strategist
- [ ] Digital Marketing Engineer
- [ ] Drop Shipper
- [ ] E-Book Publisher
- [ ] E-commerce
- [ ] Editor
- [ ] Email Marketing
- [ ] Freelance Writer
- [ ] Front-End Developer
- [ ] Growth Hacker
- [ ] Illustrator
- [ ] Independent Travel Counsellor
- [ ] Insurance Adjuster
- [ ] IT project Manager
- [ ] Journalist
- [ ] Medical coder
- [ ] Nurse/RN Case Manager
- [ ] Online/Digital Business model consultant
- [ ] Online Language tutor
- [ ] Online Marketing
- [ ] Online Music Teacher
- [ ] Online Teacher
- [ ] Photography
- [ ] PPC specialist
- [ ] Project Manager/Program Manager
- [ ] Quality Assurance Tester
- [ ] Restaurant Critic
- [ ] Restaurant Marketing Strategist
- [ ] Sales Representative
- [ ] Search Engine Optimization Specialist
- [ ] Social Media Manager
- [ ] Software engineer
- [ ] Sports Psychologist
- [ ] System Administrator
- [ ] Tax Accountant
- [ ] Technical Writer
- [ ] Translator

☐ User acquisition specialist

☐ Videographer

☐ Virtual Personal Assistant

☐ Webmaster

☐ Web, UI or Graphic Design

☐ Web Search Evaluator

☐ Writer

☐ Other: _____

11. **What knowledge and skills from previous experience and/or job are you currently using as a digital nomad?** *

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

12. **How many hours do you work on average per week?** *
*Mark only one oval.*

◯ <10

◯ 11 to 20

◯ 21 to 30

◯ 31 to 40

◯ 41 to 50

◯ >50

13. **Is your company registered?** *
*Mark only one oval.*

◯ Yes

◯ No

◯ I do not know

14. **How did you fund yourself in the beginning as a digital nomad?** *

Tick all that apply
*Tick all that apply.*

- ☐ Angel investor
- ☐ Bank loan
- ☐ Bartering (exchange goods or services as a substitute for cash)
- ☐ Bootstrapping (self-funding from savings)
- ☐ Business Incubator or Accelerator
- ☐ Crowdfunding
- ☐ Employer
- ☐ Factoring/Invoice advances
- ☐ Grants
- ☐ Immediate cash flow from remote job
- ☐ Partnership e.g. licensing
- ☐ Support from family
- ☐ Support from friends
- ☐ Severance (compensation payment employees may receive when they leave employment at a company)
- ☐ Venture capital
- ☐ Other: _____

15. **Are you currently able to cover for your total monthly expenses (accommodation, food, transport, insurance, activities, tax (!), buffer for unexpected costs) with the income from your remote job?** *

*Mark only one oval.*

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

16. **If no, how do you cover for your expenses?**
Tick all that apply
*Tick all that apply.*

☐ Angel investor

☐ Bank loan

☐ Bartering (exchange goods or services as a substitute for cash)

☐ Bootstrapping (self-funding from savings)

☐ Business Incubator or Accelerator

☐ Crowdfunding

☐ Factoring/invoice advances

☐ Grants

☐ Partnership e.g. licensing

☐ Support from family

☐ Support from friends

☐ Severance (compensation payment employees may receive when they leave employment at a company)

☐ Venture capital

☐ Other: _____

17. **The monetary return I receive as a Digital Nomad is** *
*Mark only one oval.*

◯ Much lower

◯ Somewhat lower

◯ The same as I would receive if I was location dependent

◯ Somewhat higher

◯ Much higher

◯ Don't know

# Digital experience in Bali

Section 2 of 3 is about your time perspective and experience working in Bali.

18. **How long have you been travelling as a digital nomad (worldwide)?** *
*Mark only one oval.*

◯ Less than 3 months

◯ 3-6 months

◯ 6-12 months

◯ 1-3 years

◯ 3-5 years

◯ More than 5 years

19. **How long have you been working on Bali?** *
*Mark only one oval.*

- ( ) Less than 1 month
- ( ) 2-3 months
- ( ) 4-6 months
- ( ) 6-12 months
- ( ) More than one year

20. **To what extent do you perceive that the Digital Nomad community in Bali has supported your professional development?** *
*Mark only one oval.*

|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| To an extremely small extent | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | To an extremely large extent |

21. **Please define how the Digital Nomad community in Bali has supported your professional development?** *

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

22. **If you are an entrepreneur, please describe how the Digital Nomad community in Bali has supported your business?**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

23. **Is there any other Digital Nomad community (worldwide) that you prefer before Bali? Please specify below** *

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

# Future perspective

Section 3 of 3 is about future perspective of your working situation.

24. **How many people does your company employ (including yourself)?** *

_____

25. **If it's only you, are you planning to...**
    Tick all that apply
    *Tick all that apply.*

    ☐ Employ

    ☐ Collaborate

    ☐ Outsource

    ☐ Keep working on my own

26. **If you are working with other people, in which country/countries is you colleagues working in?**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

27. **How do you see your working situation in the next few years?** *
    Please choose the alternative/alternatives that best describes your situation.
    *Tick all that apply.*

    ☐ I predict challenges due to the fierce competition

    ☐ I am pleased with the current status and therefore will continue as before

    ☐ No major changes will occur

    ☐ I am optimistic and believe that profits will increase with 10%

    ☐ My freelance business will acquire significantly more clients

    ☐ My company/employer is expanding its market and customers base

    ☐ My company/employer is expanding and will hire more employees

    ☐ My company/employer is expanding the business abroad

    ☐ My company/employer is expanding the business within Indonesia

    ☐ Other: _____

28. **What is your exit strategy?** *
*Mark only one oval.*

- ( ) Merger & Acquisition (M&A)
- ( ) Initial Public Offering (IPO)
- ( ) Sell to a friendly individual
- ( ) Keep ownership and let someone else run the business
- ( ) Liquidation and close
- ( ) None, I am employed
- ( ) None, I plan to continue to be an entrepreneur
- ( ) None, I plan to continue to be a freelancer
- ( ) Other: _____

29. **Based on my experiences so far, I plan to continue being a digital nomad for...** *
*Mark only one oval.*

- ( ) Less than 3 months
- ( ) 3-6 months
- ( ) 6-12 months
- ( ) 1-3 years
- ( ) 3-5 years
- ( ) 5-10 years
- ( ) More than 10 years
- ( ) Other: _____

30. **What are the three main advantages of being a digital nomad?** *

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

31. **What are the three main disadvantages of being a digital nomad?** *

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

32. **Do you have any short- (3months), medium- (1 year) and long-term goals (2 year)?** *

Please specify your goals below

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

33. **If you're interested in the findings of the thesis please add your email below**

_____