



UNIVERSIDADE CATÓLICA PORTUGUESA

Digital Nomad Stories: Narratives from Lisbon

Dissertation to Universidade Católica Portuguesa to obtain a
Master's Degree in Strategic Communications and
Leadership

By

Paloma Schafer

Faculty of Human Sciences

September 2024



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Under the supervision of Prof. Luís Soares (PhD)

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Abstract

EN: The rise of digital technologies has led to the emergence of a community of location-independent workers, commonly referred to as digital nomads. Despite their growing presence, research is limited on how individuals navigate identity formation and social integration in new environments. This study investigates the motivations, challenges, and identity dynamics of digital nomads, through the collection of 6 life stories of digital nomads living in Lisbon, Portugal. Grounded in the conceptual frameworks of sociologists Giddens, Appadurai, and Castells, the study reveals the role mobility, community and digital technology play in identity evolution of digital nomads in Lisbon. The findings reveal that while digital nomads leverage their mobility for freedom and flexibility, they also face challenges related to local community integration. The study contributes to the fields of modern mobility, globalization, and the future of work by offering insights into the lived experiences of nomads. Recommendations are presented for future research on the long-term implications of digital nomadism.

Key words: digital nomadism, globalization, remote work, identity construction.

PT: O aumento das tecnologias digitais levou ao aparecimento de uma comunidade de trabalhadores independentes do local de trabalho, geralmente designados por nómadas digitais. Apesar da sua presença crescente, a investigação sobre a forma como os indivíduos navegam na formação da identidade e na integração social em novos ambientes é limitada. Este estudo investiga as motivações, desafios e dinâmicas identitárias dos nómadas digitais, através da recolha de 6 histórias de vida de nómadas digitais a viver em Lisboa, Portugal. Baseado nos quadros conceptuais dos sociólogos Giddens, Appadurai e Castells, o estudo revela o papel que a mobilidade, a comunidade e a tecnologia digital desempenham na evolução da identidade dos nómadas digitais em Lisboa. Os resultados revelam que, embora os nómadas digitais aproveitem a sua mobilidade para obter liberdade e flexibilidade, também enfrentam desafios relacionados com a integração na comunidade local. O estudo contribui para os campos da mobilidade moderna, da globalização e do futuro do trabalho, oferecendo uma visão sobre as experiências vividas pelos nómadas. São apresentadas recomendações para investigação futura sobre as implicações a longo prazo do nomadismo digital.

Palavras-chave: nomadismo digital, globalização, trabalho remoto, construção de identidade.

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Prologue

Digital nomadism (DN) represents a noteworthy response to the transformative potential of the digital age, where technological advancements have redefined traditional work arrangements. Influenced by digitalization and globalization digital nomads have utilized the flexibility of remote work to free themselves of the confines of the traditional “9 to 5”. Amidst this global phenomenon, Lisbon, Portugal, has emerged as a central hub for digital nomads from all over the world, attracting them with its laid-back culture, excellent weather, and the country’s investment in its digital transformation. The city has not only seen an increase in digital nomads but also other expatriates (expats), immigrants, and tourism, with many being attracted by the high quality of life and opportunities facilitated by technological advancements. The Portuguese government has encouraged the arrival of new foreign residents despite the implications it may have on the local community.

This thesis embarks on an ethnographic and anthropological journey to explore the intricate nuances of the digital nomad experience from those who are based in Lisbon, Portugal. Through the collection of life stories, (Atkinson, 1998) the thesis aspires to deepen our understanding of the motivations and challenges of digital nomads, as well as shed light on their evolving identities when living abroad.

Lisbon, as a top choice for digital nomads, can be seen as the microcosm in which we examine the broader implications of DN in the contemporary world (Forbes, 2022). The trends in hubs like Lisbon may spread to more rural communities, influencing communities beyond urban centers (Bosworth et al., 2023). Through multiple interviews and observations, the individual narratives of each actor's life unfold. Taking part in this narrative provides a detailed and intimate view of some of the digital nomads that call Lisbon home. With that in mind, the thesis aims to contribute to the novel and growing body of knowledge on digital nomadism, through a closer and more personal viewpoint.

DN is continuing to increase in popularity yet academic research on this topic remains limited. Therefore, the focus on a major digital nomad hub, Lisbon, Portugal, allows for the unique perspective of the interplay between place and identity. Arjun Appadurai’s *Modernity at Large* (1996), offers a valuable framework for understanding how these individuals engage in cultural exchange and develop a distinct hybrid identity, as they move across borders. Appadurai (1996, pg. 13) views culture as a tool for constructing group identity by emphasizing the distinctions that define the group in relation to others. Digital nomads wield

significant power (Mancinelli, 2020) in the places they choose to reside as their impact on economic activity and culture is substantial (Wang et al, 2018). Their experiences and narratives offer valuable insights into the future of work in the digital age. This calls for a qualitative research method offering a more nuanced lens to examine the complexities of this relatively novel lifestyle and workstyle (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

With that in mind, this thesis will draw on theoretical insights from three influential academics: Appadurai (1996), Castells (2005), and Giddens (1990, 1991 ,2006). Their contributions to the study of mobility, technology, and sociology provide a unique and well-rounded perspective to the study of digital nomadism. Appadurai's focus on migration and globalization, Castells's emphasis on digital technologies and network societies and Giddens's exploration of self-identity and modernity collectively provides a solid conceptual framework for this study.

In the following chapters, I will present my thesis structure and dive into the evolving phenomenon of digital nomadism, the motivations and challenges that DN experiences, as well the personal narratives of nomadic experiences. Within the context of Lisbon's digital nomad boom, this research will seek to understand how digital nomads navigate their experiences of mobility, work, and community. In the chapter that follows, the methodology is outlined focusing on the life stories approach to explore the experiences of digital nomads in Lisbon. A revision of the existing literature can be found in Chapter 3, which covers key research on DN, globalization, identity, and the future of work. Chapters 4-7 present the empirical findings: introducing the digital nomads, sharing how they navigate life in Lisbon, illustrating their remote work lives, and detailing their experiences in forming community. The subsequent chapter discusses the implications of these findings, linking them to the conceptual framework discussed in this chapter. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the key finding and reflects on the practical implications.

1.1 Background

The term "digital nomad" was introduced by Makimoto and Manners (1997) to describe mobile professionals who utilize digital technologies to work remotely from anywhere around the world. This lifestyle choice allows individuals to break free of the confines of traditional

office work, offering them the freedom to explore other cities and cultures while doing so. The popularity of remote work was even more exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic which caused a dramatic shift in work dynamics across the globe (Everson et al, 2021; Knifin et al, 2021). The pandemic forced many professionals across industries to adapt to remote work, causing a surge in remote work opportunities. In the Post-COVID-19 era, for many, the appeal of remote jobs remains incredibly popular (Barrero, 2021).

This digital transformation has allowed more individuals to pursue digital nomadism to blend work and leisure in their daily lives. According to Muller (2016), digital nomads prioritize the leisure considerations of a destination over employment considerations when selecting a new place to settle. Within digital nomadism, there is significant emphasis on the exploration of new cultures and cities. The natural beauty, the cultural landscape, and the quality of life are the considerations individuals take when all they require to get to work is a laptop and reliable Wi-Fi (Wang et al., 2018). This signifies that the traveling aspect of nomadism is at the centerfold. The act of picking up and moving to another country for some kind of self-fulfillment did not start with the digital nomads that we hear of today but has been a global trend since the 1980s (Hannonen, 2020).

The digital transformation of organizations and work, paired with technological connectivity and advanced ease and accessibility of transportation has allowed for this international mobility to flourish (Hannonen, 2020). The Wall Street Journal (WSJ) has reported that Lisbon had an economic growth of 8.2% in 2023 and a 20% rise in tax revenue from pre-pandemic times. The transformation of the city is visible; for instance, “centuries-old facades are being polished up after years of neglect, planning is underway for a new airport, twice the size of the existing one, and for a three-hour high-speed rail link to Madrid.” An unprecedented tourist boom driven largely by American tourists has been turbocharging growth. Some economists, residents, and politicians are concerned about the boom’s long-term implications. WSJ poses an interesting question “What happens if the dollar falls, and the tourists leave?”

Speaking of Portugal, “it’s literally for Americans right now, the place to go”. Tourism now generates one-fifth of the economic output in Lisbon and supports one in four jobs (WSJ, 2024). That boom has reverberated far beyond the capital. Portugal’s GDP grew by 8%

between 2019 and 2024 (WSJ). When the country was rescued with a 78-billion-euro bailout in 2011, the government agreed to raise money in return by privatizing TAP Air Portugal, the struggling national airline. Sold a controlling stake to a consortium formed by JetBlue founder David Neeleman who says “I didn’t know anyone who has been to Portugal... It was so inconvenient that people didn’t do it” (WSJ). Once an owner of Tap, Neeleman increased the number of direct flights to the U.S. eightfold between 2015 and 2020, adding hubs such as JFK and Boston Logan, betting on the untapped American market (WSJ). The average Portuguese employee earns around 1000 euros a month after tax. Only 2% earn more than 2000 euros (WSJ). Higher rents are forcing many businesses and cultural and social spaces catering to locals to close. For Europe’s policymakers, having people open hotels and restaurants is easier than incentivizing them to build up advanced manufacturing, which is capital intensive and takes a long time to pay off, said Marcos Carias (WSJ).

1.1.1. The Digital Nomad Visa

Over the past few years, the coastal city of Lisbon has been getting an increasing amount of recognition as a digital nomad hub, largely in part due to Portugal’s digital nomad visa. Designed to attract more digital nomads to the country, this visa, which came into effect in October 2022, allows remote workers to live and work remotely in Portugal (Global Citizens Solutions, 2022). NomadList¹, an online platform for digital nomads, provides data on cities around the world to help nomads in selecting their destinations. According to this platform, Lisbon now has a burgeoning population of over 13,000 digital nomads in its city. Initially, Lisbon embraced the influx of digital nomads, as coworking spaces began to pop up throughout the city. However, the large population of digital nomads with high spending power has been one of the factors driving the gentrification of many Lisbon neighborhoods and the increasing housing prices throughout the city, with developers focusing on the foreign markets (Lestegas et al. 2018, p. 688).

¹NomadList (now Nomads.com) <https://nomads.com/>

1.1.2. Building the Conceptual Framework: Global Networks, Flows of Culture, and Self-Identity

Arjun Appadurai's *Modernity at Large* (1996) places migration at the core of the modern experience, as a modern form of migration. His ideas further prompt the exploration of digital nomads and how mobility influences their hybrid identities in Lisbon. Appadurai introduces the concept of Ethnoscape (1996) as a way to describe the flows of cultures around the world and how they influence each other. Ethnoscape refers to the flow of people across boundaries. This 'scape' includes individuals such as refugees and labor migrants to leisure travelers and expats as well. Remote work has allowed individuals the so-called digital nomads – to become part of this ethnoscape, reinforcing the global exchange of culture that occurs within Lisbon.

Manuel Castells's The Network Society adds a needed digital dimension to the study of digital nomads. Castells's ideas emphasize the role of digital technologies and communication networks in shaping contemporary life. These ideas are relevant when discussing digital nomads, who operate themselves within a network society. Castells's perspective serves as one of our guides in the analysis of the narratives of digital nomads, whose lifestyles and experiences are enabled by digital technologies and the network society (Castells, 2004).

To complement Appadurai and Castells's perspectives, Giddens's (1984, 1991, 2006) sociological teachings concerning identity help explain that modern institutions are shaped and shape new mechanisms of self-identity. Therefore, in the context of the global economy, digital nomadism can be perceived as a manifestation of a modern institution (Giddens, 1991). This lifestyle choice not only reflects the ethos of individual freedom but also carries implications for the identity of those who opt to embrace it, consequently leaving an indelible mark on their personal narrative. Giddens's Structuration Theory (1984) explores the relationship between individuals and the social structures which they live in. Individuals have agency, personal choice, that is connected with the structures in which they operate. This is especially relevant for digital nomads who are both changing their environment, while their environment is changing around them.

1.2 Problematization

DN represents a novel and evolving workforce that has rapidly gained in popularity over the past few years. As the digital age continues to reshape traditional employment structures it is imperative to advance the study of digital nomads due to the significant impact it has on the future of work. As DN gains momentum and becomes a defining characteristic of the modern work environment, it is evident that our understanding of this lifestyle is far from complete, therefore presenting itself as one more layer within the network society, made of hybrid identities and influenced by technological, migratory, and institutional factors, allowing moving actors to bridge their personal journeys with the broader societal context they inhabit. With many workers experiencing the benefits and drawbacks of working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic, remote work has contributed to blurring the lines between work and leisure (Lobo 2006, Reichenberger & Schafer 2016).

One gap in the existing literature seems to be the lack of research regarding how the identity of digital nomads evolves through their journey and how it relates with culture and cultural integration. Addressing this contributes to a more holistic understanding of how identity affects their experience in integration. From a more methodological perspective, the utilization of life stories as a research approach (Atkinson, 1998) to study digital nomads remains relatively underexplored, likely due to the relative recency of the phenomenon (Wang et al., 2018). The increased academic and media attention has focused on more generalized assessments. While some research touches on the general motivations and challenges faced by digital nomads, a life stories approach (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) can offer a more nuanced understanding of these factors. There is limited exploration of the personal stories behind the motivations of digital nomads and their unique personal experiences as nomads in Lisbon.

Additionally, the research can shed light on perspectives on the changing dynamics in Lisbon. Digital nomad's presence is a contributing factor to shifts in the real estate market and exacerbating economic disparity in the city. While the digital nomad lifestyle has garnered substantial media attention, there is insufficient scholarly research on the topic (Shawkat et al. 2021, Wang et al. 2018). The existing literature on digital nomads has primarily focused on broader trends and characteristics of this mobile workforce, with limited attention given to the microcosm of nomadic life within specific urban contexts. Specifically, there is no attention given to how Appadurai's global flow manifests in digital nomad hubs. These urban contexts can reveal many complexities worthy of academic exploration.

Consequently, this thesis's aim is to further contribute to the existing body of research on the identity formation and cultural integration of digital nomads. Also, this thesis will try to make an additional contribution to organizational studies and digital transformation. Furthermore, the significance of this research extends to the specific case of Lisbon, Portugal, which, amidst the growing popularity of this mobile lifestyle, has emerged as one of the central hubs for digital nomads from around the world (NomadList 2023).

1.3 Research Questions

Digital nomads demonstrate the changing nature of the workforce on a global scale. This synchronicity of work and leisure provides a compelling subject of inquiry. This shift also has broader implications for organizational studies, digital transformation, and tourism by shedding light on the unique experiences of digital nomads. To investigate digital nomadism in Lisbon, this research poses the following central research questions:

RQ1: What are the motivations and challenges of digital nomads in Lisbon and how does their life narrative demonstrate the interplay of identity and culture?

Subsidiary Research Question 1: Can their identity be defined as a hybrid identity? If so, how do they construct these hybrid identities and what factors contribute to it?

Subsidiary Research Question 2: How do the perspectives and identities of digital nomads evolve over their stay in Lisbon, what are the pivotal moments that influence these changes?

The research questions will aid in guiding the exploration of the digital nomads' lived experiences both as workers and as foreigners. We next show how the research will be structured from a methodological point of view.

2. Methodology

The plot or pattern of a life is the foundation of its identity. Stories provide access to individuals' claims about their motivations and emotions, enriching our understanding of the connections between individuals' lives and institutions beyond them (Maynes et al, 2011). Taking this in consideration, this thesis is constructed using life stories as the core methodology to investigate the multifaceted experiences of digital nomads living in Lisbon, Portugal. This is a rich qualitative research method that has evolved from oral history (Atkinson, 1998). The method utilizes personal narratives to allow the interviewees to provide the meaning that their life experiences hold for them as digital nomads in Lisbon (DiCicco-Bloom, 2006). The concept of a life story, as described by Atkinson (1998) captures the narrative in the words of the person who lived it. Therefore, presenting an 'evolving and dynamic life story is a key component of what constitutes the individuality of that particular person, living in that particular society at that particular moment in History. (McAdams 2001. Singer). Life stories will scaffold the thesis strategy to pull together the key elements, events, and beliefs in a person's life, creating a unified and meaningful whole.

2.1 Research Design and Strategy

Life Stories is the primary method used to get immersed in social reality. Using these methods allowed the production of six life histories of digital nomads in Lisbon which are presented in a non-chronological format to better capture the complexities and nuances of their experiences. While life histories are most appealing when presented as a story with a clear beginning, middle, and end, the oral reconstruction of one's life, often narrated over a series of interviews and under a variety of circumstances, is not always expressed in a logical or coherent manner (Ojermark, 2007). Participants' recollections are influenced by the context of the interviews, their current state of mind, and the specific prompts used, leading to a fragmented yet richly detailed tapestry of their life stories.

To address these challenges the data is organized thematically rather than chronologically. This thematic organization allows for a more fluid presentation of the digital nomads' experiences. Additionally, it reflects the iterative nature of narrative construction and the non-linear progression of their identities and lifestyles (*Please see Annex D-F*).

Data were collected through a series of semi-structured open-ended interviews in conjunction with unstructured interviews that include participant observation (DiCicco-Bloom, 2006; Crewell, 2009) throughout 5 months. These interviews were audio recorded, with participants' consent, to ensure good documentation of all information and that this research will abide to the key principles of research ethics. Due to the noise of the city potentially affecting the quality of the recordings, ethnographic notes were produced throughout the interview. These interviews correspond to 15 hours of raw data audio-recorded, which was verbatim transcribed and producing 142 pages of qualitative data that supported the construction of the stories presented. Therefore, those interviews revealed beneficial to the extent that they have encouraged individuals to share their personal stories and open-up more comfortably while making it possible for the ethnographer to ensure that the interviews are productive in the context where these histories are generated by the actor within their social worlds. Multiple interviews were carried out over multiple occasions to best allow the actors to let their stories unfold organically (Bernard, 2017 pg. 164). The overall research design embraces an inductive strategy (Blaikie, 2000) seeking to derive insights and themes organically from the participants' lived experiences. This approach allows the data to guide the development of key themes instead of imposing predefined themes. The flexibility of this approach allows for deeper engagement with the nuances of the participants' experiences.

As part of the overarching research strategy, attention is devoted to the interview process. Starting with participant autonomy in choosing the interview location. Drawing inspiration from the concept of 'the place-based walking interview' introduced by Holton and Riley (2014), the physical setting of the interview is acknowledged as a critical factor influencing the depth and authenticity of the shared information. To encourage a more open and comfortable exchange, participants are asked to select the interview location, allowing them to choose a setting where they feel more at ease.

Also, it is essential to prioritize the researcher's safety when conducting qualitative interviews. Strategies suggested in the Social Researchers' Association's Code of Practice, such as meeting individuals in public places instead of conducting home interviews, are integrated into the research design and strategy.

2.2 Philosophical and ethical assumptions of the research

Embracing the constructivist perspective, this research recognizes that the construction of multiple realities is shaped by intricate interactions influenced by social, cultural, and historical contexts (Crotty, 1998). In line with the beliefs of the constructivist paradigm, the methodology of life stories emphasizes delving into the process of meaning-making (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). This is particularly relevant when studying the narratives of digital nomads, as their stories unfold in diverse and subjective ways. The individualistic aspects of digital nomad narratives can only be elicited and refined through the interaction between investigator and respondent, as stated by Guba and Lincoln (1994). The chosen methodology, life stories, aligns with the constructivist belief that knowledge is actively constructed through social interactions and interpretations, aiming to interpret reality through the voice of the actors.

The role of the researcher in this study is not neutral, but rather an integral part of the research process, where reflexivity is crucial. In the research process reflexivity refers to a certain level of self-awareness and acknowledging that researchers are a part of the social world in which they study (Shaffir and Stebbins, 1990, Palaganas et al. 2017). Throughout this research, a continuous process of ethical reflection is necessary to examine how the researcher's social background, assumptions, and values might impact their understanding of digital nomadism.

2.3 Selecting actors, stages, and narratives

2.3.1 Sampling

To ensure a comprehensive representation of the digital nomad community in Lisbon, actors are selected using a non-probabilistic convenience sampling approach considering background and occupation, (Etikan et al. 2016). The interviews were targeted at individuals who fit into this description of digital nomad, remote work, actively working outside of their native country, flexibility to move and work in other countries, and currently residing in the Lisbon

Metropolitan Area, Portugal, for at least 2 months. Due to the time-consuming nature of conducting life stories interviews, this research aimed to follow up to six digital nomads currently residing in Lisbon (Taylor et al., 2015), which should provide a variety of views to enable robustness of the findings.

Due to ease of contact, the researcher first reached out to her immediate network which met the participant requirements. After multiple attempts to find participants who were able to commit to three in-person interviews, 6 digital nomads agreed to meet with the ethnographer to be interviewed, 3 male and 3 female. A few potential candidates stated limited availability to meet in person, they had trips scheduled for large periods of time or were only passing through for a short stay in Lisbon. Therefore, the sampling strategy involved recruitment through personal contacts including networks through friends and roommates, and snowball sampling, in which participants are asked to recommend other potential participants.

2.3.2 Interview

The interviews were developed to be flexible, starting with broad introductory (semi-structured) questions. The questions posed were intentionally open-ended and while each interview had a set goal, they were minimally structured. Atkinson (1998 p. 41) asserts, “the less structure a life story interview has the more effective it will be”. Also, Atkinson suggests creating a short list of questions to refer to during the interview. These questions are not meant to be fired one after another but instead assist some individuals may require periodic questions to keep their story going (Atkinson, 1998). Three interview guides were created: Introduction, Development, and Conclusion. These guides were not meant to be strictly adhered to but to serve as reference material. It was tried to guide the interviews as little as possible and allow the participants to decide on the interview's direction. Taking this in consideration, sometimes questions from one interview guide were asked in a different interview, and other times some questions did not need to be explicitly asked at all, due to the participant providing said information organically (*Please see Annex B for all the interview guides utilized in this research*). In total 18 in-person interviews were conducted with an average duration being 0:50 minutes per interview and the average amount of total interview time per participant being 2:30.00. The country of origin and job titles varied greatly. To ensure confidentiality each participant has been assigned a code of “Participant A-F”, which will be used in place of

their names throughout the results and discussion section. Also, the names of the companies some participants work for are not disclosed for confidentiality.

Upon scheduling the interview date and time, participants were asked to choose a location for each interview, thus the locations vary amongst participants. All interviews were scheduled in the daytime or early evening in public places, and participants were asked not to consume alcohol during the interview. Prior to the 'Introduction' interview, participants were sent a digital consent form to sign, which includes permission to record the interview, the use of the recorded interview for the purpose of this research and outlined the anonymization of the participants information. Before each individual interview, the ethnographer welcomed the participants and chatted with them briefly. During a few moments in some of the interviews, the interview was paused, or parts were redacted due to a third person, who had not consented to be recorded, entering the conversation briefly. This included food service workers, strangers, and acquaintances that we encountered during the interview. *(Please see Annex B and C for interview guide and full transcripts)*

Due to conducting in person interviews in public settings, notes were produced during the interviews to assist with transcription in moments when background noise made it difficult to hear. Additionally, complementary notes regarding the setting, and the tone and actions of the interviewee, and when external events occurred around the ethnographer and participant that would've been difficult to detect through audio recording alone. While no previous research on the individuals was conducted, some previous background knowledge, due to a previous familiarity with some of the participants, made possible the conduction of the interviews with more confidence about multiple potential direction they could have taken.

2.4 Data Analysis

This subchapter outlines the data analysis process. After the data was collected from the interviews, it was manually transcribed and organized to create a cohesive narrative. These narratives are presented in Chapters 4-7 in thematic order *(Please see annex D-F for resume of coded material)*. Presenting the narratives in thematic order allows for a comprehensive understanding of their journeys. This analysis involves a very close examination of the narratives, identifying recurring themes, patterns, or events that take place throughout the

actors' stories. This process explored how digital nomads construct their identities, their evolving perspectives on work, and the digital networks that enable their lifestyle. By drawing on the perspectives of Appadurai, Castells, and Giddens, an analytical framework was forged to analyze the dynamics of global flows, network society, and identity as they manifest in the life stories of digital nomads.

Through employing a Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA) as the primary method to identify patterns or 'themes' in the data (Braun & Clarke 2006) the 15 hours of interviews were thoroughly examined to support the development of the narrative regarding digital nomadism in Lisbon. According to Braun and Clarke (2019) RTA is a flexible interpretative approach, that emphasizes the researcher's active involvement in creating knowledge. The codes in RTA reflect the researcher's interpretations of patterns within the data. This means the analysis is shaped by the participant's responses and the researcher's perspective.

Coding was mainly done using MAXQDA, a software tool for analyzing qualitative data. MAXQDA is especially helpful with large amounts of data. Interview transcripts were uploaded directly to the software. The coding process consisted of two stages, the first and second cycle coding. The first cycle of coding involved manual coding, to gain familiarity with the data and identify any potential themes or patterns that were emerging. This stage was primarily exploratory. The preliminary themes were identified based on the frequency in which certain topics appeared in the data and their relevance to the study. This cycle used a combination of different coding methods. Initial coding, an open-ended approach, allows for the ethnographer to grasp the direction in which the data was going. These codes were tentative and allowed for a wide variance of possibilities. Next, descriptive coding was used to summarize the main topic of a data segment. Additionally, In Vivo coding was utilized to take participants' words or phrases verbatim and use them as codes, ensuring that their exact language was preserved during the analysis. Additionally, Process coding was used to describe behaviors or actions occurring in the data (Saldaña, 2009). *(Please see Annex D for code key)*

This iterative process helped identify themes present within the experiences and perspectives of digital nomads. Manual coding ensured it was grounded in actual data. Using different coding methods balanced both the participants' voices and the ethnographer's

interpretations (Saldaña, 2009). The first cycle set the stage for more theme development in the second coding cycle.

In the second cycle, the initial codes were refined into broader theme categories. By following Saldaña's advice on advanced coding methods like pattern coding, the analysis became more systematic and thorough (Saldaña, 2009). This improved the depth of the analysis and allowed interconnected themes to emerge naturally. *(Please see Annex E and F for detailed code resume)*

2.5 Ethical Considerations

No major ethical issues were identified. Participant privacy and comfort was of utmost importance throughout the research process. However, this study's qualitative life story approach presented unique challenges in maintaining participant confidentiality. Life stories inherently contain personal, detailed accounts of individuals' experiences. To address this, all identifying information, including participant names, specific locations, and any references to employers or unique personal circumstances, was anonymized during transcription. This was especially important due to the detailed nature of the life stories, which could otherwise make it easier to identify participants. Nevertheless, due to the interconnected community of many digital nomads in Lisbon, it is possible that some of the participants have crossed paths and thus would be able to identify themselves, signifying a lack of internal confidentiality. (Vorhölter, 2021, p. 19). In addition, the ethnographer does not conceal the gender identity of the participants, as it plays a role in the stories and perspectives.

Informed consent was obtained from all participants through a signed consent form before the first interview. The form ensured that everyone fully understood the purpose of the research and their role in it. Participants were told they could withdraw from the study at any point without penalty and could exclude any information at any given point in the process. Therefore, this research adheres to the fundamental principle of "do no harm". This is to prevent any potential negative impact on participants' well-being. Since the participants come from different countries and cultures, special attention was paid to cultural sensitivity during the interview design. All data has been securely stored throughout the research process. Access to the data has been limited solely to the ethnographer to protect confidentiality.

2.6 Limitations to the methodology

While this thesis aims to offer valuable insights into the experiences of digital nomads in Lisbon, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations and considerations inherent in the research design. First and foremost, this approach relies heavily on the actors' willingness and ability to share their personal narratives. This may not always be comprehensive of all their experiences. Additionally, this research method may introduce memory biases or selective recall. This could potentially affect the accuracy of the actors' personal accounts. Furthermore, personal narratives have an inherent subjectivity. This can pose a challenge when attempting to generalize it to a larger population. Because the subjective nature of this study introduces potential biases, stemming from the participants' self-reported responses and the sampling approach. Additionally using in-depth interviews is not generalizable (Queiros et al., 2017). It is important to note that this research uses non-probabilistic convenience sampling and individuals are selected from the ethnographer's personal network. Also, it is relevant to note that this sampling strategy may not be applicable to the broader population of digital nomads in Lisbon (Blaikie, 2009). This is considered when discussing the findings and drawing conclusions.

In what follows, the working life stories of six 'digital nomads' living in Lisbon, Portugal, is presented and analyzed, addressing the 3 research questions posed. The stories are directly extracted from a series of three interviews conducted in English with each participant.

3. Digital Nomadism: an academic perspective [Literature Review]

3.1 The captivating world of Digital Nomadism: an introduction

Through the examination of the existing literature, we uncover a wealth of knowledge and perspectives relevant to digital nomadism, its evolution, and the future of work and societies (Jarrahi et al., 2019; Muller., 2016; Nash et al., 2018; Reichenberger., 2017; Wang et al., 2018). Within the study of digital nomadism three theoretical framings have been proposed: digital nomadism as an economic activity, as a cultural phenomenon, and as a new technology-enabled form of working (Wang et al. 2018). Digital nomads have been defined as remote workers who utilize the affordances of digital technologies to be location-independent and work from anywhere around the world (Jarrahi et al., 2019, Nash et al., 2018). Their high

level of mobility combined with their pursuit of living while working is what sets them apart from other remote workers. (Wang et al., 2018) Hensellek and Puchala (2021) have found that the common factors across all the proposed definitions of digital nomads are: digital work, flexibility, mobility, identity, and community. Additionally, another definition highlighted three key elements of digital nomadism: gig work, nomadic work, and global travel (Nash et al., 2018). Other researchers have found that digital nomads tend to be young adults in their 20s or early 30s (Reichenberger, 2017) likely due to the lack of family commitments and familiarity with information and communication technologies (ICTs) from an early age (Reichenberger, 2017).

DNs are further enabled by new infrastructure such as coworking spaces, Airbnbs, and the expanding gig economy (Sutherland & Jarrahi, 2017). One of the key factors that attract digital nomads to a particular destination is the availability of suitable work environments, such as co-working spaces (Orel, 2019). These spaces provide a balance between work and leisure, allowing digital nomads to maintain productivity while also engaging in social interactions with like-minded individuals (Yang et al., 2019) This lifestyle allows them to blend recreational travel and leisure with their professional obligations (Reichenberger, 2017). Dedicated blogs, social media accounts, and other digital platforms offer guidance to those looking to follow the DN lifestyle. Not only does this type of content provide valuable information for aspiring DNs but also further promotes the lifestyle to others.

3.1.1 Motivations and Challenges

Some researchers have explored the motivational aspects of digital nomadism. Richards (2015) suggests that individuals are drawn to DN primarily to achieve personal independence and escape the monotony of their lives in their home countries. Gerdenitsch (2017) has further examined these motivations by comparing various forms of flexible work, such as flextime, flexplace, and nomadic work. Hall et al (2018) provide valuable insights into the motivations, mobility, and work practices of digital nomads. The study underscores the allure of freedom, flexibility, and lower living costs abroad as significant factors driving individuals to pursue DN in addition to emphasizing the conceptual realities of digital nomads and the unique challenges they face in maintaining motivation and productivity while working remotely. Henselleck et al (2024) go further and explore the factors that motivate individuals to initially

pursue DN, to continue with DN, and to abandon DN. The research found three themes that represent why people continue in DN, 1. fulfillment in DN, 2. entrepreneurialism 3. interaction with other digital nomads. The one factor individuals stated would motivate them to eventually leave their DN lifestyle is family.

Some individuals who have publicly spoken about the challenges of digital nomadism typically mention feelings of loneliness while traveling, stating that you are often seeing the world alone or with acquaintances often met through hostels, or digital nomad community spaces. (Manson 2013; Thomas, 2016) Miguel et al., (2023) highlight that the loneliness experienced by digital nomads is boosted by the absence of long-term and stable social connections. Note that this loneliness is not from remote work but from a lack of strong personal relationships (platonic and romantic) due to continuous mobility.

3.2 Digital Nomad identities

Once a marginalized figure (Deleuze and Guattari, 2010), the modern-day nomad is now celebrated for their lifestyle on social media, inspired by the concept of the new rich. (Bozzi,2020; Timothy Ferriss, 2007) Kim and Park (2020) examine the impact of millennial travelers on the tourism industry, emphasizing the evolving nature of travel preferences and the identities of modern nomadic individuals. Gidley and Rooke (2010) present a study on the intersections of classed places and identities, highlighting the complex dynamics that shape the self-perception of nomadic individuals. Jarahhi and Sutherland (2017) state that individuals who identify as digital nomads tend to create a community identity around themselves and the phenomenon. For members of the gig economy, they are not going to tie their identity to an organization (Petriglieri et al., 2018). Thus, the nomadic community comes together to have access to a community without the need for an organization. In line with Giddens's definition of lifestyle as "a more or less integrated set of practices that an individual adopts not only because they meet utilitarian needs, but because they materialize a concrete chronicle of the identity of the self" (Giddens, 1991: p. 81). These claims seem to suggest that DNs curate their lifestyle to meet their practical needs and act as an embodiment of their self-identity. Building upon previous research this study aims to add a more nuanced perspective on self-perception and self-identity of digital nomads in a way that has yet to be explored by previous researchers.

3.3 Digital Nomadism as a 21st century Globalization Wave

Globalization, as described by Appadurai (1996), encompasses the pace and scope of interconnectedness on a global scale. Jones (2010) extends this definition, describing globalization as "the growing interconnectedness and inter-relatedness of all aspects of society." Within the context of digital nomadism, these definitions take on a practical significance. Digital nomads, as a distinct community, embody two fundamental forces propelling globalization forward: mobility and digital technology. These individuals, through their dynamic lifestyle and dependence on digital tools, contribute to the ever-expanding web of global interconnections, effectively bridging geographic boundaries and advancing the transformative process of globalization. Conversi (2012) discusses the impact of digital technologies on diasporas, globalization, and long-distance nationalism, suggesting that digital technologies have facilitated the creation of virtual communities, enabling individuals to maintain strong transnational connections. This emphasizes the impact of digital tools and platforms on shaping individuals' sense of belonging and cultural connections in a globalized world.

3.3.1 Digital Nomad Visas

Countries recognize the potential of digital nomads who contribute economically and culturally to the places they travel to view them as an economic opportunity (Busuttil, 2021). Dreher and Triandafyllidou (2023) argue that while countries may have varied motivations, the rise of Digital Nomad Visas (DNVs) reflects the anticipated benefits that host cities and countries can expect from accommodating these relatively affluent travelers, without the obligation to provide certain social protections, such as unemployment.

DNVs are a recent and rapidly emerging category of visa that has started to spark academic interest, as their popularity has grown. Unfortunately, detailed government-issued information regarding visas is difficult to obtain, which limits the scope for academic analysis, as indicated by Bednorz (2024). Koskela (2023) presents a comparative study of DNVs, identifying the rationales that guide their development. This research draws attention to the role that visas play in the broader context of global mobilities and the transformation of the labor market. Most existing research asserts that the primary objective of DNVs is for direct

injection of foreign income into the local economy, akin to tourism. Tourism and leisure seem to be the primary themes promoted in DNVs (Sanchez-Vergara et al., 2023).

From a legal perspective, DNVs function similarly to work visas, in terms of the rights they grant. These visas allow governments to regulate remote work within their borders, responding to the increasing presence of remote-working tourists. As such, they also introduce economically motivated selectivity in specifying the type of remote workers, and earners, the countries want to attract. Koskela (2023) illustrates that DNVs have evolved from *ad hoc* responses to the COVID-19 pandemic to elaborate policies with much further reach.

Individuals with ‘strong’ passports—those that allow visa-free entry to a larger number of countries—or multiple citizenships are of advantage and may experience easier global mobility. To aid these multiple countries have already introduced new visas to benefit digital nomads. Public policy organizations have begun to explore the topic of digital nomad visas and the implications they have for countries (OECD, Elizabeth 2022). Wang et al (2018) explore and categorize policies that have been put in place in response to digital nomadism.

Under Portugal’s DNV (D8), digital nomads are subject to the same tax obligations as other Portuguese residents. Additionally, DNs are subject to an income requirement of four times the minimum monthly wage and must prove at least €9,840 in their bank account (Global Citizens Solutions, 2024).

3.3.2 Economic Inequality and Gentrification

In DN there exists an imbalance between digital nomads' home countries and the affordable destinations where digital nomads travel to—which, as a consequence—are subject to increased gentrification (Thompson, 2018). Coined by Ruth Glass in 1964 the term ‘gentrification’ is described as a process where “middle-class residents move into and transform traditionally poor and working-class urban neighborhoods” (Halasz, 2018, p. 1367). Recent works suggest a connection between tourism gentrification and commercial gentrification in Lisbon’s central neighborhoods (e.g. [Barata-Salgueiro et al., 2017](#); [Mendes, 2018](#)). In addition to the imbalance of monetary capital between these individuals and the locals, there is also an imbalance in the cultural capital of digital nomads, who are typically educated, English speakers, with strong passports. (Thompson, 2018).

The implications of digital nomadism on local communities remain unclear, with available literature providing contradictory reports. Jiwasiddi et al. (2022) assess the impacts of digital nomadism on local communities in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The study finds that locals reported that DNs were generally welcomed and respectful of the culture and customs, though they also reported that DNs are considered to live in a social-cultural ‘bubble’. Additionally, themes of privilege and cultural disparities also emerged in discussions with locals. There is a need to explore these implications further and in the context of other cities, such as Lisbon.

3.4 Places and Spaces

Places possess a social, psychological, and perhaps even a mythical reality, shaped by past events, images, stories, and various other aspects. (Timmermans et al., [2013](#)). Changes in infrastructure, communications, and labor, as seen in Lisbon, associated with economic globalization introduced a change in the nature of the place. The changes have created new kinds of places, elevating Lisbon in the ranks of a growing global hierarchical network of cities (Sassen 2001). DNs may rely on temporary residences such as hotels or short-stay apartments, and flexible workspaces, such as co-working spaces (Orel, 2019). Thus, place becomes crucial for them as it becomes the backdrop against which they establish their routines and sense of belonging. Understanding that places hold complex layers of meaning helps us appreciate the nuanced ways in which digital nomads maintain their sense of identity amidst continual movement.

3.4.1 Creating Home

One can use home to refer to one's habitual residence, the location where one's family resides, or even one's home country (Ahmed, 1999). The concept of home can hold different meanings for individuals. De Loryn (2022) explores the different ways in which DNs conceptualize home. For instance, digital nomads create a sense of home by staying connected with their families through social media and video calling. Additionally, some DNs prefer to have a ‘home base’ that is defined by their social relations not specifically by their geographical location. Traveling with a significant other or surrounding themselves with objects of emotional value helps some individuals feel at home. These findings indicate that home is not merely a place but a feeling. (de Loryn, 2022). Other researchers define the

contemporary concept of home as a feeling, not one of nostalgic childhood memories, but one associated with family and friends.

Co-living spaces have emerged as a housing solution for long-stay travelers. These spaces typically offer furnished rooms with plenty of shared common rooms and coworking spaces. Finding accommodation in a city, especially one in a foreign country, can be difficult, and often requires signing a lease and providing a deposit. Co-living is an easy solution for those who do not intend to stay in a place long enough. In addition, to accommodation and coworking space, co-living spaces also typically offer community, through events for networking and socializing. Zumbusch and Lalicic (2020) explore the role of co-living spaces in the well-being of digital nomads and finds that co-living spaces support digital nomads' well-being through physical, social, and psychological resources.

3.4.2 Coworking Spaces

Home is not the only place that holds importance for digital nomads. Coworking spaces, and membership-based workspaces where freelancers, remote workers, and other independent workers can work together in a communal office setting, have been strong facilitators to the DN lifestyle. Research has found that freelancers thrive in coworking spaces, with one reason being that they can feel part of a community (Spreitzer et al., 2015). Though individuals in coworking space typically work in different roles for different companies, or as freelancers, the community and social aspect is strong in these workspaces. Harvard Business Review suggests this may be in part due to the lack of internal politics and competition, and the values of the coworking movement: community, collaboration, learning, and sustainability (Spreitzer et al., 2015). Other research supports the claims that individuals seek an office space that provides social support (Gerdenitsch et al., 2016) and collectivization (Avdikos and Iliopoulou, 2019). Cook (2023) explores how coworking spaces serve as an externally regulating disciplinary space. Cook's informants explain that going to a coworking space allows them to get out for the day and be around others, despite the extra time it takes to get everything ready and go there. Nash et al. (2018) explain that though nomadism allows individuals to gain freedom from the corporate world and gain experiences outside the constraints of a traditional workplace, it also requires them to create that workspace for

themselves. Whereas an employee working in a traditional on-site role can rely on the organization to provide that work environment for them.

3.4.3 Third Places

The third place, coined by sociologist, Ray Oldenburg, refers to social environments separate from the two primary social environments of home (first place) and work (second place). These third places are important for community building, fostering social interactions, and providing a sense of place and belonging outside of home and work. Some examples of these third places include cafes, parks, bars, cultural centers, and libraries. Third places are easily accessible and appropriated by its inhabitants. The place is not seen as particularly special to its inhabitants as it is part of their regular life. They provide a place for sociability amongst its inhabitants. (Oldenburg, 1982) These spaces can be specifically important to those remote workers who don't or can't utilize coworking spaces. While third places such as cafes, are meant to be separate from work environments, it is common for these places to have Wi-Fi and for individuals to bring their laptops in these establishments. There is concern from critics that this previous third place is turning into a second place (workspace). The individuals who are using their laptops are changing the environment from one of a social atmosphere to one of an office-like space that discourages connection and communication. (Hartmann, 2009; Fleishman, 2005) Lee et al. (2019) apply Oldenburg's (1982) framework in discussing how digital nomads select their destinations finding that DNs assessed places on by if they could provide either a clear separation between their social and professional spheres or that they facilitated in merging the two together.

3.4.4 Online Spaces

The discussion of places and spaces in the context of digital nomadism would be incomplete without highlighting a vital space for remote workers: the digital realm. Nash et al (2021) find that when defining their office, digital nomads listed the technologies they use regularly for work. “When I think of my office it is definitely not a physical space. I guess it is my laptop and my mobile phone; that is my office”, says one respondent. Online tools are essential for DNs not only for conducting their work, but also for finding work, networking, sharing their work, and receiving payment. (Jarrahi et al, 2018) Additionally, online spaces facilitate the mobile lifestyles of DNs. Platforms help them find accommodations and form connections at a given place. Blogs and social media also play a large role among digital workers and travelers. (Nash et al., 2018). There is also an emergence of platforms and websites, aimed at providing valuable information for digital nomads and those looking to pursue the lifestyle. One example of this is NomadList, an ‘aggregator for potential work destinations, ranking internet, price, and safety.’(NomadList). This platform and others like it aim to promote digital nomadism and provide crowdsourced information about a location and how ‘friendly’ it is for digital nomads. For nomads, the digital realm is important for facilitating both work and nomadic life.

3.5 The Future of Work

Research shows that in developed economies there has been a rise in flexible work, increasingly affecting middle-class occupations. (World Economic Forum, 2016). This trend is driven in part by technological advancements, changing attitudes toward work-life balance, and the adoption of digital platforms that facilitate remote and freelance opportunities. While the rise in remote work brings both advantages and challenges from an organizational perspective, these impacts can be difficult to measure, which may cause organizations to be hesitant about implementing remote work capabilities. This underscores the need for more comprehensive studies that could guide decision-making within organizations.

Within organizational studies, research focuses on remote work in the post-pandemic era. (Alexander et al., 2020, 2021; Vyas, 2022; Babapour Chafi et al., 2021). Mckinsey reports indicate that post-pandemic, individuals' main hopes are towards better work-life balance and

more flexibility. Research finds that within remote work, post pandemic the expectations of employees and employers are not in harmony and suggests that organizations should craft long term remote work strategies. (Vyas, 2022)

3.5.1 Gig Economy and Freelancers

Within the past decade labor platforms have emerged as a key player in both domestic and global labor markets. (Vallas and Schor 2020). These platforms enable many freelance and gig workers today. Freelance employees or independent contractors are individuals who work independently without any long-term contractual commitments to a single employer. Whether performing services or completing work assignments, freelancers typically work short-term contracts with several employers or clients. This style of employment offers many advantages to workers including flexibility, independence, and variety. A few of the disadvantages that freelance workers face include lack of employer-provided health insurance, disability, and retirement coverage, assuming the risks involved in self-employment, and paying self-employment taxes. (Kazi et al., 2014).

Shevchuk and Strebkov (2012) describe remote freelance workers as “individuals with a higher entrepreneurial spirit and human capital, who provide creative and knowledge-intensive services and take advantage of the global Internet era while maintaining their work.” Reports indicate that 20-30% of the working age in the USA and EU-15 engage in some sort of independent work. (McKinsey 2016).

Although freelancers are often called entrepreneurs, solopreneurs (Fitz, 2019), digital micro-entrepreneurs (Malaga, 2016), etc. some authors distinguish between them. In addition, they pay their own income taxes, have full control over where they work (usually remotely), do not receive benefits from companies, usually work with several clients and projects at the same time, and set their rates, whether they charge by the hour or by project.

In the platform economy work that requires routine tasks of middle skills are among the most demanded tasks. This may lead to formerly full-time dependent workers performing these tasks being made redundant. These roles are now offered as digital work arrangements, shifting full-time employees to self-employed contractors. (Codagnome et al., 2016, Devlin, 2017). This shift means that these workers lose the job security and benefits of traditional full-time employment in addition to weakening their bargaining power. Vega et al. (2023) highlight that while freelancing is often touted for its flexibility and control over working hours, their research reveals the need to be constantly available on platforms such as Upwork undermines this flexibility.

3.5.2 The Digital Frontier: ICTs

The use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) powered by the Internet has enabled remote work capabilities, allowing for digital nomadism to flourish. Wang (2018) points out that while digital nomads favor “exotic” locations, these locations are not always ideal for strong internet connection thus breeding digital nomad “hot spots”, such as Lisbon. Simova's (2023) research identifies mobility, the internet, networks, and mobile technology as central themes in understanding digital nomads. To maintain their professional flexibility, freelancers are reliant on ICTs (Spinuzzi, 2015). Boa and Bruckner's (2023) quantitative study found that out of 818 remote workers based in Thailand, 51.3% stated internet connection as one of the main challenges they face.

The digital landscape not only facilitates their professional mobility but also fuels the digital nomad culture. Digital resources allow individuals to stay connected to family and friends abroad, receive and provide support to others, and access valuable information. The use of ICTs amongst migrants in Lisbon, specifically platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp are commonly used for accessing migrant-specific sources (Buhr et al. 2023). The term digital nomad “has already become established in the jargon within this social group and is used as a self-description” (Muller, 2016). -Visual content-sharing platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube have provided great visibility to digital nomadism to escape the 9-5 work pattern and live a happier and more fulfilling life. Digital nomad influencers romanticize the lifestyle online and share their travel experiences with their followers (Jacobs and Gussekloo, 2016)._Yet amid the allure of the lifestyle, we see online, some freelancers and

self-employed nomads face a level of uncertainty in their work due to challenges in finding new work (Kalleberg 2009). Kuzheleva-Sagan (2016) situates the phenomenon in the network communication information society, reflecting the role internet technologies have in digital nomadism. Simova (2022) identify three areas of research in DN: focused on defining and characterising the phenomenon, focused on the nomadic element of their lifestyle, and studying the factors that affect DN. Additionally it was found that location specific research on DN is already a large body of study. (Simova, 2022). Despite the rapidly growing body of literature, the research is primarily generalized assessments. While these studies are valuable to overall research on DN, there is a lack of in-depth nuanced exploration. Given the gap, this research employs a life story approach to provide a holistic analysis of digital nomadism within the unique context of Lisbon, Portugal.

4. Introducing our Digital Nomads

In this section we delve into the motivations that led our digital nomads to choose Lisbon as their current destination. These stories will aim to answer RQ1: What are the motivations and challenges of digital nomads in Lisbon, and how does their life narrative demonstrate the interplay of identity and culture?

4.1 Why Lisbon?

After navigating a series of steep stairs, I arrived at the charming neighborhood of Graca, out of breath, but eager to meet with Participant A for my very first interview. After greeting each other we took a brief stroll to a Portuguese café for coffee and ham and cheese sandwiches. We settled into our seats outside and began our conversation with “Why Lisbon?”

“Suggestion from two friends, so before coming to Portugal, I was living in Argentina. I was kinda traveling through South America, and then I met someone, and I went to Argentina to be with her, she was my then girlfriend. And the quarantine happened, and I was there two years, and when I left Argentina, my buddy was getting married in Ireland. I traveled in the States for a while, then went to Ireland. I knew I wanted to visit Portugal, I have 2 friends, a romantic interest, and a good friend I made while living in Thailand. So, I thought okay I'll pass through there, see some old friends. These two girls I met in Argentina told me I had to go to Lisbon, so after a week in Ireland I traveled around

Ireland and met a friend who wanted to spend her birthday in Lisbon. Actually, while in Ireland a friend sent me a link of someone renting their apartment in Lisbon. And then I arrived for the birthday and connected with my friend from Thailand who connected me with a flat of musicians. When I arrived, I immediately felt well received and thought wow this place is pretty awesome, like when you meet a person you're attracted to. I felt an attraction when I was walking around to get a kebab at 11 pm the night I arrived. Walking around these back streets, I didn't feel in danger, coming from Oakland where you never feel safe walking at night. I felt really calm, I feel very safe walking around the city, the next day I walked around and was enamored by the city, falling in love with every corner I turn - Part. A, Int. 1, page 1.

I proceeded to ask how long ago this was, he promptly answered *"I arrived June 7th, 2022, about to be two years."*

For Participant B, Lisbon marked her first international move, which she intriguingly described to me as a "long story". This made me smile as I expressed that I loved long stories. We began to discuss her journey in detail at a bustling restaurant near Intendente while we perused the lunch menu.

Okay, so I was living back in Guatemala. I'm from the city, from the capital city, but I wasn't really a fan of cities. So, I moved to a small city that the name is Antigua Guatemala, which is a small village, and I lived there for five years. But after that, I was like, oh, this is too small for me. But I didn't want to go back to the city, so I was like, oh, let's see next, because I like to travel a lot, and I have the freedom of being wherever I want. And so it was like, let's see Europe, you know, because it could be Mexico or something like that. But since I wanted to travel more Asia and stuff like that, I was thinking, no, maybe Europe is closer to Africa and Asia. And, I mean, buying a ticket from Guatemala is very expensive to everywhere. So, I was like, okay, let's see. And Portugal just pop up in my mind. I guess, a country that isn't that expensive, and you can live here. Actually, the cost for me, it's exactly the same as Guatemala. Exactly the same, except that for what I'm paying here, I have a room, and back in Guatemala I can have a whole apartment for myself... But I guess that

Portugal now is a destination for digital nomads. It's very beautiful, so everyone wants to come here – Part. B, Int 1, Pos. 10.

I love the culture. It still feels like Latin America, you know?... Yeah, it was a very... My decision was based on... It feels like Latin America is still here and the people are still kind and there's a Latin vibe here. There's a Latin vibe here. I love it. It's one of my favorite things about it is I feel like it's a... I have the Latin vibe, but I have the South European. And then also some of the European buildings and the history. So... And I'm close to other European countries to travel if we want. It's super close to go anywhere from here. Yeah, it's always exciting – Part. B, Int, 1, Pos. 41.

Participant C and I chose to meet at a quiosque in Almada near the Cacilhas ferry station, as we both were living on the south side of the Tejo River and were both planning to take the ferry into Lisbon that day. The quiosque offered a view of the small red lighthouse, with a stunning panorama of the bridge, the river, and the beautiful city – an ideal backdrop as he recounted the story of how he came to move to Lisbon.

“I came here for, I came to Portugal four years ago, to Lisbon, two and a half... I came for the vibe, it's like most of the people here, like the overall environment, the people, like everything is so nice, warm, chill, overall comfort and a lot of places to see, a lot of things to do.” “Where were you before Lisbon?”, I asked. “Aveiro... at that point I felt the most like cozy, comfortable there when I was visiting it... It got boring and I was looking for somewhere with more life and so I moved to Lisbon - Part. C, Int 1, pg. 1.

I met Participant D in a small Peruvian restaurant in Lisbon’s city center, nestled under the train station. We sat inside and nibbled on canchitas, an unpopped popcorn found in nearly every Peruvian restaurant, while chatting over the salsa music playing on the speakers.

His answer to ‘Why Lisbon?’ is simply, “I always wanted to move to the south.”. Curiously I probed further, he answered casually:

Weather and vibe... Like, after my master's, I was, like, trying to find a job, like, in Spain... I ended up with Lisbon, because I actually had a lot of Portuguese friends. Oh, okay. Like, I had three back when I was living in Aalborg, Denmark. And then, another

one which moved. And then, another one moved actually back to Portugal – Part D, Int 1

I met Participant E on a sunny afternoon during her lunch, at a quiosque in Arroios. The locals were casually scattered around, enjoying their cigarettes, coffee, and conversation. I ordered an espresso with milk, while she opted for a Coca-Cola. The street was calm, adorned with buildings in hues of blue, yellow, and pink. Reflecting on her decision to come to Lisbon, sharing both the practical and personal motivations behind the move, she explained:

“So, I decided to come to Portugal, one of the reasons was that I've lived in Germany for so long and I didn't want to keep living there. Like where I studied... I moved away from there. And so, at home, I didn't really have a base anymore. And then I also met my boyfriend in Lisbon and we decided to move together back to Lisbon. So that was like the initial reason why I came back in November... Before I was here for my master's degree. Yeah, and then after my master's degree I moved back to Germany, traveled, tried to find a remote job. It's quite harder than I believed and then once I got one, I moved back... I'm Portuguese but I had never lived in Portugal and I wanted to experience that, connect with that part of me – Part. E, Int 1, Pos. 2-6.

On a spring Sunday, I met Participant F at the Jardim Calouste. The grounds were littered with people bathing in the sunlight. We found a quiet spot nestled between the flora. On Sundays the museum offers free entry after 13:00h, which we were both eager to take advantage of. While awaiting the afternoon Participant F and I discussed the circumstances that led her to Lisbon:

“Since I was a kid, I think I always dreamed of living near the ocean, so I always had this thought that I have to move somewhere with sunny vibes, ocean vibes, and all this kind of situation. But why did I move to Lisbon? It was, like, the war, of course. The war started, and I ended up in Poland, but I had already lived in Poland, so I didn't feel like going back there. And then I was like, what was the other country I wanted to move to? And I just remembered Portugal, because I also had tickets bought from Poland to Portugal, so I decided to take the chance and go there for, like, 10 days of vacation, and then just stay here. And yeah, before everything happened in Ukraine, I

was already trying to find ways to move to Portugal, how to move to... I didn't... I wasn't thinking specifically about Lisbon, I was thinking about Portugal in general. And then I just found a family who accepted me, and they were living in, like, the outskirts of Lisbon. That's why, like, how I started living here, I loved it, and I stayed here... I have never seen the ocean, so it was more like, okay, I've seen the sea so many times, but the ocean always felt like a romanticized dream of, like, wow, it's just something that big, that powerful, that I... in the first place I wanted to see it, and then I was like, okay, what's the closest part, like, what's the easiest part for me to get to the... to the ocean, and it was Portugal, because it's still Europe, but it's still something different, because it's still, more edge of... not the edge of the world, but, you know... It's the last bit, furthest you can go. Yeah, the last bit... furthest I could go at this point, because other continent is a bit already, it's a different decision, you know?... If I would go more northern, I guess the weather is already, like, not... not the best, yeah, so that's... that's why, basically, it was Portugal - Part F, Int 1, pg. 1-2.

The war in Ukraine prompted her move to Lisbon, demonstrating how global events directly impact individual mobility. Collectively these participants exemplify Appadurai's concept of ethnoscaples and demonstrate how various factors such as personal relationships (Participant A, Participant D, & Participant E) or geopolitical events (Participant F), drive the movement of people across the globe. These stories reflect the dynamic nature of modern migration and therefore answer the question regarding the motivations of digital nomads.

4.2 Entry into Digital Nomadism

Fittingly, the professional journey of many digital nomads starts online, leveraging the technologies that enable their mobile lifestyles. Through freelance work, real estate, or remote positions, my participants have shaped their careers to become nomads in varying and innovative ways. With the help of online platforms, individuals can sell their skills as a service, and sometimes you don't need specific qualifications to do so. Participant A utilizes a skill set he had already developed from being a musician. He lists off the butterfly effects that have led him to this Lisbon cafe on a Thursday afternoon:

I made music before I started traveling so I've always had the skillset there but the first time I actually did voiceover was when I was in Bolivia and I had this handheld microphone and recorded this commercial and sent it off and I got like 350 bucks for it. I had already been traveling before... I met a programmer in Barcelona back in 2013 who was a coder and traveled around the world and that was the first seed of digital nomadness. I did a number of digital nomad jobs, in 2015 when I started the trip that would end in me living in Thailand. I met a girl who worked for [company removed for confidentiality] as a social media evaluator, and I thought ok that's interesting. Before that I was just traveling and landed in this northern Vietnamese town where I started teaching English to the kids and working in a homestay and that's where I met this girl making money working online and had my parents send my laptop out to me and applied and got a job doing social media evaluating. I also tried teaching English online for a month, but it wasn't really my thing...

Voice acting is what pays the bills... It's freelance. I work on a website called voices.com and you go on the platform and there is all these projects and you read a little sample script, edit it, and send it off. They each take about ten minutes to do depending on how I read it, sometimes I do it over. Sometimes they give you directions and sometimes you have to guess what the client wants. They will say "be authoritative and professional". Sometimes it's a voiceover for a videogame and you'll be like "level 1, flawless victory". It depends, sometimes they give you direction, sometimes they don't. Sending auditions is my job. If I got a job and I have a call, then we will do a video call and I will do some takes for them and they will give feedback. It's a cool niche - Part. A, Int, 1, Pos.

Similarly, Participant C also started a freelance role without any official qualifications, simply utilizing the skills he had developed organically. He developed new skills on his own by working on his own projects. I listen in admiration:

I was freelancing like still as I do now but additionally, I have like a stable job but then I just did, had freelance clients in marketing, like SEO, Google Ads, like content writing... Like first, like just freelance, like first I started when I was like 16 and like firstly I was looking for a summer job and like McDonald's was looking for someone for three months so I started doing

like translations online. Yeah, and yeah, I mean I already knew like I mean Belarusian, Russian and English, a bit of Polish like more or less and so I could do translations between all of them. Like on freelance they don't require that much of like education and job experience so like I could do some work from like already then. And then I got more into digital marketing when I started my own projects in like online and created a website about traveling to Belarus. And yeah, to grow it I needed different digital marketing skills and then I started doing it for other clients as well. And yeah, then I was like 18 I think, 18 or 19 – Part. C, Int 1, Pos. 20.

Not all digital nomads actively chose the lifestyle for travel and flexibility. While sitting with Participant F we discussed the evolution of her freelance career. She explains how lack of full-time employment opportunities in her field pushed her into freelancing and how her projects have evolved over her career.

How I got into it I just studied in university and then in Poland. It was pretty hard, like I was, I was finding some clients, but it was not good communication, not good projects, clients didn't know what they wanted. I didn't have much experience so only when I came back to Kyiv I guess my friend gave me a client we started working with him and then I just found a job in the office through my friend because she knew someone and then I just went on the interview and they just took it took me after a while but anyways that's how I got into it. Yeah, but back then I was working for a company and then like I when the war started, I just moved to remote and then eventually had to go back to freelancing... No, actually, I wanted to quit my job. But then when the war started, I was, like, oh, I'm not quitting my job because I need it. But then, like, one month they didn't pay me. So, I was, like, oh, (inappropriate word omitted). And I, we all left, kind of, all my colleagues. And then I was, like, oh, (inappropriate word omitted), I have to do something. So, yeah, actually, the biggest challenge, like, one of the biggest was to find a job. I had done freelance work before. But then I didn't have enough freelance work to survive, so I started working in a restaurant in Lisbon and then I left the restaurant. And then I was, like, okay, whatever, I'm just doing freelance... there just isn't really full-time positions for graphic design here. Like limited, I would say. I didn't choose to work in freelance for the freedom or to be a nomad. I do it because I need to – Part. F, Int. 1; Int 3 Pos. 95.

Participant F's example of her entry back into freelance and frustration with the job opportunities in her field demonstrate how certain careers are more suited to remote work and how employers may not require a full-time employee to fulfill specific tasks.

Participant B had a fulltime position prior to becoming a digital nomad and she thanks the pandemic for giving her remote capabilities. She tells me about how her previous work experience and relationship helped her start her Airbnb business.

So I'm an architect. I have to tell you, that after COVID, thanks to COVID, everything was more simple, because you don't necessarily need to meet with the clients. And with the 3D and everything, you have the tools to be not there, and still know the topography of the land and everything, so you don't need to be there. So, after COVID, and since I was working as an architect, and people were at their homes, thinking "we should build a house, oh we don't have so much to do", and stuff like that. So, they started, like, hey, we wanted to build our houses, and blah, blah, blah. But everything started online. So, it was a good thing for me, because it started. But even though I work as an architect still, and I'm an interior designer too, that is not my main income. So, before COVID, when I moved to this small village, Antigua, Guatemala, it's a very touristy city, so I was thinking about having an apartment, and then rent the rooms, or something like that, to get a profit. And, well, life is like that, that my now ex-boyfriend, he taught me how to do Airbnb. So as an architect, it was easy for me, because I was doing the scouting, or where the properties were back in Guatemala, since it's a very touristy place. And I rented it, and I made it nice, you know? ... But anyway, he teaches me how to do it. It's not a huge science, you know? But it's meant to get you started. So, I started, I rented one property at the beginning, and it was hard at the beginning, because then COVID appeared. Then COVID happened, and I have to say that I had to clean my property myself. Because obviously the contract was for one year, and so it was difficult, but after COVID, I was ready to rent new properties. And it's a long story, but the owner of the house that I was renting, he saw that I was bringing so many guests to the house, and blah, blah, blah, he had a condo and still paying the rent, and everything, so he offered me the whole condominium to manage. So, it was great... All condos are Airbnb now. I'm not working on that house anymore,

but back then. That's huge, compared to having one unit, to go from that to be like, oh, you know what? Take the whole condo. That's amazing. Not knowing anything about Airbnb, it was like I was doing the administration of a condo on Airbnb, so that teaches me a lot. And at the end, with that property, with the profit, I rent another property, and then I rent another property, and well, since I'm material design, I just put the property really, really nice, and well, basically, I return the houses, like the condominium, and I only stay with my properties. Not my properties. I rent the property, and I sublet it. Yeah. And so, I think it took me like five years, or four years, to build that. Like everything, you know? Like cleaning ladies, like maintenance guy. Because once you get to a certain amount, it's a little harder to manage – Part. B Int. 1, Pos. 23.

Not all digital nomads face the precariousness of freelancing and finding clients or assuming the risks of self-employment. A couple of my participants were working in roles that allowed them to work abroad and they used this flexibility to work in Lisbon, while maintaining a consistent fixed income with one employer. Participant D shared with me his process to land the role he has today.

Let me start at the beginning. I was looking to quit my previous job. I mean, it's already over. People started to get fired. Some of my friends had to leave. I was kind of like, 'this is not a nice working environment anymore. I've been here for a bit too long, so let's try to find something'. So, I think, at the beginning of last year, I was kind of looking for a new job. So, I did a couple of interviews... I had two main choices. The one I'm currently working for. A very good friend of mine is there. That was like a big reason. Okay, maybe I should go there. I have someone already there, so it's easy. And the other one and they offered me quite a significant amount of money to move and everything to set up. But, I was like, 'nah, I also want to move to the south. Let's take this other job', because it was remote – Part. D, Int 1, Pos. 26.

Participant D adds that though he is working for a single company, it is as an independent contractor not as a full-time employee. This may be so the employer doesn't have the tax implications involved with people working in other countries. For Participant D it seems the

tradeoff of different benefits offered from full-time employment for remote capabilities that enable him to live out his southern European fantasies was worth it.

4.2.1 Challenges to entry

Participant E is a fairly recent graduate, and she has landed a part time public relations role for German company, that has allowed her to move freely.

I work as I do a traineeship in PR. So, like at a startup... So, my traineeship is until November and then I get into a junior position there, but I want to stay until August actually and then go to Poland for a little bit. Then I wanted to travel and then come back in the winter... Even though I'm earning German minimum wage, but that is like a medium wage here. Like it's enough that you live you can go out and enjoy yourself here... I'm on the one-year contract and after this year they can prolong the contract if you finish the traineeship within the year they can promote you to a position, which is what they usually want.

Participant E continued telling me about her priorities when looking for work and the tradeoff she has observed with remote jobs.

I already knew I wanted to be back in Lisbon, and I knew I wanted to travel and to be able to visit Sebastian. But it was hard to find a remote job... Right now, for me, it's more important to live where I want, but looking at salary like options you have working remote like if you work hybrid for example your salary like I don't know... 50% more. It's crazy how much more they offer you So I'm now not sure anymore if it's worth earning so little to live where I want to live. I'm starting to, the older I get the more like, questioning if I don't want to work hybrid but from the other side. Besides Berlin, I can't imagine going back to Germany and applying to other EU countries. Even though like we have this EU passport It's super hard because you need to pay taxes there and it's a whole lot of work for them. So, they usually don't want, they don't want that... They have to figure it's not like the individual having to figure out the taxes like the company they're like, oh, yeah, I don't want to we don't want to do that unless sometimes when they're already like companies that are already scattered throughout Europe –Part. E 1, Pos. 32.

Participants E's mention of her German passport in this context demonstrate the intersection of Appadurai's concepts of ethnoscaples, financescaples. and ideoscaples. Despite the ability to move and work freely within the EU (ethnoscaples), financial limitation such as low wages (financescaples) and bureaucratic barriers such as the tax implications companies face when hiring across borders (ideoscaples) can hinder her from fully enjoying these benefits.

It was found that the diverse pathways into digital nomadism represented in my participants stories highlight the multifaceted nature of digital nomadism. Advances in technology, shifts in work culture, and the rise of the gig economy have lowered barriers into location independent work. As participants operating within the **network society**, their professional and economic activities are organized around digital networks. These stories highlight some of the challenges and motivations of digital nomads as asked in RQ1. In addition, these stories share the pivotal moments in the digital nomad journey that aid in answering SRQ2: How do the perspectives and identities of digital nomads evolve over their stay in Lisbon, and what are the pivotal moments that influence these changes?

4.3 Personal Histories and Backgrounds

The histories and experiences of my participants before they moved to Lisbon and before they became digital nomads play as much of a role in who they are today. Below I share a bit about their personal histories that they have shared with me.

At our second meeting we ate ham and cheese sandwiches at a small tasca in Mouraria, near Participant A's home. We drank coffee together and enjoyed a slow morning before getting started. He tells me about his heritage and his parents:

Well my mom is Filipino, her parents are Filipino. And my dad is mixed, but his dad is Bermudan, which were colonized by the English, so he's like fair skinned and his mom is black from North Carolina. And some roots in Louisiana. My grandma's mom, her mom I think might've been a slave. Might've been a slave. Roots go like, deep in the South. You know in America it was, I was called blasian. When I was a kid I would say the dumbest shit like "I am not Asian, I am south pacific islander"

He shares an intriguing discovery he had made:

“What’s funny is my mom’s maiden name is a Portuguese word... Yeah, Salgado. It means salty. Which I didn’t realize until I was here and started learning Portuguese. What I didn’t know is that the Portuguese went to the Philippines. So, I think, maybe either I had a Portuguese ancestor, or it was like they changed their names but it’s interesting. - Participant A, Int 2, pos. 12

Participant B told me the details of her upbringing and her home life. Sharing the values of her parents and how her experience is different from most Latin American families:

I used to live... in the city of Guatemala, so mostly, like, the culture over there is, you live in gated communities, it’s safer, you know, like, or you feel more safe, but my community was very nice because we have this forest behind the houses, so my childhood was very nice, like, with a lot of friends and everything, so, and my mom and my dad, they weren’t, like, that strict, you know, they allowed us to do, to play with friends and go out, like, of course, with rules, obviously, but they were more open to us to have friends, to go out, etc. So, it was good. I think that my mom and my dad are pretty different... they were more on this mindset, I think that because my dad traveled a bit, you know, he was more open about, and my mom was very, for her, it was very important, no, you have to study and travel, too. Like, for them, it’s not like the Latin American culture that you have to study and then get married, or get married, like, because you need a man and everything, they were totally the opposite. Actually, even now that I’m not so young, they are like, no, like, don’t get married, like, travel, like, live your life, have friends, do your patrimony, like, your house or whatever, and, so, I never felt, like, the pressure, well, the pressure on me was, like, studying and have... And being successful. Yeah. Like, being successful, I don’t know, because my parents never were like, oh, you have to be a doctor, or you have to be, or whatever. They were more like, what do you want to study, and blah, blah, blah, and we discussed about that... I was very good, like, drawing and building stuff, so I was kind of into architecture, design, all the time, like, I knew that I wanted to be an architect when I was nine. Yeah. So, it was easy for me to choose, like, I was in between being a lawyer, an architect, or being a psychologist... - Participant B, Int 2, pos 3-17

Participant B speaks with warmth and gratitude about her upbringing, reflecting on the freedom and encouragement her parents provided her. This story resonates with Giddens' ideas of identity formation. Giddens argues that individuals have more freedom in shaping their identities in modern societies. Participant B's reflection on her parents' rejection of traditional expectations in the Latin American cultures, and encouragement to pursue education, to travel, and have independence align strongly with this concept. Additionally, this represents a key element in **primary socialization** (Giddens, 2006), where family plays a crucial role in instilling values that shape a person's identity. This provides insight for understanding how perspectives and identities evolve over time, as asked in SRQ1.

Participant C shares his experiences of living in various countries before settling in Portugal.

So, I'm from Belarus but I left Belarus to study in Poland and I was in exchange semesters in, twice in Spain, once in France. Yeah, I mean I worked in the U.S. in the summer camp for two months... But yeah, I liked Spain a lot and the weather there. I took a lot of trips to Portugal while I was studying there, and I really liked it. - Participant C, Int 2, pos. 14

Participant D shared with some insight into his cultural background and global experiences:

I am born in South Korea. But I moved to Holland when I was five. And I obtained my Dutch citizenship when I was twelve or something. Yeah, I've been growing up most of my life there. After graduation of my space engineering studies, I went to Denmark for close to four years. And after that, I'm here, basically. (Participant D, Int 1, pos. 2)

I had a friend working in Denmark, and I got an interview there, and everything was really smooth. So, I just took that job... In Aalborg... It's a very small city, like 100,000 people or something like that.

His tone is casual, blasé even, when talking about Aalborg. As he stated, moving there was for an employment opportunity, so I suspect he had no other previous desires to move to this small Danish town. **Financescapes** (Appadurai) are at play here, in how the global labor market enabled and motivated Participant D's move.

As our conversation continues, he tells me about growing up in Amsterdam. He explains how the city's international atmosphere led him, someone from a non-Dutch background, to form friendships with other non-Dutch people.

Amsterdam is very multicultural. So, when I went to school, Dutch people, we had some Turkish or Portuguese even. You know, but they all immigrated or something. So, it's like... I guess that kind of, you know, like made me realize, oh, yeah, you don't have to be with Dutch people. There are other nationalities and cultures. And I was studying. So, it's also like... Mainly also like a very international department, let's say. There's a lot of people from UK, but also from Korea, other countries coming to study there. So, it's just like, you know, just forced to have, I guess, cultural friends over here. Like international friends. - Participant D, Int 1, Pos. 128

As we take in the sun, Participant F describes Kyiv and other places she has lived prior to Lisbon:

I'm from Kyiv. It's big. We have much more, you know, like, huge buildings, like, residential areas, you know. Not, like... These are all small. Yeah, here is, like, three floors. We have, like, 16, 20, almost, like, if it's not downtown. Yeah. A bit much more packed, I would say... But, yeah, in Belgium, it was my first experience when it was, like, completely different. Yeah. But from what I noticed, people were still searching a lot of for a lot of ways, like, how to entertain themselves. And I really felt it, because, like, it's the small city, but still they had a lot of events, art events, a lot. Just events on the streets, like, festas, you know. Yeah. They were just, like, gathering together all the time, like... But, like, the whole city, you know. The whole town... Yeah. So, I didn't feel like I was, like, in a really small city. Plus, we had Lille. It's the city in France, which is bigger. And it was, like, 20 minutes by car. So, if you want, you can go there.

I was doing my Erasmus there. (Belgium) And, like, the only two options were, like, either Budapest, either Belgium. And I decided to go to Belgium, because it was an art school. And for me, it was, like, the priority. So, yeah. That's why. And I lived there for half a year... Like, I graduated from school. And I went to Poland straight away, then Belgium and then, I came back to Poland for one year... Warsaw. It's the capital. So,

basically, from Kyiv, which, like, which is fast. I moved to also a fast city. Another fast city, yeah. But, actually, when I was in Kyiv, I was trying to avoid going to Warsaw itself. I didn't want to. I don't know. Actually, I don't know why. From what I remember, I think I wanted to try to live in a smaller city, just to try. But in the end, just also, just the circumstances. Yeah. And I ended up there. But Warsaw is... I wouldn't say it's more, like, business-business, but it feels like that. I mean, in Kyiv, it's also, like, business-business, but Kyiv and Warsaw is, like, less... less soul, I would say, for me. Yeah. Um, I mean, Kyiv still has a special place in my heart, you know, so I cannot really compare it, because I live... I was born there, so it's a bit different. Yeah, because there, the soul is just my soul. It's just, like, my, you know, blood - Participant F, Int 1, Pos. 27-47).

The way Participant F discusses the places she lives before using descriptors on the size of city and how the place feels to her. While describing both Kyiv and Warsaw as big and fast and as 'business-business', Kyiv holds more emotional significance as it's rooted in personal history. Describing Kyiv's soul as her soul, demonstrates how strong her identity is tied to it, even as she moves and experiences other cities. This demonstrates how Giddens's concept of place and identity remains relevant even in a globalized world. Kyiv serves as a stable point in her reflexive project of the self. This ties to SRQ1 as participant F's, hybrid identity is constructed through her experiences in new cities alongside her deep connection to her hometown, Kyiv.

These stories give us a bit more background information on some of our participants from cultural backgrounds, upbringing, to previous countries of residences. This context enriches our understanding of who these digital nomads are, providing deeper insight into their identities as we continue to explore their life stories.

4.4 Motivations and Values

The motivations behind digital nomads' decision to pursue this lifestyle or decision on where they chose to do so vary by participant. Participant A mentioned several motivations for wanting to leave his home of Oakland, California and eventually start digital nomadding. He expresses these throughout our conversations:

I haven't been living in Oakland for a while, but the big difference is that I walk here more than anywhere. I feel like I have a community here, when I was in Oakland I tried to get into the community but it felt very cliquey and small, it felt not as open as I am naturally as a person so for me finding somewhere else to live is finding a community of people who want to create and are supportive and talented musicians which here there are tons, and they're also willing to work, and like my music, and I love their music, and I found what I was looking for. In South America as well, this is why I like to stay put in a place for more than a year, I would meet up weekly with a group of horns players, playing trumpet or sax, I also play sax, finding these groups investing time into friends into people, something that you can do but to a different level when you are traveling – Part. A, Int, 1.

In addition to finding a community of musicians, Participant A also states that music played an influence in why he chose to go to Europe, as the ease and affordability of travel within Europe makes it ideal for him to travel. He briefs me about his upcoming tour during our second conversation: *Eight shows, yeah, my first tour, eight shows. This is why I wanted to come to Europe, to be able to bounce around and be near a lot of different cultures. Here flights, and trains, they're a lot cheaper so you can see more and go to more places for a lot cheaper – Part A. Int 3.*

He tells me that what he values most about digital nomading is:

Freedom... 100%. Yeah, I'm never going back to working again, but absolutely not. Yeah, no. Um, no. Yeah, that freedom is the reason why I'm like, I'm going to create this, this life - Part. A Int 3, Pos. 4.

For Participant D, her relationship is why she prioritizes remote work, she tells me:

Being like in a long distance relationship, I feel like it's just giving me the most freedom. I feel like it would be really difficult like if my boyfriend and I wouldn't both work remotely. I think it would be really hard for us to do Lisbon and Poland and like travel together. So, I think like for the life that I'm having right now, it's one of my top priorities. When I look for work, it's remotely. And second comes the money. So completely and I'm like, I don't have any responsibilities right now. Like I don't have a

family. I don't have like I don't have kids. I don't buy anything. So, I don't have like a certain amount of money that I need to have. I mean, I have that for like what I need to survive but not like I don't have to stay in a place because of kids or whatever - Part. E, Int. 3, Pos. 18.

Due to her lack of children, Participant E can prioritize flexibility over financial gains. Which she does as it enables her to maintain her long-distance relationship.

The motivations and values of digital nomads vary, depending on their circumstances and interests. These cases illustrate how the DN lifestyle is shaped by a diverse range of motivations.

5. Navigating Life in Lisbon

5.1 Relocating to and within Lisbon

I asked my participants about their experience moving to Lisbon, and for those who have been through it, they're experiences moving within Lisbon. *"The Facebook link my friend sent my while I was in Ireland I sent a message to the girl and went by to visit and loved the apartment. The owner and I hit it off and I moved into my apartment July, that I'm still in now."* Participant A answered. Participant B shares that she doesn't have interest in moving again soon, as she finds it requires a great deal of energy:

Right now, only Lisbon is in my mind. I need, like, because actually it's like an emotional effort... to move. It's a lot to move. So, it's not that you're leaving your family and stuff like that. It's that you need to build a network again. Like friends and stuff like that. So even people think that, oh, it's awesome that you're living in another country and everything. But yeah. But it takes a lot of your energy to build a network again.

Like trying to find good friends. Like real ones. That's a really hard thing as an adult to do. Especially if you're not working in an office with people. That is a thing that affects me a little bit. I think that I kind of miss this office environment. Not because of the work. Not because of the work. Because of the people that you met there. For example, one of my best friends, I met her in an office. So, when you're traveling or

working as a digital nomad, you don't have that. You go to a cafe. But I mean, everyone is working as a zombie too. And nobody... Unless you are going there frequently, you're going to meet people. Because otherwise everyone is very busy. If you're changing the place like a lot. Like the networking thing. Or having friends. It's kind of difficult when you're traveling and working at the same time. So, by the moment I think that I'm going to spend more time here. To build friends and everything. And then I will see if I want to... If I want to do it again – Part. B, Int 1.

Participant C, has lived in Portugal the longest of all my participants and has dealt with relocating within Lisbon multiple times. Despite this, he did not complain about moving around, indicating that he is able to adapt to the changes in his environment.

I visited a few apartments before. I was just visiting Lisbon for like a week or two, and I checked out a few places. But I think the final one, I decided online. I visited two rooms in the same apartment, and I ended up picking a different one from what I originally visited. I sent the other option to a friend... I first lived in Alcântara, in a shared apartment. It's a nice area, but after half a year, I had kind of walked all the streets around, and it got a bit boring... I moved four times in two years, so about every half year... I could have stayed longer, but I was always looking to change something—like the place I lived. I guess I kind of got used to the idea of always changing – Part. C, Int. 3, Pos. 41-48.

Participant D demonstrates the power of social capital and how his previous Portuguese connections helped him find a good home.

So, like, oh, yeah, my sister's boyfriend's family, they are realtors. Yeah. So, she will help me out, you know, and give me contacts. Just ask where you want to live, you know. And then, it had to come a weekend, and they're like, oh, we have this, this, and this options. And I can help. And they were, like, very helpful. I found a very nice house very easily – Part. D, Int, 1.

Participant E seems to be moving the most often out of all my participants. This may be because she has only recently finished university and the freedom to work from anywhere is still relatively new to her. She excitedly tells me about her plans:

So right now I'm moving to Poland for what I believe to be August, September, October. Three months. And then I hope to go to Japan and Thailand. Then I hope to come back. That's my plan for now. – Part. E, Int. 3, Pos. 8.

Moving this often isn't without some sacrifices, she explains:

I have so much clothes and every time I move I have to get rid of some, but I'm becoming better. I am still going to have to send a box with my things to Poland, and my boyfriend is already there. So, I will send my things there and then go home to Germany. I have some things in Germany too, for like the winter, that I leave there because I'm not going to use it in Lisbon – Part. E, Int. 3, Pos. 22.

Participant F's experience when arriving to Lisbon was unique.

I thought, if I will find something, where to live, the free place to live, then I'm gonna come here. If not, I'm not going to come here, and I managed to find it. I just kind of filled the form for, like, refugees, so... and just, like, they answered me, and when I, like, when they confirmed that they can accept me and my mom at that point, I was like, okay, like, then I can go, because otherwise I would stay probably in Poland, or I would... I think I would stay in Poland for, like, a few months and come back to Ukraine. Yeah, so it was just, like, a big coincidence – Part. F, Int. 1, Pos. 4.

In our final interview with Participant F, at a Nepalese restaurant in Alcantara, near her friend's apartment she was temporarily staying at while still looking for a new place, she told me more about the different apartments she's lived in throughout her two years in Lisbon.

...I lived with just Portuguese family, which also was, like, an experience. And then it was, like, from this family life with three kids where I lived with them, it was, like, nine international students and parties all the time. And then I feel like, okay. Everyone, most of the people left. And it's, again, changed my... Changed.

And then there were a few... It's a distinct era of time of that living in that apartment during that specific time. Even when we kept living. Like, that specific semester is, like, distinct in my head.

It's, like, a separate... It's, like, one season in my life. I guess.

And then, like, I came back and there were new people living there. But it was, again, a completely different experience because I didn't find anyone there. But at the same time, they were doing, like... such big parties... And it's also, like, an experience because I met also, again... So many other people. It was different, yeah. So, it's, like, technically, like, really each person that I met more close affected on me in some way. But it's more, like, also the connection... The groups of people. - Part. F, Int. 3, Pos. 55-57

I would argue that frequent changes such as moving apartments, rotating roommates and new neighborhoods, can be a hinderance to developing a sense of community.

5.2 A Day in the life

To get a better sense of the day to day of the actors, I asked them to walk me through a typical day. I must acknowledge that most of them admitted to providing a idealized day in their life here in Lisbon. Starting with Participant A he tells:

I have an ideal day, I wake up 9am on a Monday, make my bed, take a cold shower, and go in my room and meditate for 15 minutes, and go on a run, come home, and meditate again, take a shower and then see if I need to do anything around the house cleaning laundry, then sending emails, and making content. I'm a musician and I'm going on tour, I'm also a voice actor so reaching out to potential clients. Then usually towards the latter half of the day I'll send auditions. I am an audio engineer as well, I work for a YouTube channel., doing their voiceovers, read their scripts, mix, and master it. I send about 10-15 auditions a day, an ideal day. If I do have work then it will take about two hours to record and edit. I'll do that basically until the evening then meet up with friends in the evening. - Part. A, Int. 1, Pos. 8.

Participant B who works from a different time zone than where her business operates tells me: *Basically, like my work is that I don't have like a schedule. But in the morning, like I check everything to send the cleaning ladies to see if something's happening or stuff like that. Yeah, so... But I can do it everywhere.* (Int. 1) Participant B doesn't share a routine of any kind, which does not surprise me as someone who travels as much as she I would imagine it would be difficult to hold one.

Participant C shares what he describes as wonderful day:

Boring...^[P]_[SEP]I'm gonna take you just for a wonderful day yeah that's easier because for me like all the nice things that like I enjoyed a lot now they're kind of boring and like it's you had it so many times so it's like not enjoyable anymore. I don't know for somebody else. Let's see, get a coffee and pastel de nata close to the river. I don't know walk around some neighborhood probably, like not too central, not like Baixa, but I would say yeah like I don't know like Monte Agudo. I don't know like maybe check Marvila for like some like events or like just hang out at Marvila 8, like markets or food or like just a bar. There's some nice places there and go to the other side like here to walk along the river that's nice. Best view I think of Lisbon is like from Almada. I was like walking today like from home, it was like also kind of hills and you walk, you see the whole river from there. It was pretty nice. - Part. C, Int. 2, Pos. 89.

He proceeds to show me a photo of the view from his walk that day, a gorgeous view of the city and the bridge under a sky of violet.

I asked Participant F about her workday during our last interview over steamed chicken momos. From my observation there are many Nepalese restaurants in Lisbon, offering these delicious dumplings. The sun had set and a group of about six middle-aged Portuguese people were sitting next us, seemingly enjoying the flavorful and affordable Indian and Nepalese cuisine while drinking pints of Sagres. As we share a plate, Participant F answers:

More or less normal working hours. Like, from 9 to 5, 9 to 6. Like, normal people...

The perfect day for me is to wake up at 7am. Go boxing at 8. And I'm not even lying. And then go to, like, Padaria or something. Drink a coffee. Take a slow morning. And then maybe in the cafeteria. Or maybe at home, okay, but in cafeteria is better, if we are talking about the dream. Working day. To work there for a bit. Maybe during lunch, just to walk around somewhere. And then probably come back home. And, like, finish my stuff there. Yeah. And then after working day... To... Probably, like, meet some friends... Just in the bar for a drink or to go to samba or something like this. It

can be nice. Or just to go to a simple bar, I don't know, like, A Mata or something. Yeah. And just to talk with friends. Yeah. But something chill, not crazy. Or, if not, just to go for a long walk somewhere. Read a book, and then just come back home, and just chill, and it depends on the mood. If I'm in an introverted mood, the second option is better. If I'm... feeling social, to go play pool, as well. Lately, I'm, like, going to play pool. - Part. F Int. 3, Pos. 35-37.

According to Giddens (pg. 322) in modern societies our identities are structured more around our lifestyle choices, for example, how we spend our leisure time, and less around traditional class indicators such as occupation.

5.3 Bureaucracy

For many digital nomads, moving to Lisbon and other places in Portugal includes dealing with the often-complex bureaucratic processes that come with settling in a foreign country. This section delves into the experiences and perspectives of the actors in the study.

Actually, my experiences weren't that bad. Just because they made it much more easier for Ukrainians. So, when I came, I just received an online document with all the numbers, all like NIS, NIF and everything. But it's just an exception of the rule. All the other stories that I hear are super awful. But of course, eventually, I will face the problems with the residency... So, you just had to fill the form that you are a refugee when you entered, blah, blah, blah, under which circumstances. And they gave you this document that allows you to work.

Participant F recounts an interaction she had when trying to register at the hospital.

But also, for example, when I went to the hospital, when I was trying to sign up for the hospital, then it was a mess. Because I came once, they were like, "oh, we can only sign you up here, in this hospital. But to get to the doctor, you have to come in three weeks and only in three weeks you can make an appointment." I came, I made an appointment, they made an appointment in a week, I came in a week and they said, "oh, the doctor is not here." And I was like, "why?" They were like, "he's just not here, let's make an appointment in another two weeks." And I'm like, "but do you have

a guarantee that the doctor will be here?" And they were like, "ah." I was like, "okay, I got it." And I just never came back there... I was just going to private clinics after that because I really needed it. It's not like I could wait for another two months to get to the doctor. But yeah, from what I heard, all of these things are super, super slow here. It's very slow. - Part. F Int. 2Pos. 16-20

While Participant C's home country of Belarus is not part of the E.U. and therefore doesn't receive the privileges associated with its membership, Participant C can still live and work freely in the E.U. without a visa. He explains:

I have Polish citizenship, so for me it was way easier than if I was just Belarusian. So, to be able to live here, I didn't need to get any... I think there was one necessary process, like you need to sign up or get some papers. Something very simple. More for statistics for them. I didn't even do that in the beginning. The first three years I was still paying taxes in Poland. I was freelancing. I didn't need a local tax number or social security number. So, I didn't need to do anything new. But then when I started the job here, I needed NIF, I needed a social security number. And when I already had that, I also found out about the NHR. And I got the NHR. Non-Habitual Resident. It's like the status, lower tax status for expats. This regulation brought a lot of expats here. From different countries, the maximum you pay here is 20%... You pay a 20% tax, which is nice. I don't know what it is in other countries exactly. Usually people's average. But people have told me that they like that... I have Polish roots. My grandfather was Polish, so it's easier to get it for us. I studied there for, back then, it was three years of living and working or studying. If you have Polish roots, then you can get citizenship. Now I think it's even one year. My cousin got it in one year and something. It's probably so convenient. Because then you think, great, you get the citizenship. Now you're pretty much open to work wherever in Europe. - Part. C, Int. 2, Pos. 76-80.

This is an example of how Appadurai's ideascapes and financescapes are at play in bringing in more expats into the country. It is important to note that the NHR program has ended as of January 1st, 2024, but those who were already granted NHR status will be able to keep it until their individual status expires. This status is valid for 10 years.

5.3.1 Taxes

In this world nothing can be said to be certain except, death and taxes. (B. Franklin, personal communication, November 13, 1789). With this observation in mind, the issue of taxes remains just as relevant today, especially for our digital nomads navigating tax systems. We delve into their experiences and challenges when dealing with taxation in Portugal. For instance, participant D utilized the help of his social network to tackle his taxes, which he claims isn't as difficult to manage as others say:

I have my friend who's helping me out to do taxes. Actually, he used to have an accountant, but then he got to know how to do it, and it's very easy... Yeah, but actually, it was quite easier than I thought. I spent, like, five minutes every time to get my receipts, send it out, and then five minutes when I get my payment in, and I just have to fill in, like, my, you know, that I got the payment and everything... I think once you know how to do taxes it gets easy but yeah if you don't know any Portuguese the whole tax website in Portuguese yeah so the language barriers for sure yeah and that's more with like um language barriers with more um not and it's not logistics is it logistics like paper documents and government stuff bureaucracy not in like your daily life the language barriers. - Part. D, Int. 3, pos 90.

This perspective is not shared by Participant F, who as a freelancer must keep track of payments from different clients. She tells me about how she gets paid and her experience filing taxes in Portugal as a foreigner.

I do Recibos Verdes. I mean, like for most clients, I don't do any if it's a small project, if it's a huge project, when the payment is quite bigger, then usually they require you. And for me, it's better not to do this because I don't have to pay tax. But for them, they usually require it. And then I do Recibos Verdes. So, for other clients, like smaller projects, they just send you the money via IBAN, but it's like when it's really small projects. Sometimes I do like, for example, like a poster or, I don't know, any small thing, like a poster on Instagram. And then, yeah, they don't really require any documentation about it, which is nice...

I mean, yeah, for me, like it's the worst nightmare always, the taxes. And because I like I had an activity open, but it was wrong from the very beginning. I like, not me, but like other people opened it wrong for me. And then I talked to an accountant, or I don't know who she is. But like I had a consultation, and she said that it's all wrong. So, I had to change all of this. And then it turned out that I had to do declarations, and I didn't do this. So, it's a whole mess. I mean, I've learned how to do like Recibos Verdes. But only this... But I don't know the whole process about doing like, like, yeah, doing the whole activity and like paying it separately. So, it's always a bit stressful. - Part. F Int 2, Pos. 7-14.

As a German citizen, Participant E, claims she doesn't need to pay taxes in Portugal. “*No, no, I don't have to. I think the rule is that I would if I was here for a certain amount of time, but it's a lot of time, like I'm not going to.*” The tax rule in Portugal is that even as a digital nomad, if you are in Portugal for 183 days out of the year, you are required to pay taxes in Portugal. While I'm not certain how many days Participant E will be in Portugal for the tax year, she seems confident it will not be an issue.

5.3.2 Visas

Only two of the digital nomads are on the Digital Nomad Visa, as others are E.U. citizens or receiving temporary protection as a refugee.

I have a digital nomad visa and that lasts for two years, I have temporary residency for two years and I can renew that for three years.

Participant A explains.

During our last interview which took place at a park in Graça, he says that he shares his frustration on waiting for his residency card: *I'm still waiting on my residency card. Stuff like that. But I think my status is still, but I don't know when it started. I don't know. I've been waiting for a year for this.* - Part. A Int 3, Pos. 42.

He explains that at his appointment: “*They just said, Yes, coming in two weeks.*” We compare notes on our experiences. I told him that I received mine in two weeks and my

appointment was last August. Shocked he exclaims: *Mine was in (inappropriate word removed) August as well!*

...I paid all the 200 euros... I'm just waiting for the card. Like, then I was talking to a guy who was like, kind of checking up on my case. And he's like, "Oh, it's still in analysis.' Like, "(Inappropriate word removed), what are you analyzing? I paid the money!" - Part. A Int 3, Pos. 44-52.

Participant B recounts the steps she took for obtaining her visa here:

I'm on a digital nomad visa... There were like, a few things I needed to make sure I had before applying. I had to have a certain amount of money in the bank and show some taxes. I had to show a contract for my apartment... It was really difficult to get the, to get an appointment. I feel like the instructions were not clear, I wasn't sure what was going to happen because I could not find much information about the process anywhere. But, well, here I am. - Part. B, Int. 3, Pos. 62-68

Immigration policy can be a considerable barrier to the mobility of digital nomads. However, the rise of DN visas seem to be a good solution to this.

6. The Digital Nomad Experience

Beyond providing insight into the actors' experience with the bureaucratic processes in Portugal, this subchapter highlights the advantages of having E.U. citizenship and passport. This benefit allows some of my participants to move and work within the E.U. with ease.

6.1 Making it work: navigating remote jobs

Currently in his first remote role, Participant D reflects on the differences between connecting with his coworker's online vs in person.

I don't know. It's different. I've never worked remote before. I mean, the thing is, for me, you know, I compare it with what I used to have. I made good friends at my last job. Like, I went to their weddings, and I still talk to their moms sometimes every day about where I was going and stuff like that. Like, also, we just travel.

...But here, you know, it's just... It's not the same. Like, I know them and they're nice, but they are not my friends or I don't consider them. Yeah, so, I mean, it's definitely kind of difficult to form that relationship when you're not working together that often or you're not in person with them for anything or any kind of events. But my teammate is doing a good job on this. Like, he organizes, like, maybe once or twice a year, like, this location type of things. So, you know, for example, last summer, you know, I was just barely working. He was like, "oh, yeah, David, do you want to come to Catalonia? We are going to the city, we are going to rent, like, a house." "Oh, that's cool." We go together, and then we can work together, you know, like at location. Yeah. That was kind of nice. Actually, that was, like, really helpful because then you kind of understand how people are. You know, the screen kind of puts you at a... You'll see a little bit. Yeah. And you kind of have to act, like, you know, a bit more professional rather than, like, okay, you know, can I joke around? I mean, you can, but, you know, it's a bit... There's a boundary, an extra layer to get into that. - Part. D, Int. 1, pos 62-64.

The transition between in person to remote work that Participant D experienced reflects the shift that happens in the future of work on how connections are formed and maintained at work. Giddens's concept of disembedding is demonstrated here in how social interactions are removed from physical locations. In the case of Participant D's experience, his colleague is actively organizing trips to allow for interaction in the physical space again. While this may not be possible for all remote teams, in the future of work organized trips like this could be beneficial for allowing the opportunity for physical connection amongst remote teams.

Without a set 9-5 job that you have to clock in for, freelancers have the flexibility to create their own schedule, but this also poses some difficulty for time management. Participant F shares how she manages her time as a freelancer.

How I organize my time? Yes like every time I'm being too chaotic, I have to do something and then I I'm still too like I'm, I'm like oh okay I can try to organize in like Google calendar or in Notion or anywhere and then I'm just wasting time organizing yeah and then I'm like I have to go and learn Notion and then I start learning Notion and then like I ended up just doing this and spending time for this for organizing it

perfectly and then I never use it in the end. Maybe for me if I really have a lot of things to do I prefer to organize it on the paper yeah just write it down yeah write it down and then it's easier for me and quicker and uh yeah and it's just easier to see all the like deadlines. I'm old-fashioned and everything yeah so that's basically it that's how I don't organize my time but like I'm the worst like I'm the worst person. I'm really either work all the time or I don't work. - Part. F, Int 1, Pos. 79.

As expressed by Participant F, managing time as a freelancer working from home can become tricky. Sometimes the solution to modern problems is traditional solutions, such as pen and paper. When digital transformation fails to deliver, Participant F resorts to traditional solution

6.2 The remote office

For the digital nomad, the concept of an office is no longer confined to a single location. Remote workers create a workspace that suits their needs where they are. This section explores the perspective introduced by Castells, namely the concept of space of flows. which finds empirical evidence in how digital nomads select their workspace and the tools they rely on to stay productive. This reflects their decision to select Lisbon as their remote office and this helps to answer this thesis subsidiary research question two, which asks: how do the perspectives and identities of digital nomads evolve over their stay in Lisbon, what are the pivotal moments that influence these changes? For instance, Participant A's experience highlights the need for adaptability when working while traveling. He doesn't lower his standards, instead he gets creative with what he has:

I do everything on my computer, when I was in Brazil for six weeks I brought my computer, my audio interface, and a little microphone and I was working. To do the recordings, working in my studio is best so if I'm traveling I setup a home studio and put a mattress in the closet, I've started to chronicle the makeshift studio I make on the road. I have high standards for audio quality so I try to make it sound as best as it can. I've been audio engineering for a couple of years, being a musician I've just learned how to do it - Part. A, Int. 1, pos. 15.

Participant C adjusts to the changes in his living conditions:

I have my laptop and some monitors that my work gave me... I work in my bedroom, so I don't have roommates right now because I just moved into my place in Caparica, but before, yeah. Sometimes I would bring my laptop out to the terrace. It's not as productive without the monitors because I can only work on one thing at a time. It's nice though right now to take sun outside. Most of the time I work in my room because I had nine roommates. - Part. C, Int, 2, Pos. 138-140.

Taking his work outdoors and changing environments based on his needs or preferences when he desires illustrates Castells's idea of how space becomes fluid in the network society.

Participant B also illustrates this as she often doesn't even require a computer to do her work.

Sometimes I just do things from my bed in the morning because most of the time I just am responding to messages from my phone. And for architecture projects, I am sometimes at home but since I don't do them so often I also like to go to cafes. It's a good way to go to new places alone and you have something to do. - Part. B, Int. 3, pos. 58

I'm home office. Participant D tells me. With no roommates and a straightforward set up, he prefers to work at home. *I'm solo and just a desk and a couple monitors pretty basic.*

Comfort is one advantage to working from home, but he misses the connection that comes with working in an office:

Sometimes I just, like, "oh, I'm a bit tired. Let's lay on the couch for a while." Yeah. It's nice to do that, but, you know, if I go to work in an office, then, I can just, like, randomly socialize with people. Yeah. Like, I can just go to my friend's desk and, like, oh, what's going on with those projects? Talk about the maybe still work-related topics, but, you know, a bit more casual - Part. D, Int. 1, Pos. 56-60.

This demonstrates how Participant D's home space becomes a fluid space where home and work are blended. As the future of work evolves and the concept of an office becomes more flexible. The line between home and office may become increasingly blurred, which could pose challenges for work life balance and motivation and productivity at work. Future employers will likely have to address this and find ways to support workers.

6.1.1 Coworking

Participant F typically works from home, and even invites her friend to cowork with her in her apartment. While her apartment isn't a coworking space, she and her friends get to enjoy working alongside others without paying for a space.

Um about the co-working usually I bring people here because I like my space plus I use few laptops or the monitor yeah so I'm not really flexible uh but it really depends on the project like sometimes um yeah sometimes I go I can go out - Part. F, Int.1, pos 93-95

Participant E regularly attends coworking spaces. She tells me about her favorite spots in Lisbon to book a hot desk:

Oh, so I think a really pretty coworking space for example is Heden in Rossio, it's really pretty, then there is also Heden, there is also one by the water, and yup I think there are a lot of really nice ones, but I think the smaller ones where you interact with people are a lot nicer. There's a few near Cais.

Even though she enjoys spaces where people interact, she admits she doesn't attend the events held by the coworking spaces.

I don't participate in any activities that the co-working spaces, because I already have my people so... I'm not dependent on the co-working spaces and so for me it's actually really just a way to like be out of the house and work and be surrounded by people but I don't even want to interact with them because I'm like in my work mode. - Part. E, Int. 2, Pos. 34

In this situation Participant E illustrates how structure and agency is demonstrated through her experience at co-working spaces. She exercises her agency by choosing to go to the co-

working space to work and choosing to abstain from the social aspect. This exemplifies duality of structure, where she is utilizing the space but also shaping her own experience within the space.

6.1.2 Working while mobile

Digital nomads are typically characterized by their mobility. My participants share their experiences and perspectives on bringing their work along with them while traveling.

I flew to Agadir, and then I went to Taghazout. The first few days I was still working, though. I wanted to take a full vacation, but it was last minute, so I did two hours of work in the morning. After that, I rented a scooter and went to the mountains, to Paradise Valley. Then I joined some guys surfing because there was a spot with good waves. Winter is a better season for surfing there. - Part. C, Int. 2 , Pos. 109-114

This is easy for Participant B who only needs about an hour a day to devote to work.

Basically, when I travel, I go with my computer and I'm always there just in case I need it. - Part. B, Int. 1, Pos. 44

It's not as simple for Participant F whose work requires more than just her laptop.

I could but I would not. Sometimes if it, if what I need to do is simple and I can do it, but with just one screen it is annoying, just takes longer. And I have to bring my mouse. So for designing it's not great. And my laptop, the color is not correct, it looks different than the color on my monitor, that is why for design I need the monitor, or a new laptop. - Part. F, Int. 1, Pos. 93-95

Participant D tells me he feels that he does not take enough advantage of his flexibility to travel more. He reflects on the opportunities he has for travel:

I mean, the thing is, like, what I haven't made real use out of my flexibility to actually... Go travel. Yeah, go travel for a month, you know, somewhere else. I've been, you know, traveling, like, two weeks there, and then I work, like, a week. Like, for example, I went to India for, like, ten days, and I was working there a couple of days. And I'm like, I should do this more often, especially from Lisbon. There's a lot of places not that far

that you can get to, and I think rent's not horribly expensive here that you can leave for, like, a month. I can even find someone to sublet your apartment. Yeah, so I haven't really thought about it until, like, a month ago. I'm like, I can go to, like, Asia and then stay there for a month. - Part. D, Int. 1, Pos. 72-73

These experiences demonstrate the opportunities and challenges digital nomads have in blending their work with their mobility. The narratives highlight the how the need for certain work tools and the complexity of the job functions influence individual's flexibility to work. This reflects broader themes of agency and structural constraints as discussed by Giddens and Castells.

6.2 Work Life Balance

I don't want to work 12 hours a day to have lots of money, I want to have a happy life, enjoy life, go to the beach, enjoy nature - Part. E, Int. 1, pos. 46.

Participant E exclaims.

In addition to freelance digital marketing, Participant C works remote for a Portuguese company, owns his own company based in Poland, and has recently started a music organization based in Lisbon. I asked him how he manages to find balance; he tells me:

I mean, I could do everything, but honestly, I'm way less motivated here. I just enjoy the sun and don't feel like doing much! For my main job and client work, I do the bare minimum just to keep it going and still get paid. You can manage things with minimal effort for months. With the music thing, you have to do more, but even there, I sometimes do the bare minimum. Like, with the last party, I didn't plan too much; I just knew what was needed and let things take care of themselves – Part. C Int 3 , Pos. 62.

Because Participant D's work is more performance based, this can lead to working outside traditional work hours, as emphasized:

I mean, if you just do your work and task and deliver that, that's all they need. But, you know, there are some meetings involved where I have to be, or, like, sometimes there might be a customer, and then I have to, you know, handle these odd hours - Part. D, Int. 1, Pos. 79.

Nevertheless, participant B is very pleased with her work life balance,

Amazing balance. I wouldn't call it balance anymore. I spend a little bit of time doing the Airbnbs everyday and then the rest of the day is mine. I love that. Other projects I do, I enjoy it, but they usually require a few weeks or months, so yeah, I would say it great – Part. B, Int 3.

This differs greatly from the experience of Participant F, who shared with me about her inability to keep her time organized and the challenges of clients who don't respect her work hours:

I'm super bad in organizing time so I'm either not working or working all the time depends also on the projects. If the project doesn't have like a strict deadline, it's very hard for me to do it like straight away. So, I prefer like when I have more, strict deadlines then I can organize my time better, because I just know till when I should do it um but yeah this is the bad side of freelance for me. Like clients sometimes don't know that they cannot write you like during weekends or they just think that like oh they need it now and they don't care and then they're like oh if you don't do something during the night or if you don't do something during weekends they're like “oh why you haven't done it” and you're like “because I was resting”. Yeah like I cannot be here 24/7 so yeah it's the hard part for me about being in freelance. - Part. F, Int 1, pos. 72

I asked about how she maintains a work life balance, to which she laughed as she answered:

Yeah. I do not do this. I believe in balance. I just work until I'm exhausted. I'm postponing everything, and then I'm like, oh, (inappropriate word removed). Then I do it quickly. That's it. Now, I think I'm more... I'm trying to put boundaries with the clients a bit. If they're writing me on the weekends, I'm like, I'm not going to answer till Monday. Or these kind of things. Or the same, like, in the evening. Just to turn off notifications. Not to see it at all, because whenever you see it already... You think about it. Yeah, you think about it. Even if you don't respond. So, in this case, better just disconnect completely. And then, yeah, try to do it during hours that you think you're most productive. And that's it. - Part. F Int. 3 , Pos. 27

Using Giddens's theory of structuration explains how the varying degrees of work life balance amongst the participants are seemingly due to the nature of their work. For freelancers like Participant F who is sometimes working on longer projects, time management along with needy clients seems to affect her ability to keep a balance. The demands of Participant F's freelance work limit her agency. On the other hand, Participant B does not have to spend a lot of time managing her Airbnbs, thus has a lot of free time for herself to pursue other interests. Her work allows her a greater level of agency. This shows how structure and agency contribute to work life balance.

6.3 Digital technologies

A defining characteristic of digital nomadism is the reliance on digital technology. In this chapter we dive into the online platforms and tools digital nomads use to gain work, perform work, and communicate with their clients and coworkers. Castells's concept of the network society is particularly relevant here, as digital nomads are embedded in technology-driven networks that facilitate professional and social interactions and enable them to perform their job function remotely.

Okay, so I use mostly Adobe Creative Cloud, like Creative Suite? Yeah, Creative Cloud. Mostly Photoshop and Illustrator, if I have like..... So yeah, mostly Photoshop and Illustrator sometimes, but much more rare is like InDesign, Adobe InDesign. Or After Effects. And I also use Figma for my websites. And if it comes to communicating with clients, I mostly use Slack, I guess. It's like an app... It's free. At least all the functions that I know, like are for free for sure. And with some clients, just Telegram or like more simply WhatsApp or something. But yeah, but with bigger projects, I use Slack mostly for communicating. And for Adobe I don't pay. Adobe is expensive now, they are doing subscriptions, but I got it illegally years ago. I will never pay for it, it's so expensive. -Part. F Int 2, Pos. 5

It's typical in a traditional organization that the employer covers the cost of platforms and tools that are necessary for performing job functions. Because this is not the case for freelance workers, they must cover the expenses themselves or get creative, like Participant F.

I use Google a lot, like Google Meets and we use Slack, and we use LinkedIn a lot, because we reach out to journalists. So, it's like our platform. We use all like the Google channels like Docs, but communicate mostly through slack, yeah and it's every it's most people like German. - Part. E, Int. 1, pos. 31-32

Shares Participant E, about her role in public relations., which is reinforced by Participant A, who is a member of the gig economy, and uses a platform for finding work in his niche, voice acting:

I work on a website called voices.com and you go on the platform and there's all these projects and you read a little sample script, edit it, and send it off - Part. A, Int 1, Pos. 12

These types of platforms have risen due to the increase in gig work. I would argue that gig work platforms that specialize in a niche, such as Voices.com, are more beneficial to the workers, as they don't have to sift through jobs that aren't in their field.

These digital technologies are the backbone to the network society, that allow for global work and communication. They are essential to the digital nomad and as new platforms and tools continue to emerge and get better, they will continue facilitate remote work and the growth of the gig economy.

While technology is seen as the facilitator to the digital nomad lifestyle, I would also point out that lack of technology is the barrier to entering. Though it connects people globally, technology is not evenly distributed globally. Low-income regions and individuals may be excluded from participating in the global technoscape. This could lead to a divide in which only some of the world reaps the benefits of technological advancements. Additionally, the difference in access to these technologies from a young age can lead to long term inequalities, in terms of digital literacy, employability, and participation in the global digital economy.

7. Forming Community

Castells's teachings tell us that in the network society, personal identity is more open and not constructed from past traditional roles, instead we are actively making our identities in interactions with others, which presently is heavily done in the online realm. In Lisbon, where

people are constantly coming and going, it seems people are always looking to meet more people because the transient nature of the city fosters desire to form connections and shared experiences, illustrated in participant E reflections:

Lisbon is such a space to meet people, people here are open-minded, travelers, want to meet others. You can meet people all the time, everyone is in a good mood, it's really easy to make new connections, it really forced me to get out of my comfort zone. Sometimes in social interactions I can be little bit shy, but you cannot be in Lisbon, everyone is outgoing, which I believe is a nice thing. The opportunities to meet everyone really helps you get to know different cultures, improve your English skills, which professionally, is super important. You meet so many digital nomads, it's so inspiring, they tell you about all their life. Lisbon is a place where people really try and have a good work-life balance, and that has helped me realize what I want for life
- Part. E, Int. 3, pos 46.

Communities can form from shared interests, cultures, careers, or space. Enjoying the sunshine and the start of summer, Participant A and I sat on a blanket in Jardim do Graça. While strumming his guitar he gave his perspective the role community has in his life and the communities he is a part of here in Lisbon:

Yeah. I mean, this is, I think, how we, how we learn more about ourselves through the people we surround ourselves with. So, yeah, I think it's literally creating my identity. I have some friends that I've met at festivals. So, like, I guess a festival going community, people go to festivals, there's a lot of people. But yeah, I wouldn't say I'm a part of, yeah, there's, like, you know, people from Spain, people from Peru, the Peruvian community, the Chilean community, like, these people, these people I connect with. Because sometimes it's not like you're, you're not always, like, a main person, like, where you, but, but you don't always realize to them, like, oh, this is like a reoccurring kind of character in this, they come in and, and like, we people know you or like me, and I don't know everyone there. But I feel like I'm part of that. And it's like, this is even if people don't know me, like, I still feel like I belong. There's like an, there's like a community of, well, obviously expats. And like, folks from Ericeira as well. They like kind of come down and do events here. Or, yeah, I got a bunch of friends that live up in

Ericeira. They come down. I think my main one is, yeah, music. Music, yeah. Music or like, people that busk - Part. A Int 3, Pos. 19.

This story demonstrates how community is fluid. Being part of one does not exclude you from another. Participant A can contribute to multiple communities around Lisbon. He even mentions some cultural communities he feels he's a part referring to himself as a recurring character in those communities. This also exemplifies the fluidity of the community in Lisbon as pointed out by Participant A who can float on the surface of these communities, without being fully immersed but close enough to feel its energy and remain connected.

In my final interview with Participant C, we went for a coffee in Saldanha, as he was meeting with friends nearby shortly after.

Many, many friends who visited like here, like who live in Belarus or Poland, they, like they, they visited it kind of, it's like a therapy or like something that changes their perspective to things like that. You can be like, so chill, enjoy your life... Like whatever you do, like nobody cares. Like it's just like, do whatever you want, like dress whatever you want, say whatever you want. Like it can be whoever, nobody will judge you. You're like, you don't, you don't have to show yourself all the time. So, you can be like yourself. And then just like enjoy your thing. Yeah. That's all that matters. Yeah –Part. C Int 3, Pos. 94.

Actually, it's a bit on the opposite, you know. Because I never really felt that fitting in Holland or not in Korea when I was there. Like, it kind of doesn't matter where I am. I don't think I belong anywhere, but that's okay. Like, for example, when I was in Korea, I was like twelve or something in the subway. And I was sitting down, and I was like, oh, there's many Asians here. And, you know, I'm an Asian myself – Part. D, Int. 3, Pos. 41.

7.1 The International Bubble

In an extremely globalized city, such as Lisbon, many digital nomads, expats, and international professionals find themselves living within an 'international bubble'. Being from a Portuguese family Participant E's expectation of her experiences and community in Portugal

have not yet come into fruition. She expresses her wishes over a bagel with shmeear, at an American bagel shop in Santos:

I would like to be in the more Portuguese bubble and community. I think that yeah I always expected moving to Portugal. I always expected when moving to Portugal that I would be friends with Portuguese people and experience like how they think how they are because I'm like I never grew up in the Portuguese community, yeah. But since they aren't a lot of Portuguese people in Lisbon actually yeah and I feel like the Portuguese community that is here is like very like closed up, yeah. I don't feel like I have the chance to like really be with Portuguese people and have Portuguese experiences – Part. E, Int 2, pg. 6.

The familiar chatter of American accents fills the shop as we continue our conversation. At A Padaria Portuguesa, Participant F offers her perspective:

In my case, because I work, like, on the freelance, yes. Plus, just, like, that I... I just met too many, like, Erasmus and international people. But if you work for the company, and for, like, Portuguese company, then it's better. But still, in general, almost all my friends, they still speak more to, expats... And, every time we meet someone from Portugal, especially, like, from Lisbon, we are like, wow, it's so rare. We only have Joao. Joao is the only Portuguese person I'm, like, friends with – Part. F, Int 2, Pos. 76-77.

This demonstrates how while her remote work enables her to live in Lisbon, it is also disabling her from meeting locals, which she expects she would if she worked in person in Lisbon. While this may seem like an obvious insight, it shows how the network society while facilitating the DN lifestyle also poses challenges to cultural integration.

7.1.1 Language of Lisbon

Language has the power to connect us as much as it has the power to keep us separated. Participant A who has experienced living in multiple countries where English is not the first language vents his frustrations about the lack of effort when it comes to language learning in the digital nomad community.

I think that's the downside, something that the digital nomad community could really work is integration and language learning. Language learning is so huge and many people make excuses. Many people say I'm not good at languages, I'm too old to learn a language but that's bullshit, you have to try. And I feel like definitely as Americans we are very catered to, our culture is everywhere. English is everywhere and that's why here in Lisbon it's hard to learn the language cause everyone speaks English. This is the capital city. You have to break through that, you have to insist on speaking the language, you have to try, and study, and make an effort. We have everything, all the quick apps. That translates into the local community having a negative view on digital nomads because they come and don't learn the language, they don't try to learn the language, they walk into a Portuguese restaurant and they speak English, and it's like you're not in an English-speaking country. We never think about this as Americans but there's a lot of people who are immigrants in America who speak broken English, and we still understand them. So, thinking that you don't speak well enough is not a reason. You got to make an effort and try. It enriches your experience of your life being here – Part. A, Int. 1, Pos. 30.

Digital nomads' disinclination towards language learning can exacerbate a sense of “otherness” between them and the local community, contributing to a lack of meaningful integration. Participant C argues that language learning enriches the experience of living in a foreign country. Viewed from the lens of scapes proposed by Appadurai, one could interpret Participant C's experience as an example of a mediascape- the dominance of global language and cultural norms, in this case, English. This dominance creates an unbalanced relationship in which the global culture overshadows the local culture.

He shares our encounter with an older Portuguese lady that we had while ordering our coffees at the counter:

Today when we walked into the bakery, we're speaking in English to each other and then we go to order and we both order in Portuguese, and this older Portuguese woman maybe in her late 70s pointed to us, smiled and gave us a thumbs up, that's what I'm talking about, how language can enrich your experience and others experience. Can you imagine the amount of people that come in and speak English and

order food and leave and from her perspective she spent her whole life speaking Portuguese. I don't know if it's a lack of care, it's this culture of consumerism they just take the experience and leave but do they leave anything. As foreigners we are examples and stewards of our culture and we are rather we want to be or should be, leave a good impression - Part. A, Int. 1, Pos. 32.

Participant B says “*I speak Portuguese, but not enough, I think, to explain everything. I've been learning, but I haven't learned fast enough. I feel like because I know enough Spanish that I should be better.*” For her language learning helped her form connections with other expats.

I was signing up for everything... so I signed up for Portuguese classes and stuff like that, like, you know, like, to meet people, because people taking Portuguese classes also just got here, so they're also looking to meet people – Part. B, Int, 1, pg. 7.

Participant C tells me about his strategies for language learning:

I mean, with different languages, I kind of had different approaches, or it just happened that way. For example, when I was an exchange student in Spain, studying for half a year, I was in this environment where I had to speak Spanish; otherwise, people wouldn't understand me. Half of the Erasmus students preferred to speak Spanish, not English, and the people around me could only speak Spanish, so I had to learn. It was more about practicing, and I had some basic vocabulary, but I was forced to speak all the time. [P] [SEP] Here, it was a bit like that too, but I had friends who could speak English, so it was more comfortable just to speak English. I started learning online as well... I tried to read things, watch things, and I checked out different apps like Memrise for vocabulary. I also went to courses for like half a year or something. It was called Speak Social. It's a Portuguese startup, and now they're international. I was in Aveiro, and they had it in this small town. It's kind of community-based learning because the teachers aren't actual professors; they're just Portuguese people who want to teach you. [P] [SEP] I was also teaching English to some older Portuguese ladies for one semester, and in exchange, I studied there for free. [P] [SEP] That's nice! [P] [SEP] Yeah, but anyway, it was super cheap. It was like 30 euros per semester. [P] [SEP] Oh, that's so great.

Here, it's so expensive. [P] Yeah, so by the time I got to Lisbon, I didn't really have to learn much more... I was already in environments with a lot of Latin people—Portuguese, Spanish, Brazilians, Venezuelans. Even with the same nationalities, you can still speak English because people here are more international... I use it a bit, like for basics. You know, to order food, to deal with the finance office, or to talk to the police if they come by. I have some Portuguese friends, and sometimes with them, we only speak Portuguese. But many of them can speak English well, so often we switch back to English. But yeah, I still practice with some Portuguese.

I think with knowing Portuguese I feel more local, more like part of, part of here you know. Even not being a citizen I still feel like almost part of the community of the Portuguese of the Lisbon and Portuguese community. Yeah, also like if I go to like a bit smaller place like in Almada or like somewhere else then yeah, I can I can feel like I'm Portuguese. I can have at least a small conversation with them. Yeah I think it's like maybe for me it's important. Maybe it's not that necessary for everyone – Par.t C, Int 1, Pos. 90.

The experiences Participant C has had learning Portuguese and utilizing his Portuguese reflect the intersection of Giddens and Castells's ideas. Castells's concept of network society is evident in how Participant C uses apps and online sources to facilitate language learning, which enables him to integrate better to the Portuguese community. Giddens's notion of reflexive identity comes into play as Participant C reimagines his sense of self through the use of Portuguese.

Participant D claims that because knowing Portuguese doesn't limit his ability to find community, he has stopped trying to learn the language:

When I arrived, I was like, okay, I'm going to learn Portuguese but everyone can speak English, you know? [P] Maybe if I was in Spain, I would be more forced to learn Spanish. And that's also a language I like to learn... I was trying to when I moved. I was like, okay, I'm going to take Portuguese classes, you know, and meet new people. But people are so good in English. It's a very international community. So, it's not, you don't have to be too Portuguesey to integrate into an international community.

He humorously recounts his introduction to the Portuguese language:

My Portuguese friends, they taught me all the curse words and all the standard things you learn when you learn a new language. That's all. I think it's like, sometimes it's like a little bit similar to Spanish – Part. D, Int. 1, Pos. 148.

While his lack of Portuguese wasn't a barrier for him making friends, it did make bureaucratic processes more difficult, he tells:

So, sometimes it's very difficult because the older generation did not speak English. Yeah. So, it's like, when I went to, like, some municipalities, like, to get my social security stuff. Yeah, immigration and all that. That would be a little bit tricky, but then I was speaking in broken Spanish. Like, the words I know, and I got it, you know. Yeah. Then they tried to also talk back, and I'm like, oh, yes, I know that word in Spanish. It sounds a little bit similar, so I guess I know what they're talking about. So, that's, like, a language barrier from, um, with the older generation, mostly. Yeah. Especially, because I know in the social security, the office that I went to was not in, like, central Lisbon. It was, like, way out there – Part. D, Int. 3, pos 3

While beneficial speaking Portuguese doesn't guarantee you entry into the community as noted by Participant E, who speaks Portuguese and has Portuguese heritage.

I actually feel more foreign here and it's crazy It's because I have this like German accent like when speaking Portuguese and so everyone here is like, where are you from? And no one guesses Portugal. Everyone is like you speak very good Portuguese for a foreign person. So, I feel like here especially I'm in such like an international and I'm such like an international circle. I don't have Portuguese friends. So, for me, it's quite hard to feel Portuguese I feel like Lisbon is not really Portuguese. - Part. E, Int. 1, Pos. 8.

This exemplifies how the capital city's cultural landscape has been altered due to gentrification, and the influx of expats.

Participant F finds that the wide use of English in Lisbon facilitates community in the city.

So, I feel like, I guess... The fact that everyone speaks English here pretty well. And since it's so international and everyone here speaks English. I feel like that is probably a big reason why people tend to find a community. Because you don't have to worry about like... I don't speak that good, they don't speak that good. Everyone speaks pretty good English. And it's also about... That's why I feel comfortable here. Because everyone is like... Everyone is pretty good at English... I don't have an opportunity to converse with anyone in Portuguese beyond ordering coffee, ordering beers, ordering food, very basic. It doesn't go forward. And that's the thing, like, even if you try, people still speak English. Yeah. So, like, they can just switch. They can, if they can see you struggling, they can just switch, and then you're like, ah, shit, I wanted to try. No, that happens a lot... I took courses, it was free for refugees, which was nice, and Duolingo, I have my streak but I don't really... I don't really think it helps that much, but I do that everyday. It's fun – Part. F, Int. 2, pg. 8.

Giddens points out that in globalization as the cultural map changes some languages dominate, while others are practically eliminated. While I don't believe the Portuguese language will be eliminated, increased mobility is likely to encourage an increased use of English in big cities, even those that are not in native English speakers. This could have serious implications for the gentrification of the cities that welcome DN. This could change the cultural landscape of the cities and deepen the divide between the local and expat community.

7.3 Meet ups

Meetup is a platform for finding events in your city to meet people. While the platform isn't specifically for the use of Digital Nomads, it is well known amongst digital nomads

Participant C tells me about his experiences using it:

I mean in the beginning... the first people I met here were through meetups so like I had some like good friends some good connections in the beginning from meetups, but then like also it was still like kind of the end of COVID. So it was like way fewer things going on so it was easier to find it in the app and yeah you just go. You meet people, you find something that interests you, like whatever if it's for like a job or something

where you just go drink with other people that like also work like you – Part. C, Int 3, pg. 7.

Some events on the app are larger and aimed at connecting people, while others are tailored for people within certain industries or who share certain interests. Participant D tells me about his experience with meetups and how he first started attending:

I mean, I used to go also in Japan when I was living there for six months, because, you know, there's also very difficult to meet new people, because Japanese people, they're very nice, they're very friendly. But they are a bit like, you know, we are strangers. It's hard to get close to. If you get close to them, it's like a different world. It's a bit like Scandinavia, I think. So it was very hard. So I was like, okay, let's go to one of these stuff to meet new people, and I did, and I met some really nice people. Actually, back then, also, like, one of my high school friends was just an exchange there, so I just met him and his friends.

And then I got to realize, oh, maybe I could do this here in Lisbon as well. And then we have some of these events, you know, like-minded people, like expats, just move to Lisbon without, you know, knowing anyone. So, yeah, I think, and then one of the events they had was at, you know, here – Part. D, Int 2, Pos. 13-15.

He has mixed opinions on the matter, having both positive and negative experiences with meetups he tells me:

I think those meet-ups are really beneficial, like, really good. I never do that anymore... The older I get, the narrower down my search areas for friends. I have some harder criteria... I don't know what I would say to people. Yeah, I mean, I used to do it often, and then, you know, I met some friends. Very good friends, but they left. And then at some point, I just got tired... And maybe some of the other people, I don't really know them. You know, it's like sometimes a bit superficial... Sometimes it doesn't work out... Or sometimes the other party is a bit too enthusiastic. I don't know... I feel like I'm not good at approaching people. I can. If my mind is set up to, you know...

*Sometimes I just go to the meet-up and I'm like, Why am I here? I'm so tired – Part. D
Int 2, Pos. 21-29.*

It seems that of those who attended these events, they did find them helpful for meeting people and forming connections, but once they had an established network their need for these events dwindled and meeting new people became tiresome.

Participant F explains her perception of these events and why she doesn't attend:

I work remotely that's why I don't feel like I'm you know like I don't see people. I don't feel connected to them but I know that the digital nomad community is like pretty strong here and a lot of people are going to meetups and... I just don't like this kind of events I would say, because I don't like people that are very like business and they are just thinking only about this. And like I don't like when everything ends up being networking and not like just meeting new people, and I met this kind of people and they're like the first thing you're just like, I don't know, drinking beer, having fun, and the first thing they're like "hi I'm this one and I have this startup", and you're like "I don't give a (inappropriate word redacted)". Like that is why so I prefer to because I'm not looking now for any like networking that's why I'm not really going to this kind of events but I really know that it's like a big thing in Lisbon. And really a lot of people are maybe because also some people if they work remotely and if they are digital nomads they don't really have places where they can like meet friends. So it's one of the reasons they go there and that's the opportunity to find someone but I had just a different experience, because I met a lot of people just naturally through other circumstances, from like the house – Part. F, Int 1, Pos. 85.

As Participant F's social needs are already being met, she doesn't feel the need to attend these events. Additionally, she perceives these events and those who attend as being overly focused on networking. Regardless of individuals' experiences with these events, they continue to be popular in Lisbon. Castells's network society is particularly relevant to Meetup because the platform operates within a digital network while facilitating in person events. This aligns with Castells's argument that in the network society, social activities are increasingly organized through networks, specifically those using digital technology.

7.4 Temporary Lives

As Participant D previously noted, he made very good friends through meetup, but they left. This is a common occurrence found throughout most of the actors' stories. He elaborates on this:

“People don't stay here too long, or some people are here temporarily, so you meet them up, and they leave... Of course, they are for the summer here. And I have to repeat this whole process of finding friends.” says Participant D with a frustrated tone.

Participant C's experience is that people leave to pursue careers in their home countries with higher earning potential.

The problem, though, is that a lot of people are very temporary here. You might have really great experiences together, and then they leave because they need to grow in their careers. A lot of Spanish, Germans, and French people come here, but then they go back to their countries for better career opportunities and more money, of course... I think I'm just already used to the fact that people change, and it's okay. We hang out, have a good time, and then they move on. I accept that. If we meet again in five years, we'll hang out like before. It's all good. - Part. C, Int. 3, pos. 23,28

Participant C has a more optimistic outlook on the situation.

I mean here there are a lot of opportunities to like to find to meet people. Everybody's more open to new connections but if you're like more introverted it can be harder and if you don't know a lot of people are also here temporary, even if they're not like students and it's it can be like every many people who move here they're very yeah like the people are very mobile. So, like maybe you meet some really good friends and then they leave in three months they just decide to travel around South America for a year. It's really common yeah, (laughs) and that's like, I feel like we're about to be on the verge of like another shift and like everyone, people leaving. I think every year right around summertime there's like the shift and like oh half your friends are gone all of a sudden.

He has also seen the effects of this on his community of friends who frequents Monte Aguda.

Yeah yeah not even just summer like throughout the year like yeah. In our like Monte Club there's friends group like half of the like we had like 30 people there and half of them are not in Lisbon you know and it appeared even like less than a year ago. It's sad but they kind of have to get yeah a lot of change and yeah you have to try find Portuguese which is hard - Part. C, Int 1, Pos. 78.

Here Participant C refers to his community by the name Monte Club, further establishing it as a defined community. Corroborating, Participant E recounts her previous experience in Lisbon when she was a student, both explaining its challenges while embracing the opportunity it provides:

I feel like for me a turning point was last year when I finished university and everyone moved away I think there I noticed that community in Lisbon as quickly as you get into it, as quickly it goes away and it disappears. So in Lisbon friendships, they come and go not because you don't want to like invest in the friendships but if it's because Lisbon is not really like an end destination for most of people. I feel like Lisbon is a phase for a lot of people. So people are here for a good time but not for a long time. For me realizing hey I built this community of friends, and it happened to me a couple times over the last three years, I built this friendships, I invested in them, and I really like these people, but they are just moving away, and that was always when I noticed okay nothing is forever, that the place is fleeting for sure. I feel like Lisbon itself is very temporary like I mean I moved here three years ago the city looked different. But I also think you have to embrace that because there is always new people to meet and you make new memories. I remember it used to look so different and now everything is closing, every new things are opening, and I feel like Lisbon is the constant transition of the city and people - Part. E, Int. 2, pos 38,40.

At our last interview at a quiosque in Cais de Sodre, she mentioned people leaving again, but this time as an obstacle to forming romantic relationships in this city.

But I also think Lisbon is quite a hard city to date because everyone is here for a good time, not a long time. Yeah, everyone's here for a short amount of time. It's fun to be dating. It's hard to do a longer-term relationship or to look for a long-term

relationship when everyone's leaving. But yeah, I think when that first stage of like dating, the dating part of it, where you're going out to eat and you want to go hang out, do new things all the time together. Yeah, it's a good city - Part. E, Int 2. pos 26.

Participant F, whose friend group was made up of international students, faces a similar experience as Participant E who also witnessed all her university friends leave Lisbon.

I had a lot of friends. And then now I have none, because everyone was from our apartment. And then, or they were in school. And they're all leaving. Or from my last job, which I left. And now I have to make friends again, and I'm like, there's not many people. It's always like, for me, it was just a coincidence that I kind of ended up in a place where I can find friends – Part. F, Int. 3 Pos. 24

The constant coming and going of individuals in Lisbon through increased global mobility could lead to temporary communities, as experienced by the participants of this study. This is reflective of the increased fluidity of a globalized world. I would argue that living in a city where your community is constantly in flux would make it difficult to set roots.

7.5 Belonging

This subchapter explores an emotional, internal component to community, a sense of belonging. Finding a sense of belonging presents both challenges and opportunities. Belonging is intrinsically connected to community and identity formation, which are central themes in this study.

In our final conversation together, Participant E shared a sweet anecdote about feeling at home when she was surrounded by friends.

I think a time when I felt really at home, it was when I was living with really good friends of mine in Intendente, and it felt like you were living with family. I think that people really make a place and sharing special moments with making a place be your home, so we were all in our living room we had a balcony overlooking Largo de Intenedente and we were singing, cause I had some Italian roommates and we were singing some very Italian songs. We had made some pasta, and we were just dancing

and all singing together and it was just a really wholesome moment and I actually felt that I'm at home with very special people – Part. E, Int. 3, Pos. 30.

Not all digital nomads share the same experience, Participant D shares how he doesn't feel a sense of belonging in Lisbon, or anywhere else.

I never really felt that fitting in Holland or not in Korea when I was there. Like, it kind of doesn't matter where I am. I don't think I belong anywhere, but that's okay. Like, for example, when I was in Korea, I was like twelve or something in the subway. And I was sitting down, and I was like, oh, there's many Asians here. And, you know, I'm an Asian myself – Part. D, Int 1, Pos.

We discussed this again in our final conversation. *I wouldn't feel anywhere where I belong. But definitely not, I mean, not definitely, but not here. I feel everywhere a bit of an outsider. Even in Korea. Yeah. At least for me – Part. D, Int. 3, Pos. 41.*

It's important to note that belonging is an internal feeling which can hold a different meaning for each person. Participant D said he has a group of friends in Lisbon, which shows that having a social group does not equate to a sense of belonging. While Participant D does not attribute this lack of a sense of belonging to digital nomadism or living abroad, it does highlight that his sense of belonging is not linked to presence of friends or family. Giddens's discusses how modernity involves disembedding social relations from local contexts. As Participant D's social relations are also disembedded, this provides insight as to why he doesn't feel a sense of belonging to any specific place. The polarity between Participant D and Participant E's experience underscores that a sense of belonging is complex, multifaceted and varies from person to person.

The experiences that digital nomads face in forming community in Lisbon aligns with Giddens's concept of structuration, where digital nomads both shape and are shaped by the social environments they inhabit, when acquiring new agencies. Through their participation in Meet Ups and social groups for nomads and expats, they actively construct the social institutions that offer them a sense of community.

These fluid institutions create a structure that supports the navigation of their identities and their relationships with others. In Lisbon, nomads build these communities based on shared

experiences of mobility, flexibility, and the need for connection while in a foreign country. But these communities also present challenges. The transient nature of this community means that while there's a constant flow of new faces, deep long-term connections are harder to form. To navigate this kind of constantly changing environment, digital nomads help shape the social norms of their communities, but they are also influenced by them. Even though their networks are always changing because of their mobile lifestyle, these networks still play a key role in their social lives. This connects to Giddens's idea that structure (in this case, the informal digital nomad community) and agency (how people participate in events and activities) are connected. This connection supports Giddens's theory that modern institutions are not fixed, but instead are flexible and shaped by the actions of individuals.

8. Relevant aspects to consider for the future of work, community and mobility

The findings from this study reveal the ways in which digital nomads navigate the intersections of work, community, and mobility. These findings offer insights into the challenges, opportunities and experiences of being location independent. This chapter will outline the findings in relation to the existing literature and the conceptual framework previously established. In addition, the academic and practical implications of this study are examined.

The stories of the participants found that motivations for digital nomadism center around the desire for flexibility and freedom of being location independent. For some that means freedom to choose where to live while others enjoy the flexibility to travel. This freedom and flexibility are a priority for the digital nomads to facilitate their lifestyle. Lisbon was chosen as a destination mainly related to factors attributed to its geographic location. The city's warm climate, and beaches make it an attractive place, especially for those coming from cooler climate cities. Additionally, Lisbon's proximity to other countries offers opportunities to travel with ease. The participants not from Europe expressed this as a factor in their relocation to Lisbon. Social connections also played a part for some participants in their choice of Lisbon as a destination. This came through friends who had been living in Lisbon as expats and from Portuguese friends as well. These findings support Hall et al. (2018) claims that the allure of freedom is a significant factor for those pursuing DN.

Throughout the interviews, participants brought up different challenges they face as digital nomads in Lisbon. One challenge that the participants reported is the ability to integrate with the local community. This was difficult for participants regardless of their Portuguese language ability. Some participants mentioned difficulties with housing in Lisbon, expressing negative sentiments of housing costs near the center and the quality of housing. Another challenge that came up was issues of bureaucratic processes, such as immigration, healthcare, and taxes. The primary grievance was that things moved slowly or that people found it difficult to find information on certain processes.

Challenges in work as a digital nomad included time management when working freelance and navigating the difference across time zones. These challenges caused a strain in work life balance for the participants. Additionally, it was difficult for a participant to set boundaries of work hours with clients. However, none of the participants expressed a desire to abandon their flexible lifestyle because of these challenges. Stability was the only factor expressed that would influence them to return to a traditional in-person role. These findings directly answer RQ1: What are the motivations and challenges of digital nomads in Lisbon and how does their life narrative demonstrate the interplay between identity and culture?

Appadurai's idea of scapes demonstrates how motivations are influenced by global cultural flows. Particularly ethnoscaples, technoscapes and mediascapes. Digital nomads themselves are part of the ethnoscape, as they move across borders. Enabled by global technoscapes, individuals can now work from anywhere. Access to connectivity and digital tools facilitate that. Additionally, when it comes to choosing Lisbon as a location, mediascapes provide information that influences and aids decision making for nomads.

Castells's concept of network society is helpful in examining the motivations and challenges that digital nomads face. The freedom and flexibility that digital nomads desire is enabled by the network society and digital technology. Castells introduces the idea of space of flows, in which social interaction is coordinated through digital networks instead of physical locations. This is represented in the challenges addressed of connecting with coworkers in remote work environments. The reliance on digital networks can be an impediment when it comes to cultural integration for digital nomads.

Giddens's ideas of reflexivity are demonstrated in how the interplay identity and culture emerge within the life stories of the digital nomads. Through the reflexive project of the self, digital nomads are actively reconstructing their identities in response to their interactions in Lisbon.

The findings presented also demonstrate how digital nomads in Lisbon develop hybrid identities. This occurs through their experiences with cultural immersion, adaptation, and social connections. It was often expressed by the participants that their social groups and Lisbon in general are very international. Interactions with diverse communities can broaden individuals' perspectives and introduce new cultural influences. Additionally, participants adapt to align their behaviors with that of their new community. This was demonstrated by participants embracing the slower pace of Portugal and practicing the local language. Outside of Lisbon, participants must adapt to remote working environments. For Participants who are relatively new to this lifestyle, that includes figuring out paying taxes as a freelancer and trying to connect with coworkers while remote. These findings demonstrate that digital nomads in Lisbon do indeed adopt hybrid identities as posed in SRQ1. This process of developing a hybrid identity is facilitated by an openness to new cultures and experiences, a willingness to adapt, and the strong international community in Lisbon.

Castells's concept of network society can be used to identify another factor of this hybridization. Beyond the physical interactions happening in the international community in Lisbon, remote workers, especially those who are part of team are interacting digitally with diverse cultures.

Appadurai's concept of ideoscapes describes how adopting global ideologies, for instance the slower pace of living and focus on work life balance, influences identity formation. As the digital nomads adopt values from other cultures, they contribute to the hybridization of their identities.

Within the construction process, Giddens's concept of reflexivity emerges. Through reflexivity, digital nomads incorporate new cultural practices. Cultural immersion and social interactions can be contributing factors to this.

One common experience digital nomads shared is the recurring departure of their friends and connections. This has affected those who have lived in the city for years as well as newcomers. It seems that the transient nature of digital nomads in Lisbon is a double-edged sword. On one hand, the community of expats and digital nomads are keen to meet people and form connections in their new city, on the other hand many are only living in Lisbon temporarily, so as experienced by the participants, the people they do meet often end up leaving. This experience is a pivotal moment for digital nomads influencing their identities and perspectives. Navigating this high turnover rate could trigger identity evolution as their social circle is changing and they have to adapt to the constantly changing social environment, directly answering SRQ2: How do the perspectives and identities of digital nomads evolve over their stay in Lisbon, and what are the pivotal moments that influence these changes? Appadurai's concept of ethnoscaapes also supports the idea that digital nomads develop hybrid identities through their experiences with other cultures. As described by the participants, Lisbon has a diverse international community of digital nomads, expats and immigrants. The participants said this is reflected in their social circles too. The digital nomads in Lisbon are active contributors to the city's ethnoscape. Giddens's theory of structuration is strongly illustrated here as the digital nomads' identities are shaped over different experiences and interactions. This happens when they enact their agency and get immersed in the social fabric of Lisbon.

8.1 Constraints and opportunities for further studies

Lack of time and resources proved to be considerable limitations throughout the research process. While three interviews were conducted with each participant, the overall research period was relatively short. Additional time would allow for a few more interviews spread out over different seasons. This could potentially introduce or deepen themes and stories as seasonal changes might affect the perspectives of participants in Lisbon. This time constraint also limits the ability to capture shifts in identities and perspectives. This could have deepened understanding of an individual's personal and professional development. Additional time would have also allowed for more participants, increasing the generalizability of the study and providing additional perspectives. Due to these interviews being conducted in person, additional time was required to meet with participants, when factoring in the commute.

With many participants there was difficulty in scheduling the interviews with their professional and personal schedules and occasionally participants had to cancel due to work or personal obligations. These time constraints also limited the ability for the ethnographer to seek out participants through different channels outside of the ethnographer's personal network, for instance, through Meetups and other events tailored towards digital nomads.

Additionally financial constraints limited access to coworking spaces frequented by digital nomads. Increased financial resources could allow for financial incentives for participants or to travel to Lisbon's surrounding towns, such as Cascais or Ericeira, for more variance in the data. The lack of human resources also limits the scope of the research. Without research assistants to aid in the transcribing or coding of the data, it would have required significantly more time to add even one more participant, as the addition of merely one participant requires three separate meetings, with three interviews to transcribe and code. Language also limited access to non-English-speaking digital nomads. These time and resource limitations underscore the importance of recognizing the scope of this research and offer insight into where future research could expand on this study.

Future research could build upon this study by gathering perspectives and life stories from locals living in Lisbon, who have witnessed how it has evolved since the digital nomad boom and offer the narrative of how the lives of locals evolve when cities become hubs for digital nomads and expats.

Additionally, future research could build upon this study by expanding the geographic scope. This could be by including other popular digital nomad destinations, or other cities in Portugal or in Europe. This could provide insight into how the place influences the integration and experience of the digital nomads. A comparative analysis could also identify patterns that may be unique to Lisbon.

Additionally, a longitudinal study would aid in capturing a more in-depth view of the evolution of identity in digital nomads. This would be particularly valuable as major shifts such as changes in work, relationships and places of residence could all trigger shifts in identity.

Epilogue

This study aimed to explore the motivations and challenges of digital nomads in Lisbon, utilizing life stories to examine how their identity evolves through their journey. This study posed one primary research question and two subsidiary research questions to achieve this aim.

RQ1: What are the motivations and challenges of digital nomads in Lisbon and how does their life narrative demonstrate the interplay of identity and culture?

Subsidiary Research Question 1: Can their identity be defined as a hybrid identity? If so, how do they construct these hybrid identities and what factors contribute to it?

Subsidiary Research Question 2: How do the perspectives and identities of digital nomads evolve over their stay in Lisbon, what are the pivotal moments that influence these changes?

This study found that participants were primarily motivated by the freedom and flexibility afforded by remote work. They face challenges in cultural integration and forming deep long-term relationships due to the transient nature of Lisbon's international community. It was found that Lisbon's digital nomads do adopt hybrid identities. These are developed through cultural immersion and interaction with diverse international community in Lisbon and through remote work dynamics. Identities evolve through their experiences, mainly influenced by shifts in social circles and deeper engagement with local communities.

Appadurai's ideas of global flows and ethnoscaples provide insight into the global mobility of digital nomads as well as the hybrid identities they develop. Castells's concept of the network society provides an understanding on the reliance of digital technologies and global network and how they aid in remote work as well as social connection. This influences both the digital nomads' remote opportunities as well as their challenges. Finally, Giddens's teachings of reflexivity and ideas on identity helps illustrate the identity formation and evolution that occurs within the stories of the participants.

Time constraints limit the opportunity for deeper exploration that could come from conducting interviews over a longer time. Limited resources, specifically financial and human resources, affected the sample size, which may impact the generalizability of the study. Future research could compare other digital nomad hubs to understand the role of place within the context of identity formation. Additionally, the inclusion of local perspectives could provide a more holistic view of the state of digital nomadism in Lisbon. A longitudinal study could provide more insight into the evolution of digital nomad identities.

This study presents the complex experiences of digital nomads in Lisbon through the lenses of sociologists, Appadurai, Castells, and Giddens. Highlighting how to navigate in a foreign city and balance remote work, this study provides valuable insights into the dynamics of mobility in the digital age, globalization and organizational studies. This study advances the academic understanding of digital nomads and provides practical implications that organizations can implement to support remote workers. Understanding the dynamics of digital nomads can inform stakeholders such as policy makers, urban planners, local communities, and those in the tourism industry.

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Annexes

Annex A

Consent Form for the Collection and Processing of Personal Data

Research Project	Digital Nomad Life Stories: Narratives from Lisbon
Institution	Universidade Católica Portuguesa
Supervisor	Luís Lourenço Soares
Interviewer	Paloma Schafer
Interview Date	_____

I, _____, hereby confirm my participation in an interview for the research project mentioned above. I have been informed about the purpose and procedures of the research.

I agree to the recording of the interview and its subsequent transcription. Audio recordings will be deleted after the completion of the research project. Transcripts of the interviews will be anonymized, ensuring the removal or alteration of personal identifiers.

I acknowledge that excerpts from the anonymized transcripts, which cannot be linked to my person, may be used for scientific purposes. Contact details will be stored separately from interview data and will be kept inaccessible to third parties. Personal data will be deleted after the completion of the research project unless I expressly consent to further storage for contact purposes. I reserve the right to object to this at any time.

I understand that my participation in the study and my consent for the use of my data are voluntary. I reserve the right to withdraw my consent at any time and to terminate the interview. No consequences will arise from my refusal or withdrawal. I am aware of my rights including, the right to access, rectification, blocking and deletion, restriction of processing, objection to further processing, and data portability of my personal data.

Under these conditions, I willingly agree to participate in the interview(s) and consent to its recording, transcription, anonymization, and evaluation.

First Name, Last Name of Interviewee

Date, Signature of Interviewee

Date, Signature of Interviewer

Annex B

Interview Guide

Interview Date _____

Interview 1: Introduction

1. What brings you to Lisbon?
 - i. And you're enjoying it so far?
2. How long have you been living in Lisbon?
3. How was the move?
4. How did you find housing?
5. What do you currently do for work that you are able to be location independent?
6. Were you specifically seeking out to work remote/freelance?
7. What is your day to day like?
8. How would you describe your workspace?
9. What does that look like while travelling?
10. What has been your experience with making friends?
11. Are you still actively trying to make new friends
12. Do you speak any Portuguese or are you trying to learn Portuguese?

Interview 2 Development

1. How do you typically balance your time or set your schedule when working?
2. Do you use any platforms or softwares for you work?
3. Do you attend any events centered around networking or making friends, do you use any platforms for this?
4. What visa are you on?
5. What did you have to do to obtain your visa/residency status?
6. How do you pay taxes as a freelancer/entrepreneur/etc.?
7. Did you do research on how to do taxes/residency?
8. Do you feel part of any particular community here in Lisbon?
9. How do you maintain friendships that you've made traveling or with friends who leave Lisbon?
10. What are some of the challenges you face when developing friendships and maintaining friendships as a digital nomad.
11. How do maintain your cultural identity while in a new place?

Interview 3 Conclusion

1. Do you ever see yourself working in a traditional office job?
2. Do you see yourself continuing to be a digital nomad long term?
3. Do you feel that you identify as a digital nomad?
4. Is desire to travel a strong factor in being a digital nomad?
5. Have you felt or noticed any changes in yourself since moving to Lisbon?
6. Have you had any memorable cultural experiences while living in Lisbon?
7. How connected do you feel to the local community.
8. Do you find it difficult to connect with the local community? Why do you suppose that is?
9. How do you adapt when in a new country?
10. Do you feel that you make the most of the flexibility you have?
11. What aspect to your lifestyle do you value most right now?
12. Are there any notable experiences you've had in Lisbon that you believe has changed you in a significant way?
13. Anything you would say about Lisbon or being a digital nomad that you haven't yet shared?

Annex C

Participant A - Interview 1

Interviewee: Paloma Schafer

Date: 15/02/2024

So tell me about how you ended up in Lisbon.

Suggestion from two friends, so before coming to Portugal I was living in Argentina, I was kinda traveling through South America and then I met someone and I went to Argentina to be with her, she was my then girlfriend. And the quarantine happened and I was there two years, and when I left Argentina my buddy was getting married in Ireland, traveled in the States for a while then went to Ireland. I knew I wanted to visit Portugal, I have 2 friends, a romantic interest and a good friend I made while living in Thailand. So I thought okay I'll pass through there, see some old friends and these two girls I met in Argentina told me I had to go to Lisbon, so after a week in Ireland I travelled around Ireland and met a friend who wanted to spend her birthday in Lisbon. Actually, while in Ireland a friend sent me a link of someone renting their apartment in

Lisbon. And then I arrived for the birthday and connected with my friend from Thailand who connected me with a flat of musicians, when I arrived I immediately felt well received and thought wow this place is pretty awesome, like when you meet a person you're attracted to. I felt an attraction when I was walking around to get a kebab at 11pm the night I arrived, walking around these back streets, I didn't feel in danger, coming from Oakland where you never feel safe walking at night. I felt really calm, I feel very safe walking around the city, the next day I walked around and was enamored by the city falling in love with every corner I turn.

And how long ago was that?

I arrived June 7 2022, about to be two years,

And the move felt smooth?

Yeah, the Facebook link my friend sent me while I was in Ireland I sent a message to the girl and went by to visit and loved the apartment. The owner and I hit it off and I moved into my apartment July, that I'm still in now.

What's your typical day like in Lisbon?

I have an ideal day, I wake up 9am on a Monday, make my bed, take a cold shower and go in my room and meditate for 15 minutes and go on a run come home and meditate again, take a shower and then see if I need to do anything around the house cleaning laundry then sending emails and making content, I'm a musician and I'm going on tour, I'm also a voice actor so reaching out to potential clients. Then usually towards the latter half of the day I'll send auditions. I am an audio engineer as well, I work for a YouTube channel, doing their voiceovers read their scripts mix and master it. I send about 10-15 auditions a day an ideal day. If I do have work then it will take about two hours to record and edit. I'll do that basically until the evening then meet up with friends in the evening.

Oh wow that's so cool, so which of these roles would you consider is your main source of income?

Voice acting is what pays the bills.

And what does that entail?

It's freelance, I work on a website called voices.com and you go on the platform and there's all these projects and you read a little sample script, edit it, and send it off. They each take about ten minutes to do depending on how I read it sometimes I do it over. Sometimes they give you

directions and sometimes you have to guess what the client wants. They will say be authoritative and professional. Sometimes it's a voiceover for a videogame and you'll be like level 1, flawless victory. It depends sometimes they give you direction sometimes they don't. Sending auditions is my job. If I got a job and I have a call then we will do a video call and I will do some takes for them and they will give feedback. Its a cool niche.

And you do this just at home or at like a studio?

I do everything on my computer, when I was in Brazil for six weeks I brought my computer, my audio interface, and a little microphone and I was working.

To do the recordings, working in my studio is best so if I'm traveling I setup a home studio and put a mattress in the closet, I've started to chronicle the makeshift studio I make on the road. I have high standards for audio quality so I try to make it sound as best as it can. I've been audio engineering for a couple of years, being a musician I've just learned how to do it.

I made music before I started travelling so I've always had the skillset there but the first time I actually did voiceover was when I was in bolivia and I had this handheld microphone and recorded this commercial and sent it off and i got like 350 bucks for. I had already been travelling before.

I met a programmer in Barcelona back in 2013 who was a coder and travelled around the world and that was the first seed of digital nomadness. I did a number of digital nomad jobs, in 2015 when I started the trip that would end in me living in thailand i met a girl who worked for appen as a social media evaluator, and I thought ok thats interesting. Before that I was just traveling and landed in this northern Vietnamese town where I started teaching english to the kids and working in a homestay and thats where i met this girl making money working online and had my parents send my laptop out to me and applied and got a job doing social media evaluating. I also tried teaching english online for a month but it wasn't really my thing.

Did you ever imagine yourself becoming digital nomad?

I don't think I even thought about it. The term digital nomad wasn't even around. Maybe in some pockets it was forming where I was in Chaing Mai Thailand, in 2016. I don't remember first hearing the term. I went back in 2019 and it was already a term, and I remeber my uncle was sick and I told my uncle I was digital nomading and he said "wow thats a really good term you should coin that term" *Laughs*

This idea of 'nomading' was there. I remember living in Thailand and it was acommunity of artists and nobody knew what anyone did. I think everyone was just working online. I was living in a hostel when I first got there for 3 dollars a night, like 90 bucks a month or 5 like 250. I could

pay that. I had come from paying 800 dollars in oakland. That's when I realized that I think could do this. I can do this. I don't need much I can do with very little, if I have resources, which I'm learning to manage better, I can do it but when I don't I can live with it. The world provides.

In Thailand did you feel that you were able to integrate into the community?

I think I was there at the beginning of the boom, the nomad boom, that's one thing I regret, in that era, was that there was little integration with the Thai people. A lot of people were just in expat community didn't integrate. I really like languages so I started learned a bit of Thai and took classes.

I think that's the downside, something that the digital nomad community could really work is integration and language learning. Language learning is so huge and many people make excuses. Many people say I'm not good at languages, I'm too old to learn a language but that's bullshit, you have to try. And I feel like def as americans we are very catered to our culture is everywhere, English is everywhere and that's why here in Lisbon it's hard to learn the language cause everyone speaks English. This is the capital city. You have to break through that you have to insist on speaking the language, you have to try and study and make an effort. We have everything, all the quick apps. That translates into the local community having a negative view on digital nomads because they come and don't learn the language, they don't try to learn the language, they walk into a Portuguese restaurant and they speak english, and it's like you're not in an English speaking country. We never think about this as americans but there's a lot of people who are immigrants in America who speak broken english and we still understand them. So thinking that you don't speak well enough is not a reason. You got to make an effort and try. It enriches your experience of your life being here.

Do you think your experience in Thailand, influenced that point of view towards language learning?

Oh, definitely. Also, Thai isn't easy to learn so it can be difficult to learn more than memorising words and phrases, I think that is why most people didn't bother to learn, and that limits people's experience. I think once I got to Argentina I was more determined to learn Spanish because it was easier and it felt possible. Also I had a girlfriend there which helps, a lot. And now in Portugal, since I learned Spanish, why would I not learn Portuguese.

Do you have Portuguese speaking friends here?

I have a lot of friends who are Portuguese or Brazilian or Angolan and you speak Portuguese with them and they are amazed and open up. I relate this to when I had a German girlfriend I

wanted to learn German, I wanted to learn who she is in German cause they are different people, you speak in a different language a different personality comes out.

Here I want to learn who my friends, who are you in your native language. I have the privilege to speak English natively and people understand who I am but I want to know who people are.

English is everywhere. Especially in Europe, in music, TV, movies. In Portugal they never even dub their films, they just have subtitles and I think that's why people learn how to speak the language well, it's always around. English is such an incredible tool.

(redacted)

Yeah it's tough since everyone speaks English it is easy to default to that.

It can be challenging since the Portuguese people of our generation speak really well English. Because America really markets, sells itself and culture. Shove it down people's throats. But this is what we do it's like America's social role in the world. We've created a show.

Today when we walked into the bakery, we're speaking in English to each other and then we go to order and we both order in Portuguese, and this older Portuguese woman maybe in her late 70s pointed to us, smiled and gave us a thumbs up, that's what I'm talking about, how language can enrich your experience and others' experience. Can you imagine the amount of people that come in and speak English and order food and leave and from her perspective she spent her whole life speaking Portuguese. I don't know if it's a lack of care, it's this culture of consumerism they just take the experience and leave but do they leave anything. As foreigners we are examples and stewards of our culture and we are rather we want to be or should be, leave a good impression.

Do you view yourself as a foreigner or like a tourist at all, or do you feel a bit like a local?

I definitely don't feel like a local, I wouldn't describe myself as a local. I feel like a member of a new community, I wouldn't even call myself a digital nomad because I'm a musician. I am a traveling musician and like back in medieval times there were these troupes that would travel and tell stories of things that happened in other cities in other towns and this war broke out and they would spread news through song and that's what I do. And I'm doing that now and gaining new experiences and new friends and new languages and new ways to express what is going on and I feel and what I see, and what's going on in the world. And what I do to make money is not my identity, I feel my identity is more a traveler, musician, poet, romantic,

storyteller, that's my identity. And my means to do that is working online. I don't identify myself with this community.

Do you see a future for yourself here or do you have plans to go somewhere else soon?

I don't see myself leaving Lisbon anytime soon. I have a digital nomad visa and that lasts for two years I have temporary residency for two years and I can renew that for three years but that depends on if I find a partner. Next place I've been thinking of going is London for the music scene. It's also a different culture. I really like Lisbon for the culture it has this cross between Latin America and Europe, it has this nice balance, the cost of living, the history, lots of Latin American and African immigrants. Where I'm from we have a lot of Latin American and Asian immigrants so that's new for me.

I think Latin American, African and lots of Asian and super cosmopolitan city and it's just very beautiful and the weather is incredible. I love the rain, that's when I do most of my writing. I don't know if I'll go to London it's an idea that keeps popping into my head. I'm going there soon on my tour.

You mentioned that you can renew but it depends if you have a partner, can you elaborate a bit?

So, yeah, I would, extend and stay longer if I were to find a partner, I wouldn't want to leave. But if I don't I could still stay longer or I could go if I want. My staying isn't dependent on having someone but if I did they would definitely influence my decisions on where to go. Or if my partner wants to go somewhere else with me, then that is also a possibility.

Okay yeah. So, where else are you going on tour?

So I'll be starting in Marseille then Madrid then Paris then London then Milan and I'm planning like five more shows, the other I'm planning in Seville, Lisbon, Porto, Manchester, Berlin and Amsterdam. So these are shows from a platform that has these satellite teams in big cities all over. They have an online platform with groups in all cities and some are employees of the organization but some are volunteers and I reached out to them and I have a profile on the webpage so they can check out my music, I mostly reach out to them through Instagram or email.

Do you use social media a lot for your music?

I see marketing myself on social media as a necessary tool, I make these little videos of me doing things and edit them. I'm going to make a GoFundMe to help fund my tour that I'm going to put it up there. I like making my videos, it's fun. I release my music on Spotify through a third party platform that you submit your music to and they send it on the platforms.

Is there any special equipment you need to have with you that you travel with?

If I'm traveling and I feel like I want to record something I use the same equipment as I do for voice acting. I'm recording demos not full songs, but voiceover requires a more controlled environment, that's for a client. When I make music I make it for me.

Sometimes I don't need to record live instruments, I just make beats you know on the computer.

What type of projects do you do for voice acting?

I did a commercial for a treadmill.

How does Lisbon compare to your hometown of Oakland?

I haven't been living in Oakland for a while, but the big difference is that I walk here more than anywhere. I feel like I have a community here, when i was in Oakland I tried to get into the community but it felt very cliquy and small, it felt not as open as I am naturally as a person so for me finding somewhere else to live is finding a community of people who want to create and are supportive and talented musicians which here there are tons and theyre also willing to work and like my music and I love their music and I found what I was looking for. In South America as well, this is why I like to stay put in a place for more than a year, I would meet up weekly with a group of horns players, playing trumpet or sax, I also play sax, finding these groups investing time into friends into people, something that you can do but to a different level when you are traveling.

That's really cool, I didn't know you play sax. Ok, we can end here, that's great thank you.

Participant A - Interview 2

Interviewee: Paloma Schafer

Date: 27/02/2024

So, when are you leaving for tour?

I'm leaving on Friday, I added Bristol and I am waiting to hear from Amsterdam, one of my dates sold out.

Right on. Congrats that's epic. How many shows are you going to be doing?

Eight shows, yeah my first tour eight shows, this is why I wanted to come to Europe to be able to bounce around and be near a lot of different cultures. Here flights, and trains, they're a lot cheaper so you can see more and go to more places for a lot cheaper.

So tell me a bit about your cultural background?

Well my mom is Filipino, her parents are Filipino. And my dad is mixed, but his dad is Bermudan, which were colonized by the English, so he's like fair skinned and his mom is black from North Carolina. And some roots in Louisiana. My grandma's mom, her mom I think might've been a slave. Might've been a slave. Roots go like, deep in the South.

You know in America it was, I was called blasian. When I was a kid I would say the dumbest shit like "I am not asian, I am south pacific islander.

Oh on those test forms?

Yes for the state tests I would put that.

"What's funny is my mom's maiden name is a Portuguese word.

Really?

Yeah, Salgado. It means salty. Which I didn't realize until I was hear and started learning Portuguese. What I didn't know is that the Portuguese went to the Philippines. So I think, maybe either I had a Portuguese ancestor or it was like they changed their names but it's interesting.

Do you feel a strong connection to that culture?

We moved around a bunch but my mom's family is in California, so those years we were more connected to the culture, mostly through food. But not the language but I will learn because I already now have the Spanish knowledge so I think that will help. My mom has come out to visit last year in June for Santos. I went back to California and Maryland last year.

That's awesome, do you get a lot of friends and family visits?

Not so many anymore, at least not friends from the States but some other friends I've met nomading, yeah. Mostly because they are already planning to be around for their own personal visits, and they just hit me up since they are already here. So we meet up and I show them around a little bit for a day, it's nice.

What do you have going on today.

Today I'm going to the flea market to get some new earrings, I think I lost mine.

Feira de Ladra?

Yeah there's this this lady that sells jewelry right by the entrance so we'll see if she's there.

What is one aspect of Lisbon that you appreciate that you don't get back home?

That's one thing, the states just doesn't figure out public transportation. The car and oil industry marketed route 66 and it was all marketing and now we have to drive everywhere. So yeah, I would say having public transportation.

Anything you miss?

My mom's food. I am trying to cook more because I've been going out to eat too much. I love to cook. Filipino food is a lot of meat and rice, this one dish called adubo which is like pork cooked down in spices for a couple hours. Filipino food uses pretty general ingredients so it's not like I have to go find anything specific. The plan was this week to make a dish out of this cookbook I have.

Yes I also miss my mother's food and like Southern BBQ.

Me too, there really isn't anything like close. Like with the smokey flavors.

So I went to University of Miami and there was this incredible BBQ place in Miami near the mall. Oh this fucking place. It was called Shorty's.

Shorty's! I know Shorty's!

Motherfuckin shorty's! Oh my god this place! My mouth is literally watering right now.

I would love some BBQ right now or like buffalo wings with ranch.

I've actually been making my own ranch with natas and bechamel and mayo, some garlic and perejil, lemon juice, cebolihno. I make cesar dressing as well with anchovies.

Yes I love cesar I can't find good cesar here.

How much would you say cooking and food helps you when you're missing home?

So much, it's such a, there's just so much comfort in food, especially when it's something you grew up with. What's nice is you can find most ingredients to make things, I've been cooking a lot more at home. Getting inspired, you know?

Yeah, I need to cook more.

Before you leave for tour do you have anything lined up?

Tomorrow I'm playing a show at Camoes in Graca. It's an open mic type thing. I play there pretty often.

Cool, is it all musicians?

Yeah, it all different artists and everyone gets a few minutes and the energy is super supportive. It's a great way to meet other musicians.

Cool yeah, I'll come by after class So last time we met we were in Graca and you said your show is in Graca, I know you live close by but do you mostly hang out in Graca or are there other neighborhoods that you frequent?

Oh yeah, I definitely spend a lot of time in Graca, it's one of my favorite spots in Lisbon.

What do you like about it?

The vibe there is just really calm but also full of life, you know. It's got this really cool mix of old and new, like you can feel the history, but there's also this young, this creative energy. And there's great like, the views are amazing, like the Miradouros. I like to just hang out there, get inspiration, maybe bring my guitar. And some cool places like Camoes. A lot of musicians I know here hang out in Graca too.

Cool, yeah, it is beautiful there. Any other place you go a lot?

Besides that, I like Mouraria, that's where I live. I like the neighborhood, going to the flea market, you know check out some cool things, chat with the vendors, sip a coffee. I like to walk along Cais. The other day I was walking down by the river, everyone's out enjoying the sun, it was a beautiful day, and you can just feel it in the air, the vibe was like the first day of summer. Just walking through any neighborhood though it, Lisbon's just got this endless charm.

So do you plan to also work while you're on tour?

Yeah, for sure. I'll still be doing some audio engineering for the YouTube channel I work with. It's pretty flexible, so I can manage it on the road. I'll probably also try to send out some auditions since I'll have all my gear with me anyway. It's my first tour so we'll see how much I actually get done since there's a lot of travel. But yeah I'm funding the tour through donations mostly and savings. Thank you by the way for your donation I really appreciate it, it means a lot.

Yeah well thank you for meeting with me. I also very much appreciate you for this and your time.

No problem, I'm happy to help. But yeah I will have to carve out a couple hours a week to work on the channel, but besides that I don't have that much time in each city. I want to be able to explore and leave things open for spontaneity. If I manage to send out auditions, cool,

but I don't have to. I don't really like to work during a short stay, if I only have a couple days, I just want to appreciate where I am.

What is your workspace like when you travel?

I only really need my laptop for editing. If I happen to get any voice acting gigs I would just do it at home since I need to have good control of the sounds around me. That's why I'm not sure if I will record any auditions. If the quality isn't great it's not really worth the time. Or if I land a gig and they want it done quickly and I'm not able to, it's like, what's the point.

Well I know you have a big trip coming and will be going to a lot of places, but besides tour, do you find yourself traveling often given that you have the flexibility to do so?

I don't. I enjoy traveling but I'm cool with just chilling here most of the time. If I do travel it's usually to meet up with friends. Traveling gets expensive too if you are doing it all the time but if I want to get away for a while I like to explore other parts of Portugal. I go to some events for musicians.

How did you get in contact with the music community here when you arrived?

The community here is very open so I didn't have a difficult time. Really just going to different places, bars, live music, and meeting people. Met some musicians out and we would follow each other on socials and I would go to their shows they promote. Which is also a good way to get to know which places you might want to play at. They aren't cliquey. Everyone wants to support each other and help each other meet the right people who can give you a chance to play. Just like with a job there is a degree of networking but it's more like connecting over a love, a love for music and art and poetry. But yeah just meeting people who introduce you to more people or invite you to events.

And friendships you've made throughout your journey, and your travels, how do you stay connected with people?

Social media, definitely, Instagram. It is the easiest way to stay in contact and check in with people. You meet so many folks when you travel and it's tough to actually keep in touch with people after but it's like you are supporting them from a distance. They're doing their thing, you're doing yours, but you are still connected in a way and you have those memories. And there are some people who you will never see again and there are others who you end up in the same city for a little while and you meet up and it's like no time has passed. It's cool to see how they've been and what they've been up to.

Cool nice, and you find it easy?

Not easy, but since like, since most of the people I meet are also travelers, we all understand that it not easy, everyone has their lives going on but we support each other either way and, and yeah we understand each other's lifestyle.

Yeah, totally. Okay well I don't have any more questions for today.

Ok cool, I'm heading down to the market, gotta buy another earring, if you want to join. It's nice out.

Oh, yeah, its beautiful out.

Participant A – Interview 3

Interviewee: Paloma Schafer

Date: 7/05/2024

Is there any like aspects to your like lifestyle and to your work that you think are kind of the most important to you?

Freedom. Freedom to wake up late. Yeah, not work. If I'm not feeling well, or, you know, that's what I cherish most about like, my lifestyle is that in a parallel universe, I have to wake up at eight o'clock every day, be somewhere at 9am, whether or not I feel like going or whether I feel sick, or whether I feel hungover, or whether I feel emotionally not, yeah, wanting to do anything. So yeah, that's what I, that's what I value the most, just being able to, you know what, today, I'm gonna do a little bit of work, I'll do this side of things, but yeah, don't have to put eight or nine hours in place.

How much do you think like that, or maybe other values, like kind of guide your decisions and your actions throughout?

100%. Yeah, I'm never going back to working again, but absolutely not. Yeah, no. Um, no. Yeah, that freedom is the reason why I'm like, I'm going to create this, this life. Um, yeah.

We had previously talked a little bit about like, how you made friends. Did you ever like, attend any like, meetups? Or did you use any like, Facebook pages or anything like that to, to..

No. No, I'm just going out, playing music, meeting people, making friends with those people. Ah.

Did you hear about any of those groups before?

I've heard of them, yeah. Like Meetup or... Yeah, Meetup is like the main one.

Just, what's your like, opinion on it? Or like, do you have a perspective?

Yeah, I think they're useful. I think they're super useful. I think they help a lot of people meet like, yeah, I don't know, have a reason, like a, not a reason to meet people, but an easier way to meet people. You're all there because you have the common interest of wanting to meet people, or you're new in a place.

And how much do you think like, kind of, the community here... How much do you think your community here, like just having the friends you have, or anywhere, like anywhere you've been, like the relationships that you have formed, affect your sense of like, belonging in that city?

Yeah, it's everything. That is, yeah, one of the reasons, like, probably the main reason why I'm staying, because I feel like I have a lot of good friends, musician friends. Obviously, it takes time to like, deepen these friendships to like, a really deep level, but I feel like I have very good friends, and I have very, and they're good people, you know? Like, not just people you go out and party with, but like, they're good, good humans. We connect on them. That's important.

Which is funny, because this year, I also feel like there's been an exodus from my life of just people. Like, people I was friends with. Yeah, so all of a sudden, like, you know, yeah.

Do you think that kind of influences at all your sense of self, as well? Just like, your relationships, your friendships and stuff, your community?

Yeah, for sure. Yeah. I mean, this is, I think, how we, how we learn more about ourselves through the people we surround ourselves with. So, yeah, I think it's literally creating my identity. If I do something fucked up, and friends don't want me to, like, they don't hit me up to go out anymore, then it's like, yeah, okay, I'm gonna analyze my behavior and see what I did.

And I know you're big in, like, obviously, the music, musician community.

And I feel like, in the music community, even those who, like, maybe might not be musicians, but like, are just hanging around, or still, like, kind of, like, actively going to shows often are probably also in the head of a, like, creative, or consider themselves like creatives, or like, enjoy the arts in general.

What do you think, what other communities besides, like, the music community, do you feel like you are a part of here in Lisbon?

Interesting. I have some friends that I've met at festivals. So, like, I guess a festival going community, people go to festivals, there's a lot of people. But yeah, I wouldn't say I'm a part of, yeah, there's, like, you know, people from Spain, people from Peru, the Peruvian community, the Chilean community, like, these people, these people I connect with. Because sometimes it's not like you're, you're not always, like, a main person, like, where you, but, but you don't always realize to them, like, oh, this is like a reoccurring kind of character in this, they come in and, and like, we people know you or like me, And I don't know everyone there. But I feel like I'm part of that. And it's like, this is even if people don't know me, like, I still feel like I belong. There's like an, there's like a community of, well, obviously expats. And like, folks from Ericeira as well. They like kind of come down and do events here. Or, yeah, I

got a bunch of friends that live up in Ericeira. They come down. I think my main one is, yeah, music. Music, yeah. Music or like, people that busk.

You know a lot of the people that busk around here?

I know a good amount. A good few. That's cool.

That's probably cool to be walking around.

I'm sure I know maybe 10%. Yeah. If that. But it's cool to, you know, if you were walking around and you're like, oh, hey, I know that person singing over there. Or that person playing over there.

Yeah. In terms of, so like your online presence, I know, with music, you have to kind of use that. Do you feel like there's any communities online that you're a part of?

That's interesting. Um, not so much. I don't know the, I don't really spend so much time in an online community. No.

But is there any like significant moments or experiences that you had that you think were a very like pivotal point to like making you who you are today, putting you in the position that you are today? Any experiences in life?

Yeah. Yeah. Traveling. Traveling to Asia. It's like the first big trip that I ever did. I only planned to be there for like a month or two months. And then I was in the South of Thailand and I was staying at a hostel and I saw that there were kids there like working and like volunteering, but having like food and a bed to sleep in. And, and I was like, what? I'd never, I was like, you guys are volunteering here at this hostel where I'm paying to stay. Like, and we're doing the same thing. We're having like dinner together and we're going out together. It's like, that changed my life. That for sure changed my life. And then traveling with my buddy in 2013 when we came here to Europe for the first time in Europe and he was like working

online. He was a coder. So he was like making money and traveling. And I was like, what? You're making, you're what? You're making money and traveling? Okay. And that kind of, yeah, um, made me think. Yeah, that was like the spark, the first seed planted.

That was the seed. Um, oh, and um, do you think there was any maybe challenges that, I don't know, that made you kind of think about yourself in a different way or like evaluate more of like who you are and what you want? Are there any, were there any challenges that made me? Yeah, or times that experiences that just made you kind of more question your like any like previous beliefs or, or just your way of seeing the world. I know these, some of these are a little bit more like harder to think on the spot.

So um, yeah, I mean, I think traveling, um, I think, yeah, traveling to Southeast Asia and just seeing, that's when I, that's when I started to work online as well. Like my parents sent out my laptop, which I had bought and I didn't travel with because like, oh, I'm going to come back in a couple months. And then like six, seven months, was it seven months later? Oh, had to be like five months later. Um, yeah, I wanted to like work online and and yeah, I don't know. I was like in Asia and just seeing however, how people are very like resourceful. They, they did a lot with very little. And yeah, that kind of maybe made me take a look at the things that I had and that I wasn't using to my full potential. I was traveling around with a camera that I hardly used, which subsequently got stolen later on. And I was like, okay, well somebody else is going to use it more. But yeah, I think, uh, I forget the question.

It's just like, what you said is great thanks.

Um, now, okay, so I know you've been in Asia, South America, and now Europe. And because also since you just did a whole thing of traveling, um, how do you like kind of adapt to changes in your environment, changes in the people around you, general culture around you? Do you find it easy to adapt?

Yeah. Yeah, it's pretty easy. How do I adapt? I think I observe. When I'm in a new place, I like to walk around and just kind of check out the environment. I love walking around cities for the first time that I've never been in, just like getting lost. Yeah. Are you into people watching? Uh, yeah. Yeah. I like people watching. I like people watching. I feel like that's how I kind of

adapt. I'm like, Oh, okay. Like I see the, I see what the locals are doing. Yeah. They seem like, I remember my first time here. I was like, Oh, people really eat late.

Have you picked up any of the habits from the locals, like the eating late..?

Yeah that and smoking. Like in my community of, of artists and musicians and friends and stuff like that's when I smoke more than ever. Yeah. My last relationship I was with, yeah, she was a smoker as well. So it is, it is more so when the people around you are smoking, I smoked, I started smoking quite a bit when I started working at the bar, because it was kind of like, okay, things are like, died down or we'd have nothing to do. So whoever else was working would go out for a cigarette. I was like, Oh, I want to go out for a cigarette. You know, everybody's going outside to smoke a cigarette. And I was like, I want to go out and get some fresh air. I think that too, if you're in like bars, and then like, most of your friends leave to go outside and you're like, I want to be outside with them. Yeah, it's nice to like, nice little cigarette and a glass of wine.

That's great. I also think I drink slower here than I used to. And that's something that it's wasn't right away. But over time, and that's comes from same observing people kind of are very slow paced.

Oh, I drink so fast.

I don't think I've slowed down at all.

Great. Are there times where you feel like you have to adjust or pivot, hiccups I guess while travelling that would limit you from working, or unexpected things?

I mean, me staying here, me being here is an unexpected. I really hiccup, but it was just like, okay, I like this place. But yeah, my tour, like I missed a couple of like, not planes, but buses. Usually I stay a little too late drink a little too fast. But with work it's hasn't been a problem because I do usually just work when I'm in my home base. So if I am not able to get internet or something while abroad, it's okay because it's usually not essential for me to be working at that moment. Or I have enough flexibility that I could figure out a solution.

Are you on a digital nomad visa right now?

Yes.

And do you know if they give you a flat tax?

I don't know. Honestly, I haven't. This will be my first year doing taxes. I heard it's not as difficult as it seems. It's like a little bit to learn. And then my other friend who's been doing their taxes, they're like, Oh, once like you kind of figure it out. It's quite simple. It's now but I do actually I need to look into this.

I haven't, I'm still waiting on my residency card. Stuff like that. But I think my status is still Yeah. But I don't know when it started. I don't know. I've been waiting for a fucking year for this.

Oh, have you gone? Have you had an appointment?

Yeah, and they just said, Yes, coming in two weeks.

I mean, mine came in two weeks.

They told me two weeks and I showed up. Did you go through like some sort of?

No, I went through. I just made an appointment at the immigration office, showed up, presented all my documents. They said great. There you go.

The same thing with me. When when was your appointment?

Mine was in August of last year. August or September, but I think August.

Mine was in fucking August as well. Yeah. So I was like,

I don't know you have to try and contact them because like, yeah, because it's it's just I don't know because my friend that had the same shit the same exact thing. And I was like, Well, that's weird that dates. Usually it's like you can't get the appointment or something like that. But once they already paid. Yeah, I paid all the 200 euros.

Yeah, I'm just waiting for the card. Like, it's just and then I was talking to a guy who was like, kind of checking up on my case. And he's like, Oh, it's still in analysis. Like, bitch, what are you analyzing? I paid the money.

Like, what was the point of the meeting? I thought the analysis was there.

I don't know, man.

So overall negative experience with immigration than here. The worst like how am I waiting? She said two weeks. And it's been like almost 52 weeks.

Did you have difficulty getting your appointment?

Or no part was produced when I got my so I had to go back to the United States to get my visa into my passport. And on the visa, it says like a URL. So I typed that in and it was my date.

Yeah, that's mine was the same. Except I did not look at the URL until literally the day after my appointment.

Wait, what?

Yeah I think I was not looking at the right thing. I don't know why. But I had like seen it and I saw numbers in my in the URL. Or I don't know what I had seen. I was just dumb.

Okay, so is there any like maybe lessons that you've learned if like looking back on your journey as a nomad?

Yeah, there's a lot of lessons. What lessons have I learned? What lessons am I learning? I'm learning a lesson of like, knowing when my time in a place is expired. Being able to sense when it is time to move on.

Do you want to stay in Lisbon longer?

Yes I feel that I'm comfortable here and it's a good place for me. I don't know for now I'm going to stay for a while longer, I can't see myself leaving so soon.

Are there other places that are calling to you?

London. I would like to be in London for a bit. Yeah the music scene there is nuts. Being there on tour was just unreal, well everywhere, everywhere I played it felt like that, you know I was there playing my music, and my purpose in being there for that time was to play my music, to show my art. It was such a surreal feeling.

So London is calling?

(laughs) Yeah, a bit, I haven't actually looked into anything for living there I might just have to go back for some travel and feel it for myself. But I don't feel like it's the end of my time in Lisbon yet.

How do you know when it is time to move on?

It is a feeling, something deep, I guess you could also describe it like saudade. You feel a longing for something, a longing for the place you're in as if you have already left, that's when you know. It emotional.

Yeah. Well, thank you so much.

Participant B – Interview 1

Interviewer: Paloma Schafer

Date: 18/04/2024

Thank you for agreeing to meet with me.

Yeah, yeah, it is not a problem. Will it be in English or Portuguese?

English. You speak Portuguese?

I speak Portuguese, but not enough, I think, to explain everything. I've been learning, but I haven't learned fast enough. I feel like because I know enough Spanish that I should be better.

Yeah, same I thought it would be easier.

Okay, so to start, what originally brought you to Lisbon?

So, okay, obviously it's a long story.

I love a long story, go for it.

Okay, so I was living back in Guatemala. I'm from the city, from the capital city, but I wasn't really a fan of cities. So, I moved to a small city that the name is Antigua Guatemala, which is a small village, and I lived there for five years. But after that, I was like, oh, this is too small for me. But I didn't want to go back to the city, so I was like, oh, let's see next, because I like to travel a lot, and I have the freedom of being wherever I want. And so it was like, let's see Europe, you know, because it could be Mexico or something like that. But since I wanted to travel more Asia and stuff like that, I was thinking, no, maybe Europe is more closer than Africa and Asia. And, I mean, buying a ticket from Guatemala is very expensive to everywhere. So I was like, okay, let's see Portugal just pop up in my mind. I guess a country that isn't that expensive, and you can live here. Actually, for me, it's exactly the same as Guatemala. The prices are the same? Exactly the same, except that for why I'm paying here, I have a room, and back in Guatemala I can have a whole apartment for myself. I think that's the only difference between that. Yeah, the house is a thing. But I guess that Portugal now is a destination for digital nomads. It's very beautiful, so everyone wants to come here, and it's full of Airbnbs and stuff like that. I remember looking for a room, and I was like, I just want a window. All I wanted was a window, and it was so hard. Or not a window, you know? Or the bathroom is shared with five people. So it's not the ideal situation for living here. In prices, and for the income here, it's like...

Yeah not great..

What will you order?

I think a boa bun with cogumelos. Yeah.

Hmmm.

Well, my income is not from here, so...

Yeah, that's good.

That's the best thing. But I'm not coming from a rich country, but I built something that allowed me to live here, with the prices that they have here, because it's similar to Guatemala, but basically that. But if you want to know what I'm doing...

Yeah, I was going to ask you that.

So I'm an architect. I have to tell that after COVID, thanks to COVID, everything was more simple, because you don't necessarily need to meet with the clients. And with the 3D and everything, you have the tools to be not there, and still know the topography of the land and everything, so you don't need to be there. So after the COVID, and since I was working as an architect, and people were at their homes, and we should build a house, or we don't have so much to do, and stuff like that. So they started, like, hey, we wanted to build our houses, and blah, blah, blah. But everything started online. So it was a good thing for me, because I can... Because it started. But even though I work as an architect still, and I'm an interior designer too, that is not my main income. So before COVID, when I moved to this small village, Antigua Guatemala, it's a very touristy city, so I was thinking about having an apartment, and then rent the rooms, or something like that, to get a profit. And, well, life is like that, that my ex-boyfriend, right now, he teaches me how to do Airbnb. So as an architect, it was easy for me, because I was doing the scouting, or where the properties were back in Guatemala, since it's a very touristy place. And I rented, and I put it in nice, you know?

It's great interior design, so you can design it.

Exactly. It was meant to be, actually. But anyway, he teaches me how to do it. It's not a huge science, you know? So I started, I rented one property at the beginning, and it was hard at the beginning, because then COVID appeared. Then COVID happened, and I have to say that I had to clean my properties myself. Because obviously the contract was for one year, and so it was difficult, but after COVID, I was ready to rent new properties. And it's a long story, but the owner of the house that I was renting, he saw that I was bringing so many guests to the house, and blah, blah, blah, he had a condo and still paying the rent, and everything, so he offered me the whole condominium to manage. So it was great.

That's so awesome. So is the whole condo Airbnbs, or are they all different?

All condos are Airbnb now. I'm not working on that house anymore, but back then. That's a huge, compared to having one unit, to go from that to be like, oh, you know what? Take the whole condo. That's amazing. Not knowing anything about Airbnb, it was like I was doing the

administration of a condo on Airbnb, so that teaches me a lot. And at the end, with that property, with the profit, I rent another property, and then I rent another property, and et cetera, and well, since I'm material design, I just put the property really, really nice, and well, basically, I return the houses, like the condominium, and I only stay with my properties. Not my properties. I rent the property, and I sublet it. Yeah. And so, I think it took me like five years, or four years, to build that. Like everything, you know? Like cleaning ladies, like maintenance guy. Because once you get to a certain amount, it's a little harder to manage.

Do you have someone, like will you have someone managing anything down there?

No, actually I'm doing myself. Because since I feel like I need to do something, you know? Not having any work, I would feel bored.

That's true. Yeah. But does your cleaning lady, is it one person for all the properties?

No, no, no. I have a team of five. Okay. And so, I have eight properties. And well, I can live on the properties I'm doing. And so, obviously that allows me to travel, and be here without working here. And stay in a property when I'm in Guatamala. Yeah. And well, now I am here I...

In case, like if people are requesting anything. Just if anything happens, I do the managing. I call, I text the cleaning ladies, you need to go there. Yeah. Organize the stuff. Okay. And I'm still keeping touch with the guests all the time. People can't find where to get the keys. People are like... Yeah. Asking like 20 questions. So, I manage how to do it like very automatic, you know? Like very intuitive and automatic. Like most of the times, like when I rent a property, I spend one or two days in the property to see what am I missing or if the people are going to understand how to get in and etc. You know?

Yeah

And well, basically, like my work is that I don't have like a schedule. But in the morning, like I check everything to send the cleaning ladies to see if something's happening or stuff like that. Yeah, so... But I can do it everywhere.

And how often do you do architecture work now?

Now, I think that twice in a year. Usually, I have two types of projects. And... So... And... So, I am 38. Yeah. So, I think that I feel in my past life as an architect, I was a director of two companies. One was an architecture company and the other one was interior design. So, I spent like seven years in that interior design company where I learned everything, you know? I know how to build everything. A chair, a table... But I know how to do it because I was working with carpenters and yeah. But well, at the end I worked for this company as a director, so I think I learned a lot. And then I decided to jump and be by my own when I was

maybe 32. And well, there was two companies, like a very big one in Guatemala, that hired me to do the interior design of the demo apartments. So they are selling buildings and you have to design the demo apartments with people. With the furniture and everything, so it can be nice and blah blah. So usually I do the work like twice a year, it depends on the demand that you have. But usually like that. And with this other company, it's only architecture with houses, maybe once or twice too.

How long do most of these projects take? Is it a couple of days or is it a month?

No, for example, I think the interior design took me one month between changes and stuff like that, and another month to set everything together. So yeah, they're pretty long, they're long projects. Yeah, and the houses, I mean years. You can do a design in eight weeks, yes, but then it's a process, it's not depending on me actually. But it goes to the municipality and they... I only design, so actually I have a team that I don't know, it's an outsourcing everything. A guy does the renders, like the 3D images, and another person does all the layouts. And the engineers do the structure, and I only design and I only send them. But they do all the smaller things, like the other jobs. Yeah, exactly. In the whole project. Exactly, so they send them to me and I send everything to the guy, so he can build the property.

That's super cool.

Well, but basically it's us, it's not that I'm not getting an income from that. Yeah, it's just not the main one that keeps you steady. Yeah. So I'm here like traveling and working like every morning on the Airbnb's and solving doubts of architecture that I did like two years ago, one year ago. So they are building now the houses. But yeah, basically it's like that. That is my past life and my actual life.

Are you planning on staying in Lisbon long term?

If I'm planning to stay here, I don't know actually. It's a really really nice country, like very welcoming I guess, like the people is very nice. And since I feel like there's a lot of foreigners, people are more open to meet people in general. There is a lot of people who are also here for only a couple of years, there's a lot of turnover, which is good and bad of course. But it's good because usually most people are looking to make friends and to meet people. Even if you've been here for a year, like you're still like, oh you people. And it's a small community, like it's a small city. And I feel like I always meet people who know someone I know. Actually, that's a thing that I really like about Lisbon. Because I don't like cities but this city is so small that it's very personal. Yeah. It's very personal, it's small, everyone knows everyone. Yeah. It feels like a small town.

Oh no it's raining. This year it's raining a lot.

Yeah I feel like last year it was warmer earlier. This year it's a late summer.

I'm going to run away in summer. It's too hot.

When did you get here?

In September. I was actually... I came here. I spent the three months that I was allowed to be here to see if I like it and stuff like that. Uh-huh. And then I... Yeah, then I figured out, yes, I love it. I love the culture. It still feels like Latin America, you know? And it was like... Yeah, it was a very... My decision was based on... It feels like Latin America is still here and the people are still kind and there's a Latin vibe here. There's a Latin vibe here. I love it. It's one of my favorite things about it is I feel like it's a... I have the Latin vibe, but I have the South European, Mediterranean buildings of color. And then also some of the European buildings and the history. So... Exactly. And I'm close to other European countries to travel if we want. It's super close to go anywhere from here. Yeah, it's always exciting. Anyway, it's nice. Just the weather.

But yeah, basically when I travel, I go with my computer and I'm always there just in case I need it.

And how much time do you have to spend?

Like an hour a day. That's perfect. Like, the only thing that could cause me like a little trouble is like the time zone. Yeah. So I would say Asia to South America is what, like a whole 13 hours. So when you're... In the morning it's night. Night is morning. Yeah. In the morning there is night there, you sleep and you wake up in the morning of them. Like it's very weak, but you're sleeping during the day of them. Yeah. So anything, you can wake up and you can have a bunch of messages. Well, right now it happens the same too, like 8 hours but it's a bit easier. It's not, like you can work with it. But yeah, in the beginning it was difficult for me because I didn't know how to deal with the Airbnb thing. But at the end it was like, okay, I'm going to wake up early in the morning and check the messages, see if I still have time because there is 10 or 11. And I can still answer something. And then I can go back to sleep.

That's a good system, though.

That's really nice that you have like eight different streams of income. And to also be able to do interior design and architecture.

Actually, I wanted to do it here. I don't know when, actually.

Here?

I don't know. Or maybe just get a flat and rent the rooms. How much do you pay for your room?

I pay \$300. It's like super cheap. But I used to live in Lisbon and now I live in Almada. And I was paying \$450. Then they put it up to \$480. And I couldn't afford it so I had to move.

But you lived near here?

Yeah. But now they closed it and kicked everyone out.

Are they putting an Airbnb or something?

They're going to make it into a hotel, I think. It's like empty right now.

The whole building?

Yeah. It's just empty now.

Damn.

So, you said that you automate your AirBNB process. What is that like?

Things are automated.

Do you have any softwares, like systems that you use?

No, it's just through Airbnb, but I'm thinking in doing like a bot for the phone. Like this automatic. So, because I already know the common problems. Yeah. But I still need to work on that. It's kind of... My Airbnb is still dependent on me in a certain kind of way. Because I need to answer and stuff like that. But I will figure out the way. Expanding myself. For example, I started only in Antigua Guatemala. Yeah. But now I am in another area. So, I'm trying to... I was actually in Sri Lanka thinking, oh, this could be a good place.

Oh Sri Lanka is cool?

Yes I was there and in Malaysia, Thailand.

You did all of this trip?

Yeah.

How long were you gone?

Like one month and a half or one month and a half.

That's a good trip, though.

Yeah, yeah. I'm spending more time in Thailand and Sri Lanka was the longest one. Yeah, like two weeks in Sri Lanka.

I want to go. I haven't been in Asia. That's like... My next is like, hey, I want to go to Asia. But I gotta wait until I'm done with my thesis.

What are you studying?

Communications.

Ah, okay, and you're just talking with digital nomads.

Yeah

Well, digital nomads here, they love it. First, because of the weather. Except right now, it's not supposed to be raining this much now.

There was a bunch of rain last month, so I stayed here like for a week, and then I bought a ticket to Thailand. And I was like, okay, I'm going to Thailand. And I'm going to come back in April.

And now how long have you been living in Lisbon?

So by now, it's one year and a half.

And do you want to continue living in Lisbon or move around a bit, or maybe go back?

Right now, only Lisbon is in my mind. I need, like, because actually it's like an emotional effort. A lot to move. It's a lot to move. So it's not that you're leaving your family and stuff like that. It's that you need to build a network again. Like friends and stuff like that. So even people think that, oh, it's awesome that you're living in another country and everything. But yeah. But

it takes a lot of your energy to build a network again. Like trying to find good friends. Like real ones. That's a really hard thing as an adult to do. Especially if you're not working in an office with people. That is a thing that affects me a little bit. I think that I kind of miss this office environment. Not because of the work. Not because of the work. Because of the people that you met there. For example, one of my best friends, I met her in an office. So when you're traveling or working as a digital nomad, you don't have that. You go to a cafe. But I mean, everyone is working as a zombie too. And nobody... Unless you are going there frequently, you're going to meet people. Because otherwise everyone is very busy. If you're changing the place like a lot. Like the networking thing. Or having friends. It's kind of difficult when you're traveling and working at the same time. So, by the moment I think that I'm going to spend more time here. To build friends and everything. And then I will see if I want to... If I want to do it again. And definitely a bigger thing is the weather. There's not that many other places that have as good weather.

Also our cities, you know. Mexico sounds good. Yeah but it doesn't feel like a once in a lifetime thing. And I'm like, yeah, but I can do that at any time. I can just do that whenever. I don't have to do that now. Well, now, go the furthest possible. Because then, take advantage that I can do it. And then in the future, I can just go to Mexico City.

Yeah, and it's close to home.

And why did you decide to come to Portugal?

Well, I came to visit. And, it changed like, for me, it changed my priorities. Because since I'm 38. And I'm thinking, like, okay, I'm getting old, you know? And at the end, I need to figure out where I'm going to live. I would say it is harder the older you get. You feel like, do I want to? Is it going to get even harder for me to make those roots the older I am? It's easier to do it when you're young. To have more of that adventure. But it does get... I think if you're young, you can do whatever you want. But then, like me, I feel like I'm closer to 40. And then I'm like, no, okay, I need to figure out where I'm going to live. Like, I like Portugal. I'm not against, like, getting married here or something. I'm open to that. But I will think about it. I will go with the flow for a few years. And then I will figure it out. Like, for sure, I was thinking, like, to buy a property here.

Yeah, yeah. But, yeah, that's the thing, like, the emotional impact, yeah, for sure. The moving. Also, you have to find an apartment. Yeah. That's one thing. Everything.

How did you make friends here?

Well, actually, I was signing up for everything, you know, like, first, I know that with my income, I can rent an apartment by my own, but I decided not to do it because I didn't want to be alone. Yeah. So, so I decided to live with someone. The girl is from Colombia. So it was nice because she was from Latin America, you know, with a dog and everything. It's like, it was, like, perfect. And so I signed up for Portuguese classes and stuff like that, like, you know, like, to meet people. That's good because people taking Portuguese classes also just got here, so they're also looking to meet people. So I took a Portuguese class with Ana. And, but I met her because my Colombian friend, she was dating a friend of hers for six months or so. And I don't really remember well who it was, but it was like a dinner or something. Maybe the birthday of Ricardo, the friend of hers? I don't know if you know him.

Oh, I know Ricardo.

But Ricardo knows everyone.

I've run into him so many times. He's everywhere, yeah.

Actually, he's everywhere. But yeah, I know Ricardo through her because they were dating for a couple months. And then I became friends with him. I knew Ana. And I were having together the Portuguese stuff. But I haven't been and haven't seen her because I've been away for four months. And I'm going to be away again for one month.

Where are you going?

My parents are coming. So we're going to Spain.

Is it their first time coming?

Yeah.

Oh, they're going to love it. They're going to be so excited.

Exactly. I know. I know they are. They're coming the first of May. So I'm going to travel to Madrid. And we're going to Barcelona. And we're going to Porto.

That'll be really fun.

Yeah, I know. I know. But I'm so tired. Because I've traveled so much. And I don't have that much time. I just got back. Like two weeks. Two weeks and a half. And I'm going to see my parents. Which I'm very happy. But it's like a heavy shit. Oh my God. Because I need to be in

charge of everything. What are they going to eat? The plans. The Airbnb, the hotels. Where are we going? Because obviously they don't know nothing. So basically I'm going to be far away again one month. And I'm coming back in June. And I'm leaving in August. Because August is hell.

Where are you going to go in August?

I have no idea. Maybe Romania.

Oh. Romania.

No, I think I'm okay. Yeah. We can do the bill. If you have tap water, that would be awesome. Tap water. Oh, okay, okay, okay.

Okay, well then I'll also text you for the other meeting. To get them quickly so that you have time with your parents. And I don't have to bother you after that.

No problem this was nice, it was fun.

Thank you again.

Participant B – Interview 2

Interviewer: Paloma Schafer

Date: 26/04/2024

All right, so tell me just a little bit about, like, your cultural, like, upbringing. Yeah.

So, I used to live, as I told you, like, in the city of Guatemala, so mostly, like, the culture over there is you live in gated communities, or it's safer, you know, like, or you feel more safe, but my community was very nice because we have this forest behind the houses, so my childhood was very nice, like, with a lot of friends and everything, so, and my mom and my dad, they weren't, like, that strict, you know, they allowed us to do, to play with friends and

go out, like, of course, with rules, obviously, but they were more open to us to have friends, to go out, etc. So, it was good. I think that my mom and my dad are pretty different.

And, so, they were more on this mindset, I think that because my dad traveled a bit, you know, he was more open about, and my mom was very, for her, it was very important, no, you have to study and travel, too. Like, for them, it's not like the Latin American culture that you have to study and then get married, or get married, like, because you need a man and everything, they were totally the opposite. Actually, even now that I'm not so young, they are like, no, like, don't get married, like, travel, like, live your life, have friends, do your patrimony, like, your house or whatever, and, so, I never felt, like, the pressure, well, the pressure on me was, like, studying and have... And being successful. Yeah. Like, being successful, I don't know, because my parents never were like, oh, you have to be a doctor, or you have to be, or whatever. They were more like, what do you want to study, and blah, blah, and we discussed about that.

And I, well, I was very good, like, drawing and building stuff, so I was kind of into architecture, design, all the time, like, I knew that I wanted to be an architect when I was nine. Yeah. So, it was easy for me to choose, like, I was in between being a lawyer, an architect, or being a psychologist.

Oh. Because I'm very... That's so... No, but, you know, sometimes when you work in architecture, it's kind of a psychologist thing, because you need to talk with clients, and they are, like, spitting everything, their lives, and, you know, you kind of start knowing them to understand the spaces, or whatever. As simple as, some people like to have, like, a pole in the room, and stuff like that.

Yeah. Yeah, so, and, but yeah, my, well, my dad was a bit strict, yes, but I guess, at that time, he was, like, protecting us, he was a very good provider. So, yeah, I wasn't, like, the spoils girl, or whatever, but, because I'm the last kid with.... Yeah, the last one, so, they are, like, ah, the whatever, or whatever, and I have a twin sister. So, it was, like, ah, you have a friend, like, forever, you know, like, you go everywhere, and you already have a friend, I guess, so it's easy. So, yeah, it was, like, a nice childhood, yeah.

Is your twin in Guatamala?

Yeah, actually, she's married, with three kids, and everything, like, yeah, she has, like, a good family, you know, I guess, like, a good husband, three kids is a lot, but they are, like, my kids, you know, because we are the same, so the DNA of us is the same, so. I don't have to take

care of all of them, but they are my kids. And give them little outfits, like, that's the only part I want, for now. Yeah.

Yeah, you want to see, like, the...

Yeah, I want to see.

No. Maybe after, maybe it just kicks in. I don't know. I don't know. Like, for me, it's, like, I already have done so many things, you know? Traveled so much and everything that I think is, for me, it's, like, ah, I think I'm ready to give my life to somebody, you know, like, a little more. But if it doesn't happen, like, it's okay. And, but yeah, well, I studied architecture there, as I told you before. Uh-huh.

So, actually, cultural, I think I'm against, like, everything, you know, that is happening right in Guatemala. Because, you know, like, Latin American culture is more that, um, in Guatemala, for example, most of the population is indigenous. And so, they have a totally different mindset, like, not all of them, of course, I don't want to generalize.

Yeah. But they are more like, yeah, having a lot of kids because they are helpful to work, actually. Yeah. So, they start, like, having kids, like, very early and blah, blah, blah. Like, so, for me, having, like, 38, like, I'm a weirdo in that society, for example. But, yeah, the culture in Guatemala is indigenous.

Yeah. And so, I was like, I think that we were in the middle class. Yeah. Actually. And so, I went to, like, private, everything, school, university was private, too. Yeah.

It's kind of, yeah, I just kind of, like, through a lot of poverty, but my parents, well, my mom, not my dad, but more in, like, the middle class. So, I don't think I really realized, especially when I was little, because, not when I was little, but, like, when I think about it, I don't really realize, because I don't go to, I didn't grow up there, I didn't get to see as much of it. Yeah.

Yeah. But that's also nice that I have gated communities, because I feel like it's good, kids can kind of run around and feel safe. Yeah. Parents can feel safe having their kids running around, usually.

Yeah. That's awesome.

Very Catholic. Well, we do have this culture of, that you have kids, and then when you get old, you're assuming, like, that they're going to take care of you. They're going to take care of

you. It's more of the village mindset, like. I think it's in Latin America in general, that you have this mindset of, oh, you're going to have kids, and you're going to give your life to them, and then. They give back to you when you're older. The family stays together, I feel like, it's very. But my parents never pressured me to get married and have kids.

And that, how much do you think that influenced you in not just your desire and ability to travel and live abroad knowing the support you those decisions?

Totally. Like, I have totally different life of the standards of Guatemalan people. Both of them. Like, there were like, you should travel. I think that when you do your first travel is that you're, you open your mind and then there's no way that you can go back, actually. So for me, it's like, totally influenced that because my dad was like this free spirit, you know? And I think I have it, you know, I have the same spirit of him, like traveling, like doing like revolutionary spirit.

So, so yes. But yeah, totally influenced. And my mom, that she's, she's very intelligent.

So she was like, no, you need to be, no, you need to be intelligent, but I need... She wants you to like be knowledgeable. Yeah, exactly. And smart.

In Guatamala, a lot of people don't get to leave and travel, especially like outside of South America. So, especially the older, I think, older generations. Younger ones, I think, are a little... We're in a better position to do that. And... Well, I think that the world is more connected now. It's not that expensive to travel. When my dad did it, it was very expensive. Also, imagine our parents, they were traveling, they have to call the hotel. They don't have reviews, they have to call the hotel, they have to look at a map. They have to look at a map when they get there. If you get lost, you don't have... I mean, they have credit cards and stuff, I think, back then.

No, it was such a different... And there was no...

It really changes.

You mentioned, once you first travel, your eyes open to the world. What do you consider to be that first... Whether it was an independent travel experience or when you were younger with your parents that gave you that moment?

Like, first memorable travel experience. Well, the first travel that we did... My parents liked to go every... Not every weekend, but at least one week in a month. Like, exploring Guatemala and stuff like that. And then we had this possibility to go to the U.S. And we went to Sacramento, I remember. So we went there, we went to Disney and stuff like that. But that was in the 90s, you know?

Yeah, exactly. So, I don't know if that trip opened my mind. But I remember that I was maybe into the other cultures. So my first boyfriend, he was from Costa Rica. And he invited me to go. So the story is that I lied to my parents that I'm going to the beach or something for a week. And I went to Costa Rica.

How far is Costa Rica from Guatemala?

Like, two hours? Maybe two hours and a half, not that far. Until this day, they don't know that story, actually. I'm going to confess the story someday to them. But when I did that trip, it was the first trip that I did alone, without them. And my ex-boyfriend, by that time, influenced that too. He likes to travel. I mean, I don't know, maybe you buy that and you match these people that are going to help you to open your... To do that. Yeah, exactly. So that travel, I started with that travel to Costa Rica. And then he was like, I like to travel. And I know people from other places and from all around the world.

And my next travel was Mexico. I went to Mexico. I was very into music. And actually, my first goal was like, oh, I love music. So I wanted to see... What's the name of this group? Is it a Latin group?

Is it a Spanish-speaking group or an American group?

No, no, no, an American group.

What's the song?

No, no. I love them. Fuck, I forgot the name. Where's my head?

What kind of music? Rock?

It's rock, yeah.

Are they like small?

No, no, they are not small. They are very well known. Fuck. Do you know the song House of Cards?

No. I don't know, who can I think of? Blink-182?

No, no, no, it's too pop. I'm trying to think of rock. I have the name here, and my mind is white. I don't have it in my mind right now. Radiohead. Radiohead. So I love them, and I went to Mexico to see them. And it was amazing. I wanted to do this the rest of my life. Traveling and go to concerts and stuff like that. So I went to Mexico. I remember by that time that I had a friend. And she was like, oh yeah, I'm going with you. And then she decided not to go. And I was with the ticket already. With the two tickets.

The concert and everything. So I was like, I don't give a shit. I'm going alone. So I went to Mexico. Alone. But lucky me, I had this friend. He was like, yeah, I can join you. I love Radiohead. So we went to Mexico. Stayed in a hostel. Meet Aral. So that was maybe more than 12 years ago. Mexico City right now is really popular. And since Guatemala is too small, we don't have that type of concert.

I feel like it is really cool to go somewhere else for a concert too.

Because you're going and you get to experience that city and that place. But I feel like something about like, oh, I have an event that I'm going to go to there. I don't know.

And you get to be like, oh, yeah, I saw Radiohead in Mexico. Not here.

I went all the way there. I saw it and it was awesome. And then I also saw the whole city.

It's cool.

But that's the way I open my eyes to the world. Yeah.

So once you started Airbnb, and once you had that income where you could leave and start traveling, when was it that you were like, OK, I'm doing this full time.

I work, I work as a director in two companies. So all the money that I get there, I use it for traveling. So the second travel that I did, let me think about it. Maybe it was, I don't remember, it was South America. Yeah. So we did Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina. And they gave me one month to travel. So it was like, OK, like I'm leaving. So I did. And so many little travels. So my mindset was like, OK, in the holy week that we have in Guatemala, I will travel near like Nicaragua or Costa Rica or El Salvador or Belize, stuff like that. So I did all Central America in that holy week. Yeah. And when I get my vacation, it was like three weeks, four weeks, I travel more. Yeah. And you go further because you're like, OK, I'll take the flight. So that was one. That was my second one, actually. I don't remember. But I did an Euro trip. I

don't know if it was between that one or I don't know. So I did South America. Then I did, I think, or maybe Europe was first. And I was in... But I picked some random places like Croatia. I was in Spain, Croatia, France, Germany. Germany, Prague. Is it Czech Republic? Czech Republic, yeah. So I did... On that trip, I did those countries. And another trip, I did Turkey, Israel, Jordan. So maybe I know like 50 countries now, by now. Yeah, but I used all my money to do that. And then I think that everything works out to be here by this moment, like right now. But because I matched that with my cosmology of living, you know. So yeah, I met my ex-boyfriend and he teaches me how to do that. So in my mind, like, OK, you're not going to be in my life, but you're going to teach me this. So I can be free. And do what I want, you know.

Go where you want. Live how you want. That's awesome.

I think, like, things, small things, but things in our lives have really set us up to be like where we are. Yeah. Like, having that boyfriend. I never fight against anything. Like, not if I was like heartbreaking or if I was like, I don't know, stuff like that. I am like, oh, it should be. But now I can see it, like, but. Looking back, everything's like, oh, you know what? This worked out perfectly because I got this, this, this great things out of this. The outcome of that. All these other wonderful things.

Do you have like a favorite, a favorite place that you've been able to experience?

A the moment. Yeah. But I think it's about people too, you know, because you can love the places. Like I will give you an example. For example, I, I went to Israel and I totally don't recommend it. Like I went there because I wanted to see the Dead Sea and, but you know what? Like, yeah, it's a beautiful country for sure. But the people is like, no, they think that they're the shit, you know, even though like I'm Christian, you know, like, yeah. But they think that they are the chosen one. So it's like this kind of attitude that you don't like in people.

So, uh, no, but then I was traveling Turkey and Jordan. It was like amazing. I love Turkey.. You should go. It's amazing. It's so huge. I mean, like for me, all the history is there. Yeah. Like all the history is in Turkey. Like it's amazing. They have like all this history in the timeline. Like it's amazing. Amazing. Like in the country, it's amazing. A lot of cats and I love cats. A lot of cats everywhere. There's like sheep cats.

Yeah. It's like, have you ever been in Latin America?

Yeah.

Yeah. There's a lot of cats, a lot of cats and they love cats actually because the cats are everywhere. Like in the stores, in the restaurants and they love them. They feed them. Like they like cats. That's nice. You go to the, I don't know, you go to the desert and they are there. You go to your Airbnb and you do the shit like this and there's a cat inside. Yeah. Turkey is the place of cats. But they have like this.

I was only in Gurami, which is Cappadocia, where you fly with the balloon. It's very cool. And I was in Pamukkale. It's like a wine mountain with water and everything. That is very cool too. And obviously Istanbul. But I really feel that I need to go back. Yeah. Like do it again. The second time and go like, go more to the north. Because I was more in the south. Like Istanbul and then I flew to the south. But it's amazing. And the food is good. One of my favorite ones is Turkey actually.

Yeah. It's amazing. I don't, I feel like I don't have like my favorite trip. Yeah. I have places that I have been. Actually, one of my favorite places is Portugal. I really, I really got in love from Portugal since I arrived. And it was like definitely the people. But I don't know if it was the people from Portugal. I think it's this mix that is happening right now. Like it's so international. Yeah. That you actually, yeah. That you actually love it because I can, I can meet someone from around the world. I love the language. I'm like, oh, it's so nice. Like, I just, I don't know what they're saying, but I'm just like listening.

No, I like that too. That's what I feel like. I feel like my friends are pretty mixed group. It's a fun mix.

.Yeah. I love it.

So that's why Portugal has been my favorite and I choose it because of that. This multicultural thing that is happening here that maybe they hate it a little bit, but for us that we are outsiders, like we love it. So I kind of love it because it reminds me this little town that I was living in Guatemala for five years. And the thing that I love about that town is that I met a lot of people from around the world. And it's the same here just as a huge, not huge city because it's much bigger than much bigger than the village that I was living. So yeah, definitely.

Do you feel like from any of the places that you've traveled, that the culture has like, influenced your identity?

No, I mean, I think that my identity is like, so strong that I actually love being from Latin America. So I with this flag that I love. Yeah. I mean, probably like, small things like food. But still, I still cooking like the same breakfast as Guatemala. And I kind of miss it when, when I'm traveling, like the difficult part for me is the food. So I'm not like I didn't change my habits. For example, here in all Europe, like all the people are very used to eat bread. And we don't eat bread like back in Guatemala, we eat more corn. Yeah, yeah. So I still keep that as you can see, I'm eating some nachos with guacamole. Right now. So it's like my comfort food. I think that is kind of that I'm here. But I think I think that I still want to feel comfortable. You know, so I trying to reach out like all the time like comfortable food. Yeah, for me like food from like childhood, childhood, but just like from home. So sometimes I cook like soups and stuff like that. So I feel comfortable in this environment that at the end like it's not, it's not the same as Guatemala, you know, because they don't have breakfast here.

Here it's more just an espresso and maybe a pastry.

Yeah, I miss the food. And well, answering your question.

I don't know, like, I think that you have to spend so many time, so many years in that specific country that you start mixing your cultures. Yeah, I can see it with my flatmate, for example, she's from Colombia. Yeah. And yesterday, she was putting like Portuguese music in the morning, like feeling Yeah, that's the 25 of April. Yeah. And I was like, I don't have that culture yet. You know, because for me, it was like a random day. It's not like for me. It's like, I remember I still love Portugal like as a tourist.

Yeah. That doesn't mean that I'm not gonna get there. But but it's still like early days.

You know, it's not the love isn't like the love people have for their hometowns. Or for Yeah, it is a different way to spend a lot of time somewhere. But like, because I've been there so many times, certain places there. And I have these memories that are really strong in a bunch of them. That's the thing I think creating a lot of memories in a place I think about makes you have like this identity I think or feeling part of it, or maybe it not that you are a part of it but that it is a part of you. Yeah. But by the normal I have friends that they have it because they spent here like 10 or 12 years or have partners from Portugal. That's a big thing too. I think I mean, especially if it's a partner, because especially if you're living together, that's a whole

different thing. Your families, you're having those more traditional experiences as well. Yeah. So yeah, so basically, it's like that, like maybe when you're moving too fast, as a nomad, actually, is difficult.

Yeah. You need time.

Mm hmm. Or have some kind of relationship with these people, like directly, like, and sometimes it's hard to do. Well, here, I think it's hard to do. Because they are very, like, very close. Like they don't like to speak with other people that aren't Portuguese. But with Brazilians it's not like that, they will invite you to dance to their parties.

But do you think that it's like, it's more that you have like this Latin American culture too?

Like, yeah, exactly. So I, I really feel like, for example, I don't remember that back in Guatemala, I was so into cumbias or Latinas. But right now that actually, I like, I'm away. Like for me, here is like, I'm looking for this Latin American culture here. I like being around the Latin American community here. Like, yeah. I don't know if it's like a nostalgic thing or are you looking for what is like comfortable, the environment comfortable. So usually I'm looking for Latin parties or stuff like that.

Yes. I also feel I connected more with my Latina roots here than I did in Miami.

It was, I was like, yeah, but it was not something I regularly sought out. You know?

Yeah it just happened.

Exactly. Well.

Ok well thank you for your time.

Participant B – Interview C

Interviewer: Paloma Schafer

Date: 18/06/2024

But first, how are you? How is Santosh? How have you been enjoying your month?

Oh my god, yeah.

And your trip? With your parents?

A lot of things, like... Yeah, I came... Like, the trip was amazing with them. Yeah. I was exhausted, you know, because you need to be... The guide tour... My mom is Celiac. Yeah. And... In Portugal. Yeah. So, it was challenging, I think. But it was okay, like, she was taking pills and stuff like that, so we could, like, eat everywhere. But yeah, it was very nice. Actually, I was thinking that... Oh no, it's gonna be... Not horrible, but you know, like, when you have your dad and your mom, like... But no, actually, it was very sweet to have them here.

And where in... You just went around Portugal, right?

No, no, no. I met them in Madrid. We stayed there for a couple of days, then we went to Valencia, and then to Barcelona, and then Paris. Porto.

Is it your first time in Porto, or you've been to Porto?

No, I've been so many times, yeah.

Their first time in Porto?

Yeah. For them, yeah. For them, everything was new, and they loved it, but they were like, oh, we understand now why it's Portugal. And I was like, yeah. It's so beautiful.

They were like, the most beautiful city, I think, is Lisbon. Yeah, yeah. I think Lisbon is the most beautiful city in Portugal. It's colorful, it's small, but it's, like, big. But it's small. Is it small? But it's a city still. They were like, no, don't go back to Guatemala.

Yeah, my parents are the same. They're like, don't. You don't gotta come back.

So, yeah. And Santos, like, I party a lot. I'm sick, actually. I got sick. I got sick. Because it was 1 a.m. in the morning. It was raining a bit. And I was like, why am I sick? I thought it was from smoking cigarettes. And I don't really smoke. I don't sometimes smoke. You know what? No, no. I was thinking that maybe COVID was around. Because... But I got sick right away. Like, the next day I was like... And that's why I thought, oh, I just smoked cigarettes. Like, that's my throat. But then the next day it was worse, and I had a headache. Then I got better, then I went out again. I spent, like, two days... That is weird. I spent two days with a headache. And I was like... I was fine, but I still had a little bit of a throat. But I was, like, a little tired sometimes. But I was like, oh, I'm just not going to drink But I was fine. Maybe... And it was a little something. I never get sick.

But was it your first Santos?

No, my second. My second. It was fun. Last year was also so much fun. But I think it was more fun this year. Yeah. I think because... I have more friends than last year. Everytime I'm like, I want to sit and have a real Portuguese moment. It never happens. Well, since I don't have Portuguese friends.

Yeah. Me neither.

But I'm surprised, you know, that there's a lot of, I don't know if the people is like, or maybe the young people, they are like, too close. Like, they don't want to come so close. Uh-huh. I think because they have their friends that they've had forever. They're like, we don't need other friends. Like, we just, we're our group. They're not, it's like, I feel like internationals who are always looking for more friends. Exactly. Because they're like, people are like leaving and coming and going.

Yeah, I was speaking with my sister, like, and she was like, oh, but you speak with your friends Portuguese. And I was like, no dude, like, I speak English most of the time. English or Spanish.

Spanish, yeah because it's only like other Latinos. Because there's a lot of the Latin American community here.

Yes, do you find yourself in the Latin American community much?

Sometimes, yeah, but I would say my friends are more international not just Latin American. Which I glad it's like that.

Is there a trip you've had that was very impactful or memorable?

Turkey. I love Turkey. Like, I need to go back to explore more the North, because I was in the South. But it's amazing. Like, it's full of culture. For me, the civilization starts there.

How do you feel when traveling alone, I know you said you went to Malaysia alone? Did you feel safe?

No. I was about to talk about it. Unfortunately, even if the people want to defend so much like the Muslim countries, the guys don't like you, you know? Yeah. They treat you like... Like a whore. No. I felt a bit insecure, yeah, in Malaysia. And I was traveling alone.

What was your first time like traveling alone?

Yeah. It was from New York.

How was that?

It was because of work. But I decided to... Well, the work was like the design week in New York. And so I decided to... I like to flew like one week before that. And I was like completely alone there. I did like everything alone. Like it was okay. But I think that I was thinking like maybe traveling alone is not good. But now I appreciate it a lot. Yeah.

What's been your favorite solo travel like spot so far?

My favorite solo... Portugal. Yeah. Portugal is a great place to travel. There's also so many international people that you'll make friends. I think that it was good because I came here alone and the hostel was very, very friendly. And yeah, I made so much friends there. So it was like good. But Portugal is my number one.

Do you prefer to stay in hostels over hotels or Airbnbs?

Well... I think that if I'm traveling with people like hotels or Airbnbs are okay. But if I'm traveling solo, I prefer hostels because there's an opportunity to make friends. About sleeping again with people in a room, I don't know. Because I feel like, oh my God, I'm getting old and sometimes you just want to sleep and not party and stuff like that. Also, sometimes you don't always know. I've had some hostels where everyone's been pretty quiet. It doesn't seem like people are going out partying much there. I had others that it seemed like everyone was partying and I was like, I would not know which one to pick. Well, when I came to Portugal, I just... It wasn't a hostel, but it was like a party. But yeah. I don't know.

What do you think is like the coolest travel experience that you've done in you life so far?

Well, I think that being in the... in the Jordan desert with the Bedouins and spend a few nights there with them. It was like the coolest thing, yeah. Because we did a trip of... Well, mostly like all the... all the years, like I planned a trip, like close, you know, like Europe is okay, and then I planned like I want to go to Japan or something. And so, I did a trip with one of my best friends and we went to Turkey, Israel. And Jordan. We saw Petra, it's so beautiful, so beautiful and Jordan in general is very nice. And so, we booked, like we went to this place, Petra, we spent like two days there and then the other two days we spent in the desert of Wadi Rum. So you can go there and stay with the Bedouins and they cook for you under the ground. And the sunset, like, the best sunset I had, it was there.

Well, the Uyuni Salar, it was amazing too, yeah. Uyuni Salar in Bolivia there is a desert made of salt. You have to go only to the Salar to see the mirror of the world. Or you go in another season and you can explore more because otherwise it's raining a lot. But yeah, I think Uyuni Salar, Bolivia in general, is amazing and Jordan.

I think that when you know other cultures, that's like open your eyes. Yeah. And then you travel and your eyes are more open. And you want it more. That's true. I do think it is like, if

you haven't done it, it's easier. I mean, there's some people who have it and they really want to and they have to push, but I think it's really easy to be comfortable not doing it if you haven't been doing it.

Before, were you ever worried about moving, how were you feeling?

I'm very confident. But I have to say that since I am a God believer, I don't feel fear. Because I'm like... I'm not talking about religion. I'm talking like, hey, I'm alone here. Can you give me some friends? Or stuff like that. I trust my life 100%. And I feel like He's taking care of me. He's taking care of me. I go with the flow. What was happening. I never think that... Even if I suffer or something, I feel like... It needs to happen to become who I am.

That's a really good perspective.

Exactly. I don't see anything without purpose. For example, meeting people or stuff like that. It's like... I go like blindness and then let's go. Take me wherever you want. It'll work out either way. So basically, I don't put much effort on me. Like, I need to do this and that. Of course, if I want to have friends, I need to go out and stuff like that. But I'm not worried for anything at all. And it's necessary that bad things happen too to grow, you know? In order to grow and change your heart to becoming a good and better person. So, no. Basically, I'm not afraid.

How did you grow into being able to be confident in your decision and life?

I think in life you have two options. The option of being grateful and the option of complaining about everything and have a miserable life. And the other one is being grateful for everything. Even the bad things. So, that will change your perspective of life. And knowing that your time is limited here. So... Yeah, basically. So, answering your question? No, I'm not afraid. I'm not afraid.

Was there any role models or influences in your life that kind of instilled that for you and gave you that belief system? Or did it just come naturally for you?

I think that everyone, you know? Like, everyone teaches me a lot of things. A role model? Yeah. Like, I don't know. Maybe my dad. My dad, yeah. He's a good guy.

What's been your proudest accomplishment in your life so far? What has made you the most proud of yourself?

The most proud... Like, I really like meeting people and help them. Not help them, because that sounds like bad. Like, not help them, but share the life. Like, connect. Like, connect with others and see what happens with their lives. Love them. That's cool. I think... Like, a personal achievement. Like, I'm an architect. Like, I know I'm an architect. I'm into design.

I do business and stuff like that. But that doesn't make me feel proud. That's not, yeah. Not at all. I like the greater life. Like, the connections that I've made. I feel like I accomplished so much from that.

Thank you. Do you feel like making these connections comes easy to you?

Yes. It's because I have a very clear mind. And not everyone knows. Like, I know who I am. I know why I'm here. I know my purpose. I'm not lost. I think that makes it easy for me to be myself.

So... But it's interesting what you're doing. Yeah. Yeah. Because obviously, there's a lot of people like, like working in their own lives. I feel like, people have so much like, history of themselves.

No, starting to remember now everything, all my dreams, because you're asking me. Yeah, that's what's like cool about it. I feel like, no one, it's easy to forget if no one asks about it or it doesn't get like brought up in conversation naturally. Usually what I try to do is when I'm in a place, like I take a moment to think that what I'm seeing right now is gonna be gone, like, I'm right here, like, yeah, and that stays on my mind, like that moment, but then, I go back.

But you know like it's not for everyone. No it's not. Because I have a friend and he's half Mexican and half Guatemalan and he was like oh I enjoy so much your trips like seeing your stories and blah blah blah but I can't do that. Like every time I want to travel is go to Mexico and that's it like yeah and I was like yeah not all the people have like this desire to explore the world.

What are some of the challenges you face in your life right now as a digital nomad?

As a digital nomad, I don't really think I have challenges, I would say the time zone and you know, I miss my family, yeah.

Do you feel that you have a good balance between work and life.

Amazing balance. I wouldn't call it balance anymore. I spend a little bit of time doing the Airbnbs everyday and then the rest of the day is mine. I love that. Other projects I do, I enjoy it, but they usually require a few weeks or months, so yeah I would say it great.

When doing these projects or even doing tasks for the Airbnbs do you have a preferred space to work?

For Airbnb no. Sometimes I just do things from my bed in the morning because most of the time I just am responding to messages from my phone. And for architecture projects, I am sometimes at home but since I don't do them so often I also like to go to cafes. It's a good way to go to new places alone and you have something to do.

How would you describe your evolution into digital nomadism?

It doesn't happen overnight, I moved here when I was 37. I have worked very long and it took years to get here. Everything I was doing in my life was a step to get here. Working in architecture and interior design, then having that boyfriend who showed me how to rent Airbnbs and cleaning the Airbnb myself. Now I think and it wasn't so long ago but it feels like a long time. And now I'm here. I get to live in Portugal and travel.

And which visa did you apply for coming to Portugal?

I'm on a digital nomad visa.

What were the requirements for that?

There were like, a few things I needed to make sure I had before applying. I had to have a certain amount of money in the bank and show some taxes. I had to show a contract for my apartment.

Did you do this from Guatamala or here?

Here, yeah, it was all once I got here.

Did you have any troubles with it.

It was hard to get an appointment. I feel like the instructions also were not clear, I wasn't really sure what was going to happen because I couldn't find that much information about the process anywhere. But, well, here I am.

Participant C – Interview 1

Interviewer: Paloma Schafer

Date: 30/04/2024

PS: It's like kind of a get to know you and I know you already but like they don't know me, you know? So, just tell me a little just about when you got to Lisbon, like how long you've been here and what brought you here.

R: I came here for, I came to Portugal four years ago to Lisbon too, two and a half. I like the, I like the, I came for the vibe, it's like most of the people here like the overall environment, the people, like everything is so nice, warm, chill, overall comfort and a lot of places to see, a lot of things to do.

And you were in Portugal, where were you before Lisbon?

Aveiro.

Oh, cool, what brought you there?

I know it sounds like it's random but I've been to several parts of Portugal, at that point I felt the most like cozy, comfortable there when I was visiting it, like I was, I visited it when I was a student in Spain and I was an exchange semester there and we were traveling to Portugal and like visited Aveiro among others and the local students showed us around and like and it felt like very, like a place where you can very easily feel like home. Yeah.

And I mean it was really nice in the beginning but then COVID made it much worse. Yeah, it was a bit boring. Yeah, still, for a while it was really nice.

What made you decide to leave Aveiro for Lisbon?

It got boring and I was looking for somewhere with more life and so I moved to Lisbon.

Before Portugal where were you living?

So I'm from Belarus but I left Belarus to study in Poland and I was in exchange semesters in, twice in Spain, once in France. Yeah, I mean I worked in the U.S. in the summer camp for two months and now it's not, if it's living abroad. But yeah I liked Spain a lot and the weather there. I took a lot of trips to Portugal while I was studying there and I really liked it.

Yeah, that's cool. And when you got to Portugal, what were you doing for work then?

I was freelancing like still as I do now but additionally I have like a stable job but then I just did, had freelance clients in marketing, like SEO, Google Ads, like content writing.

How long have you been freelancing for?

10 years.

How did you get into like freelance and digital marketing?

Like first, like just freelance, like first I started when I was like 16 and like firstly I was looking for a summer job and like McDonald's was looking for someone for three months so I started doing like translations online. Yeah, and yeah, I mean I already knew like I mean Belarusian, Russian and English, a bit of Polish like more or less and so I could do translations between all of them. Like on freelance they don't require that much of like education and job experience so like I could do some work from like already then. And then I got more into digital marketing when I started my own projects in like online and created a website about traveling to Belarus. And yeah, to grow it I needed different digital marketing skills and then I started doing it for other clients as well. And yeah, then I was like 18 I think, 18 or 19.

Did you ever like think of it in a way of like oh I want to be able to work remote so I can be wherever I want to and be a digital nomad or did it just fall into place that way?

I wasn't trying to be a digital nomad specifically but I don't know like I was still studying to have like something maybe more stable or have a business or but I mean yeah I enjoyed it like after a while it could it wasn't just like a small gig, small like orders, like separate orders like with SEO it was more like months and months of work so it became like some kind of stable income that I can rely on.

Yeah, I mean I enjoyed it. I didn't, I was yeah I was just the only time like when I was started looking for a stable job like it's when I came to Lisbon, like that's why I came to Lisbon actually. It was yeah just to have some a bit more stability of like income.

And what's your stable job?

It's in Google Ads,

And now you work from home too?

Yeah, mostly from home, but because the company has an office in Lisbon I am able to go in whenever I want. I think tomorrow I'll go to the office but I don't have to.

Okay, so that's nice you have a hybrid and are you able to work outside of Portugal or the E.U. with that job?

No, not really outside Europe but I do anyways. They don't actually care as long as the work is done and you can work out the timezones but I think legally I'm not allowed to work outside Europe.

Are there any other places you would want to be able to like to be able to move to if you could work outside the E.U.?

For now I'm staying here like and I enjoy it like before I was more thinking of changing the place more often but yeah I don't know for now I feel like home here and like I'm already leaving some roots here in this place so yeah. So before I was thinking like oh maybe I'll be like traveling around more and then it's kind of like you get here and you're comfortable.

That's kind of I feel like a lot of people are like those people I talk to are like they're like I didn't know how long I was going to be here but then I picked it so I stayed.

Yeah, true. And so I already know that you go to digital nomad meetups, but is that like a big part of like how you made friends and made the connections here?

I mean in the beginning the like meetups were like my the first people I met here were through meetups so like I had some like good friends some good connections in the beginning from meetups but then like also it was still like kind of the end of COVID so it was like way fewer things going on so it was easier to find it in the app and yeah you just go you meet people you find something that interests you like whatever if it's like just if it's for like a job or something where you just go go drink with with other people that like also work like you.

Okay, so your whole time in Lisbon, you've worked for this company?

Yeah, even a bit longer like already two months two or three months when I was still in Aveiro I was already in the company.

And you like working for them?

Yeah, I mean before I was enjoying it more and now they started being more strict and more controlling about many things so it's not as enjoyable anymore.

What kind of like controls do they put on like your that affect your day-to-day?

I mean now they're like instead of like focusing on the productivity so that like you do like I don't know you bring income for their clients or like you like you did like I don't know you did

a lot of something useful or you did it very fast very at a good like level and you brought good results instead of that they focus on like usability so how many hours you actually worked on some particular case so you just have to show this like numbers that like hours that mean nothing and also like the team lead also like pushes you all the time like so what is it how's your case going how's it.. so yeah it's definitely more like micromanaging.

Has that been like a recent shift or?

Yeah very recent, yeah I don't know um I don't know who pushes it more yeah maybe some someone higher but yeah there are so many like like levels so I don't know where exactly it comes from also they work for like we work with these guys and so like like probably it comes from them as well so I don't know what part comes from where. (sighs)

You do both freelance work and then you also work as an employee as well, what are some of like the things that you think you really enjoy over being able to do freelance work as opposed to that and what are some of the things that you like more and being an employee?

I mean overall that like yeah with with an employee yeah you're not so responsible for the final result especially in a big company there are so many steps between between you and the client so that like you if you do something wrong or like also if you do something well like it's not really reflected in what's like the final result. There are so many people in between you so like this like effect it just spreads among all the people on the way but yeah also like you're not responsible you don't have to talk to the clients directly you don't you don't have to yeah like you it's more like higher leadership or like those who talk to the client they're more responsible. That's it. It's like you don't get the recognition but you also don't get the fault yeah.

For freelancing, I mean the freedom of like yeah deciding when where where you work like with many of my clients who just just like agreed that I do like this amount of work or like this list of things during the month and I don't have to like all the time talk to them, don't text them, just send them a report in the end of the month and like plans for the next month and that's it. So that's more like project-based and just like completing tasks or whatever tasks

Do you like that style of work more and like I just got to get this project done and then once it's done like good and I just let them know it's done move on or do you like having a shift, a start time and stop time.

I don't think about it. (pause) No, I prefer like project-based because like then I'm not.. I'm more motivated in doing it like better and faster rather than just like wasting hours. Yeah, if I'm doing something for someone that I'm not really motivated in doing and I'm just I just have to I'm looking at the time when it finishes. Right now I'm like an agent so it's like the kind of lowest roles I'm not like managing anyone and I'm not motivated in getting high positions although I was like suggested to get one

Yeah, one of the like, another benefit of like having employees, like having an office, having a space, having people to meet but yeah with freelance you're just like on your own. If you're having like a team, it's probably remote you maybe you see them like on through on a camera once a week or once a month not more than that

What do.. what do you do, like what's your day-to-day like with them?

Um, like I get cases for the clients so they have like huge like ads accounts and yeah they have like video ads search ads like different types and I like they want to improve one certain part of this account and then like they tell me okay do this. Then we do them like for different clients I was more doing the account restructure which is like the biggest the biggest task when you read like redo the whole account and it takes more time but it's more it's more demanding but also a little bit more creative not just like copy pasting different like data values for the like presentations and yeah.

Is this role your primary source of income or is your freelance work?

It's pretty even, they are pretty equal in the end.

Are you able to do freelance work while you work for the company if you have like two computers?

Like before it was easier to do at the same time like you just complete the tasks that you need to do in the main job then like for example you have like the whole day or two days for this like the big case I like sometimes I do it in two hours and like I don't need to like if I deliver it in two hours I'll just get a new task and I wouldn't get any like bonus for doing it quicker, you know for doing more so I prefer like yeah I did this like what I was required to do and then I can do my own like freelance clients or whatever else I want. Yeah, if I had to be in an office I don't think I'd be able to do that.

That's nice so you were able to kind of still squeeze it into your regular work day.

Yeah, if not I can do it on weekends

Okay so tell me about the music organization that you have started, is this a business project?

I mean it could be potentially a business like for now it's more, it more like just breaking even like the the last party was like I think a success but still like I had like 500 earu loss on it but although like it was doing well so yeah like it now it's for now it's like I'm more investing time and money into it so there's the growth and then like yeah I want to like start making money on it at some point but also I don't want to lose this vibe by commercializing it. Right now part of the vibe is that it is underground music events and the community around that is strong. Everything is donation based besides like when we sell food and drinks there. I could start charging admission but with locations being abandoned buildings or like outside I'm not sure how I would manage it. I did get like unofficially sponsored by Club Mate. That was cool. They sent a bunch of free Club Mate that we used for an event.

Besides digital marketing and the music organization are there any other like projects that you're working on in addition to those?

We also do like a startup with the like means kind of my relatives started with plus some other people like in Germany and Poland. It's uh it's like a platform like a delivery platform such

like software that like connects uh couriers or like drivers or courier companies with uh with like different supermarkets or like shops online offline. Um, so like like shipping yeah like a small size... like not not completely Uber but like more B2B. Like there's a store maybe like they sell online or it's a supermarket that they need and they don't have any like drivers and then can connect to the platform and they can access these drivers there

And is this going to be based in Portugal or in Germany and Poland?

No it's now it's in uh Germany in Poland uh and like it's kind of two different companies so like I've been helping the one in Germany from the beginning but like I'm the co-founder in Poland and uh yeah like we are planning to do also in uh in like Austria Switzerland and also in Portugal but like for now no like no time not enough time for that so we need we need investors there at first and then increase it there and then move to new markets cool and

How do you manage your time when you have multiple different projects going on and different things that are going to be consuming and require your attention like how do you keep track of everything that you got to be doing?

Yeah I mean putting priorities like I don't know like now there's really a lot of stuff that I'm feeling like something that I should have done like two weeks ago or like a month ago and like really uh... Yeah sometimes it's complicated but yeah something is urgent so I do it first or something that is um yeah I don't know like when it's possible to like when I'm not behind the schedule then I see like okay I have this project so for this I need to do this by that time and like I kind of yeah put priorities estimate the amount of time I need for that try to like break into the smaller pieces try to delegate whatever is possible although it's like hard also sometimes.

Do you like do you just have like do you use any like software are you just relying on like a Gmail calendar a paper calendar like or do you have any like software or apps anything that you're using to kind of help you in your businesses or just in your general like daily life to kind of keep you organized.

Um for like I had like um from like the Polish from the Polish government we had three interns there was like a program for interns so they were paying paying the salary for the interns like actually from the EU money but it's organized by the Polish government and co-organized courses with Google so like a lot of different so for three months we had three uh interns in Poland and they were helping me with different clients like with our project in

Poland and also with other clients and uh yeah like for to manage them I used monday.com like to manage the task so Monday yeah Monday. Um, yeah I mean it helped like I put the list of tasks, like name of the client, how much time required for that. So like they change the status they put the output link with the like ready work and, and yeah like that is what we use but then one of them like, like, I still keep hiring but, like just for one person it doesn't make sense anymore. Also now she's more independent so she does like great tasks for her for herself so now she just sends me a list of what she's done via email like at the end of the month that's great. That's adding like one less role that I have to take on into like making sure I'm managing okay.

Cool now within this music organization, is this just something you've done in Lisbon?

Yeah, I mean uh yeah for now it's local yeah. It would be nice to do make an international to like yeah to do events in different places but yeah I would have still Lisbon as a base um yeah I feel like here is that in this like area there's like way less competition like I can imagine like in in any small town in in Germany there would be so with so much higher level of competition that everything is already like the market is saturated you know like there's it's hard to bring something new there but here it feels like uh it's really on the rise like the underground techno stage. It just appeared like three years ago kind of so and a lot of like free parties they're like very at the like low level of organization they're just like very simple. They're very on the budget and uh yeah it's easy to be better to create something more interesting something more valuable you know. Like I'm trying to choose the right like the right DJs the right places to promote to to have the like this community that is like similar values not just like any people not just to grow not just the party. Yeah, no, because they would, like the community, you could end up having a bunch of people but if the people suck and you're like well this sucks, you know but, you can have a party with like 10 people and they're all amazing people. You could have so much fun.

I know I know what it is but for the interview do you mind describing it?

It is a local music organization, yeah. We organized techno music parties pretty much wherever we find a space that we won't bother anyone, and we won't be bothered. It's not 'legal' technically because of permits but that's the vibe. That is why people like it and why we can make it free.

And now I know you have a whole team of people making this happen with you, how do keep that organized with everyone and how do you make sure these events run successfully

Yeah i mean uh like I'm the main organizer I just like look for someone who can help and be like each party separately so each event uh yeah like who is available who will be able to help at like different things different points. Like before I was doing more on my own like this this time like I also did more of delegation, so like these people do that, like here's like the driver, "you're the driver, do that", "you're gonna do that". Somebody gets like I don't know free drinks, somebody gets like money for their time, and yeah like somehow this works.

How do you feel about like the community that you have in Lisbon like and the people that you've met? How is it different from the community you had other places?

Yeah, yeah for sure they're different yeah like I mean Belarus is not that international like all my friends were from Belarus and yeah like maybe some like all of us have like a bit of roots from that's like not it's not so diverse. In Poland as well like it was more like I had Polish, Ukrainian friends. Yeah like I mean I was hanging out with Erasmus people but they're they're like temporary people, you know. They're there for like three, four months and then they leave and it's.. Yeah also it's also not the same type of people as I meet here, um yeah. I feel like the type of people who go like to move to Lisbon or Portugal are a bit different, that they like they don't come for money they don't come for I don't know job opportunities they just come for like the feeling this like okay good vibes.

Yeah I know no it's it's so like kind of vague but it's like what everybody they come because they just like feel it here yeah.

How would you describe your experience in making connections and establishing your community in Lisbon?

Yeah I mean it can be hard to. I mean here there are a lot of opportunities to like to find to meet people. Everybody's more open to new connections but if you're like more introverted it can be harder and like if you don't know a lot of people are also here temporary even if they're not like students and it's it can be like every many people who move here they're very yeah like the people are very mobile. So like maybe you meet some really good friends and then

they leave in three months they just decide to travel around South America for for a year. It's really common yeah, (*laughs*) and that's like, I feel like we're about to be on the verge of like another shift and like everyone, people leaving. I think every year right around summertime there's like the shift and like oh half your friends are gone all of a sudden.

Yeah yeah not even just summer like throughout the year like yeah. In our like monte club (referring to a group of friend that frequent miradouro de Monte Aguda) there's friends group like half of the like we had like 30 people there and half of them are not in Lisbon you know and it appeared even like less than a year ago. It's sad but they kind of have to get yeah a lot of change and yeah you have to try find Portuguese which is hard.

Have you had how have you made any Portuguese friends here?

Yeah yeah.

How do you make Portuguese friends because I don't I'm struggling I don't know I can't find them?

Yeah I mean like those Portuguese that I know they're more also kind of international like they're more open to like hanging out with others. A lot of Portuguese they hang out with other Portuguese that they know since like a kindergarten or school like um so yeah like it's harder to get into this uh friend zone also if you don't speak much Portuguese and then like everybody else is Portuguese.

Did you learn portuguese yeah like fluently?

Yeah I mean speak well yeah that's good

How long did it take you to learn Portuguese?

Um like I don't know half a year to a year in the beginning I had some like courses a little bit of like a like a tutor for a bit and um yeah. Also, Aveiro is a smaller town yeah although many people knew they could speak English but the,y because, like most people around, are like Portuguese Brazilians or Venezuelans. So like it was either Portuguese or Spanish most of the time. So like it was harder for them to just adapt for me so like I was in the beginning without speaking much Portuguese I had to like concentrate a lot to listen to understand what they say to like participate in conversations and was more forced to do that.

How important do you think like learning the language here how much of a role you think that plays in someone's experience um when they're getting here.

Just like living here as technically as like a as an expat or an outsider uh specifically in Portugal or Lisbon?

I would say like in Lisbon

Because in Lisbon you don't really have to learn Portuguese but I think it does yeah yeah exactly it's a big difference like if you go to like even a big city in Spain it would be very different without speaking Spanish there you would never feel comfortable and local you know here you can speak English and you still feel local yeah and uh yeah like i have friends who who can maybe order a beer in Portuguese after two years living here and they feel fine um yeah I mean I think with knowing Portuguese i feel more local more like part of part of here you know like even not being a citizen I still feel like almost like part of the community of the Portuguese of the Lisbon and Portuguese community yeah also like if i go to like a bit smaller place like in Almada or like somewhere else then like yeah I can I can feel like I'm Portuguese I can have at least a small conversation with them yeah I think it's like maybe for me it's important maybe not it's not that necessary for everyone that's good

So what brings you to Almada today do you hang out here a lot?

Well I'm buying a house here, as like an investment.

Yeah, wow, how is that going? Do you qualify for that like program can you tell me about it?

And in the new program, at least for the locals, like, at least for young people until the age of 30, even there's no need for the first down payment. Like, there's, like, the, I don't know, the central bank or, like, the government, I'm not sure exactly, like, kind of takes care of this, that, like, they secure it for the banks so that banks don't risk it. So, like, young people can get an apartment and just pay the mortgage, like, monthly mortgage rate.

That's really cool.

It's really nice. Yeah, it will change a lot. And also, if people see that, they're also going to decide, oh, yeah, like, I can pay a room in Lisbon or I can pay a whole, like, apartment with four rooms on the other side of the river. So, yeah, it's going to change things. Yeah, and I think because the prices in Lisbon are really, are getting to that point that, and Lisbon's great. Like, I get it. Like, from being here, I understand, like, why sometimes it is, like, worth it to pay the price there. The best part of Almada is that it's chill, and there's not, like, it's not full of tourists. It's not full of, like, it's not full of anyone.

But, like, after a while, more people will be using it. And, like, then it will also solve the, like, the rental crisis. That, like, people will be more likely to move here. And then more people will commute from, like, the other side of the river. And then you need more of the ferry. Yeah. Good transportation can help with it. Yeah, I think so, too. I think also, like, this tram. Because this tram is, like, good in terms of, like, it's pretty reliable. Yeah, but overall, like, trams, like, they're, like, the best overall transportation, like, for the city. I really love this. I really love this tram.

Yeah, this is nice. It's good they have it here. It's funny they call it, like, metro.

Yeah, they call it metro. And I call it tram because to me it's a tram, but they call it a metro. It's, like, there is, like, above the ground metro. Above the ground metro, yeah.

Also Almada, I think as it grows, it's going to become a much more fun place. Right now, that's what it's lacking. I think Caparica is fun. I think if you're here in Cacilhas, you can have some fun. But little by little, like, I think this area is going to change. Overall, like for me, it's like such a, I don't know, how do you call it? Strategic location. Because it's like, it's so many places are so near and just like in different ways. Like the rave locations, they're like 7-minute drive. Like the spot where it was like the last time, it's like 7-minute drive from my home. It's crazy how close, I feel like sometimes I'm like, just a general area of like Amala, Setubal. Like by car, everything's, like on a map, it does not look like it's that small. But like, it's all like really close if you're driving. Once you're taking public transportation, it becomes twice as long for sure. But like driving, like it's really not, things aren't so far. Because there are no traffic jams. And these are highways. And like the roads are more straight. Like in Lisbon, it's so weird. Like the city is way older. And here's like maximum 100 years old.

How are you finding the prices here, for buying a home?

I mean, it used to be comparable, like Lisbon and Minsk, it used to be like... Yeah, not a very big difference, maybe 15 years ago. But now it's like 6 times higher in Lisbon than Minsk. I would say Minsk is probably... I mean not many internationals are moving to Minsk only from Belarus, yeah. I mean, from more Eastern countries to the Passio Union countries. But not like here, people come with more purchasing power here, you know?

Yeah, for sure.

There, people sell more and the overall situation is so unstable that it's not... I mean, it's reflected in the price that you don't know what's going to happen the next year. It's not a place to invest. The police comes into your house and takes it away, you know?

And so do you plan to live in it or more rented out?

More rented out, but for the summer at least I'm staying there. Yeah, it's like an 8-minute drive to Caparica. So when you're the actual shore of a... I don't even know how much an Uber is. Our Uber, it was like 10 euros. It's not bad if we were a group though. I'm excited for the summer.

Yeah that's nice, you like to go to the beach?

Yeah I used to go surfing but I haven't been in a while so maybe I will start again.

That's cool that you're buying a place, was it easy?

Not easy because it's in Portugal but the real estate agent, she takes care of everything. Made sure I had my documents in order.

Okay thank you for your time.

Participant C – Interview 2

Interviewer: Paloma Schafer

Date: 10/06/2024

Hey how was you Santos?

It's alright.

Did you go to the parties? You like it?

Yeah. It's not my favorite, not my type of music. Some of the music was different, but it's usually like, you know, not the best music, it's just for the people. I think that Moraria has the best music out of all of them, because they do change it up. I mean, it's not always great, but they'd have to help with this. So it's mostly like the same 10 traditional songs that everybody knows, and they sing. Just a lot of people pass by, pass through, you know, in their streets. Have you participated in other years? Like, you go to Santos every year, right? Yeah, I've kind of been there last year, but not that much, I remember.

I don't know, like, it's alright. It's not so exciting, but it's just going on all month, and it's like most of the activities is in Santos, the whole month. And everyone's in a good vibe.

I like Carnival better.

Yeah? What do you usually do?

Maybe next year I'll go to the one in Brazil. I think we did something at the house, yeah. I think we were at the streets, also in Graça, walking around somewhere. Then we went to our house and we did this day and night party. Before 11pm was Latin music, and after 11pm it was techno. But yeah, I think also then the police came, as usual. And I think it was the last time when Mariana was like, no, this... I think that was the last, yeah. That was like the last month before everyone had to leave. I think there was like only one goodbye party after that, and that's it.

So besides Santos and Carnival do you like to go, have you gone to any other, kind of more cultural events while you've lived in Portugal?

Not sure. I mean, traditional festivities, yes, but not really... Like Semana Santa, I remember in Spain it's huge. I'm not sure how it is here. Everyone gets like the day off, they have this, like, capes. Yeah. They walk with fires and with the Virgin Mary statue through the streets. It's a bit weird, but, you know, interesting. I feel like there's not too many really weird things here. Like even the festivities.

Carnival here, it's not something that's so crazy. It's like, yeah, it's like a parade and there's parties. And then Santos, it's like, okay, there's a lot of parties, but they're just like normal. You know, like a show, beer, food, nothing too crazy. Yeah, I mean, I lived in Aveiro before, so like Lisbon, it's like only half of my time in Portugal. So I was like before more like in other parts and it's more traditional, there are like a lot of like local holidays.

Like in Coimbra, you know, Coimbra das Fitas. I mean, like student traditions are crazy here. Like it's a lot of them, especially first year students. Yeah, I mean, like some of them were telling about them. Like, for example, you have like one t-shirt that you have to wear the whole year. Like on top of your clothes. Yeah. And like they have to wear this like this cape, like long, you know, like coats. Like also all year. It doesn't matter what weather it is. Like on Coimbra das Fitas in May, like they still wear those. Yeah, that is not, I would not go. Yeah, they have like a godmother like in the university kind of. And like the godmother is just like a girl from like one year older. And then she puts like to baptize them, like the kids kind of. They have to put like the water from like from some river in the shoe of that person. And like pour in the head. Like let me tell them a lot of like this. Like each faculty has their own, like they compete with each other. They have like in terms of like the different dances and songs. And like they try to show off that they're better. Like it's like medics are the best. The university culture here, like for the Portuguese is so crazy to me.

When you went to Lisbon, were you kind of like at all surprised about how international it is? Or did you know, did you expect that? Or did you expect to be more Portuguese?

I guess, I mean, first times when I was visiting, I first didn't like it. It was like too kind of touristic and commercial already like, I don't know, six years ago or something like that. And like first, I didn't want to move to Lisbon because of that. But I was also like, when I was visiting, I was more visiting the touristic areas, not where I live now. So, yeah, I mean, I knew that it's international, but it became way more international in the last year. So I was kind of feeling how it's changing.

It's nice, I think I like it a lot. Sometimes it's good to feel more local, more like Portuguese. But here, you can be whoever from whatever country and still live your own life like you used to or like you want to. You may stick to your own community and speak your own language and learn Portuguese, which is like both disadvantage and advantage. And I feel like you can experience a little bit of a bunch of other cultures when you're here. Yeah, I feel like it's more difficult to do in other countries. Because even if you find... I feel like there's a lot of...

Do you feel like there's a lot of intermingling of like cultures, like everyone of all different places are coming together? Or within your groups of friends, it becomes more people from at least your region?

I think it depends on the... Maybe not so much on where they're from, but like type of people, kind of. Like some that will mix up the expat community with people who came here for half a year, maybe to do some internship, maybe stay longer, maybe go to another country.

Like they're usually very international, they know languages, they are like an international group. They might have parents from different parts of the world and so on. So they're more used to being international, so it's all mixed up with friends from very different countries.

But yeah, there are also some communities that stick to each other. They might know English and Portuguese, but they still stay in their own community and don't integrate that much with the rest. I feel like I know a lot of Spanish groups, Italian groups, German groups. And then individuals from those kind of will wander off. But those groups are strong, too. They're really obvious. Yeah, like many, like Ukrainians, Brazilians, Nepalese, Indians, Chinese. I like the international vibe, but I did expect it to be more Portuguese. But then when I'm in Almada, I'm like, okay, yeah, this is it.

Do you feel the Portuguese are closed off at all to international people?

It also depends on the type. There are some that have their own group of friends, and it's hard. They're not looking to expand it, or get to know new people. Some Portuguese people I know, they're international, and maybe they lived abroad. They don't have such a big group of local Portuguese friends, so they meet others. I guess it also depends if you're from Lisbon, or outside of Lisbon. Because if you're from outside of Lisbon, you're probably also just looking for friends, too. If you're from Lisbon, it's the people you were raised with for years.

Any hidden gems that you think you have, or that you've found over your time here? Where you would want to go to relax, or to chill?

I mean, yeah, but I feel like it's very relative, the hidden gem. How hidden, you know? Some people found it, and probably I found it out from my group of friends that also know it, that knew from other people, so probably it's not so hidden. I mean, there are less touristic places, I would say, less mainstream.

Which ones do you like the most? Or that you frequent?

I mean, for example, from Miradouros, from viewpoints, Monte Agudo is the one that you almost never see tourists there. It's always people who live there, at least for a while, and then they know it. Just in the Intendente Anjos area, there are a lot of cafes that are not as touristic, more underground, more local vibe. I mean, local expat vibe.

Local expat vibe, that's true.

But yeah, I think in the Intendente Anjos, because there's not much touristy things to do over there, it's not like you're down in Cais, or Santos, or Alfama, where it's like a touristy area, so it's nice to be able to go places and be like, oh, okay, cool, this is more chill. I mean, still, the whole block where we live, it's going to be a hotel at some point.

And everywhere they put in more hotels, it's going to be very touristic, so if it's closer to their hotel, they're more likely to go to these places. Yeah, to these places. And that's what I was thinking too, it's going to change.

I know, you know those little restaurants behind the... There's a hotel right there already in the corner, but there's some nice little restaurants there, and I remember they opened up a new one, like a pizza place while we were living there, and I was like, this place looks so fancy, and it feels like it didn't fit in with the vibe of the rest of the street. It seems out of place. But it's just changing.

Some places are pretty fancy and upscale.

What is this cafe? I've never been, but I've seen it when I've walked by, and I'm like, oh, this is nice, you get a view of the park, it's quiet, but it still feels like there's life around.

Yeah I've never been.

How do you like your new place, by the way? It's nice.

I'm too lazy to... It's alright, it's nice. It's not too much to do there. Also, to go here, it doesn't make sense. I went to Graça every day this week. Anyway, I go to the other side. I do go pretty often, yeah. I feel like I have to, though. If I'm in Almada for more than one day, not doing anything, I'm just like, oh, I've got to do something. I need a little bit more life around me sometimes.

With work and everything, how many hours do you typically work in a day or in a week? I think not that many productive hours. I have a lot of different small tasks and different things. Sometimes I do a lot in a short time, but I don't know, maybe 15 productive hours a week.

Fifty? Fifteen. Fifteen? Yeah. That's not a lot.

Yeah. But that's nice. And you feel like your work-life balance is chill, it's good?

Yeah, I don't know. I don't find enough fun things for the life balance. I have enough time, but I don't have enough hobbies for the free time.

In your free time, would you rather just do more work or find something to do, or do you just more chill?

No, I always can find more work to do, more things to do. I would rather rest, switch to some other activities, so then I feel more motivated to get back to work.

What kind of activities have you found yourself gravitating towards?

Now, most of all, just socializing with people and drinking. I would say socializing is the best one. Sports is good, but I used to padel, but now I haven't played for a few months. I want to go back to surfing, but I also need to plan a bit more. It's not so easy. You have to plan, you need to know when the days are good, and it's a bit of a hassle to get to the beach. It's more of a list of hours, committing to doing that activity. Often it's just for the whole day, you decide what day you can go.

That's fun. Did you pick up surfing at all when you were in Portugal only, or did you ever do that before?

Most of Portugal, but I surfed a bit in Spain. When I was in Erasmus in Vigo, I went almost every week. It's a skill that you lose after a while, so when I took a break, I had to relearn again. I feel like if I go, I haven't surfed in months, maybe almost a year. I think if I went, I would be very humbled at how bad I am right now. But I really want to go.

I left my surfboard at the house when I moved out. It was broken, so it's okay. I just left it.

I have my bike in the number 4. You? And an office chair in the old apartment.

Did you bike around Lisbon at all?

Yeah, along the river mostly. Sometimes I go a few stations up or down, not too far away. If I need to print something or I want to work.

I want to bike but I'm scared of the hills. I'd have to find my way around this.

There's no way around. Yeah, but where I'm living, in Monte Caparica, it's mountains. So to go to Caparica I go down, and then up it's double the time. Some places I think it's possible. To get the bike back to my new place, I'll be biking from there probably. I'll see how it is. At least from Cascilhas maybe.

I think if you follow the line of the tram, it's probably not steep anywhere.

Yeah, I think it's good.

So how many years have you been in Lisbon?

So two and a half.

Five in Portugal, right?

And do you feel like because you had already lived in Portugal, it was easy for you to go to Lisbon and you felt acclimated, settled quickly? Do you usually take a while to acclimate to a new place or do you think it's a fast process for you?

I think relatively fast. But I think over time, now for me it would be harder to... I mean, I know the ways, I know how to feel more at home. But maybe it would be harder now to get acclimated, to change the place than I did three years ago, five years ago. Because I'm settled here now. I'm kind of used to that. I would be kind of lazy to start again.

Although here you can also restart a lot of times because the people change all the time. You change the place, change the...

How much do you think from now to a year ago, today, your daily life, community has changed?

I don't know. Community, the people... People and the things that you do, places you go.

Do you feel like there's been a big shift in the year or since when you first got here?

Yeah, I mean, during that year, probably... I don't know how many people I still talk to from a year ago. Maybe three people, three persons. And it's like 250 people a week, you know.

A lot of people change. Constant flow. I mean, some places I go to regularly, but also from one period I go more to hang out around Cais and the river.

Sometimes I lived in Alcantara, I was a lot around Alcantara. Then this year, last year, I was more around Graça, Intendente and so on. Now I'm here.

How was Alcantara? How did you like living there?

It's nice, it's nice too. It was... I kind of walked through all the ways around. I knew every street, so it became boring after a while.

Although it's pretty comfortable to live in. That's what I think is happening to me already here. I'm like, okay, I feel like I know... I actually don't even know much about Mal because I don't explore too much because... I'm like, cool, I'm just gonna explore alone.

But I feel like I already know everything in my neighborhood. There's places I haven't gone, but I kind of already know the vibes. I know what it is.

I'm already used to it.

Have you been to the park?

No, I still haven't. It's a wonderful park.

I really like it. I started going a month ago. Really, really good park.

I don't know if I asked this actually to you last time, but when you first moved, your visa process, was that difficult? Was it easy? Did you have to do anything different?

No, I didn't need to do much. I have Polish citizenship, so for me it was way easier than if I was just Belarusian. So to be able to live here, I didn't need to get any... I think there was one necessary process, like you need to sign up or get some papers. Something very simple. More for statistics for them. I didn't even do that in the beginning. The first three years I was still paying taxes in Poland. I was freelancing. I didn't need a local tax number or social security number. So I didn't need to do anything new. But then when I started the job here, I needed NIF, I needed a social security number. And when I already had that, I also found out about the NHR. And I got the NHR. Non-Habitual Resident. It's like the status, lower tax status for expats. This regulation brought a lot of expats here. From different countries, the maximum you pay here is 20%.

Yeah, that's what I've been hearing.

You pay a 20% tax, which is nice. I don't know what it is in other countries exactly. Usually people's average. But people have told me that they like that.

That's cool. So how do you have Polish citizenship?

I have Polish roots. My grandfather was Polish, so it's easier to get it for us. I studied there for... Back then, it was three years of living and working or studying. If you have Polish roots, then you can get citizenship. Now I think it's even one year. My cousin got it in one year and something. It's probably so convenient. Because then you think, great, you get the citizenship. Now you're pretty much open to work wherever in Europe.

That's nice. Does it make the process pretty easy?

Yeah, it gave a lot of possibilities. With the Belarusian passport, now you have to go back to Belarus to renew it. In some kind of list, if you did something wrong, then you can be just detained at the border. They just give you the list. They won't be asking you why you can't help. Otherwise, you don't have a valid passport or you go there and you're in prison. So that's kind of a messed up system.

Yeah, have you gotten back though like since you've been in Portugal, what was the last time you were back?

In um like five years ago, like three months before I moved here.

Do you want to go back ever to visit?

I would like to go back to the one like when the government changes that would be a really interesting time to to go but like now I don't feel like I mean I have some friends there. Yeah like some some were visiting me here like some I haven't seen for a while I don't know like so many moved or it's kind of not not the same like I saw that like 10 years ago.

Yeah that's true, a lot can change in ten years.

How would you describe let's say like your typical day in Lisbon?

Boring

I'm gonna take you just for a wonderful day yeah that's easier because for me like all the nice things that like I enjoyed a lot now they're kind of boring and like it's you had it so many times so it's like not enjoyable anymore um I don't know for somebody else um let's see get a coffee and a pastel de nata close to the river. Like I don't know walk around some neighborhood probably like not not not too central, not like baixa, but I would say yeah like I don't know like Monte Agudo. I don't know like maybe maybe check Marvila for like some like events or like just just hang out like Marvila 8, like markets or food or like just a bar. There's some nice places there and go to the other side like here to walk along the river that's nice. Best view I think of Lisbon is like from Almada.

Yeah yeah sure Yeah I was like walking today like from from home it was like also kind of hills and you walk like you see the whole river from there it's it was pretty nice like..

oh wow this is where you live

yeah like ten minutes walk

whoa it's awesome that's so nice yeah I have to go there then for a walk I have to figure out how to get there

I mean like uh like three or four buses go there and like tram as well it's not that hard it's on the way to uh to costa caprica yeah that's so nice

That's nice, I feel like the buses are more reliable here

Yeah, yeah it's not like Lisbon, usually they are on time.

So, you mentioned that like sometimes doing the same thing it's just kind of like you kind of get used to it it's not so fun anymore yeah, do you feel like you need are you a person who likes to have change?

Yeah, for sure. Like, I kind of got used to it, like kind of got used to changing the place, the environment, the people, everything. And now I kind of need it too. Yeah, so I kind of enjoy it. It's like a nice thing that I enjoy.

And let's say, if you were, I don't know, craving some change in your routine, do you do anything? Or do you just wait until something changes itself, or do you maybe seek out new things, new opportunities, new events?

No, for sure, I try to find something. Sometimes it's like a trip, just a random trip somewhere, and you switch off, change the whole environment. Then after this small break, you look at the same things and you're a bit more excited about them because you took a break from the usual. Or, yeah, I try new stuff, like look for some new activity. Sometimes it can be hard though. I think if I already like something, I would do it, but it can be hard to change things sometimes.

So what trips have you made from Lisbon? Any that stood out, like an awesome trip in Portugal or just somewhere cool?

Yeah, I mean, Morocco is always fun. I've been there four times, the last time was two weeks ago.

Oh, you went two weeks ago? That's so cool!

Yeah, there's so much nice stuff to buy there. It's big too, a lot of places to visit. There are cities with different vibes, so you can explore different ones every time. Cheap flights, super close too.

Yeah, that's great.

Also, the last few times I chose by price. I sorted from the minimum, so the last time I paid like 27 euros for a return flight. I bought tickets on Sunday for Wednesday—Lisbon to Agadir and back.

Where did you go?

I flew to Agadir, and then I went to Taghazout.

That's dope! How many days were you there?

A week.

A week, that's a nice trip.

Yeah, the first few days I was still working, though. I wanted to take a full vacation, but it was last minute, so I did two hours of work in the morning. After that, I rented a scooter and went to the mountains, to Paradise Valley. Then I joined some guys surfing because there was a spot with good waves. Winter is a better season for surfing there.

Same here, right? Summer isn't really the best for surfing.

Yeah, I mean, summer is okay, but winter is better. There, during the first few days, the waves were fine. I joined a group of people who had boards and wetsuits at the beach. They had an extra one, so I joined them and surfed. After that, I went back to Paradise Valley on my scooter.

How did you approach these people? Did they approach you? Is it easy to strike up a conversation?

Depends on the place and situation. There, it's really easy. It feels like everyone is open to talking, at least in that part of Morocco. In Lisbon, it's sometimes the same, but not everywhere and not every situation. It was pretty random that time. I was just like, "Oh, which group should I join? I'll join this one." It felt right. I wasn't the first to join either, someone else had just joined the group too.

That's great! Traveling on your own lets you switch up the environment and meet new people.

Yeah, exactly. It's nice to come back after a week and see people again, like, "Hey, nice to see you!"

That's awesome. Any other recent trips?

Hmm, I don't know. Well, there was another trip before that one. I was at a house party on a Saturday, and I wasn't really enjoying it. The area was where I was looking to buy an apartment, so I thought I'd walk around. I got bored, though, and decided to buy the cheapest ticket for the next day. I found a one-way ticket for 10 euros to Carcassonne, in France, near the Spanish border.

Wait, you did that two months ago?

Yeah. I flew there and walked around, thinking about where to go next. I was checking flights back from cities like Barcelona, Bilbao, and Toulouse, looking for 80 euros or less. I decided to take a bus to Barcelona. The same day, I went on a pub crawl with a hostel group and later went to a club. The next day, we did a walking tour with people I met there, and we spent the whole day exploring Barcelona together.

That's so fun! And those people you met, were they also going to Lisbon?

Yeah, they were. We made plans to meet in Lisbon. We talked about doing shrimps on the beach the next Sunday.

That sounds so fun!

Yeah, it was. Oh, and in Morocco, at the airport, I met one of the girls I had met during the trip. She was on the same flight back to Lisbon, so we sat together. She was going to the Sant Jordi Hostel, which is like five minutes from my old place. We took the metro together, and then she went to her hostel, and I went home.

Oh, that's perfect!

i feel like sometimes Lisbon's like a small world and everyone's connected to it.

Yeah, for sure.

It's like, if you're around, if I fly all the time to Spain or Morocco, then almost for sure, some other people that have been to Lisbon recently or are going to Lisbon soon. So yeah, I feel like people run into each other a lot.

Oh, do you have people visit you here often, or not as much as you expected?

No, I think a lot of people used to visit me, or they visit some other friends, so I kind of show the city to my friends and their friends sometimes. I mean, before, in the places I lived, people weren't visiting as much because they weren't as easy to reach or resort-like. You know, just for vacations. Like, when I was in a small town in Spain that's not famous for tourism or doesn't have amazing beaches nearby, not many people would visit. But yeah, here, sometimes it's like you do the tour too often, and sometimes you need to take a break.

Yeah, yeah. Now a friend is visiting me. We lived in the same room in Poland in the dormitory like eight years ago, and now he's visiting with friends. Yesterday we were at Alex's place, showing them Santos, and they were like, "Is it like this every day?" I'm like, "I mean, all this month, yeah."

Yeah, this month. I want my friends to come and visit during Santos next year.

That's cool. Yeah, it's a fun place to have people visit you. But yeah, it does get repetitive to take people to places like Belém or to Sintra. I'm like, I don't want to pay 20 bucks to get into Sintra again—I'm over it!

What's your home office setup like?

I have my laptop and some monitors that my work gave me.

And you work in your bedroom or in the living room? Do you live alone or with roommates?

Yeah, I work in my bedroom, so I don't have roommates right now because I just moved into my place in Caparica, but before, yeah. Sometimes I would bring my laptop out to the terrace. It's not as productive without the monitors because I can only work on one thing at a time. It's nice though right now to take sun outside. Most of the time I work in my room because I had nine roommates.

Yeah, it a lot of distractions.

Participant C – Interview 3

Interviewer: Paloma Schafer

Date: 18/07/2024

Can you tell me a little bit about your process and just how you learned Portuguese, how you picked it up, and how it's progressed over your time here?

I mean, with different languages, I kind of had different approaches, or it just happened that way. For example, when I was an exchange student in Spain, studying for half a year, I was in this environment where I had to speak Spanish; otherwise, people wouldn't understand me. Half of the Erasmus students preferred to speak Spanish, not English, and the people around me could only speak Spanish, so I had to learn. It was more about practicing, and I had some basic vocabulary, but I was forced to speak all the time.

Here, it was a bit like that too, but I had friends who could speak English, so it was more comfortable just to speak English. I started learning online as well...

Oh, you took courses online?

Yeah, some. Not just Duolingo—Duolingo is very basic—but I did different stuff. I tried to read things, watch things, and I checked out different apps like Memrise for vocabulary. I also went to courses for like half a year or something. It was called Speak Social. It's a Portuguese startup, and now they're international. I was in Aveiro, and they had it in this small town. It's kind of community-based learning because the teachers aren't actual professors; they're just Portuguese people who want to teach you.

I was also teaching English to some older Portuguese ladies for one semester, and in exchange, I studied there for free.

That's nice!

Yeah, but anyway, it was super cheap. It was like 30 euros per semester.

Oh, that's so great. Here, it's so expensive.

Yeah, so by the time I got to Lisbon, I didn't really have to learn much more.

Yeah, by the time you were here.

True. I was already in environments with a lot of Latin people—Portuguese, Spanish, Brazilians, Venezuelans. Even with the same nationalities, you can still speak English because people here are more international.

Do you still feel like you use a good amount of Portuguese here, or do you barely use it?

I mean, I use it a bit, like for basics. You know, to order food, to deal with the finance office, or to talk to the police if they come by. I have some Portuguese friends, and sometimes with them, we only speak Portuguese. But many of them can speak English well, so often we switch back to English. But yeah, I still practice with some Portuguese.

And what's your impression of Lisbon, culturally speaking? Especially since you can compare it to a smaller town, do you feel like there's a lack of Portuguese culture in Lisbon, or is it just harder to find?

I don't know, kind of both. There's a lot of international culture here. I've discovered a lot of Asian food and different parts of Asian cultures—Nepalese, Bangladeshi, stuff like that. There are many foods I'd never tried before, but I did here in Lisbon.

Yeah, like I learned more about traditional Portuguese culture in Aveiro than here in Lisbon for sure. There are also some traditions that are more local or have a regional history, like things based in Lisbon, such as Santos.

Can you remember any distinct cultural experiences that you've had, either there or in Lisbon, that were memorable to your general experience in Portugal?

You know, it was really nice during the first year. We arrived—me and my ex-girlfriend—and we were living together, but we didn't know many people. We arrived in autumn, so there wasn't much going on. The few people we knew were her colleagues and maybe a few others. Christmas for us wasn't that important; it's not a big deal in Belarus. New Year's Eve is more important. Usually, it's for both family and friends. First, we celebrate with family, then we meet up with friends. But Christmas itself is not a big thing for us. It didn't matter much to us not to celebrate it, you know? It's just there—it's okay. But for the Portuguese, it's really important. It's a big part of their tradition. Some people from her work—she didn't speak much Portuguese at the time; she was learning mostly at work—they invited her to celebrate with

their families. We didn't know how long the gathering would last or how much interaction we'd have, but we went. It was two girls, and they were together. First, we went to the parents of one of them and stayed there for the night. The next day, we went to the parents of the other girl in another village. After that, we visited some aunts in yet another village. We went to about four or five different parts of their family. Nobody really knew us, but everyone was so welcoming. They were like, "Just eat, have this!" Some had their own rabbits, turkeys, and lots of fruits. They even gave us a lot of food to take with us to the next house. It was like, "Here, take this to the next place," and when we got there, they'd give us more food. It was kind of funny, like, "Just bring everything home."

That's actually really cool! I wish I could know more Portuguese families like that because I don't know many here. I wish I did.

Yeah, it was a really nice experience.

Can you tell me about any meaningful relationships or friendships that you've made since moving here?

Yeah, I mean, there are many. The problem, though, is that a lot of people are very temporary here. You might have really great experiences together, and then they leave because they need to grow in their careers. A lot of Spanish, Germans, and French people come here, but then they go back to their countries for better career opportunities and more money, of course.

How do you think about the future in that context? Do you feel temporary here?

I consider myself a bit more permanent too since I plan to be here for a few more years, and bought a house, so even when I leave I think I'll always be coming back.

How do you feel about the future when you think about who you'll be around or who your friends will be next year? And when you think back, like a year ago, when your life was so different because you were around different people, do you ever feel like that might get lonely?

Yeah, I used to worry more about that. It's been like this for the last 10 years—always being in a place temporarily, surrounded by temporary people. Then I move on and need to find a new group of people all over again. I kept meeting new people, and I met a lot of great people. But I also worried that if I stopped, I wouldn't have anyone left, you know? There were times, like during COVID, or even last year maybe or like at some points where just like a lot of people leave and you feel like even if you have some friends but you're kind of lonely. Yeah, I don't know. Not necessarily, I mean, it's hard to think one year ahead. It feels like too far into the future. I've kind of gotten used to the change.

I think I'm just already used to the fact that people change, and it's okay. We hang out, have a good time, and then they move on. I accept that. If we meet again in five years, we'll hang out like before. It's all good.

So, is there anything about your experience in Lisbon, or about the city itself, that you would change if you could?

Hmm, I never thought about it. I don't know. I mean, nothing is perfect. There are definitely things that don't work well here, like small things I don't like. But it's kind of part of the charm. You like it for not being perfect.

So, is there any insight you'd give to someone thinking about moving to Lisbon for remote work or just traveling around while working?

First, it's important to be open to meeting new people and different social situations. But if you're a more introverted person, you have to think about how you'll meet people. A lot of people move to a new place and just stay at home, working on their own, and they end up feeling a bit isolated. They don't feel like part of the place because they don't know anyone and are too shy to meet people or don't have social situations where they could meet them. So, if you plan ahead for ways to meet people, you'll be much better off.

Yeah, definitely.

Do you want to walk to the park? We could grab a coffee on the way if you want.

Sure, I'm good either way.

There's a little kiosk too if you'd prefer that.

Yeah, let's do that.

So, has there been any big challenges or difficulties you've faced over the past few years? Or has it been pretty smooth overall?

Oh, there have definitely been challenges. A lot, for sure. Yeah, I mean, housing is always a challenge here. And the fact that people change all the time—it can feel lonely. You have to accept it, but that doesn't mean it always feels good. It's something you deal with. With housing and everything, there are definitely challenges. But at the end of the day, you accept it because it's a good city, and you want to live here.

Where were you living when you first moved here?

I first lived in Alcântara, in a shared apartment. It's a nice area, but after half a year, I had kind of walked all the streets around, and it got a bit boring.

Did you find the apartment when you got to Lisbon, or before?

I visited a few apartments before. I was just visiting Lisbon for like a week or two, and I checked out a few places. But I think the final one, I decided online. I visited two rooms in the same apartment, and I ended up picking a different one from what I originally visited. I sent the other option to a friend.

So after Alcântara, is that when you moved to Almirante?

Yeah, first to number four, then number six, and then number 30. So, I was on the same street the whole time. I mean, I still moved four times in two years, so about every half year.

Yeah, I guess that's quite a bit. Did you want to move or was there other circumstances?

Yeah, I could have stayed longer, but I was always looking to change something—like the place I lived. I guess I kind of got used to the idea of always changing.

How were your apartments?

The first was eight rooms in total. And then the other was ten?

That's a lot, was that an adjustment or were you used to that?

I was used to it. Before that, in Poland, I lived in a place with eight rooms as well. The house was over 100 square meters, so it didn't feel crowded.

Do you prefer living with a lot of people, or does it not really matter to you?

I don't really mind, as long as there are enough common areas and you don't have to wait in line for the kitchen or bathroom. If there's enough space, it's fine. The first apartment on Almirante was great because we had a big terrace. Multiple people could hang out there without feeling like they were on top of each other. People could be in the living room, and others at the dining table, and it didn't feel like you had to be doing the same thing. I hate it when shared apartments split the living room into extra bedrooms, and there's no common area. Everyone just stays in their rooms, and it feels disconnected.

Yeah, my first apartment here used the living room as a big bedroom and we had no common space.

Yeah, same here. That's why now, in my own apartment, I made sure to have space.

Oh, this is your new one, right?

Yeah, tomorrow I'm having a housewarming party. I've got the hammock and the DJ set all set up.

Nice. That sounds awesome.

How did you find that apartment, by the way? What was that process like?

I was looking in a lot of ways. I checked Idealista, and I also looked at real estate agency websites. I contacted some agencies directly to look for me, so they were sending me offers. I visited, I don't know, like 30 or 40 apartments over more than half a year. It wasn't the optimal solution because I was also hanging out all the time in the center so like, it's nice to be there, but I knew the housing quality isn't great, and it's not a good investment anymore. I was

thinking about places like mine. It's nice because there's a hangout area, restaurants, and other stuff, but the houses are older and still a bit more expensive. In my area, the houses are newer, and while there's not much to do around here, there's good transportation to get to nicer places. Plus, it's a better investment.

So, in terms of remote work and work-life balance, do you find any challenges balancing everything? I know you freelance and make your own hours, plus you work for someone else. On top of that, you have your music organization, which you have to manage yourself. How do you balance all that?

I mean, I could do everything, but honestly, I'm way less motivated here. I just enjoy the sun and don't feel like doing much! For my main job and client work, I do the bare minimum just to keep it going and still get paid. You can manage things with minimal effort for months. With the music thing, you have to do more, but even there, I sometimes do the bare minimum. Like, with the last party, I didn't plan too much; I just knew what was needed and let things take care of themselves.

That's nice! So, you prioritize being able to chill?

Exactly.

Would you say this balance changes at all during the seasons?

It's not a huge difference here, but in northern Europe, where there's a bigger temperature shift, you feel it more. In winter, when it's gray and cold, you just stay at home, glued to your laptop. You're more motivated because there's nothing else to do, and there aren't any distractions. You get ideas and feel more productive. But here, with the good weather, it's harder to stay motivated.

How's your self-control when it comes to work? And how do you stay motivated?

Sometimes it's good, sometimes not so much. When I feel like I can do the bare minimum and still get by, I don't feel the urgency. But if I'm running out of money, that's when I really get motivated to work.

So, financial pressure is the main motivator?

Yeah, exactly. But there's also some intrinsic motivation, especially when I'm excited about something new. Like with a new client or project, I'm excited at the start—trying new ideas, seeing changes. But once it becomes routine, the excitement fades. Same with the raves—at first, it was really cool. But after a while, I realized it didn't bring me much in terms of fulfillment. I don't enjoy the parties that much anymore; I'm more focused on organizing them. I'm working there all the time, and I don't make money from it. In the end, maybe the equipment pays off, but it's still not something where I'm making much, even though I spend so many hours on it. I could make so much more money working in marketing. For a while, it was just enjoyable to plan it, to do it, but then you lose the motivation unless you think of something new.

Do you think that "doing something new" helps keep you motivated?

For me, that's the best way. There can be different ways of motivating yourself, though. You could have a really far-away goal, like imagining yourself living on an island, running your own resort in some exotic place. Then you'd need money, so you'd plan steps to achieve that goal, which would give you more motivation to do your daily tasks. But I don't have that kind of long-term plan. I'm more about enjoying life as it is today.

So you're more of a short-term goal person than long-term?

Yeah, kind of. I don't have a huge long-term goal. I'm enjoying life now, and I don't feel like I need something radically different to feel better. I guess a lot of people with long-term goals focus on these big, aspirational things like, "I want to live in this dream house." But there are so many ways to get there that it can feel overwhelming.

I've read a lot about goal-setting and time management. There are principles where you can break big goals into smaller tasks and plan week by week. I've done that at certain points. I would plan, like, "This task will take me this much time, this one will take that much time." I'd schedule everything down to the hour and follow that plan step by step. And it makes you way more productive because you're like, "Okay, I have this time slot, I need to get this done." If you fall behind, you rush to catch up. But after a while, you realize your whole life is planned in advance, and it's just not enjoyable anymore.

Yeah, it doesn't leave much room for spontaneity.

Exactly. I think a lot of people, especially people in Lisbon or just people in general who love traveling, they also like, enjoy the short-term, spontaneity, you know, enjoy the moment.

Yeah, live in the moment.

Exactly.

Do you remember your first impressions of Lisbon, of the city, the community, or the people?

When I first visited before moving here, it seemed very different. I only visited for a short time and mostly stayed in the central, touristic areas. It seemed very commercial and touristy, not so lively or genuine. It felt more like a place made for people to walk around, take pictures, and leave. That's why I didn't move to Lisbon at first. I moved to Aveiro because it seemed more authentic, more like real, like where you really feel cozy, comfortable, like home. But yeah, you just have to find the areas, like places in Lisbon where you feel home. There are a lot of such places.

How did that, your impression of it change, like once you kind of got here and settled in and weren't in the kind of tourist bubble? Or what's your impression of the city now?

Yeah, I mean, for sure it changed. It just like, I think, the same way about this Baixa area, where it's like a lot of crowds of tourists and you kind of try to avoid it. I don't feel like a tourist there anymore.

I'm just like walking around and being like, I don't fucking know this. Yeah, I just like staying in places which ones are comfortable for me. But yeah, so like for example, like from hangout areas, like where you go out, like Bairro and Cais, there's like such stressful places, but it's like in the evening, it's kind of no other place to go.

No, that's open late, not really. It's limited for sure. And yeah, it's kind of like, yeah, with all the tourists.

It's not so nice, but I guess like there should appear some new areas, like Marvila maybe will grow. Marvila is growing. I think there's also like small, like individual spots that like pop up, like Quimbo is open late, but they're underground, you know that?

Yeah.

And there's another one. It's near. It's actually near Intendente, I don't remember what it's called though. But it's because they're like underground, so you can kind of get away with the

noise. But there's still like few and it's a few and far between. And it's not enough places where like everyone's going to find a place like for them and their type of music they like and the type of community they like. It's just like there are individual bars, but normally like either not everyone wants to go to this bar or just like you're very limited to this one option.

Yeah, like this is the only one in the area. Something nearby, yeah. Yeah. And like from the areas like where they have this like zoning laws, it's just like Cais. Cais in Bairro. Like Santos for like students, Portuguese students. Marvila. Marvila feels quite far too. Yeah, transportation. It feels like a commitment if I'm going to go out in Marvila. Like, okay, I'm going to go all the way over there. I'm not going to just go for an hour and then come back. Like, it's just a waste of time.

I'm looking forward to the other side of the river to develop. Like, I think it's going to be such a cool area. Like, just like from Cacilhas to the Christ, like just all this path, like all these abandoned buildings, if they do something with them. I mean, they've been trying. That whole little industrial area, if they could just get a warehouse with a club.

Like they're looking for like some bigger investors. Like about this, like this path on the, on the river, they've been planning it for more than 10 years. Like they wanted to find investors who does like the whole infrastructure.

Yeah. I mean, just the garden, I think they did a really good job in that. I don't know what it looked like before, but I, I can see like people, so many people are going and it's great.

Any final notes, stories of your time here that you think are relevant, important, or were meaningful to you.

I was just, I was just like said that like, uh, like make changes, like, uh, many, many friends who visited like here, like who live in Belarus or Poland, they, like they, they visited it kind of, it's like a therapy or like something that changes their perspective to things like that. You can be like, so chill, enjoy your life. So much, like, even like, it seems like there's wholesale Southern Europe, like similar, but it's still like different. So in a different way, you're like, very like, like everything is fine. Like whatever you do, like nobody cares. Like it's just like, do whatever you want, like dress whatever you want, say whatever you want. Like it can be whoever, nobody will judge you. You're like, you don't, you don't have to show yourself all the time. So you can be like yourself. And then just like enjoy your thing. Yeah. That's all that matters. Yeah.

And would you say it's not like that in Belarus?

No, like, yeah, I think it's a lot of, a lot of, uh, like people, people think too much of how, like how they look, how they, like, they think much of the others. They judge the others more, like how you should dress in specific occasions, how you should behave in specific occasions, like overall, like the life path, like, like you should do that and not that. And then it's a lot of, like, it comes like, I think from the dictatorship itself that there are like a lot of rules and people like put it in their heads that like, okay, this, this is right. This is wrong. Yeah. So socially there's a lot of rules in society that aren't official, but like unspoken rules.

Yeah. No, I will say, yeah, Lisbon, it's like, do whatever you want, do whatever you want. Like nobody cares.

You'll always find a friend. I was also noticing, you can be any type of person and you'll find a community. You'll find a friend here who will accept that and love it.

It's nice how that works out here. Yeah, that's true. Awesome. Thanks

Participant D – Interview 1

Interviewer: Paloma Schafer

Date: 19/03/2024

Okay, so my name is David. I am born in South Korea. But I moved to Holland when I was five. And I obtained my Dutch citizenship when I was twelve or something. Yeah, I've been growing up most of my life there. After graduation of my space engineering studies, I went to Denmark for close to four years. And after that, I'm here, basically.

You're from more than one place then. Do you feel like you're more from one place or another?

No. Actually, it's a bit on the opposite, you know. Because I never really felt that fitting in Holland or not in Korea when I was there. Like, it kind of doesn't matter where I am. I don't think I belong anywhere, but that's okay. Like, for example, when I was in Korea, I was like

twelve or something in the subway. And I was sitting down, and I was like, oh, there's many Asians here. And, you know, I'm an Asian myself.

Haha, okay. And then, how did you end up in Lisbon?

Good question. So, I always wanted to move to the south. Like, after my master's, I was, like, trying to find a job, like, in Spain. Even though, you know, I wouldn't have a good salary or whatever. I just wanted to move to the south.

Any specific reason for the south?

Weather and vibe. The south is always relaxed. But, yeah, you know, it's a hard job market out there. I had a friend working in Denmark, and I got an interview there, and everything was really smooth. So, I just took that job.

In what city?

Aalborg. So, yeah. It's a very small city, like 100,000 people or something like that.

And how long have you been in Lisbon for now?

It's, like, came around end of May last time. So, ten months, right?

Oh, I didn't realize you haven't been here that long.

That seems long for me.

I feel like I've known you for a long time but I guess it can't be more than ten months.

And do you feel like you've been here, you got to know people quickly?

Yeah, I kind of feel like I know the city a bit too well, I think.

Where do you like to frequently go out or eat or hang out? Where do you, like, pass your time?

Yeah, I don't know. I guess actually here (Pisco Peruvian Bar) in the beginning, but then after a while, I don't know. I just like to explore mainly, like, new foods and stuff. So, I like to go to new restaurants. Because I like food, I like cooking and stuff. So, anywhere there is good food, I like to go.

And in Lisbon, do you eat Korean food in Lisbon at all?

I mean, actually I cook it at home sometimes. Yeah, actually I go to Korean restaurants quite frequently yeah, there are actually a couple of them. And they are pretty decent. So, things I cannot cook, you know. Or it's too much hassle to cook, like frying or something. I go to restaurants. I can cook. Like, last time, you know, last weekend I was in Holland to pick up some foods for my mom.

Did your mom cook a lot of Korean food growing up?

Yeah, practically every day.

Yeah, that so nice, mom's cooking.

So, you've been here 10 months. What was the process that you had to do for moving? Was it easy to find a place? Job?

Let me start at the beginning. I was looking to quit my previous job. I mean, it's already over. People started to get fired. Some of my friends had to leave. I was kind of like, this is not a nice working environment anymore. I've been here for a bit too long, so let's try to find something. So, I think, beginning of last year, I was kind of looking for a new job. So, I did a couple of interviews. In France, in Luxembourg, and a couple of other places. But, yeah, I had two main choices. The one currently I'm working for. A very good friend of mine is there. That was like a big reason. Okay, maybe I should go there. I have someone already there, so it's easy. And the other one and they offered me quite a significant amount of money to move and everything to set up. But, I was like, nah, I also want to move to the south. Let's take this other job, because it was remote. So, I could choose where I wanted to go. Spain. Yeah, I'm like, okay, maybe Spain. So, I was like, looking up, okay, how are stuff, you know, how's the bureaucracy. Is it difficult? Like, do I have to do my own taxes? Do I have to hire someone? Or like, how does it go?

What cities were you looking at, like, in Spain?

Just Barcelona. Barcelona, yeah.

Did you consider any other cities in Portugal besides Lisbon?

No.

Yeah, even Lisbon is a bit small for me. Lisbon is a bit small.

Yeah. Why did you end up choosing Lisbon over Barcelona?

I ended up with Lisbon, because I actually had a lot of Portuguese friends. Oh, okay. Like, I had three back when I was living in Aalborg. And then, another one which moved. And then, another one moved actually back to Portugal. So, they have been helping me out, like, set it up. Like, oh, yeah, you know. Once you get to know, like, Portuguese people, they are very friendly. They want to help you as much as you can. So, like, oh, yeah, my sister's boyfriend's family, they are realtors. Yeah. So, she will help me out, you know, and give me contacts. Just ask where you want to live, you know. And then, it had to come a weekend, and they're like, oh, we have this, this, and this options. And I can help. And they were, like, very helpful. I found a very nice house very easily.

That's good. I know it can be hard to find something here. Did you find it before you got here? Or were you already, like, arrived, and you had to look for it?

No, I came here for, like, a weekend before, two weeks before, something like that. No, I came, like, I think, like, three weeks before or something. Oh, okay. Just with my friend, and I'm like, oh, yeah, let's show in Lisbon, and then I can, like, figure out my house and stuff.

Then I have my friend who's helping me out to do taxes. Actually, he used to have an accountant, but then he got to know how to do it, and it's very easy.

It's really easy?

Yeah, but actually, it was quite easier than I thought. I spent, like, five minutes every time to get my receipts, send it out, and then five minutes when I get my payment in, and I just have to fill in, like, my, you know, that I got the payment and everything.

So right now, are you a freelancer?

Yeah, contractor.

Contractor. Okay.

yeah.

So what do you, like, do? What's your role? What you do day to day?

So I'm a space engineer. Do you want my full title?

If you're comfortable sharing it.

It's like a space control engineer, so, the satellite, you have a lot of, like, subsystem, let's say, and I focus in the control part of the satellite. So it's a bit like hardware and software and also, like, system stuff, like requirements. So it's a bit broad, but I kind of like it.

But you do mostly a lot of math and programs?

Yeah. Actually, most of them is programming.

Programming.

Yeah. Like software, but also some development, like, in terms of, like, you know, I have a new algorithm, I'll, you know, test it out.

And do you have a lot of collaboration with, like, a team or do you work mostly independently?

So I used to be more, like, also customer focused with my previous job, but I think my current team lead saw that I have a lot of extensive development experience as well, so he put me into the development team. So it's mainly, like, I can do stuff on my own. Yeah. But, like, every now and then, like, I have to interact with, like, other development engineers or, like, other, like, engineers in general. But it's less than I'm used to.

Do you like it more or less to work alone? Or did you like more when you were, like, constantly talking to people?

Yeah, I mean, the thing is, like, I'm now in this situation, right? Yeah. Probably if I was in the reverse situation, I would, like, oh, I wish I had a little bit of that. But now I kind of miss it. Like, I miss the actual face-to-face interaction with colleagues, you know, like, not just having coffee talk or something, but also more like I go to book a meeting room, have a whiteboard and brainstorm ideas and just discuss if this is a good solution or not, you know. Like, that's

something I really miss. Yeah. But, you know, I have to make some sacrifices. Yeah. And if you're not working in an office, so, like, at least if you're working independently in an office, there's, like, okay, there's stuff around, but you can't go, like, wander and talk to someone.

So when you're, like, in, when you're remote or you're in a home office or do you, are you in a co-working space?

No, I'm a home office.

What does your workspace look like, do you have roommates there also?

No I'm solo and just a desk and a couple monitors pretty basic.

Yeah. So then you're, like, even during a lunch break, you like stay home?

Oh, yeah. Sometimes I just, like, oh, I'm a bit tired. Let's lay on the couch for a while. Yeah. It's nice to do that, but, you know, if I go to work in an office, then, you know, I can just, like, randomly socialize with people. Yeah. Like, I can just go to my friend's desk and, like, oh, what's going on with those projects? Talk about the maybe still work-related topics, but, you know, a bit more casual.

Are you, like, friends with anyone that you work with that, like, remotely friends with them because you, like, have had to work with them and they're, like, do you consider them, like, you know, like, your co-worker?

I don't know. It's different. I've never worked remote before. I mean, the thing is, for me, you know, I compare it with what I used to. I made some really good friends at my last job. Like, I went to their weddings and I still talk to their moms sometimes every day about where I was going and stuff like that. Like, also, we just travel.

Like, oh, David, I'm going to Lisbon right now. That's more what I consider friends and you just go, like, for drinks and, you know, go to dinner parties and stuff like that. But here, you know, it's just... It's not the same. Like, I know them and they're nice, but they are not my friends or I don't consider them. Yeah, so, I mean, it's definitely kind of difficult to form that relationship when you're not working together that often or you're not in person with them for anything or any kind of events. But my teammate is doing a good job on this. Like, he organizes, like, maybe once or twice a year, like, this location type of things. So, you know, for example, last summer, you know, I was just barely working. I was like, oh, yeah, David, do you want to come to Catalonia? We are going to the city, we are going to rent, like, a house. Oh, that's cool. We go together, and then we can work together, you know, like a location. Yeah. That was kind of nice.

Actually, that was, like, really helpful because then you kind of understand how people are. You know, the screen kind of puts you at a... You'll see a little bit. Yeah. And you kind of have to act, like, you know, a bit more professional rather than, like, okay, you know, can I joke around? I mean, you can, but, you know, it's a bit... There's a boundary, an extra layer to get into that.

So you enjoyed it, like, that work trip?

Yeah. It was quite long. Oh, yeah. Yeah, I enjoyed it.

But you think if, like, your company offered it again, would you want to go again?

They cut the budgets, you know, to the business.. Yeah, like, I think there was, like, this Christmas party but it was canceled or... Yeah. They decided at the last minute, like, oh, yeah, if we all give you this kind of budget, it was okay. Yeah. But then you look at the price of the, you know, plane tickets and, like, oh, no. No. No thanks. Yeah. Not worth it. Yeah, so unless... I guess the people who are near Lithuania, it's probably easy, but Lisbon's pretty far.

Do you think you would ever go back to working a not-remote job, or are you, like, in...

Ooh... If, let's say, same pay, same everything. Hybrid, definitely.

Hybrid.

Okay, yeah. I mean, the thing is, like, what I haven't made real use out of my flexibility to actually... Go travel. Yeah, go travel for a month, you know, somewhere else. I've been, you know, traveling, like, two weeks there, and then I work, like, a week.

Like, for example, I went to India for, like, ten days, and I was working there a couple of days. And I'm like, I should do this more often, like, also... Especially from Lisbon. There's a lot of places not that far that you can get to, and I think rent's not horribly expensive here that you can leave for, like, a month. I can even find someone to sublet your apartment. Yeah, so I haven't really thought about it until, like, a month ago. I'm like, I can go to, like, Asia and then stay there for a month.

Yeah, you can bounce around.

Yeah.

And your company's fine with you working wherever you want? Or do they have any kind of limitations to being in Europe, or...?

They are more performance-based, so they don't care really about how many hours.

Do you prefer that, or do you ever find yourself working more to get things done?

I mean, if you just do your work and task and deliver that, that's all they need. But, you know, there are some meetings involved where I have to be, or, like, sometimes there might be a customer, and then I have to, you know, handle these odd hours. Yeah. It's not easy, but apparently I had a chat with my friend who's working at the same company. Oh, that's my only friend, actually. Yeah, but he lives in Leiria.

Oh, but that's cool that they live in Portugal. Yeah. Okay, did you already...? Did you know him before you worked there?

Yeah, he was actually my ex-colleague back in Brazil. I kind of knew that he was working, but that was not my decision to, like, oh, let's go for this job, you know?

Yeah, yeah.

But he did tell me a lot, like, oh, how's that kind of, you know, how's the working culture, how does it feel like working remote? So I basically asked these kind of questions.

So, okay, cool, you had a little bit of info before.

So, yeah, so they don't mind that you're, like, if you're traveling, as long as you're getting the work done, you can be wherever you want.

Yeah, I think someone got, like, five months off to, like, just travel Asia. I would love five months off. I mean, it's, like, still working every day, but, like... I don't think it's actually that easy, like... No, I don't think it is. I mean, the people I've talked to so far, I don't think it's easy because there is a little bit of, like, movement. And I think sometimes if you go to a new place and you still have to work, you feel like you're on vacation and you want to be, like, yeah, vacation mode, but it's like, oh, but I have to be working. So you got your weekends. But I think being able to go somewhere for a short amount of time is cool because you can really, like, live there for a while.

Where would you want to go?

With a good amount of time... maybe South America, but I think that's a little bit tricky. I think so. Depends where.

Yeah. Or I think I have to go to Korea at some point. I mean, I haven't been there for five years, so I kind of need to see my family. Tokyo. I love Tokyo. I've been there for six months, so.

Yeah. I don't know. I think I have to think about this.

You need to pick a country. Whereas, you know, so good internet. I was going to say, that's another thing. Just the decision-making. It's not easy.

No, it's... I don't know. I kind of like the U.S. But I'm afraid that if I work there, even though, like, a bit, they will deport the hell out of me.

You think so?

I don't know how long... How long can you go to the U.S. for as a tourist?

I think three months.

Three months?

Yeah.

I have Dutch passport. It's pretty strong. Yeah.

I was going to say, where would you go in the U.S.?

Actually, I've already been to California, so I have that too. I really want to... Where's the Yellowstone? California.

Oh, but it goes... I think it goes into... No. I think it's Montana, Idaho.

I'm thinking of Yosemite.

Yeah. I think it is Idaho and Montana, maybe. Yeah, I think Idaho, Montana.

Because I know Montana has that, and Grand Teton is like... Jackson and... Miami. There's a lot. I don't know.

I want to go to Louisiana. But in New Orleans?

The food is the best.

So, New Orleans.

I love New Orleans. It's one of my favorite cities in the U.S.

So, I kind of... Did you come to Lisbon from Denmark, by the way? Or did you go anywhere in between?

No, so I had to move, right? So, I didn't bring, you know, all my moving stuff from Denmark. I just dropped it at my parents' place in Amsterdam. So, I just like ran into like a big van. Dropped everything at my parents' and then... Every time I go to my parents' I just bring a couple of my stuff, you know. Bring a couple things back.

Do you get to go home like... Do you go home and visit them often?
Nowadays, I actually kind of do. Yeah.

It's not too far though, right? From Lisbon?

Three hours. But, yeah. I don't know why I go so often. Like, I think I've been there like four times in a year. That's like more than I did like last year. I mean, the main thing was like I have like this gold thing on KLM Airlines. So, if I want to maintain it, I have to travel. You have to do certain travel and get like miles.

Well, you see, that's another excuse for you to be traveling.

I can go like anywhere with that airline. With that airline, yeah. Or like Air France as well, a couple of them. It's like Flying Blue.

Oh, okay, okay.

It's like Air France, KLM, and some other airlines, yeah. I mean, it's really nice. You get like priorities. So, basically, I mean, I don't have to go into the big queues. I can just like...

Oh, you just cut. You get lounge?

Yeah. Food is free. It's like a buffet and you can grab anything you want. But the food is not that amazing. I save maybe 20 euros per time I go there. Yeah, because the airport food is expensive usually. So, I think it's worth it.

I also went to India with KLM.

How was India? What did you do in India?

I went for a wedding. It was my second time there.

The first time was like six years ago with some friends. Some Indian friends. They guided us around India, except for the east part. This time was for a wedding. Some of my friends were like, oh, it's your first time in India. So let's go travel. But I'm like... I'm done traveling India. I don't want to have that experience again. I don't need it. So I was like, oh, let's work a couple of days.

Are most of your friends international?

They're all... A sprinkle of everything.

Cool, that's awesome. Always like that? Even like growing up? Or is that more like now as an adult?

I mean, Amsterdam is very multicultural. So when I went to school, Dutch people, we had some Turkish or Portuguese even. You know, but they all immigrated or something. So it's like... I guess that kind of, you know, like made me realize, oh, yeah, you don't have to be with Dutch people. There are other nationalities and cultures. And I was studying. So it's also like... Mainly also like a very international department, let's say. There's a lot of people from UK, but also from Korea, other countries coming to study there. So it's just like, you know, just forced to have, I guess, cultural friends over here. Like international friends.

That's nice, though.

It's nice having international friends. I really like it. Because, you know, I'm getting invited to the Indian wedding, but also like I went to like Serbia for a wedding.

I'm going there again.

Oh, that's cool.

I need to buy my flight ticket there.

That's cool. I want to go.

And now maybe I'll go to Miami. I've been there. It's like spring break and alligators, you know?

Yeah. I mean, maybe I can go to US next time. I don't want to go to New York. It's so close, like relatively. New York's close from Lisbon. I think it's what, like six hours. Maybe take a direct flight. And, I'm sure, one of the KLM big fly.

Go directly from here?

Well, they might not go directly from here, but it probably is a direct flight out of somewhere. I will take a 50 euro box more and then I'll go from Amsterdam. I would say that's worth it.

Oh! Do you speak Portuguese?

No.

Are you learning Portuguese?

I mean, actually, when I arrived, I was like, okay, I'm going to learn Portuguese but everyone can speak English, you know?

Maybe if I was in Spain, I would be more forced to learn Spanish. And that's also a language I like to learn.

Yeah. So, you speak, how many languages do you speak right now?

So, Korean, Dutch, English. Depending on how you see it, German. I mean, I've done five years in high school. And I think if I would live in Germany, I would pick it up quite fast. And then some other small languages. French, for three years, I can mainly only read.

Did you do any kind of Portuguese prep of trying to learn a couple of things when you got here or before you came?

No. My Portuguese friends, they taught me all the curse words and all the standard things you learn. When you learn a new language. That's all. I think it's like, sometimes it's like a little bit similar to Spanish. A little bit of Spanish. It's like, oh yeah. I can figure it out.

Do you think you'll ever, well, how long do you see yourself living in Lisbon? Do you think, do you like it enough that you would definitely stay for a while? Or are you already kind of like, oh, I'm probably just very temporary?

So, basically my job dictates how long I'm here. So if I get fired or, you know, that would happen, I'm going to leave immediately. Because there's not a big space in the city. And there's not many jobs here, even if there was in an industry. There's like, no jobs here. So if that happens, first flight, I'm out. I mean, not first flight, but, I don't know, maybe in three months or something. Yeah. Because then, I mean, I could find something else remote, but it just depends on, I guess, how long. Yeah, I have to put effort into interviews. It's a long process always.

And if job, that stuff, wasn't a problem, just out of like, desire of where to live, like, what would you think?

Right, so if I had a good job. If the same job, and I was secure in my job. I would probably be in Spain right now.

Oh, okay, you would be in Spain?

Yeah. No, I really like Barcelona.

Yeah. Have you been a lot of times?

Two times. Yeah, some of the ones.

And what are like, your favorite, let's say, favorite things about Lisbon, least favorite things about Lisbon that you can think of?

My most favorite, I think actually, Santos Populares. It's also was the, the month I arrived. Yeah. And seeing, yeah, seeing like, the city so alive, and you know, like everyone, literally everyone in South that kind of, Yeah. I'm so excited. And I think that's the best thing about Lisbon.

And your least favorite thing?

I mean, as a joke, would be the hills, but yeah.

I don't know what exactly like, I mean, I know that feel really kind of easy that people have sometimes hard time, you know, living here. Even if there are engineers, like I know, I met some friends, like my friends' friends. Yeah.

Yeah. You know, sometimes with engineer, you got, you know, very bad salaries, like, a lot of Portuguese move out. That's kind of sad. Yeah. It's not that I hate it, but it's more like the feeling of like, I wish the Portuguese government was a bit better in this kind of stuff. Yeah.

Because that's also why Chega got a lot of votes this time. Because people are unhappy with the current situation.

So do you follow like the politics here, quite a bit, or no?

No, just sometimes on the, you know, I like to read The Guardian. Yeah. It just pops up, or like, my Portuguese friends tell me, oh yeah, David, did you hear about this? And I'm like, oh yeah, and it's like, and then I ask them, like, how is the coalition going on? Yeah.

That's good so you can be informed.

Yeah

Okay, well, we're good for today. That seems all I need.

Cool.

Participant D – Interview 2

Interviewer: Paloma Schafer

Date: 11/04/2024

Okay, so my name is David. I am born in South Korea. But I moved to Holland when I was five. And I obtained my Dutch citizenship when I was twelve or something. Yeah, I've been

growing up most of my life there. After graduation of my space engineering studies, I went to Denmark for close to four years. And after that, I'm here, basically.

You're from more than one place then. Do you feel like you're more from one place or another?

No. Actually, it's a bit on the opposite, you know. Because I never really felt that fitting in Holland or not in Korea when I was there. Like, it kind of doesn't matter where I am. I don't think I belong anywhere, but that's okay. Like, for example, when I was in Korea, I was like twelve or something in the subway. And I was sitting down, and I was like, oh, there's many Asians here. And, you know, I'm an Asian myself.

Haha, okay. And then, how did you end up in Lisbon?

Good question. So, I always wanted to move to the south. Like, after my master's, I was, like, trying to find a job, like, in Spain. Even though, you know, I wouldn't have a good salary or whatever. I just wanted to move to the south.

Any specific reason for the south?

Weather and vibe. The south is always relaxed. But, yeah, you know, it's a hard job market out there. I had a friend working in Denmark, and I got an interview there, and everything was really smooth. So, I just took that job.

In what city?

Aalborg. So, yeah. It's a very small city, like 100,000 people or something like that.

And how long have you been in Lisbon for now?

It's, like, came around end of May last time. So, ten months, right?

Oh, I didn't realize you haven't been here that long.

That seems long for me.

I feel like I've known you for a long time but I guess it can't be more than ten months. And do you feel like you've been here, you got to know people quickly?

Yeah, I kind of feel like I know the city a bit too well, I think.

Where do you like to frequently go out or eat or hang out? Where do you, like, pass your time?

Yeah, I don't know. I guess actually here (Pisco Peruvian Bar) in the beginning, but then after a while, I don't know. I just like to explore mainly, like, new foods and stuff. So, I like to go to new restaurants. Because I like food, I like cooking and stuff. So, anywhere there is good food, I like to go.

And in Lisbon, do you eat Korean food in Lisbon at all?

I mean, actually I cook it at home sometimes. Yeah, actually I go to Korean restaurants quite frequently yeah, there are actually a couple of them. And they are pretty decent. So, things I cannot cook, you know. Or it's too much hassle to cook, like frying or something. I go to restaurants. I can cook. Like, last time, you know, last weekend I was in Holland to pick up some foods for my mom.

Did your mom cook a lot of Korean food growing up?

Yeah, practically every day.

Yeah, that so nice, mom's cooking.

So, you've been here 10 months. What was the process that you had to do for moving? Was it easy to find a place? Job?

Let me start at the beginning. I was looking to quit my previous job. I mean, it's already over. People started to get fired. Some of my friends had to leave. I was kind of like, this is not a nice working environment anymore. I've been here for a bit too long, so let's try to find something. So, I think, beginning of last year, I was kind of looking for a new job. So, I did a couple of interviews. In France, in Luxembourg, and a couple of other places. But, yeah, I had two main choices. The one currently I'm working for. A very good friend of mine is there. That was like a big reason. Okay, maybe I should go there. I have someone already there, so it's easy. And the other one and they offered me quite a significant amount of money to move and everything to set up. But, I was like, nah, I also want to move to the south. Let's take this other job, because it was remote. So, I could choose where I wanted to go. Spain. Yeah, I'm like, okay, maybe Spain. So, I was like, looking up, okay, how are stuff, you know, how's the bureaucracy. Is it difficult? Like, do I have to do my own taxes? Do I have to hire someone? Or like, how does it go?

What cities were you looking at, like, in Spain?

Just Barcelona. Barcelona, yeah.

Did you consider any other cities in Portugal besides Lisbon?

No.

Yeah, even Lisbon is a bit small for me. Lisbon is a bit small.

Yeah. Why did you end up choosing Lisbon over Barcelona?

I ended up with Lisbon, because I actually had a lot of Portuguese friends. Oh, okay. Like, I had three back when I was living in Aalborg. And then, another one which moved. And then, another one moved actually back to Portugal. So, they have been helping me out, like, set it up. Like, oh, yeah, you know. Once you get to know, like, Portuguese people, they are very friendly. They want to help you as much as you can. So, like, oh, yeah, my sister's boyfriend's family, they are realtors. Yeah. So, she will help me out, you know, and give me contacts. Just ask where you want to live, you know. And then, it had to come a weekend, and they're like,

oh, we have this, this, and this options. And I can help. And they were, like, very helpful. I found a very nice house very easily.

That's good. I know it can be hard to find something here. Did you find it before you got here? Or were you already, like, arrived, and you had to look for it?

No, I came here for, like, a weekend before, two weeks before, something like that. No, I came, like, I think, like, three weeks before or something. Oh, okay. Just with my friend, and I'm like, oh, yeah, let's show in Lisbon, and then I can, like, figure out my house and stuff.

Then I have my friend who's helping me out to do taxes. Actually, he used to have an accountant, but then he got to know how to do it, and it's very easy.

It's really easy?

Yeah, but actually, it was quite easier than I thought. I spent, like, five minutes every time to get my receipts, send it out, and then five minutes when I get my payment in, and I just have to fill in, like, my, you know, that I got the payment and everything.

So right now, are you a freelancer?

Yeah, contractor.

Contractor. Okay.

yeah.

So what do you, like, do? What's your role? What you do day to day?

So I'm a space engineer. Do you want my full title?

If you're comfortable sharing it.

It's like a space control engineer, so, the satellite, you have a lot of, like, subsystem, let's say, and I focus in the control part of the satellite. So it's a bit like hardware and software and also, like, system stuff, like requirements. So it's a bit broad, but I kind of like it.

But you do mostly a lot of math and programs?

Yeah. Actually, most of them is programming.

Programming.

Yeah. Like software, but also some development, like, in terms of, like, you know, I have a new algorithm, I'll, you know, test it out.

And do you have a lot of collaboration with, like, a team or do you work mostly independently?

So I used to be more, like, also customer focused with my previous job, but I think my current team lead saw that I have a lot of extensive development experience as well, so he put me into the development team. So it's mainly, like, I can do stuff on my own. Yeah. But, like, every

now and then, like, I have to interact with, like, other development engineers or, like, other, like, engineers in general. But it's less than I'm used to.

Do you like it more or less to work alone? Or did you like more when you were, like, constantly talking to people?

Yeah, I mean, the thing is, like, I'm now in this situation, right? Yeah. Probably if I was in the reverse situation, I would, like, oh, I wish I had a little bit of that. But now I kind of miss it. Like, I miss the actual face-to-face interaction with colleagues, you know, like, not just having coffee talk or something, but also more like I go to book a meeting room, have a whiteboard and brainstorm ideas and just discuss if this is a good solution or not, you know. Like, that's something I really miss. Yeah. But, you know, I have to make some sacrifices. Yeah. And if you're not working in an office, so, like, at least if you're working independently in an office, there's, like, okay, there's stuff around, but you can't go, like, wander and talk to someone.

So when you're, like, in, when you're remote or you're in a home office or do you, are you in a co-working space?

No, I'm a home office.

What does your workspace look like, do you have roommates there also?

No I'm solo and just a desk and a couple monitors pretty basic.

Yeah. So then you're, like, even during a lunch break, you like stay home?

Oh, yeah. Sometimes I just, like, oh, I'm a bit tired. Let's lay on the couch for a while. Yeah. It's nice to do that, but, you know, if I go to work in an office, then, you know, I can just, like, randomly socialize with people. Yeah. Like, I can just go to my friend's desk and, like, oh, what's going on with those projects? Talk about the maybe still work-related topics, but, you know, a bit more casual.

Are you, like, friends with anyone that you work with that, like, remotely friends with them because you, like, have had to work with them and they're, like, do you consider them, like, you know, like, your co-worker?

I don't know. It's different. I've never worked remote before. I mean, the thing is, for me, you know, I compare it with what I used to. I made some really good friends at my last job. Like, I went to their weddings and I still talk to their moms sometimes every day about where I was going and stuff like that. Like, also, we just travel.

Like, oh, David, I'm going to Lisbon right now. That's more what I consider friends and you just go, like, for drinks and, you know, go to dinner parties and stuff like that. But here, you know, it's just... It's not the same. Like, I know them and they're nice, but they are not my friends or I don't consider them. Yeah, so, I mean, it's definitely kind of difficult to form that relationship when you're not working together that often or you're not in person with them for anything or any kind of events. But my teammate is doing a good job on this. Like, he organizes, like, maybe once or twice a year, like, this location type of things. So, you know, for example, last summer, you know, I was just barely working. I was like, oh, yeah, David, do you want to come to Catalonia? We are going to the city, we are going to rent, like, a house.

Oh, that's cool. We go together, and then we can work together, you know, like a location. Yeah. That was kind of nice.

Actually, that was, like, really helpful because then you kind of understand how people are. You know, the screen kind of puts you at a... You'll see a little bit. Yeah. And you kind of have to act, like, you know, a bit more professional rather than, like, okay, you know, can I joke around? I mean, you can, but, you know, it's a bit... There's a boundary, an extra layer to get into that.

So you enjoyed it, like, that work trip?

Yeah. It was quite long. Oh, yeah. Yeah, I enjoyed it.

But you think if, like, your company offered it again, would you want to go again?

They cut the budgets, you know, to the business.. Yeah, like, I think there was, like, this Christmas party but it was canceled or... Yeah. They decided at the last minute, like, oh, yeah, if we all give you this kind of budget, it was okay. Yeah. But then you look at the price of the, you know, plane tickets and, like, oh, no. No. No thanks. Yeah. Not worth it. Yeah, so unless... I guess the people who are near Lithuania, it's probably easy, but Lisbon's pretty far.

Do you think you would ever go back to working a not-remote job, or are you, like, in...

Ooh... If, let's say, same pay, same everything. Hybrid, definitely.

Hybrid.

Okay, yeah. I mean, the thing is, like, what I haven't made real use out of my flexibility to actually... Go travel. Yeah, go travel for a month, you know, somewhere else. I've been, you know, traveling, like, two weeks there, and then I work, like, a week.

Like, for example, I went to India for, like, ten days, and I was working there a couple of days. And I'm like, I should do this more often, like, also... Especially from Lisbon. There's a lot of places not that far that you can get to, and I think rent's not horribly expensive here that you can leave for, like, a month. I can even find someone to sublet your apartment. Yeah, so I haven't really thought about it until, like, a month ago. I'm like, I can go to, like, Asia and then stay there for a month.

Yeah, you can bounce around.

Yeah.

And your company's fine with you working wherever you want? Or do they have any kind of limitations to being in Europe, or...?

They are more performance-based, so they don't care really about how many hours.

Do you prefer that, or do you ever find yourself working more to get things done?

I mean, if you just do your work and task and deliver that, that's all they need. But, you know, there are some meetings involved where I have to be, or, like, sometimes there might be a

customer, and then I have to, you know, handle these odd hours. Yeah. It's not easy, but apparently I had a chat with my friend who's working at the same company. Oh, that's my only friend, actually. Yeah, but he lives in Leiria.

Oh, but that's cool that they live in Portugal. Yeah. Okay, did you already...? Did you know him before you worked there?

Yeah, he was actually my ex-colleague back in Brazil. I kind of knew that he was working, but that was not my decision to, like, oh, let's go for this job, you know?

Yeah, yeah.

But he did tell me a lot, like, oh, how's that kind of, you know, how's the working culture, how does it feel like working remote? So I basically asked these kind of questions.

So, okay, cool, you had a little bit of info before.

So, yeah, so they don't mind that you're, like, if you're traveling, as long as you're getting the work done, you can be wherever you want.

Yeah, I think someone got, like, five months off to, like, just travel Asia. I would love five months off. I mean, it's, like, still working every day, but, like... I don't think it's actually that easy, like... No, I don't think it is. I mean, the people I've talked to so far, I don't think it's easy because there is a little bit of, like, movement. And I think sometimes if you go to a new place and you still have to work, you feel like you're on vacation and you want to be, like, yeah, vacation mode, but it's like, oh, but I have to be working. So you got your weekends. But I think being able to go somewhere for a short amount of time is cool because you can really, like, live there for a while.

Where would you want to go?

With a good amount of time... maybe South America, but I think that's a little bit tricky. I think so. Depends where.

Yeah. Or I think I have to go to Korea at some point. I mean, I haven't been there for five years, so I kind of need to see my family. Tokyo. I love Tokyo. I've been there for six months, so.

Yeah. I don't know. I think I have to think about this.

You need to pick a country. Whereas, you know, so good internet. I was going to say, that's another thing. Just the decision-making. It's not easy.

No, it's... I don't know. I kind of like the U.S. But I'm afraid that if I work there, even though, like, a bit, they will deport the hell out of me.

You think so?

I don't know how long... How long can you go to the U.S. for as a tourist?

I think three months.

Three months?

Yeah.

I have Dutch passport. It's pretty strong. Yeah.

I was going to say, where would you go in the U.S.?

Actually, I've already been to California, so I have that too. I really want to... Where's the Yellowstone? California.

Oh, but it goes... I think it goes into... No. I think it's Montana, Idaho.

I'm thinking of Yosemite.

Yeah. I think it is Idaho and Montana, maybe. Yeah, I think Idaho, Montana.

Because I know Montana has that, and Grand Teton is like... Jackson and... Miami. There's a lot. I don't know.

I want to go to Louisiana. But in New Orleans?

The food is the best.

So, New Orleans.

I love New Orleans. It's one of my favorite cities in the U.S.

So, I kind of... Did you come to Lisbon from Denmark, by the way? Or did you go anywhere in between?

No, so I had to move, right? So, I didn't bring, you know, all my moving stuff from Denmark. I just dropped it at my parents' place in Amsterdam. So, I just like ran into like a big van. Dropped everything at my parents' and then... Every time I go to my parents' I just bring a couple of my stuff, you know. Bring a couple things back.

Do you get to go home like... Do you go home and visit them often?
Nowadays, I actually kind of do. Yeah.

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Three hours. But, yeah. I don't know why I go so often. Like, I think I've been there like four times in a year. That's like more than I did like last year. I mean, the main thing was like I have like this gold thing on KLM Airlines. So, if I want to maintain it, I have to travel. You have to do certain travel and get like miles.

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I went for a wedding. It was my second time there.

The first time was like six years ago with some friends. Some Indian friends. They guided us around India, except for the east part. This time was for a wedding. Some of my friends were like, oh, it's your first time in India. So let's go travel. But I'm like... I'm done traveling India. I don't want to have that experience again. I don't need it. So I was like, oh, let's work a couple of days.

Are most of your friends international?

They're all... A sprinkle of everything.

Cool, that's awesome. Always like that? Even like growing up? Or is that more like now as an adult?

I mean, Amsterdam is very multicultural. So when I went to school, Dutch people, we had some Turkish or Portuguese even. You know, but they all immigrated or something. So it's like... I guess that kind of, you know, like made me realize, oh, yeah, you don't have to be with Dutch people. There are other nationalities and cultures. And I was studying. So it's also like... Mainly also like a very international department, let's say. There's a lot of people from UK, but also from Korea, other countries coming to study there. So it's just like, you know, just forced to have, I guess, cultural friends over here. Like international friends.

That's nice, though.

It's nice having international friends. I really like it. Because, you know, I'm getting invited to the Indian wedding, but also like I went to like Serbia for a wedding.

I'm going there again.

Oh, that's cool.

I need to buy my flight ticket there.

That's cool. I want to go.

And now maybe I'll go to Miami. I've been there. It's like spring break and alligators, you know?

Yeah. I mean, maybe I can go to US next time. I don't want to go to New York. It's so close, like relatively. New York's close from Lisbon. I think it's what, like six hours. Maybe take a direct flight. And, I'm sure, one of the KLM big fly.

Go directly from here?

Well, they might not go directly from here, but it probably is a direct flight out of somewhere. I will take a 50 euro box more and then I'll go from Amsterdam. I would say that's worth it.

Oh! Do you speak Portuguese?

No.

Are you learning Portuguese?

I mean, actually, when I arrived, I was like, okay, I'm going to learn Portuguese but everyone can speak English, you know?

Maybe if I was in Spain, I would be more forced to learn Spanish. And that's also a language I like to learn.

Yeah. So, you speak, how many languages do you speak right now?

So, Korean, Dutch, English. Depending on how you see it, German. I mean, I've done five years in high school. And I think if I would live in Germany, I would pick it up quite fast. And then some other small languages. French, for three years, I can mainly only read.

Did you do any kind of Portuguese prep of trying to learn a couple of things when you got here or before you came?

No. My Portuguese friends, they taught me all the curse words and all the standard things you learn. When you learn a new language. That's all. I think it's like, sometimes it's like a little bit similar to Spanish. A little bit of Spanish. It's like, oh yeah. I can figure it out.

Do you think you'll ever, well, how long do you see yourself living in Lisbon? Do you think, do you like it enough that you would definitely stay for a while? Or are you already kind of like, oh, I'm probably just very temporary?

So, basically my job dictates how long I'm here. So if I get fired or, you know, that would happen, I'm going to leave immediately. Because there's not a big space in the city. And there's not many jobs here, even if there was in an industry. There's like, no jobs here. So if that happens, first flight, I'm out. I mean, not first flight, but, I don't know, maybe in three months or something. Yeah. Because then, I mean, I could find something else remote, but it just depends on, I guess, how long. Yeah, I have to put effort into interviews. It's a long process always.

And if job, that stuff, wasn't a problem, just out of like, desire of where to live, like, what would you think?

Right, so if I had a good job. If the same job, and I was secure in my job. I would probably be in Spain right now.

Oh, okay, you would be in Spain?

Yeah. No, I really like Barcelona.

Yeah. Have you been a lot of times?

Two times. Yeah, some of the ones.

And what are like, your favorite, let's say, favorite things about Lisbon, least favorite things about Lisbon that you can think of?

My most favorite, I think actually, Santos Populares. It's also was the, the month I arrived. Yeah. And seeing, yeah, seeing like, the city so alive, and you know, like everyone, literally everyone in South that kind of, Yeah. I'm so excited. And I think that's the best thing about Lisbon.

And your least favorite thing?

I mean, as a joke, would be the hills, but yeah.

I don't know what exactly like, I mean, I know that feel really kind of easy that people have sometimes hard time, you know, living here. Even if there are engineers, like I know, I met some friends, like my friends' friends. Yeah.

Yeah. You know, sometimes with engineer, you got, you know, very bad salaries, like, a lot of Portuguese move out. That's kind of sad. Yeah. It's not that I hate it, but it's more like the feeling of like, I wish the Portuguese government was a bit better in this kind of stuff. Yeah.

Because that's also why Chega got a lot of votes this time. Because people are unhappy with the current situation.

So do you follow like the politics here, quite a bit, or no?

No, just sometimes on the, you know, I like to read The Guardian. Yeah. It just pops up, or like, my Portuguese friends tell me, oh yeah, David, did you hear about this? And I'm like, oh yeah, and it's like, and then I ask them, like, how is the coalition going on? Yeah.

That's good so you can be informed.

Yeah

Okay, well, we're good for today. That seems all I need.

Cool.

Participant D – Interview 3

Interviewer: Paloma Schafer

Date: 30/04/2024

How would you, like, describe your identity as a digital nomad in Lisbon?

Ooh. That is such a... These require a little bit more thinking. I'm sorry.

No, no, no. Take your time.

Actually, I don't consider myself as a nomad because I don't... Like, I think most nomads, they travel more. I think in the digital nomad community, people say things like, slow mad. Slow mad, okay.

Because people are, like, not really, you know, nomading or, like, very slowly. Like, you just stay for a longer time in a single place and then go to another place. But even then, I think it doesn't fit me because I'm still on my base here in Portugal, you know? I might go for a month somewhere else, but it's unlike other digital nomads.

They stay for six months somewhere else, six months somewhere else, but they don't come back, go back. It's like traveling around.

Because you're longer term, do you feel that you're not... That you're not in the digital nomad... Under the umbrella term of being a digital nomad because you're here long term?

I mean... In my point of view, yeah.

But maybe some other people's point of view is a bit different, right? Yeah. Because I did travel quite a bit, I think. But not for, like, oh, I work, I travel, I work, travel and work.

I think that's not for me. It seems like it's a bit of a waste of time to do both at the same time. I know some people can do it, but I don't think I can work 40 hours in a week and then try to, like, enjoy the evening.

Something like that. So then... Can you elaborate on what your identity is here? And maybe how things from your previous experiences or from being in Lisbon have influenced what you feel like your identity is here.

That's like... That's a difficult question.

Should I ask this to myself or... We can also go to other questions that might kind of help you in that general. Like if you have a pre-question. Yeah.

Okay, so how do you think your interactions with the local culture, how has that influenced who you are now?

I don't think that much. You don't think much? I mean, besides going to, like, Santos Populares and having a beer at the kiosk. But I don't think I have, like, gotten, like, the Portuguese culture that much.

Or at least I don't think I even know what it exactly means. Yeah. Identities are kind of a hard one to talk about.

So I'm not sure how I identify myself in that. I don't hang around with Portuguese. I mean, I have Portuguese friends.

And they showed me... Okay, there's a couple of things I've done. That could be even a question, like, why don't we have any Portuguese friends here? I don't know. No, I do actually have.

That's another question. They invited me all the way in the north, like, not Braga or Porto side, but the other side, you know, in the east. It's like a small village area on a farmland, and it was his birthday, and they were, like, doing barbecues with pigs and stuff. Maybe that's part of the Portuguese culture.

It is. It definitely is.

Yeah, but I'm pretty sure it's also, like, a limited area of Portugal. Like, city Portuguese people, they're a bit more different. I guess also a lot of people, they like to surf, or is it also a minority? I'm not exactly sure. I think it's not a majority who like surfing, or who does surfing as a big hobby, right? Like, culture? I don't know. It's more like foreign people.

Even if there's a small minority of the people here, it's still, I think that's part of the identity of Portugal. It's like, oh, a surf destination, that's part of that identity, in addition to all the other cultural things. But I hate surfing.

Have you gone here before?

No, I've done it, like, for days in Uruguay, when I was there on the beach. Just couldn't stand up. It was just not normal for me.

And if you try this for, like, a full day, and you're just, like, swimming, and you get tired, and you're, like, on the beach again, reapplying sunscreen, think about, like, am I going to do this every day? Nah. So how have these, like, more cultural moments that you've experienced here, these things, like, going to these, like, smaller towns, being with, like, Portuguese family, being with Portuguese friends, how do you think that has impacted your experience while you've been here? I don't know.

Actually, one nice thing my friend told me when I was actually in the North was his family really appreciated that I was, like, eating everything, you know? And I like food in general. But I was, like, also surprised, because, you know, do you call that piglet? Guinea pig? No, no, no. Pork? Piggy, piggy. Small pig.

Piglet. I don't know. Small pig.

Piglet, yeah. I'm not sure what the... I'll find out the terms, I can type it in. Yeah, but in Portuguese, you have a word for it, and you've read it, you know? Bifangas? Huh? No, that's not piglet, that's just a sandwich.

Okay, at least it doesn't matter, you'll find it out. It's not.

Leitão.

Leitão, yes. Leitão, yeah. I mean, it's still delicious, though. Yeah, so I've been eating that, and also, like, they made their own, like, aguardientes and stuff like that. They had, like, a huge bounty.

That's really cool that they would make their own.

Yeah, so I was, like, just trying everything. They were like, oh, yeah, David, he knows, you know, because they really appreciate from their culture that, you know, if someone really, like, enjoys the food and tries, you know. Yeah, tries everything. Yeah, and then, you know, I don't know, that's part of their culture, so. He told me, oh, it was very nice of you. Yeah, like, that I like food, so I will do that. Also, like, I'll go, so please give me more aguardientes.

And you, like, know, like, how do you perceive the cultural differences here as opposed to your, like, home culture, either?

Oof, but then you have to go back to another question, like, what is my home culture? Yeah, because. I don't know. I think because I'm, like, vastly grown up in, like, different culture, right? Korean, like, I have Korean parents, so they taught me Korean manners and stuff like that. Also, like, hierarchy and how to, like, be formal and address people in a different way. I also went to, like, Dutch schools, and, you know, and so I learned a bit of both sides, so it kind of, you know, learned me how to, like, get into, like, different cultures, understand it and grasp it better, I think. Yeah. So for me, like, looking at Korean culture, I have to pay attention, of course, in the beginning a little bit, but once I get to know it a little bit, I'm like, okay, this feels a bit natural for me. Yeah.

Like, also when I was in India, I'm like, just pay attention, or, like, ask my friend, like, Indian friend, like, oh, yeah, or do you do it in this kind of scenario? Just be mindful. Yeah. Okay, cool.

Do you feel a sense of belonging when you're in Lisbon?

No.

Not at all?

No. No. Well. I mean, the thing is, like, I wouldn't feel anywhere where I belong, so. But definitely not, I mean, not definitely, but not here. I feel everywhere a bit of an outsider. Even in Korea. Yeah. At least for me.

Do you feel like you belong in another place or in multiple places?

It feels like I don't belong anywhere, but, like, in a bit more pessimistic way. Yeah.

Okay. No, I understand.

You feel like you fit everywhere, but no, I don't feel fit everywhere. Yeah. It's like I fit nowhere. Yeah. More towards that, yeah.

Okay, cool. Um. Have you noticed any changes in yourself since living here?

Oh, yeah, but you know that already, like, my diet. I mean, actually, I was being more healthy before I arrived that I didn't go to the gym because I was, like, looking into the gym, like, oh, yeah, but I don't want to go to the gym because it's, like, such a, yeah. So, I was, like, looking for other places, but they're too far. I'm, like, I don't want to walk or, like, go all the way there.

Yeah. So, I didn't go because I was, like, still trying to figure out what to do, but then I didn't go to the gym for, like, maybe half a year or five months or something. I mean, since, because I moved out from Denmark.

So, that was another month or something. So, basically, half a year of not going to the gym and drinking so much because I just arrived on Santos Populares. Yeah.

All right. Do you think you drink more, though, in Portugal than you drink in other countries that you lived in?

So, back when I was, like, not working out, maybe I was a bit more drinking than usual because in Denmark I was still working out, you know, so I cannot just go, like, every day drinking. Yeah.

But now, after the six months, I realized, oh, okay, like, because of my skill, I'm like, oh, shit, this is my lowest point, my highest point. So, I stopped drinking as much because I just wanted to go back to a normal weight. But then once I reached normal weight, I'm, like, seeing this as a challenge, I'm like, ah, maybe I can go lower, you know?

Yeah, like, you just said, I'm already on the way.

Yeah, exactly. I'm already in the habit of this lifestyle, we just continue. Yeah, technically I can stop right now, but I'm just giving that extra bit of... Extra push. Extra mile or something.

Besides in your health any other changes you've found?

I mean, maybe I do, but, you know, these things change gradually. Might be to soon.

Ah, no, that makes sense.

It's kind of like, you might discover... You might not discover, you will discover these new parts of yourself and not realize you discovered a new part of yourself until you've actually, like, seen it in hindsight, like, oh, wait, oh, look at all this growth, or look at... I can see, like, I can compare it when I was 21 or something, you know, I was very stupid back then. But, yeah, I didn't see that back when I was 21, right? But, yeah. Hindsight is 20-20.

What do you see for yourself in the future in terms of nomading, and work and just general life?

I don't like to think that far in the future. At least, if you put... I mean, it's my opinion, of course. Yeah. Like, I don't want to put too much, like, a big objective in the future because if I do, then if that doesn't happen, I would just be disappointed. Yeah. So it's like, you know, how do you say that? I don't know. Like, just going with the flow, kind of?

Yeah.

Just enjoy life. It's a very cheesy line in Latin, I think.

What, in Latin?

Yeah.

Carpe diem?

Yeah, carpe diem. Carpe diem, yeah. It's very cheesy.

So, how, like, is there any, like, things that you're doing to help integrate yourself a little bit more in your, the culture of Lisbon or your local culture?

No, I don't think I'm trying that. Or at least, I was trying to when I moved. I was like, okay, I'm going to take Portuguese classes, you know, and meet new people. But people are so good in English. It's a very international community. So it's not, you don't have to be too Portuguesey to integrate into an international community. Just be yourself, I guess. To get into those groups of Portuguese people is very difficult, even if you know Portuguese.

Is a very international community something you're already familiar with or was it not so much like that in other places you've lived?

No, I mean, my friend group is pretty international. But yeah, I mean, I think maybe it's because I'm getting older or something. It's like harder to, like, create, like, good friends. I mean, random people, you know, meeting, that's fine. But like, getting close to people is like, it's a lot of effort you need to put into it. It is. I'm already putting too much effort in my diet. I can only do one thing at a time.

Did the large international community in Lisbon influence your decision to move here at all?

No, I just want to move to the South. It doesn't matter where. First pay. I have some friends here. And then, you know, taxes are very lucrative. I still do it for me. So, yeah, that's the primary reason, nothing else. Like, I was, I mean, I want to move to a capital city, like, it doesn't matter where. Or, like, a big city, you know, where there's millions of people. So, yeah, that was my only goal. Like, it doesn't matter, South, at least a million people, probably two or more. That's all. And warm weather. Yeah. And good food. Don't forget the good food.

What are some places, or activities that feel quintessential to the experience in Lisbon?

Like, for me, I think, like, a bigger one is, like, the kiosk, like, lifestyle. Like, the kiosk in the park, the coffee outside, because the weather is good. It's, like, because of the weather, there's this energy of being outside on the patio, drinking coffee. Yeah, okay.

People sitting outside with a beer in the nice weather, yeah. Yeah, I think the nightlife is part of it. Like, the food, the way people's customs towards food. Like, the sunsets, I think, that's, I don't know if it's a Portuguese thing or it's, like, international. Because the international people always, you gotta go watch the sunset, you know? All my international friends love to go see the sunset. Yeah.

That's a big Lisbon thing, to go to Miraduro and watch the sunset. It's just typical of, like, a southern, like, southern European, but near the sea, like, of course, on a hill.

Do you think your perspective of work life balance has changed since being here or since starting to work completely location independent?

Here, in terms of work-life balance, like, the life is more important. The work isn't. It's just that it's a different work culture, right? And also, like, maybe also the worker's rights is a bit important. Yeah. Because in Scandinavia, in Denmark, like, people have, like, 37 work hours. So then, you know, they do their hours, and then, okay, I'm done. Yeah. But they do work effectively, you know, efficiently. I haven't worked in a Portuguese environment, so I cannot really say.

Do you find it difficult to stay focused at work when living here, when the weather is nice and everyone's outside, ...

Not at the moment. Not yet. Everyone's drinking beers and like, all the beers are calories. Yeah. But yes, if I wouldn't, like, be on a diet, yeah, I'm, like, looking outside... That, like, summer weather rubs off, and you're like, I'd rather be there. I go to the gym in the afternoon, and I walk back, and there's, like, a small kiosk there, and I see people, and I'm like, shit, I wish I was over there. Just enjoy the sun.

Well you could just get a coffee or get a water, and just hang out, and just sit, and watch people.

Alone? No. I hate to be alone.

Really? You don't like to be alone?

It's kind of weird, no? I mean, I could, but going there, like, more than once alone, that's not my thing, I think. Oh, okay.

So I know you said motivations to choose Lisbon were because of you wanted to live in the South European area, but like for the weather and..

It's food, man, you know. Food. Food, too? Food? Yeah, I think food is number one for me.

Have you encountered any challenges here?

So, sometimes it's very difficult because the older generation did not speak English. Yeah. So it's like, when I went to, like, some municipalities, like, to get my social security stuff. Yeah, immigration and all that. That would be a little bit tricky, but then I was speaking in broken Spanish. Like, the words I know, and I got it, you know. Yeah. Then they tried to also talk back, and I'm like, oh, yes, I know that word in Spanish. It sounds a little bit similar, so I guess I know what they're talking about. So that's, like, a language barrier from, um, with the older generation, mostly. Yeah. Especially, because I know in the social security, the office that I went to was not in, like, central Lisbon. It was, like, way out there.

Yeah, me too.

but also like that but also taxes but i think once you know how to do taxes it gets easy but yeah if you don't know any portuguese the whole tax website in portuguese yeah yeah so the language barriers for sure yeah and that's more with like um language barriers with more um not and it's not logistics is it logistics like paper documents and government stuff bureaucracy not in like your daily life the language barriers

And if going to bars or going out or going to a doctor or anything like that you don't have an issue with the language?

i haven't been to a doctor yet oh yeah i did go to doctor vaccinations but he could he was a young doctor he could speak english very well and i think it was more also like i mean it was a private clinic you know so they knew that you know people from uh with the expat background would come there as well um

Is there anything about lisbon that like you didn't expect that kind of like surprised you either about the culture just the life or just in general the city?

Yeah it seems I mean it's still big but it's smaller than I initially anticipated because it is a big city you would think you'd have like oh a little bit of everything but no it's a lot of portuguese yeah yeah you know back in my home city I would say amsterdam yeah that's all right it's better than denmark where I used to live I mean we're not copenhagen but anywhere outside um

Is there anything you want to share about like the journey that you had like here anything about the challenges about how how you just feel about your time here?

I don't know like I mean it's like it's a lot of like uh retroreflection right I guess this is more an introspective oh I should do that more often yeah introspect. Yeah I think I need to travel more while I have this uh perk um yeah maybe just like fuck off for sorry for my bad words go to like Madrid or for a month and just live there you know. I can do it, Barcelona, I can also go further like not limited to just you know where there is nice food I haven't also been to south of Italy but that gets too hot i think. Yeah, I don't think I would like to live in greece but I do have to visit greece I don't know I should do this like i think. That's the main thing like i've been thinking about this quite a bit i should travel more i should be more like a nomad. I'm not very nomadic. You know, don't stay in Portugal too long but yeah. I don't think it's that easy and it's no, it's not, it's not when you have leases and all that stuff that's like that makes things, yeah. It seems like a waste of money like my apartment and then I have to get an Airbnb but i could have like Spanish tapas every day of course. Yeah, yeah, definitely worth it.

Yeah that. I think those are my main points.

So in general you've liked it here, you've enjoyed Lisbon?

seven out of ten

Seven out of ten.

Seven out of ten.

okay and what would you change about it that's the question for me that's the question for me

Yeah I don't know economy maybe

I don't think i could ever find a 10 no. I think that just my personality of being always like you know like a bit more pessimistic never you know give something a 10 you know like just give it an eight, an eight has room for improvement.

Where do you think Portugal can improve?

I don't know more food better food i should cook more often that's one more thing like I shouldn't be like that's one thing I yeah that's something i need to improve as well because I really like cooking and i've brought some Japanese knives because my younger brother he was in Japan for a while. And he told me oh David i'm in Japan like fuck but you never told me that you were going to Japan or into Korea yeah he told me like he's got the parents and like he told me like 'Oh dude do you want me to get something', I'm like "oh yeah maybe uh some Japanese lunch boxes", you know they're kind of cute. They're so cute like rice bowls or something like that but then I already have a Japanese knife but then I chipped it. It's a small chip. I'm like I felt very sad it was my pleasure knife you know like good knife it's like everything for a chef like cooking. So I'm like oh you're there anyway can you get me like a very high-end knife and he got me one. I'm gonna have to pay him a little bit. So yeah I need to cook more.

I have this, I took my cooking, I had a cooking class last weekend because my friends bought me a voucher to go to a Portuguese cooking class. Never go there it's like yeah.

You went

I did go last weekend but don't go

Why not

Because it's more like american pensionist american yeah like pensionist pensionist yes 60 70 plus. They don't know how to use the electric stove. Yeah it seems like they never cooked in their life for almost now.

What did you guys make

i'll show you some pictures i haven't taken a picture of the main dish but like this this orange custardy thingy with egg right yeah and i forgot to take a picture of the main dish with this soup

Oh nice

I forgot to take the main dish. I had oysters. I mean you know you just shuck it. I thought I would, not like it

Oh you like, this is your first time trying?

I've never tried.

I don't know I did try it like I think 10 years ago yeah that's why I was like I'm not gonna like it, but then the the chef told me oh this is very good one you should try these ones. I'm like okay I'll give it another go. Like that's been a while and so I learned how to shuck a oyster. I've never shucked one though. Yeah, so, that was kind of interesting because I learned that and I was we also fillet the fish but i think i you learned to fillet a fish yeah but i've done it before i think oh okay i was like i've never filleted fish I was like seafood's a big part of the culture here so yeah that was pretty much it but uh I wouldn't spend that much money I'd rather go for like i'd rather like make dinners for other people or like learn it by myself and be in a group and be told oh you do this specific part of cooking and you do this part of cooking maybe it's more enjoyable if you're like with younger people with people who like to drink more or friends too and it's like a whole friend group does it together they can take more yeah but I just got a voucher i'm like oh shit i need to cash this in before it expires or something so i'm like okay this weekend free and i have to do my taxes and stuff like okay let's do it this night yeah so i did it it was all right yeah but yeah i do like cooking

Okay yeah well that's a nice taste yeah but the texture does kind of get me a little.

But yeah so we also went to like a market and like trying out like bread from Madeira and there's like surprisingly good bread which is never i'm never interested in bread because you know like uh grown up in like korean culture so it's like more rice and this kind of stuff but like i had some really good bread like with nuts and like wow i was surprised also cheese everyone loves cheese there's a lot good cheese though from a lot of places yeah so yeah i'm gonna go buy cheese now do you know the cheese which is like melty or no no no it's like a portuguese one solid or like it's like a you know a round one and then you cut top you put it outside for a while and it just liquidifies at room temperature that's the best cheese i think i've ever tried do you know what it's called uh I have it somewhere so it's a circle and then in the inside it's like soft on the inside but you put it if you put it outside let it sit a little in the sun it gets like liquidier and you like you like dip yeah you can dip it yeah no but Brie has like a similar vibe but i think this is

I think I know I feel like I've seen what you're talking about but I haven't had what you're talking about because there are a lot of softer like cheeses that on the outside they're firm but on the inside

It's very soft in in Portugal or not in Portugal maybe it's the same cheese in Portugal where is it oh man I hope I didn't lose it i want to actually... figure out where you can buy it so i can bring it to you know to my parents

You know there's like some of the bigger grocery stores have bigger cheese departments that you can or El Corte Ingles will have for sure

oh that's so good

serra estrela cheese

I had it like three times because on New Year's Eve but yeah I like to cook and I should cook more but I think after taking the cooking class and going to the market, not the cooking lesson, the market I'm like yeah I'll cook more after my diet, I forgot how to pronounce 31 in Portuguese but 31 nice.

I haven't been yet but I've heard good things about it.

it's like apparently one of the best in the world

Nice okay I gotta try it I feel like I know I've seen it I think

Any closing comments, additions that you want

I should have prepared for it like a punchline you know so you can like quotation marks in your yeah yeah to add it it can be like one of the the head

It can be the title

You know if it's a good quote it should have it should be something in portuguese that would add it much better but i was saying my portuguese not like it unless it's like an idea or something oh okay no this is something I like to think about can I come back to you later

No worries if you come if you think of something it doesn't have to be like a like a pun it doesn't have to be in Portuguese.

but also your thesis will be more fun

Yeah ,no worries if you have nothing else to add.

Participant E – Interview 1

Interviewer: Paloma Schafer

Date: 08/05/2024

To start like okay. Well, I know you're Portuguese, but they don't know you're But why did you decide to come to Lisbon?

So I Decided to come to Portugal Like one of the reasons was that I'm, I've lived in Germany for so long and I didn't want to keep living there. Like where I studied was not I moved away from there. And so at home, I didn't really have a base anymore And then I also met my boyfriend in Lisbon and we decided to move together back to Lisbon. So that was like the initial reason why I came back in November

And what were you doing in Lisbon before, when you had met your boyfriend?

Before I was here for my master degree. Yeah, and then after master degree I moved back to Germany, traveled, tried to find a remote job. It's quite harder than then I believed and then once I got one, I moved back

Why did you choose Lisbon for your master's of all places?

I'm Portuguese but I have never lived in Portugal and I wanted to experience that, connect with that part of me.

Do you feel a sense belonging here, coming from a Portuguese background?

No, I actually feel more foreign here and it's crazy It's because I I have this like German accent like when speaking Portuguese and so everyone here is like, where are you from? And no one guesses Portugal. Everyone is like you speak very good Portuguese for a foreign person. So I feel like here especially I'm in such like an international and I'm such like an international circle. I don't have Portuguese friends. So for me, it's quite hard to feel Portuguese I feel like

Lisbon is not really Portuguese. Everybody talked to everyone says the same thing. Yeah, it's like more I feel like here I feel more foreign than I actually do in Germany.

Yeah, and Like growing up did you feel really well like connected to your Portuguese culture?

Yeah at home I did just because we had this rule at home that we would just speak Portuguese. So, we like, we never like spoke German at home. So, we always speak Portuguese and my mom cooked all the Portuguese dishes and we did Portuguese celebrations. We celebrated Christmas like in Portugal, like with Portuguese food. So, in part in Germany, I actually feel very Portuguese because my parents are quite Portuguese. So actually more than here.

Oh, wait, what are you doing for work right now?

Oh, I work as I do a traineeship in PR. So like at a startup.

In Germany?

Okay, I'm not so they didn't say anything when I started, and they know I'm here but everyone else is in Germany. And like for example now we have like this work trip and I have to go to Berlin and we needed to book our trains, but I have to book a flight and they don't cover that. So I'm flying to Frankfurt to take a train to Berlin. It would be easier for me to fly straight to Berlin, but the flight to Frankfurt was cheaper and they arranged a pick up from the train station not the airport. So I would have to pay those extra things you know.

Yeah now I have like Yeah, I'm like whatever. Yeah You've worked with them for them for six months

Yeah,

How long were you gone?

I was gone for six months actually I don't think I've known you that long but I guess I have. I know. I think I know you like for one and a half years.

I really only been here one and a half years.

But I guess I met you, I must have met you earlier than I realized because I feel like it hasn't been that long but I've was gone and came back so that was a year.

Yeah, and then you came back and now you've been here six months. You know, I met you, I met you No beforehand because I wanted to move in an apartment of Mariana. That was last year January.

Yes, that's how I met you. And I knew And I was next to it and I had Mariana's contacts. I texted her about you. Yeah, and And I think I saw you guys I remember last year I saw you a lot

So that's obviously being said like Easier in terms like you already know someone but did you already have friends in Lisbon?

For or friends who are gonna be in Lisbon the second time I moved here first first time I did I have my family But they live in Porto. So I didn't have anyone here in Lisbon. Actually, I I moved here and I knew zero people but then in you knew you kind of meet weekly people So from there, I find I found my people and now when I move back actually my people from uni were gone Yeah, but the people that I knew from Lara.

Yeah So I kind of still have a friend. That's what you say. You meet, people leave and that's what was a little tough.

Yeah, do you have no like friends here that you are like that are planning to stay here longer Past their current uni?

I have my friend Maya actually She's from Poland and she doesn't want to live in Poland due to the like political situation But also due to like the job opportunities there they are not better than in Portugal so she's like, okay I'm just gonna stay here and stay.

Yeah, so she's staying long-term. How long do you want to stay? Well, how long is your traineeship?

So my traineeship is until November and then I get into a junior position there but I want to stay until August actually and then go to Poland for a little bit and Then I wanted to travel and then come back in the winter August. Which is like nine months just a good amount of time, especially they like working once you're not in school It's like different you kind of when you have the funds to like do more Even though I'm earning German minimum wage, but that is like a medium wage here. Like it's enough that you live you can go out and enjoy yourself here.

That's good. I think the German minimum wage is much higher than the Portuguese.

No, I remember when I first moved to Portugal I was like eating it like this burger place and they were like looking for people and I was like still the students I was Just like asking out of curiosity. What do you pay? They pay three euros 20 an hour. And if you want to eat there at the burger place, you have to pay yourself and one burger was like 18 euros. And I'm like, this is crazy.

What platforms what are you using for work right now?

So what I used to find a work what I use for work just for work in terms of I use any softwares I use Google a lot like Google Meets and we use slack and we use LinkedIn a lot a lot because we like we Reach out to journalists.

So it's like our platform. We use all like the Google channels like docs, yeah, but you communicate mostly through slack, yeah And it's every it's most people like German

And are you on a contract or working independently for them?

No, I'm on the one-year contract and after this year they can prolong the contract if you like finish the traineeship within the year they can promote you to a position, which is what they usually want. But if not your contract ends after 12 months.

When looking for your next role would you prefer something that offer you the flexibility to move wherever is that how much of an impact does that have on like where you would decide to go?

So my thing is that right now for me, it's more important to live where I want But looking at salary like options you have working remote like if you work hybrid for example your salary Like I don't know that you 50% more. It's crazy how much more they offer you So I'm now not sure anymore if it's worth earning so little To live where I want to live like I'm starting to the older I get the more like, questioning if I don't want to work hybrid but from the other side. Besides Berlin I can't imagine going back to Germany and applying to other EU countries even though like we have this EU passport It's super hard because you need to pay taxes there and it's a whole lot of work for them. So they usually don't want they don't want that. Yeah, I know it's like a big thing for the company. They have to figure it's not like the individual having to figure out the taxes like the company they're like, oh, yeah I don't want to we don't want to do that unless sometimes when they're already like companies that are already scattered throughout Europe.

What Sebastian does really works for him because he's a software engineer so he works as a freelancer, Sebastian's my boyfriend.

Where's he from?

Poland

He works as a freelancer, yeah, and you can do that, in software engineering is huge. He's also a digital nomad. But he pays taxes in Poland and he's living in Poland right now but when we met he was living here for a bit. And that's how we're going to be able to move back together.

When you were applying for jobs after completeing uni, were you thinking about working remote or being a digital nomad?

Yes I already knew I wanted to be back in Lisbon and I knew I wanted to travel and to be able to visit Sebastian. But it was hard to find a remote job.

Are you guys going to get your own space? Will you cowork together at home or continue going t

Yeah, I don;t know. I think it depends on the flat because if it's too small then it might be distracting. Maybe I would just go to the coworking space, when like, I know that I'll have a meeting. But I guess it would also be nice, to like have that time apart, while we working, to go to another space, and not be together all the time in the flat, especially if the flat is smaller, yeah.

Do you go to coworking spaces mostly to work or do you prefer at home?

I prefer to go to coworking spaces.

Which ones do you like?

Oh, so I think a really pretty coworking space for example is Heden in Rossio, it's really pretty, then there is also Heden, there is also one by the water, and yup I think there are a lot of really nice ones, but I think the smaller ones where you interact with people are a lot nicer. There's a few near Cais

How have you seen yourself growing since being here?

Maybe my professional, Lisbon is such a space to meet people, people here open minded, traveller, want to meet others, you can meet people all the time, everyone is in a good mood, it's really easy to make new connections, really forced me to get out of my comfort zone. Sometimes in social interactions I can be a little bit shy, but you cannot be in Lisbon, but everyone is outgoing, which I believe is a nice thing. The opportunities to meet everyone really helps you get to know different cultures, improve your English skills, which

professionally is super important. You meet so many digital nomads, it's so inspiring, they tell you about all their life. Lisbon is a place where people really try and have a good work life balance, and that has helped me realize what I want for life, I don't want to work 12 hours a day to have lots of money, I want to have a happy life, enjoy life, go to the beach, enjoy nature.

Yeah, that's wonderful. So yeah we can stop here for today.

Participant E – Interview 2

Interviewer: Paloma Schafer

Date: 16/05/2024

You should look up the 1000 club.

Oh what's that?

It is like 500 foreigners and 500 Portuguese and they do cool like cultural events things that like help people and so the 1000 club is like a community where and you have to subscribe to it like you have to send a request to like enter the group and you then you were like they see if you're like eligible because they can just have 500 foreigners and 500 Portuguese and it's about bringing like like-minded people together and like people that are curious to like build a community and like people from like diverse backgrounds so they have like different parties that they do for for their community and to get to know people but also for people to maybe like help each other. And they have like different themes and different parties that they make and once a month they have like this get-together party where everyone can meet and it's called the 1000 club in Lisbon.

That's cool, I want to maybe look it up and see if I can add it to my list like some of the platforms that are used and people to get I don't know more into the Portu-

for foreigners it's nice to get more into like a Portuguese community

-and you have to live in Lisbon?

Yeah that's like you have to be in based in Lisbon.

Yeah I think it'd be cool the thing is which I wonder because I guess I don't know, I don't go. I think it'd be really cool to have like an organization not an organization but like yeah any kind of like club that is that organizes events but to make it as accessible as possible so that people of different incomes can partake but also that it would inspire people of diverse groups. Like for instance, I feel like if I went to a random event if it's geared towards internationals I feel like it's gonna be mostly women, mostly German woman, because that's what I feel like the city is.

Yeah like there's so many especially out of like our age.

It depends on the event of course but like if there was like Oh pottery class like every girl in here is gonna be like a German girl maybe an American girl maybe maybe one or two other random girls yeah but yeah I was like but also like all these activities are designed for people that have money. For example, also like they have like nomads that can come together in a coworking space before that you have to like be a member and yet not pay for it yeah and then you can join there get together and meet ups

-otherwise you can't join them?

Yeah so that's why I'm like I wonder I would like to make a more accessible.

Do you ever go to these types of events?

Not with them. Actually there are a bunch of like networking like yeah events happening in Lisbon I remember that I know some people that they went like to this bar up here and they went to like some networking events where they like but it was like networking events for people in business or for people in tech like it's always very specific because you will talk with people of your industry and that's it.

Do you know the rookie run club? There's a run club in Lisbon there's a couple there's more than one run club but there's one that's become very popular on Instagram, I've sent Xenia one but I don't think

It's the one, it's green right, it's the green one? It's the main one I've seen they do 5k here in Cais.

Yeah they do 5k. Yeah it's like Sunday and Wednesday twice a week. I sent Xenia so I was like oh that's cool it seems to be the most part of like I've looked at other run clubs in Lisbon I haven't seen anything everything else I don't that's like seems international like this one seems like this is an international type of run club this would be good for you know international people and maybe some Portuguese people who live but if it's like starting in Cais it probably is mostly like international people living here. Which is cool and I was just like but this is the only run club there's only one you know like where I think when I think of New York City. New York City has like a hundred run clubs and there's so many different things about them and I was like that would also be a cool thing.

They sound fun I don't run though so I'm like I can't do it but I'm like okay you could yeah but like I I can't because that their pace is too fast oh I think they have different groups I know but their slowest pace is too fast I've never run a 5k though

I'm also like a slow runner Xenia is a fast runner I'm a slow runner she's so fast like for me when I'm like I'm moving to Poland for in the summer like I'm moving end of July and for me it already gives me like a little bit of worries moving somewhere and not knowing anyone and I think many people feel that in Lisbon so I've been also looking at run clubs because that's a way like in a run club you don't just like go running afterwards like go for a beer or go for a coffee but a lot of cities besides Lisbon don't have, they don't have as many opportunities to meet people as you would think.

No like I remember that Seba he wanted to meet maybe some like Polish people here and he wants like on this Facebook groups but this Facebook groups that are meant for people to meet in end up being groups where people like put in a job offer or like yeah something like that but people are are not as much out for connection as you think they would be.

You know and I think if the people are it just feel maybe like maybe individually people are but they see that like oh this doesn't seem like there's anyone actually putting that out there so like I'm not gonna go to anything because no one's putting anything out to like no one's inviting me.

yeah sort of and it kind of takes like you need to have someone who's like oh hey we're gonna do an event yeah everyone come here and then some people will come to move on

whatever yeah no a lot of people are in a lot of people even if they are kind of there's like an invite they're like okay I want to show up to this alone like if you show up with a friend saying it's like oh it's easier but then I'm like yeah but you're with a friend you're gonna talk to your friend maybe you'll meet other people but you'll have the comfort of having someone. You won't be forced and some people that works but I don't know I was talking I was talking with Seba about it and he was saying so it's like different we were also talking that like the last year we've been traveling together but he said that sometimes he like he also enjoyed traveling by himself because when we are together or when he's traveling with friends he doesn't really meet people because he's like so comfortable and that he doesn't like feel the necessity to like interact with someone but he actually enjoyed it.

When he was in Ericeira for example at the surf camp and he didn't know anyone so he met some really cool people and he was like that's also like a cool experience and it's a different experience because you're more out there yeah and that's like I think what people like to travel is because of that.

It's like having those experiences the only thing that sucks is that when you do those experiences those are people who you have to leave.

Yeah and you don't know how long it's for.

Yeah it doesn't you don't do that in your own city because it's not as common like you're like being a tourist in your city you probably never see them again. Yeah you never see them again so you're kind of like great like maybe made a friend, maybe I followed them on Instagram maybe that's that's the end of that, you know.

Sometimes people stay connected sometimes like you update them from time to time maybe like twice a year end up in the same city at some point you're like well maybe yeah but not likely

What are you doing after this?

I'm meeting Lara because she wants to buy a present for Jeremias because he's leaving so I'm gonna go with her and buy a present for him that's nice okay well

What you had mentioned about what communities a little bit do you feel like there's a community that you are a part of here or not?

I feel like I'm part of the international community which is the German community I feel like that's mostly yeah like I also like have friends that are not German but I feel like the community itself is very German and it's easy like you like easily get into this German community. Yeah it is pretty easy they're everywhere that's true

Do you think with the co-working spaces do you feel like community within those people or not as much.

I think I don't but it's like my own fault because for me I don't participate in any activities that the co-working spaces do because I already have my people so I'm not that like I'm not dependent on the co-working spaces and so for me it's actually really just a way to like be out of the house and work and be surrounded by people but I don't even want to interact with them because I'm like in my work mode.

Is there a community in that you see yourself in, in Lisbon, or did you expect to be part of a more Portuguese community?

I would like to be in the more Portuguese bubble and community. I think that yeah I always expected moving to Portugal. I always expected when moving to Portugal that I would be friends with Portuguese people and experience like how they think how they are because I'm like I never grew up in the Portuguese community, yeah. But since they aren't a lot of Portuguese people in Lisbon actually yeah and I feel like the Portuguese community that is here is like very like closed up, yeah. I don't feel like I have the chance to like really be with Portuguese people and have Portuguese experiences.

Is there any memory that you like us more of like a specific instance that you experience that kind of gave you that felt pivotal to your experience here?

I feel like for me a turning point was last year when I finished university and everyone moved away I think there I noticed that community in Lisbon as quickly as you get into it as quickly it goes away and it disappears so in Lisbon friendship come and like they come and go not because you don't want to like invest in the friendships but if it's because Lisbon is not really like an end destination for most of people I feel like Lisbon is a phase for a lot of people so people are here for a good time but not for a long time yeah and so for me realizing hey I built this community of friends and it happened to me a couple times over the last three years I built this friendships I invested in them and I really like this people but they are just moving away and that was always when I noticed okay nothing is forever that the place is fleeting for sure

Does get a little tiring to have like a I feel like a revolving door of people.

Yes, I feel like Lisbon itself is very temporary like I mean I moved here three years ago the city looked different. But I also think you have to embrace that because there is always new people to meet and you make new memories.

I remember it used to look so different and now everything is closing, every new things are opening, and I feel like Lisbon is the constant transition of the city and people.

Yeah.

It's a changing place

In your field of work do you think there's enough opportunities for jobs that offer the kind of flexibility you have.

I feel like in times of COVID it was there were a lot of possibilities and opportunities for you like in communication or in PR but now they are very few and it's transitioning back to hybrid or on site but mostly hybrid. So to be fully remote it's not really possible, I think I just got lucky. The best way to be remote is to be a freelancer in whatever industry you go but working for a company itself it's really hard within communications and PR.

Are there's enough like freelancing opportunities in PR?

No I don't think so but I think in journalism or writing. Yes I think it's very specifically journalism. In PR not at all because there would, no big company would work with one PR freelancer they want to work with some agency that has a certain reputation, and so they wouldn't. PR is like such a cornerstone of like how the company will do and their image wise that people don't rely on just one person they want to have like a good agency so it's really hard as a freelancer and especially you are not if you like work at an agency and you learn a certain like work style of PR or you learn to work in PR. I cannot just go and open my own company and do the same that they are doing like I have to do something slightly different and you have a kind of... I feel like with PR you need a lot of media connections as well and if one

person like even if you have a lot like that's great but I feel like that's just one part of it and that's like the only thing that an individual can really like prove and show and bring to the table and besides that there's like so much work that would go into it like you'd have to have your own firm yeah.

Yeah or be like the business owner that's how you have the flexibility but yeah but since PR it's like usually you work with clients over a long period of time to build up their image and it doesn't really allow for freelancing because freelancing would be just for a certain project.

And also communication I feel like you can do a lot of freelance if you do social media, yeah. You can do that. Social media and journalism, I think are like copywriting, I think that's like if PR. I don't know if PR people really use copywriting much, but if they needed to for copywriting like they could freelance that, but that would be a firm having to freelance someone not the clients to freelance a copywriter, but that's about it. Yeah there's some industries there's definitely better than others for sure.

Is there any, do you have any goals on how you see yourself like working and living in the future or what your ideal would be, would you want to ever be like a freelancer or an entrepreneur or Would you prefer working remote for a company or even on site?

I have different ones I wouldn't mind being a freelancer if I already had a certain reputation where I could ask for a good amount of money so that it means I wouldn't be dependent to have 20 freelancing jobs in a month, I could just do three and do well then I wouldn't mind doing freelancing because I think it also helps you to like or like it gives you the possibility to be very creative and really make a choice who you want to work with, but I think for now I would want to work for like a big company in a team where I can still learn a lot from others because I don't think that I'm in the place yet where I could do like a lot of good freelancing. I would still want to like profit from someone else's knowledge so in a couple years I would like to be like in a big company just working for one client fully focusing on one client and one client that I would love what they do or love their product and like stand behind it. I would never want to work like more than 40 hours a week. I wouldn't want to do that and so that's the kind of thing if you work for like a big company they kind of like want to work over time but

yeah like a big company where I can learn from people and I can grow and then one day do my own thing, it would be nice. But I don't know what the industry will look like then.

Are you not optimistic about the future of work in your industry?

I think in PR that they are gonna reduce massively on people because with like with like all like this artificial intelligence they like they are able to personalize so many things and like they are able for one person to do the job of three. So I think for sure like reduction in workforce and I think there are gonna be a lot of like one-man shows where people are like one-woman shows where people are gonna do a whole department by themselves and or like in a very very very small team and I feel like the field is also like getting more creative because in PR for example every imaginable topic is already out there. So you kind of have to think out of the box so I think like some crazy ideas that seem crazy are gonna be like the way to go. Yeah it's kind of like you have to stand out especially if you're in any kind of brand that your creativity is valued for example, beauty brands, fashion brands, any kind of like more trendy things, like even food brands. Things that are really have a strong visual brand and visual mark is part of that and their creativity is a part of that they're gonna need to stand out. There's some brands that can kind of get away with having like I feel like there's legacy brands like insurance brands, banks. Yeah they don't really need to do anything to stand out beyond they can just they can work with things like numbers and stats they don't have to them being creative it's not giving us like anything you know like versus I don't know fashion brand or any kind of like strong like even like restaurants. But yeah it's different ways in the industry for sure and what.

So right now, how do you schedule your work time and separate that from your personal time?

Yeah, so I'm more on a schedule now since I work for a company, and because they're based in Germany, I work mostly their hours. I mean, it's nice because I'm not full-time, so I do have some flexibility with my hours, but like, I still need to be there for all the meetings, you know? So, I kind of build my day around that.

And I don't know if you have to, or not, but do you have to do anything for a work visa here, or do you have to do anything for taxes here?

No, no, I don't have to. I think the rule is that I would if I was here for a certain amount of time, but it's a lot of time, like I'm not going to. And, yeah, so since I'm German, I can work anywhere in the EU without anything.

So the same with Poland then?

Yeah.

That's so great, nice.

Okay I think we've covered quite a bit today, thanks.

Participant E – Interview 3

Interviewer: Paloma Schafer

Date: 27/05/2024

What's been your most memorable experience here? My most memorable experience?

I think one of the nicest experience I had besides like all the people I met. I think just Lisbon is the lifestyle in general that it's super memorable but I think also the half marathon that I ran with Xenia I think was pretty memorable. I think it was like kind of something like we trained for so long and then kind of like achieved. But I think Lisbon is like memorable in general. Like the work-life balance here is just so great.

And like how would you just summarize your time here?

I would say I had a really great time. Like I would say it was like 80% positive. I had a great time here. I think just the lifestyle of Lisbon is really nice. In Germany after work you're, In Germany like after work you're just like... I don't know and it's like... You're like you don't have the feeling that you're like you can really relax. And here I feel like after work I'm on vacation. There is always somewhere you can just go to take sun or watch the sunset. Even just going to a Quiosque it feels like a treat. So that's really nice. And also you like meet a lot of people. I think Lisbon is the perfect city to like network and make connections to get the most out of your free time.

But also I'm like the 20% that I would say is not that good. I think it's like I had some like times in Lisbon where I was like done with the city. Not because of like Lisbon itself. I think it's like really demotivating to like everything just gotten so expensive. And if you work here it's like really hard to make money. The remote jobs are super limited. Eventually I still found one from Germany but still. So I like that's the negative part of the city. But overall I had like a great time. It's so good.

So you're gonna be going back to Germany. You're coming back in January. What will you be doing in January?

I hope to stay at my job that I have currently until like maybe February, March. Just because I want to do some backpacking over the winter. So I think that staying at the same job it's just like easier because new jobs don't really allow you to work like outside of Europe. And then I hope to find like a better paid remote job and be back in Lisbon. I don't really consider a job in Lisbon because even if it's a good job it's still not good pay. And I don't want to stay the whole year in Lisbon. I like being able to come and go as I please.

And right now where are you moving to?

So right now I'm moving to Poland for what I believe to be August, September, October. Three months. And then I hope to go to Japan and Thailand. Then I hope to come back. That's my plan for now.

So your company doesn't care that you're traveling?

No, they know that I'm going to Japan and Thailand. Like I already told that because it's outside of Europe and it's time difference. For Japan I took three weeks off and for Thailand I'm just gonna hopefully work remotely from there. But I didn't tell them where.

How long are you in Thailand?

I hope for four to six weeks. That's what I hope for. I cannot really take much more time because they don't really want that from my company. They said they will try to make four to

six weeks work. If not, I might just quit. So I might just quit. Because I'm being so badly paid that I can find another remote job paying me the same. Yeah, so just quit, take the vacation.

Anything that you would change about your experience here? In Lisbon.

Something that was just like... But my experience in Lisbon would I would change? I think I would change that I didn't network a lot. Like I feel like you first come to a city, you like make your connections and you stay in like groups that you meet and you stay with people that you meet. And then you get comfortable and you already have people that you know and like people that you like and your friends with. And you don't really like put yourself out there anymore. But like I think I would have networked more. Because I think it's really beneficial to just like have a bigger network. If you're looking for a job or just like friends wise. But also like in general, I think it's nice to get to know more people. And I think I just got comfortable with the people I already knew.

How important is it to you like to have remote or like flexible work?

Really important. I'd say like 70%. Being like in a long distance relationship, I feel like it's just giving me the most freedom. I feel like it would be really difficult like if Sebastian and I wouldn't both work remotely. I think it would be really hard for us to do Lisbon and Poland and like travel together. So I think like for the life that I'm having right now, it's one of my top priorities. When I look for work, it's remotely. And second comes the money. So completely and I'm like, I don't have any responsibilities right now. Like I don't have a family. I don't have like I don't have kids. I don't buy anything. So I don't have like a certain amount of money that I need to have. I mean, I have that for like what I need to survive but not like I don't have to stay in a place because of kids or whatever.

So for me, it's really important to be able to like travel as much as I can and earn okay to do that. Also so that I can see Sebastian.

Okay, so like how did you guys meet?

We met on Bumble. We met and had our first date in the park. That was really nice. And it was actually super nice to like date in Lisbon. I think Lisbon is like a really cool city to date. You have a lot to do. There's a lot going on. It's like good vibes, good weather. So that time was good.

I think it got really difficult when we started doing long distance. Like we were dating two months and then we did long distance.

Where were like some of the places you guys like to go to?

I think everywhere. I think we like two weeks after we met, we went on this little vacation to a little bit more north. Like to this like tiny house, which was really cool. I think Portugal in general just like taught me how like important it is to have a life outside of work.

I think like in some countries, you look at like really stuck and it's very competitive. I think Portugal is not competitive at all. Like the like job market, like people here are not that much concerned about making the most money. They are more concerned about having the best life. And I think that's just like the lifestyle that I took with me. And so it was really nice like to date here and to have that experience.

But I also think Lisbon is quite a hard city to date because everyone is here for a good time, not a long time. Yeah, everyone's here for a short amount of time. It's fun to be dating. It's hard to do a longer term relationship or to look for a long term relationship when everyone's leaving. But yeah, I think when that first stage of like dating, the dating part of it, where you're going out to eat and you want to go hang out, do new things all the time together. Yeah, it's a good city.

It's the nicest time. There's so much to do. And I think I didn't like, if I'm talking like about like the experience that changed me more in Lisbon, I don't think it was Lisbon itself. I think I never really valued Lisbon. I knew what Lisbon was and I knew how great of a city it was. I noticed how special the city was to me and how much I changed when I moved back. I think that was like really life-changing for me. Because when you're here, that's just your life. You don't appreciate it that much, because all these beautiful moments you have, they become part

of your routine. Sometimes you have these little moments where you're like, oh my gosh, I'm so thankful to be living here. But like, that's not how you feel the whole time. Like you have your life, you have your problems. And then everything like overwhelming or like on top of that. But when I moved back to Germany and I noticed like how life works there, I appreciate it so much. And that's why I came back. That's why I think I will always come back to Lisbon. I think it would always be like my home, kind of. Your home away from home.

Yeah. That's nice. Yeah, I think the same. I also don't see myself leaving any time soon because I want to just stay until it's really like not possible for me to stay.

Can you tell me about a moment when you felt that you were at home on Lisbon?

Hmm.. I think a time when I felt really at home, it was when I was living with really good friends of mine in intendente, and it felt like you were living with family. I think that people really make a place and sharing special moments with making a place be your home, so we were all in our living room we had a balcony overlooking praca de intenedente and we. um were singing, cause I had some italian roommates and we were singing some very Italian songs we had made some pasta, and we were just dancing and all singing together and it was just a really wholesome moment and I actually felt that I'm at home with very special people.

Where there any places or people that facilitated connection with others?

Yes, there was definitely people who helped me connect with others, one of my closest friends who was Laura, my previous roommate, she lives in Berlin now, and she was just a social butterfly even though she had her group of friends, she would always make sure to meet you new people and bring new people to the group. We were super close she'd take me everywhere, I became super close to her group and we built our own group of friends and she was very inviting, and she took me along and I made great friendships because of her and she's still to this day one of my dearest friends and definitely when you have someone that is outgoing, cause I'm this kind of person that whenever I have my group and I feel comfortable with them then I'm not proactive in or interested in having more friends or building more friendships, whereas she was always keen to making new friendships while still caring for her

for the friendships she already had, yeah definitely having friends who are social butterflies and who love you and you love them a lot.

How important have these friendships been in shaping your experience of Lisbon?

They've been everything, honestly. I think when you're living in a place like Lisbon, far from where you grew up, your friends really do become your family. They've made Lisbon feel like more than just a place I live—they've made it feel like a true home. And I think that's rare, especially in a city that's constantly changing with people coming and going all the time.

Do you think there's anything specific about Lisbon that fosters this kind of feeling of home?

Lisbon as a city has this really welcoming vibe. It's hard to put into words, but there's just something about the way people interact here. But at the same time, I don't think I'd feel as strongly about Lisbon if it weren't for the people I've met here. I think because it's so international, and because a lot of people are here temporarily, everyone is looking to make connection. I also think that the places here, and the lifestyle of like always being out helps too. I feel like I don't have much desire to stay home because there is always somewhere to go. Like if you want to chill, you can go to a quiosque, or cafe, or miradouro. Or like running along Cais, it's so beautiful why would I stay inside and go to gym when there's a perfect place right here. I feel like the life I have here is hard for me to replicate outside of Lisbon. The vibes not the same, the views and the atmosphere. It's a combination of everything.

What would you say is your go to place to hang out in Lisbon, but not a workplace?

Um, this is hard. I guess, it's not one place but I really love running from Cais to Belem. I run sometimes with Xenia, but even alone at sunset. It's so beautiful. And right now, I've been coming here a lot for bagels.

Yeah why did you pick this place for our interview?

I've been really loving the bagels here, I used to come a lot with my friend Nora. And it's a nice vibe in here. I used to live around here so I would go to places here all the time and I missed them when I was gone, but I don't live nearby anymore but since I go to the coworking space here, then I go to all my favorite spots during lunch, like here (Rhodo bagels) and Buna, have you been to Buna.

Yeah once but I know Nora is there all the time.

Yeah Buna is nice.

And now you are living in Arroios right?

Yeah, Arroios.

How do you like your neighborhood over there.

It's so different then here, but I really like it, it's not as many tourists and it feels a bit more Portuguese but it is still very international. But I like it there too and I am closer to my friends there. But I still feel like I hang out in the center most of the time, so when I move back if I'm not living in Arroios I probably won't need to go there for anything. I haven't explored it as much though.

I know Arroios pretty well if you want recommendations. There's a nice little wine bar there.

Oh really, you have to send it to me before I leave.

When do you leave?

July, maybe, end of July, because I will go to Germany before Poland.

Where do you keep all your things when you move? Is it a lot to move everything?

Yes! Paloma! I have so much clothes and everytime I move I have to get rid of some but I'm becoming better. I am still going to have to send a box with my things to Poland, and Sebastian is already there. So I will send my things there and then go home to Germany. I have some things in Germany too, for like the winter, that I leave there because I'm not going to use it.

Yeah I still have so much at home that I haven't even seen in two years, I don't even know what's there.

Same, I don't know what else is there but when I go home it's like I'm going shopping in my own closet.

Okay so you mentioned that you'll be in Asia this winter after Poland. Is this amount of travel typical for you, have you always been a big traveller?

Not really, because before I did not have a remote job and I was a student. I also don't think I really knew that I wanted to travel. At least not so much that I actually made plans, especially not any longer travel. It's easier now especially with Sebastian because we both work remote, and we can go together.

Do you think it's cheaper going as a pair?

Yes, a lot cheaper because we can split the cost for the rooms. Also I just feel safer with him there. And my parents feel better about me going with a guy and not alone.

Sounds like it's going to be so fun.

Yes, I'm excited.

Okay, thank you again for your time.

Participant F – Interview 1

Interviewer: Paloma Schafer

Date: 14/05/2024

So, why did you choose to come to Lisbon?

Okay, since I was a kid, I think I always dreamed to live near the ocean, so I always had this thought that I have to move somewhere with, like, sunny vibes, ocean vibes, and all this kind of situations, but why did I move to Lisbon was, like, the war, of course, the war started, and I ended up in Poland, but I already lived in Poland, so I didn't feel like coming back there, and then I was like, what was the other country I wanted to move in, and I just remembered Portugal, because I also had tickets bought from Poland to Portugal, so I've decided to take the chance and go there for, like, 10 days of vacations, and then just stay here, and yeah, before everything happened in Ukraine, I was already trying to find the ways how to move to Portugal, how to move to... I didn't... I wasn't thinking specifically about Lisbon, I was thinking about Portugal in general, and then I just found a family who accepted me, and they were living in, like, in the outskirts of Lisbon, that's why, like, when I started living here, I loved it, and I stayed here, and then I decided that, okay, I could move to a smaller city, but I came from a big city, so it's kind of... it will be kind of boring for me to be in a smaller place, and Lisbon is, like, quite nice, yeah. And it's not that... it doesn't feel like it's that big, you know? Like, sometimes it's a small city, but... Yeah, I mean, even if you live in a big city, it's still, like, you go to the same places and you do the same... Yeah, you see the same people. Yeah, you see the same people, but it's just the feeling, you know?

And so you came, and you had already arranged to live with people?

Yeah, because I was... it was the... like, I thought if I will find something where to live, the free place to live, then I'm gonna come here. If not, I'm not going to come here, and I managed to find it. I just kind of filled the form for, like, refugees, so... and just, like, they answered me, and when I, like, when they confirmed that they can accept me and my mom at that point, I was like, okay, like, then I can go, because otherwise I would stay probably in Poland, or I

would... I think I would stay in Poland for, like, a few months and come back to Ukraine.
Yeah, so it was just, like, a big coincidence.

I always was thinking about this, like, this country, this place, but just, like, yeah, the things just worked out in a way. Not in the best way, but yeah, that's how it happened, yeah. Yeah, cool.

And so you always wanted to live near the ocean. Is there a reason on why, like, Portugal specifically was attractive to you? Like, do you have... do you remember any moment where you were like, oh, like, this is a cool... it would be a cool place to be, or any things about it specifically?

So I always... I never... I have never seen the ocean, so it was more like, okay, I've seen the sea so many times, but the ocean always felt like a romanticized dream of, like, wow, it's just something that big, that powerful, that I... in the first place I wanted to see it, and then I was like, okay, what's the closest part, like, what's the easiest part for me to get to the... to the ocean, and just, like... and it was Portugal, because it's still Europe, so... and it's still Europe, but it's still something different, because it's still, like, more edge of... not the edge of the world, but, you know... It's the last bit, furthest you can go. Yeah, the last bit, but, like, yeah, furthest I could go at this point, yeah, because other continent is a bit already... it's a different decision, you know? Yeah, it's... it's very far to be across continent.

Yeah, and more, like, if I would go more northern, I guess the weather is already, like, not... not the best, yeah, so that's... that's why, basically, it was Portugal. Is the weather in Ukraine usually sunny, or is it really cold? It... it really depends on the season, yeah, so, of course, we have a diversity.

Is your winter, like, really...

Yeah

..compared to the winter here?

Yeah, compared to here is much more colder, so... and in Ukraine, like, there is not that much sun, so people are more, like, depressed, and that's also, like... and plus we... it starts, maybe,

in, like, end of October and by the end of, like, March. It depends, really, from one year to another, but... but, yeah, usually it's, like, minus... it gets from minus... from zero, maybe, to minus, like, 15. It's really different. It's different every year.

But, yeah, basically, it's much more colder and we have the snow, but during the summer it's almost the same as in Portugal. Oh, like, hot? Yeah, it's pretty hot, but the hu... it's less humid, I guess. Yeah. But, yeah, but we have, of course, we have sun, like, during summer it's, like, around 30-35 as well, so, yeah.

And then, like, culturally and how you feel about the Ukrainian culture compared to, like, the Portugal culture, do you see any, like, similarities or do you think it's very different?

I think... I think I see more differences than... than kind of connections, I guess. It's still, like, far. I think, for me, it's more different. Of course, we are quite similar because we are still in, like, it's still Europe, you know, we are still kind of the same in a way, like, comparing to, I don't know, Latin America or just, like, America or Asia, but... But I don't even know if I can see, like, very strict, like, connections, like, very obvious connections.

Do you notice any very obvious differences in, like, just the way, I don't know, like, family life or just the general...

Oh, just, like, from the details, I guess, yeah, the way of living. Here people are much more chill. Yeah. And they eat dinner much later, much later. For us, it's usually, like, around seven and they, like, eat at nine and here they drink coffee during the night and... I don't... They work out more here, I guess.

Really?

Yeah, people are, like, skin... Yeah, healthier, for sure, skinnier. In Ukraine, like, more... Most people who are, like, more than, like, 50 or they're more chubby, I would say. So, like, I think it's just obviously people eat more, people eat less healthy, because I think here is more... Like, the wellness. People are more aware of these things and in Ukraine, for example, people have different problems, so they, like, think about, like, the country problem, you know, about some

shit first and then they are, like, okay. That's, like, yeah, their health isn't their biggest concern right now. Just, like, safety, maybe. But from what, like, I haven't noticed it, but my mom came down with her friend and they were, like, why everyone is working out, like, everywhere. Like, because we went walking... Yeah, and they were, like, what the fuck? And I was, like, oh, but we don't do it? Like, can you... Because I don't... Like, it's not like I don't remember. I wasn't paying attention about the amount of people working out. Yeah, working out. But here a lot of people, really a lot of people are doing it outside and, like, just... Especially this season.

Yeah I guess everyone is getting their summer bodies ready.

Yeah. And people just do yoga outside. I feel like our people are more, like... our people think more about what others think. Here they're, like, more chill. But it's also, maybe, here is also about, like... It's not Portuguese people, it's international. So it's kind of, like, you just do whatever.

Like, live the way you are instead of... And I think Portuguese people, they're still a bit cool. Like, they don't... They keep the distance, I guess, but not, like, French people or, like, Belgian people. But still they're, like, on the distance.

But our people, for example, we might seem like we are like this, but if you know someone, we are just, like, super open. We will be, like, your best friends. We will be telling them, like, everything, you know? Like, it's very... We are getting very close to other people.

But here, for sure, the sun affects people a lot. People are happier. Yeah, people are just... People are so broke. Their salaries are bad, like... But they're, like, whatever. I'm just... I'm just gonna join this... We have a park. The park is free. Yeah, I'm just gonna go have a slow morning. Yeah. And in Ukraine, it's different. I don't think that people value that much, like, the moments, you know. Yeah. They don't appreciate it.

You spend so much money on... Everyone just, like, goes and then goes... Buys, like, stuff. I feel like that's it. If you have the beach, it's nice.

But parks and people.. I guess it just depends on the city because I'm from Kyiv.

Is Kyiv, like, fast-paced? Like, go, go, go?

Yeah, it's fast. Yeah.

Is it a lot bigger than Lisbon?

Yeah it's big, and we have much more, you know, like, huge buildings, like, residential areas, you know. Not, like... These are all small. Yeah, here's, like, three floors. We have, like, 16, 20, almost, like, if it's not downtown. Yeah. A bit much more packed, I would say.

But, yeah, in Belgium, it was my first experience when it was, like, completely different.

Yeah. But from what I noticed, people were still searching a lot of for a lot of ways, like, how to entertain themselves. And I really felt it, because, like, it's the small city, but still they had a lot of events, art events, a lot. Just events on the streets, like, festas, you know. Yeah. They were just, like, gathering together all the time, like... But, like, the whole city, you know. The whole town.

That's cool, though.

Yeah. So, I didn't feel like I was, like, in a really small city. Plus, we had Lille. It's the city in France, which is bigger. And it was, like, 20 minutes by car. So, if you want, you can go there.

But, yeah. And why were you there?

I was doing my Erasmus there. And, like, the only two options were, like, either Budapest, either Belgium. And I decided to go to Belgium, because it was an art school. And for me, it was, like, the priority. So, yeah. That's why. And I lived there for half a year.

And then, after that, you went to Poland?

No, no. Like, I graduated from school. And I went to Poland straight away, then Belgium and then, I came back to Poland for one year.

And in Poland, what city were you in?

Warsaw. It's the capital. So, basically, from Kyiv, which, like, which is fast.

Yeah. I moved to also a fast city. Another fast city, yeah. But, actually, when I was in Kyiv, I was trying to avoid going to Warsaw itself.

Oh, you didn't want to go there?

I didn't want to. I don't know. Actually, I don't know why. From what I remember, I think I wanted to try to live in a smaller city, just to try. But in the end, just also, just the circumstances. Yeah. And I ended up there. But Warsaw is... I wouldn't say it's more, like, business-business, but it feels like that. I mean, in Kyiv, it's also, like, business-business, but Kyiv and Warsaw is, like, less... less soul, I would say, for me. Yeah.

Do you think Lisbon has a lot of soul?

Yeah, for sure.

How do you compare it to other places you've lived?

Um, I mean, Kyiv still has a special place in my heart, you know, so I cannot really compare it, because I live... I was born there, so it's a bit different. Yeah, because there, the soul is just my soul. It's just, like, my, you know, blood.

But here, I feel like the city itself and people, like, people make the, also, the vibe of the city. So, yeah, I for sure think that Lisbon has a lot of energy and, like, vibe, so, you know.

For sure. How long were you living with the family here?

I was living with them for eight months. So, it was, like, two years ago I came in March 2022. And, yeah, for eight months. And then I moved in with you.

Yeah.

That's how we met. Yeah. And now you're here. Now I'm here.

Do you like the neighborhood here?

Yeah. I always, like, I hate love it, I guess. No, I mean, I love it. Yeah. For sure. But I always feel like I want to try other neighborhoods. But then I'm like, but it's still, but, like, it's far and all my friends are here. All literally. All my friends are here. If everyone would be, like, just, like, around the city, then I would consider moving, like, closer to the ocean for sure, to the coast.

Finding housing here and your housing, how it's been.

Like, what's happened, what you would want for the next... Okay, so basically, after I moved out from the family, I moved into Erasmus' house with you, there was 10 people on the floor and I don't remember how much we were paying, like 450 maybe? I think 450 in the beginning. And it was nice at that point because I didn't have that much friends, so it was a really good opportunity to find people around.

Would you say that's how you made most of your friends?

For sure, for sure, because we had like a party house and from being by myself all the time, spending time only with like a few people, I ended up like meeting a bunch of people every week, I don't know, like... So at that point it was really nice, but it was in Erasmus' house, so after half a year obviously everyone is leaving. so it was a sad part of it. So then I went to Ukraine and realized it's pretty hard to find an apartment when you're not in Lisbon so I came back to the same house knowing that I don't want to live there anymore because 10 people is still too much, like it's already too much for me and I had already different priorities I would say.

I was already more stable with my friends, with the job, with everything so I had a different goal. I really wanted to build a routine and be more feel like home and not like I'm in the party all the time. But I still moved in there and after three months I moved out because my friend offered me an apartment and now I'm living in the apartment with two rooms which is amazing and I'm paying slightly, I know I'm paying even five euros less which is amazing. But I have to leave this month. I hope to find a room that is like maximum 500 and it's still a lot for me plus the area that I want which is also like where I live now um it's quite hard to find something normal with the window and like the room that will be at least big enough to have a desk because I also work from home so yeah. Yeah no finding a room in Lisbon is probably one of the most stressful things I've ever had to do.

Yeah but it's it's the problem for everyone. Oh okay. I mean like Paris and yeah like a lot of like a lot of places. It's almost not even capitals honestly. Yeah just a lot of cities. Europe Yeah a big problem was this.

I found a really good option today um and like and the girl has cats and it's only two two people but she's like no male visitors and I'm like like I'm I like I understand but like what if it's just your even like friend. Just like not having or maybe you have some like relationship at some point. I wouldn't really like to have that kind of rule. And this place is amazing like but you still pay a lot like you pay money and you pay a lot of money for the room so I want to be able to host someone or to yeah to like do your own thing or do a dinner or just to feel like I'm home and not like yeah just to be afraid or hide someone you don't want to feel like you're a

guest in someone else's home you don't feel like it's your home and that I think that is hard to find though in Lisbon there's especially when there's a lot of these like student apartments that are they're clearly like advertised for students and like each room is like a certain way as opposed to when you just find people who just live somewhere and they're like yeah we have a room available that's why Facebook is a little bit better for finding yeah because I mean it's yeah it's more of those apartments it's it's it's more of those like like some there's just like one landlord that is renting the rooms and they're just like looking for whoever and they just want you to follow the rules.

Yeah, I know it's hard to find a decent place that isn't a student accomodation.

Tell me about just what you do for work and employment?

I mostly do you know graphic design and um like half a year ago maybe I started to doing more web design as well but it's just like naturally came to me um I never learned for web design. And I will like yeah so now I'm doing basically two things like branding and websites but just the visual part.

How do you find clients?

Mostly it's just one client is selling to or clients have other how to say um co-founders or like partners yeah partners who also have some businesses and they just like ended up reaching out to me. Because I barely look for clients by myself I'm not good in this yeah. Yeah I would say it's hard to find clients by yourself. Yeah it's it's very hard like I was trying to find but um this for me it's really hard because I don't know how to sell myself. It's like the hard part of it for me. So yes basically that's it and for example if I finish one project then the same person might need another project or if they're opening the business and then like the business needs more things consistently or some projects might last for a long time for like months if it's like a big project. So yeah that's basically how it is.

How did you start freelancing here, how did you get into it?

How I got into it I just studied in the university and then uh like in Poland it was pretty hard like I was I was finding some clients but it was all not good not good communication, not good projects, clients didn't know what they they wanted. I didn't have much experience so only when I came back to Kyiv I guess I my friend gave me a client we started working with him and then I just found a job in the office through through my friend because she knew someone and then I just went on the interview and they just took it took me after after a while but anyways that's how I got into it. yeah but back then I was working for a company and then like I when the war started I just moved to remote and then eventually had to go back to freelancing. Actually when I needed a job and one of our flatmates here was making a film, an animation, and he knew that I do graphic design and so he was oh can you draw my backgrounds, so yeah I was his background designer, but it was really stressful because he had to finish at a specific day and he had someone else doing it but he fired him. So when I started , it was not a lot of time left to finish. I was really stressed. And I also got a freelance to do the branding for the yoga studio while I was still working with him and it was hard doing two big projects.

How did the yoga people find you?

Through my sister, so that is also why it was stressful because I knew the clients and didn't want to do a bad job but I was so stressed. I think it made me more stressed, you know.

Well and how how do you like organize your time for that.

Oh I'm super bad in organizing time so I'm either not working or working all the time depends also on the projects if the project doesn't have like a strict deadline it's very hard for me to do it like straight away uh so I prefer like when I have more yes strict deadlines um then I can yeah organize my time better, because I just know till when I should do it um but yeah this is the bad side of freelance for me. Like clients sometimes don't know that they cannot write you like during weekends or they just think that like oh they need it now and they don't care and then they're like oh if you don't do something during the night or if you don't do something during weekends they're like oh why you haven't done it and you're like because I was resting. Yeah like I cannot be here 24/7 so yeah it's it's the hard part for me about being in freelance.

And are your clients mostly from Ukraine or Poland or like um or are they from Portugal as well?

Not too much from Portugal just my flatmate and right now I am working with a music organization here, doing their logo and social media, but the clients aren't Portuguese. Mostly Poland and Ukraine now it's more or less equal yeah Poland and in Ukraine I would say only so yeah.

What would you recommend for anyone who wants to do freelance web design or graphic design?

Oh actually wait when I when I was working for the company we just had a kind of a production studio, not the studio but like the production group and the guy who was working with me, he was like um oh how to say operate no like videographer yeah and he was editing videos as well and we were working together uh like almost all projects we had together. So he was doing a lot of freelance he was doing like crazy side works a lot so he sometimes when he didn't have time or it was more my specification he was just giving me clients and from that point it just started like I was working full-time plus some freelance more.

But yeah and suggestions to uh not to be afraid like good portfolio good for sure and like studying by yourself all the time because uh university didn't give me. It gave me nothing honestly it's also only like you really have to learn the things by yourself and it's never ending. Like clients think that you should know everything and they don't really understand, if you're a web designer or like if you're a graphic designer they sometimes think that you also do a 3d that you also do animation. Well they don't really understand the differences so it's better also to to try yourself in like in everything a bit but still have like a main direction where you work and try them a bit then choose like one and succeed in one and not like spread around.

Yeah um so I know you said earlier you didn't organize your time well but like do you use anything like do you use like do you make yourself like a daily calendar or like a virtual daily calendar or anything like that?

How I organize my time? Yes like every time I'm being too chaotic, I have to do something and then I I'm still too like I'm I'm like oh okay I can try to organize in like Google calendar or in Notion or anywhere and then I'm just wasting time organizing yeah and then I'm like I have to go and learn Notion and then I start learning Notion and then like I ended up just doing this and spending time for this for organizing it perfectly and then I never use it in the end. Maybe for me if I really have a lot of things to do I prefer to organize it on the paper yeah just write it down yeah write it down and then it's easier for me and quicker and uh yeah and it's just easier to to see all the like deadlines. I'm old-fashioned and everything yeah so that's basically it that's how I don't organize my time but like I'm the worst like I'm the worst person. I'm really either work all the time or I don't work.

Oh so what do you think about your work-life balance, do you think it's balanced or it's not balanced at all?

No it's not balanced at all because uh I I think about work all the time. I can be just anxious okay so even when I'm like trying to enjoy life yeah because also um because of the clients because they sometimes they text you right. Yeah they just can text you anytime and you can just be enjoying and you know that you deserve this rest but someone can just write you a message like, "oh I need something urgently", or "like why haven't done this", and you're like "oh how can I be here right now". I'm saying only both the negative things.

That's okay it's okay.

Okay cool.

Do you feel like you're a part of the like digital nomad community here?

No, no. it's basically like I work remotely that's why I don't feel like I'm you know like I don't see people. I don't feel connected to them but I know that the digital nomad community is like pretty strong here and a lot of people are going to meet up, meetups and...

You've never gone to a meetup?

No I just don't like this kind of events I would say, because I don't like people that are very very like business and they are just thinking only about this. And like I don't like when everything ends up being networking and not like just meeting new people, and I met this kind of people and they're like the first thing you're just like, I don't know, drinking beer, having fun, and the first thing they're like "hi I'm this one and I have this startup", and you're like "I don't give a fuck". Like that is why so I prefer to because I'm not looking now for any like networking that's why I'm not really going to this kind of events but I really know that it's like a big thing in Lisbon. And really a lot of people are maybe because also some people if they work remotely and if they are digital nomads they don't really have places where they can like meet friends. So it's one of the reasons they go there and that's the opportunity to find someone but I had just a different experience, because I met a lot of people just naturally through other like circumstances. From like the house..

...yeah exactly the house

But like other people don't have these experiences.

Yeah I mean most my friends are from the house too.

Exactly plus I feel like a lot of digital nomads here are rich and then they can really afford to to rent a place. Then of course they don't have even like flatmates and of course they have to go somewhere and like just to find people who have the same interests and it makes sense that you go somewhere where people have the same interests as you.

Do you go anywhere to do like co-working or just like work from home like what are your work from home like habits?

Um about the co-working usually I bring people here because I like my space plus I use few laptops or the monitor yeah so I'm not really flexible uh but it really depends on the project like sometimes um yeah sometimes I go I can go out.

So if you went on a trip, would you be able to work?

Um, I could but I would not. Sometimes if it, if what I need to do is simple and I can do it, but with just one screen it is annoying, just takes longer. And I have to bring my mouse. So for designing it's not great. And my laptop, the color is not correct, it looks different than the color on my monitor, that is why for design I need the monitor, or a new laptop.

Any other challenges to remote or freelance work?

My eyes are I'm like it's too bright I need, I need darkness for my eyes. They hurt.

Participant F – Interview 2

Interviewer: Paloma Schafer

Date: 22/05/2024

Oh, okay, what like digital tools do you use for work? Like easy, you don't have to think much about it. Like the programs? Yeah, like just programs, like what are you using, how are you communicating with people.

Okay, so I use mostly Adobe Creative Cloud, like Creative Suite? Yeah, Creative Cloud. Mostly Photoshop and Illustrator, if I have like..... So yeah, mostly Photoshop and Illustrator sometimes, but much more rare is like InDesign, Adobe InDesign. Or After Effects. And I also use Figma for my websites. And if it comes to communicating with clients, I mostly use Slack, I guess. It's like an app.

Is it free for you to use or do you have to pay?

Yeah, Slack is free. At least all the functions that I know, like are for free for sure. And with some clients, just Telegram or like more simply WhatsApp or something. But yeah, but with bigger projects, I use Slack mostly for communicating. And for Adobe, I don't pay. Adobe is expensive now, they are doing subscriptions, but I got it illegally years ago. I will never pay for it, it's so expensive.

And do you do like the Recibos Verdes for your clients or do you...

Yeah, I do Recibos Verdes. I mean, like for most clients, I don't do any if it's a small project, if it's a huge project, when the payment is quite bigger, then usually they require you. And for me, it's better not to do this because I don't have to pay tax. But for them, they usually require it. And then I do Recibos Verdes. So for other clients, like smaller projects, they just send you the money via... Yeah, but it's like when it's really small projects. Sometimes I do like, for example, like a poster or, I don't know, any small thing, like a poster on Instagram. And then, yeah, they don't really require any documentation about it, which is nice.

So when you file taxes here, do you find it easy or is it difficult? Sorry? For filing taxes here?

Oh, it's a disaster.

Really?

No, I mean, yeah, for me, like it's the worst nightmare. Always the taxes. And because I like I had an activity open, but it was wrong from the very beginning.

I like, not me, but like other people opened it wrong for me. And then like I talked to my like an accountant or I don't know who she is. But like I had a consultation and she said that it's all

wrong. So I had to change all of this. And then it turned out that I had to do declarations and I didn't do this.

So it's a whole mess. I mean, I've learned how to do like recibo esverde. But only this.

But I don't know the whole process about doing like, like, yeah, doing the whole activity and like paying it separately. So it's always like a bit stressful.

But what do you think about the general bureaucracy and getting anything done in Portugal? What's your experience as a non-Portuguese?

Actually, my experiences weren't that bad. Just because they made it much more easier for Ukrainians. So when I came, I just received an online document with all the numbers, all like NIS, NIF and everything. But it's just an exception of the rule. All the other stories that I hear are super awful. But of course, eventually, I will face the problems with the residency.

We also discussed it a bit that I will have to wait for years probably and not being able to leave the country. But for now, they are just basically making an exception for us. So yeah, in this case, it was pretty easy for me, I would say.

So you just had to fill the form that you are a refugee when you entered, blah, blah, blah, under which circumstances. And they gave you this document that allows you to work. But also, for example, when I went to the hospital, when I was trying to sign up for the hospital, then it was a mess. Because I came once, they were like, oh, we can only sign you up here, in this hospital. But to get to the doctor, you have to come in three weeks and only in three weeks you can make an appointment. I came, I made an appointment, they made an appointment in a week, I came in a week and they said, oh, the doctor is not here. And I was like, why? They were like, he's just not here, let's make an appointment in another two weeks. And I'm like, but do you have a guarantee that the doctor will be here? And they were like, ah. I was like, okay, I got it. And I just never came back there.

But do you have your hospital stuff now or no? Do I have what? Do you have your stuff for the hospital or you signed up at a hospital?

No, no, no. I mean, yeah, I signed up for the hospital, but I never went actually for the... Yeah, I was just going to private clinics after that because I really needed it. It's not like I could wait for another two months to get to the doctor. But yeah, from what I heard, all of these things are super, super slow here. It's very slow.

What do you, in your opinion, what do you see as being like the future of work for you? Would you want to be working freelance or would you like to try anything different?

My ideal for sure is working for a company, but like fully remote, but with an ability to go to the office. Something like this. Like a hybrid, but like not forced hybrid, like not forced... You don't have to go to the office. Yeah, I don't have... Yeah, I can, but I don't have to. So, and plus also like that I'm able, if I'm working for a company, that I'm able to work from anywhere and not, for example, only from Portugal or not only from European Union. Yeah. But like from whatever. Yeah. Because sometimes I feel like I'm not really good working by myself at home. And on those days, like on these days, like I would prefer to go to an office. But in general, I like to have this freedom. Plus, it would be nice to have like a flexible schedule, I guess. Yeah. I would be still like a bit of structure.

Structure. So, it would be really, like it's the best option for me. So ideally, you would be being able to work fully remote, but hopefully for just one company. Is that so that way you don't have to worry about getting freelance clients and just kind of having something more stable for stability?

Yeah, for sure, yes. First, like financial stability, benefits as well, plus taxes that they pay taxes, plus that I don't have to communicate with all the clients.

Sometimes because if it's in design, for example, you have the team and then they communicate with clients and then they are telling you what to do, for example. And because if you have so many clients on the freelance separately, then it really takes your energy to get

to know every client and their preferences and blah, blah, blah. So it's really sometimes less stressful at least to work for a company and yeah, so for the future, I would love to have this kind of things. Because then you have the benefits and then I think you receive more and you don't have to really worry about the tax because then if you are freelancing, even for the company, you have to take care of all of your taxes.

Plus, I feel like when you also put the freelance in your CV, it's not very, like when they're looking, they're like, oh, okay, no freelance, yeah.

Oh, really?

Yeah, because they don't see it as like, Yeah, it's like they cannot really check the quality. They can maybe, for graphic design, they can see your past projects, but they can't really get a good idea of like, oh, you were with this company for this much time, it's a company that we know, it's credible. Because you can do one project and that's it. You can just choose what you put in your portfolio, but, and like, okay, in this case, it's good in my area, but in other areas where people, like when it's not art, when you don't really see the portfolio, like then it gets a bit harder, I guess.

Like I did social media for a bit, if I actually wanted a role for like a job, like they're not gonna really look at that as being like serious experience. They're gonna be like, okay, like. But I also have some projects, for example, when I was doing Instagram, like for my sister, this for yoga studio and like, I created the style, how they should post. And then I was still doing for them, like for one month, for example, 32 posts. But then they randomly stopped like posting what I, what I made for them and I was like, what the fuck? Like, why am I doing this then? And they explained that, yeah, okay, we have some events or we have some urgent stuff to post. So we don't want to like ask you every time. So they just preferred to like keep the style. Yeah, and they're like kind of tailored to what they need, but I was like, yeah, but I still, if I put it in my portfolio, or if I also give an Instagram page, it's still like, yeah, of course, that's what I have, like I have done. But like, still I cannot say, oh, this post is mine, this post is mine. So it's a bit, for me, like as a graphic designer, it's like, I don't like everything they post. I would do it

differently, that's the thing. For example, like it still looks okay. It still looks nice, but it's not me who made it. You know what I mean?

No, I feel you.

Sometimes you have to lie, and then you learn. That's the only way. Because, like, now it's still hard to find a job. And if you'll be telling the truth and everyone will be lying. Yeah. Then you're like. Like, you're, you're no one, like. Yeah. This is still hard. Then you're not gonna get anything.

Yeah.

But I do enjoy the flexibility I have because I can do other things in my day that I couldn't with a regular job.

Like what?

I don't know. Drinking. Swimming. Probably, yeah, swimming, is the only one that I actually do during the work day I guess.

What else do you like to do on your freetime? Any hobbies?

I try to draw sometimes. Even yesterday, I tried to draw. And the day before yesterday, I was like, I have to do it from time to time. So, but I feel like a bit, I'm forcing myself usually to do it. Sometimes I'm like, shit, I mean, I'm drawing, like why I don't do this anymore, I would say. And then I'm going like, okay, I have to do this. But sometimes, yeah, I love doing it. Puzzles. Puzzles. I love puzzling, all of this nerd shit, when like, nonograms and all this like, grandma things, this is really, like, that requires a bit of a logic course.

Are these things that you do by yourself?

Yeah, yeah, yeah, for sure. Because like, puzzling is like, it's just like a meditation for me. I can borrow you.

Well, I don't want that hard one.

I have another one.

Oh, good, good. I'm gonna look for a puzzle, so that I can do a puzzle, and then I can send it to you after it's done. I'll do it.

So that you can do it, yeah.

Did you finish your puzzle?

Almost, almost finished, yeah. But yeah, anyways, walking, I guess. Like, literally, like, yeah. But yeah, swimming, yeah, but I have to do it more often. But that's the thing that I was doing since my like, childhood. And now, actually, because like, of the class pass, I'm trying to try new things. I'm really like, craving for trying new things, and like, I tried paddle, for example, or like, tennis, I never tried like, tennis. Only ping pong.

Is this a new thing for you, to be trying new things? Or have you always felt the urge to try new things?

I think it's more recent that I was like, oh, okay, I want to try climbing, I want to try this, I want to try that. Because, I have an explanation. Because, when I came here, I just really had other things in mind, I think. And like, other problems that I really constantly had to solve, I guess. Or, I didn't have, for example, I couldn't afford something, or any circumstances. And now, I'm getting into more like, routine life. And I was really trying to be, to create this routine for myself. So now I'm like, oh, when I have this boring life, I can really do something new, I would say. I would also, of course, want to do surfing, and all of this. But I'm still, I don't know why, but I'm kind of postponing it. I don't know why. I have not been surfing in so long.

Yeah, me too. I've just been like, lazy to do it. Yeah, it just requires a lot of like, you have to go there, and it's also not that cheap.

It's not cheap, it's unaffordable. It's always like, time and money. It's a big time commitment. That's why it's one of those sports, you have to get super committed to learning it. And then, once you're really committed, and you learn it, then you start to really enjoy it. And then, it's easier to stay committed. I feel like there is a big barrier between when you get good enough that you're really enjoying it, that you really desire to go all the time. It's suffering. It's a lot of suffering.

Yeah, in the beginning, for sure. It's doing all this, to be in shitty weather, it's not even nice out.

Shitty conditions, and sometimes you get out, there's no waves, or the waves are so hard, you can't do anything.

Yeah. That's what I hate. Like, I hate it, but I wanna be good at it.

Yeah, the same shit. But I'm also like, I honestly, I have a fear a bit of... I'm scared.

I'm also scared, like, a bit. At last, I have a bad eyesight, and I feel like I have to get these fucking lenses, like, at least to see what they say, because I remember when I was surfing, like, when I just came here, there was, like, a trainer who was, like, teaching us, and he was showing me something, and I was like, I have no idea to whom and what he's showing, so. It gets a bit dangerous at some point, I guess, so.

Do you feel like surfing's a big, like, Portugal thing?

I expected it to be more, honestly. When I came here, I was like, yes! Everyone will be like, California. Yeah, you know what I mean? I was like, surfing vibes, but... Actually, in Lisbon, I don't feel that much. Only if you go, of course, like, to Ericeira or Caparica, it's more wet. But in Lisbon itself, I expected more. Lisbon, on occasion, I see people with their boards, like, on their way to the beach. It's not Lisbon. It doesn't have, no, the culture, the surf culture is a Lisbon thing. It's like an Ericeira thing.

Yeah, for sure, for sure. Even Caparica, it's like a little bit there.

But I also, like, when I came here, I, I don't know, I was using Tinder or something, and I was like, oh, I'll meet so many, like, surf guys. And then I was, like, I don't know, like, just texting with Portuguese guys, for example, who live, like, they live here for their whole lives. And they're like, no, I don't surf. I don't surf, I don't surf. And like, 80% of the guys were like, I don't surf. And I'm like, what do you mean? Now I understand, I guess, but still. It's also an expensive sport.

It is an expensive sport.

It's expensive as fuck, actually. Yeah, but I tried tennis when I came here. And I would love to do, I think I like padel more. I tried it here, as well. But for that, you need, like, four people, and usually it's quite hard to get. It's hard to get four people or you get strangers, and that's kind of weird and you don't know, like, the level of them, and you, like, I'm also just starting, and I don't know.

How do you feel about being a woman in Portugal, in Lisbon? Do you feel safe?

Yeah, I feel super safe, actually. Sometimes there's like, for example, the car where, like, the guys were stopping and, like, screaming from the car, oh, beautiful, or some bullshit like this, but it's happening everywhere in Lisbon. So it's not like I'm, but I was always the girl who, I was never afraid of someone going behind me or something. So I'm usually more, like, chill about these things, and I don't really pay attention to these things, so I don't attract it that much, I guess. So I haven't encountered any, like, super bad situations with this.

With, like, men here? Yeah, I mean, yeah. Even if I encountered, it wasn't about being a woman, it was more about, like, the situation or the person itself, was just, like, behaving weird. Yeah.

But not because I'm the woman, you know what I mean? No, just the people. Just, like, being drunk, someone was being drunk or something like this. It's, like, drunk people, because it's a big party culture, I feel like, in Lisbon, like, especially in, like, Barrio Alto, I feel a lot of tourists who are, like, just, like, just annoying.

I feel it less than in Ukraine, honestly. Oh, okay. I don't know why. It's not like in Kiev, it's, like, very dangerous. Yeah. But you see more people, like, drunk or high, like, I don't know, just being weird.

But, like, recently, I guess, now there are much more homeless people and, like, junkies. Junkies, I see much more. So it's more, like, concerning than drunks, I guess. Because also, like, tourists, yeah, they drink, but they also drink in one area, I guess, more or less. And sometimes, if I go there, I usually also drink. So it's, like, chill.

But, yeah, sometimes I feel like I see some people who are, like, but actually I see the same people in my area. It's the same people, yeah. Who are, like, just being weird and just screaming something in the street or doing some shit, but, yeah.

But in general, yeah, I feel safe, I feel safe for sure. But maybe, okay, lately it's changing a bit here. I think it's getting a bit worse, but from what I heard also, it got better at some point.

Yes. And how do you feel, like, about the Portuguese perception of foreigners, tourists, or digital nomads.

I think there is not positive feelings, but you don't really actually feel it. I feel pretty good here. I never, I think, felt any discrimination towards me, but I heard a lot about this from, like, Brazilians, for example. Even, like, our flatmates, like, they were telling that, okay, they went to university and, like, they were, like, oh, yeah, we are Brazilians and professors were, like, ew, you know? But then when they said, like, oh, Germans, like, to the other one, it's completely fine.

So in this case, I think, yeah, like, towards Brazilians, they don't really like it. Plus, maybe, I don't know, I feel like some people are getting a bit mad if you are, like, don't speak, but in, like, smaller spaces. But, like, if you live for a longer time and you just speak the language, they're like, what the fuck? Which makes sense, I guess.

And I also know that some people are getting mad that there are so many immigrants, and also, I think, towards, like, Nepalese or towards Indian, yeah. Yeah, but in my case, it's not that strong, I guess. Because we are also not that different, our culture, I guess.

So, plus, the circumstances why there are so many Ukrainians here also are different. So, and I feel much more better than in Poland, for example, much more better. So for me, just even this comparison is already, like, I feel good here.

But also, that's the thing, like, I don't really interact with Portuguese people, that's the thing. Maybe if I would be, like, surrounded by them, maybe I would feel different, but I'm, like...

Do you feel, in Lisbon, it's hard to make connections with Portuguese people?

Like, real connections? It depends, like, in my case, because I work, like, on the freelance, yes. Plus, just, like, that I... Ultimate, like, I just met too many, like, Erasmus and international people, yeah. But if you work for the company, and for, like, Portuguese company, then it's better. But still, in general, almost all my friends, they still speak more to, like, expats, or, like... Because, I don't know. And, like, every time we meet someone from Portugal, especially, like, from Lisbon, we are like, wow, it's so rare. We only have Joao. Joao is the only Portuguese person I'm, like, friends with.

Yeah, yeah.

I mean, we have, like, two, but it's not, like, Manuel and João, but they are, like...

Oh, Manuel and Joao, yeah, yeah.

But it's not, like, my close friends, yeah. It's just, like, okay, I know them, but, like, there's others.

Yeah. So, but, I mean, I don't know, like, that I... I don't think that I feel bad about it. I feel, I feel okay, like... Yeah, of course, it would be nice to learn a language, but, like, I don't have an opportunity to talk, actually.

Have you learned a lot, like, I feel like, you know, you know a lot of words, and, like, you know, phrases and sentences.

But because I don't have an opportunity to converse with anyone in Portuguese beyond ordering coffee, ordering beers, ordering food, very basic. It doesn't go forward. And that's the thing, like, even if you try, people still speak English. Yeah. So, like, they can just switch. They can, if they can see you struggling, they can just switch, and then you're like, ah, shit, I wanted to try. No, that happens a lot.

It happens a lot, for sure. All the time. What have you done to learn Portuguese?

I took courses, it was free for refugees, which was nice, and Duolingo, I have my streak but I don't really... I don't really think it helps that much, but I do that everyday. clas.

Yeah I do Duolingo but I feel like I need to take classes at this point to get better. My grammar isn't good. Do you think it is important to know Portuguese in Lisbon?

Not important, I guess, because everyone speaks English, but I think it's nice to. I think for me it's also something to do, to learn Portuguese. And I think more people who live here should try but everyone always is leaving so it doesn't really matter to everyone, I guess.

How has your experience been with people moving to Lisbon and leaving shortly.

I hate it. I feel like everytime I make friends, they leave after six months. You're the exception. But now the friends I have who haven't left I am very close to because we have all gone through that.

Do you think that affects how you connect with people or how you meet people?

Definetly. Yeah, I have my friends so I don't really look for new friends, especially since everyone is usually a student. Even next month we have to start saying bye to some of our friends.

Yeah, it's going to be hard.

Yeah well,

Okay. I think, though, that's it.

Participant F – Interview 3

Interviewer: Paloma Schafer

Date: 22/05/2024

Oh, okay, what like digital tools do you use for work? Like easy, you don't have to think much about it. Like the programs? Yeah, like just programs, like what are you using, how are you communicating with people.

Okay, so I use mostly Adobe Creative Cloud, like Creative Suite? Yeah, Creative Cloud. Mostly Photoshop and Illustrator, if I have like..... So yeah, mostly Photoshop and Illustrator sometimes, but much more rare is like InDesign, Adobe InDesign. Or After Effects. And I also use Figma for my websites. And if it comes to communicating with clients, I mostly use Slack, I guess. It's like an app.

Is it free for you to use or do you have to pay?

Yeah, Slack is free. At least all the functions that I know, like are for free for sure. And with some clients, just Telegram or like more simply WhatsApp or something. But yeah, but with bigger projects, I use Slack mostly for communicating. And for Adobe, I don't pay. Adobe is expensive now, they are doing subscriptions, but I got it illegally years ago. I will never pay for it, it's so expensive.

And do you do like the Recibos Verdes for your clients or do you...

Yeah, I do Receibos Verdes. I mean, like for most clients, I don't do any if it's a small project, if it's a huge project, when the payment is quite bigger, then usually they require you. And for me, it's better not to do this because I don't have to pay tax. But for them, they usually require it. And then I do Receibos Verdes. So for other clients, like smaller projects, they just send you the money via... Yeah, but it's like when it's really small projects. Sometimes I do like, for example, like a poster or, I don't know, any small thing, like a poster on Instagram. And then, yeah, they don't really require any documentation about it, which is nice.

So when you file taxes here, do you find it easy or is it difficult? Sorry? For filing taxes here?

Oh, it's a disaster.

Really?

No, I mean, yeah, for me, like it's the worst nightmare. Always the taxes. And because I like I had an activity open, but it was wrong from the very beginning.

I like, not me, but like other people opened it wrong for me. And then like I talked to my like an accountant or I don't know who she is. But like I had a consultation and she said that it's all wrong. So I had to change all of this. And then it turned out that I had to do declarations and I didn't do this.

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But I don't know the whole process about doing like, like, yeah, doing the whole activity and like paying it separately. So it's always like a bit stressful.

But what do you think about the general bureaucracy and getting anything done in Portugal? What's your experience as a non-Portuguese?

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Almost, almost finished, yeah. But yeah, anyways, walking, I guess. Like, literally, like, yeah. But yeah, swimming, yeah, but I have to do it more often. But that's the thing that I was doing since my like, childhood. And now, actually, because like, of the class pass, I'm trying to try new things. I'm really like, craving for trying new things, and like, I tried paddle, for example, or like, tennis, I never tried like, tennis. Only ping pong.

Is this a new thing for you, to be trying new things? Or have you always felt the urge to try new things?

I think it's more recent that I was like, oh, okay, I want to try climbing, I want to try this, I want to try that. Because, I have an explanation. Because, when I came here, I just really had other things in mind, I think. And like, other problems that I really constantly had to solve, I guess. Or, I didn't have, for example, I couldn't afford something, or any circumstances. And now, I'm getting into more like, routine life. And I was really trying to be, to create this routine for myself. So now I'm like, oh, when I have this boring life, I can really do something new, I would say. I would also, of course, want to do surfing, and all of this. But I'm still, I don't know why, but I'm kind of postponing it. I don't know why. I have not been surfing in so long.

Yeah, me too. I've just been like, lazy to do it. Yeah, it just requires a lot of like, you have to go there, and it's also not that cheap.

It's not cheap, it's unaffordable. It's always like, time and money. It's a big time commitment. That's why it's one of those sports, you have to get super committed to learning it. And then, once you're really committed, and you learn it, then you start to really enjoy it. And then, it's easier to stay committed. I feel like there is a big barrier between when you get good enough that you're really enjoying it, that you really desire to go all the time. It's suffering. It's a lot of suffering.

Yeah, in the beginning, for sure. It's doing all this, to be in shitty weather, it's not even nice out.

Shitty conditions, and sometimes you get out, there's no waves, or the waves are so hard, you can't do anything.

Yeah. That's what I hate. Like, I hate it, but I wanna be good at it.

Yeah, the same shit. But I'm also like, I honestly, I have a fear a bit of... I'm scared.

I'm also scared, like, a bit. At last, I have a bad eyesight, and I feel like I have to get these fucking lenses, like, at least to see what they say, because I remember when I was surfing, like, when I just came here, there was, like, a trainer who was, like, teaching us, and he was showing me something, and I was like, I have no idea to whom and what he's showing, so. It gets a bit dangerous at some point, I guess, so.

Do you feel like surfing's a big, like, Portugal thing?

I expected it to be more, honestly. When I came here, I was like, yes! Everyone will be like, California. Yeah, you know what I mean? I was like, surfing vibes, but... Actually, in Lisbon, I don't feel that much. Only if you go, of course, like, to Ericeira or Caparica, it's more wet. But in Lisbon itself, I expected more. Lisbon, on occasion, I see people with their boards, like, on their way to the beach. It's not Lisbon. It doesn't have, no, the culture, the surf culture is a Lisbon thing. It's like an Ericeira thing.

Yeah, for sure, for sure. Even Caparica, it's like a little bit there.

But I also, like, when I came here, I, I don't know, I was using Tinder or something, and I was like, oh, I'll meet so many, like, surf guys. And then I was, like, I don't know, like, just texting with Portuguese guys, for example, who live, like, they live here for their whole lives. And they're like, no, I don't surf. I don't surf, I don't surf. And like, 80% of the guys were like, I don't surf. And I'm like, what do you mean? Now I understand, I guess, but still. It's also an expensive sport.

It is an expensive sport.

It's expensive as fuck, actually. Yeah, but I tried tennis when I came here. And I would love to do, I think I like padel more. I tried it here, as well. But for that, you need, like, four people, and usually it's quite hard to get. It's hard to get four people or you get strangers, and that's kind of weird and you don't know, like, the level of them, and you, like, I'm also just starting, and I don't know.

How do you feel about being a woman in Portugal, in Lisbon? Do you feel safe?

Yeah, I feel super safe, actually. Sometimes there's like, for example, the car where, like, the guys were stopping and, like, screaming from the car, oh, beautiful, or some bullshit like this, but it's happening everywhere in Lisbon. So it's not like I'm, but I was always the girl who, I was never afraid of someone going behind me or something. So I'm usually more, like, chill about these things, and I don't really pay attention to these things, so I don't attract it that much, I guess. So I haven't encountered any, like, super bad situations with this.

With, like, men here? Yeah, I mean, yeah. Even if I encountered, it wasn't about being a woman, it was more about, like, the situation or the person itself, was just, like, behaving weird. Yeah.

But not because I'm the woman, you know what I mean? No, just the people. Just, like, being drunk, someone was being drunk or something like this. It's, like, drunk people, because it's a big party culture, I feel like, in Lisbon, like, especially in, like, Barrio Alto, I feel a lot of tourists who are, like, just, like, just annoying.

I feel it less than in Ukraine, honestly. Oh, okay. I don't know why. It's not like in Kiev, it's, like, very dangerous. Yeah. But you see more people, like, drunk or high, like, I don't know, just being weird.

But, like, recently, I guess, now there are much more homeless people and, like, junkies. Junkies, I see much more. So it's more, like, concerning than drunks, I guess. Because also, like, tourists, yeah, they drink, but they also drink in one area, I guess, more or less. And sometimes, if I go there, I usually also drink. So it's, like, chill.

But, yeah, sometimes I feel like I see some people who are, like, but actually I see the same people in my area. It's the same people, yeah. Who are, like, just being weird and just screaming something in the street or doing some shit, but, yeah.

But in general, yeah, I feel safe, I feel safe for sure. But maybe, okay, lately it's changing a bit here. I think it's getting a bit worse, but from what I heard also, it got better at some point.

Yes. And how do you feel, like, about the Portuguese perception of foreigners, tourists, or digital nomads.

I think there is not positive feelings, but you don't really actually feel it. I feel pretty good here. I never, I think, felt any discrimination towards me, but I heard a lot about this from, like, Brazilians, for example. Even, like, our flatmates, like, they were telling that, okay, they went to university and, like, they were, like, oh, yeah, we are Brazilians and professors were, like, ew, you know? But then when they said, like, oh, Germans, like, to the other one, it's completely fine.

So in this case, I think, yeah, like, towards Brazilians, they don't really like it. Plus, maybe, I don't know, I feel like some people are getting a bit mad if you are, like, don't speak, but in, like, smaller spaces. But, like, if you live for a longer time and you just speak the language, they're like, what the fuck? Which makes sense, I guess.

And I also know that some people are getting mad that there are so many immigrants, and also, I think, towards, like, Nepalese or towards Indian, yeah. Yeah, but in my case, it's not that strong, I guess. Because we are also not that different, our culture, I guess.

So, plus, the circumstances why there are so many Ukrainians here also are different. So, and I feel much more better than in Poland, for example, much more better. So for me, just even this comparison is already, like, I feel good here.

But also, that's the thing, like, I don't really interact with Portuguese people, that's the thing. Maybe if I would be, like, surrounded by them, maybe I would feel different, but I'm, like...

Do you feel, in Lisbon, it's hard to make connections with Portuguese people?

Like, real connections? It depends, like, in my case, because I work, like, on the freelance, yes. Plus, just, like, that I... Ultimate, like, I just met too many, like, Erasmus and international people, yeah. But if you work for the company, and for, like, Portuguese company, then it's better. But still, in general, almost all my friends, they still speak more to, like, expats, or, like... Because, I don't know. And, like, every time we meet someone from Portugal, especially, like, from Lisbon, we are like, wow, it's so rare. We only have Joao. Joao is the only Portuguese person I'm, like, friends with.

Yeah, yeah.

I mean, we have, like, two, but it's not, like, Manuel and João, but they are, like...

Oh, Manuel and Joao, yeah, yeah.

But it's not, like, my close friends, yeah. It's just, like, okay, I know them, but, like, there's others.

Yeah. So, but, I mean, I don't know, like, that I... I don't think that I feel bad about it. I feel, I feel okay, like... Yeah, of course, it would be nice to learn a language, but, like, I don't have an opportunity to talk, actually.

Have you learned a lot, like, I feel like, you know, you know a lot of words, and, like, you know, phrases and sentences.

But because I don't have an opportunity to converse with anyone in Portuguese beyond ordering coffee, ordering beers, ordering food, very basic. It doesn't go forward. And that's the thing, like, even if you try, people still speak English. Yeah. So, like, they can just switch. They can, if they can see you struggling, they can just switch, and then you're like, ah, shit, I wanted to try. No, that happens a lot.

It happens a lot, for sure. All the time. What have you done to learn Portuguese?

I took courses, it was free for refugees, which was nice, and Duolingo, I have my streak but I don't really... I don't really think it helps that much, but I do that everyday. clas.

Yeah I do Duolingo but I feel like I need to take classes at this point to get better. My grammar isn't good. Do you think it is important to know Portuguese in Lisbon?

Not important, I guess, because everyone speaks English, but I think it's nice to. I think for me it's also something to do, to learn Portuguese. And I think more people who live here should try but everyone always is leaving so it doesn't really matter to everyone, I guess.

How has your experience been with people moving to Lisbon and leaving shortly.

I hate it. I feel like everytime I make friends, they leave after six months. You're the exception. But now the friends I have who haven't left I am very close to because we have all gone through that.

Do you think that affects how you connect with people or how you meet people?

Definetly. Yeah, I have my friends so I don't really look for new friends, especially since everyone is usually a student. Even next month we have to start saying bye to some of our friends.

Yeah, it's going to be hard.

Yeah well,

Okay. I think, though, that's it.

Annex D

Interview Question	Code	Definition	Example
Q6(INT), Q4(CON)	Motivations	Reasons and driving forces that influence individuals to adopt a digital nomad lifestyle.	I wasn't trying to be a digital nomad specifically but I don't know like I was still studying to have like something maybe more stable or have a business or but I mean yeah I enjoyed it like after a while it could it wasn't just like a small gig... (Part. C, Int. 1, Pos. 22)
Q5(CON), Q11(CON)	Values	The core principles and beliefs that guide the behaviors and decisions of digital nomads.	Freedom. Freedom to wake up late. Yeah, not work. If I'm not feeling well, or, you know, that's what I cherish most about like, my lifestyle... (Part. A, Int 3, Pos. 2)
Q1(INT), Q13(CON)	Lisbon Vibe	The unique atmosphere, energy, and cultural essence that digital nomads associate with Lisbon.	I think just the lifestyle of Lisbon is really nice...here I feel like after work I'm on vacation.... (Part. E, Int 3, Pos. 5)
Q7(INT), Q4(CON)	Leisure	Activities and pastimes that digital nomads engage in during their free time.	Just in the bar for a drink or to go to samba or something like this. (Part. F, Int 3, Pos. 37)
Q10(INT), Q11(INT), Q8(DEV), Q11(DEV), Q3(CON), Q7(CON), Q12(CON)	Community	The sense of connection and network of relationships that digital nomads build with others.	It's everything. That is, yeah, one of the reasons, like, probably the main reason why I'm staying, because I feel like I have a lot of good friends, musician friends. (Part. A, Int 3, Pos. 12)

Interview Question	Code	Definition	Example
Q7(INT)	Routine	The daily habits and structured activities that digital nomads establish to maintain work-life balance.	...reaching out to potential clients. Then usually towards the latter half of the day I'll send auditions... If I do have work then it will take about two hours to record and edit. I'll do that basically until the evening then meet up with friends in the evening. (Part. A, Int 1, Pos. 8)
Q3(INT), Q4(INT), Q9(CON)	Relocation	The process and experiences associated with moving from one place to another.	I will find something where to live, the free place to live, then I'm gonna come here. If not, I'm not going to come here, and I managed to find it. (Part. F, Int 1, Pos. 5)
Q7(CON), Q8(CON)	Belonging	The feeling of being accepted and fitting into a community or place.	Like, it kind of doesn't matter where I am. I don't think I belong anywhere, but that's okay. (Part. D, Int. 1, Pos. 4)
Q6(INT)	Getting Started	The career evolution of digital nomads.	I started when I was like 16 and like firstly I was looking for a summer job and like McDonald's was looking for someone for three months so I started doing like translations online. (Part. C, Int. 1, Pos. 20)
Q10(INT), Q11(INT), Q9(DEV)	Friendships	The relationships and bonds that digital nomads form with others.	Everyone brought their own touch. And I feel like all these people together changed my experience here for sure. (Part. F, Int. 3, Pos. 53)

Interview Question	Code	Definition	Example
Q10(INT), Q11(INT)	Making Friends	Initiating and developing new friendships in new places.	I signed up for Portuguese classes and stuff like that, like, you know, like, to meet people. (B1, Int. 1, Pos. 83)
Q7(INT)	Places	Specific locations, cities, or countries significant to digital nomads as destinations or homes.	Just in the Intendente Anjos area, there are a lot of cafes that are not as touristic, more underground, more local vibe. I mean, local expat vibe. (Part. C, Int. 2, Pos. 32)
Q9(INT), Q4(CON), Q9(CON)	Travel	Travel experience and travel preferences of digital nomads.	There was a bunch of rain last month, so I stayed here like for a week, and then I bought a ticket to Thailand. And I was like, okay, I'm going to Thailand. And I'm going to come back in April. (Part. B, Int 1, Pos. 72)
Q6(DEV), Q1(DEV), Q10(CON)	Flexibility		I think like for the life that I'm having right now, it's one of my top priorities. When I look for work, it's remotely. (Part. E, Int. 3, Pos. 18)
Q4(INT)	Home	Where a digital nomad considers as their base or primary residence, and housing.	...you don't want to feel like you're a guest in someone else's home you don't feel like it's your home and that I think that is hard to find though in Lisbon there's especially when there's a lot of these like student apartments (Part. F, Int. 1, Pos. 134)

Interview Question	Code	Definition	Example
Q12(INT)	Language	The role of language in digital nomads' experiences, including learning new languages or dealing with language barriers.	The fact that everyone speaks English here pretty well. And since it's so international and everyone here speaks English. I feel like that is probably a big reason why people tend to find a community. (Part. F, Int. 3, Pos. 115)
Q4(DEV), Q5(DEV)	Bureaucracy	The administrative and governmental processes digital nomads must navigate, such as visas and permits.	...from what I heard, all of these things are super, super slow here. It's very slow. (Part. F, Int. 3, Pos. 20)
Q4(DEV), Q5(DEV)	Residency/Immigration	The legal aspects of living in different countries, including visa types, residency permits, and immigration laws.	I haven't, I'm still waiting on my residency card. Stuff like that. But I think my status is still Yeah. But I don't know when it started. I don't know. I've been waiting for a fucking year for this. (Part. A, Int. 3, Pos. 42)
Q6(DEV), Q7(DEV)	Taxes	Financial obligations related to taxes, both in the digital nomad's home country and host countries.	I have my friend who's helping me out to do taxes. Actually, he used to have an accountant, but then he got to know how to do it, and it's very easy. (Part. D, Int. 1, Pos. 36)
Q9(DEV), Q10(DEV)	Long Distance Relationships	Maintaining personal relationships across distances.	Sometimes people stay connected sometimes like you update them from time to time, maybe like twice a year, end up in the same city at some point you're like well

Interview Question	Code	Definition	Example
			maybe, yeah but not likely. (Part. E, Int 2, Pos. 28)
Q5(INT), Q6(INT), Q7(INT), Q1(DEV)	Freelance	Work done independently by digital nomads.	But there just isn't really positions for graphic design here. Like limited, I would say. I didn't chose to work in freelance for the freedom or to be a nomad. I do it because I need to. (Part. F, Int. 3, Pos. 95)
Q6(INT), Q1(DEV), Q12(CON)	Work-Life Balance	The equilibrium digital nomads strive to maintain between work responsibilities and personal life.	I think Portugal in general just like taught me how like important it is to have a life outside of work. (Part. E, Int. 3, Pos. 24)
Q7(INT), Q1(CON)	Work Preferences	The preferred working conditions, environments, and schedules of digital nomads.	I prefer like project-based because like then I'm not.. I'm more motivated in doing it like better and faster rather than just like wasting hours. (Part. C, Int. 1, Pos. 47)
Q2(DEV)	Platforms/Tools	The digital tools and platforms that digital nomads use for work, communication, and management.	mostly Photoshop and Illustrator sometimes, but much more rare is like InDesign, Adobe InDesign. Or After Effects. And I also use Figma for my websites. And if it comes to communicating with clients, I mostly use Slack... (Part. F, Int. 2, Pos. 3)
Q12(INT), Q11(DEV), Q6(CON),	Cultural Experiences	The exposure to and participation in different cultures.	I don't think that much. You don't think much? I mean, besides going to, like, Santos Populares and having a beer at the kiosk. But I don't think I have, like, gotten,

Interview Question	Code	Definition	Example
Q8(CON), Q12(CON)			like, the Portuguese culture that much. (Part. D, Int. 3, Pos. 16)
Q7(INT), Q8(INT), Q9(INT)	Workspace	The preferred spaces to conduct work for digital nomads.	Mostly from home, but because the company has an office in Lisbon I am able to go in whenever I want. (Part. C, Int. 1, Pos. 27)
Q1(CON), Q2(CON)	Future Directions	The ideas, preferences, hopes, and reservations about one's long term future.	Because since I'm 38. And I'm thinking, like, okay, I'm getting old, you know? And at the end, I need to figure out where I'm going to live. (Part. B, Int. 1, Pos. 80)
Q9(INT), Q4(CON)	Working while travelling	Work preference and experiences while traveling.	if you go to a new place and you still have to work, you feel like you're on vacation and you want to be, like, yeah, vacation mode, but it's like, oh, but I have to be working. (Part. D, Int. 1, Pos. 86)
Q3(DEV)	Meet ups	Events tailored to digital nomads for the purpose of meeting people.	I mean in the beginning the like meetups were like my the first people I met here were through meetups so like I had some like good friends some good connections in the beginning (Part. C, Int. 1, Pos. 34)

Annex E

Code System

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5.5 freelance	38
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5.8 Work Preferences	20
6 DN	7
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6.3 Flexibility	20
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13 Bureaucracy	11
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13.1.1 Taxes	9
14 Cultural Experiences	31
14.1 cooking/food	20

Annex F

Parent code	Code	Cod. seg. (all docs)	% Cod. seg. (all docs)	Documents
Living abroad	Experience in Lisbon	22	2.40	10
DN	Motivations	14	1.53	8
Work	work life balance	27	2.94	12
Residency/Immigration/Visas	Taxes	9	0.98	6
DN	Sense of self	8	0.87	6
Experience in Lisbon	adapting	6	0.65	4
DN	Getting started	9	0.98	6
Experience in Lisbon	fluidity	2	0.22	2
Work	Working while traveling	7	0.76	4
	Language	24	2.62	9
Making friends	Meet ups	14	1.53	4
Friendships/Relationships	Long Distance relationships	15	1.64	6
	DN	7	0.76	5
Cultural Experiences	cooking/food	20	2.18	4
	future	16	1.74	10
Experience in Lisbon	Routine	9	0.98	6
	Living abroad	5	0.55	2
personal history	Family	14	1.53	6
Work	Work Preferences	20	2.18	9
	personal history	23	2.51	9
Places	Third Places	18	1.96	6
Experience in Lisbon	Personal Health	9	0.98	2
Experience in Lisbon	Relocation/Accommodation	34	3.71	11
Experience in Lisbon	vibe	15	1.64	8
	roommates	1	0.11	1
	Work	18	1.96	8
	Connecting with Locals	6	0.65	4
Bureaucracy	Residency/Immigration/Visas	21	2.29	6
personal history	cultural identity	17	1.85	6
	Places	9	0.98	6
Friendships/Relationships	Making friends	31	3.38	14

Friendships/Relationships	People leaving	26	2.84	12
	very international	5	0.55	5
	Bureaucracy	11	1.20	4
DN	Flexibility	20	2.18	9
Experience in Lisbon	Belonging	13	1.42	7
Work	Remote office	5	0.55	2
Work	Platforms Software Tools	12	1.31	7
Living abroad	Perception of Lisbon	32	3.49	8
Work	workspace	15	1.64	9
Places	Home	18	1.96	8
Work	freelance	38	4.14	9
	Cultural Experiences	31	3.38	10
Places	Travel	45	4.91	10
DN	Networking	5	0.55	4
Experience in Lisbon	Cost of living	6	0.65	4
Experience in Lisbon	community	29	3.16	11
DN	Values & Beliefs	19	2.07	7
Work	Job functions	10	1.09	3
Experience in Lisbon	Leisure	32	3.49	11
	Change	12	1.31	4
DN	Challenges	25	2.73	9
Experience in Lisbon	Why lisbon	21	2.29	9
Perceptipn of Lisbon	Safety	9	0.98	2
	Friendships/Relationash ips	16	1.74	7

