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TEMPORARY EXISTENCES IN CITIES: DIVING INTO DIGITAL NOMADS' EVERYDAY LIFE IN MADRID

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ABSTRAKT

Vor dem Hintergrund der globalen Mobilität und der Digitalisierung der Arbeit hat sich das digitale Nomadentum allmählich zu einer neuen Lebensform entwickelt. Seit der COVID-19-Pandemie haben sich die Ströme digital nomads zu südeuropäische Großstädte verstärkt. Dennoch untersuchen Forscher diese Bevölkerungsgruppe nach wie vor außerhalb des städtischen Kontexts, was eine Lücke im Verständnis der Integration digital nomads in lokale Dynamiken hinterlässt. Meine Arbeit zielt darauf ab, ihre Existenz in Städten zu erklären, indem ich ihre alltäglichen Lebenspraktiken und Bedürfnisse untersuche. Durch ethnografische Methoden, die sich auf Tiefeninterviews, Beobachtungen, aber auch Teilnahme stützen, untersucht meine Forschung die Art und Weise, wie digital nomads sich in städtischen Räumen in Madrid bewegen und diese nutzen. Insbesondere geht es um ihre Vorlieben in Bezug auf Wohnung, Arbeitsplatz, Konsum, Freizeit und soziale Beziehungen sowie um die Art und Weise, wie ihr städtisches Umfeld ihnen ermöglicht, ihren Lebensstil au unterstützen. Meine Ergebnisse zeigen, dass die digital nomads ein eher gewöhnliches Leben führen, da sie dazu neigen, an ihrem Ankunftsort eine Routine zu reproduzieren. Dies führt mich zu der Annahme, dass diese Fernarbeiter manchmal mehr digital als nomadisch sind. Darüber hinaus zeigt meine Studie die zunehmende Entwicklung von Spezialitätencafés, Coworking Spaces, transnationalen Veranstaltungen und Netzwerken in der städtischen Landschaft. Allerdings sind diese Umgebungen, obwohl sie sehr international sind, nicht ausschließlich auf digital nomads ausgerichtet. Sie scheinen ein breiteres Spektrum an hochgebildeten und mobilen jungen Menschen anzuziehen, zu denen schließlich auch privilegierte Spanier gehören. Schließlich ist meine Arbeit ein erster Schritt zum Verständnis der Rolle der digital nomads bei der Beschleunigung der Veränderungen in den Stadtvierteln von Madrid.

ABSTRACT

In a context of global mobilities and digitalization of work, digital nomadism has gradually emerged as a new way of life. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, flows of digital nomads directed towards major Southern European cities have intensified. Yet, researchers continue to study this population outside the urban context, leaving a gap in understanding how digital nomads are involved in local dynamics. My thesis aims to account for their existence in cities, by looking at their everyday life practices and needs. Through ethnographic methods relying on in-depth interviews, observations but also participation; my research investigates the way digital nomads navigate and use urban spaces in Madrid. Specifically, it looks at their preferences in terms of housing, workspaces, consumption, leisure and social relations, as well as the way their urban environment allow them to sustain their lifestyle. My findings reveal a rather ordinary existence for digital nomads, as they tend to reproduce a routine in their arrival space. This leads me to think that these remote workers are sometimes more digital than nomad. Moreover, my study indicates the increasing development of specialty coffee shops, coworking spaces, transnational events and networks within the urban landscape. However, these environments although very international, are not exclusive to digital nomads. They seem to attract a larger range of highly educated and mobile people, which eventually includes privileged Spaniards. Finally, my work is a first step towards understanding digital nomads' role in the acceleration of neighborhood changes in Madrid.

To my dear mother, who has been the pillar of my life's journey.

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INTRODUCTION

Since a very young age, my insatiable need of traveling and discovering the world inspired me and my life choices. At the same time, my personal and academic interests have always placed concerns and questions of socioeconomic inequalities at the heart of my work. Today, my thesis is at the crossroads of these two worlds: how does the decided and happy mobility of a privileged few becomes a source of greater inequalities and injustices for others?

When I started to investigate on this project, I had just heard one of my professors going through the newly theorized concept of transnational gentrification. His presentation of the idea was brief but really captured my attention. I had no idea that research had come up with a new term specially coined to account for the newly international developments that were occurring in cities.

When I looked it up, I discovered that this transnational gentrification did not just entail the arrival of tourists in urban spaces, but also of a vast range of populations driven by lifestyle mobility. It was a second discovery for me. I started to explore the endless literature of lifestyle mobilities, which I have to admit, fascinated me. Where travel, leisure and migration meet, people now define their freedom to move and their life choices as a central part of their identity. Those populations largely originating from Northern America or Western and Northern Europe increasingly converge towards Southern locations. From adventurous backpackers to retirees wishing to spend the rest of their days in sunny destinations, from young professionals relocating to a hectic Southern European city to millions of digital nomads wandering the globe: lifestyle mobilities included all those people who, for the simple reason that they wanted to follow their dream lifestyle and optimize their income, chose to relocate to relatively lower-cost destinations for a temporary or indefinite period of time **(Torkington, 2012; Cohen et al, 2016; Mancinelli, 2020).**

More specifically, my interest in the digital nomad population grew. The temporary nature of their existence in the places where they live, added an intriguing dimension which sounded familiar, as I was myself constantly making temporary homes across Europe. Of course, I already had an idea of what this lifestyle was, as it has become so trendy and increasingly visible on social medias, travel blogs and magazine articles. However, I needed to dig deeper to

understand how this mobile lifestyle had emerged, what it represented and what it might mean for the future.

This is where the academic journey really started…

The following pages are a rapid contextualization of what my research entails, from who are the digital nomads, to why I decided to study them more in-depth, passing by the fundamental concepts around which my research develops. I propose in this introduction three zooms, in order to present why this topic is important and needs to be researched now.

ZOOM 1: Digital nomadism becomes a new way of life

At the end of the 20th century, digital nomadism has appeared as a rapidly mobile practice. The first definitions of digital nomadism were based on the extraordinary ability of some knowledge workers to use the digitization of their work tools as a lever for their own mobility and, more specifically, to work from wherever they want to in the world. Digital nomads are referred to as location-independent workers, who use their freedom of choice and capacity to be highly mobile to reach self-fulfillment and happiness objectives **(Hannonen, 2020)**.

The emergence of a digital nomad population has been based on the mutation of working forms; but also, the improvement of transport and technologies, pushing individuals to create a new lifestyle adaptative to those changes **(Makimoto & Manners, 1997; O'Reilly & Benson, 2009; Müller, 2016; Hannonen, 2018; Orel, 2019)**. Precisely, **Makimoto & Manners (1997)** who were the first ones to coin the term of digital nomadism, had seen the development of new technologies as an enabling factor for our modern societies to go back to a nomadic way of life.

Digital nomadism has experienced 3 different phases of growth since its emergence. The 1990s and 2000s was the birth of this type of mobility, with gradual recognition of the phenomenon. The 2010s corresponds to the consolidation phase of this lifestyle. Finally, the period after the COVID-19 pandemic reveals a boom in the number of digital nomads around the world, with flows continuing to increase at a faster rate and now particularly directed towards large cities **(Parreño-Castellano et al, 2022)**.

Today, more than ever, digital nomadism seems to be at the heart of modern concerns and forms a complex nexus around work, mobility, tourism and policy **(ibid.).** Precisely since the pandemic, **Sánchez-Vergara et al. (2023)** explain that governments and the hospitality industry in receiving locations, have been actively working to develop *"attractive packages"*

for these mobile populations. The idea behind the desire to attract digital nomads to a destination is that these individuals with relatively high purchasing power will support consumption and boost local economies, which have been particularly affected by the successive crises of the 21st century.

Yet, in parallel, digital nomadism is increasingly debated both by researchers **(Hannonen, 2020; Parreño-Castellano et al, 2022; Cook; Sánchez-Vergara et al., 2023)** and the general public, giving way to a growing number of papers and press articles now being published to highlight the risks it can represent for societies that host this form of mobility. More specifically, the question of displacement of local populations and new forms of gentrification is on the table.

But what is it all about? To understand the economic, social and cultural implications of the digital nomad lifestyle for host cities, the way to gentrification must be understood.

ZOOM 2: From gentrification to transnational gentrification in a nutshell

Gentrification is an urban process that has expanded world-wide and is increasingly discussed as a contemporary challenge for cities. First coined by Ruth Glass in 1964, it had for historical meaning *"the neighborhood expression of class inequality"* **(Slater, 2009)**. The concept can be defined as *"the transformation of a working-class or vacant area of a city into middle-class residential and/or commercial use"* **(ibid.)**. In other words, it involves the *"substitution of the resident population in some areas of cities by higher-income classes following periods of social and economic decline"* **(Ardura Urquiaga et al, 2020)**. Gentrification has taken different directions during the past decades, and have become in some cases a transnational phenomenon.

Undeniably, the democratization of mobility and globalization have now opened many urban markets to international actors. Some cities in Southern Europe have particularly oriented their development towards tourism and leisure, which have attracted many transnational populations from first tourists to then lifestyle migrants, going through a wide array of ephemeral populations that come experience the city for an intermediate period of time **(Torkington, 2012)**.

Originally, touristification was predominantly analyzed as the international source of neighborhood change per se. Mass tourism has encouraged the development of short-term accommodation, but has also transformed the commercial landscape in order to satisfy the

needs of an ever-increasing number of visitors. This has had the effect of disrupting residents' use of space and driving up housing prices. Eventually, local people were forced to leave their neighborhoods, as they no longer reflected the *authenticity* of their culture. However, researchers did not consider this phenomenon to be a gentrification process in itself, since tourists did not settle there permanently, and therefore did not replace the local population, although they did displace it **(Jover & Díaz-Parra; 2020)**.

Nevertheless, recent research has come up with the term transnational gentrification in order to better grasp this phenomenon and include the arrival of lifestyle-led populations, that have joined the flow of tourists. More precisely, **Hayes & Zaban (2020)** define transnational gentrification as *"the form of contemporary urbanization that occurs as a result of closing (...) rent gaps through attraction of higher income, transnational migrants".* Here, the rent gap is the difference that exist between the actual rent paid by local populations, and the rent that could be collected if higher-income transnational newcomers were to close the deal. Precisely, transnational gentrification occurs as the foreign populations replace long-term inhabitants, because they are able to pay a higher price for housing than local populations. So far, the literature has focused on the arrival of lifestyle migrants in Southern European cities. In Spain, research has showed that the settlement of those migrants in inner-city districts of Sevilla, Barcelona and Madrid, has activated processes of transnational gentrification that overlap prior phenomenon of touristification **(Jover & Díaz-Parra, 2020; Cocola-Gant & Lopez-Gay, 2020; Ardura Urquiaga et al, 2020).** Thus, gentrification, touristification and transnational gentrification are three different things, that have occurred in different times, but are highly connected one to each other.

Sigler & Wachsmuth (2020) argues that transnational gentrification is still an *"embryonic phenomenon".* Precisely, **Alexandri & Janoschka (2020)** explain that the COVID-19 pandemic is expected to have a significant impact on the way people appropriate and use cities, which surely will be accompanied by the creation of new markets satisfying new transnational mobile populations' needs. Thus, the phenomenon of transnational gentrification in Southern Europe is expected to expand in the post COVID-19 world, and further research is needed.

But so, you wonder, where do digital nomads stand? Well, this is exactly where my study intends to take us. Both digital nomadism and transnational gentrification are growing phenomena and yet, continue to be studied separately.

ZOOM 3: Expanding research on digital nomads in cities

When they arrive to a new location, lifestyle migrants and digital nomads tend to actively differentiate themselves from tourists, through the negotiation of a distinctive identity **(Torkington, 2012)**. Still, do they behave differently? In practice, recent research has showed that lifestyle migrants tend to share their arrival spaces with tourists. However, digital nomads remain largely absent from urban research. This population follows a different mobility path: digital nomads are less mobile than tourists as they will live in a location for a while, but they also do not come with the idea of settling down like lifestyle migrants do.

Moreover, digital nomads often rely on new commercial developments, as they seek flexible accommodation and use alternative workspaces in order to sustain their lifestyle at destinations. Besides providing a good working environment, using these spaces allow them to find a community and other digital nomads around the world. Recent market trends show that a new segment has opened up, specifically designed to meet the needs of these remote workers and to encourage their arrival **(Parreño-Castellano et al, 2022)**.

However, it is still unknown to this day, what repercussions the arrival of digital nomads will have on local spaces nor how local populations will be affected when their number will continue to rise. In other words, the question that appears here is to know how digital nomads possibly reinforce processes of transnational gentrification in Southern European cities, not only in the sense that rent prices increase but also that commercial landscapes change.

Presenting my research project

To answer this question, we first need to study the existence of digital nomads in an urban context. Precisely, my research project aims at taking a first step towards filling this gap, by looking at their everyday life in host cities. I believe that this is an interesting angle of approach, as the temporary nature of digital nomads' stay and life in all the locations they visit, is what makes this population so special. Here, I consider their everyday life as a set of habits and practices, whether in terms of housing, work, mobility, consumption, but also social and cultural preferences. In addition, I intend to examine the alternative workspaces that digital nomads use in these cities, and which form an integral part of their daily lives.

My field of study will be Madrid, where processes of transnational gentrification have been recently identified, and which also has emerged as the second largest digital nomads' hub in Spain **(Ardura Urquiaga et al, 2020;Parreño-Castellano et al, 2022)**. For these reasons, I

believe it makes it a particularly interesting case study for observing the lifestyle of digital nomads, their interactions with spaces and other city users, and the emergence of new commercial developments.

This manuscript will take you on a journey through:

- First, my **literature review**, divided into 5 main sections which address in greater depth all the issues raised above: starting with explaining lifestyle mobilities, proposing different understandings of digital nomads, presenting research in Southern European destinations and public policies, unpacking transnational gentrification with various displacement forms, and finally, examining the creation of new markets with the development of coffeeshops, coworking, coliving spaces.
- Secondly, I will dive into my **case study**, presenting in details findings of gentrification and population change in Madrid; leading the way to my research question and the presentation of my ethnographic **methods**, divided between conversations with digital nomads and exploration of alternative workplaces.
- Third, I will organize my **findings** and subsequent **discussions,** following exactly the same structure as my methods, ending with the general conclusions of my research.
- Finally, I will provide **final remarks** on my study of digital nomads in Madrid, setting out the **limitations** of my research and my vision for the future.

For the sake of simplicity, I will use the following abbreviations throughout my thesis.

Digital Nomads	**Coffee Shop Spaces**	**Coworking Spaces**	**Coliving Spaces**
DN	CFS	CWS	CLS

LITERATURE REVIEW

1 - Global mobilities in the 20th and 21st centuries

1.1 Emergence of lifestyle mobilities

During the second half of the 20th century, moving across the planet has become easier and accessible to many more citizens of the world **(Harvey, 1989)**, beyond the elites and highest-income groups. Mobility became central in individuals' life as a way to negotiate their existence in the complex modern society **(Cohen et al, 2016)**. Nowadays, movements across the globe are not exclusively made for leisure nor for work. They are not necessarily considered as a one-way permanent nor seasonal migration neither. Instead, a hybrid form has developed between these classical perceptions of mobility: that of lifestyle mobilities **(Benson and O'Reilly, 2009).** They can be understood as *"the intersection between travel, leisure and migration."* **(Cohen et al, 2016)** and are *"consumption-led, tourism-related and leisure-based"* **(Torkington, 2012).** Unlike economic or war migration, lifestyle mobilities are based on a free choice to move to another part of the world in order to better one's quality of life. Thus, this is not a forced movement, but a self-decided mobility.

Torkington (2012) points out several factors that have enabled those international mobilities to thrive, such as the spread of communication and information technologies (ICT), fast and affordable transport, rise of leisure time, flexible forms of work, retirement conditions, development of tourist infrastructures, etc. In Europe, the opening of the EU borders also participated in facilitating intra-zone movements. Transnational mobile populations take the freedom to travel and move abroad to optimize their purchasing power, access enjoyable leisure facilities, and benefit from advantageous natural environment. The concept of geographic arbitrage allows to grasp this practice. Individuals coming from higher-income nations develop opportunistic strategy to take advantage of the income – or savings - they generate in their home country and relocate their everyday expenses in lower-cost locations **(Mancinelli, 2020)**. People navigate the actual capitalist system and make use of the asymmetries of power to better their life opportunities.

However, this freedom of choice is not possible for everyone and pursuing this individualized strategy is accessible only to some privileged persons **(Cohen et al, 2016)**. This is why we

mainly observe lifestyle-led mobilities from higher-income countries like Northern America or Western and Northern Europe to Southern relatively affordable destinations. For some scholars, the mobility status of people has been a new source of social divide across the world **(Torkington, 2012)**. Those highly mobile individuals benefit from being on the "*right side of the 'mobility gap'"* **(Molina Caminero & McGarrigle, 2022)** and enjoy a feeling of empowerment**,** whereas some others are 'stuck' in a specific place **(Torkington, 2012)**. The freedom of mobility, or the lack thereof, reinforces inequalities in the globalized world. In addition, when they move to their new location, transnational mobile populations are positioned relatively higher on the socioeconomic ladder than they were in their country of origin **(Hayes & Zaban, 2020).** This contributes to their sense of a better quality of life, whereas this is often the opposite for other categories of migrants who restart a life from the 'bottom'.

1.2 Various forms of lifestyle mobilities

The word 'lifestyle' is a broad umbrella term that actually covers a wide array of mobility practices. Lifestyle-led mobilities entail a migration process but also identity, cultural and consumption practices. Whereas the motivation for leaving the natal home is similar and attached to an idea of seeking a better life elsewhere, different forms of mobility are attached to it, from the most permanent type of movement to more ephemeral ones.

Lifestyle migration is the lifestyle-led mobility that has received the most attention in the literature during the past decades, followed by lifestyle mobilities which are seen as a *"more fluid and dynamic process"* than the first one**.** Usually, lifestyle migration is associated with a one-time significant life transition, that can be looked at as a retirement or leisure migration **(Sigler & Wachsmuth, 2020)**. On the other hand, lifestyle mobilities are related to the idea of *"being on the move"* **(Cohen et al, 2016)** and the formation of several homes in the visited places. It does not correspond to one but multiple transitions along the life-course **(ibid.)**. This mobile population is a bit more difficult to frame than migrants, because it is located somewhere between temporary mobility and permanent migration, involving on-going semi-permanent movements of variable durations. In that sense, **Cohen (2010)** presents *"travel as an inseparable part of life"* for those populations. Lifestyle travelers such as backpackers is probably the most common example of lifestyle mobilities.

Mobility is a way for those individuals to develop their individual identity, but also to foster their collective identity as they are able to recognize as a larger group that share similar practices and values **(Cohen, 2011)**. In our current society, the sense of belonging to a place is not

necessarily linked to the fact of being born and raised in the location anymore, but can be associated to a place that allows one's wanted lifestyle and the creation of a community **(Torkington, 2012).** For instance, lifestyle migrants tend to actively differentiate themselves from tourists, through the negotiation of a distinctive identity in the arrival space **(ibid.).** However, we can wonder whether they adopt different everyday practices, and make different use of spaces than mere visitors.

2 - Attempts to classify digital nomads within global mobilities

The fast-growing trend of digital nomadism is running up against problems of understanding and defining the phenomenon and its corresponding population. This section is an attempt to look at digital nomadism through different lenses, to understand what are the current debates around the concept in the research world, and what are the different scopes of this contemporary way of life.

2.1 Digital nomads within the lifestyle mobilities

DN can be seen as a sub-group within the large spectrum of lifestyle mobilities - between tourism, travel-led mobility and migration **(Hermann & Paris, 2020).** Their particularity is that they have no home base. The literature on DN is emerging at an increasing pace, presenting two-folds approaches of the phenomenon from a work to a lifestyle perspective. I will in this thesis focus on the second, as DN are mobile professionals that *"select their location based on leisure and lifestyle considerations, rather than work or employment"* **(ibid.).** For many authors, DN cannot be categorized as tourists because they are working along their journey, but they cannot be considered as migrants neither, because they do not come to a space with the idea of settling.

As introduced previously, those individuals' life strategy also relies on a technique of geographic arbitrage to maximize financial resources and lifestyle. This seems to be a key source of motivation, rather than participating in local community for example. As **Thompson (2019)** emphasizes, the transnational mobile populations take profit from their *"demographic privileges"* in order to satisfy their "*hedonistic pleasures".* The identity of DN heavily relies on consumption of experiences, and combine a life philosophy with entrepreneurialism practices.

It is worth noting that initially, the ability to work remotely and the rejection of universal work norms was what made DN such a singular minority. However, since 2020, remote work is no longer an exception and the spread of this practice suggests that digital nomadism is no more unique. Moreover, as companies now allow more flexibility from its workers, many new DN are full-time salaried, which raises new difficulties in distinguishing this population from other types of workers. Likewise, now that remote working is becoming mainstream, it is overturning other work standards, such as *"the 9-to-5 routine, the 5-day work week, the traditional meaning of a vacation (as a break from work), and the home as a private domestic space"* **(Cook, 2023).** Until now, the disruption to these norms had been specific to DN, but it is now spreading to many other professionals in the post-COVID-19 pandemic world. It is therefore legitimate to ask to what extent this will have repercussions on global mobility.

2.2 Digital nomads within the tourism industry

Whereas the first scholars working on digital nomadism had put a lot of efforts into framing DN outside of the traditional field of tourism, recent research has been underlying the importance of considering DN within the tourism industry **(Chevtaeva & Denizci-Guillet, 2021; Parreño-Castellano et al, 2022; Putra & Agirachman, 2016)**. Indeed, the definitions available in the literature have kept blurred boundaries between digital nomadism and tourism, but the importance of DN for the hospitality research is argued to be incontestable, in particular to understand future directions of commercial developments. Adopting a tourism approach can be especially crucial when looking at receiving spaces and the emergence of many new services and products targeting DN (i.e., CFS, CWS and CLS). I will present them in more details later.

Parreño-Castellano et al. (2022) talk about DN as a new type of "*tourist-worker*". Still, authors emphasize on the wide diversity within the population and thus on difficulties to classify DN between on one side, "*digital adventurers"* or "*temporary digital nomads*" that are highly mobile, and on the other side, "*lifestyle remote workers*" or "*workation migrants*" that stay longer in a place. To this date, struggles remain to provide one single category that would fit the entire population. Authors claim a need for researchers to come to an agreement on a definition for the population, in order *"to consolidate a united vision and avoid misconceptions"* about DN **(Chevtaeva & Denizci-Guillet, 2021).** It is important to emphasize one more time that the rise of remote working since the COVID-19 pandemic has introduced new challenges in this regard, since the line between DN and mere teleworkers is sometimes very thin.

As for the other types of tourists, DN still have major differences with for instance backpackers, since DN have *"a high focus on work"* during their journeys **(Chevtaeva & Denizci-Guillet, 2021)**, but also with business travelers, since DN select *"their trips based on leisure interest"* **(ibid.).** However, just like backpackers, DN want to maintain a different identity than the tourist one **(Cohen, 2011),** and both population groups like to claim that mobility is not *"separated from their regular life"* **(Chevtaeva & Denizci-Guillet, 2021).** Even though there has been recently an emergence of studies focusing on DN's *"consumer experiences as tourists",* research remains needed in this field to establish *"possible connections between culture and digital nomads' lifestyle."* **(ibid.).**

2.3 Digital nomads within a wider range of city users

Maitland (2010) called into question the need to strictly classify populations. Indeed, he shows that a mere division of people with visitors on one side, and residents on the other, is not satisfactory to understand people's behavior in a city. The author explains that temporality of one's existence in the urban spaces can help identify different populations groups, but it cannot be sufficient to understand individuals' urban preferences and practices. Instead, we should see people as *"different city users with different demands and needs"* **(ibid.).**

Maitland (2010) sees a *"continuum of mobilities, that range from the short term to the permanent".* At first glance, this may seem reminiscent of what we have been talking about with lifestyles mobilities, between temporary and permanent movements. However, the author does not make a specific distinction between work and lifestyle-led mobilities, but instead includes every type of city user, no matter if they are mere visitors or workers, foreigners or locals, just passing through or long-established.

Moreover, **Maitland (2010)** explains that a tourist behavior is not only practiced by tourists and short-term stay visitors, but can become an *"integral part of daily life"* for many urbanites. Indeed, local populations that inhabit the city on the long-term, may have similar consumption patterns to tourists and tend to enjoy the same cultural activities. The author explains those existing synergies by the existence of a *"cosmopolitan consuming class"* **(ibid.),** meaning a group of consumers that share common preferences all around the world.

We could use this analysis to go even further by recalling **Veblen (1889)**'s theory of the leisure class, defined as a group of individuals who asserts their economic power and their position in society through consumption practices. Building a bridge with the analysis of **Mainland**

(2010), this let us think that no matter the way an individual is classified (tourist, backpacker, business traveler, DN, expats, student, worker, resident, etc.) the idea is that those populations want to affirm their lifestyle through consumption of services, goods and experiences.

3 - Studying mobilities to Southern European cities

3.1 From the extra-urban to the urban research

In Europe, literature on the settlement's location of lifestyle migrants have first largely focus on higher-income retirees moving to rural and coastal areas, such as South of France and Portugal or Spanish Costa Brava and Costa del Sol. However, lifestyle migrants – mainly the younger and still working ones - also increasingly settle in urban areas. Location choices of DN seem to follow the same trajectory.

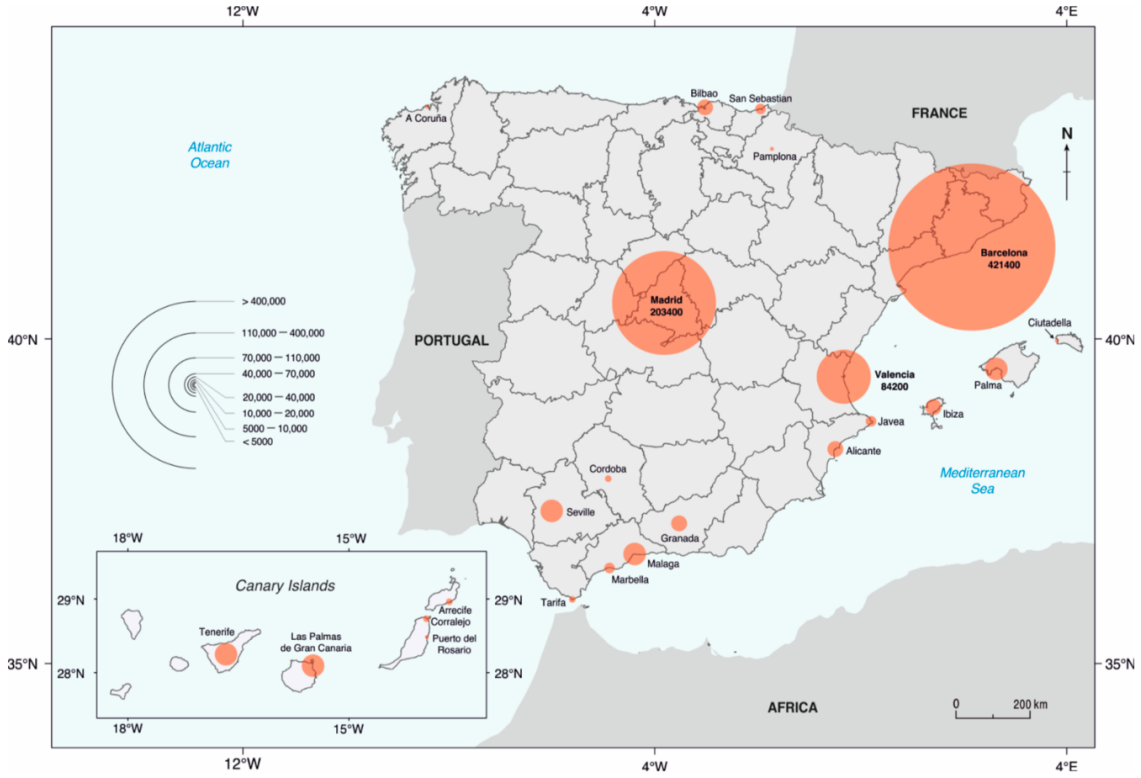


Figure 2. Number of digital nomads who have visited Spanish destinations. Source: Nomad List (2021). The authors.

Figure 1. Geography of digital nomadism in Spain. Source: **Parreño-Castellano et al. (2022).**

Although it remains very complicated to track DN and properly quantify them through traditional statistics, **Parreño-Castellano et al. (2022)** provide a first attempt for mapping the intensity and geography of the recently expanding phenomenon in Spain. The numbers on **Figure 1** have been extracted from the participative website *nomadlist.com* and correspond to

the amount of DN that have themselves reported their visit in each destination. Based on an approximation of exact numbers, the **Figure 1** illustrates that while DN, just like lifestyle migrants, are located on islands and coastal areas, they also tend to massively cluster in the urban areas of the peninsula. Mostly since the mid-2010s, the three largest cities of Spain, which are also the largest economies of the country, are the one that have attracted the most DN.

Research has shown that people initiating lifestyle-led mobilities are also attracted to highly touristic cities. **Molina Caminero & McGarrigle (2022)** recently argued that by centering studies on one age group and on some particular destinations only, research has arrived to a blind spot regarding younger transnational mobile populations that are searching for *"lively and cosmopolitan atmospheres"*. In Spain, research has demonstrated that cities like Barcelona, Sevilla and more recently Madrid have become very attractive for those populations **(Cocola-Gant, & Lopez-Gay; Jover & Díaz-Parra; Ardura Urquiaga et al; 2020; Parreño-Castellano et al, 2022).** The **Figure 1** confirms that Barcelona remains in Spain the biggest hub for transnational populations in general, which includes tourists, lifestyle migrants but also now DN. However, Madrid also became a place of importance on this regard **(Parreño-Castellano et al, 2022)**.

Until now, literature on DN have been focusing on the behavioral, sociological and labor aspects of such a lifestyle-based mobility. Although it has recently been shown that DN increasingly visits major touristic cities in Spain, no geographical study has yet looked at these receiving destinations. Indeed, the very few papers on DN that are adopting a geographical approach, have been exclusively focusing on exotic destinations outside of Europe like Thailand, Indonesia, India, etc. However, the growing presence of DN in (European) urban spaces constitutes an opportunity to learn on how those incoming populations produce a sociocultural influence on the destinations, but also what are the nature and frequency of their interaction with local populations **(Parreño-Castellano et al, 2022)**. On this respect, literature on lifestyle migrants' settlement in Spanish cities is a little bit ahead from the one on DN. Thus, the case studies of Barcelona and Sevilla **(Cocola-Gant, & Lopez-Gay; Jover & Díaz-Parra; 2020)** will to some extent, serve as an early proxy to address DN mobilities to urban spaces.

3.2 Pre-pandemic: tourism development as a way to overcome crisis

The question now being raised is to know how these populations were led to come together in the major cities of Spain. To understand this, there is a need to look back at how Spain has sought to develop its territories over the last 40 years. In those cities, coping with difficult

economic times have been synonym of tourism development. Barcelona and Seville have started to advertise themselves as tourism hub already after the late 1970s industrial crisis, but the 2008 economic crisis has reinforced Spain's public strategy of tourism growth, and Madrid has joined this method. They developed new marketing strategies to promote tourism and advertise potential new visitors. In that context, *"transnational migration"* has been a *"tourism-informed"* form of mobility **(Cocola-Gant, & Lopez-Gay, 2020).** The underlying objective of public authorities was to attract capital and populations from wealthier economies in order to help the Spanish society overcome the local economic and social crisis **(Hayes & Zaban, 2020)**. Precisely, lifestyle mobilities are part of the larger phenomenon of globalization which entails people, but also capital mobility.

State-led strategies of urban renewal, consisting in an extension of tourism capacity and increased attractiveness to bring foreign capital to the urban space, have led to the internationalization of major Spanish city cores. In Barcelona for instance, state-led policies for urban regeneration of the historical Gotic neighborhood had already started in the 1980s and in anticipation of the Olympic games of 1992. **Slater (2009)** argues that policymakers at the time saw urban renewal as a desirable process that would help combat the abandonment of inner-city areas, and at a relatively low cost since it would be mostly sustained by private forces. The aim was to give the city a whole new image to attract foreign investors and counteract the recession effects of the deindustrialization. *"The leisure-led restructuring of Barcelona and its effective international representation as a city to have fun in, have not only triggered the arrival of visitors but have also been successful in attracting young transnational migrants, <…> who moved to Barcelona because of lifestyle choices."* **(Cocola-Gant, & Lopez-Gay, 2020)**. Thus, tourist destinations have also become destinations for many other transnational mobile populations. Learning from the case of Barcelona and Sevilla, this led lifestyle migrants to *"share spaces and lifestyles with visitors rather than mixing with the host community"* **(ibid.).**

However, **Maintland (2010)** also explains (in the London context) that some areas were initially not planned for tourists - possibly referred to as *"off the beaten track"* **(ibid.)** - but where visitors contributed to the renewal of the neighborhood anyway, by initiating urban change. Visitors go to those areas, because they seek the *"real"* and *"everyday city"*, outside of the already touristified neighborhoods. Typically, there are areas where people still live and work, thus to which some visitors associate the opportunity to experience the authentic daily life of the city, along with the local population. Nonetheless, this is a process that follows on from the initial efforts made by a city to enhance its reputation as a tourist destination.

Consequently, research has showed that solving a crisis through greater international openness was not without consequences for the spatial organization of cities. Foreigners – both temporary visitors and lifestyle migrants - with greater purchasing power than local residents, have now appropriated the inner-city neighborhoods in those cities, which has deepened local population's feeling of exclusion from the place **(Cocola-Gant, & Lopez-Gay, 2020)**.

3.3 Post-pandemic: legislating to support digital nomadism in destinations

I have explained that the trend towards digital nomadism has accelerated since the COVID-19 pandemic, and is expecting to continue growing in the future, due particularly to the normalization of remote work. However, in addition to this, and in an unprecedented way, many national governments have created advantageous policies aimed directly at DN, in order to take advantage of this form of mobility. Indeed, after several years where international flows of tourists have drastically slowed down due to the COVID-19 pandemic, countries for which the economy highly depended on this industry had to find alternative ways of attracting consumers with relatively high purchasing power. During this period DN's mobility appeared to be more resilient than that of tourists, which led public authorities to perceive these populations as a more stable source of economic benefits and a unique opportunity to make up for the lack of foreign capital inflows **(Parreño-Castellano et al., 2022; Sánchez-Vergara et al., 2023; Cook, 2023)**. Based on this observation, countries have tried to enhance DN's mobility by proposing attractive conditions and by marketing their destinations as *"DN friendly sites"* **(Parreño-Castellano et al, 2022)**.

I mentioned before that DN tend to be attracted to touristic destinations, and cluster in similar areas than tourists. It is crucial to underline that the COVID-19 pandemic has put the concern of DN even higher on the preoccupation of the hospitality industry **(Chevtaeva & Denizci-Guillet, 2021).** In fact, if digital nomadism has entered the tourism agenda, it has also entered the political one. Specific taxation policies, visa-free stay, e-residency or DN visas, so many measures that have aimed at facilitating and extending DN's stay in their destinations. Since the pandemic, there has been a boom in the way public authorities have worked on those questions and provided concrete actions in order to abolish remaining barriers to the arrival of DN. In 2020, right after the end of the first wave of COVID-19 in Europe, Estonia was the first country in the world to provide a DN visa. At the end of the year, it was 16 countries that were proposing similar visas, and by 2022, 30 countries in the world. Duration of those visas may vary between 6 and 36 months depending on countries **(Parreño-Castellano et al, 2022)**. Spain

voted for the implementation of its DN visa in late 2022, and officially allocates it since this year (2023) for a duration of 12-months. Until now, most of the non-EU DN in the country were staying under a tourist visa, which allows a stay of only 3-months.

This way, institutions are actively trying to consolidate digital nomadism and attract knowledge workers within their countries, in order to stimulate the *"business environment"* and foster an *"high-level entrepreneurial ecosystem"* **(Parreño-Castellano et al, 2022).** By promoting themselves as *"ideal territories"* **(Sánchez-Vergara et al., 2023)** they seek to attract foreign capital and consumers with greater financial resources **(Parreño-Castellano et al, 2022.)**. Although the authors point out that DN do not inherently have high purchasing power in their country of origin, they stipulate those individuals purposely try to take advantage of the *"income differential"* by moving to Spain **(Parreño-Castellano et al, 2022.)**.

For destinations, solving the visa issue has been a milestone in ensuring the continuity and sustainability of the DN phenomenon. As recent developments provide a recognized legal status to DN, it also tends to drive them into a more formal integration into the local system **(Sánchez-Vergara et al., 2023).** I believe this is likely to push DN away from the fluid path of lifestyle mobilities and make their trajectory more rigid.

4 - Unpacking transnational gentrification

4.1 Differentiating several forms of displacement

Research have showed the existence of gentrification mechanisms in the arrival neighborhoods of lifestyle-led transnational populations, which are also places that were undergoing transformations due to the earlier arrival of tourists. Once central neighborhoods are regenerated, they first attract many visitors, then also transnational mobile populations, who want to benefit from a nicer and cheaper life environment. As mentioned earlier, this transnational behavior leads to increased inequalities within the urban space, as newcomers have a better socioeconomic position than local long-term residents, also potentially worsen off by the arrival of this new population.

Because it was second to the arrival of tourists in the renewed areas, the role of lifestyle migrants' arrival on neighborhood change has first been very neglected by the literature, and the one of DN is still inexistent in the current state of research. But the consequences of tourism and lifestyle mobilities on urban neighborhoods need to be understood together to have a full

picture of the on-going processes of neighborhood change in central areas of major Spanish cities **(Cocola-Gant & Lopez-Gay, 2020)**. This could offer an opportunity to understand how different kind of transnational mobile populations - staying in the urban space from very short-term period to an indefinite one - share and use their arrival space. **Cocola-Gant & Lopez-Gay (2020)** have underline the emergence of *"'foreign-only enclaves' that exclude the local community in terms of housing affordability issues and cultural practices".*

Displacement can be explained as *"what happens when forces outside the households make living there impossible, hazardous or unaffordable"* **(Hartman et al, 1982)**. Already in the mid-1980s, **Peter Marcuse** had identified different forms of displacement in the neighborhoods of cities **(Slater, 2009)**. There are forms of direct displacement that are happening in non-gentrifying neighborhoods, as well as there are exclusionary displacement and displacement pressures that occur in gentrifying neighborhoods. Direct displacement can be both physical and economic, it can lead a household to leave their housing behind because landlords decided to cut the heat and/or water in the building, or to significantly increase rent. Exclusionary displacement can be due to the inability for a household to afford housing in a neighborhood where they would have normally lived, because it has already started a process of gentrification. Displacement pressures are just as important, as poor households living in gentrifying areas can also suffer from seeing their neighborhood change rapidly. Indeed, the apparition of new bars, restaurants, stores, services and facilities, is slowly making the place more desirable for higher-income populations, but less livable for long-term residents that grow a feeling of *"relative deprivation"* **(ibid.)**. **Phillips et al. (2021)** elaborates on that: *"people come to feel they do not belong to a place or places are changing in ways that do not reflect their values and ways of living".* To that sense, displacement pressures are related to the socio-cultural dimension of gentrification.

4.2 Direct and exclusionary displacements

In the context of global scale inequalities, the free movement of capital and the globalization of real estate markets have allowed owners to benefit from higher returns on rent than if the market would have stayed entirely Spanish. This difference between possible rent prices on the local market and the ones when opening the market internationally is known as the rent gap. Thus, access to the real estate market in central districts of major Spanish cities is increasingly difficult for local long-term population because Spanish rent gaps are now global and more likely to be closed by international investors or tenants, than by local population who have a

lower purchasing power **(Hayes & Zaban, 2020).** Moreover, the economy has evolved towards 'platform capitalism' which has allowed to speed up the rate of extraction of real estate value through the multiplication of short-term rentals slowly replacing existent local housing stock **(Alexandri & Janoschka, 2020)**. Spanish cities have therefore not been spared by the proliferation of *Airbnb* and have even largely been the receptacle for these kinds of services.

The pre-conditions for the mechanisms at stakes to happen seems to be the centrality of the neighborhoods and the past neglect of these areas which have suffered long-term disinvestment. In all studied cases - Barcelona, Seville, Madrid – indigenous residents of those formerly abandoned parts of the city, come from working-class and elderly population group. Precisely, it was in those deprived areas that had not undergone a process of gentrification yet, that the rent gaps were the largest **(Slater, 2009)**. This latter point is of outmost importance, because it gives the opportunity for investors to increase financial profits in making a 'better' use of the land **(Cocola-Gant, & Lopez-Gay, 2020)**.

Housing unaffordability is one well-known factor that not only forces the local population to move directly away from their place of residence, but also prevents new tenants who would normally have come to the area from moving in. In this regard, quantitative analysis of the on-going transnational transformation of neighborhoods has been dominant in the literature. This means explaining transnational gentrification through the explosion of short-term rental places and boom of housing prices as a key reason for long-term local population to gradually leave the central urban areas **(Jover & Díaz-Parra, 2020; Ardura Urquiaga et al, 2020)**.

4.3 Displacement pressures

The scope of research on transnational gentrification have been broadened by **Cocola-Gant (2015),** who argues that mechanisms can be both residential and commercial. Indeed, beyond the rise of real estate prices and difficulties for local populations to access housing, the transformation of retail landscapes and divergence of lifestyle in the arrival urban areas also fuels the processes of gentrification. Yet, this has mostly been studied from a tourism perspective and still little is known on how other lifestyle-led transnational populations behave in the receiving urban spaces.

Research has recently made some progress on this topic and seems to continue evolving in this direction since the COVID-19 pandemic. Papers on lifestyle migrants' identity formation pointed out that they tend to cluster and live in *"self-marginalized spaces"* **(Torkington, 2012)**.

This suggests that mobilities based on the search for a better life, far from the one back home, do not systematically imply that the newcomers integrate into local communities and traditions. As mentioned earlier, those populations tend to socialize with people that share similar values and existence conditions anywhere in the world **(Korpela, 2020).**

Two qualitative studies relying on in-depth interviews with the studied populations, have been of particular relevance in order to understand the arrival of lifestyle migrants in Southern European cities. In the context of Barcelona, **Cocola-Gant, & Lopez-Gay (2020)** showed that renewed areas are becoming places of consumptions for visitors and lifestyle migrants, which then turn out to be less attractive to local population with local cultural preferences. In that sense, pressures of displacement are at stake in those neighborhoods, and **Alexandri & Janoschka (2020)** refer to them as *"violence of everyday life"*, *"disputes over cultural hegemony"* and *"increasing defamiliarization with space"* for local populations. In the context of Lisbon, **Molina Caminero & McGarrigle (2022)** also contributed to "*the emerging body of literature on the migratory movements of young cosmopolitans to vibrant European cities".* The authors explore *"under-the-radar experiences"* and the way newcomers deal with both their aspiration to an embedded local life and a constant attachment to transnational places. Young transnationals negotiate their existence in the city, between being very *"adaptable and integrative"* to local society, but still relying on *"international and cosmopolitan networks".* While interviewees affirm their willingness to consume locally and develop social ties with Portuguese dwellers; they seem to encounter difficulties in doing so. However, they insist above all, on making a distinction between themselves and tourists and other *"floating city users"*, in order to give legitimacy to their presence in the city **(Molina Caminero & McGarrigle, 2022)**.

Similarly, literature on DN have showed that they try to differentiate from tourists, through distinctive values and ways of travelling. However, it is not clear how to make the difference between visitors' behavior and theirs. Especially because DN keep on moving between destinations, existing research argues that they often provide very few efforts to get to know local culture, traditions and language of the place they move to **(Hannonen, 2020)**. Because lifestyle migrants and DN share an identity self-constructed far from the tourist one and a privileged position in the globalized world, the case study of Lisbon is a good proxy to understand how could possibly behave DN in arrival urban spaces. However, **(Molina Caminero & McGarrigle, 2022)** focus on people initiating a one-time life transition towards a new lifestyle and local space, whereas DN are depicted as a population on the move, completely free from spatial constraints. Moreover, the studied population in Lisbon is working

locally, while DN work remotely for clients or companies often located in their home country. Thus, there is a need to provide more accurate research about DN's use of local spaces.

So far, we know DN create a community for themselves that also tends to leave outside the local population and culture, as they often end up living among westerners in *"all-inclusive communities such as co-living/co-working spaces"* where they share a *"bubble-like existence"* **(Thompson, 2019)**. Those mobile consumers led new markets to open and companies to offer new products and services (CLS, CWS, specialty CFS, yoga studios, cocktail bars, eco-brand shops, places of leisure and social services, etc.) made specifically to provide this wealthier population a *"comfortable, middle-class, western environment in which visible social interactions can take place within any location around the globe"* **(Hermann & Paris, 2020)**. Thus, a contradiction also exists between the desire for local and traditional aspects of a place, and the access to standardized and uniformed amenities and services around the globe **(Thompson, 2019).**

In cosmopolitan cities, some areas have been converted into *"cool, authentic, alternative and trendy"* urban spaces of consumption **(Alexandri & Janoschka, 2020)** in order to appear desirable to those transnational mobile populations. On this question, the approach of **Maitland (2010)** seems to be contrary to the one argued by **Cocola-Gant, & Lopez-Gay (2020)** about the creation of 'foreign-only enclaves' in Barcelona. Indeed, the authors described a mechanism of marginalization for long-term residents due to a divergence in lifestyle with transnational populations. They argued that whereas the latter population feel comfortable sharing spaces and activities with tourists, Spanish residents tend to avoid those areas, and associate neighborhood change as undesirable. However, **Maitland (2010)** suggests that in some cases, "*higher spending residents"* along with visitors, form a strong demand for new consumption opportunities, such as restaurants, bars and shops. Those populations come together to claim distinctive practices and new experiences through the consumption of high-quality products. Those developments usually happen in neighborhoods that were not initially planned for tourism, but that are relatively close to the history center and main attractions.

This overview of the current state of knowledge on the potential cultural influence of DN in cities is the starting point for further research, to understand exactly how newcomers' lifestyle and consumption preferences can fuel mechanisms of transnational gentrification and potentially push to the displacement of local populations.

5 - Digital nomadism with the creation of new markets

As I already mentioned, the rise of digital nomadism has also coincided with the opening of new international markets. To sustain their existence, DN tend to choose destinations that are providing access to a wide community of like-minded people and infrastructures that match their tastes and are good enough for them to maintain their personal and working lifestyle. As they aim at embarking in their journey, preoccupations on how to find an adequate place to live in and work from are central for DN. In order to provide some flexibility and comfort for people with such a mobile lifestyle, companies have been adapting their facilities and supply of accommodation (short-term rentals, CLS) and workspaces (CFS, CWS, libraries…) **(Parreño-Castellano et al, 2022)**. Those elements are crucial for DN's labor productivity, but also for their social sanity. Indeed, the private sector seems to have rightfully understood the challenges for DN to find a community in which they feel at ease and can flourish, but also comfortable spaces where they can work from and suitable housing that combine all of that with the privacy that they may need. In this section, I will be looking in more detail at the diversity of places, products and services that have been created and that support DN's lifestyle.

5.1 Coffee shops: a place of distinction and work

Traditionally, CFS used to be a *"'third place' in urban lives separate from work and home"* **(Ferreira et al, 2021)**. They were mostly seen as a space of encounter, particularly important for enjoying social interaction while drinking a warm cup of coffee. Over the past decades, the rise of entrepreneurialism, the digitalization of the labor market, and lately the generalization of remote working; have resulted in a rising demand for alternative workspaces in cities. Although this thesis focuses on a lifestyle perspective, profound changes in everyday practices cannot not be understood without considering the deep transformations that occurred on the labor market since the end of the last century. Among other things, this participated in transforming the original function of CFS.

Nowadays, not only CFS offer customers a *"caffeine fix"* **(ibid.)** and the opportunity to have a good chat with people, but they also become a substitute for offices, providing customers with high-speed internet, electric plugs and spacious work tables to sit at for hours. CFS are not necessarily neutral spaces anymore, as many people choose to work from them. **Ferreira et al (2021)** have been as far as qualifying them of *"coffice"*, explaining how some CFS owners now market their place as a workspace where quality coffee is provided all day long.

Among the new independent CFS that have developed in cities, the ones dedicated to specialty coffee have taken on a greater place in the market **(Ferreira et al, 2021)**. They had initially opened in Anglo-Saxon countries (US, UK, Australia, Canada, etc.) before finally reaching many more international markets **(Bantman-Mansum, 2020).** The rapid spread of specialty CFS across the world is linked to the rise of mobility in general. The facilitated movements across the Schengen area, but also the apparition of programs like Erasmus study exchange or Work-Holiday visas have increased the possibilities for youngsters to temporarily migrate to another country, and experience new products and services on the market **(ibid.)**. Thus, since the end of the 20th century, new urban modes of consumption have emerged as the same time as highly mobile middle-classes were growing. Consumption preferences for this group of educated and relatively-privileged transnationals became more unified across countries of the Global North, and fueled *"changing nature of modern urban consumptionscape"* **(Ferreira et al, 2021)**. Urban spaces where those CFS are located slowly tend to appear as *"sanitized, cosmopolitan spaces of consumption"* **(Bantman-Mansum, 2020)**.

The role of modern CFS in the life of *"well-travelled, urban dwellers"* **(ibid.)** have evolved principally into two directions. First, they now frequently take on the role of an alternative working space, where people can comfortably work remotely from their laptop. Secondly, they become the stage on which *"difference from mainstream norms"* **(Zukin, 2008)** are performed. Thus, trendy specialty CFS turn out to be more than a place to get a cup of quality coffee, but where *"new emerging middle classes can show off their lifestyles and social status"* **(Bantman-Mansum, 2020)**.

The cross-border flows of tourists, students, and lifestyle-led mobile populations, but also the circulation of ideas and concepts have a great influence on gentrification **(Bantman-Mansum, 2020)**. The changing nature of CFS has to be understood in the context of neighborhood change as they are at the heart of the retail offer in *"revitalised shopping streets"* **(ibid.).** The implementation of these CFS often takes place in neighborhoods undergoing transformation, pushed by the presence of international visitors and residents. The apparition of this new segment on the CFS market, often turn out to exclude urbanites with lower purchasing power and different cultural preferences. This can gradually lead to the displacement of local *"working-class and ethnic minority consumers"* **(Zukin, 2008)** for whom the CFS do not serve the interests of the community.

Bantman-Mansum (2020) points out the need for studying deeper *"the influence of relatively privileged migrants on retail-led gentrification",* as the multiplication of specialty and

workspace cafes in gentrifying neighborhoods has been a new way of commodifying urban spaces **(Zukin, 2008)**. CFS can be seen as an *"expression of transnationalism"* **(Bantman-Mansum, 2020)** initiating *"processes of cultural change"* **(ibid.)**.

5.2 Coworking & Coliving spaces: between community and flexibility

As I mentioned with the rise of CFS, the profound transformations that occurred on the labor market have led people that do not go to a traditional office anymore, to search for comfortable alternative workspaces. Moreover, those changes in working practices and an increased mobility have also overturned the traditional meaning of home. That you prefer to have it all, or to divide the different aspects of your life, the market has come up with innovative products to cater for the need of those (mobile) remote workers.

First, CWS developed as a new workplace at the end of the 2000s. **Chevtaeva & Denizci-Guillet (2021)** have described CWS as *"a shared working environment where different kinds of knowledge professionals mostly freelancers, work in various degrees of specialization in the knowledge industry"*. Since their emergence, CWS have spread around the world: in 2010, no more than 21 000 people across the globe were working from that kind of spaces, against 2,17 million in 2019 **(Chevtaeva & Denizci-Guillet, 2021)**, so more than 100 times more in 9 years. In Spain, CWS have grown rapidly and the country was in 2021, the world's 4th largest supplier of those workspaces (after the US, India and the UK) **(Alonso-Almeida et al., 2021)**. More recently, the CLS market has emerged as part of the share economy, and shows promise of following a similar development. Indeed, since the mid-2010s, and especially the pandemic COVID-19, it has become more and more common for home to mix private and work spheres. As a response to those evolutions, new companies have recently appeared to propose CLS as a well-designed and efficient solution to combine every aspect of life in one place: working, socializing, exercising and also resting. In a sentence, **Chevtaeva (2021)** explains how CLS disrupt conventional ideas of housing: *"instead of being an escape from work, it is productive; instead of being private, it is social; and instead of being inhabited long-term, it is mobile."*

Chevtaeva (2021) reported in one example of Bali, that members of a space with access to both coworking and coliving facilities, are 90% people that self-identify as DN. Probably because digital nomadism embodies both the changes in the labor market and the acceleration of mobility, it has particularly pushed the development of those spaces **(Chevtaeva & Denizci-Guillet, 2021)**. More than ever, CWS's companies are orientating their business strategies

towards DN, which offer them a real opportunity to pursue growth in the post-pandemic future. As for CLS, DN are also often targeted as consumers of those products, as they are considered as *"the up-and-coming work-leisure segment"* **(Von Zumbusch & Lalicic, 2020).** Many CWS and CLS actively work in expanding their supply worldwide, since DN are often looking for similar services and communities across their destinations.

CWS and CLS have in common that they both allow its members a facilitated integration into a chosen community, but also the capacity to be accessible and flexible everywhere in the world. **Chevtaeva & Denizci-Guillet (2021)** argued that CWS can become essential in DN's well-being, as they have been recognized as one of, if not, the most fundamental infrastructure for DN to maintain their lifestyle and especially their work-life balance. They can be *"used as a self-discipline strategy"* **(Cook, 2023)** to separate work life from the private and social one. The logic of CLS is antagonist, since it is a place that makes the different facets of DN life possible, from work to intimacy. However, just like CWS, the use of CLS, gives residents the opportunity to access a *"ready-made community"* and a *"sense of belonging"* no matter where they are, and who they already know there **(Chevtaeva, 2021)**. In fact, CLS can be the perfect accommodation to tackle the problem of social isolation for young international urbanites in general. Beyond this, the community spirit can go as far, as for members of those CLS to be considered as members of a *"'tribe'"* **(Von Zumbusch & Lalicic, 2020)**. Other advantages of those spaces, could be the reduction of cost and access to information. Indeed, this way of sharing working and living facilities can allow to cut the cost of moving around destinations. Moreover, DN seem to also appreciate CWS and CLS' efforts to provide them with local information and relevant tips about the destination, through articles and feeds on their social networks **(Chevtaeva, 2021).**

The proliferation of CWS is mostly located in large business cities, and has to be understood in a wider context of *"the making of the 'creative city'"* **(Moriset, 2013)**. Following on the work of **Florida (2002)**, a city that is said to be creative, is a city that places 'human creativity' as the central driver of its economic growth. Despite the controversial use of the term, the creative city has emerged as a new place-making strategy for post-industrial cities that try to attract and fit the life standards of their *creative class* by developing *creative economies* **(Pratt, 2008).** What does it all mean? For **Florida (2002)**, the *creative class* is a socioeconomic group of individuals that gathers highly-skilled workers, intellectuals, but also artists, etc., and whose productivity and consumption have been deemed to be at the origin of positive urban development. To this regard, leaders have been particularly providing efforts to expand the

cultural, art, educational, technological sectors, in order to foster innovations and promote investments. Indeed, in a context of globalization and increased competition, cities have actively tried to brand their city as a place of knowledge **(Peck, 2005).** Along with those goals, the creation of spaces that would cater the needs of *creative* and innovative actors, have been strongly encouraged. To this regard, the DN's culture has played a major role in expanding the *creative* tourism industry. **Richards (2021)** defines *creative* tourism as the *"sharing experiences and skills between tourists and locals".* **Putra & Agirachman (2016)** argue that CWS allow urban destinations *"to promote their creative tourism through social networking".* Particularly, the authors reflect on CWS as a unique opportunity for locals to meet foreigners and have some knowledge exchange. **Florida (2002)** establishes a link between the *creative class* and work practices: usually *creative* workers tend to be freer in choosing their work places and hours, and opt for more casual norms that fit better with the lifestyle they aspire to. This suggests that freedom of choice is not exclusive to DN, but is also shared by other privileged populations, potentially more sedentary. To assure that this *"bridge between local and global creativity*" exists, designers of CWS have to make efforts to facilitate interactions between users **(Putra & Agirachman, 2016).** In the same logic, **Bergan et al. (2021)** have considered the emergence of CLS as the reflect of DN and their new meanings of home. Authors perceive DN as *"the latest iteration of the creative class"* ***(ibid.)***. Precisely, "*the ideal home for the new creative class is a place of work that is mobile and social."* ***(ibid.)***. This explains how CLS appear as the perfect housing choice for those young professionals.

To sum up on both CWS and CLS, what DN particularly seek in those spaces seem to be a cure for loneliness, the comfort of a work environment and the practicality of obtaining short-term contracts **(Chevtaeva, 2021).** At the same time, those products are seen as drivers of innovation for receiving places. However, literature remains vague about the full range of spillovers that could be for the economy, and especially for the surrounding communities and neighborhoods where CWS and CLS are embedded. **Alonso-Almeida et al. (2021)** call for new research in order to "*identify coworking spaces' positive and negative impacts regarding city spaces, such as urban transformation"*. Whereas some scholars claim the possibility for those spaces to mix local and foreign communities, and to promote their connectivity, no studies have tried to quantify the frequency or quality of those interactions, nor to prove the benefits for the local economy and the integration of foreign populations within the host society. Precisely, **Chevtaeva (2021)** points out the need to further distinguish DN from the local users of those spaces, and to find out whether they truly share those environments. Because it seems that DN's

singular lifestyle, needs and preferences are at the origin of this specific market orientation towards the shared economy (CWS and CLS), the author argues one more time that digital nomadism needs to be part of research on tourism.

To conclude, although the recent literature repeatedly enunciated how digital nomadism can be an opportunity for local economies, there has been no proof or attempts to measure these benefits yet. **Cook (2023)** sums up this concern very well by arguing that *"rather than asking what digital nomads are escaping, we need to ask what they are exporting"*. Now that the volume of DN is rising at an exponential level, a critical question is to figure out whether or not there will be a culture clash between the arrival and the local populations, as *"cultures can merge, be subsumed, or be imposed"* **(ibid.)**. According to the scholar, the challenge for the coming years is *"to decide whether digital nomadism is an opportunity or a threat"* **(ibid.)** for receiving cities and populations.

CASE STUDY & METHODS

1 - Transnational gentrification in Madrid

1.1 Current state of research

As mentioned in the literature review, transnational gentrification has been mostly studied from a real estate and housing affordability perspective. In Spain, this research has been particularly focusing on Barcelona and Sevilla, which are long-established tourist (therefore international) cities. So far, research on transnational gentrification in Madrid is not exhaustive, and first proofs of the process were showed a couple years ago by **Ardura Urquiaga et al. (2020)**. The authors address the changing structure and prices of real estate, but also population change in the inner-city districts of the capital city. This is the only available paper that takes Madrid as a case study to examine transnational gentrification, producing considerable knowledge on the current process in the city. However, the article focuses on mechanisms of direct displacement, leaving aside additional displacement pressures for the local population.

Researching on Madrid is necessary because the city has been particularly active in implementing post-crisis real estate and touristic policies that have taken place over the past 15 years, thus inducing the greater attractiveness of the city to transnational populations **(Ardura Urquiaga et al.; Janoschka et al., 2020).** I will look at this case to argue that further research is needed to understand the full picture of the on-going mechanisms of transnational gentrification in Madrid.

In the following section I will be analyzing the findings of **Ardura Urquiaga et al. (2020).**

1.2 Understanding the ongoing transformations

Gentrification is not a new thing in Madrid, but the 2008 economic crisis has triggered a new phase in the process, now making it transnational. Following the path of others Southern European cities, the exacerbation of global tourism and planetary rent gaps led to the multiplication of short-term rentals in the Spanish capital, especially over the period 2013-2018. This has been followed by *"transnational residential relocations from higher-income countries",* to the city of Madrid *"both in the longer and shorter term".* The authors point out

an incontestable link between the increasing tourists' number, settlement of wealthier transnational mobile population and rise of rental prices.

In Madrid, the very central districts (Sol, and Northern Palacio including the Royal Palace) corresponds to the highly touristified areas which redevelopment were initially planned for tourists as they contain the major historical attractions of the city. Nevertheless, neighborhoods like Southern Palacio, Embajadores, Universidad and Justicia (La Latina, Lavapiés, Malasaña and Chueca) - that were not initially known for being among the city's must-sees – have also transformed over the last fifty years. Their transformation was initially driven by state-led regeneration but since 2008, their renewal took a new direction with the proliferation of *Airbnb* and the arrival of visitors and other transnational populations, who wanted to broaden their experience of the *"authentic"* Madrid. The paper aims at investigating those new mechanisms of transnational gentrification, and looks into the arrival of higher-income migrants and the resulting change in the socioeconomic profiles of residents in certain areas of Madrid.

The map of Madrid bellow, provided by the authors, makes clear which are the neighborhoods being discussed, and where they are located (you can ignore the orange and blue frames who corresponds to redevelopment projects but are irrelevant for my study).

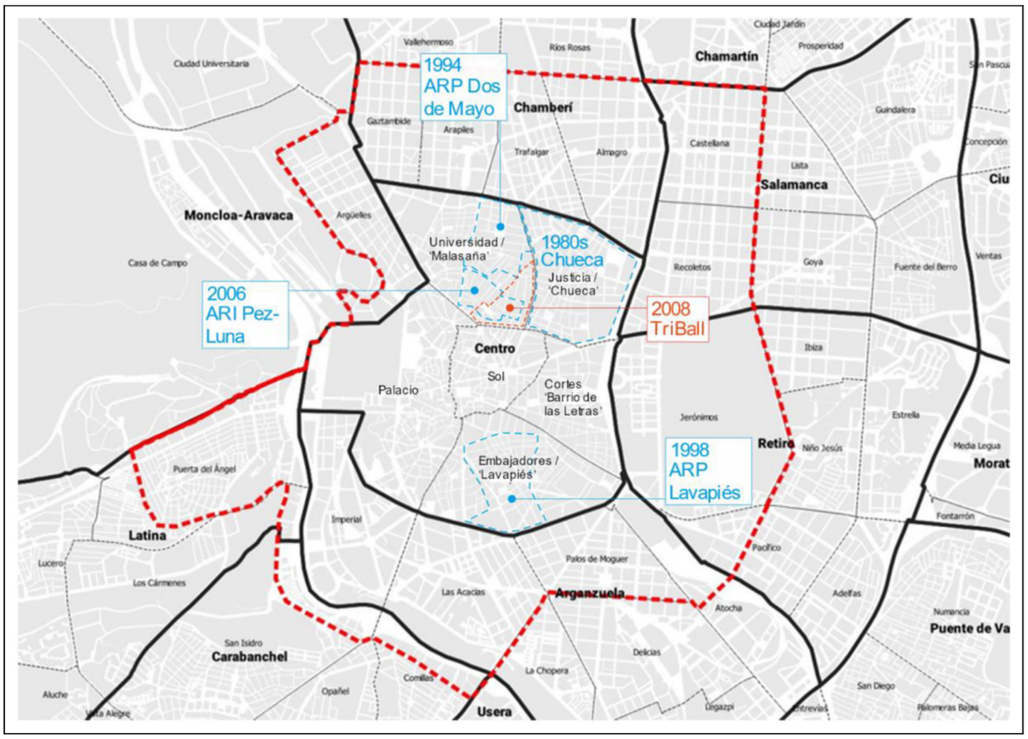


Figure 1. Map of the Centro district and its surrounding administrative quarters. The thick dashed line represents its best-connected surrounding neighbourhoods.

Figure 2. Geography of Madrid. Source: **Ardura Urquiaga et al. (2020).**

A very brief history of gentrification

In the 1970s and 1980s, the northern districts of Madrid, Universidad and Justicia, used to be known for being the birthplace of the Spanish counter-cultural movement of 'La Movida' (Malasaña), and the hotspot of associated issues of alcohol and drug consumption (Chueca, Malasaña). At the end of the 20th century, both areas undergone first phases of urban renewal that were initiated by state-led policies and attempts to tackle the bad reputation of those neighborhoods. In the late 1990s, the southern district of Madrid, Embajadores, historically known as the most diverse central district of Madrid, also experienced significant state-led redevelopment projects. This resulted in the modification of the social composition of Lavapiés' population that was known as a *"melting-pot"*. Authors explain that public desire of urban upgrading led to the arrival of inhabitants with higher levels of income and education, than the local population. Today, Chueca is known for being the LGBTQ+ district of Madrid, and Malasaña to be the most *"hipster area",* as it was also part of a private attempt to rebrand the neighborhood as a place of art and culture (2008). Lavapiés also continues facing processes of privatized urban regeneration, that are seen as a way to combat 'insecurity' and negative stigmatization of the neighborhood. Those more recent phases of gentrification were led by the speculative expansion of the Spanish economy, but also the 2008-2012 economic and financial crisis. As I explained in the literature review, the crises have led cities to increasingly compete globally to attract capital to their spaces, so they now also try to stand out from the crowds to attract *"globally mobile, higher-income real estate consumers"*. At that time, the Spanish population was particularly suffering from the economic contraction and was seen as insufficient to motor local economic growth and urban 'upgrading' processes.

Proliferation of Airbnb

In Madrid, it was not a public strategy to have urban renewal through tourism until *Airbnb* appeared. Unlike Barcelona and Sevilla, Madrid became a tourist hub only in the 2010s. The authors show that within the span of 4 years, Madrid has experienced a boom of *Airbnb* accommodation. While in 2015, the short-term rentals were mostly located in Madrid Centro, it rapidly expanded towards neighboring districts, to the West in Puerta del Angel, to the North in Chamberí and Tetuán, to the South in Arganzuela and Usera, to the East to Salamanca and Retiro. Although they do not have any tourist attractions, those areas experience strong growth in short-term accommodation. In the far Northern, Western and Southern parts of the city, *Airbnb* clusters have taken roots in long-established working-class or disadvantaged immigrant neighborhoods. In the Eastern and Northern-Centro parts of Madrid, which are generally home

of higher-income households, the Airbnb have emerged precisely in the lower-income part of those neighborhoods. Embajadores, precisely the lowest-income area of the city center, is the part of Madrid where *Airbnb* accommodations grew the most, and where losses of purchasing power and displacement were the most significant.

Towards unaffordability of traditional housing

In the Centro, a clear correlation has been proven between the emergence of short-term accommodation and rent prices. The Ayuntamiento de Madrid (2017) have calculated that the *Airbnb* accommodation can bring 100% profits more than traditional rental if the occupancy rate is above 60% all year long. Because of that, landlords who want to maximize their earnings, choose between turning their housing into short-term rental, or increasing their rent to make up for this opportunity cost of keeping their good on the traditional rental market. Due to the sharp rise in rental prices and the fact that the purchasing power of the local population failed to keep up with those rates, average residents in these areas have been threatened with, and often victim of, displacement. Thus, this suggest that the boom of *Airbnb* in Madrid goes beyond indicating an explosion of tourism and temporary visitors, it is *"an indicator of precariousness"*.

Therefore, the mid-2010 was particularly complicated for low-income local populations who had to face both shrinking household income and higher rent prices, as a consequence of the economic crises. This resulted in a twofold reduction in purchasing power, as the share of rent in residents' disposable income has risen by up to 10 percentage points in some cases. Because local residents could no longer afford housing in those areas and *"there was little additional higher-income demand from Spanish workers"*, inhabitants were slowly replaced by wealthier transnational newcomers.

Arrival of lifestyle migrants

Madrid has long been a diverse and cosmopolitan city. However, this desire to open up the city to tourism and international visitors has rapidly and significantly changed the structure of migration since the 2008 economic crisis. In each neighborhood, the distribution of the total number of migrants has evolved towards a growing importance of migrants from the EU, Europe or OCDE, and thus a relative reduction in migrants from Latin America, Asia and Africa. Central areas of Madrid are the one which attracted higher-income migrants the most, with Malasaña and Lavapiés being the neighborhoods where the presence of these lifestyle migrants have grown the fastest (respectively +28 and +25 points of %) over 9 years. The share

of those relatively privileged newcomers among the total foreign populations was in 2008 around 40% in Palacio, Cortes, Justicia and Sol and in less than 10 years went up to around 65% or 70%.

Another thing to note, is that those figures are a low estimate of the actual numbers of individuals from higher-incomes countries, because *"short-term foreign residents – often neither traditional tourists nor neighbors in the conventional sense – may not be in the Register"* – because they may have no reason to as it is only useful for obtaining parking rights or public health services for instance. This suggest that many incoming populations from higher-income countries may actually be impossible to track and quantify through traditional statistics.

1.3 Moving towards my research

To conclude, insights from ***Ardura Urquiaga et al. (2020)*** show that central areas of Madrid have become *"an emerging destination for lifestyle migrants".* This can be explained by two things: on one side, efforts made by the city to advertise itself as an easy and relatively cheap city to visit; and on the other side the resulting impossibility for local population to maintain access to accommodation in the central districts, turning the supply of housing into an opportunity for new populations. This helps clarify the reasons for the *"influx of new, mobile workers and visitors, who have partially displaced lower-income populations".*

Considering those findings and following the literature on lifestyle-led mobile populations, but also transnational gentrification in Barcelona, Seville and Lisbon; we can expect the arrival of newcomers with greater purchasing power, but also distinctive consumption and cultural practices to also have consequences on the way the urban space is used and (re)produced in Madrid. Precisely, because newcomers have a more advantageous socioeconomic situation, we can assume this would also result in a conflict of interest within the local retail landscape.

Although DN are unlikely to be included in the figures I presented (because of their short-term stay, and thus their non-registration to the city authorities), we can assume that both this evolution in terms of migrants' countries of origins but also the increase in digital nomadism that occurred in Spain during the same period (mid-2010s) **(Parreño-Castellano et al, 2022)**, are good proxies for the growing number of DN in Madrid.

2 - Research statement & questions

Already more than 20 years ago, **Makimoto & Manners (1997)** were expecting the progress and diffusion of technologies to slowly transform digital nomadism into a mainstream way of life. The phenomenon indeed had expanded, but DN had remained unconventional remote workers till the mid-2010s. However, since few years, the trend has intensified and the COVID-19 pandemic has been seen as a trigger for the rapid growth of digital nomadism (particularly in cities), also in the sense that working remotely settles into normality. Since then, researchers have been changing their approach to digital nomadism, shifting their focus from populations to destinations: the aim is no longer to understand who the DN are and what motivates their mobility, but to know how public institutions and companies attempt to attract and support their lifestyle. Yet, it remains unclear how this plays out specifically in the urban context. In that sense, I identified a gap in the literature concerning DN located in cities, but especially concerning the way they use spaces in those cities.

At the same time, literature on transnational gentrification has been gradually gaining importance too, as it becomes a growing concern for Southern European cities. Nevertheless, research on that field remains mainly attached to the settlement of lifestyle migrants who relocate permanently to a city, and little is known on the implications of the temporary urban existences of DN. Precisely, the literature does not address the way cultural preferences and specific needs of DN in cities, can also contribute to non-tangible signals of displacement for the local population. This knowledge is particularly lacking in Madrid, where barely anything is known about the evolution of commercial landscapes that may have accompanied the arrival of new transnational populations.

As a matter of fact, we are facing two fast-growing global phenomena that I believe are greatly overlapping, yet that remain studied separately from each other. The ethnographic work I provide is useful to gain clarity about the way DN behave in the cities they move to for a temporary period of time, and what their everyday life looks like. In the future, this contribution may help account for the existence of sustained displacement pressures, which could potentially lead to greater tensions with long-term residents than the rise of housing prices alone.

In particular I aim to answer the following question: **How do digital nomads build their existence in Madrid, and specifically, what are the resources, networks and spaces in the city that help them do so?**

I explore this question by investigating where do they live, who do they socialize with in the city, which districts do they spend most of their time in, which are the ones they ignore; but also, which spaces do they work from, where are they located, with whom do they share them, etc.

3 - Research methods

In-depth interviews, but also participant observations have been used to study lifestyle migrants in Barcelona and Lisbon, both to learn about *under-the-radar* narratives and experiences of young cosmopolitan newcomers, and to try to understand how new international city users and local long-term residents co-exist in the urban spaces **(Cocola-Gant, & Lopez-Gay, 2020; Molina Caminero & McGarrigle, 2022)**. In the case of Madrid, I argued that adopting a quantitative approach based on the census of rent prices, incomes and population, does not provide sufficient knowledge to understand the full pictures of urban transformations. For this reason, I was inspired by research in Barcelona and Lisbon, and decided to put the interviewees' own words at the center of my work.

Therefore, the aim of my thesis is to explore DN's everyday life in Madrid, which means diving into their practices and habits, their housing and consumptions preferences, their way of building social networks, but also to look into the spaces they choose to work from. Because of resources constraints, my research will not develop relationships with both DN and local residents, but will be a first step for determining whether there is a possible divergence in lifestyle between both groups in Madrid.

To answer my research questions, I adopted a set of qualitative methods. Most of my data has been produced through in-depth interviews with DN, as well as with owners of CFS and CWS. Additionally, it comes from my participation in online chats and social events, but also my observations at CFS and CWS, to which I added a series of informal interviews with workers of those spaces. Finally, I used photography as a means of conveying the particular atmosphere of CFS I studied. I underline that my work will not include ethnography at CLS, as I decided to focus on workspaces. My research had two phases: first, conversing with DN, and second, exploring alternative workspaces. Thus, my methods, and later on my findings, will be presented in two distinctive sections.

3.1 Conversing with digital nomads

Preparing semi-structured interviews

In order to prepare my interviews, I designed my interview grid in January 2023. My first step was to write down my ideas about the information I needed to understand the behavior of DN in Madrid. Secondly, I organized this information according to their topic of relevance. Ultimately, I came up with 7 large themes in my interview grid, which were divided into sub-sections, themselves gathering few questions to extract specific data (see **Figure 3**).

THEME	SECTIONS
Profiles & Choices	Migration to Madrid Socio-demographic profile
Housing and geographic preferences	Housing choices Housing location and importance of the neighborhood
Remote professional life	Organization of work life Home and other places to work from
Urban lifestyle: consumption, leisure and cultural practices	Food habits Free time Leisure and cultural activities
Social network	Pre-existent social circle Developing a social circle Social life at home
Mobility in & out	Mobility within Madrid Mobility outside of Madrid Mobility of visitors to the interviewee
Conclusion on their experience	Knowledge of the city Knowledge of the culture Additional insights of their choice

Figure 3. Themes and sections of the interview grid (DN). *The complete grid is provided in appendix.*

To participate in my study, people had to meet three necessary conditions: working remotely from their laptop, being in Madrid for more than a month (in order to already have developed habits) and self-identifying as a DN. The self-identification is a decisive criterion, particularly because the profiles of DN are very heterogenous and definitions are blurred and changing.

Finding interviewees

End of January 2023, just after moving to Madrid, I started to actively reach out with DN in the city. My goal was to find people willing to speak with me about their daily life. To find

respondents, I have adopted several strategies. The main one was to use digital tools, the second was to meet them in-person and the last one to use my personal network. The anonymity of each participant will be respected.

Digital methods consisted in integrating some private *Facebook* groups for DN, on which I published a short message to explain the aim of my research project and formulate my demand for interviews. In no time, M1 volunteered for being part of my study. More importantly, the admin of the first *Facebook* group, accepted my demand to enter their corresponding *WhatsApp* group. This chat was probably the most useful tool I got to meet a large number of DN. After sending the same explicative message, I had the opportunity to find W1,W2,M4,M5,M6 willing to participate in my research. Beyond finding respondents, just being member of the chat was very helpful to understand where DN were meeting, which CFS and CWS they possibly frequented, and how they were dealing with the soon to be (and later freshly) released Spanish DN visa. .

In person methods allowed me to meet M2,W3,W4,W5. Indeed, I participated in cocktail and rooftop events, some of them that were precisely shared on the *WhatsApp* group I had integrated. Moreover, I met W4 in a CFS when I went to my first interview with W1. Both women knew each other's from before, and W1 had invited everyone on the *WhatsApp* chat to come work with her from this CFS.

Using personal network led me to interviews with M3,W6,W7. End of 2021, I was living in a CLS in Brussels. The brand *COHABS* likes to see itself as a company that connects people through housing. Since January 2023, they also offer houses in Madrid. To foster the sense of community, they created an online network exclusively accessible to their members all over the world. Thus, my former housemates in Brussels helped me share a message with the tenants of the new house in Madrid, through this app. W7 was one of them. Additionally, M3 was a former colleague of a housemate I had in Brussels. Finally, I met W6 as she was the friend of an expert I met on a school excursion in Madrid.

Conducting interviews

I interviewed a sample of 13 DN. Interviews took place from January to May 2023, either in person: in cafés (4), at a market (1), at their house (2); but also, online through *Google Meet* (4) and over the phone (2). Interviews' length goes from 39 to 82 minutes, with 9 interviews located in the interval (55;70) minutes. The gender split between my respondents is almost perfect, with

7 women and 6 men. Ages range from 24 to 60. Nationalities are diverse, coming from 4 different continents (Americas, Europe, Asia). Among DN, 10 came here solo, 3 with their spouse and none with their family (but M6 has a young daughter living in Madrid).

I recorded every interview, then transcribed them manually and sorted out the data by using my interview grid. I filled it up replacing the question column with an answer column, and thus keeping the same exact structure to process data according to each theme and sub-sections. When each individual interview grid had been filled in with personal responses, I created tables to group all DN information together by theme and topic. Some of those tabs are available in the APPENDIX. Following that, I organized my results as such: *Being, Staying, Inhabiting, Working, Eating, Socializing, Enjoying, Moving, Knowing…*

GENDER (W/M) & IDENTIFICATION	NATIONALITY	AGE
W1	US (Also, soon Polish)	31
M1	Canada (Initially German)	Refused to answer Approximately 55-60
W2	Argentina (Also, Venezuela)	26
M2	France	25
W3	Peru (Also, soon French)	25
M3	Argentina	36
M4	India	27
W4	US	33
W5	German	24
M5	UK (Also, Spain)	34
W6	Columbia	32
M6	Lebanon (Also, UK)	35
W7	Brazil (Also, Canada, Italy)	29

Figure 4. General profiles of interviewees (DN)

3.2 Exploring alternative workspaces

Selecting places of research

The first part of my research was very useful in finding out which workspaces (other than home) DN choose in Madrid. That is, I decided to conduct research in spaces (CFS/CWS) that were mentioned by my interviewees.

To narrow my selection of specialty CFS, I also examined online articles recommendation for finding the *best cafés in Madrid for DN.* Most of them were located in Malasaña, but also in La Latina and Lavapiés. After visiting several CFS and conducting preliminary observations, I decided to focus on those that were most representative of CFS's workspace offer in Madrid, choosing one in each representative neighborhood. Thus, I excluded other CFS that had similar visions but a lower capacity for workers, or that were less defined by it. I included Starbucks to my final sample, as it is an entry-level specialty coffee, but was mentioned by a couple of my interviewees as a good alternative workspace especially for its relative affordability, compared to other trendy CFS.

	CFS1	**CFS2**	**CFS3**	**CFS4**	**Starbucks**
Actor	Independent owner	Independent owner	Independent owner	Independent owner	Multinational Chain
Location in Madrid	Malasaña (Universidad)	La Latina (Palacio)	Lavapiés (Embajadores)	Delicias (Arguanzela)	Malasaña (Universidad)

Figure 5. Information and code of the studied CFS.

The selection of CWS was faster as my sample exactly corresponds to every CWS my respondents reported going to. Additionally, CWS5 was mentioned by M2, as an independent CWS that he would like to try out as soon as it opens (February 2023).

	CWS1	CWS2	CWS3	CWS4	CWS5
Network	Multinational	Multinational	Multinational	Multinational	Local
Location	Salamanca	Justicia	Justicia	Justicia	Chamberi
Number of locations in the world	721	490	133	107	1
Number of locations in Madrid	3 (+1)	11 (+2)	8	6	1
Neighborhoods of location in Madrid	Chamberi Tetuan Salamanca	Cortes Justicia Imperial Chamberi Chamartin Tetuan Salamanca	Chamberi Tetuan Salamanca Valdebebas	Cortes Justicia Embajadores	Chamberi

Figure 6. Information and code of the studied CWS.

On-site visits

My observations took place in May and June 2023, in spaces I had never visited before, with the exception of CFS1, where I had interviewed W4 in February.

CFS were visited once (1), twice (2) or up to four times (2). Observations were conducted both during the week (9) and weekends (4), always during daytime. During my visits, I sat down at a table working myself on my laptop, or just having a coffee. I took notes on my laptop or phone as I was there, observing the customers and workers, interactions and dynamics; but also analyzing the menus. Additionally, I took some pictures of my surroundings.

CWS were visited only once, during a weekday. I had to introduce myself at the front desk every time, and present myself as a researcher. I introduced briefly my intentions of learning more about the functioning of their CWS. Except in CWS1, workers were pleased to welcome me and answer my questions. I was kindly taken on a tour within CWS4, and I was able to do it myself in CWS3. Photographing spaces was not allowed.

Social media & Website

To understand better the places I was studying, I also followed their Instagram pages (CFS1,CFS2,CFS3,CFS4,CFS5,CWS5) and consulted their official website (CFS1,CWS1,CWS2,CWS3,CWS4,CWS5). Doing so, allowed me to learn more about their offer, their prices, their target clientele, but also about their visions and values. Sources (with URL) will not be provided as I wish to keep the anonymity of each visited spaces.

Interviews

To complement my observations, I gathered insights from workers and owners. One of my professors happened to know OCFS1 and provided me with his personal contact. This allowed me to plan a formal meeting with him, during which we sat down together for a couple of hours in his CFS. Concerning OCWS5, after multiple failed attempts to reach out to him on social media and through his official website, I went on-site a couple of times, before finally meeting him. He immediately agreed to talk to me, and apologized as he had been overwhelmed since the opening. I conducted a rather informal interview with him, while he was cleaning and closing his space. All the workers I interviewed, spontaneously agreed to answer my questions while they were working. The anonymity of each participant and spaces will be respected.

CFS	Staff	Nationality	Interview type	Duration (in minutes)	Language
OCFS1	Owner	Spanish	Formal Semi-directed	110	English
WCFS2	Worker	Spanish	Informal	15	Spanish
WCFS3	Worker	Argentinian	Informal	10	Spanish

Figure 7. Interview details in CFS.

CWS	Staff	Nationality	Interview type	Duration (in minutes)	Language
WCWS2	Worker	Spanish	Informal	10	English
WCWS3	Worker	Spanish	Informal	5	English
MHCWS4	Member Host	Spanish	Informal	25	Spanish
OCWS5	Owner	French	Informal	45	French

Figure 8. Interview details in CWS.

Interviews that were done in Spanish and French were translated in English by myself. In the findings section, own translation is provided and marked with (*).

To interview OCFS1, I had prepared a list of both open and specific questions, that was with me during the interview. I started with the open-questions (see **Figure 9)** to see what he would spontaneously tell me. As he was providing a lot of details, I hardly needed to follow up with my sub-questions. The interview with OCWS5 took more the form of a conversation, with me improvising based on a very similar structure of questions I had in mind, and building the exchange on what he was already saying. Finally, other interviews were significantly shorter with only a few questions I had thought of beforehand. For CFS's workers, I mostly asked about *customers, working people, laptop policy.* For CWS's workers, questions were centered around *network, contracts, users.*

Open-ended questions for OCFS1	
History and motivations	Can you tell me about you and your business?
Customers	Can you tell me about your customers?
Working within the CFS	How do you organize people working from your CFS?
Communication around services	How do people get to know your place?

Figure 9. Structure of the interview session (OCFS1). *The complete list of questions is provided in appendix.*

3.3 Reflections on research process and positionality

Enhancing my research methods

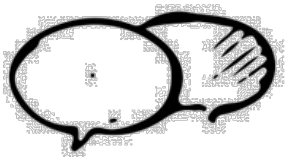
As I progressed in my research process, I realized there were some questions or methods that could have been added. First, I regretted after conducting most of my interviews with DN, not having included a specific question on the legal situation of the non-EU citizens in Madrid and their difficulties in obtaining a visa. Additionally, it could have been very insightful to share surveys on social-media, in order to have for the second part of my research more direct input from DN, who would share their choices and opinions on those workspaces. Finally, because of resources constraints, I had to focus on workspaces and leave aside reflections on CLS, but perhaps I could also have shared a survey including questions on those spaces.

Self-reflection on my position as a researcher

Before presenting my findings, I would like to reflect on my position as a researcher and acknowledge my standpoint as a highly educated and mobile French woman. Indeed, since I graduated from high-school in 2017, I have completed a bachelor degree and the 4CITIES master's program, living in total in 6 different countries and 7 cities. I recognize that my positionality has influenced my project to some extent, as I have chosen to focus on temporary existences in cities. Undeniably, my own questioning about my lifestyle and interactions with local spaces and populations were the starting point of this thesis. Moreover, during my research process, I have been living 6-months in Northern Malasaña, which was my most frequented neighborhood, along with La Latina. Finally, my preferences in terms of CFS are similar to those of my interviewees, and I found it pleasant to spend hours studying from these spaces. Therefore, although I'm still a student, I have been a privileged nomad myself in recent years.

Figure 10. The author. (2023, July 10th). Self-portrait in CFS1.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS



Conversing with digital nomads in Madrid

1 - Learning about profiles, choices and perceptions

1.1 Being: education, profession and language skills

First of all, my interviewees share a similar *level of education*. Indeed, they all have higher education diplomas: with at least a bachelor degree and equivalent (5), or more (8). Moreover, most of them had experience with living aboard already during their studies (8). Respondents who did not study abroad reported making this choice because they were unaware of this possibility at the time (W1,W4), they were young and had never left their country before (M4), it did not exist or was not really a thing in their country (M1,M3). Anyway, many of them already had moved a lot during their childhood (W2, M3, M5, W7), but also after they graduated yet still before they became DN (W1,M1,W5).

My interviewees' *professional status and fields* also have similarities. Their status is either freelancer (8) or salaried employee (5), knowing that W5 is about to abandon her co-founded company for a salaried position in another one. This finding goes along with the rise of remote working, the greater flexibility of companies allowing employees to work from wherever they want, and thus the apparition of more salaried DN. Concerning the fields, my interviewees work in: IT and software engineers (6), photography and design (2), digital marketing and management (2), design and sell of sustainable products (1), human resources (1) and language education (1). We observe a clear predominance of IT and software-related positions, whether self-employed or salaried.

Although they currently or predominantly work remotely, *professional path* can be complex. Indeed, W4 and M5 first worked as English teachers in local schools when they arrived in Madrid. After a while they changed professional field and started working for remote companies, becoming DN but still keeping Madrid as their *home base*. Similarly, beside her remote freelance activity, W7 always work in the cities she moves to, because otherwise she

cannot afford a living in Europe with her Brazilian income. Here in Madrid, she signed a short-term contract for a salaried position unrelated to her field of study. Finally, W6 is always busy with so many professional activities (business, education, yoga, spirituality, etc.). She also used to be the co-founder of one of the firsts CLS for DN in Bogota. She continues to provide her former business partner with information about her lifestyle, so she says he can develop the site according to DN's needs.

When it comes to *language skills*, one expected result was that everyone is fluent in English (except M2). However, more surprisingly, local language is also known pretty well by the DN since some are native Spanish speakers (4), speak fluently (3), are advanced learners (2) or beginner learners (2). Some learn the very basics words because it seems fun, while others really invest time in improving their Spanish in order to increasingly use it in the future. Despite those results, English is the most used language on a daily basis in Madrid (8) even by some Spanish fluent speakers (2). Spanish is the second most used one essentially by native speakers (4) and M2 for whom English is not comfortable.

1.2 Staying: migration and duration of stay

Now looking at *duration of stay*, the answers I collected were very heterogeneous. First, I present DN with *very short* (1-3months) (M3,W6,M6) or *short* (4 -7 months) (W2,W7) period of stay. Those interviewees knew exactly when they would leave Madrid and where would be their next destination. Second, DN with a *long* (12-24months) (W1,M1,M2,W3,M4,W5) period of stay. This group is the most significant, and it includes both people that are have completed this length of stay but don't know yet when they will leave, and people who recently arrived but know they want to stay in Madrid at least for one more year. Finally, there is two extraordinary cases that were particularly surprising, of DN with a *very long* duration of stay respectively of 4 years (W4) and 8 years (W5). Whereas W4 mentioned thinking of leaving Madrid this summer, M5 had no desire of doing so in the near future, as he was *"happy here for now"*.

Moreover, DN also have very different way of approaching their own stay in the city. During the interview, W6 does not understand some of my questions, and seems a bit annoyed: *"as I said I am a nomad, I am not living in Madrid, I don't live anywhere".* In contrast, M2 argues *"I want to live in Madrid for a while and create my own space and cocoon",* he says he will travel from there every month or so.

Although I did not include a question about DN's visa situation, some interviewees brought it up by themselves. Only 2 of my respondents are native EU citizens, M5 got the Spanish citizenship after years, and W3 have a residence permit through marriage. Concerning the 9 other interviewees, they need a visa to legally stay in Spain. M6 explains that some people are forced to work under a student visa, because the DN visa is quite new and is *"a challenge, because you need to earn at least 2200€ per month, or have 30000€ at the bank, in order to qualify for it".* M6 explains that he has neither of that at the moment, he is working hard to develop his business, but he will have to leave the country since he cannot apply for it yet. M4 would love to have the DN visa because it is fiscally advantageous. Similarly, W4 explains that she initially came to Madrid because getting a visa was easy. Now she has a student visa from her Spanish school. The agreement between US and Spain, exempts her from being double taxed, she pays her taxes only in the US. She also comments on the fact that she cannot apply to the DN visa since she does not have enough savings. She would consider Portugal as she says the conditions are easier there, so she knows she would fulfill the minimum income requirement: *"with an American salary it is really easy"*.

1.3 Inhabiting: from home to neighborhood

When it came to *searching housing*, DN (6) favored the leading property rental website in Spain: *Idealista.com*. Apart from that, only few DN used platforms specialized in short-term rentals, and those who did were all staying a (very) short time in Madrid. They used *Airbnb.com* (M3), but also CLS companies like *Homeclub.com* (M6) and *Cohabs.com* (W7). Other interviewees reported finding housing on Facebook (W5), their company help desk (W4) or through randomly meeting their future housemate in a bar (W2). Finally, W6 did not search for housing since she is staying at her friend's flat for the month.

The twelve DN who are renting a place, live in: shared apartments (3), 1-bedroom flat with their partner who travel with them (3), their own 1-bedroom apartment (2), their own 2 or 3-bedrooms apartments with perspective of subletting rooms (2), in a CLS having their private room (W7) or apartment (M6).

The *prices* they accept to pay individually for the housing they choose go from 390€ to 930€ utilities included. DN are equally distributed across each of those three price range: the lowest (390-525€) (W1,W2,W3,M2), the intermediary (600-800€) (W4,M3,M4,M5) and the highest (850-930€) (W5,W7,M1,M6). This reflects a wide disparity in rents paid by DN, with a gap of 540€ between the cheapest and the most expensive.

Most of the time, price is not the main determinant in the choice of accommodation. They report a need for space (4) *"there is a budget to meet, but we need a lot of space to work"* **(M3)**, but also a need to choose their own housemate (2), *"then I could travel and get some money back from my rent, let my stuff here and know that they are safe."* **(M1)**. Centrality criteria are also gaining in importance for DN in Madrid (6) *"I just want to live in the center"* **(W4)**, precisely because the opportunity to have a better or more spacious apartment in the center comes at a lower cost than in their standards. M2 explains: *"in Paris we could have never found the same apartment for this price",* from his perspective *"it is a very correct price and normal in a capital city not to pay 500€ rent for an apartment".* However, sometimes the logic is reverse, and DN will prefer the housing of their dream rather than living in the center. This is the case of M6 and W7 who decided to live in CLS. They explain: *"I was looking for a new building, natural light, big windows, this was very difficult to find in Madrid especially if you are on a budget, (…) mine was 1200€ max for myself"* **(M6)**, *"At first I thought: it is really expensive… But it was so beautiful. I thought it would be the best option and I would have company, plus I really felt safe here."* **(W7).**

Below is the map I have created to help readers better understand the distribution of DN across the different neighborhoods of Madrid. For that purpose, I decided to delimit neighborhoods just the same way as **Ardura Urquiaga et al. (2020)** did. Hence, the blue and pink areas correspond respectively to the central neighborhoods, and the most connected ones around.

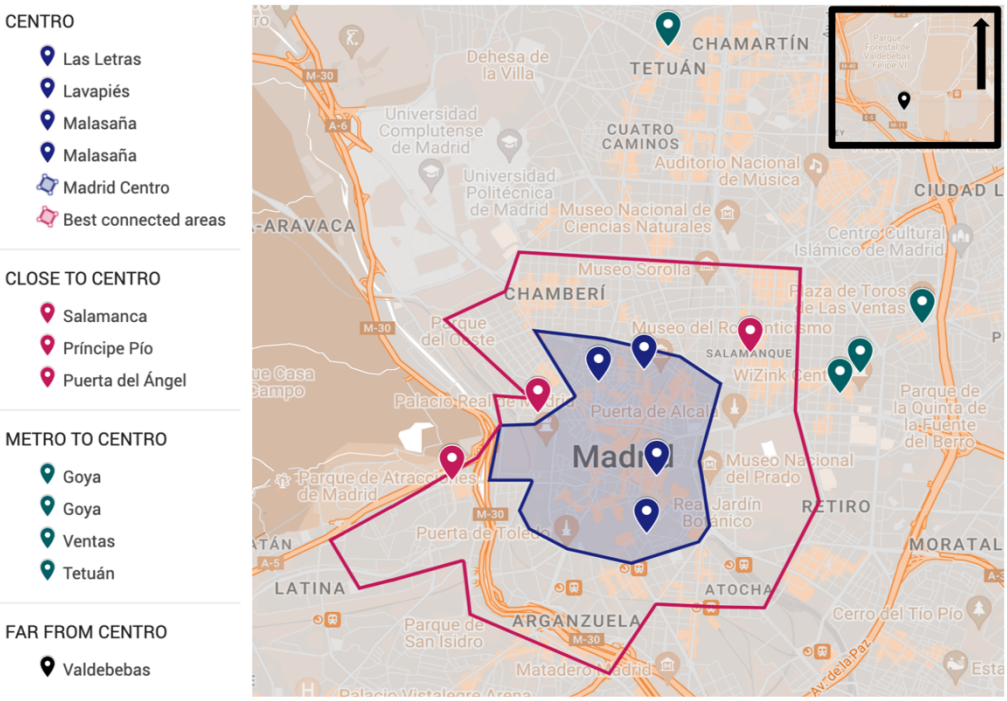


Figure 11. Housing location of DN in Madrid. Source: The author.

A majority of my interviewees live in Madrid Centro (M2,W3,M3,W4,M5) or nearby (M1,W1,W5); others live in neighborhoods that are more distant to Centro but still easily accessible by metro (W2,W6,W7,M4). The exception is M6, who lives in the newly-developed Valdebebas district in the far north of the city, and has to take the suburban train or the car to get to Centro.

Generally, DN express themselves in positive terms about their neighborhood, except W7 about Tetuán: *"it is not a nice neighborhood. (...), it is good because it is cheaper but there is not much to do."* However, many of them (6) would actively want another neighborhood if they could change in a close future. All these people currently live outside Centro, and would like to move there (W1,M1,W2,M4,W6,W7). Although some others are fully satisfied by their neighborhood (4), they would also appreciate to live in different areas, all located in Centro or close by (M2,W3,W5,M5). The reasons for desiring other neighborhoods are often because theirs are a bit *too quiet, boring* or *old,* and they want *more lively, international, cosmopolitan* areas, with *plazas, cafes, restaurants.* In contrast, W4 would never leave Malasaña for another neighborhood, nor M6 would live in the center since he likes his quiet neighborhood that is relatively closer to where his daughter lives.

When looking at where people like to live, where they dislike and where they would desire to move to, **Malasaña, Salamanca, Chamberi, La Latina** and **Lavapiés** are in order, the neighborhoods of Madrid that attract the most the DN I interviewed. Some adjectives were recurrent when talking about **Malasaña*:*** *cool, people, fun, eclectic, international, restaurant, bars, favorite;* and **Salamanca*:*** *not hipster, posh but, expensive but, aesthetic, nice, good.* However, interviewees (4) mentioned being eager to live in **Chamberi**, but none have been commenting on it beyond *'nice'*, nor have been reporting spending time there (see later) (except W7). Finally, **La Latina** and **Lavapiés,** were respectively addressed as *cosmopolitan and multicultural.* I guess M3 self-responded to stigmas as the only words he said about his neighborhood were: *"Good. I did not feel unsecure, it was a happy place to be".*

1.4 Working: a remote professional life between workload, workspace and home

Whereas I showed in the literature review that DN often have greater *work flexibility* than ordinary workers, my interviewees seem to replicate some well-known working norms as the 9-to-6 working hours (M4,M5,W5), but also the 5-day week (8). Additionally, they sometimes push it till 7 or 9pm (W1,W2,W3,M2,M3) as M3 explains: *"I normally work from 9am to 9pm, I know it's really bad"*, and also tend to work on weekends (M1,M2,W3,W7). M3, W4 and

W7 are probably the ones that work the most, especially during evenings, night and weekends. This is due to time difference but also an accumulation of tasks: *"my nights usually are very busy. If I can't finish all my work during the week, then I work during weekends"* **(W7)**. DN are not always only working remotely, they sometimes complement with *on-site activities* like: enrolling in short university program (W1), teaching yoga (W6), working in local company (W7). The reasons for that are the need to get a visa, *"to have face to face projects"* **(W6)** and to earn local currency: *"I set it this way because I need the money"* **(W7)**. This provides additional explanation for their heavy workload.

Most of my interviewees struggle finding a *work-life balance*. In some cases, they are fine with it because they can *"enjoy more during weekends"* **(M2,W3)**, but sometimes it seems to take completely over their life: *"I work from 2pm to midnight. Sometimes I go to Spanish classes in the morning to force myself to go out once during the day. But, I am really tired."* **(W4)**. Eventually, they would be aware that they work too much: *"I spend too much time working just because I am home, I need to set myself limits, and that's it."* **(W2)**. In contrast, M4 is amazed by his new schedule. Since he got hired in a European company, he works way less than before: *"in India, I would be working 10hours a day, so my quality of life right now is really better"* **(M4)**. Apart from that, only M1, M6 and W5 reported having a meeting-free day once or twice a week, so they try to take the early morning off to carry out personal activities (Spanish lessons, sport, meditation).

Finally, when it comes to workspaces, a majority of interviewees reported dominantly working from home (6), few others dominantly working from CWS (2) and CFS (1). Still, some DN reported mixing the use of the three spaces (3), or of home and CWS (4). Staying home has been associated with a need for space (M5,W7), and getting a more spacious flat have influenced the choice of workspaces for DN (W4,W5,M5). Another reason is a need for calmness (M1,M2,W2,W7) but sometimes staying home is more an obligation than a choice: *"I have a lot of calls, and I need to talk a lot. So, unfortunately I need a space without background noise."* **(W2).** Moreover, staying home is sometimes associated with a higher productivity because the space *"is fully yours"* **(M2)**. The use of CFS and CWS, will be discussed later.

1.5 Eating: food practices inside and outside home

Most of the interviewees *cook at home* (6), because it helps them relax (W4,W6), because it has been the way parents have raised them (W1, M4) but also because it is the cheapest option

(W7). Reasons for not cooking might be due to loss of habit (M5) or to travel plans (M6). Still, those who do not cook, warm up prep meals at home (4) and they do so because it is economical and practical. To do their grocery shopping, interviewees mostly go to their closest supermarket. Most recurrent brands are (local) Dia and Mercadona. Some still prioritize cheaper brands like Lidl and Aldi, but only if they have a choice and do not have to commute for it (M5,W7). More rarely, DN are keen to commute when it comes to buying specific products in ethnic shops in order to cook their mother' recipes (W1, M4).

A majority of people (8) reported never *ordering food* at home. Among the ones who order, it remains something occasional (4) when they are exhausted and lazy (2), or want to try exotic food that is far from home (2). Only W5 orders *"a lot"*, which she explains to me with a guilty laugh when she mentions how expensive it is. Interviewees order food through both *Glovo* (multinational Spanish platform) and *Uber Eats* apps. Instead of ordering, some respondents mentioned going to pick up take-aways nearby, as they live in areas with many restaurants (M2,M5,W3,W5). Finally, according to M6, *"the toughest challenge that DN face in Madrid, is to find a healthy meal delivery service"* which is also *"more cost effective than Uber Eats"*. He addresses the topic very seriously, and explains that it is vital for a new market to develop.

While people seem to eat at home all week long, they mostly *go to restaurants* during the weekend (8) while others would go anytime of the week (2). No matter if it is occasional (4) or relatively common (6); when DN go out for food, they pay attention to prices (6), because they "*don't want to spend too much money"* **(W1)** even though it is unclear what they consider as not too much: *"I don't want to pay 100€ just to eat something"* **(W2)**, *"I don't end up in super fancy places, I have dinner for 45€ per person with drinks included, it is a very fair price"* **(W5)**. Some respondents also indicate relying extensively on online ratings (4). For instance, M2 and W3 always choose a restaurant based on *Google Maps'* recommendations: they want to spend money in a *"nice experience, where people are professionals" thus "thanks to Google we were never disappointed"* **(W3).** Yet, others just *go wherever* their friends decide to (3), *"since I am a bit lost most of the time"* **(W5).** Moreover, DN tend to eat in similar neighborhoods as they would like to live. Indeed, many indicated going to restaurants *in the center* (6) including Malasaña, La Latina, Lavapiés; others would just go in their *own neighborhood or just around* (4) which also corresponds to the center. Also, some reported willing to *go "far"* for eating *"good food"* **(W1,W2,M4)**, which could be in Tetuán or Arguanzela for example. On the other hand, others reported *"hardly ever"* **(W7)** going to the restaurant (3), mostly because of financial reasons *"moneywise I am still very tight"* **(W7),** of

lack of company (M1) and of negative perceptions *"I would go if I am in a hurry, but now that I think about it, I don't eat out that much, I am doing good actually"* **(M6).**

1.6 Socializing: connecting and bonding with people

A significant number of DN (8) already had relatives or friends living in Madrid or Spain: a daughter and brother (M6), a mum, a cousin, a boyfriend (W2,M2,W7), friends because they previously studied in Erasmus in Spain or elsewhere (M5,W6), but also friends of friends they would be in contact with (M3,W5). Apart from this, some DN actively tried to reach out with others DN before moving to Madrid, because they were excited to meet people (2), they wanted to find housing (2) and to have tips on administrative matters (4). To do so, they used *Facebook* (3) and *WhatsApp* groups (3) for DN, or specifically for people from their home country (W4,W5).

Similarly, once in Madrid, social media is the first way to make new friends (10). They reported several apps which allow to find DN and other internationals: *Facebook, WhatsApp, Meet Up, Bumble BFF, Internations*. W1 realizes: *"I met no one in person, it is so weird now that I think about it"*. M2 explains: *"digital nomads are really a tribe because Facebook groups are really active, and everyone care for each other's".* M5 also joined a freelancers' chat, even if he is not one of them, but he believes that event organizers who moderate the chat do not mind because *"they just want to make money".* Although the use of social media is common for many DN, others still do not feel comfortable (M6) or the need (M3) to use them. W5 uses *Facebook* only to meet with people with whom she has some sort of connection: *"I never go to DN's group to meet random people or complete strangers".* Few other respondents (5), met some people in person: in language exchange, dance classes, gym facilities, CLS or CWS. W7 did not meet anyone apart from *COHABS* people, mostly because of lack of time, and because she barely leaves the house.

Most of my interviewees who are not native Spanish speakers have difficulties (3) or show little interest (3) in bonding with Spanish people. Many of them just report having *international friends* (9), but sometimes American (W4), French (M2) and German (W5) tend to cluster with their fellow citizens, or people from similar cultures (Canada, UK, Austria). M2 explains about the French community in Madrid: "*French people here are the best ones, because they did not stay in Paris or in France: they love to travel and are more open-minded. I don't want to generalize but generally when you meet a French person here it's 'good vibes'".* Occasionally, they still meet people that are not in their usual social circle. W4 explains: *"Now I have 3 friends*

here; they are all Americans. But one of my closest friends was from… Denmark. Mmm no wait, not Denmark, the Netherlands? I don't know anymore." W5 also argues having few Spanish friends, she says to me: *"you know, the ones who like to spend time with internationals".* Moreover, for DN that have housemates at home, they mostly share their housing with international people and occasionally bi-national Spanish (W2,W5). M6 and W7 who live in CLS, are the only ones who reported living with some Spaniards, M6 explains: *"there is plenty of Spaniards living in my building, foreigners are more in the barrios like Malasaña, La Latina, Lavapiés".* Among native Spanish speakers, most of them have Spanish friends (3) but rarely from Madrid: *"I don't know Madrileños. It is hard to find them…"* **(W2)**. They also tend to socialize more with other South American people in Madrid (3). Yet, like the other interviewees, the native Spanish speakers also hang out with internationals crowds. Finally, even though M5 is not a native Spanish speaker, half of his friends are Spanish and the other half are foreigners, this can be explained by his fluency in Spanish, his previous Erasmus stay in Valencia and his long-term stay in Madrid.

In any cases, DN I interviewed tend to socialize with people with similar lifestyle: they reported bonding with *open-minded, international-oriented, active* people: *"the ones who also have lived in many different countries, this kind of background"* **(W2)**. Most of the time, they bond with others *DN, expats* or *English teachers.* However, DN create relationships that are rather shallow, and they confessed (8) the need to better the "*quality"* **(W5)** of their social circle, in order to have *"more strong connection with people"* **(W2).** After two months living in Madrid, M2 and W3 explain that they still have no one to text if they really want to share an evening with somebody, and other respondents (5) explained having more acquittances than real friends.

Overall, interviewees were satisfied and positive about their social life in Madrid and when they compare it with places where they have lived before, 8 of them reported an increase in the frequency of events and activities they take part in. W5 argues *"from a cultural aspect it fits much better with my personality than Vienna"*. Still, even if they go out and meet people all the time, it can be a challenge to have *"really close friends on whom to rely"* **(M5)** (4). Some others are a bit less outgoing but it is mostly a choice: *"Madrid is the perfect place to have a social life, I mean if you want one"* **(M3)**. Most of the time, the reason why some DN (4) don't actively try to socialize in Madrid is because they are here with a partner, or they are tired of doing it over and over: *"the making friends part is not the bad one, the bad one is to see them leaving always."* **(W4).**

1.7 Enjoying: leisure and cultural activities during free time

When DN have free time in Madrid, they practice a wide range of activities: from sport to cultural ones. They walk, run, do yoga (5), go to the gym, engage in Salsa classes (3), but also in language exchange events and courses (5). Weekends may also be a good opportunity to plan a picnic in a park (3). Interviewees who speak Spanish also go to the Cinema (4), plus M4 who managed to find one where they play many English-speaking movies. Another main activity for my interviewees is to go out in bars (11) and clubs (8). Sometimes they also mentioned going to rooftop bars where they *"pay around 15€ the basic cocktail but the view is worth it"* **(W3)**. Weeks are often less hectic than weekends, where they may just stay at home *chilling* and *watching Netflix* because they are tired from work (5). Finally, DN events also attract my respondents (8), who frequently participate in those, in order to discover new people and activities in Madrid. M2 goes to those events in order to make friends, but *"so far it has not really worked"*. His wife W3 tells him to be patient, it will happen.

Beyond working or resting, not much of personal time is spent at home. DN in Madrid generally reported spending much more time outdoors than in their previous cities (9), meeting friends rather in the streets and cafés, bar, restaurants, clubs, than at home: *"the culture is to meet outside"* **(W5).** For some interviewees, never meeting friends at home seemed odd at the beginning, but they happily adapted to this new way of life. Madrid has been dominantly described by my respondents as *a place to have fun* in, *to enjoy a drink with friends* and *relax*: *"here, you are enjoying and living the moment"* **(W1)**. More specifically, they also consider it as *the place to party*. Indeed, night life in Madrid is particularly busy for them (8), and partying is one of the highlights of their stay here. The reasons for that seem to be the general atmosphere in Madrid, which DN perceive as particularly joyful and festive, with people ready to party the night away. In contrast, my American interviewees argue *"in Chicago, night life sucks, people want to go home around 1am, they are tired and sad"* **(W1),** *"In the US, we don't have time to go out as much, we work SO MUCH"* **(W4).** Yet, W4 prefers to keep working for a US company with the corresponding workload, because *"they pay better than in Europe"*. Thus, she had also reported being sometimes too exhausted herself to enjoy going out. Similarly, W7 barely have energy to leave home: *"I used to go out a lot, but here I am working evenings and weekends, so I do not have the chance to do anything else"*. Sometimes, DN also just have other interests, as it is the case of W6: *"I want to do activities that do not require to get drunk, I am looking for a spiritual movement here in Spain"*.

DN who live in Madrid Centro often do activities that happen in their neighborhood, or in the surrounding ones within the center (5). M6 also stays in his (distant) neighborhood, and only commutes to the center once every two weeks for some special events or nights out. In the same way, M1 mostly stays in Puerta del Ángel. People stay around where they live because of a lack of time during the week, because they are lazy or because it is a priority to get to know their own neighborhood (1). For other respondents living in neighborhoods outside Madrid Centro (5), they mostly do activities in Malasaña, La Latina, Lavapiés, Sol, Chamberi. The neighborhood they go to, depends on their time, and where people they meet want to go. W6 is still a bit irritated as I am asking this kind of question, she explains: *"it depends on my mood I told you, I am moving, I am a real nomad".* This completely contrasts with M2, who also strongly self-identifies as a DN, but for whom the priority is to find his *"neighborhood bar".*

Favorite hanging out neighborhoods for DN are more or less the same as the ones where they would like to live. The difference is with Sol because they consider it as too touristic to live in, but they would still go to a bar or restaurant there; with Salamanca where they would like to live while no one reported hanging out there; or similarly with Chamberí that was only mentioned as a place to hang out by W7, since it is *"way cooler than Tetuán"* and still close from it.

1.8 Moving: mobility inside and outside the city

Concerning mobility within Madrid, there seems to be no specific pattern in the way DN choose their mode of transportation. Distance between neighborhoods where they live and where they hang out can necessitate a bit of commuting, and this obviously influences their choice of transportation. A majority (7) seem to prioritize walking as a first mean of transformation in Madrid: this is mostly the ones living in the center or surrounding areas. Among those DN, seconds mean of transportation is often taxi, or metro, and a minority also use electric scooters. Choosing to walk or ride an electric scooter has been justified as a way to discover the city while commuting. Among the other respondents, the first mean of transportation is equally shared between taxi (3) and public transportation (3). Generally, laziness and weather are arguments for choosing taxi. Moreover, some interviewees reported disliking public transportation and never using it (4). Finally, only W6 reported occasionally using bikes.

Concerning mobility outside Madrid, there is a real diversity of answers about the frequency of their trips, but also the choice of destinations. Some DN (M3,M6,W6) have very short-term stay in Madrid, thus they do not travel during their time here, with the exception of a quick

weekend in Toledo (M3) or Malaga (M6). On the contrary, M2 and W3 who are staying longer-term, want to go once a month visit somewhere in Spain. They were waiting to settle and boost their income a bit, before starting the trips. For them, it makes no sense to live in Madrid, but travel to many other countries without knowing Spain. Yet, this is precisely what W1 does by traveling at least twice a month abroad. She went to Italy, Germany, Portugal, Turkey, Morroco, Canarias islands, she explains: *"I go there, from Saturday to Monday night. Then, on Monday I don't work at all, so I would just go on an organized tour: it is my first time there so I want to see as much as I can, you know".* As of now, M4 and W5 never left Madrid just to travel by themselves and they are not comfortable with the idea; only M4 would be willing to try but he argues: *"I am losing my confidence when I travel alone"*. Some respondents specifically mentioned going on *workation* (3), where they work from the places they visit. Every two months, M5 goes to countries like Greece, Turkey, Romania, and sometimes also outside Europe. W5 mostly leaves Madrid for birthdays, parties, etc. in Austria, Germany, or the Netherlands. There, she works from her family and friends' places. She also spent her last summer in Vienna. When I asked her how often she leaves Madrid, she laughs and replies *"too often"*. Since she does not have days off, W4 also traveled to Barcelona and worked from there for Christmas. She could not afford going back to her family in California. Similarly, W6 works everywhere she goes. However, she tends to have many on-site activities that justify her mobility. Beyond being an online entrepreneur, she organizes her trips because of *work reasons* where she meets the manufacturers of her product in Germany, but also where she gives workshops on sexual education in Indonesia and India. Finally, M6 and W7 also motivate their mobility by *personal reasons.* M6 came in Madrid to be closer to his daughter who lives here, and W7 closer to her boyfriend who lives in Barcelona. Since January, W7 left Madrid to go to Canada, Brazil and Barcelona, she argues: *"all of that for personal reasons, and I am also now building a life with another person, so that is why my work flexibility is really good".*

Finally, I wanted to see if DN induce other types of mobility around them, but my findings show that they never receive visitors in Madrid (8) or only very occasionally (5). Visitors are mostly family (3), but they can also be former colleagues (1), W2 explains: *"we met online, and we had a very good connection, so I invited them in Madrid".*

1.9 Knowing: knowledge and perception of the host city and country

My interviewees interpreted my last questions differently, and this revealed discrepancies in the way they conceive and approach Madrid and Spanish culture.

Knowing Madrid

A first group of respondents seemed pretty aware of the fact that Madrid was more than a city center, and that they still had so much to discover.

***I don't know enough the city**, there is too much, **it is massive,** you know. It makes me think of NYC.*

W1, from the US

*I don't know Madrid so much yet; **I came several times in vacations so "I know" Madrid** but I **would like to know more about the city** and **not only from the center**, you know the city is really huge.*

M2, from Argentina

*The more things you do in the city, the more **you realize you don't really know the place**. So, it is **an infinity of things** to discover.*

M2 & W3, from France and Peru

*In the center I have covered everything, but **around, I still have few neighborhoods to go to.***

M4, from India

It's like an onion, and right now I am still peeling the onion**. I am trying to find out where is the spiritual movement I am looking for, because **well knowing Madrid, is well knowing where is my community and how are the needs.

W6, from Columbia

Others seem to have a shallow knowledge of their physical environment, mostly limited to their own neighborhood and the touristic areas of the city. Eventually, they interpreted my questions as knowing how to go through the city without a GPS.

***What is knowing the city? The neighborhood we were in, yes, I think we know it pretty well, and I know also a bit the surrounding of my neighborhood.** There, we can walk around without Google Maps and find the places that we want to go to.*

M3, from Argentina

*Mmm… I don't know, I am very bad at direction. **I know Madrid good enough. I mean the center. I never leave the center, because there is nothing out there,** everything is here, in Malasaña, Sol, La Latina, etc.*

W4, from the US

I know Madrid pretty well. *I know* ***how to use the metro, the train,*** *sometimes I still make mistakes, but I am learning.*

M1, from Canada

In contrast, W7 wanted to make clear that she barely knowns the city…

I am not the person people should come to ask what they can do in Madrid… No, I have no idea. *During summer, when I will have free weekends, I should get to know the city more.*

W7, from Brazil

Finally, some respondents made the choice of giving a grade to their own knowledge of Madrid. M4 said 7/10 after 3 months, M5 provided the same grade but after 10 years, and M6 put the grade of 6/10 after 2 months here. Moreover, M2 argues that his wife and him already *"did one third of Madrid"* after 1 month.

Knowing local culture

A first group of respondents, places tapas at the center of local culture, but also bullfighting…

I think ***I know the culture not bad; I like Spanish food like tapas.*** *There was a tapas place where I was going to in Boston, a long time ago.*

M1, from Canada

Depends on what you define as culture, but ***I love tapas and cervezas****. I also* ***went to a bullfight*** *last spring; this is* ***the typical thing for Spanish culture****. But I don't understand enough to really understand the culture.*

W5, from Germany

Other interviewees want to emphasize on the kindness of local population, and sometimes even making a distinction between Madrilenians and Spaniards from other cities.

I love it, I think ***locals are very welcoming and kind****, and it is something* ***definitely refreshing*** *from someone coming from the UK. In Spain, there is a* ***high level of openness****.*

M6, from Lebanon

People from Madrid are chill, more than in Barcelona*, where people are less friendly, because there are* ***too much tourists****.*

W3, from Peru

W4 does not know how to interpret my question, she is very surprised…

Like what? ***Do I feel Spanish? Oh no no!*** *(strong laughs)*

W4, from the US

Finally, DN from Latin American countries, who are also fluent in Spanish, seem way more comfortable and accustomed with cultural practices and norms in Madrid.

I did not feel a culture crash because people are like me, we are Latinos afterall*… The Spanish people are really talkative, I always feel very close from people here, they are really open…*

W2, from Argentina

I feel more at home than in Berlin, ***I can understand everyone and speak to people. I recognize the warmth of Latin culture****.*

W7, from Brazil

Concluding

The last part of the interviews was an open-ended question, to allow DN to express themselves further on their overall experience in Madrid.

W1 starts by telling me how she sees the next phase of her nomadic adventure.

After living overseas for 5 years, and moving in different countries (Latin America, Asia), ***I would like to have a home base,*** *I can travel and come back to a home base. Because after many years,* ***it is exhausting****, it is amazing but you get tired.*

W1, from the US

M5 warns about the challenges of settling in Madrid without a good command of Spanish.

As a digital nomad, I would not like to come without knowing any Spanish*, people do not really speak English, specifically the civil servants.* ***It can get very difficult****.*

M5, from the UK

M2 and W3 are convinced that entrepreneurship and remote working will lead to a positive transformation of cities.

> ***The urban space will transform*** *in the coming years for* ***the independent workers to have the possibility to live their life the way they want****. Many* ***new CWS will appear, because it is the future of work****, people do not want to work for someone else anymore. I am excited to see those changes that are coming soon!*
>
> **M2, from France**

> *There is* ***a lot of empowerments of the young generations through this way of working****, because they are frustrated with the traditional job market.* ***Through social medias, they can bring much more 'value'****.*
>
> ***Madrid is a city that attracts a lot this lifestyle****. There are cities where people are running to work, they don't want to arrive late, etc.* ***Here it is different, there is a lot of people working in marketing or with social medias, they start their day at 10am, they are not as stressed****. This participates in* ***creating a city that is more cool****.*
>
> **W3, from Peru**

On the contrary, I naively ask M6 if he could explain to me more about an online article, he had shared the day before on the DN *WhatsApp* group. He calls for DN to realize that their lifestyle is not without consequences for local populations.

> ***Not many DN consider how this affects the local life****, especially now that we are so many, and it is important to know how our habits and trends affect local life, like you know* ***the way we rent, the way we consume, and things like that.*** *So yeah, we* ***need to be aware of that****.*
>
> **M6, from Lebanon**

2 - Challenging knowledge and imaginaries

2.1 From research to practice: the impossible classification of DN

Researchers have struggled to agree on one exact definition of DN, even more since the pandemic, where remote working – central to the DN's lifestyle - has become increasingly widespread. My research shows that indeed, the DN group in Madrid is very diverse and only few criteria remain common to the entire population: they self-identify as DN and their main professional activity is done through remote working. The other parameters that vary around are nationality, language skills, duration of stay, existence of home-base, frequency of mobility, reasons for mobility, etc. Heterogeneity of conditions makes it difficult to think of DN as one single group, that would approach the city of Madrid the same way.

Unlike what was argued in my literature review, DN come from a *wide range of countries* from all over the world, including from lower-income countries. Due to its long migration history with former colonies in South America, Madrid welcomes many DN that already share the language and certain cultural norms. This explains most of the differences I found on how DN socialize and experience life in Madrid, without fundamentally changing the way Latinos choose their friends and places to go out. Moreover, because Spanish is spoken world-wide, other DN are more likely to speak it or be willing to learn it, than when they go to destination in Asia, for example. Yet, I showed that it does not always mean that non-natives speakers will use Spanish in their daily life in Madrid, especially when socializing.

Another contradiction with the literature, is the *duration of stay*. DN were presented as highly mobile, way more than lifestyle migrants, but my research shows that they can stay or want to stay longer in Madrid. Similarly, living without a home base is central when defining DN. Yet, some of my interviewees (6) build one, or would like to have one. In those cases, respondents continue thinking of themselves as DN. The reason for that is that they are remote workers free to travel or relocate whenever they want to, since they can easily take their work with them. Thus, the ability and freedom to activate mobility at any time is seen equally as the act of moving constantly. Moreover, the DN visa is probably going to normalize longer term stay, since it gives the ability to stay 12 months in the country, and can be renewed under certain conditions.

On the other hand, the *frequency of mobility* is a criterion that has been increasingly used by academics to try to differentiate DN from mere remote workers. **Cook (2023)** argues that to be a DN, one need to *"visit at least 3 locations a year that are not their own or a friend's or family*

home". This contrasts with at least, the mobility types of W5 and W7. Precisely, *reasons to move* or *travel* for my interviewees are not always or solely leisure or lifestyle-related, as the definitions suggest, but also work-related and personal. Thus, DN like every individual, face constraints and parameters that they need to include in their decision-making process.

2.2 From self-identification to personal conceptions of digital nomadism

Beyond the difficulties of objectively classifying DN as such, they also have different beliefs and visions about their own lifestyle. M2 and W3 seem to be the best examples of how one creates a specific identity linked to this DN lifestyle. They talk about it as a true philosophy of life, heavily dependent of the entrepreneurial values, and that they think everyone should envy or tend to soon. Similarly, M1 co-created a podcast for DN, which aims at sharing stories from the community in order to help people become DN. Also, W6 proudly justifies many of her actions by her nomadic lifestyle, and M6 sees DN nutrition as a singular challenge. Yet, other interviewees do not seem to revendicate the DN label as strongly.

Literature assumes DN like to feel part of a wider community of like-minded people, sometimes even creating a *bubble-like existence* for themselves. However, my research shows that not every DN seek to cluster in a 100% DN environment. M2 feels part of a *tribe,* and is excited to meet other DN in Madrid, while M3 does not show interest in finding this community, and is happy to spend time with former work acquittances living in Spain, no matter their status and lifestyle. Sometimes, others (W1,M4,W4,M5) seek any type of international population through online groups. In this case, the community search is not necessarily limited to the DN category but extended to all freelance workers, expats or international students.

Furthermore, it seems that their own conceptions of DN are contradictory and critical of each other. M2 makes a distinction between his CWS4, made for *"alternative people with good values"* that want to *"protect the planet"*, and other CWS (used by some of my interviewees) that he thinks for *"DN that want to make money and be successful"*. Similarly, some will say about their life in Madrid that it is culturally enriching (W1,M4) and others that it is relatively cheaper (W4). Moreover, when it comes to mobility, perception of short-term is different for each DN, it can go from a couple of months to a couple of years. For instance, M3 did not consider himself a DN before coming to Europe, mostly because he was staying up to 8 months in a country. Similarly, M1 kept moving all over Europe during the pandemic, he states *"I did not slow down, I was not scared nor tired"*. On the contrary, M2 and W3 claim having a distinctive behavior from DN that visit too many places in a year without remembering them

after a while. They justify their longer-term stay in Madrid, by the desire to know the city and the country in depth. Additionally, for them, digital nomadism is doing what you love - *"I don't know any DN that dislike what they are doing"* **(W3)**- and being flexible - *"DN never overthink, if they are not satisfied, they just change or move"* **(M2).** With those comments, they actively criticized the choices of many others DN I interviewed in Madrid, and it seems that even within the DN *tribe* that M2 mentions, there are some attempts of differentiating themselves by hierarchizing values and life decisions.

2.3 From the escape to a better life to the reproduction of high-pressure work

Although DN are depicted as relatively privileged location-independent workers who use their relative socioeconomic power to improve their quality of life in their new destination, they can also find themselves with the burden of a heavy workload, and little free time to enjoy their life in Madrid. Lifestyle mobilities and digital nomadism are centered on personal fulfillment and happiness, but my interviewees do not seem to particularly achieve those goals more than other populations.

In practice, freedom of choice is accompanied by economic constraints. Employed DN can occupy positions in companies that they do not esteem (3) or chose by default (2), for the simple reason that they need a paycheck. W2 and W4 fundamentally disagree with their company policy, respectively discriminating employees or violating their private life (all-day monitoring via video recording). They explain actively wanting to find another job, but a lack of time to do so. Similarly, freelancers can find themselves under pressure to take on more contracts and less interesting clients (3), to make sure they can support their lifestyle. In most cases, DN consider working too much (8) and find it difficult or impossible to do differently (5).

Thus, this hinders the work-life balance of DN, as they are unable to explore and enjoy Madrid because they are too exhausted, working during nights or weekends, with the pressure of getting more money. It is paradoxical to think in terms of lifestyle-led mobility, where maintaining that lifestyle can be very costly in terms of time and effort, and prevent people from living life to the full. M2 and W3 have been working hard since arriving in Madrid and are putting their social life on hold, so that they can hopefully travel across Spain in a close future. Moreover, *workations* sometimes becomes a remedy for the impossibility of taking a real break from work (6).

However, some DN find themselves in such situations because they do not want to change their living standards (4) at the cost of having to deal with stress and fewer personal time. This is the case of W4, who complains about her job and workload, but does not understand why she would change her American company for a European one, since she would get less money. Thus, she puts maximizing her purchasing power, before her rest and social time in Madrid. At the opposite, W7 relocates from Brazil and thus emphasizes on her financial situation being too weak compared to the cost of life in Madrid, paradoxically she is the interviewee with the most expansive rent, and is forced to work from 4am or till 1am to make ends meet. Similarly, M6 mentions a need for more money, but still make the choice of an expensive new CLS.

The DN visa is designed for location-independent workers with higher purchasing power, and is seen from the government as an opportunity to attract capital, notably through consumption. However, some DN reported having insufficient income or savings to even apply for the visa (3). But more generally, DN mentioned being too short on money to do some activities, regularly go to the restaurant, or work daily from CFS and CWS facilities (5). Thus, my results show that the DN lifestyle is not systematically accompanied by the extensive use of targeted services, nor by a particularly high level of consumption.

2.4 From connected workers to disconnected dwellers

Comments and perceptions that DN shared with me during interviews revealed a slight disconnection with the reality of Madrid's spaces, populations, and practices. DN may have a somewhat naive and partial reading of local life and culture.

A majority of my interviewees, have no interest in exploring Madrid beyond the central neighborhoods (8), because they ignore what's *there*, or because they are convinced nothing's *there*. Thus, DN with few exceptions (4), seem to see no reason for them to spend time in traditional and residential Madrilenian neighborhoods. Moreover, DN do not always know the city's geography. At the moment of the interview, M3 had already left Madrid for few weeks after living there for a total of 2-months; when I ask him where he liked to hang out in the city, he struggles remembering the name of Malasaña whereas he seemed to have spent most of his free time there, he explains: *"around the metro stop of… Tribunal… there… I always forget the name of the neighborhood"*. He pauses and asks his wife for help. Similarly, W5 considers herself lost most of the time, and just follows her friends to whatever places they know. Yet, she has been living in Madrid for a year now. Likewise, W4 has been living here for many years, yet she does not know more than the hyper central areas, and especially Malasaña. She

does not seem able to name one neighborhood that is not in Madrid Centro or nearby. This raises the hypothesis that a partial knowledge of Madrid is not always due to a lack of time to explore, but also to a lack of consideration.

Moreover, discussing the affordability of the city, DN sometimes make statements that seem out of touch with the reality of the local housing market. For instance, while M6 explains how DN should be aware of the influence their behavior can have on host cities, he also paradoxically thinks that finding a *"decent flat"* in the city center of Madrid for 1200€ would be too complicated: *"I knew that with this budget, it would not be a pretty experience".* Also, for M2, it is *"normal"* to pay at least 500€ for housing in a capital city. However, it is not clear what he founds his argument on as he does not mention the population's income to establish the level of rent that is acceptable for people to pay in a city.

Eventually, their perception of Madrid's job market also suggests a lack of awareness of other workers around them. As mentioned, M2 and W3 argued that the future of work is independent and remote, with people that will mainly be working from CWS. W3 sees Madrid as the perfect city for that, as people already work a lot with social media-based services, and escape to a too stressful work life. By living in the center of the city, at 5min walk from her CWS, she seems to completely miss out on other people commuting across the metropolitan area to reach their workplace, mostly low-skills workers that have to wake up very early while she is still sleeping.

Finally, because of a strong desire to stand out from the tourist imaginary, some DN fail to realize that they tend to reproduce a touristic attitude in their approach to Madrid. Although M2 and W3 live less than 10min walk away from Plaza del Sol and Plaza Mayor, right where all the touristic attraction is concentrated, they argue that they choose the capital over Barcelona, because they did not want to find themselves in the middle of tourists. W3 argues: *"Barcelona is too touristic; people are not friendly there. Madrid is better, dynamic enough but with fewer flows of DN than Barcelona or Lisbon for example*". Thus, by coming to Madrid, they feel more *off the beaten track,* having an *authentic* living experience in Spain. Ironically, M2 and W3 discover their new environment by following the recommendations of tourist articles on the TOP10 things to visit in Madrid. They experience the city through *Google maps*, *Instagram* feed and tourist blogs, ticking a box every time they see a place from those lists. Consequently, and following the literature review, we can wonder whether the recent and rapid development of tourism, complemented by an increase in the arrival of DN in Madrid, will ultimately change the nature and perception of the city to resemble that of Barcelona. Moreover, although

gastronomy occupies a very central place in Spanish culture, the love of beers and tapas (M1,W5), especially when those are consumed in touristic or international areas, seem to reveal a rather shallow knowledge of life in Madrid. Furthermore, if corridas were important for the Iberian culture few centuries ago, attending one nowadays is not something popular among the Spanish population anymore, and is rather seen as an activity for very conservative crowds, which in some cases converted into a controversial touristic attraction. On the other hand, my interviewees also commented on the open-mindedness of the Spanish people and their lifestyle where everyone meets up in public space at all hours of the day. However, for a majority of non-native Spanish speakers, interactions with Spanish people seem to be limited to courtesies when shopping or ordering food at the restaurant, and social circle seems to be almost 100% international. Thus, while DN like to let themselves be carried away by this particularly welcoming atmosphere, they also tend to reproduce it in more exclusive international spheres.

2.5 From special beings to ordinary urbanites

DN have long been regarded as free birds, capable of any choice, combining working with living the life of their dream across the world. Digital nomadism was seen as a mystic way of breaking the routine of life. However, my findings show that DN have a similar existence to most of the urbanites, as they recreate routines in Madrid with a schedule and constraints. There seems to be a sharp contrast between the DN lifestyle imaginaries and reality. The growth of salaried DN seem to foster this gap, as restrictive work standards are reproduced, and give way to tiredness and laziness to engage in leisure and social activities. Moreover, DN tend to have to make similar choices than if they would have a fully sedentary life, meaning they have to optimize their budget and make tradeoffs between rent, food and leisure consumption. Even if their purchasing power is generally greater when they arrive in Madrid, they are not in a position to act without worrying about their financial means, and there is significant concern that they may not be able to continue to support their lifestyle in the future (7). Likewise, their daily life in Madrid is not extraordinary, and some of their eating habits or transportation practices in the city, for example, show that there is no specific pattern to DN. They tend to have an ordinary relationship with these everyday things and it is reasonable to imagine that it is similar to that of Spaniards with similar socioeconomic backgrounds.

Finally, the way they appear disconnected from the everyday life of other dwellers, specifically of the local lower-class inhabitants, might not be particular to DN. Indeed, any privileged populations may have to make choices to optimize their own quality of life, regardless of the

consequences this may have for other groups with whom they share the urban space. We can expect highly-educated Spaniards with medium-high incomes to also have no interest in living or hanging out in working class neighborhoods. Moreover, as DN often are solo newcomers it makes sense that they are not keen to live in family-dominated residential areas. Lastly, DN might be part of a wider social group of educated people, with international experience and interest in cosmopolitan environments. Some interviewees explained that they are open to meet people with similar backgrounds, which includes international students, other expats, and sometimes Spaniards eager to share these cosmopolitan atmospheres.

The following section will look at CFS and CWS that were mentioned by my interviewees, as seeing who frequents these places is interesting for pursuing the hypotheses placed here, namely whether DN have practices that are exclusive to them or that they share with other populations.

Exploring alternative workspaces in Madrid

1 - Coffee shops

1.1 Local emergence of specialty coffee shops as alternative workspaces

Almost fifteen years ago, specialty CFS appeared in the commercial landscape of Madrid, with CFS2 being the first and CFS1 the second to open their doors. Those places imported from abroad, were seen as more than an opportunity to taste high-quality coffee beans: it marked the beginning of a new way of life in the Spanish capital. Precisely, specialty CFS have also innovated by offering brunches, and what could be described as a blend of Anglo-Saxon food, French and Scandinavian pastry, all of that with a healthy twist. Today, they have also added natural wines, craft beers and spirits to their menu. In fact, all the CFS of this kind that I visited offer more or less the same beverages and food: which gives customers the certainty that they will find what they are looking for there. Moreover, the development of alternative workspaces in Madrid has been interwoven with the emergence of these specialty CFS. W1 explains: "*during the week, I LOVE to go work while having a brunch in a nice café"*. These new spaces of their time have inevitably become trendy places where users seek out a special atmosphere.

The owner of CFS1 is a Spanish man that grew up in Madrid. He explains to me how he came up with the idea for his business, at the intersection between CFS and workspace. In the early 2000s, after doing his Erasmus in Amsterdam and travelling to London, Berlin, etc.; he came back to Spain with new passions for bikes and specialty coffee. While working as a freelance graphic designer across Spain, he also started working from CFS because he was bored and unproductive when he stayed at home all day. At that time, around 2005, it was something *"very weird"* that *"nobody was doing"* **(OCFS1)**. He asks me laughing: *"can you imagine?"*. There were no plugs to be found in CFS, laptop batteries were *"shitty"*, so it was not very comfortable to do daily. He got tired of his job, and the dream of creating a place that would bring people together around his interests and at the same time allow them to find a new workspace was growing in his mind. He argues: *"I wanted to create the place I was lacking myself; this is why I understand DN so well, I used to be one"*.

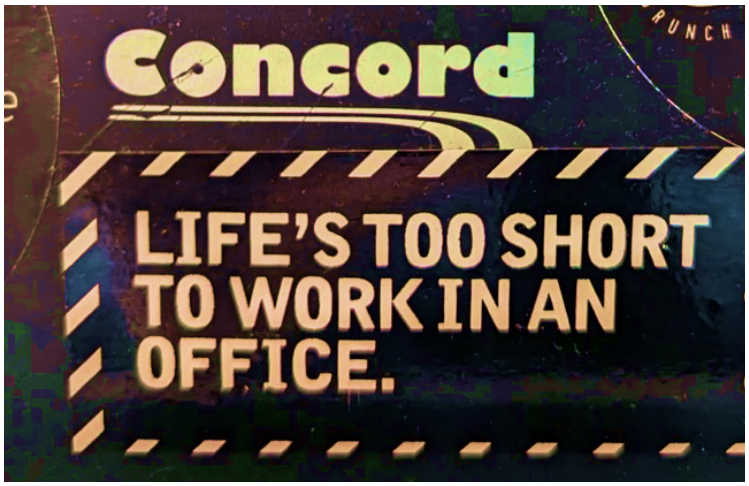


Figure 12. The author. (2023, May 09th). Bar counter of CFS1.

When CFS1 finally opened, it was labeled as *CFS and workspace*. At the beginning, people working remotely were still a minority but through the years this population grew, and especially from 2016, he noticed a significant acceleration in the number of workers visiting the CFS daily. Finally, since the pandemic, the success of his business has taken on unprecedented proportions. He argues: *"we were always successful since the very first year, because we were the pioneers of such a place in Madrid. Now, many more specialty CFS that also are workspaces have flourished in the city, yet our fame continues to grow, because the demand for that kind of spaces is rising."*

When we address the question of pricing, he states: *"specialty coffee is not cheap, the ingredients we use are not cheap, it was never meant to be a cheap place"*. Indeed, a coffee generally cost from 3,50 to 5€, while it can be found half price in traditional cafés of the same neighborhood. According to him, it is impossible to compare because the products are not the same at all, nor is the experience people are getting, he argues: *"people need to understand that they need to pay for the service they are getting"*. OCFS1 also adds about the location: *"I mean in Malasaña nothing's cheap anyway"*. Yet, prices were reported by my interviewees (4) as a factor discouraging daily use of CFS as a workspace.

1.2 Finding a balance between money, vibe and workspace

While interviewing staff from CFS, they pointed out at the difficulty of welcoming people to work in their space, without discouraging other types of consumers and while still making profits.

The first time I conducted observations in CFS1, I was abruptly asked to renew my order every hour if I wanted to keep working at the table. When I address this issue with OCFS1, he regrets

"I wish I would not have that rule, but it is necessary for the place to run". Actually, this rule applies only during weekdays, because on weekends they do not let people working on their laptop at all. In CFS2, CFS3, and CFS4 the same choice is made. This is mostly because they need to welcome many customers who come to enjoy weekend brunches, so spaces are very hectic and busy. Staff and users even refer to the decision of limiting laptop use in CFS as *laptop policies.*

Figure 13. (*left)* The author. (2023, May 14th). Front door of CFS2 on a Sunday.
Figure 14. *(right)* The author. (2023, June 22th). First floor tables in CFS3 on a Friday.

However, those policies are broader than the mere interdiction to work on Saturdays and Sundays. Indeed, CFS also have a limited number of tables available for workers, even during the week. For instance, in CFS2 it is only two thirds of the tables, and in CFS3, it is only the basement room and exclusively after 2pm. Reasons why CFS make these choices are both financial and atmospheric. WCFS2 explains: *"working people only take one coffee and stay 5-hours or more, so we earn only few euros from them compared to 30€ with a normal table"* (*), to what WCFS3 adds: *"we are still a CFS, we need to sell our food and drinks"* (*) **(WCFS3).** Moreover, OCFS1 explain the risk of having too many working people in CFS: *"sometimes people do not want to come hang out when everyone is working on their own laptop without talking to each other's, it changes completely the mood".* Thus, the *mood, vibe* and *atmosphere* seem to be the main preoccupations for CFS's staff who try to combine work and leisure in their spaces. Likewise, and although CFS4 officially labelled itself as a workspace, their displayed motto is *Good Coffee, Good vibes*. WCFS2 argues: *"we have different spaces with different comfort and vibes, according to whether people want to work or relax."* (*) **(WCFS2).**

Contrary to CFS1, at CFS2 and CFS3, they make the choice of not pressuring working customers to renew their order. Ultimately, if they need more tables, they would kindly ask working people to leave if they have not renewed their consumption for a long time. WCFS2 explains *"we are not a CWS"* (*), that is why they do not want to provide people with a perfect WIFI connection nor individual electric plugs *"otherwise they expect from us some standards and they stay comfortably seated all day long"* (*). Sometimes people complain for that, but according to him providing perfect working conditions would have to be accompanied by charging people additionally to their consumption for their time spent, he argues: *"we do not want to take this responsibility, because we still want to be a real CFS, you know where people meet and talk to each other's"* (*). On the contrary, CFS4 seems to combine both aspects. They decided to incorporate a proper coworking room within its CFS4, and offer during the week a specific space where people will find the comfort of a true shared office. To access the working area, clients have to pay a half-day or full-day fee, which also entitle them to a 10% discount on the menu.

Thus, on weekends, only Starbucks seem to allow working customers. It is also reliable all year long, without exception. I went there on the San Isidro holiday, because I knew laptop policies of others CFS would have prevented me from finding a spot to work from. Most of the people were on the terrace on their laptop, including people with luggage under the table. As M1 explains: *"the good thing about Starbucks is that they will never ask you to leave, that is why I go there, coffee is around 5€ but you can stay as long as you want without being chased away."*

Finally, among the specialty CFS I had selected for my research, some turned out to be entirely banning laptops from their spaces. Eventually, after entering one CFS in Salamanca, a worker immediately tells me that nobody is accepted to work from their space, he said dryly *"it is not an office here"* (*). In another CFS, it was even mentioned on the front door in English (only).

Figure 15. The author. (2023, May 20th). Front door of a CFS in Justicia.

Thus, we can also wonder if the reluctance of some CFS to convert into alternative workspaces stems from a general annoyance at the omnipresence of work in leisure spaces.

1.3 Like a *déjà vu* in Madrid

Decoration-wise, CFS1 CFS2 and CFS3 are all alike. Huge windows open onto the interior to reveal an industrial-style fabric, with red brick cladding, steel beams here and there, large wooden tables, old leather sofas laying out around the rooms and an abundance of green plants. Hanging on the walls, huge burlap sacks in which the coffee beans have supposedly been transported from Peru, Rwanda, Vietnam and elsewhere. The old-factory atmosphere continues all the way to the restrooms, with worn white tiles on the walls and industrial-style plumbing. When I look around, I could be anywhere and nowhere at the same time. There is simply no way to know in which city I am. I hear English being spoken on all sides, the international music blaring from the speakers is familiar, the iced latte I'm sipping is to its usual taste.

Figure 16. The author. (2023, June 22th). Main room in CFS2.

Figure 17. The author. (2023, June 22th). Restrooms in CFS2.

Figure 18. The author. (2023, June 22th). Basement (working) room in CFS3.

Figure 19. The author. (2023, July 10th). Main room in CFS1.

On its website **(Website CFS1, consulted on May 08, 2023)**, CFS1 is advertised for its '*cozy-cosmopolitan atmosphere'* with its '*Berlin-esque style'* decoration. During the interview, OCFS1 explains more about his choices: *"my inspiration mostly came from Berlin and then London. Around 2010s, there was a growing number of industrial buildings that were rehabilitated. It was a recycling of half-abandoned spaces, sometimes even in ruin. Not only the furniture was kept, but also the structure with the brick walls and metal beams. New owners were not adding a lot of decoration. In London, the same style was appearing but it was even more carefully thought.".* Ten years later, this industrial-inspired style exported world-wide: *"in Madrid, we were the first café with those inspirations. Now there are more, in Malasaña, Chueca, La Latina and Lavapiés".* **Slater (2009)** argued that reconversion of abandoned warehouses or industrial buildings into shops, restaurants and CFS led to commercial gentrification through displacement mechanisms. Clearly, this new choice of atmosphere for CFS venues, where *industrial* was seen as *vibrant* and *cool*, has not become trendy and famous among former factory workers, but rather among the young, highly educated populations.

In CFS4, the industrial-influenced decor is more subtle and largely complemented by Scandinavian inspiration. Still, many features found in the others studied CFS can also be found there, like wooden tables, some tiles around the counter, few metal structures and huge green

plants. The sense of travel is also present, with a large world map displayed on the wall, showing the countries from where coffees originate. Yet, the walls are purer and clearer. Nordic CFS culture has also more recently become increasingly famous, with its simple atmosphere and minimalist design, it is now imported by CFS owners around the world who want to replicate this trendy lifestyle.

1.4 Users and workers of the spaces

My personal observations and conversations with the staff, revealed a wide range of users in those CFS including workers, students, tourists, travelers, foreigners and Spaniards.

On the official website of CFS1, it is said that '*people from all walks of life'* can be found in this space: from *'Malasaña's typical uber-hipsters with Gin Tonic'* to '*digital nomads hubbled around the coworking table',* including *'stylish-Salamanca moms having too many Spritzs'.* In CFS1, but also CFS2, CFS3 and CFS4, some customers come from the neighborhood and others from the other side of Madrid. People hear about those CFS through word of mouth, but also especially through social medias as those places all have their own Instagram account. OCFS1 explains: *"every day I see knew faces among working people, but they are also people that come often".* According to him, a lot of customers become usuals because they know the place and like what they can find there. The exception are tourists who stay in a nearby *Airbnb* and only can visit a couple of times. According to him, age ranges from 22 to 35 in his CFS: *"not too young, because prices are not too cheap".* Age is similar in the other studied CFS.

Figure 20. The author. (2023, May 09th). Working people in CFS1.

Every time I visited those CFS during the weekdays, I was dominantly surrounded by working people. As we can see on **Figure 20**, people do not mind each other's, they just focus on their work. OCFS1 would love for working people to stay at night for a drink and get to know each other's. Yet, most of the time when people are done, they close their laptop and walk out. New kinds of customers then arrive for the evening shifts. However, WCFS2 and WCFS3 mention recognizing some of their working customers who come back during weekends, this time for enjoying not for working.

In those CFS, I noticed a dominant of foreign costumers, with a minor presence of Spaniards. Without any hesitation, each staff validates my observations: clients are mostly foreigners, especially the people working. OCFS1 argues that customers on weekdays are mostly international both workers and students on their laptop, but on weekends he believes there can be up to 50% Spanish customers. Yet, when I went to CFS1 and CFS2 on a weekend, I would still hear dominantly speaking in German, Dutch, French, Italian and English around me. Moreover, not only places are frequented by cosmopolitan crowds, but it may also be at the center of their reputation: *"we are known for attracting travelers and people from all over the world who want to experience quality products"* (*) **(WCFS3).** OCFS1 explains: *"at the beginning in 2012, it was less international, now it is a lot".* Those evolutions he observes in the clientele, coincide with the arrival of foreigners from high-income countries noted by **Ardura Urquiaga et al. (2020).** He justifies this by the transformations he has witnessed in the neighbourhood over the last decade: *"anyway, there are less Spaniards in Malasaña now, everything is so expensive, people moved to the south of Madrid: at the beginning Lavapiés, but it also becomes expensive so they even go even further, they also go to west, to Puerta del Ángel, but it will soon become expensive too".* OCFS1 concludes by explaining that many customers do not necessarily come for the specialty coffee anymore but rather for the location of the place: *"here people can enter the hipster universe of Malasaña".*

Beyond customers, staff can also be international. They come from Italy, Romania, (CFS1), France (CFS2) or South America (CFS3,CFS4). OCFS1 is happy to hire international people, but they have to be able to speak a bit of Spanish: *"I mean, we are in Madrid".* According to him, even foreign customers understand Spanish, especially the students. On his website, information is fully written both in English and Spanish. However, the Instagram page of the other CFS are mostly in Spanish, with only few exceptions for English advertisement.

Finally, using Starbucks as a basis for comparison, remote workers around me were also speaking in many foreign languages: English, Italian, German, Arabic, French, Chinese... It appeared to me that people came from an even wider range of countries than in the studied specialty CFS.

2 - Coworking spaces

2.1 Local diversification of coworking spaces

A wide range of CWS are available on the local and international market. W3 explained to me the differences between existing brands of CWS: *"depends of your values and job"*. Ultimately, the variety of CWS can be a reflection of the diversity of people within the DN population.

Chevtaeva & Denizci-Guillet (2021) had distinguished two categories of CWS, between *corporate* and *individual* spaces, with the first one belonging to multinational companies and providing massive infrastructures worldwide, and the latest one targeting specific groups, companies, freelancers, startups or even DN, who are eager to get involved into the local community. In my research, CWS1, CWS2 and CWS3 seem to fall into the *corporate* category and CWS5 into the *individual* one. It is important to note that CWS3 is part of a multinational bank, that decided to create workspaces for its clients, but not only. Finally, CWS4 would probably be half way between those two categories as it is an international franchise, where local entrepreneurs decide to open their own CWS4 in Madrid, rooting themselves into the local context while signing a contract with the brand's group. Yet, OCWS5 explains to me "*in Madrid, you have only big actors on the market"* (*): he lists CWS1,CWS2,CWS3,CWS4, *"they are doing real estate, they are owners of the walls and propose huge spaces"* (*). He considers himself a pioneer of the independent market here, having opened a café coworking last February – *"I am a small space but the only one in Madrid to propose something where customers pay per hour with unlimited consumption of specialty coffee and snacks"* (*). OCWS5 presents its concept to me as a hybrid between a CFS and a CWS: it is quiet, for work purposes only and paid on a time basis.

Visiting the different CWS gave me the opportunity to grasp this distinction. In CWS1, the welcome desk is located in a *cold* and *grey* hall, just before the security door where members are supposed to scan their pass to go up the building and reach offices. My impression is that the vibe is really *corporate,* and *impersonal.* My observations are similar in CWS3. In CWS2, the decor is *brighter* and more *jovial*. On its website **(Website CWS2, consulted on May 24,**

2023) the company fuzzily describes its space as a *'lifestyle-influenced surrounding'*. In CWS4, the space is more intimate and I perceive the vibe as way more *relaxed, colorful, friendly* than in the other CWS. People are wearing casual outfits compared to CWS1 and CWS3 were most of the people would be wearing suits. At CWS5, the space is quite *neutral* and *minimalistic*, still rather *laid-back*: the owner is receiving me with flip-flops on his feet.

The atmosphere within each CWS seem to be a reflect of the spirit and values they are caring. On CWS2's website, people are invited to '*watch (their) world accelerate'* as they become part of the community. In CWS3, the commitment is to foster *'innovation and evolution',* but also '*the progress of people and businesses'* **(Website CWS3, consulted on May 24, 2023)**. CWS4 seems to communicate its principles even more strongly: they claim to have a '*human perspective'* and '*promoting inclusivity, sustainability and justice'* **(Website CWS4, consulted on May 24, 2023)**. Moreover, they advertise themselves as designers of *'impactful solutions'* that will '*drive positive change'* and build '*a better tomorrow for people and planet.'* W3 argues: *"in CWS4, people have the same vision of the world, the same values, okay they earn money too, but they want to bring things to society",* she adds pejoratively *"CWS1 is just the Starbucks of CWS".*

2.2 Choosing a contract between spaces, prices and flexibility

All the studied CWS offer more or less similar spaces, and price ranges.

Usually, users can choose whether they want a private office, a dedicated desk or just a coworking membership that gives them access to shared working rooms. Additionally, and especially for companies, CWS also propose meetings rooms. In CWS3 and CWS5, the spaces are developed around the concept of a CFS. Thus, people can only work in a common working room, or they can book meeting rooms. Moreover, in the first floor of CWS4, a small CFS hiring refugees only and offering fair-trade products, ensures the continuity of the brand's values. In CWS3 and CWS4, specialty coffee and pastries have to be paid additionally, while CWS5 include the consumption in the price of space use. In CWS1 and CWS2, access to the rooftop bar is available to members on Thursdays and Fridays' evenings, where they can buy themselves a fresh beer or cocktail. We can see that each CWS has a consumption space, often thought out for promoting exchange and cohesion among CWS members.

When it comes to offering fares and subscriptions, CWS propose different prices according to the chosen space, but also according to duration. In CWS5, it can be as flexible as the hour. Then, there are day pass, such as in CWS1, CWS4. You can also get a discount if you buy

multiple day pass at once. In CWS2, the shortest offer is a month, but you can also choose 6 or 12 months with 30 days' notice in the case of contract termination. In the monthly subscription, it is also possible to only get half day access, or only few days a week. If we compare CWS4 and CWS5, a flexible spot will cost 18€ for a day in the first and 25€ in the second, or 220€ for a month and 300€ respectively. In fact, the independent CWS5 is the one with the highest rates. However, it is possible to get some free access in CWS4 if you volunteer at the welcome desk, or discounts in CWS5 if you are student.

Most of the time, DN I interviewed choose the most flexible options. Indeed, none of them subscribe for private or dedicated spaces, instead they choose basic memberships that give them access to shared working rooms. Moreover, only W3 and W5 have a monthly subscription, while others (6) just buy punctual day pass, or week pass. Beyond flexibility, what they seek is affordability. Indeed, buying a membership is still a considerable cost that some DN are not willing to carry, or only occasionally as W4 explains: *"I found one that is 25€ a day, so it is not that bad, but 5 days a week, it becomes very expansive".* That is why W3 decided to become a volunteer host for CWS4, like this she does not have to pay the full price of her subscription, and she likes to be closer to the community. Additionally to the cost, the problem might also be the need for privacy and calm: *"I need to do meetings and calls, so it is not always ideal, I need a private space but I cannot pay for one beside my home"* **(W4)**.

2.3 Local and global community network

Among the benefices of choosing a membership in a CWS, some of my interviewees (3) reported the access to a global community and the possibility to go to any office of their chosen brand when they travel or move. Precisely, W5 argues: *"it is a network, so I can pick the office I want".* As listed in the methodology, every CWS I studied (except CWS5), have multiple locations in Madrid, but also in Spain, Europe and every other continent. WCWS2 explains *"all our locations are on our website; people can go to all of them with the same access".* Indeed, one of the first things that pop up on CWS websites is a global map, or a list on which every location appears. This does not seem to be only done for advertising local population that they have one CWS around the corner, but rather to strongly communicate to (future) customers that they will always be able to find an office on their way. Moreover, WCWS2 elaborates on the multinational company that owns the brand CWS2, as well as several other kinds of CWS with different prices, standards and aesthetics. As CWS2 is the higher-middle range brand, it is also possible for its members to spaces of the lower-ranges ones. Thus, from services to decoration,

the spaces (CWS1,CWS2,CWS3) are provided the same all over the world. Just like for specialty CFS, entering a CWS in Madrid is like entering a CWS in Berlin, London or Bangkok.

However, in CWS4, the community is slightly more *locally rooted,* and this is especially what M2 and W3 were looking for. Thus, MHCWS4 explains *"the membership works all over Spain, but if you want to go to another country, access is possible yet a bit more restricted. Sometimes, people who moves just change their contract to their new country"* (*). Finally, CWS5 cannot provide his customers with a network yet, as it is a single space. Nevertheless, the owner is overexcited about the idea of expanding his business, he affirms: *"I want to grow in Madrid, and it will work because there are loads of demand for that kind of spaces"* (*). As of now, OCWS5 focuses on building an international community and promoting knowledge exchange within his own space.

Lastly, it exists another option for people that want to benefit from an international environment but do not need a physical office or cannot afford it: subscribing for *virtual offices*. This is what propose CWS1, CWS2 and CWS4, providing entrepreneurs and companies with a billing address, a hotline, etc. but also with access to online networking events with the community.

2.4 Users of the spaces

While conversing with W3, she explains that DN are not the only ones using CWS. Indeed, there can be local companies and entrepreneurs, expats or DN. She argues*: "this makes several groups of people, but at the end they all do the same thing more or less, expect some move and travel less than others".* In CWS4, spaces are founded by *local innovators,* and the users seem to be mostly native Spanish speakers. Moreover, all the documentation I am being provided with on-site and the website of this particularly space is only available in Spanish. W3 elaborates: *"I speak only Spanish at the CWS, and most of the people here are Spaniards. As I am a photographer, I can travel wherever I want but I need to find local clients with whom I share the environment, I cannot possibly shoot for a Canadian company, it would not make sense from Madrid."*. In CWS2, CWS3 and CWS5, there seems to be more foreigners among users than in CWS4. WCWS2 explains *"we have a lot of international memberships that come to work in our space in Madrid, for a day, week or month, it can be international freelancers or employees. For instance, many people have subscriptions from London, but they are lucky enough to be able to work from wherever they want".* According to her, international users live in the neighborhood (Justicia) but Spanish users come from further by using public transportation. Similarly, WCWS3 explains that everywhere in Madrid there are always lots of

foreigners coming to their spaces, but the location of this particular one (Justicia too) makes it essentially international. CWS1 refused to answer any of my questions about users, but the similarity of their offers and network with those of CWS2 allows us to reasonably assume that users' profiles are similar, thus also international. Finally, in CWS5, the owner sees a majority of foreigners, he names Swiss, British, French and Italians, each working for customers or companies in their own countries, or also being international students. But he is delighted to see more and more locals walking through his door every day, as he aims for a wide community: *"that's my goal, I want to get the locals on board too. I want to create a real neighborhood atmosphere"* (*). In order to help people bonding, OCWS5 organizes all kind of events such as afterwork drinks, pilates sessions, brunch, wine tasting, and more.

2.5 A foreign perspective on Madrid's commercial landscape

Not only is the coworking market booming in Madrid, with big actors planning to acquire more and more buildings to open new spaces, but there is now a diversification of actors on the market. OCWS5 is the first independent to open a CWS in Madrid: *"I was living in Paris, working hard in finance, they offered me a partnership in my company, but I felt like a slave and I wanted to create my own business with my own vision"* (*). He explains how the COVID-19 pandemic was a trigger for him to quit his job. After travelling for some months, he met his wife in Argentina and started to learn Spanish. They settled in Madrid a year later, and he started to search for an opportunity: *"I just happened to type "café coworking" into Google, and there were none to be found"* (*). He always considered Madrid as an attractive city, and he knows that right now *"it is on the rise, as there are now more things to do, which is also due to the arrival of foreign investors"* (*). According to him, Spain is *"always five years behind France, and especially Paris, in terms of mentality but also businesses"* (*): this is why he imported his concept from there. I express my surprise to him, having just read a study that ranks Spain 4th in the world in terms of CWS development, ahead of France. He does not pick up on my comment. I perceive his analysis and knowledge of the local market and dynamics as very partial.

Speaking more specifically about the local context in which CWS5 is embedded, OCWS5 describes the district of Chamberí as a dynamic neighborhood with great potential. As of now, he argues: *"local shops owners here are old, and so are their business models... there's a need to revitalize the retail offer, and people are waiting for that"* (*). For the moment, he wants to get known and raise funds to be able to open more spaces like this one in the city. OCWS5 is

convinced that it will work, and that he will probably be copied in no time, as people come up to him and ask questions about his business plan. As the business grows, OCWS5 recently offered a part-time contract to an Italian student: he tells me how great she is, that she speaks four languages, and he would eventually like to give her full responsibility for this space once he has opened the next one. He adds: *"it's a good thing she's not French like me, that could be seen the wrong way"* (*).

Conclusions

The results of my study revealed a rather ordinary existence for DN in Madrid. By this I refer to their way of recreating routines in the city, which most often resemble the life patterns of conventional workers or sedentary residents. Days and weeks are characterized by constant work, and often give way to fatigue in the evenings and sometimes even during weekends. For this reason, they tend to spend all their time in the same neighborhoods, often in the center, developing habits that they reproduce throughout their stay in Madrid. For DN, discovering new areas outside the city center or their own neighborhood, is seen as an initiative to be taken during special moments, once they have been able to rest and find some quiet time in their daily lives. Thus, most of the time DN stay in their comfort zone and the places they are familiar with in Madrid, which they share with people who are similar to them. Indeed, they quickly identify neighborhoods, spaces and groups of people that make them feel good, without necessarily challenging their daily lives. These places are often close to or in their neighborhoods, since they choose to live in Madrid Centro; or easily accessible by foot, metro or taxi if they live a little outside the center.

Moreover, my findings support a vision of DN as a population of workers rather than travelers. Indeed, the imaginary of a nomadic lifestyle and traveller soul that, according to **Makimoto & Manners (1997)**, initially accompanied the emergence of DN populations, no longer seems particularly relevant to describe my study population. In fact, some DN reproduce the pattern of a home base, with only occasional trips from Madrid to intersperse the daily routine. Most of the time DN's mobility from Madrid is motivated by visiting family or friends, meeting work partners and regularizing their legal situation, rather than by spending time discovering a new region. Work paces mobility decisions, either in the sense that they have to take it with them due to lack of time off, or in the sense that they wait for the right moment to leave, once they will have saved up money and will be able to take a break. On top of that, a couple of interviewees reported never travelling by themselves because of a lack of confidence. For those who said travelling from Madrid for leisure, the majority of their trips involved more traditional sightseeing and tourism practices, with a couple of them especially making flash trips of a few days in another country. Furthermore, when they are in Madrid, my impression is that some DN perceive the city more as a pleasant and fun playground to enhance their working lives for

a while, rather than an environment in which they want to invest their personal life, and are keen to know every little nook and cranny.

Therefore, DN tend to frequent places and population groups that are not specific to Madrid, but which ensure the continuity of their social habits and practices. Yet, the belief that these people live in 100% DN communities has not been validated by my research. Instead, DN share their everyday life with like-minded people which more broadly includes people with similar socioeconomic background, high levels of education and extensive travel experience, beyond DN alone. Thus, they mix with visitors, international students, expats and Spaniards who share their values, interests and environments. As a matter of fact, my study found out that there are tourists in CFS, students in CFS and CLS, but also Spaniards in CFS, CWS and CLS. All of that to say, that DN probably fuel the increasing demand for that kind of spaces, but at the same time, do not seem to be their only source of customers. Precisely, my results go into the direction of **Alexandri & Janoschka (2020)** and **Molina Caminero & McGarrigle (2022)** in the sense that DN seek *cool, authentic, lively* and *cosmopolitan atmospheres*. Moreover, during my participation in a few cocktail events, I chatted with two bi-national Spaniards, and one Spaniard, who argued their love of these international environments as a way of meeting *open-minded* people. Precisely, W3 thinks of the members of her CWS4 as a group of alike people doing similar things, even though she identifies different users including Spaniards and foreigners, but also sedentary and temporary inhabitants.

Nevertheless, I also identify a strong need for DN but also OCFS and OCWS, to constantly distinguish themselves and their choices, from behaviors they denounce. Whether it is to justify choices of mobility (M2) or CWS (W3), to affirm awareness of the risks that the DN lifestyle represents for host cities and populations (M6), to legitimate a Latino presence in Madrid over a 'foreign' one (W2), but also to charge high prices as induced by unrelated neighborhood transformations of Malasaña (OCFS1), or to defend some businesses values and size (OCWS5), all the interviewees seem to have a good reason for acting the way they do. Precisely, their comments suggest that they are aware of potential problems linked to their lifestyle and personal preferences, but that they seek to avoid taking responsibility for them.

The CFS and CWS are promoted as places of work, but also of encounter and exchange for these educated and cosmopolitan populations in Madrid. However, the rates charged and the integration of these commodified communities are becoming a factor of exclusion, sometimes even for the DN I have met. Indeed, only two of my interviewees have a monthly subscription

to a CWS, with six others opting occasionally for a punctual or short-term membership. Similarly, only two interviewees frequently use CFS as a workspace, and a couple others reported going there from time to time. Reason for not choosing to work from those spaces was in most cases financial, although two of them also reported their preference for working from home.

When looking at the geography of Madrid, DN live in the areas that have been reported by **Ardura Urquiaga et al. (2020)** as the ones experiencing the most significant rent increases. Indeed, interviewees live in Madrid Centro (5), but also in Tetuán (1), Puerta del Ángel (1) and Eastern part of Salamanca (2). In addition, if we look more generally at their preferences in terms of place of residence, taking into account their potential desire to relocate, my results show an unquestionable attraction for Malasaña, followed by a surprising preference for the posh neighborhood of Salamanca. Moreover, Chamberí comes next in order, just before La Latina and Lavapiés. All of this shows a slight difference with the places where DN hang out which are dominantly in Madrid Centro, with Malasaña keeping the first position followed by La Latina and Lavapiés. My interviewees often associate those neighborhoods as being the *authentic* and *real* Madrid. Additionally, I identified no meaningful difference in responses between DN that stay in Madrid a very short amount of time, and those who stay longer.

Furthermore, these last three neighborhoods I mentioned, also correspond to the areas where I have identified the strongest concentration of specialty CFS, also known for being workspaces. Yet, CWS seem to be more widespread in the Eastern belt of the city center, and in the North of Madrid (Chamberí, Tetuán), rather than in the central and Southern districts of the city. Precisely, Chamberí and Tetuán figure as the lower-income part of Northern Madrid, most likely the areas where the rent gap is the widest in this region of the capital. Thus, this can explain why many CWS open their doors in this part of Madrid, and have ambitions to continue doing so in the future. OCWS5 emphasizes on the importance of creating a *real neighborhood atmosphere* through the implementation of his business in Chamberí. In reality, his aim seems to be the revitalization and transformation of the neighborhood to create a local landscape in his own image. On top of that, and despite my choice of not focusing on CLS, many brands that I found on the market of Madrid are also located in this area. For instance, COHABS have opened its house in Tetuán with a capacity of 18-bedrooms, and is currently preparing the opening of another one in the heart of Chamberí with a capacity of 38-bedrooms! W7 who lives in Tetuán but also spend a lot of time in Chamberí, explains that she sees many CLS in those neighborhoods, simply because companies pay relatively little to acquire huge properties and

renovate them entirely, to then rent them out to young professionals. M3 also mentions his initial wish of living in a CLS, but the difficulty of finding one, considering the existence of long waiting list. Thus, reviewing all those facts, I believe the CLS market in Madrid is still in its blooming stage. Moreover, as Malasaña has already become the most gentrified and international neighborhood in Madrid, that La Latina and Lavapiés are on their way to follow the same development, but also that CWS and CLS increasingly progress in Chamberí and Tetuán: I expect those two neighborhoods to become the scene of Madrid's next major transformations in the coming years. Indeed, the arrival of these costly services in this part of the city will most likely change the composition of the local population, with the arrival of new foreign populations with relatively higher incomes. In time, this could change the commercial landscape in the same way as in Malasaña, La Latina and Lavapiés, and see the emergence of more and more transnational hangouts like CFS. By way of example, CFS1 has more recently opened a second CFS in Chamberi, which may not be as successful as Malasaña yet, but offers growth potential. Additionally, my interviewees expressed themselves very positively about Chamberí, that they qualify of *nice* and *cool*, underlying its relative proximity with Madrid Centro. Thus, I believe that on-going and future developments in this area of Madrid will have to be closely examined by researchers.

Final remarks and limitations

One of the foundations of my thesis argument was to underline the need for DN in cities to be the subject of separate studies, in order to account for their singular behavior in arrival spaces. Precisely, I specifically pointed out the need to study their behavior and lifestyle, apart from that of tourists or other privileged migrants. Yet, my findings got me closer to **Maitland**'s **(2010)** conception of city users. Indeed, DN share common practices and everyday life with a wider range of dwellers in Madrid, from the most temporary visitors to the long-term residents. Even though my studied population is the one that activates its mobility when travelling to Madrid, some local inhabitants may have similar life standards, which is most likely due to previous experience of traveling and living abroad.

Sigler & Wachsmuth (2020) propose a distinction between transnational and 'local' gentrification. Yet, would it be too daring to say that the changes in the commercial landscape of Madrid is not simply the results of the arrival of privileged foreigners, but of an even broader phenomenon of mobility and conveyance of ideas, leading to the homogenization of practices deemed desire by young educated populations? For instance, OCFS1 had the idea of creating its CFS in 2012, inspired above all by its own mobility and prior to the peak of wealthier international newcomers in Madrid. Similarly, many other Spaniards seem to visit transnational hangouts, CWS and CLS. Thus, I wonder if the transnationalisation of commercial landscape in Madrid, can thus to a certain extent, be fueled by some local populations that mobilize their mobility status 'from the inside' to affirm their lifestyle.

To conclude, I would like to emphasize on my awareness that a sample of 13 DN is insufficient to fully account for their existence in Madrid. Precisely, my interviewees did not make intensive or systematic use of CFS and CWS as workspaces, although the second part of my research showed that many foreigners are to be found in these spaces, and more specifically, many of whom are presumed to be DN. Moreover, my research methods could not allow to determine the exact proportion of foreigners and Spaniards among total CWS users, nor whether they really form a single harmonious community, as advertised by the companies. Lastly, I was surprised to see that only one of my interviewees used *Airbnb* to find his housing, but this should be considered along with my surprise that their stays were particularly longer than I had expected.

Thus, my suggestions would be to both extend the qualitative research on DN, but also to further research on Spanish users of the spaces from which DN work and hang out, in order to learn more about their profiles and the motivations that push them to engage in these international spheres. As of now, it is unclear to what extent DN are the drivers of CFS, CWS and CLS developments in Madrid. Indeed, although they use those spaces, they are not the only ones to do so. Therefore, my results are more ambivalent than what my literature review might have suggested.

Finally, I have noted a clear acceleration in research publications on digital nomadism since the start of my research project (March 2022), especially since last autumn. I interpret this as the post-COVID-19 boom, taking into account the time needed for research and editing. Thus, I am hopeful that research will focus on the urban practices of this growing population, whose stays will probably be lengthened by the implementation of DN visas.

Ultimately, the question that researchers will need to ask is how DN, but more specifically the apparition of new services and products to cater their lifestyle (among others?), can possibly fuel processes of transnational gentrification in Southern European cities. Although my research did not intend to tackle this question, it constituted a first step in expanding knowledge about DN located in urban areas.

APPENDIX

1 - Methods

1.1 Interview: conversing with digital nomads

THEME	SECTIONS	QUESTIONS	INFORMATION I AM LOOKING FOR
PROFILES & CHOICES	**Migration to Madrid**	Can you introduce yourself?	Personal information
		Since when are you living in Madrid? How did you arrive here?	Date of arrival in Madrid Reason for moving in Madrid
		Did you already have some contacts in Madrid, before arriving?	Contacts
		How long do you intend to stay here?	Perspectives in Madrid
		Where have you been living before coming to Madrid?	Place / Country of previous residency
		Do you already know where you want to go after?	
	Socio-demographic profile	How old are you?	Age
		What is your professional activity?	Profession

THEME	SECTIONS	QUESTIONS	INFORMATION I AM LOOKING FOR
		Where are located your company, your clients, your colleagues? Did you study, if yes what? - Did you do an international exchange program during your education? - Did you already live abroad before? Which language(s) do you speak? - Which one do you use the most in Madrid? - When? How?	 Education Experiences abroad Language skills
HOUSING AND GEOGRAPHIC PREFERENCES IN MADRID	**Housing choices**	Where do you live in Madrid? - What type of housing is it? (Individual housing, shared housing, co-living housing, lodger, etc.) - If okay to reply, how much do you pay your rent per month? - How did you find this housing? Do you still live in the same housing as when you arrived? *If yes, how long do you think you will stay here?*	Housing location Housing type Housing price Resources or networks to find housing Number of housings in Madrid

THEME	SECTIONS	QUESTIONS	INFORMATION I AM LOOKING FOR
		If no, where was your first housing?	Motivations for potential change
		What kind of housing were you looking for before moving to Madrid? (Location, type, price, etc.) - Does your housing match those criteria? - Did your housings match those criteria?	Housing criteria of research -vs- Housing reality
		Will you search for another housing after this one or will you move out of Madrid?	Housing perspective
		Is this housing similar to other housing you have lived in before? (Even if elsewhere than in Madrid)	Previous housing
	Housing location and importance of the neighborhood	In which neighborhood are you living? How do you feel about this neighborhood?	Neighborhood's preferences in Madrid
		Was the neighborhood a determinant criterion for you to choose your housing?	Importance of the neighborhood in the final housing choice
		Which other neighborhood(s) would you like to live in if you would have to move somewhere else in Madrid? - Why?	Other neighborhoods of interests

THEME	SECTIONS	QUESTIONS	INFORMATION I AM LOOKING FOR
REMOTE PROFESSIONAL LIFE IN MADRID	**Organization of work life**	How do you organize your work schedule during the week? (Repartition of days and hours of work, etc.) During the week, how much of your daytime are you spending at home?	Workload Work time spent at home
	Home & other places to work from	Where do you work from? (Home, cafés, office, co-working space, etc.) → *several answers possible* If you work from elsewhere than home, where in Madrid do you go to?	Environment for work Location of other places of work
URBAN LIFESTYLE IN MADRID: ***CONSUMPTION LEISURE & CULTURAL PRACTICES***	**Food habits in Madrid**	Do you cook at home? - How often? - Is it more or less than what you were used to where you lived before? Why? - When you want to cook, where do you go for grocery shopping? Do you order food at home? - How often? - Is it more or less than what you were used to where you lived before? Why?	Food practices in Madrid Potential comparison with previous place of living Places of shopping

THEME	SECTIONS	QUESTIONS	INFORMATION I AM LOOKING FOR
		- When you want to order, which services/app do you use? Do you eat in restaurants? - How often? - Is it more or less than what you were used to where you lived before? Why? - Where do you go when you want to eat outside? - Which kind of food are you looking for the most? - What are the determinant criteria when looking for a nice place to eat outside (price, location, type, specific recommendations, etc.)?	Platforms for ordering Places of consumption Restaurant preferences
	Free time in Madrid	What do you do during your days / evenings when you are not working? - During the week - During the weekend Which neighborhoods of Madrid do you spend most of your time in? → *Similar or not to housing*	Activities outside of work hours (evening/weekends) Favorite and most common areas to go to in Madrid

THEME	SECTIONS	QUESTIONS	INFORMATION I AM LOOKING FOR
		More particularly which kind of places do you hang out at the most? (Public space, home, friends' places, bars, cafés, others, etc.) Do you go out more than in the previous place you were living in?	Type of space uses (public / private) Potential comparison with previous place of living
	Leisure & cultural activities in Madrid	*If not already fully replied in the previous section* Which kind of leisure activities do you practice in Madrid? (Sport, art, music, film, volunteering, parties, etc.) - Where (in Madrid) do you practice those activities? - With whom do you practice them? (Alone, friends -locals or not, strangers, etc.) Do you organize yourself some activities with others? If you party in Madrid: - What kind of party do you like? - Where do you go to party? - With whom? (People you know, meeting new people)	Type of activities Places of activities Community around those activities (?) Involvement degree between organizing and participating Preferences in terms of types of parties, location and community

THEME	SECTIONS	QUESTIONS	INFORMATION I AM LOOKING FOR
SOCIAL NETWORK IN MADRID	**Pre-existent social circle?**	Did you have any relatives living in: - Madrid? - Spain? Did you have any friends living in? - Madrid? - Spain? Did you reach out with people before arriving to Madrid? (Through apps, Facebook, Instagram, specific companies, etc.) If yes, why did you?	Presence of family or friends constituting an 'already made' social environment in Madrid Anticipation of the social circle Finding networks of support, help, before moving-in.

THEME	SECTIONS	QUESTIONS	INFORMATION I AM LOOKING FOR
	Developing a social circle in Madrid	Did you meet new people since you arrived here? - Where do they come from?	Meeting new people?
		- Do you know any Spanish persons? People born and raised in Madrid?	Nationality: foreigners or locals
		- How do you consider them? (Acquittances, co-workers, friends, close friends?)	Degree of intimacy with those people
		How did you meet your friends in Madrid? (Online, bar, restaurants, housing, from before, through work, through other activities, etc.)	Means of meeting new people
		How would you define the people you are hanging out with in Madrid? (Age, interest, experience, professional activities, etc.)	Background resemblance within a social circle / formation of a community?
		Do you feel satisfied by your social life / network? - Are you eager to meet more people while staying in Madrid?	Degree of satisfaction of the current social life in Madrid
		- If yes, what 'kind' of people are you looking for? And how?	Need for enlarging the social group? By which means?

THEME	SECTIONS	QUESTIONS	INFORMATION I AM LOOKING FOR
	Social life at home	In the case you have housemates, what countries do they come from? How do you communicate with them? In which language? Do you do any activities with your housemates? - Which kinds of activities? - Only at home or also outside? Would you consider your housemates as friends?	Homogeneity or Heterogeneity of backgrounds among the housemates Shared interests within the household? Degree of intimacy with housemates
MOBILITY IN / OUT OF MADRID	**Mobility within Madrid**	Would you say you spend most time **in** or **out** of your neighborhood? How do you move around in Madrid? (Walk, public transportation, bike, scooter, car, others)	Commuting frequency Modes of transportation
	Mobility outside of Madrid	Do you often leave Madrid? If yes, to go: - elsewhere in Spain? - somewhere in Europe? - somewhere outside Europe	Travelling frequency Travelling destination

THEME	SECTIONS	QUESTIONS	INFORMATION I AM LOOKING FOR
		For which reason do you do so? (Professional, leisure, visit people i.e., family, friends, partner)	Motives of the mobility
	Mobility of visitors to the interviewee	Do you often receive visitors in Madrid? If yes, they are from: - Spain - Europe - Outside Europe Who? (Family, friends, partner)	Frequency of guests visiting Origins of the visitors Connection to the interviewee Motives of their visit
CONCLUSION ON THEIR EXPERIENCE		Today, how well would you say you know: - The city of Madrid? - The local and national culture? Would you like to add anything on your experience in living in Madrid?	Reading and knowledge of the city and the country Additional info if needed

1.2 Interview: meeting with OCFS1

History & motivations

Can you tell me about you and your business?

- When did you open the café? In which context?
- What were your motivations behind creating this concept/café?
- What is the role of ~~xxx~~ in your concept?

Customers

Can you tell me about your customers?

- What kind of customers did you target / expect?
- Would you say that the customers you have now match with the ones you imagined when you opened the café? Why?
- Did you observe an evolution in the type of customers you have?
- How old are your customers?
- Where do you think they come from?

Working in the café

How do you organize people working from your cafés?

- What is your approach / policy concerning remote workers in the café?
- Do you have some hours and/or days where laptops are not allowed within the café?
- Some cafés adopted this 100% laptop free policy, why do you think is that? Why your approach may differ?

Communication around services

How do people get to know your place?

- How do you communicate about your café and type of services you propose?
- How do you make sure people will find you?
- What do you think made your cafe so popular and successful?

2 - Findings

2.1 Being

	Education	Experience studying abroad
W1	Psychology English teaching certification TOEFL	NO
M1	Economics & IT	NO
W2	Bachelor in psychology & MBA in human resources	Toledo, Spain
M2	Master in Sociology Trainings in e-business	Buenos Aires, Argentina
W3	Audiovisual arts	Buenos Aires, Argentina
M3	Industrial engineering	NO
M4	Software engineer	NO
W4	Master in Communication and sociology	NO
W5	Business	Buenos Aires, Argentina
M5	Languages	Valencia, Spain
W6	Social Communication & Marketing (Master) + Trained as life coach, yoga teacher, astrologer.	Barcelona & Madrid, Spain
M6	Computer engineering	London, UK
W7	Architecture & Urbanism	Roma, Italy

	Profession	Status
W1	Student & online English teacher for international companies	Salaried
M1	IT consultant	Freelance
W2	Human Resources in Estonian company	Salaried
M2	Community manager	Freelance
W3	Personal branding photographer	Freelance
M3	Start-up accelerator in different tech companies across the world	Freelance
M4	Software engineer in German insurance company	Salaried
W4	Project manager in digital marketing in an American company	Salaried
W5	Software developer Co-founder of a 4 people company	Freelance
M5	Software engineer in a Swedish/global company	Salaried
W6	Entrepreneur selling sustainable products and providing education worldwide about menstrua and sexuality	Freelance
M6	Personal coach for software engineer	Freelance
W7	Designer and for a company in Spain	Freelance

	Language skills	Most used one in Madrid	Number of spoken languages
W1	Native: English & Polish Learning: Spanish	English	2,5
M1	Native: German Fluent: English	English	2
W2	Native: Spanish Fluent: Portuguese Fluent: English	Spanish English for work	3
M2	Native: French Fluent: Spanish Learning: English	Spanish French for work	2,5
W3	Native: Spanish Fluent: English Learning: French	Spanish	2,5
M3	Native: Spanish Fluent: English	Spanish English for work	2
M4	Native: regional language in India Fluent: English Learning: Spanish	English	2,5
W4	Native: English Advanced: Spanish	English	2
W5	Native: German Fluent: English Advanced: Spanish	English	2,5
M5	Native: English Fluent: Spanish, French, Italian	English for work and social life Spanish to complement	4
W6	Native: Spanish Fluent: English Comprehension: French	Spanish	2,5
M6	Native: Arabic Fluent: English	English	2,5
W7	Native: Portuguese, Italian, English Fluent: Spanish	Portuguese for work English for life	4

2.2 Staying

	Arrival date in Madrid	Duration of stay (At the moment of the interview)	Previous place of living	Expected duration and date of departure from Madrid	Expected next destination
W1	September 2022	6 months	US, Thailand, Korea, Mexico	Not before 2024? 1 year and half	N/A
M1	October 2022	4 months	Germany, Canada	Not before 2024? 1 year and half	N/A
W2	December 2022	2 months	Venezuela, Argentina, Toledo Spain	April 2023 4/5 months	Berlin, Germany
M2	January 2023	2 months	Peru, Argentina, France	January 2024/2025? 1 or 2 years	N/A
W3					N/A
M3	December 2022	2 months	Many countries since a kid because expat family. Since working Argentina, Portorico, Chile…	March 2023 2 months	Pompei, Italy
M4	October 2022	At least a couple of years	India	October 2024 2 years	Italy?
W4	March 2019	4 years	US	Summer 2023? 4 years and few months	Lisbon, Portugal Latin America
W5	January 2022	1 year and 3 months (back and forth)	Germany, Argentina, Austria, Thailand	N/A	N/A
M5	2011 (with, 3 years in Sevilla, then back to Madrid since 2015)	Now 8 years	UK, Sevilla Spain	N/A	N/A
W6	27th March 2023	1 month	Columbia, Spain, Germany, Indonesia	10th May 2023 1 month and half	Italy
M6	February 2023	2 months	Lebanon, UK	May 2023 3 months	Belgrade, Serbia
W7	January 2023	5 months	Brazil, Italy, Canada, Germany	August 2023 7 months	Barcelona, Spain

2.3 Inhabiting

	Housing location	Housing type	Housing price	Finding housing
W1	Principe Pio	Shared flat	390€ all included	Idealista.com
M1	Puerta del Angel	2 bedroom-flat for himself, want to sublet 1 room	850€ without utilities	Idealista.com
W2	Goya	Shared flat	500€ all included	She met her housemate in a bar
M2	Las Letras	Married couple living together in a 1-bedroom flat	1050€ without utilities (so 525€ each shared with them 2)	Idealista.com
W3				
M3	Lavapiés	Living with his wife in a 1-bedroom flat	1600€ all included (so 800€ each shared with his wife)	Airbnb.com
M4	Ventas	3-bedroom flat and subletting 1 room	1000€ in total without utilities BUT 600€ after he sublets a room	Help desk of his company
W4	Malasaña	1 bedroom-flat for herself	660€ without utilities	Idealista.com
W5	Salamanca	Shared flat	850€ without utilities	Facebook (friends of friends)
M5	Malasaña	1 bedroom-flat for himself	765€ without utilities	Idealista.com
W6	Retiro	Room of a friend in a shared apartment	0€	N/A
M6	Valedebebas	Private apartment in a CLS	1800€ all included (so 900€ each shared with his brother)	Homeclub.com/es
W7	Tetuán	Private room in a CLS	930€ (middle price room for her house)	Cohabs.com

	Current housing location	(Other) attractive neighborhood in which to live
W1	Principe Pio	**La Latina**
M1	Puerta del Angel	**Madrid Centro**
W2	Goya	**Malasaña**
M2 + W3	Las Letras	**Salamanca Chamberí**
M3	Lavapiés	**Malasaña**
M4	Ventas	**Salamanca, Goya**
W4	Malasaña	*Doesn't want another neighborhood*
W5	Salamanca	**La Latina** or anywhere where her friends live
M5	Malasaña	**Chamberí, Salamanca Lavapiés**
W6	Goya	**Las Letras**
M6	Valedebebas	*Doesn't want another neighborhood*
W7	Tetuán	**Chamberí, Salamanca, Lavapiés, La Latina**

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