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Digital nomads: Who are they? Why do they relocate to Porto?

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DIGITAL NOMADS: WHO ARE THEY? WHY DO THEY RELOCATE
TO PORTO?

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Abstract

Digital nomads comprise people who work from anywhere and who can travel while maintaining their careers. With a rising number of individuals relocating to Porto for work and leisure, it is relevant to know more about the expanding trend of digital nomads moving abroad and their drivers for settling in Porto. By drawing upon the international mobility literature and the city branding perspective, the present study aims to investigate a range of specific motives that digital nomads have for relocating to Porto. By using a qualitative approach and 24 semi-structured interviews with local digital nomads, it was possible to assess their sociodemographic characteristics, including the three dimensions of the self (i.e., the personal, occupational, and family self) that, consistent with the literature review, expanded our knowledge of who are these individuals. The findings also shed light on the individuals' needs for adventure and freedom, a vibrant lifestyle, and local attributes, such as visa requirements, culture, architecture, infrastructure, transportation, climate, cost of living and safety, which are some of the main drivers for digital nomads choosing Porto. This study paves the way for future research aiming to develop our understanding of this new international work form, including the development of a framework for city attractiveness assessment. Although the findings are limited to the local context, they have major implications for public policy on international business, employers resourcing international workers, and individual decision-making.

Keywords: Digital nomads, mobility drivers, international mobility, city attractiveness, international human resource management

JEL Code: F00, F20, J69, J80, O15, Z30

Resumo

Os nómadas digitais são pessoas que trabalham em qualquer lugar e podem viajar enquanto mantêm as suas carreiras. Com um número crescente de indivíduos que se mudam para o Porto em trabalho e lazer, é relevante saber mais sobre a tendência crescente dos nómadas digitais que se deslocam para o estrangeiro e os seus *drivers* para se estabelecerem no Porto. Ao recorrer à literatura sobre mobilidade internacional e à perspetiva da marca da cidade, o presente estudo pretende investigar uma série de motivos específicos que levam os nómadas digitais a mudarem-se para o Porto. Através de uma abordagem qualitativa e 24 entrevistas semiestruturadas com nómadas digitais locais, foi possível avaliar as características sociodemográficas destes, incluindo as três dimensões do “eu” (ou seja, o “eu” pessoal, ocupacional e familiar) que, de acordo com a revisão da literatura, ampliaram o nosso conhecimento sobre estes indivíduos. Os resultados também iluminam as necessidades dos indivíduos por aventura e liberdade, um estilo de vida vibrante e atributos locais, como requisitos do visto, cultura, arquitetura, infraestrutura, transportes, clima, custo de vida e segurança, que são alguns dos principais impulsionadores para os nómadas digitais que escolhem o Porto. Este estudo abre caminho para pesquisas futuras que visam aprofundar a nossa compreensão desta nova forma de trabalho internacional, incluindo o desenvolvimento de uma estrutura para a avaliação da atratividade da cidade. Embora os resultados sejam limitados ao contexto local, têm grandes implicações para políticas públicas sobre negócios internacionais, empregadores que contratam trabalhadores internacionais e tomadas de decisão individuais.

Palavras-chave: Nómadas digitais, *drivers* para a mobilidade, mobilidade internacional, atratividade da cidade, gestão internacional de recursos humanos

Códigos JEL: F00, F20, J69, J80, O15, Z30

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1. Introduction

Over the last decade, the phenomenon of “digital nomads” (DNs) has received increased attention from the media, including academics and managers. This interest has been linked to the use of technology in diverse areas (e.g., Hannonen, 2020), such as travel, leisure and tourism (e.g., Cook, 2020; Orel, 2019). Technological transformation through digitalization has not only impacted the global workforce (Hajro et al., 2022) but working from anywhere is helping lower-income economies avoid the "brain drain"(Choudhury, 2020).

According to Hannonen (2020), digital nomads are mobile professionals working remotely. Digital nomads are known for their passion for travel and adventure, temporarily settling in a physical environment where they can do their tasks and be productive (Aroles et al., 2020). They distinguish themselves from other global workers, such as international business travellers (Welch et al., 2007), business expatriates (McNulty & Brewster, 2017a), expatpreneurs (Selmer et al., 2018) and qualified immigrants (Zikic et al., 2010) by travelling as a personal choice instead of being an employment obligation, allowing them to have a location-independent lifestyle (Hannonen, 2020).

The number of digital nomads worldwide has expanded massively over the last two decades and is expected to grow (Hermann & Paris, 2020). This phenomenon interests international business because digital nomads are highly skilled and represent an expanding talent pool. Currently, at least six out of thirty-eight countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) are offering specific visas for digital nomads (OECD, 2022), underscoring the attention these workers receive from the international business community. However, the study of digital nomads remains theoretically fragmented and restricted to a few occupational groups and locations, which limits the theoretical inferences (Aroles et al., 2020). The literature has consistently shown the need for more conceptual development on this phenomenon, including an in-depth understanding of why they relocate to specific destinations.

Although prior international business research and global mobility (Andresen et al., 2014; Guttormsen & Luring, 2022; Selmer et al., 2022) has addressed the importance of defining the phenomenon of digital nomads against other categorisations (e.g., global work and travel mobility), research on why digital nomads relocate to specific destinations remains challenging (Cook, 2020). Specifically, research has shown that digital nomads aim to change

routines (Nash et al., 2021), spaces, and work locations to balance their work, leisure and touristic needs (Cook, 2020). However, we still need to learn more about the role that destinations and their specific context play in the decision to become a digital nomad. These are the gaps this study attempts to address by expanding our knowledge of (i) who are the digital nomads in Porto and (ii) why they choose this location.

To answer these research questions, this study employs a qualitative approach through in-depth and semi-structured interviews with 24 digital nomads who live and work in Porto. This location was selected because of its convenience for the research team, but mainly because Portugal is one of the OECD countries with special visas for digital nomads (OECD, 2022), and, on average, about 3800 digital nomads arrive in Porto with an expectation to continue to increase (Nomad List, 2023). This research follows Hannonen's (2020) definition of digital nomads to address a rapidly growing group of extremely mobile, location-independent professionals. These individuals attempt to create a new nomadic lifestyle by working while travelling on a (semi)permanent basis, which gives them meaning and purpose (Hermann & Paris, 2020).

Given the paucity of research on the digital nomad phenomenon, this study contributes to the literature in various ways. Firstly, it extends the analysis of digital nomads to a specific European location, such as Porto, a context usually neglected by international business research. Secondly, it provides an in-depth understanding of the drivers for digital nomads to choose a location, such as Porto, which have several implications for informing international business and city policies as well as organisational strategies, including policies and practices concerning the assessment of Porto's "pull factors". Thirdly, the findings are informative for international human resource managers aiming to attract and retain this talent pool.

This document is organised into more five sections in addition to this introduction. The following section reviews the relevant and current perspectives on the digital nomad phenomenon in terms of technology, work, leisure, tourism, and the characteristics of the destinations they choose for achieving their goals. The methodology, results that answer the research questions, and discussion are then addressed in the remaining sections. Finally, the main conclusions are presented, including the study's limitations, suggestions for future research and theoretical and practical implications.

2. Literature review

Digital nomads work in the gig economy (Sutherland & Jarrahi, 2017). Digital entrepreneurship, online coaching and mentoring, marketing, IT or software development, graphic design and social media work are some of the occupations of digital nomads (Aroles et al., 2022). Due to the growth of the remote economy, there is an expanding diversity of digital nomads who may work in various industries (Chevtaeva & Denizci-Guillet, 2021). The sections below summarise the literature on DNs.

2.1. Digital nomad phenomenon

The definition of digital nomads is not consensual. To better understand and explore the phenomenon, Table 1 presents the most common definitions of the construct.

<i>Study</i>	<i>Findings related to the DN phenomenon</i>
Nash et al. (2021)	As frequent travellers, digital nomads explore new places and generate unique experiences. However, DNs are not tourists because they look for resources that enable them to carry out mobile work.
Aroles et al. (2020)	Digital nomads are known for their passion for travel and adventure, temporarily settling them in a physical environment where they can do their tasks and be productive. Five key modalities that capture the professional life of digital nomads are entrepreneurship, remote work, travel while working, freelancing and having at least two professional activities.
Cook (2020)	Individuals who are very mobile and working or actively looking for work. As they aspire to become "successful digital nomads", digital nomads become a specific image of entrepreneurial independence that makes them personally responsible. Digital nomads establish disciplined routines not to combine work and leisure but to keep them separate. Nomadic freelancers and nomadic entrepreneurs are two significant subgroups of digital nomads. Both groups have unique disciplining methods, and each one needs scholarly attention. Digital nomads create favourable environments for productive labour and leisure by combining these informational infrastructures with special and temporal disciplinary methods. The focus of the digital nomad identity is work.
Hannonen (2020)	Digital nomads are mobile professionals who do their work remotely from anywhere using digital technologies. They further distinguish themselves from other global workers by adopting a new mobile lifestyle as a result of travelling while working or working while travelling (semi)permanently. Digital nomads actively pursue location-independent work along with their involvement in travel. They prefer to be mobile,

<i>Study</i>	<i>Findings related to the DN phenomenon</i>
	in international and digital travel, to conduct remote work in a variety of online and social situations. DNs also pursue a minimalist lifestyle.
Orel (2019)	Digital nomads are seen as being at the intersection of work, leisure, and travel. They are also known as location independent, mobile and an alternative to regular employment. It seems that combining work and leisure activities is becoming more and more common.
Reichenberger (2018)	Digital nomads are (1) mobile employees who do not travel much, (2) frequent travellers who have permanent residence, (3) and lifestyle movers who do not have a permanent address. Digital nomads can consider work-related activities as leisure, transferring leisure elements, including enjoyment and self-control, to their working contexts.
Thompson (2018)	Digital nomads go a step further in their location independence. They often and frequently travel both domestically and abroad. Additionally, rather than considering work or employment, digital nomads choose their location based on leisure and lifestyle factors. Digital nomads work while on the move, frequently during regular office hours.
Wang et al. (2018)	Digital nomads are teleworkers who work from anywhere. They have a constant, interleaved life of travel and work. It is a new way of doing and organising work, not just a new way of life. Teleworkers are a combination between a businessperson and a backpacker. Digital nomads are an emerging form of cultural and economic trend — "journeymen".

Table 1. Literature review on the construct of digital nomads

As shown, the common elements pertaining to this phenomenon are travel, mobility, work, leisure, temporary living in a place, and technology. The time of moving that digital nomads spend in a location can vary widely from a few days to several months, depending on their drivers, visas, personal circumstances or even their goals. However, our current understanding is restricted because previous research is limited and selective about DNs origin (essentially from the Global North), and most information is anecdotal from newspapers and blogs (Reichenberger, 2018).

2.2. Distinction of DN from other similar constructs

Given the literature review on the concept of digital nomads and considering the goal of further exploring this concept, Table 2 shows the distinction between the digital nomad phenomenon from other forms of international work.

<i>Similar Concept and Study</i>	<i>Difference between digital nomad and similar constructs</i>
Assigned expatriates (AEs) are individuals who are relocated by their employer, of their home country, for an international long-term but temporary assignment (Lindsay et al., 2019).	While an assigned expatriate usually goes to work in a specific location because of a task given by their employer, a digital nomad can work anywhere (Hannonen, 2020) and for one or more employers.
Business expatriates (BEs) relocate for work reasons and are usually employed by an organization. The organization covers the costs of relocation, and they work primarily from client offices or locations (McNulty & Brewster, 2017a; 2017b).	While the business expatriate relocates for work reasons (McNulty & Brewster, 2017a; 2017b), the digital nomad has a location-independent lifestyle, works remotely and self-finances their travel expenses (Hannonen, 2020).
Expatpreneurs engage in entrepreneurial activities abroad and travel when required for projects or business (Vance et al., 2016).	While the expat-preneur goes abroad to develop entrepreneurial activities (Vance et al., 2016), the digital nomad works remotely and has a location-independent lifestyle (Hannonen, 2020).
Flexpatriates perform short-term assignments and flexible roles. They are employed by a parent company and work in its subsidiaries. Labor expenses are paid by the organization (Shaffer et al., 2012).	While flexpatriates are sent abroad by the organization for short-term assignments (Shaffer et al., 2012), digital nomads work remotely while traveling by choice (Hannonen, 2020).
International business travellers (IBT) are employees of an organization and travel, usually for short periods, due to business meetings and activities. Furthermore, travel expenses are paid by the organization. The focus of the travel is on achieving the organization's objectives. Typically, they interact with colleagues and business partners. They also attend events of the industry and meet with customers (Welch et al., 2007).	While an international business traveller travel for the purpose of business-related activities (Welch et al., 2007), a digital nomad travel for personal lifestyle reasons while working remotely (Hannonen, 2020). Furthermore, DNs finance their own relocations. International business travellers are limited by location and working hours (Welch et al., 2007), while digital nomads have higher freedom in choosing where to work and organizing their schedule (Cook, 2020).
Qualified immigrants (QIs) look for work opportunities in the foreign country and are hired by the company in the foreign country. They seek to advance their career in the host country. They usually work from offices or client locations and permanently move to the host country (Zikic et al., 2010).	While the qualified immigrant goes to the host country for job opportunities (Zikic et al., 2010), the digital nomad pursues location-independent work while using digital technologies (Hannonen, 2020).

Table 2. Differences between DNs and other forms of international work

The descriptions of the digital nomad phenomenon are usually vague and unsupported by earlier theories of global work, such as those regarding qualified immigrants (Zikic et al., 2010), expatpreneurs (Vance et al., 2016), flexpatriates (Shaffer et al., 2012),

business expatriates (McNulty & Brewster, 2017a; 2017b), international business travellers (Welch et al. 2007) and other flexible global work arrangements (Jooss et al., 2021). Additionally, some explanations are even incongruent (e.g., Thompson, 2018; Reichenberger, 2018) which adds to the confusion of global mobility (Andresen et al., 2014). The main distinctions between digital nomads and other international workers are that they work remotely (Selmer et al., 2022) using digital technologies, which allows them to combine working anywhere with travel and leisure. Remote work takes on several contractual forms, such as permanent employment (Wang et al., 2018), freelancing (Cook, 2020), self-employment, and entrepreneurial ventures (Aroles et al., 2020). Digital nomads travel because they are working and have the personal and financial means to support their lifestyle, as opposed to other global workers who travel to work (e.g., international business travellers); travel for work (e.g., qualified immigrants), or travel to pursue a career abroad (e.g., business expatriates) (Nash et al., 2021).

So far, the conceptualization of digital nomads remains largely atheoretical, which reinforces the importance of this study. Although the construct can serve in part to better understand the phenomenon it is pertinent to study where home is for a digital nomad (Hannonen, 2020), because these individuals can choose certain destinations to settle, such as Porto, due to the destination characteristics.

2.3. Relocation of digital nomads

Being a nomadic worker demands work and effort simply because it is necessary to switch work locations, routines, and spaces before setting everything up again in a new environment (Cook, 2020). The idea of lifestyle mobility emphasises the freedom of movement as a personal preference (Hannonen, 2020). However, the suggested freedom of movement is frequently subject to entrance and departure mobility regimes, the validity of passports and visas, and other factors determining the terms and duration of the travel to and out of one's native country (Hannonen, 2020). This means that while lifestyle mobility emphasises the individual ability to choose, it gives less focus to the importance of mobility regimes and structures that can support or hinder work mobility (Hannonen, 2020). For this reason, the sections below list the features of the locations that influence the relocation of DNs, and Table 3 reviews the literature about the location attributes valued by digital nomads.

<i>Study</i>	<i>Location attributes valued by DNs</i>
Nash et al. (2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To complete their tasks, digital nomads must look for locations that can support the functions of their portable technologies. ▪ Digital nomads frequently travel with the intention of completing one or more tasks in a specific location. There are clear correlations between the kind of workspaces they choose and the types of tasks they prefer to complete there. They must rely on selecting places with the spatial characteristics necessary for efficient work.
Cook (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Although laptops and smartphones are frequently used by digital nomads, the laptop is more utilised in coworking spaces. So, the existence of such spaces can be relevant to DNs. ▪ Digital nomads frequently cannot establish regular work schedules because they must work across a time zone. ▪ Making a distinction between being at work and being on vacation while maintaining discipline depends on the choice of sleep accommodation. Thus, the time zone is a relevant criterion for DNs.
Mancinelli (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assuming the risk of entrepreneurship, taking the time to "create" or "bootstrap" their own "gig" or increasing the number of their income-generating activities by starting new businesses, are possible for digital nomads living in low-cost places. ▪ The freedom of choice for these digital nomads is constrained by the requirement for reliable connectivity, practical and affordable accommodation, shared workspaces, and the appropriate visa.
Lee et al. (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Digital nomads favour locations directly tied to their social well-being and work-life balance issues. ▪ Internet accessibility, climate and natural surroundings, cost of living, community, culture, language, accessibility, time zone and safety are some aspects that are significant for DNs. ▪ DNs focus more on local leisure and lifestyle aspirations than specific work-related issues. ▪ DNs frequently look for warm, beautiful locations that are also inexpensive and accessible. Having access to reliable internet is often a necessity.
Schlagwein (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Digital nomads want to be in a place that provides cultural and personal adventures (inspirational), involvement in a group of like-minded, interesting people (civic), and a lower cost of living (market).
Thompson (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DNs have the freedom to spend their time in nations that are highly affordable for themselves.

<i>Study</i>	<i>Location attributes valued by DNs</i>
Reichenberger (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DNs can expand their firm with less financial stress because of the freedom to choose regions with lower living costs.

Table 3. Literature review on location attributes valued by DNs

From Table 3, it can be concluded that time zone, affordable places, tourism and leisure activities, internet accessibility, culture, climate, coworking spaces, necessary visas, and safety are characteristics valued by digital nomads. Digital nomads frequently look for warm, beautiful locations that are also affordable and accessible. Access to stable internet is essential (Lee et al., 2019). These individuals use infrastructures and local resources for work and create or discover places that support their fundamental work methods (Sutherland & Jarrahi, 2017).

Digital nomads often take advantage of living in a less expensive place, sometimes in a developing country, but still earn professional pay rates from typically developed country locations (Schlagwein, 2018).

Digital nomads have drivers for their mobility. In this sense, it is relevant to understand why digital nomads want to work and live abroad. Table 4 summarises the various mobility drivers identified by multiple studies.

<i>Study</i>	<i>Mobility drivers for digital nomads</i>
Pidduck & Zhang (2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ See opportunities and creative behaviours.
Cook (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A way out of unnecessary bureaucracies.
Hannonen (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Travel to new places and have unique experiences. ▪ Mobility and technology are every day in daily life. ▪ Own desires for self-fulfilment, freedom of choice, and a lifestyle change. ▪ Intentional travel.
Mancinelli (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reliable connectivity, practical and affordable accommodation, shared workspaces, and the necessary visa. ▪ Take on the risk of entrepreneurship.
Lee et al. (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Geographic characteristics of the destination.
Orel (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Find the ideal workspace.
Reichenberger (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ “Create a more flexible and tailored life outside externally imposed structures” (Reichenberger 2018, p. 9). ▪ Increase productivity, creativity, and self-development.
Schlagwein (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Travel and experience diverse cultures.
Thompson (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experience freedom, liberty, and self-determination.
Cohen et al. (2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Movements are tied to a lifestyle.

Table 4. Literature review on mobility drivers for digital nomads

Finding the best workplace spot is one of many reasons digital nomads travel and frequently switch locations (Orel, 2019). The possibilities offered by a way of life centred on experience, challenge, personal growth, and development are highly desired (Schlagwein, 2018). Foreign cultural exposure also benefits entrepreneurship by encouraging adaptability, self-image discovery and frame breaking (Pidduck & Zhang, 2022). The digital nomads' preferred locations are directly related to their social well-being and work-life balance (Lee et al., 2019).

2.4. Porto as a destination

From a marketing perspective, tourism-related products and services have become branded to attract clients. Due to this, brand-related research is now more important than ever to find creative ways to promote a destination brand and generate beneficial word of mouth in the context of tourism and its linked industries, such as travel and hospitality (e.g., Hamzah et al., 2021). Positive word of mouth can result from a satisfying, memorable interaction with a touristic brand (e.g., Moliner-Velázquez et al., 2019). Given that digital nomads are usually searching for inspirational and distinctive locations to work and live (Schlagwein, 2018), Porto's brand can contribute to attracting and capturing the interest (Santos et al., 2017) of these individuals.

2.4.1 Porto city brand

Nation branding is the outcome of the interaction between public and commercial sector interests to transmit national priorities between domestic and international communities for a range of connected objectives (Aronczyk, 2013). This theoretical approach is herein used to understand not only the notoriety of certain locations, such as Porto but also to capture the interest and awareness of digital nomads.

Table 5 reviews the importance attributed to national branding, i.e., marketing research.

<i>Study</i>	<i>Importance of nation branding</i>
Hamzah et al. (2021)	▪ Generate positive word of mouth.
Sousa et al. (2019)	▪ Compete worldwide.
Aro et al. (2018)	▪ Consumers' love for a place.
Hosany et al. (2017)	▪ Establish a relationship of connection and attachment with a location.
Papadopoulos et al. (2016)	▪ Image is crucial, and the location is the "product".

<i>Study</i>	<i>Importance of nation branding</i>
Huber et al. (2015)	▪ Attract visitors.

Table 5. Literature review on the importance of nation branding

Reducing trade barriers has accelerated the theory and application of nation branding because nations are creating national brands to compete worldwide (Sousa et al., 2019).

Notably, locations worldwide have reacted fast to the new phenomena and begun to promote themselves as welcoming to digital nomads, positioning themselves as the ideal location (Hannonen, 2020). Several nations have developed favourable taxes, e-residency, visa-free stays, and visa policies to attract more digital nomads (Hannonen, 2020). In addition to co-living and coworking spaces, digital nomad's house rentals, conferences, leisure programs, healthcare insurance, publications, banking, and a nomad nation project are among the many new elements catering to the demands of this new way of life (Hannonen, 2020).

Visitors and locals may develop an emotional connection and affection for a place (Hosany et al., 2017), and consumers' love for a location is a delicate mix of love for the brand values and the place itself (Aroles et al., 2020). Furthermore, brand love strongly correlates with customers' social and inner selves (Huber et al., 2015). Moreover, marketing campaigns, allied with the use of social media, are an important tool (Sousa et al., 2019) that a location can use for disseminating its identity and cultural heritage, combined with its differentiating characteristics (Santos et al., 2017). For example, Porto has a reputation of a historic and lively travel destination (Gusman et al., 2019) with good food and wine, which can draw the attention of visitors aiming to have new experiences (Pinho & Marques, 2021). So far, Porto has sought to position itself internally and externally, as shown in Table 6.

<i>Study</i>	<i>Porto's brand</i>
InvestPorto (2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Many of Portugal's top businesses are based in Porto. ▪ One of the key factors is the talent of the people. ▪ Internationalisation is becoming a bigger priority in Porto's educational system. ▪ Porto has a reputation for having an atmosphere that is friendly to entrepreneurs. ▪ Porto Airport won Best Airport in Europe for the 10–25 million passenger category in the 2022 ACI Europe Best Airport Awards. ▪ Porto has made significant advances toward the objective of carbon neutrality. ▪ Porto's public transportation system covers the entire Metropolitan Area and is considered the best in Portugal (won Portugal's European Customer Satisfaction 2020 Index). ▪ Porto was ranked as one of the best cities in Europe for raising a family in a 2021 study by the Norwegian consulting firm Sumo Finnans. ▪ Porto Historic Centre and the Douro Wine Region are two UNESCO World Heritage Sites.
Porto Digital Association (2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Porto Digital Association was created to promote Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) initiatives.
EF Education First (2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It is considered the third city with the best English skills in Southern Europe.
Carvalho, et al. (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Talents from other countries are migrating to Porto.
Gusman et al. (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Porto has a reputation as being historic and lively travel destination.

Table 6. Literature review on Porto's brand

To connect the city digitally and create brand awareness, Porto has several social media accounts, such as “Câmara Municipal do Porto”; “Visit Porto”; “Porto. Portal de Notícias do Porto”; “portoponto”. In addition, the Porto Digital Association (a private non-profit organisation) was created in 2004 to promote information communications technology (ICT) initiatives within Porto metropolitan area (Porto Digital Association, 2023).

For businesses trying to tap into fresh viewpoints and backgrounds, there’s an effort to enhancing the region's diversity and multiculturalism that encourages creativity and flexibility (InvestPorto, 2023). Internationalisation is a priority, and Porto is quickly becoming an entrepreneurship and business hub (InvestPorto, 2023). With an extended tradition of supporting SMEs and the private sector, Porto has a reputation for having an atmosphere that is friendly to entrepreneurs. Porto was recognised "The Best Start-up

Friendly City of Europe" by the World Business Angels Investment Forum in 2018 and "The Best European City for Startup and SME Support" by the Financial Times in 2019. According to Startup Heatmap Europe 2022, Porto ranks among the top five mid-sized cities in Europe for female company founders (InvestPorto, 2023). The metropolitan area of Porto has approximately 550 startups with more than 1,300 employees, making it one of Portugal's major startup ecosystems (ScaleUp Porto, 2023). The startup scene in Portugal is highly impacted by the new ventures created and headquartered in Porto, although the city has also attracted scale-ups and international players (InvestPorto, 2023).

One of the key factors in Porto's recent success in capturing an increasing number of businesses is the human capital (InvestPorto, 2023). Approximately 27,000 international students from 150 countries are enrolled in higher education institutions in Northwest Portugal, and about half of them are in the Porto Metropolitan Area. Furthermore, Porto is considered the third city with the best English skills in Southern Europe (EF Education First, 2022). Additionally, Portugal was recognised as the sixth safest country in the world by the Global Peace Index 2022, and Porto was ranked as one of the best cities in Europe for raising a family (InvestPorto, 2023), which makes Porto a desirable place to live. The Porto Historic Centre and the Douro Wine Region are two UNESCO World Heritage Sites. These attractions make Porto one of Europe's must-visit locations, combined with the city's gastronomy, wines, and lively cultural life.

Since Porto has made significant advances toward attracting international business, it is relevant to understand to what extent the city branding is linked to the attraction of DNs.

2.4.2 Digital nomads in Porto

By law, a digital nomad in Porto needs to have a visa. A visa permits foreign citizens, and digital nomads to remain in Portugal while performing their professional activity provided remotely (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023). A visa can be for a *Temporary Stay* or for the purpose of obtaining a *Residence Permit*, and further information about some visas available to foreign citizens are summarised in Annex 1.

Digital nomads in Porto are becoming commonly known in the local and international press, including social media. For example, in Facebook groups they share information in forums like "Digital nomads Porto" and "Porto Expats" and use the Nomad List platform to see information about places and interact with others digital nomads. In February 2023, Porto was ranked the seventh hottest destination for digital nomads in

Europe (Nomad List, 2023). However, most of what we know about digital nomads in Porto remains scarce and anecdotal, which reflects the need for further research in this context.

2.4.3 Mobility drivers to choose Porto

Porto is being promoted by a variety of worldwide organisations and sources. For example, in 2010, Porto was classified on the top 10 tourist destinations in Europe by the editor of the Lonely Planet travel guide, and won the European Best Destination Awards in 2012, 2014 and 2017. Furthermore, it has been presented in the global market (Gusman et al., 2019). Therefore, Table 7 reunites information about the common drivers to choose Porto as a destination to live and work.

<i>Study</i>	<i>Drivers to choose Porto</i>
Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appropriate visas for the stay of foreigners.
Marques & Pinho (2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scientific research and technological development units. ▪ Variety of tourist attractions and activities. ▪ Solid reputation as a leisure travel destination. ▪ Friendly residents. ▪ Price competitiveness. ▪ Alfandega Congress Center is a prestigious conference and event location.
Gusman et al. (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hub of a significant urban tourism destination on a European scale. ▪ Culture and leisure contributed to the city centre's revitalization. ▪ The importance of the services sector in Porto's economy has grown, particularly the services related to tourism. ▪ UNESCO classified Porto as a World Heritage Site, in 1996. ▪ Won the European Best Destination Awards in 2012, 2014 and 2017. ▪ Renovation efforts throughout the city centre. ▪ Construction and expansion of Porto's airport. ▪ Boom in low-cost airline routes and its frequency.

Table 7. Literature review on drivers to choose Porto

In 2021, around 1.7 million people lived in the Porto Metropolitan Area, of which 57.970 were foreigners (Pordata, 2023).

As drivers to visit and live in Porto, over the years the city has changed from a devalued older city into an urban touristic destination on a European scale (Gusman et al., 2019). Its social, physical, and economic characteristics have been significantly impacted by

tourism (Gusman et al., 2019). The Porto centre's urban landscape with cultural relevance and concentration of touristic attractions have increased the number of people visiting and living in this area, which impacted its residential functions (Gusman et al., 2019). Tourism is crucial in Porto, since it is a complement to leisure tourism, a strategic tourist product, a stimulator of local and regional economies and a promoter of entrepreneurship and business networks (Marques & Pinho, 2021). Nonetheless, the culture of Porto may be impacted by this "culture-led regeneration" that is strongly affected by foreigners (Marques & Pinho, 2021). In this process, cultural values are being overused and space is utilised for tourism purposes in excess, which can be a downside (Marques & Pinho, 2021), since it might force Porto's local inhabitants to gradually relocate and consequently Porto may lose its culture and attractiveness (Gusman et al., 2019) to digital nomads, since they value to meet the culture of the places.

The Alfandega Congress Center, a prestigious conference and events location, is another advantage that attracts foreigners (Marques & Pinho, 2021). As mobility drivers to work in Porto, the city has some coworking spaces where digital nomads can work and socialise. Finding a workspace that facilitates work duties and productivity is essential to DNs (Nash et al., 2021), which can explain their presence. Another attractive aspect is the suitable visas for foreigners that Portugal offers (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023), which allows them to live and work in Porto. Furthermore, Porto is in the same time zone as other destinations, which is very relevant for these individuals since, for example, they can work for the English market from Porto. Working from Porto to destinations where wages are higher is likely to be feasible and attractive. Overall, Porto stands out for significant scientific research and technological development units; convenient airport location; various tourist attractions and activities to boost business tourism packages; solid reputation as a leisure travel destination; price competitiveness and friendly residents (Marques & Pinho, 2021).

To summarise, Porto is gaining the reputation of being a hub for digital nomads, since tourism, culture, access to stable internet, safety, leisure, coworking spaces, entrepreneurship, cost of living, visas and welcoming residents are highly valued by these individuals.

3. Methodology

3.1. Methodological approach

Table 8 presents the methods employed in similar studies with DNs, which mostly used a qualitative methodology thus reinforcing the decision to adopt this approach in the present study.

<i>Study</i>	<i>Method</i>
Nash et al. (2021)	The study explores the relationship among diverse workplaces, work practices, and technology that characterise nomadic work , drawing on interviews with 23 digital nomads and analysis of workspace images from Twitter.
Aroles et al. (2020)	A qualitative approach to content analysis. Analysis of 346 online forum profiles of self-identified digital nomads .
Cook, D. (2020)	Sixteen digital nomads for four years are covered in this longitudinal viewpoint . The period was necessary for this study to contextualise and show the common details underlying characteristics of research participants to idealize their statements of being digital nomads or to describe hypothetical future scenarios.
Mancinelli, F. (2020)	For four months, fieldwork was conducted in Barcelona, Spain, and Chiang Mai, Thailand. Netnographic study , such as video interviews, immersive online interaction, and content analysis of personal blogs, articles, and interviews that have been shared online. Familiarised with the structure of the neighbourhood, involved in several activities, and kept a fieldwork journal with socialisation dynamics, workplace descriptions and fragments of informal conversations. Twenty-one semi-structured interviews in total.
Lee et al. (2019)	Analysed the /r/digital nomad forum on reddit.com. Keyword search to gather the DNs' interactions to gain an understanding of how the lifestyles of DNs affect their choices for places to live , socialise and work.
Reichenberger, I. (2018)	Twenty-two semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted to learn more about why and how this lifestyle is performed and to add explanation and detail through coherent narratives.
Schlagwein, D. (2018)	The research strategy is exploratory, qualitative, and interpretive and focuses on field data and lived experiences. There are two main places where the data for this study is collected. The initial step is gathering field data on-site (e.g., Thailand and Indonesia). The second is the collection

<i>Study</i>	<i>Method</i>
	of online data via digital platforms (e.g., Nomad List, Facebook groups).
Thompson, B. (2018)	Through qualitative research of the lifestyle, the study investigated the socio-economic background of digital nomad work . The DNX hosts events in both German (the founders are German) and English, thereby representing the substantial German digital nomad community; the Digital Nomad Girls retreat in Javea, Spain, from 18–27 September 2017; and the third annual DNX Conference for Digital Nomads & Life Hackers in Lisbon, Portugal, on 9-10 September 2017.

Table 8. Methodology applied in studies on digital nomads

Considering there is still much more to explore about digital nomads, a qualitative methodology will be used to answer the research questions, within the framework of a phenomenological approach. This approach emphasises a subjective understanding of the world and focuses on how individuals interpret their experiences from their perspective (Eatough & Smith, 2017). In essence, it examines how individuals, as "embodied socio-historical situated persons" (Eatough & Smith, 2017, p. 195), utilise cultural and social resources to construct specific interpretations of their personal experiences (Wojnar & Swanson, 2007). Moreover, this epistemological approach aligns with recent calls to expand global mobility research (Guttormsen & Lauring, 2022) and underscores how digital nomads attribute meaning to their experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

3.2. Procedure of data collection

This study employed 24 in-depth semi-structured interviews with digital nomads who moved to Porto to capture participants' viewpoints on intricate subjects (Patton, 2015). This methodological approach is deemed suitable for portraying the participants' perspective, shedding light on their interpretation and organisation of the world and their lived experiences. The semi-structured interviews were conducted using a predetermined set of open-ended questions, supplemented by the flexibility to delve into additional topics based on the respondents' answers. The interviews were conducted by the first author (an ethnic Portuguese). The interview guide, which is in Annex 2 – Interview guide, was first tested with two digital nomads and then improved according to the feedback received. Several broad, open-ended questions about participants' nomad experience were asked and the interview guide was divided into three parts: (1) beginning of the interview – explanation of the research purpose and related interview topics, ensuring anonymity and confidentiality;

(2) development of the interview - questions about participants' demographics, family, career experiences and open questions about the subject of the research study and (3) end of the interview –thank the interviewee for the participation, space for additional questions that the interviewee may wish to ask and request for recommendation of other digital nomads in Porto who may also be available for the interview.

Since it was difficult to locate digital nomads, we searched in local coworking spaces and sent individual messages in online groups or through Instagram, ensuring diversity among participants. All interviews were conducted in English by the first author between March and May 2023 and were held online or in public spaces (coworking spaces, cafes or in outdoor gardens). The shortest interview took thirty minutes, and the longest lasted one hour, totalling 189 pages of transcripts.

3.3. Participants

The participants were targeted according to the following criteria: (1) be a foreign citizen; (2) who legally lives in Porto; (3) who is working remotely with digital technologies; (4) who financed the move to Porto with their own means; (5) who went to Porto by choice and not by being assigned by an employer; (6) who intends to live and work temporarily abroad and (7) who is available for an interview.

The final set of research participants included 24 digital nomads from 17 different origins, and most ($N = 15$) needed a visa to reside in Porto. This sample size meets the minimum requirements for an exploratory approach (Rowley, 2012). The profile of the research participants is presented in Table 9.

Interviewees were aged between 23 and 53 years old ($M=34,625$; $SD=2,99$), and 58% were male. All had higher education, and their occupation field included audiovisuals, accounting, finance and management consultancy, teaching, IT, and marketing and sales. 13 participants had an employment contract (54%), and the others were self-employed or international entrepreneurs. Among the participants, two-thirds lived alone, while the others travelled with someone else, but only one travelled with children. At the time of the interviews, the extended family were predominantly living in the USA (29%), England (13%), Germany (8%), and New Zealand (8%).

To guarantee the participants' confidentiality and anonymity, they are identified in the research study with the letter "P" for participant, followed by a number that corresponds to the alphabetical order of their first name and surnames.

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Age group</i>	<i>Occupation field</i>	<i>Employment Type</i>	<i>Country of Birth</i>	<i>Travel Companions</i>
P1	F	31-40	Audio-visuals & Edition & Filming	Service provider Self-employed	New Zealand	Alone
P2	M	31-40	Accounting & Finance & Business Consulting	Service provider Self-employed	England	Alone
P3	M	31-40	IT (technical, consulting, managerial)	Employment contract	USA	Alone
P4	M	31-40	IT (technical, consulting, managerial)	Entrepreneur	USA	Alone
P5	M	31-40	Marketing & Sales	Employment contract	USA	Alone
P6	M	41-50	Marketing & Sales	Employment contract	Belarus	Different sex Spouse/ Partner
P7	M	20-30	IT (technical, consulting, managerial)	Service provider Self-employed	New Zealand	Alone
P8	M	31-40	Marketing & Sales	Service provider Self-employed	Venezuela	Same sex Spouse/ Partner
P9	F	31-40	Marketing & Sales	Employment contract	Swiss	Different sex Spouse/ Partner

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Age group</i>	<i>Occupation field</i>	<i>Employment Type</i>	<i>Country of Birth</i>	<i>Travel Companions</i>
P10	M	20-30	Marketing & Sales	Entrepreneur	China	Alone
P11	M	31-40	ESL Teaching	Employment contract	Cyprus	Alone
P12	F	20-30	Marketing & Sales	Entrepreneur	Brazil	Alone
P13	F	20-30	Marketing & Sales	Employment contract	Estonia	Alone
P14	F	20-30	IT (technical, consulting, managerial)	Employment contract	Poland	Alone
P15	F	Over 51 years	Non attributed	Entrepreneur	India	Different sex Spouse/ Partner
P16	M	41-50	Audiovisuals & Edition & Filming	Self-employed	Singapore	Same sex Spouse/ Partner
P17	M	31-40	Accounting & Finance & Business Consulting	Employment contract	Germany	Alone
P18	M	20-30	Marketing & Sales	Employment contract	England	Different sex Spouse/ Partner
P19	M	41-50	IT (technical, consulting, managerial)	Employment contract	USA	Spouse/ Partner & Children
P20	F	31-40	IT (technical, consulting, managerial)	Employment contract	Myanmar	Alone

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Age group</i>	<i>Occupation field</i>	<i>Employment Type</i>	<i>Country of Birth</i>	<i>Travel Companions</i>
P21	F	20-30	Education and instructional design	Employment contract	France	Alone
P22	M	20-30	IT (technical, consulting, managerial)	Entrepreneur	USA	Alone
P23	F	31-40	Marketing & Sales	Self-employed	Canada	Alone
P24	F	31-40	Accounting & Finance & Business Consulting	Employment contract	Germany	Different sex Spouse/ Partner

Notes. P – Participant; HE – Higher Education; M – Male; F – Female

Table 9. Participants' characteristics

3.4. Data analysis

The audio-recorded interviews were fully transcribed and then a second listening was conducted to verify possible flaws and to ensure that the transcription accurately captured what was verbalized (Flick, 2009). To guarantee the fidelity, objectivity and validity of the data analysis, an initial reading was carried out first, i.e., reading the transcripts and analysing the text to enhance impressions and guidelines (Bardin, 2011).

Furthermore, a thematic content analysis of the transcribed material was made (Krippendorff & Bock, 2009). According to Bardin (2011), the categorization enables the transformation of unorganized raw data into structured data, which allows the development of a descriptive and objective understanding of the material gathered.

We listed and coded the main themes based on the interview guidelines and the literature review (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). An inductive approach to the qualitative data was also undertaken to identify new emergent themes. After the first level of codification, we proceed to a second code order by searching for patterns or major categories that allow us to relate the themes in the first order of codification. Annex 3 contains the category system and its operational definition. The categorization, number of sources and accounting of the frequency of references was developed by using the NVivo 1.7 software (QSR).

Furthermore, the final coding structure was obtained, when it met the criteria of representativeness, objectivity, relevance, exhaustiveness, exclusivity (Bardin, 2011) and by consensus, thereby granting more rigour and reliability to the findings (Morse, 2015).

4. Research findings

The content of all interviews was coded into eight main categories, reflecting the major themes discussed during the interviews as shown in Table 10.

<i>Category</i>	<i>Sources</i>	<i>References</i>
00_DIGITAL NOMAD EXPERIENCES	24	315
01_IDENTITY-SEE THEMSELVES	24	526
02_WHY DIGITAL NOMADISM?	24	519
03_HOW TO...	24	470
04_WHY PORTO?	24	283
05_WHICH PORTO BRAND ATTRIBUTES?	24	90
06_HOW IS PORTO?	24	377
07_RECOMMENDATIONS...	24	137

Table 10. Main thematic categories

The first category refers to the experience as a digital nomad; followed by the identity of digital nomads; and the reasons for the choice of digital nomadism. The following categories refer to the destination: what preparation they had to become digital nomads and move to Porto; why Porto; the attributes of Porto brand; how Porto is seen; and recommendations to others.

4.1. The Digital Nomad Experience

Several aspects were considered during the interviews, namely the participants' experiences as digital nomads. Table 11 presents the main theme grouped by subcategories with the number of sources and references.

		<i>Sources</i>	<i>References</i>
00_DIGITAL NOMAD EXPERIENCES		24	315 (100%)
First Move	As a digital nomad	9	24 (8%)
	As an international student	7	7 (2%)
	As a business expatriate	5	7 (2%)
	As a trailing family member or migrant	4	4 (1%)
Subsequent Moves	As a digital nomad	23	47 (15%)
	As a business expatriate	4	6 (2%)
	As a trailing family member or migrant	4	5 (2%)
Frequency	Varies from one month to six months	21	33 (10%)

		<i>Sources</i>	<i>References</i>
	One or more years	10	10 (3%)
	One to three weeks	4	5 (2%)
Next Moves	Moving elsewhere as a DN	19	24 (8%)
	Considering staying longer in Porto	15	18 (6%)
Considering Permanent residency	Porto	15	18 (6%)
	Portugal	15	17 (5%)
	Other places	2	2 (1%)
Leave Porto	Lifestyle	10	15 (5%)
	Visa and other bureaucratic requirements	11	14 (4%)
	Adventure and freedom	7	7 (2%)
	Family events or heartbreak	2	3 (1%)
Visa Considerations	Porto	6	10 (3%)
	Portugal	6	10 (3%)
	In general (in other places)	5	7 (2%)
Challenges		14	22 (7%)

Table 11. “Digital nomad experiences” category

The subcategory - “First Move” - concerns the first international move of each participant. Through the analysis of the table, one can see that not all participants went on their first international experience as digital nomads. Participants mentioned other forms of international moves, namely as international students, business expatriates and trailing family members or migrants. However, the first experience as a digital nomad was more mentioned, with a referral percentage of 8%. For example, the participant P22 mentioned that it was a transition until he became a digital nomad:

“I would say I started going abroad regularly in 2017 and 2018, I began going often and then became a full-time nomad in 2019. So, I first went as a nomad to Grenoble, France, in the Alps. I did that because I had the opportunity to work remote, I was done with grad school, and I knew that I wanted to travel.” (P22)

The subcategory - “Subsequent Moves” - refers to subsequent international moves as a digital nomad or other forms, similar to the “First Move” subcategory. The subsequent moves of 23 out of 24 respondents were as digital nomads. For example, participant P10 mentioned some places he went as a digital nomad:

“I also lived six months in Australia, I did one month in Rome...” (P10)

The subcategory - “Frequency” - concerns the frequency of change of location. Digital nomads do not always know how long they will stay in a place and, for example, participant P5 mentioned that he had no guarantor and therefore had to pay the first month and another five or six months in advance, not knowing if he would stay in Porto for that long. The duration of each stay and the frequency of relocation depends mostly on the visa requirements and 21 out of 24 respondents mentioned moving from one place to another every few months:

“The longer that we stayed were three months in a place, I think.” (P9)

The subcategory - “Next Moves” - refers to the next planned moves (after Porto). Most participants intend to make the next move as a DN too (n=19). They enjoy the adventure of getting to know different places. As an example, consider the verbalization of P3:

“I’m going to Monti, France. I’m going there because it’s partially history, but it’s also just exploring more of France. I am trying to discover stuff that I didn’t know about, it is a big reason...” (P3)

The subcategory – “Considering Permanent Residency” - is related to the participants' considerations in obtaining permanent residency somewhere. 20 out of 24 interviewees expressed their interest in obtaining permanent local residency. Among these 20 interviewees, 15 considered obtaining residency in Porto. The following quote illustrates the consideration of obtaining residency in Porto:

“Yes, I would like to become a permanent resident. First, I would be able to work towards getting a Portuguese citizenship which give me access to the EU. So, I would really like that one day to spend four or five years that’s required. I see this is a long-term place where I can have a family and I really do enjoy, for all the reasons I already mentioned. There are so many benefits to Porto that I feel like this is the city for me, for now at least. Maybe that could change in the future, but I feel like for my 20s and even for a large part of my 30s, Porto is where I’ll be living. I do like Porto a lot.” (P7).

In addition to Porto, 15 respondents also showed interest in getting residency in Portugal and two interviewees also considered obtaining permanent residency in other places (e.g., in one of the European countries). As an example, participant P5 mentioned that *“if you have citizenship throughout one of these European Union countries or Schengen countries, then you have access to all of the other countries and you can live and work in all the other ones. So, I feel like this would be a very good career and personal opportunity for me to be a citizen of one of these European Union countries.”*

Four participants have not yet considered obtaining permanent residency somewhere because they still enjoy the freedom that this lifestyle gives them, as participant P10

verbalized: “...there are other places that I am interested in exploring and experiencing. I believe that being a digital nomad allows me to have the freedom to choose where I want to be and when, and I value that flexibility in my lifestyle.”

The subcategory - “Leave Porto” - refers to the reasons that led/would lead to leave Porto, namely due to the lifestyle in Porto; the visa requirements and other bureaucracies; the freedom and adventure of experiencing other places; or due to family events (e.g., a wedding) and heartbreak (e.g., breakup of a romantic relationship). The main driver for participants to leave Porto is due to lifestyle (n=10), namely because they consider it is a disorganized location (e.g., the buses are not reliable), with too many digital nomads in the city, and the participants referred that they don't want to be a problem for the locals. Furthermore, they mentioned that the weather is rainy and windy at some times of the year, which makes them want to leave Porto, as noted by P22: *"I think if it would be raining in April, I would have left earlier, so the weather could make me leave..."*. They also consider leaving if the cost of living become too expensive. The second most mentioned driver for wanting/thinking about leaving Porto is the visa requirements and bureaucracies, such as taxes (n=11). As noted by P1: *"I would leave Porto if I couldn't stay because of visas or if another country I like had a better visa deal..."*; and as reinforced by P7: *"If I start making a lot more money and I'm pushing has quite high taxes, that would be something I would consider if I'm at a really high tax bracket. For now, it's not a super big problem for me, but going forward, it could be a reason why I leave."*

The subcategory – “Visa Considerations” - refers to choosing the location based on the Visa. Regarding the places participants chose due to visas, they gave equal emphasis to Portugal and Porto, followed by wherever they were going next:

"All I need is the visa. If you can get the visa, you can make a life for yourself wherever you go. You just need to get there." (P2)

The subcategory - “Challenges” - refers to the main challenges faced throughout the experience as a digital nomad. As challenges, throughout their experiences, there is a prevalence of less productivity, loneliness of not having a community, energy costs and non-anticipated costs, because they are still getting used to the place. As an example, one of the participants mentions:

"There's a cost. There's an energy cost every time you arrive somewhere new, that you're constantly trying to figure out the basics..." (P4)

4.2. Digital Nomads Identity

The “Identity-see Themselves” category includes the answers to the initial questions about how DNs see themselves. Consists of three subcategories: “Personal Self”, “Occupation Self, and “Family Self”. Table 12 outlines the subordinate categories, as well as their expressions in terms of units of analysis, by descending order.

		<i>Sources</i>	<i>References</i>
01_IDENTITY-SEE THEMSELVES		24	526 (100%)
Personal Self	Embrace change, freedom and adventure	24	150 (29%)
	Have a plan and be self-disciplined	24	121 (23%)
	Belong to communities and want to meet other cultures	24	81 (15%)
	Minimalist lifestyle	12	28 (5%)
	Considerations in stop being a digital nomad	9	14 (3%)
	Entrepreneurial mindset	6	6 (1%)
Occupational Self	Work online	20	34 (6%)
	Work anywhere	18	32 (6%)
	Switch for a job or work format that allows the DN to work remotely and be updated	15	27 (5%)
	Created or intend to create something by themselves	5	7 (1%)
Family Self	Wants to start a family or has already created a family, independently of continuing being or stop being a DN	9	11 (2%)
	If it happens, does not want to continue being a DN	5	6 (1%)
	Does not want to start a family, independently of continue being or stop being a DN	5	5 (1%)
	If it happens, wants to continue being a DN	3	5 (1%)

Table 12. “Identity-see Themselves” category

Regarding the subcategory - “Personal Self” - all participants reflected on themselves. They mentioned that they see themselves as adventurers, who embrace change and value freedom. For example, participant P8 mentioned the following:

“Well, actually, for me this question is more about freedom. I think this is something that digital nomad lifestyle has to offer me.” (P8)

Participants have a plan of some sort to pursue this lifestyle and have reported that they consider themselves to be self-disciplined individuals:

“...in order to achieve something significant, you actually need to focus...” (P6)

In addition, the 24 participants mentioned that they want to know other cultures, as noted by P19: “*We like to get to know the actual culture, as opposed to just pass through...*” and belong to communities of like-minded people.

Additionally, half of the respondents (n=12) referred to having a minimalist lifestyle and six an entrepreneurial mindset, as they want to “*...create something...*” (P8) by themselves. Still in the "Personal Self" subcategory, less than half (n=9) of the participants consider stopping to be a digital nomad, mainly due to wanting to start a family and settle down somewhere, as referred by P2: “*I'd want to be in one place, and I'd probably want to be near family as well.*”

In the subcategory - “Occupational Self” - respondents mainly mentioned working online (n=20), working anywhere (n=18), switching to a job or work format that allows them to work remotely (n=15) and created or intend to create something by themselves (n=5), as noted by P7: “*I switched careers from that to working in technology because it gives me much better flexibility about where I can work from and I can basically completely design the life that I want to and so I became a digital nomad as a result of wanting to live overseas.*”

The subcategory - “Family Self” - was mentioned by the participants: nine out of twenty-four want or have already started a family. While three stated that they would continue to be digital nomads if they started having a family, five do not put the possibility of having a family aside, but would stop being digital nomads, as referred by P18: “*The only way it could stop is if I ever had children and I will want some stable place for them to grow and go to school instead of moving.*”. However, five have already decided that they do not want to have children regardless of continue or not continue being digital nomads.

4.3. Why Digital Nomadism?

The "Why digital nomadism" category includes the reasons, views, interpretations for being a "digital nomad" (as someone who is living and working temporarily abroad, while travelling and using digital technologies). Table 13 also contains the subcategories and their expression in terms of units of analysis, by descending order.

		<i>Sources</i>	<i>References</i>
02_Why Digital Nomadism?		24	519 (100%)
Individual Drivers	Lifestyle	24	262 (50%)
	Adventure and Freedom	21	48 (9%)
	Serendipity	8	11 (2%)
Local Drivers	Transports and local infrastructures	20	69 (13%)

	<i>Sources</i>	<i>References</i>
Visa and other bureaucratic requirements	20	70 (13%)
Location, City size, Time Zone	20	41 (8%)
Language	12	18 (3%)

Table 13. “Why digital nomadism?” category

The subcategory – “Individual Drivers” – refers to the drivers of participants in pursuing digital nomadism. The primary reason of the participants is lifestyle. This dimension consists of a variety of interrelated aspects, such as (i) local culture, including local amenities, people, and architecture; (ii) mobility freedom within and from/to the selected destination, (iii) living costs, (iv) climate and (v) safety. The importance of lifestyle is exemplified by the following quote:

“There's this rotation I go through. For example, a more nature spot, but now in a more cultural place. So, I'll rotate. I'll be in the mountains, the city centre, and this rotation. So, when people say what you value most, I value constant change. Then it's the cost of living (...), the weather, (...) people, (...) that's safe, (...) then the first impression of a place” (P3).

Another individual driver related to digital nomadism is the need for adventure and freedom, which is possible when there is compatibility between remote work and travel as an option:

“I wanted the freedom of working for myself and traveling.” (P1)

Finally, eight digital nomads said that they became a digital nomad by chance, as participant P20 noted: *“I became a digital nomad just out of sheer luck and randomly. (...) I have landed here by accident.”*

Regarding the – “Local Drivers” - for digital nomadism, the participants value more: *“...a place that's easy to get around. So, transportation is obviously a big thing. I don't have a car, so I have to be somewhere where there's good transportation.”* (P4) and *“...decent digital nomad infrastructure...”* (P1) that allows digital nomads to work online (e.g., coworking spaces and internet). Furthermore, visa requirements and bureaucratic laws are the following most mentioned by participants. Digital nomads are aware that their freedom of moving is limited by residency and tax regime, which vary across Europe and are less strict in Portugal. Other drivers referred by most of the participants (n=20) are the location, the size of the city and the time zone (e.g., they want to be close to the customers time zone). Half of the participants also referred the language as a local driver (e.g., locals can speak English).

4.4. How to... Digital Nomadism | Porto

The "How to..." category encompasses the subcategories "Digital Nomadism", which concerns preparation to become digital nomads, and "Porto", which includes preparation of DNs to relocate in Porto. Table 14 below summarises this information.

		<i>Sources</i>	<i>References</i>	
03_HOW TO...		24	470 (100%)	
Digital Nomadism	Have a plan and prepare mentally	24	97 (21%)	
	Follow recommendations from others	18	36 (8%)	
	Research about the place	18	29 (6%)	
	Minimalist lifestyle	12	28 (6%)	
	Serendipity	11	16 (3%)	
	Test the places, visit the places before relocating	8	12 (3%)	
	Have financial means	4	4 (1%)	
Porto	What/ Who(m) influenced	Lifestyle	24	109 (23%)
		Location, city size	13	34 (7%)
		Adventure and freedom	16	24 (5%)
		People, word of mouth	10	12 (3%)
		Research	8	11 (2%)
		Travel, Trip	3	4 (1%)
	When heard	People, word of mouth	11	11 (2%)
		On a trip or visiting someone	6	7 (1%)
		Research	6	6 (1%)
		When moved to Lisbon	3	3 (1%)
		Does not remember	2	2 (0,4%)
	How long in Porto	Months	11	11 (2%)
		Years returning to Porto while relocating to other places	7	7 (1%)
		Does not know	4	4 (1%)
		Weeks	2	2 (0,4%)

Table 14. "How to..." category

In the subcategory - "Digital Nomadism" - all digital nomads mentioned having a plan and preparing themselves mentally to become a DN. Although participant P2 referred that he never prepared for anything in his life, he said that he did research on visas in various places before relocating. More than half of the participants also mentioned that they prepared to be a DN through recommendations from others (e.g., on the Nomad List platform and through word of mouth) and through research about the place where they consider going

(e.g., lifestyle, visa, price of short-term accommodation and quality of Wi-Fi). Additionally, almost half of the participants (n=11) reported that they became digital nomads by chance and half of the participants verbalized that they adopted a minimalist lifestyle to travel so much. To a lesser extent, eight participants mentioned that they tested locations (e.g., one week) before relocating for longer, and four mentioned the importance of financial means that allowed them to be digital nomads and to pursue this lifestyle.

In the subcategory - “Porto” - the participants mentioned that what most influenced them to go to Porto was the lifestyle:

“...the authenticity of the town, but also from the people.” (P9)

Although to a lesser extent, respondents were also influenced by Porto's location and by being a mid-size city. Moreover, word of mouth, people (e.g., friends, other digital nomads, and family), research about places (e.g., list of visas or articles) as well as trips they took also influenced some participants in their decision to move to Porto.

Regarding the first time they heard about Porto, it was mainly through family, friends or other digital nomads who recommended Porto to them. Other participants heard about Porto in other occasions, for example P12 mentioned the following: *"I've heard about Porto when I visited a friend who lived here..."*; while P2 noted: *"I saw it on that list with visas..."* and P3 referred: *"I first heard about Porto when I moved to Lisbon..."*. Only two participants mentioned that they do not remember the first time they heard about Porto.

Less than half of the participants (n=11) mentioned that they pretend to stay in Porto for a few months and then relocate somewhere else. Those who intend to stay years in Porto, but at the same time relocate to other places while returning to Porto, is related (i) to visa limitations, (ii) to obtain permanent residency or (iii) because they consider that Porto is their “base”. Other participants do not know how long they will stay in Porto and others are only relocated in Porto for up to three weeks, due to visa limitations or because they only came to Porto due to events that took place in the city.

4.5. Why Porto?

In the category "Why Porto" the participants mentioned all drivers to relocate as a digital nomad in Porto. Table 15 outlines all the themes included in this category and their expression in terms of units of analysis.

	<i>Sources</i>	<i>References</i>
04_WHY PORTO?	24	283 (100%)

	Sources	References
Lifestyle	24	139 (49%)
Special Visa	14	32 (11%)
Transports and local infrastructures	18	45 (16%)
Location, mid-size city, time zone	15	36 (13%)
Adventure and Freedom	11	17 (6%)
English	5	7 (2%)
Serendipity	5	5 (2%)
Healthcare systems	2	2 (1%)

Table 15. “Why Porto?” category

Similar to the category “Why Digital Nomadism”, the lifestyle subcategory, in the category "Why Porto", is the most mentioned, with a referral percentage of 49%, which includes (i) safety, (ii) climate, (iii) walkability, (iv) affordability, and (v) local culture, such as architecture, local amenities and city authenticity:

“...the warmth and the lovely lifestyle where everyone seem to be kind of happy all the time. And I wanted to be part of that (...) I wanted that warmth and Porto is the best place to get it.” (P2)

Visa policies, and residency laws allowing for extended stays and travel throughout Europe and Schengen-area nations, is not surprising given the investments made in the area to support internationalization, entrepreneurship, and startups. This is also in line with the significance of transportation and infrastructure, particularly the local airport (and its associated inexpensive flights and various connections, including an easy connection into the city). It is also valued that locals are fluent in English and that Porto has reliable healthcare systems. The following quote outlines some of the aspects that make Porto more appealing to digital nomads than other European locations:

“The main reason is that Portugal has a visa for people like me (...). That's why there are so many nomads here because no European country provides the same visa type as Portugal, simply because the requirements are lower. So, for example, with this visa, to qualify for the visa that I have, you have to have a job with a contract, earn maybe €800 per month minimum, and have an apartment (...) Those are only the qualifications you need to get a visa here. So, I've started my one year; then I renew, maybe two years and two years, and I can become a citizen, right? So, there are so many nomads here because the requirements are just salary and accommodation, but if you go somewhere like Spain, the visa is an investment visa. So, you'll need €1,000,000 to buy a house, and in places like France, Germany and Italy, they have visas, but they are very traditional types of visas too. You have to fill a skills gap often in countries like this. Things like English teacher are not on the list, so I never went near those countries, and when I worked in crypto, I needed

a visa to stay in a country for a long time (...) Portugal is the only country in Europe that allows you to do that. In Europe, so luckily, I mean Portugal is a godsend. The weather is perfect. The people are lovely. It's a great place to live, and they have a visa, which is why there are so many digital nomads.” (P2)

4.6. Which Porto Brand Attributes

"Porto Brand" concerns recollections of campaigns or other sources of information (from friends, acquaintances, etc.) about Porto, as well as images the participants have spontaneously about Porto.

Table 16 specifies the categories and the respective number of units of analysis by descending order.

		Sources	References
05_ WHICH PORTO BRAND ATTRIBUTES?		24	90 (100%)
Images of Porto	Architecture, views	17	22 (24%)
	Relaxing and welcoming atmosphere	11	14 (16%)
	Affordable food and good places to eat	5	6 (7%)
	Beach and surf	5	6 (7%)
	Tourist and international destination	5	5 (6%)
	Opportunities: a lot to offer and see	4	4 (4%)
	Sun and rain	3	3 (3%)
Information about Porto	No previous information	12	17 (19%)
	Marketing campaigns, social media, and articles	12	13 (14%)

Table 16. “Which Porto brand attributes?” category

The subcategory - “Images of Porto” - encompasses spontaneous images/feelings/perceptions about Porto. The most spontaneous image mentioned by the participants (n=17) was the architecture of Porto and the views of the city: *“I think of an image of the beautiful orange roofs, the churches (...) and the bridge...”* (P7). Underlined by 11 participants, with a referral percentage of 15%, there is also the perception *that “...it's a small city with just a chill vibe. A place that you want to come to and just relax.”* (P5). Other perceptions about Porto were also reinforced by five participants, which include (i) good places to eat affordable food; (ii) the existence of beaches and the possibility of surfing and (iii) being an international and tourist destination. With less emphasis, some DNs have the perception that Porto is a place with many opportunities (a lot to offer and see) and, although it is rainy at certain times of the year, it is also sunny at other times.

Finally, in the subcategory - “Information about Porto” - half of the digital nomads (n=12) said they had not seen any marketing campaign, initiative, or publication about Porto, before they came. However, the other half of the participants saw information promoting Porto before relocating. As P23 illustrates: *"Nomads, often, when we're considering a city, we're usually considering three, four or five (...) and one of the ways we decide, which it's pretty common, is to follow that city's most popular tourism account for a few weeks and see which city has the best stuff. Tourism office that has a good Instagram is quite an asset. It gives you a preview of whether or not it's going to be maybe a good fit for what you're looking for."*

4.7. How is Porto?

The table 17 outlines the "How is Porto?" category, which includes all descriptors, metaphors, and images related to the participants' stay in Porto.

		<i>Sources</i>	<i>References</i>
06_HOW IS PORTO?		24	377 (100%)
A place of Opportunities & Pros	Lifestyle	24	139 (37%)
	Transports and local infrastructures	18	45 (12%)
	Location, mid-size city	15	36 (10%)
	Special Visa	14	32 (8%)
	Adventure and Freedom	11	17 (5%)
	English	5	7 (2%)
	Serendipity	5	5 (1%)
	Healthcare systems	2	2 (1%)
A place of Challenges & Cons	Lifestyle	19	36 (10%)
	Accommodation	15	24 (6%)
	Mobility	8	18 (5%)
	Bureaucracies	8	11 (3%)
	Language	4	5 (1%)

Table 17. “How is Porto?” category

The subcategory - “A Place of Opportunities & Pros” – concerns all the positive aspects of being a DN in Porto. It is the same as the "Why Porto?" category, since the opportunities and pros of Porto are the reasons why participants chose Porto, with lifestyle, once again, being the pro that everyone mentioned, with a referral percentage of 33%. The following quotes sum up some of the reasons for Porto’s attractiveness among digital nomads:

“Porto really has this authenticity (...) it is really a family mood, and we feel at home here (...) the authenticity of the town, but also of the people.” (P9)

“Porto seems like the obvious choice for digital nomads, a culturally interesting place...” (P16)

On the other hand, in the subcategory - “A Place of Challenges & Cons” – the lifestyle, despite being a pro, is also a con, as P21 mentioned: *“I didn't know before going that Porto was raining a lot. Otherwise, maybe I wouldn't go to Porto...”*. P2 also referred that there is *“...a problem of starting from scratch because when you make friends you have to meet so many people before you meet one that you want to keep in your group.”*, and P5 noted: *“...another con is the assimilation. I know Portuguese people are quite kind (...) and they're quite friendly (...), but I've been here for so long and I haven't really made friends with, or even acquaintances, with any Portuguese people.”*

Furthermore, more than half of the interviewees (n=15) complained about accommodation, due to poor quality for the price charged, humidity and lack of isolation, as P21 referred: *“The things I didn't like was the noise isolation. I know it's really weird, but I was in an Airbnb, and you could hear everything I was saying, and I didn't like it. And the cold, the cold in the rooms and sometimes very humid, so you feel cold. I remember having nights where I could not sleep properly because it was too cold in my room and there was no heating, not very good heating. So, that was really a drawback...”*. The difficulty in finding accommodation was also mentioned, as well as scams on the platforms where they look for accommodation (e.g., Airbnb).

It is also a con the contracts requiring advance payments, since DNs do not always know how long they will be staying. Some participants also complained about mobility, which includes (i) buses being unreliable, (ii) being difficult to drive by car and (iii) the local airport not having direct flights to some destinations where DNs want to go to, and *“...that is a key drawback...”* (P22).

4.8. Which Recommendations?

Table 18 summarises participants' views and recommendations to others about becoming a DN (in general) and to DNs to relocate to Porto.

		Sources	References
07_RECOMMENDATIONS		24	137 (100%)
To become a DN	Personal Requirements	23	41 (30%)
	Lifestyle Requirements	16	23 (17%)
	Job Requirements	14	17 (12%)
	Financial Requirements	4	4 (3%)
For DNs to relocate to Porto	A place to visit/live: Living costs, safety, location and climate	21	34 (25%)

	<i>Sources</i>	<i>References</i>
Convenient, relaxed atmosphere	10	11 (8%)
Mobility and Infrastructures	6	7 (5%)

Table 18. "Recommendations" category

In the subcategory of recommendations made by the participants - "To become a DN" - the most weight is given to personal requirements, with a referral percentage of 28%. The quotes that follow demonstrate that being a digital nomad is not for everyone:

"Not to everyone. I think over the years I've realized that some people aren't as risky; they won't take as many risks as me, my wife and my family" (P19)

"As a nomad, you have to be the kind of person that's pretty self-disciplined. (...) If you're a nomad, you're living a very unconventional lifestyle and, at times, a challenging one by choice. And so, the people that do it tend to have much conviction. They know what they're doing, right? They have a strong sense of why they're doing it, what they're going to do, that kind of thing. So, I would say, it's not the kind of thing to try if you're going get into, I would say if you're going to do it, it's not for everybody" (P22)

It was also mentioned to pursue a minimalist lifestyle (i.e., "travel light"), to have a well-paid job, and to have savings to cover travel expenses as well as other nomadic costs, such as rent, moving, living expenses, reliable telecommunications, and transportation. As a participant recommended:

"You've got to have some safety net. I can do this because if it all went terribly, I have a family I could go to back home. (...) I think that explains the demographic you get, who can do it. So, that financial security, safety net, the flexibility, the mobility being footloose, I think are the main things" (P11)

Regarding the subcategory of recommendations - "For DNs to relocate to Porto"- most participants recommend it as a place to live or visit (n=21). They recognize that *"Porto would be a good place (...) because it's safe, it's not expensive. If you're looking for food, weather, people, it's a good place, absolutely."* (P9). They also consider that it is a place with a relaxed atmosphere and that they can walk around, despite having steep sidewalks, or easily take transport to other places. Respondents also mentioned that they would recommend Porto to family or friends for the same reasons.

Nevertheless, some participants made cautionary remarks highlighting the necessity of balancing the city's attractiveness for sustained growth, as P17 noted: *Porto checks all the obvious boxes, but the only reason why we are not 100% sure about Porto is because every digital nomad is here. We think about "do we want to add to the problem?" If it is a problem and, also, we leave our country, so that we can get to know a culture, but then when you have a big group of foreigners in a city who are doing*

their own thing, that would affect local culture, and then do we want to be a part of that?” and P14 reinforced: “If you are looking to start something, if you're looking for capital, if you're looking for a network, if you're looking for something more happening and business and more driven and more infrastructure, I don't think Porto would be my first, I'd say Lisbon (...) When you're young, you can take risks. You want to be hungry for things. Porto is more of a laid-back chill vibe. It has a chill vibe. It doesn't have much growth, in my opinion. I could be wrong. So, it depends on what you want. Not be right for everybody.”.

4.9. Other Analyses

In attempting to explore how certain experiences and themes could relate with the sociodemographic characteristics of DNs, several matrix queries were run with the aid of NVivo software. The most meaningful associations were found in (i) reasons for choosing digital nomadism among participants who are on their first move as a DN and those who have already made more than one move as a DN; (ii) assessment of Porto among participants who considered obtaining residency in Porto and those who did not consider obtaining residency in Porto and, finally, (iii) participants' recommendations by gender. Annex 4 – Other analyses contains more detailed information about these analyses.

5. Discussion

In the context of international business, this research explored our existing knowledge of the digital nomads in Porto. In-depth interviews to 24 digital nomads from multiple origins generated insights about the general and Porto-specific drivers that determined their decisions. One contribution of the present study is to present a framework of the influencing factors, also informing about the identity of these foreign-born workers.

5.1. Who are the digital nomads currently settling in Porto?

The results corroborate earlier findings (e.g., Cook, 2020; Hannonen, 2020; Mancinelli, 2020) about digital nomads who relocate to other places, travel, and work remotely from anywhere, with the use of digital technologies (Hannonen, 2020). Digital nomads chose to pursue digital nomadism mainly because of the lifestyle it provides, namely getting to know cultures (Schlagwein, 2018), being in places with pleasant architecture (Lee et al., 2019), good infrastructure, and Wi-Fi (Hannonen, 2020; Mancinelli, 2020; Nash et al., 2021). In addition to lifestyle, adventure and freedom were frequently mentioned, as well as other more mundane factors, such as the (i) visa requirements (Mancinelli, 2020), (ii) passport, (iii) tax regime, as well as (iv) the local supply of accommodation.

Digital nomads identify themselves as people who have a plan of what they want to do (Cook, 2020), embrace change, travel, live abroad and experience other cultures. They value freedom, flexibility and balance between work and life (Aroles, 2020). They are individuals who work online and anywhere (Hannonen, 2020), which requires changing their work format or job to be able to work remotely. Furthermore, they often intend on creating something of their own (Cook, 2020) or doing something different from others.

In terms of **personal self**, it is worth mentioning that DNs place great emphasis on planning and structuring their decisions. They are individuals who value self-discipline, productivity, and work-life balance (Cook, 2020; Lee et al., 2019; Nash et al., 2020). In general, digital nomads also recommend preparation, including clear goals and mental resilience. With an adventurous spirit, digital nomads enjoy meeting new cultures (Schlagwein, 2018) and engaging with like-minded people. Self-fulfilment and freedom of choice are also very appreciated by these individuals (Hannonen, 2020; Thompson, 2018).

Regarding the **occupational self**, digital nomads mainly mentioned working online and from anywhere. However, they placed more emphasis on not only working online, but

also switching to a job that allows them to work remotely and create something by themselves. These findings corroborate the literature by evoking the dimension of working with digital technologies aligned with mobility (Hannonen, 2020) which permit a flexible life to achieve DN's work outcomes (Reichenberger, 2018).

Finally, about the **family self**, both new and experienced digital nomads considered that creating a family is a preponderant choice in the decision of continuing or not to be a digital nomad. One of the most mentioned considerations to stop being a digital nomad is having children. Participants mentioned only once that having a family was part of their preparation to become a digital nomad. When analysing these data, it seems that there is a negative relationship between wanting to create a family and being a digital nomad. According to the literature, one of the things that moves them is freedom and taking risks (Mancinelli, 2020a) and with children this lifestyle can be more difficult to pursue. However, references to the family self of DNs is still lacking in the literature. It is dynamic, complex and contributes to the richness of the construct and the impact it has on the future decisions of digital nomads.

In summary, the digital nomad phenomenon proves to be built around diverse components such as experiences, transitions to become DNs and, above all, the identity, and drivers of these individuals. Furthermore, career concerns and achievements were almost absent in the discourse of the digital nomads in Porto. The findings about DNs in Porto resorted to three fundamental components: **the personal self** - which corresponds to how they see themselves at a personal level in terms of values, aspirations, plans and drivers to pursue digital nomadism, **the occupational self** - which includes remote work anywhere, creating something for themselves and having a job that allows them to be a digital nomad, **and family self** - which concerns having/wanting (or not) to have a family. These three dimensions are interdependent and volatile as they are likely to evolve along the life span.

5.2. Why do they relocate to work and live in Porto?

The findings reveal that other forms of international experiences, such as being an international student or migrant, can influence the decision to pursue digital nomadism and the preference for certain locations. In some cases, the previous experience of working on-site, as an immigrant, at a destination, and then have the opportunity to start working remotely contribute to motivate the individuals to travel while working (Hannonen, 2020).

It requires a sense of adventure, a minimalist lifestyle, financial means, and the capacity to overcome challenges to cope with the “uncertainty” of relocating to different places.

The findings also highlight the general drivers versus Porto-specific drivers for digital nomadism. The decision to go live and work abroad is due to several influencing factors (e.g., Orel, 2019; Reichenberger, 2018; Schlagwein, 2018), such as a desire for freedom and personal growth, the opportunity to experience different cultures, to meet other people and to find the ideal coworking space; and Porto specific drivers. These are associated with Porto's branding, namely a combination of the city's brand values, such as a relaxed, authentic, historic, welcoming and lively destination, with the place itself. These include location, safety, healthcare systems, culture, cost of living, size of the city, the possibility of having a passport and easier access to the EU, the local transport and walkability (to move around town and out of town) that act as powerful incentives to live and work in Porto. Porto airport is also highly valued by these individuals, due to its proximity to the city centre, connection to local transport, flight availability, and its convenience.

6. Conclusion

Porto, one of the largest cities in Portugal, is becoming a popular place for digital nomads. This study, by looking into this lifestyle and work trend in Porto, not only contributes to the understanding of the phenomenon, but also conveys valuable insights to policy makers, networking event organisers, service providers and local businesses to support and attract the DNs community to Porto.

In the following subsections, the limitations, the suggestions for future research and the theoretical and the practical contributions of the study will be presented.

6.1. Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

While the research findings are informative and advance our understanding of digital nomads in Porto, some limitations should be noted. Firstly, the results are limited to the sample size and composition. While the 24 participants were from different origins, they were all highly educated and from privileged high-status occupations. Research comparing how digital nomads from similar and diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds experience the phenomenon in other locations, in Europe and elsewhere, is required. Another limitation refers to the local origin of the interviewer, which might have limited the access to some other digital nomads less privileged and qualified, including the collection and interpretation of data. However, given the extension of the interviews and the procedure of data analysis aiming to ascertain the internal consistency and validity of the findings, this is a minor concern in this study. Women were less represented in the sample, which is common among the ranks of digital nomads (Cook, 2020), so we need further research to examine the specific barriers affecting women itinerancy. In addition, given the limited scope of this study, future research may further discuss the adaptation and integration issues these workers face, including how they 'fit in' and 'out', giving their temporary and short stays abroad.

There are other aspects that also deserve further investigation, such as the weighting of the family self that is still very unsubstantiated and deserves further exploration. Moreover, some digital nomads have expressed a desire to acquire permanent residency in Porto. Thus, it becomes imperative to ascertain whether, upon obtaining residency, they undergo a transformation from digital nomads to migrants or align themselves with a distinct category of international workers (Hannonen, 2020). There is a gap in the literature and the

phenomenon seems to defy categorization within pre-established typologies of international workers, so future research efforts in this domain would be very relevant.

6.2. Theoretical Contributions

Regardless of the paths that may open, this study alone provides several relevant contributions. In theoretical terms, the present study contributes to the exploration of the construct of digital nomads in Porto, providing empirical evidence of the phenomenon, confirming, and extending the existing literature, and distinguishing it in the context of research on international mobility. Furthermore, this exploratory study examined the lived experiences of digital nomads, focusing on the factors influencing digital nomadism and the motivations for selecting Porto as a destination, drawing on the global mobility literature and city branding framework.

This study highlights the importance of the personal, occupational, and family self-dimensions, which shape individuals' choice of location. The findings reflect the traditional profile of a digital nomad: predominantly men who actively pursue location-independent work (Hannonen, 2020). They are highly skilled and educated, from diverse national origins and occupations, travelling for adventure and freedom, and can afford to sustain a cosmopolitan and stylish way of life. The dimension of occupational self reveals the alignment of working remotely with mobility, allowing digital nomads to achieve their work goals. One of the findings is that career concerns and achievements were almost absent in the discourse of the digital nomads in Porto. Unlike other digital nomads (Cook, 2020) and international workers (Dickmann et al., 2018), a career is not a major drive but a necessary precondition for a nomadic lifestyle. Furthermore, the study sheds light on the trade-offs and complexity of the relationship between the decision to have a family and digital nomadism. It seems that creating a family is a significant decision in reconsidering whether or not to continue being a digital nomad.

Regarding the factors influencing digital nomadism, an earlier international experience, such as an international student or international assignments, can drive individuals' interest in digital nomadism, including selecting a specific location. Sometimes, it happens by chance and individual drivers are paramount in such an event. It is starting by having a flexible job that can be performed digitally and from a distance and across different time zones, to having the curiosity and “stamina” to face the challenges of meeting diverse cultures, locations and people. Secondly, the findings also illustrate different contractual

arrangements (Aroles et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2018), varying from a permanent contract to freelancing and entrepreneurship. Although digital nomads also activate an individualistic discourse centred on personal and psychological agency (Pinto et al., 2023; Kumpikaitė-Valiūnienė et al., 2021), they resort to a high-paying job and private financial resources to ground their mobility decisions. Findings suggest that digital nomadism and its inherent lifestyle are more an outcome of a self-centred educational and career path than an instrument for career success. These distinguish them from other global workers whose career motives are paramount (Doherty et al., 2011).

Finally, the data revealed the drivers for selecting Porto as a destination. Apart from the personal and locational factors influencing digital nomadism, the findings also indicated new motives associated with Porto's city branding. Porto reflected a mix of love for the city brand values (e.g., historic, lively, authentic, open, easy-going) and the place itself, with its location within the EU, the appropriate visa programs, the closeness of the Porto airport as well as the convenient and affordable transportation. The research emphasizes the attractiveness of Porto's lifestyle, which is defined by work-life balance, safety, a lively atmosphere, with friendly locals, and appealing architecture. The study also reveals neglected aspects, such as size of Porto, its location, the passport accessibility, and ease of access to the EU, which act as drivers for digital nomads to choose Porto.

6.3. Managerial Contributions

Understanding the factors and characteristics that attract digital nomads to Porto can help marketing strategists to promote and improve Porto's marketing and branding. Marketing organisations can enhance city characteristics such as lifestyle by tailoring messages, creating brand awareness, and promotional efforts to attract digital nomads, which can help boost the economy and stimulate tourism.

Furthermore, the research study contributes with insights for urban planners and policymakers regarding the requirements for infrastructure development, such as coworking spaces, and to make informed decisions about the development of spaces with digital infrastructure, local transport and accommodation options that meet the needs of these individuals. Digital nomads are usually qualified people, with a high level of education and expertise in various fields, who may want to find opportunities to meet people, collaborate and even start a business while they are in Porto. Realising their occupational self can help local entrepreneurs and business communities to collaborate or invest. Moreover, it can

stimulate the development of supportive ecosystems, such as networking events or startup incubators, which facilitate digital nomads' interactions with each other, as well as with local people and businesses. Another managerial contribution relates to insights for policy, law and regulation makers about the needs and challenges of digital nomads in terms of visas, taxes and accommodation laws, and safety. Promoting a welcoming environment, community integration of digital nomads and cohesion. As digital nomads are temporarily in Porto, they often feel lonely and their integration into the local community can have social and cultural implications. In this way, the study can provide insights for local communities and digital nomads themselves to understand each other's needs, increase inclusiveness and promote interaction between individuals, to create a more vibrant and open environment for Porto to thrive.

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Annexes

Annex 1 – Examples of visas available to foreign citizens

<i>Source</i>	<i>Temporary Stay Visa</i>	
<i>Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2023)</i>	The purpose of the <i>Temporary Stay Visa</i> is to permit entrance for stays in Portugal that last no longer than a year . It is valid during the time of the stay and for various entrances into the country.	
	Who needs a visa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any citizens of third countries who want to stay in Portugal for periods longer than 90 days must get a long-term visa.
	Who does not need a visa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nationals of Member States of the European Union; parties to the European Economic Area; third parties with which the European Community has concluded an agreement for free movement of people; or members of the families of Portuguese citizens or the foreign nationals already mentioned.
	Where to apply for a visa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To apply for a visa, digital nomads must consult the Portuguese Consular Post of the nation where they must apply for a long-term visa in line with their nationality and/or residence, if it differs from their nationality. On the portal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs they can consult the appropriate Portuguese Consular Post.
	Documentation needed to apply for a visa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fill out and sign a form, a requirement of consent for SEF to analyse criminal records and a Term of Responsibility (this documentation is available at the portal); ▪ A passport or other travel documentation that is still valid three months after the intended stay; ▪ photocopy of the biographical information; ▪ Two equal pass-style photographs that identify the applicant, both recent, and in good quality; ▪ A transport ticket with return guarantee; ▪ If the applicant is from a different nationality than the country where he is applying for a visa, the applicant must provide evidence of regular status; ▪ A valid travel insurance that will pay for medical costs, including urgent medical care and potential repatriation;

<i>Source</i>	<i>Temporary Stay Visa</i>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A certificate of criminal record from the applicant's country of origin/ from the nation where he has resided for longer than a year, legalized or with the Hague Apostille (if necessary); ▪ Evidence of the availability of means of subsistence as determined by directive from the Government's competent members; ▪ A term of responsibility signed by an eligible foreigner, or a national citizen can also be shown along with a document showing residency in Portugal to demonstrate ownership of the necessary means of subsistence. ▪ If the applicant is in subordinate job circumstances, must have an employment contract or a statement from the employer evidencing the work relation or a promise of a contract of employment; ▪ If the applicant is engaging in independent professional work, must have a contract with the company or a contract for services or a document that shows the services that were provided to one or more entities or a contract for services provision that is proposed in writing; ▪ A record of the last three months' average monthly remuneration from subordinate or independent professional work, which must be at least equal to four guaranteed minimum monthly remuneration; ▪ Documentation of applicant's tax residency.
	Family reunification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Family reunification with relatives outside the country is allowed for foreign nationals with appropriate residency permits. The foreign citizen who is eligible for the right has to go to the Foreigners and Borders Service to ask for the deferment of the family reunification to favour of their relatives and then go to a Consular Post to ask for a residence visa due to reasons of family reunification. The members of the family will be qualified to apply for a residence visa if the foreign citizen is informed of the favourable decision.
	Deadlines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The request must be made within 30 days.
	Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The administrative process for a national visa application is €75. ▪ Under the terms of family reunification, applicants for visas provided to descendants of people with Residence Permits are exempt.

Table 19. Temporary Stay Visa

<i>Source</i>	<i>Visa required to apply for the Residence Permit</i>	
<i>Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2023)</i>	The visa required to apply for the <i>Residence Permit</i> is valid for two entries and for four months, during which period the holder must apply a Resident Permit to the Foreigners and Borders Service.	
	Who needs a visa	Any citizens of third countries who want to stay in Portugal for periods longer than 90 days must get a long-term visa .
	Who does not need a visa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nationals of Member States of the European Union; parties to the European Economic Area; third parties with which the European Community has concluded an agreement for free movement of people; or members of the families of Portuguese citizens or the foreign nationals already mentioned.
	Where to apply for a visa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To apply for a visa, digital nomads must consult the Portuguese Consular Post of the nation where they must apply for a long-term visa in line with their nationality and/or residence, if it differs from their nationality. On the portal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs they can consult the appropriate Portuguese Consular Post.
	Documentation needed to apply for a visa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fill out and sign a form, a requirement of consent for SEF to analyse criminal records and a Term of Responsibility (this documentation is available at the portal); ▪ A passport or other travel documentation that is still valid three months after the intended stay; photocopy of the biographical information; ▪ Two equal pass-style photographs that identify the applicant, both recent, and in good quality; ▪ If the applicant is from a different nationality than the country where he is applying for a visa that is valid for more than three months after his intended date of return, the applicant must provide evidence of regular status; ▪ A valid travel insurance that will pay for medical costs, including urgent medical care and potential repatriation (the requirement may be dispensed, if Portugal and the country of origin have a Bilateral or International Agreement addressing medical assistance, that makes some beneficiaries eligible with appropriate insurance, such as in the cases of United Kingdom (S1) and Brazil (PB4)); ▪ Evidence of the availability of means of subsistence as determined by directive from the Government's competent members; ▪ A certificate of criminal record from the applicant's country of origin/ from the nation where he has resided for longer than a year, legalized or with the Hague Apostille (if necessary);

<i>Source</i>	<i>Visa required to apply for the Residence Permit</i>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If the applicant is in subordinate job circumstances, must have an employment contract or a statement from the employer evidencing the work relation; ▪ If the applicant is engaging in independent professional work, must have a contract with the company or a contract for services or a document that shows the services that were provided to one or more entities. ▪ A record of the last three months' average monthly remuneration from subordinate or independent professional work, which must be at least equal to four guaranteed minimum monthly remuneration; ▪ Documentation of applicant's tax residency.
	Family reunification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Family reunification with relatives outside the country is allowed for foreign nationals with appropriate residency permits. The foreign citizen who is eligible for the right has to go to the Foreigners and Borders Service to ask for the deferment of the family reunification to favour of their relatives and then go to a consular post to ask for a residence visa due to reasons of family reunification. The members of the family will be qualified to apply for a residence visa if the foreign citizen is informed of the favourable decision.
	Deadlines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With the exclusions allowed by law, the resident visa application must be made within 60 days.
	Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The administrative process for a national visa application is €90 for a Residence Visa. ▪ Under the terms of family reunification, applicants for visas provided to descendants of people with Residence Permits are exempt.

Table 20. Visa required to apply for the Residence Permit

Source	<i>Visa application process for citizens of countries with Exceptional Regimes</i>	
<i>Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2023)</i>	<p>The Mobility Agreement between the Member States of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP Agreement), which was signed in Luanda on July 17, 2021, regulates the visa application process for citizens of those countries</p> <p>Documentation needed to apply for a visa</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fill out and sign a form, a requirement of consent for SEF to analyse criminal records and a Term of Responsibility (this documentation is available at the portal); ▪ A passport or other travel documentation that is still valid three months after the intended stay; photocopy of the biographical information; ▪ Two equal pass-style photographs that identify the applicant, both recent, and in good quality; ▪ If the applicant is from a different nationality than the country where he is applying for a visa, the applicant must provide evidence of regular status; ▪ A certificate of criminal record from the applicant's country of origin/ from the nation where he has resided for longer than a year, legalized or with the Hague Apostille (if necessary); ▪ If the applicant is in subordinate job circumstances, must have an employment contract or a statement from the employer evidencing the work relation; ▪ If the applicant is engaging in independent professional work, must have a contract with the company or a contract for services or a document that shows the services that were provided to one or more entities or a contract for services provision that is proposed in writing; ▪ A record of the last three months' average monthly remuneration from subordinate or independent professional work, which must be at least equal to four guaranteed minimum monthly remuneration; ▪ Documentation of applicant's tax residency; ▪ A valid travel insurance that will pay for medical costs, including urgent medical care and potential repatriation; evidence of the availability of means of subsistence as determined by directive from the Government's competent members and a return transport ticket, unless when a residence visa is required, can be exempt if the applicant presents one of the following: ▪ Term of responsibility with acknowledged signature, signed by the host organisation for interns or employees, as well as by the entity in charge of volunteer work or student exchange programs;

<i>Source</i>	<i>Visa application process for citizens of countries with Exceptional Regimes</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A term of responsibility with a verified signature, signed by a qualified foreign or a Portuguese citizen, along with proof of residence in Portugal, that assures the visa applicant, accommodation, food and payment for the costs of removal in the event of an irregular stay. ▪ The person signing the term of responsibility may be required to provide evidence of their financial stability.

Table 21. Visa for citizens of countries with Exceptional Regimes

<i>Source</i>	<i>Schengen Visa</i>
<i>Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2023)</i>	<p>There is also another type of visa. A Schengen Visa is an authorization for a short stay in the territory of one or more Member States and is authorized by a Member State, which enables the holder to present himself at the external border (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023). A short-stay visa only allows its holder to appear at a border post and request entry into the nation. It does not automatically grant the permission to enter the Schengen space (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023). The countries that belong to the Schengen area are: Austria, Germany, Belgium, Czechia, Croatia, Denmark, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Sweden and Switzerland (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023).</p>
	<p>Who needs a visa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, people applying for a visa, under these circumstances, can consult: ▪ List of nations not requiring a Schengen visa; ▪ List of nationalities requiring a Schengen visa; ▪ Exceptions made to the exemption or requirement for a visa; ▪ Information about nationalities subject to previous consultation; ▪ List of nations with which the European Union has signed Visa Facilitation Agreements.
	<p>Where to apply for a visa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the applicant can verify the Portuguese Consular Post of the nation where he has to apply for a short-term Schengen visa, in accordance with his nationality or place of residence, if it differs from the nationality. ▪ An application for a uniform visa for short-stay reasons, is reviewed and decided by the Member State qualified, which is: ▪ The Member State whose territory serves as the only destination of the visit(s);

<i>Source</i>	<i>Schengen Visa</i>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Member State for whom the land is the principal destination of the visit(s) in regard to the duration of stay, counting in days, or objective of stay, if the visit involves more than one destination or if it is planned to conduct several separate visits during a period of two months; ▪ The Member State which borders the applicant plans to enter initially, if the principal destination cannot be identified. ▪ If transit, it has to be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The same Member State, when is transit from one Member State; ▪ The Member State of the external border, if the applicant plans crossing to start transit in the case of various Member States.
	Biometry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With the implementation of the VIS (Visa Information System), the biometric information must be gathered at the moment of the delivery of the visa application, if it is recognized admissible. ▪ The first visa application must include the gathered data, and the applicant must physically appear. ▪ The International Civil Aviation Organization's regulations and the Commission's Directive 2006/648/EC of September 22, 2006, must be followed when implementing this system. ▪ If there are no temporary or permanent disabilities, the gathered data involves collecting 10 fingerprints and a picture using the equipment of the adequate Consular Post. ▪ If biometric information was previously gathered, less than 59 months ago, in relation with a previous visa application, the data may be replicated without the requirement for a new collection.
	Documentation needed to apply for a visa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A properly filled out and signed form; ▪ A pass type photography; ▪ A travel document that is still valid three months after the intended departure date, a photocopy of the passport and any prior visas; ▪ If the applicant is not a citizen of the nation where he is applying for the visa, needs documentation of his legal status; ▪ Booking a round-trip ticket for transport; ▪ Travel medical insurance. If a multiple-entry visa is authorised, the applicant must submit a signed and dated declaration certifying that he/she knows that each following trip requires him/her to have valid travel medical insurance;

<i>Source</i>	<i>Schengen Visa</i>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Economic and labour circumstances: confirmation of the employer and the salary obtained and presentation of the latest three bank statements (evidence of means of subsistence) that confirm the period of the stay and return; ▪ Economic and labour conditions: presentation of the latest three bank statements (evidence of means of sustenance) that confirm the length of the stay and return; confirmation of the employer and the salary obtained; ▪ Reservation for a hotel (if necessary) or renunciation of responsibility; ▪ If a family member is providing the accommodation, documentation of kinship and the terms of the accommodation may be required. If the period of responsibility's signing is not Portuguese, he/she needs to show documentation proving his/her legal status in the Portuguese territory; or on business travels, an invitation will be required outlining the itinerary's purpose, the arrival and departure dates, the identification of the organisation hosting the event, and the name of the person who made the invitation; or in the scenario of transit, an entry visa may be needed for the country of ultimate destination. ▪ The applicant should look at the lists of documents selected in order to prevent forgetting any paperwork when completing the application instructions if he/she submits the visa application in a nation where a harmonised table has been authorised, along with general and special documentation. The harmonised tables of documents are available on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website.
	Deadlines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In general, requests should be made up to 15 calendar days before the scheduled visit but may be requested up to six months in advance. In the context of their responsibilities, seafarers have up to nine months before the intended visit to submit their application. Applications may be approved with less than 15 calendar days before the planned start date in particular cases, with rigorous justification. It might be necessary for applicants to make an appointment, so they can submit the application. The consulate might approve a waiver of this requirement or grant the interview instantly in circumstances of urgency, but in general, it must be completed within two weeks of the day on which it was ordered. ▪ Member States can ask their central authorities for advice when examining short-stay visa applications submitted by citizens of specific third countries or particular groups of people. In certain situations, the evaluation and decision-making process for the request will take additional seven days.

<i>Source</i>	<i>Schengen Visa</i>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A decision is made regarding the application between 15 calendar days on the date of an accepted application that was submitted. A maximum of 45 calendar days may be added in specific circumstances, especially if the application needs to be evaluated further.
	Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The standard rate is currently €80. After the appropriate amount has been paid, the visa application is regarded as being acceptable.

Table 22. Schengen Visa

Annex 2 – Interview guide

<i>Parts of the interview</i>	<i>Research Question</i>	<i>Subsidiary Research Question</i>	<i>Themes/ Topics</i>	<i>Questions to Participants</i>
Start of the interview			Introduce myself (interviewer)	
			Introduce the research study	
			Indicate the duration of the interview	
			Permissions	<p>All the information you give in the interview will be kept confidential. In these terms, do you agree to participate in this research?</p> <p>May I record the interview?</p> <p>Do you want me to share the transcripts with you in case you want to add/correct something or approve?</p> <p>May I quote you anonymously?</p>

<i>Parts of the interview</i>	<i>Research Question</i>	<i>Subsidiary Research Question</i>	<i>Themes/ Topics</i>	<i>Questions to Participants</i>
				I kindly remind you that your participation is totally voluntary. If you do not want to answer any question you can decline to answer and/or finish the interview at any time.
Interview development	Who are the digital nomads currently settling in Porto?	What are the demographic characteristics of digital nomads settling in Porto?	Demographics	<p>To characterize the sample in the research study, can I ask you some demographic/personal questions first?</p> <p>How old are you?</p> <p>Where were you born?</p> <p>What is your gender?</p> <p>Are you traveling alone or with someone else?</p> <p>Where is your family? (Implies they will speak about partner, parents and so forth)</p>

<i>Parts of the interview</i>	<i>Research Question</i>	<i>Subsidiary Research Question</i>	<i>Themes/ Topics</i>	<i>Questions to Participants</i>
		How digital nomads see themselves?	Identity	<p>What do you do for a living? What is your present occupation?</p> <p>How do you see yourself? As a digital nomad? (silence) Why? What's your route? Could you please elaborate on your career-life path?</p> <p>When was your first “international” move? Do you remember? Why have you moved then? And after that?</p>
	Why do digital nomads relocate to live and work in Porto?	What are the drivers for digital nomads settling in Porto?	Drivers for DNs	<p>When did you become a “real” digital nomad? Why?</p> <p>Do you relocate regularly? How often? Why?</p> <p>Do you want to stop being a digital nomad, anytime in the future? Why?</p> <p>If you want to start a family, will you continue to be a digital nomad? Why?</p>
Nation’s brand			What makes a destination appealing to you? What is important for you? (in the destination)?	
Drivers for DNs in Porto			<p>When have you heard about Porto? When was your first move to Porto?</p> <p>Who/what influenced that first step?</p>	

<i>Parts of the interview</i>	<i>Research Question</i>	<i>Subsidiary Research Question</i>	<i>Themes/ Topics</i>	<i>Questions to Participants</i>
	Why do digital nomads relocate to live and work in Porto?			<p>And now, why did you choose Porto to live and work?</p> <p>How do you see Porto as a mobility place? What are the pros and cons? Could you please elaborate?</p> <p>How long will you be staying?</p> <p>Have you ever considered to become a permanent resident? Why?</p> <p>If you relocated to Porto for the first time, and alone, would you still relocate? ((in case the DN had relocated with someone)</p> <p>What is your next destination? Why?</p>
		What aspects influence the choice of digital nomads to relocate to Porto?	Porto's brand	<p>Do you remember any publication/campaign/initiative - on social media or elsewhere - that shaped your perception of Porto? (silence) What made you feel? Why?</p> <p>What do you think (spontaneously) when you think about Porto? Could you please elaborate?</p>
			Circumstances/ factors that influence decision-making	<p>How did you prepare to be a digital nomad?</p> <p>How did you find out about Porto as a destination for digital nomads?</p>

<i>Parts of the interview</i>	<i>Research Question</i>	<i>Subsidiary Research Question</i>	<i>Themes/ Topics</i>	<i>Questions to Participants</i>
		What difficulties do digital nomads face when living and working in Porto?	Challenges	Do you remember any experience/challenge at the beginning when you came to Porto? (silence) What emotions did you feel? Why? What would make you leave Porto? Why?
		Should more digital nomads think about settling in Porto?	Advice	Do you recommend being a DN to others? In your opinion, what are the requirements for that? Why? Do you recommend Porto to other digital nomads? Why? Would you recommend Porto to a sibling/best friend? Why?
End of the interview				Thank you very much for your time and participation. These were all the questions I had for you. Do you have any questions you want to ask me? May I follow-up with another interview in case it is necessary to clarify some topic? Can you recommend other potential DNs to participate in this research study?

Table 23. Interview guide

Annex 3 – Category system and its operational definition

<i>Category and subcategories</i>	
00_DIGITAL NOMAD EXPERIENCE	
Refers to the descriptions of earlier digital nomad experiences, including answers to the questions: (i) What do you do for a living? What is your present occupation? (ii) When was your first “international” move? Do you remember? Why have you moved then? And after that?	
First Move Refers to the first international move as a digital nomad or other forms.	As a digital nomad Includes registration units referring to participants who were digital nomads in their first international move.
	As an international student Includes registration units referring to participants who were international students in their first international move.
	As a business expatriate Includes registration units referring to participants who were business expatriates in their first international move.
	As a trailing family member or migrant Includes registration units referring to participants who were as trailing family members or migrants in their first international move.
Subsequent Moves Refers to subsequent international moves as a digital nomad or other forms.	As a digital nomad Includes the registration units referring to the following international moves as digital nomads.
	As a business expatriate Includes the registration units referring to the following international moves as business expatriates.
	As a trailing family member or migrant Includes the registration units referring to the following international moves as trailing family members or migrants.
Frequency	Varies from one month to six months

<i>Category and subcategories</i>	
Refers to the usual frequency for a new move.	Includes recording units referring to relocations between one and six months of participants.
	One or more years Includes the recording units referring to participants' relocations of one or more years.
	One to three weeks Includes the recording units referring to participants' relocations of one to three weeks
Next Moves Refers to the next planned move (after Porto).	Moving elsewhere as a DN Includes recording units referring to moves to other locations after Porto.
	Considering staying longer in Porto Includes the registration units referring to considerations for a longer stay in Porto.
Considering Permanent residency Refers to considerations in obtaining permanent residency somewhere.	Porto Refers to registration units on considering being a permanent resident in Porto.
	Portugal Refers to registration units on considering being a permanent resident in Portugal.
	Other places Refers to affirmative responses about having already considered permanent residency somewhere, but not the specific location.
Leave Porto Refers to the reasons that led/would lead to leave Porto.	Lifestyle Includes recording units about leaving/possibly leaving Porto due to the local lifestyle (e.g. disorganized location, rainy and windy weather at certain times of the year, many digital nomads in the city, if the cost of living gets expensive).
	Visa and other bureaucratic requirements Includes recording units on the reasons for leaving Porto due to the visa (regime in force and comparison with other destinations) and other bureaucratic requirements (e.g., taxes, laws, issues with the Foreigners and Borders Service).

<i>Category and subcategories</i>	
	<p>Adventure and freedom Includes recording units about wanting adventure and the freedom to relocate to other locations.</p>
	<p>Family events or heartbreak Includes recording units on wanting to leave Porto if participants need or want to be with their family in their hometown or if they have a heartbreak in Porto (e.g., end of a love relationship).</p>
<p>Visa Considerations Refers to choosing the location based on the visa.</p>	<p>Porto Includes recording units on choosing Porto because of the current visa regime.</p>
	<p>Portugal Includes recording units on choosing Portugal because of the current visa regime.</p>
	<p>In general (in other places) Includes recording units on choosing places (not including Porto and Portugal) based on the visa.</p>
<p>Challenges Refers to the main challenges faced throughout the experience as a digital nomad (e.g., loneliness, energy cost, non-anticipated costs, less control of the day and productivity).</p>	
<i>Category and subcategories</i>	
<p>01_IDENTITY-SEE THEMSELVES First main tree category of analysis, according to the interview guide.</p>	
<p>Personal Self It refers to personal reflections about themselves.</p>	<p>Embrace change, freedom and adventure Includes recording units about participants embracing change, valuing freedom and enjoying adventure.</p>
	<p>Have a plan and be self-disciplined Includes recording units about participants having a plan to achieve their goals and being self-disciplined in their daily lives.</p>
	<p>Belong to communities and want to meet other cultures</p>

<i>Category and subcategories</i>	
	Includes recording units about participants having a need to belong to communities (e.g. digital nomad communities) and getting to know other cultures.
	Minimalist lifestyle Includes recording units about participants seeing themselves as having a minimalist lifestyle (e.g., getting rid of most of their material possessions to travel freely, as they value experiences).
	Considerations in stop being a digital nomad Includes recording units on considerations in stopping being a digital nomad (e.g., stopping forever, at a stage in life, when starting a family or in retirement)
	Entrepreneurial mindset Includes recording units about seeing themselves as having an entrepreneurial mindset and creating something on their own.
Occupational Self It refers to self-reflections about work.	Work online It includes registration units of participants who report that they work remotely, using digital technologies.
	Work anywhere Includes recording units relating to participants having the freedom to work anywhere.
	Switch for a job or work format that allows the DN to work remotely and be updated Includes recording units related to participants having to change jobs that allow them to be digital nomads or change the way they work in order to pursue this lifestyle (e.g., changing face-to-face to remote) and stay up to date (e.g., up to date on freelancing platforms and learning new updates in digital technologies as they emerge).
	Created or intend to create something by themselves Includes recording units for participants who create or intend to create something themselves (e.g., create their own company).

<i>Category and subcategories</i>	
<p>Family Self It refers to self-reflections about wanting to have a family.</p>	<p>Wants to start a family or has already created a family, independently of continuing being or stop being a DN Includes registration units related to participants already having or intending to start a family, regardless of whether they continue to be digital nomads or not.</p>
	<p>If it happens, does not want to continue being a DN Includes registration units of participants who want to stop being digital nomads, whether or not they start a family.</p>
	<p>Does not want to start a family, independently of continue being or stop being a DN Includes registration units related to participants who do not want to start a family, regardless of whether they remain digital nomads or not.</p>
	<p>If it happens, wants to continue being a DN Includes registration units of participants who do not want to stop being digital nomads, whether or not they start a family.</p>

<i>Category and subcategories</i>	
02. Why Digital Nomadism?	
Reasons, views, interpretations for being a "digital nomad" (as someone who is living and working temporarily abroad, while travelling and using digital technologies)	
Individual Drivers Motives related to the participant	Lifestyle Includes recording units of a variety of interrelated aspects, such as (i) local culture, which includes local amenities, individuals, and architecture; (ii) freedom of movement within and to/from the chosen place; (iii) cost of living; (iv) climate; and (v) safety.
	Adventure and Freedom Includes recording units on the need for adventure and freedom.
	Serendipity Includes recording units about participants becoming digital nomads by chance, i.e., randomly.
Local Drivers Motives related to the location	Transports and local infrastructures Includes recording units about the reasons for going to a certain place, given the transportation around the city and out of the city (e.g., metro, bus, uber), as well as infrastructures that allow digital nomads to do their work remotely (e.g., coworking spaces, Wi-Fi).
	Visa and other bureaucratic requirements Includes recording units on reasons for going to a place, given the visa requirements and bureaucratic laws in the place.
	Location, City size, Time Zone Includes recording units on the reasons for choosing a place, given its location (e.g., being in Europe), city size and time zone (e.g., being similar to the customers' location).
	Language Includes recording units about participants choosing a particular location, given the languages the locals can speak (e.g., the locals can speak English).
<i>Category and subcategories</i>	
03 HOW TO...	
Preparations to become a (i) digital nomad and (ii) move to Porto.	
Digital Nomadism	Have a plan and prepare mentally

<i>Category and subcategories</i>	
Refers to the question: “How did you prepare to be a digital nomad?”	Includes recording units on having a plan to start and continue to pursue digital nomadism and mentally preparing yourself for everything that being a digital nomad involves (e.g., being adaptable, flexible, sociable to meet new people and face challenges).
	Follow recommendations from others Includes recording units about receiving/having recommendations from friends, family or other digital nomads about what being a digital nomad requires and places to relocate.
	Research about the place Includes recording units on preparing to be digital nomads, when it comes to researching the places where they intend to go (e.g., ranking of places, living costs, climate, culture, accommodation and visa regime) on various websites, articles or media social.
	Minimalist lifestyle Includes recording units about participants mentioning that they have to follow a minimalist lifestyle, get rid of many material things and be good at packing.
	Serendipity Includes recording units about participants becoming digital nomads by chance (e.g., because of the COVID-19 pandemic, they switched from face-to-face to remote work and took the opportunity to travel while working, without intending to become digital nomads until they did).
	Test the places, visit the places before relocating Includes recording units about testing the location they are considering relocating to before they do (e.g., going on a short-term trip to see if they would like to live there).
	Have financial means Includes recording units on having the financial means to be able to start and continue digital nomadism (e.g., having a job that pays a good salary, having savings or investments).
Porto Refers to the question: “How did you prepare to be a digital nomad in Porto?”	What/ Who(m) influenced Includes recording units on what/ who(m) influenced
	Lifestyle Includes recording units about Porto's culture, cost of living, climate, safety, etc. Location, city size

<i>Category and subcategories</i>		
	participants to relocate to Porto.	Includes recording units about participants moving to Porto due to the location of the city (e.g., being in Europe) and its size (e.g., mid-sized city).
		Adventure and freedom Includes recording units about the participants having moved to Porto in a perspective of adventure and freedom of having the option to choose the destination they want.
		People, word of mouth Includes recording units about friends, co-workers, other digital nomads, partner, spouse, etc. influencing participants to move to Porto.
		Research Includes recording units about the participants moving to Porto due to the research they did about the place.
		Travel, Trip Includes recording units about participants going on a trip to Porto and enjoying it so much that they wanted to come back, but this time to live in Porto.
	When heard Includes recording units about when participants first heard about Porto.	People, word of mouth Includes recording units about participants hearing about Porto for the first time, through family, friends or other digital nomads.
		On a trip or visiting someone Includes recording units about participants having heard about Porto for the first time, on a trip or when they went to visit someone in Porto.
		Research

<i>Category and subcategories</i>		
		Includes recording units about participants hearing about Porto for the first time, on a visa list, through research or online images.
		When moved to Lisbon Includes recording units about participants hearing about Porto for the first time when they were living in Lisbon.
		Does not remember Includes recording units about participants not remembering when they first heard about Porto.
	How long in Porto Includes recording units about the length of stay in Porto.	Months Includes recording units about staying in Porto for a few months.
		Years returning to Porto while relocating to other places Includes recording units about staying in Porto for a year/few years or relocating to other places, but returning to Porto.
		Does not know Includes recording units about not knowing how long they will be in Porto.
		Weeks Includes recording units about staying in Porto for a few weeks.
<i>Category and subcategories</i>		
04_WHY PORTO? All drivers to relocate as a DN in Porto.		
Lifestyle Includes recording units of a variety of interrelated aspects, such as (i) local culture, which includes local amenities, individuals, and architecture; (ii) freedom of movement within and to/from Porto; (iii) cost of living; (iv) climate; and (v) safety.		
Special Visa		

<i>Category and subcategories</i>	
Includes recording units about appealing visas in Portugal.	
Transports and local infrastructures	
Includes recording units about transportation (e.g., metro, bus and local airport) and infrastructure in Porto that allows digital nomads to work remotely (e.g., Wi-Fi, coworking spaces).	
Location, mid-size city, time zone	
Includes recording units on the reasons for choosing a place, given its location (e.g., being in Europe), city size (e.g., mid-sized city) and time zone (e.g., being similar to the customers' location).	
Adventure and Freedom	
Includes recording units about the participants chose Porto in a perspective of adventure and freedom of having the option to choose the destination they want.	
English	
It includes registration units about participants who chose Porto because the inhabitants speak English.	
Serendipity	
Includes recording units about participants choosing Porto by chance (e.g., randomly, by chance).	
Healthcare systems	
Includes recording units about participants choosing Porto because of the quality and access to healthcare systems.	
<i>Category and subcategories</i>	
05_ WHICH PORTO BRAND ATTRIBUTES?	
Refers to (i) spontaneous images about Porto and (ii) recollections of campaigns or other sources of information (from friends, acquaintances, etc.) about Porto.	
Images of Porto Spontaneous images/feelings/perceptions about Porto.	Architecture, views Includes recording units of participants spontaneously thinking about architecture (e.g., red/orange roofs) and views (e.g., <i>Jardim do Morro</i>) of Porto.
	Relaxing and welcoming atmosphere Includes recording units of participants spontaneously thinking of Porto as having a relaxing and welcoming atmosphere.
	Affordable food and good places to eat

<i>Category and subcategories</i>	
	Includes registration units of participants who spontaneously think of Porto as having good quality food at affordable prices and pleasant places to eat.
	Beach and surf Includes registration units of participants who spontaneously think about the beaches and the possibility of surfing in Porto.
	Tourist and international destination Includes registration units of participants who spontaneously think of Porto as an international and tourist destination.
	Opportunities: a lot to offer and see Includes recording units on spontaneous perceptions that Porto is a place with many opportunities.
	Sun and rain Includes recording units about spontaneously thinking that Porto is a rainy place, but also sunny at certain times of the year.
Information about Porto Campaigns, articles, social media or other sources of information about Porto and about being a destination for digital nomads.	No previous information Includes recording units about participants not seeing anything about Porto and/or not finding out that it was a destination for digital nomads before they relocated.
	Marketing campaigns, social media, and articles Includes recording units about participants having seen information about Porto through marketing campaigns (promoting Porto or Portugal), social media or articles.
<i>Categories and subcategories</i>	
06_HOW IS PORTO All descriptors, metaphors, and images related to the participants' stay in Porto.	
A place of Opportunities & Pros All positive aspects of being a DN in Porto	Lifestyle Includes recording units of a variety of interrelated aspects, such as (i) local culture, which includes local amenities, individuals, and architecture; (ii) freedom of movement within and to/from Porto; (iii) cost of living; (iv) climate; and (v) safety.
	Transports and local infrastructures

<i>Categories and subcategories</i>	
	Includes recording units about transportation (e.g., metro, bus and local airport) and infrastructure in Porto that allows digital nomads to work remotely (e.g., Wi-Fi, coworking spaces).
	Location, mid-size city Includes recording units on the reasons for choosing a place, given its location (e.g., being in Europe), city size (e.g., mid-sized city) and time zone (e.g., being similar to the customers' location).
	Special Visa Includes recording units about appealing visas in Portugal.
	Adventure and Freedom Includes recording units about the participants chose Porto in a perspective of adventure and freedom of having the option to choose the destination they want.
	English It includes registration units about participants who chose Porto because the inhabitants speak English.
	Serendipity Includes recording units about participants choosing Porto by chance (e.g., randomly).
	Healthcare systems Includes recording units about participants choosing Porto because of the quality and access to healthcare systems.
A place of Challenges & Cons All negative aspects related to DN in Porto	Lifestyle Includes recording units about lifestyle in Porto (e.g., there is an attempt to imitate trendy places from other countries; participants not feeling wanted by Porto residents for being digital nomads; rainy, windy and cold weather; loneliness; and stress of adaptation).
	Accommodation Includes recording units about accommodation in Porto being a challenge and a con, (i) given the difficulty in finding accommodation, (ii) low quality for the price charged, (iii) scams on the platforms of accommodations (i) high humidity (iv) lack of sound isolation and (v) thermal insulation.
	Mobility

<i>Categories and subcategories</i>	
	Includes recording units related to mobility (e.g., buses being unreliable, the metro not covering the entire metropolitan area, being a place where it is difficult to drive by car, and Porto airport not having direct flights to certain destinations or flights being too expensive to some places).
	Bureaucracies Includes recording units related to bureaucracies (e.g., the visa and with foreigners and borders service).
	Language Includes recording units referring to (i) Portuguese people speaking only to the participants in English and, therefore, the participants are unable to learn Portuguese; (ii) the Portuguese language being difficult to learn or (iii) the expectation that Portuguese people would speak in Spanish and not in English.
<i>Categories and subcategories</i>	
07_RECOMMENDATIONS	
Opinions and recommendations to others on (i) how to become a DN (in general) and (ii) for DNs to move to Porto.	
To be a DN Recommendations or requirements for someone to become a digital nomad.	Personal Requirements Includes recording units relating to the personal requirements that participants recommend for becoming a digital nomad.
	Lifestyle Requirements Includes recording units relating to the lifestyle requirements that participants recommend for becoming a digital nomad (e.g., minimalist lifestyle).
	Job Requirements Includes recording units relating to the job requirements that participants recommend for becoming a digital nomad (e.g., work online from anywhere).
	Financial Requirements Includes recording units relating to the financial requirements that participants recommend for becoming a digital nomad.
To other DNs to relocate to Porto Recommendations to other DNs to move to Porto.	A place to visit/live: Living costs, safety, location and climate Includes recording units of recommendations for other digital nomads to live in or visit Porto, given the cost of living, security, location and climate.
	Convenient, relaxed atmosphere Includes recording units of recommendations for other digital nomads to move to Porto as it is a convenient location and has a relaxing atmosphere.

<i>Categories and subcategories</i>	
	<p>Mobility and Infrastructures Includes recording units of recommendations for other digital nomads to travel to Porto, because of the ease to visit other places and move in and out of the city (e.g., walkability, good connection between local transports) and the infrastructure that allows them to carry out their work remotely (e.g. coworking spaces, internet, sockets for charging digital devices).</p>

Table 24. Category system and its operational definition

Annex 4 – Other analyses

1. Why Digital Nomadism vs First Move

To analyse whether there are similarities or differences among interviewees in the “Why digital nomadism?” category, a coding query matrix was created to compare individuals currently experiencing their first move as DNs with those who have already made more than one move as DNs.

<i>N° of References</i>		<i>First move as a DN</i>	<i>Experienced DNs</i>
02_Why Digital Nomadism?		65 (100%)	381 (100%)
Individual Drivers	Lifestyle	31 (48%)	169 (44%)
	Adventure and Freedom	5 (8%)	43 (11%)
	Serendipity	1 (2%)	10 (3%)
Local Drivers	Transports and local infrastructures	4 (6%)	59 (15%)
	Visa and other bureaucratic requirements	13 (20%)	49 (13%)
	Location, City size, Time Zone	6 (9%)	39 (10%)
	Language	5 (8%)	12 (3%)

Table 25. Why Digital Nomadism vs First Move

Data analysis shows that both subgroups (i.e., those participants who are in their first move and those who have already made more moves as DNs), reported on “lifestyle”, as the main “individual driver”, which includes (i) local culture; (ii) architecture; (iii) cost of living; (iv) climate; and (v) safety. P22 also noted that “...if you're a nomad and you want to spend time with other nomads, so, finding places that have communities of digital nomads is a big factor then...”. The “individual drivers” of adventure and freedom that this lifestyle provides were mentioned by both subgroups. Serendipity was also emphasized by both subgroups, although with a slightly higher percentage of referencing by digital nomads who have already made more moves (3%).

One of the “local drivers” most mentioned by both subgroups is the visa and other bureaucracies, as noted by P16: “Every year, we try a different place; we try to stay about six months in one place. And why? I think the most obvious reason would be the visa doesn't allow us to stay there, which is, I'm sure, the most common reason.”. Location, city size and being in time zones close to customers were also mentioned by both subgroups. However, experienced digital nomads underlined other drivers generally overlooked by those who are in their first move, which is the wish to learn the local language and direct flights at the airport. Furthermore, the local

driver most mentioned by digital nomads with more experience are transports (e.g., uber and metro) and the infrastructure that allows them to do remote work (e.g., internet in cafes and coworking spaces). It seems that as digital nomads gain more experience relocating, their considerations and priorities expand beyond lifestyle-related aspects. These facts may indicate that the excitement with the adventure of getting to know other places is gradually replaced by the practicalities of living and working in a certain place.

2. Why Porto vs Permanent Residency in Porto

To examine if DNs differed on their assessment of Porto as a destination, depending on their intention to get local residence, a Matrix Coding Query was created. Table 26 outlines all the subcategories and their expression in terms of units of analysis.

<i>Nº of References</i>	<i>Permanent Residence</i>	<i>Not Permanent Residence</i>
04_WHY PORTO	197 (100%)	58 (100%)
Lifestyle	80 (41%)	34 (59%)
Special Visa	31 (16%)	0 (0%)
Transports and local infrastructures	34 (17%)	11 (19%)
Location, mid-size city	31 (16%)	4 (7%)
Adventure and Freedom	12 (6%)	5 (9%)
English	4 (2%)	2 (3%)
Serendipity	3 (2%)	2 (3%)
Healthcare systems	2 (1%)	0 (0%)

Table 26. Why Porto vs Permanent Residency

The “lifestyle” subcategory predominates, once again, to a much greater extent for both subgroups:

“...it’s a beautiful city with a lot of charm.” (P1)

Furthermore, both subgroups mentioned mobility (which includes walkability and transportation) and local infrastructure as the second driver for choosing Porto. Other drivers for choosing Porto are the location, the fact that it is a mid-size city and also that the locals can speak English. In both subgroups there are participants who moved to Porto by chance. Participants also mentioned enjoying adventure and feeling the freedom to live in different places, in this case in Porto.

However, those who aim to get local residency valued (i) the visa deal in Portugal that may enable them to obtain permanent residency., (ii) the flights at Porto airport, (iii) the opportunity to learn another language, and (iv) the local healthcare systems. Apparently, DNs

aiming to settle in Porto value the destination attributes that are supportive and indicative of a higher quality of life.

3. Recommendations by gender

To analyse whether there were gender differences on the recommendations to become digital nomads and digital nomads in Porto, the data were encoded in a matrix. In Table 27 are the results of this category and the respective codified subcategories.

<i>N° of References</i>		<i>Female DNs</i>	<i>Male DNs</i>
07_Which Recommendations?		40 (100%)	91 (100%)
To be a DN	Personal Requirements	11 (28%)	28 (31%)
	Lifestyle Requirements	7 (18%)	14 (15%)
	Job Requirements	2 (5%)	14 (15%)
	Financial Requirements	1 (3%)	3 (3%)
To DNs to relocate to Porto	A place to visit/live: Living costs, safety, location and climate	13 (33%)	20 (22%)
	Convenient, relaxed atmosphere	4 (10%)	7 (8%)
	Mobility and Infrastructures	2 (5%)	5 (5%)

Table 27. The Recommendations of DNs in Porto by gender

Regarding recommendations for being a DN, female participants mainly recommended that individuals must be adaptable, flexible and disciplined to pursue this lifestyle, while male participants placed greater importance on being open-minded, adventurous, sociable and curious, as P3 noted: *“You must be open-minded and curious to meet different cultures, places, perspectives and people.”*

Male respondents also referred topics not mentioned by female respondents. One of them is the importance of developing new skills, learning new things, and doing research to be able to be a digital nomad. Another piece of advice given only by male respondents is related to not believe in everything that appears on social media, as P7 noted: *“working at the beach with your laptop, is a terrible experience. Never work on the beach.”*; and participant P17 reinforced *“...it comes with a lot of challenges, it's not only fun and travel and getting lots of money to travel...”*. Both female and male participants mentioned that being a digital nomad is not a lifestyle for everyone and it is necessary to have a job and the financial means that allows one to be a DN.

Regarding recommendations to other digital nomads to relocate to Porto, both genders recommend Porto mainly due to the reasons why they chose Porto, which includes culture, architecture, safety, cost of living and climate. Although to a lesser extent, both

female and male participants mentioned that they would not recommend digital nomads in Porto if they do not want to relocate to a city, if they have a low income, if they want to start something, if they are looking for capital or network. In addition, P1 also mentioned that *“...it’s already a small city with a lot of tourists.”*