

[Open Peer Review on Qeios](#)

# Greece as an Organic Space for the Development of Digital Nomadistry

Akrivi Vagena<sup>1</sup>, Oleg Yuryevich Latyshev<sup>2</sup>, Leonidas Papakonstantinidis<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> University of Patras

<sup>2</sup> University of Peloponnese

**Funding:** No specific funding was received for this work.

**Potential competing interests:** No potential competing interests to declare.

## Abstract

In the modern working reality, the term Digital Nomad refers to professionals who work remotely via the internet and initially the phenomenon was treated simply as a modern way of life that includes continuous travel and travel away from the place of permanent residence. But since travel is a key part of nomadic life, it is now important to understand the potential of digital nomads as tourists.

In a highly competitive international tourism environment, the utilization of Digital Nomads can prove to be an extremely important advantage. As this audience grows constantly, the major tourist destinations around the world are claiming their share.

The growing enthusiasm of workers for travel combining work and leisure is gradually being addressed by the policies of countries that are trying to work out and amend rules on residence permits and taxation.

Finally, a research on correlation coefficient is realized by the authors. According to the research findings, Nomad Tourists spend time and activities in the destination and in favor for the destination.

There is a close ( $r = 0.62$ ) correlation between activities and spending time in the destination. Also, from the questionnaire a number of tourist digital nomads activities are resulted, indicating that nomads participate in local activities (for example cultural activities) even if their job is offered in another place or country.

From this point of view, tourist nomads participate in local development in the destination.

**Akrivi Vagena**, *Business Administration Department, University of Patras* <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9135-9200>, 26504 Rio Achaia, Greece

**Oleg Yuryevich Latyshev**, *Mariinskaya Academy named after M. D. Shapovalenko* <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6164-0015>, 115470 Moscow, Russia

**Papakonstantinidis L.A.**, *Prof Emeritus University of Peloponnese, Academician (IMA), Greece*

**Keywords:** Digital Nomads, Remote work, Tourism Industry, Local Economy, Greece, Tourism Destination.

## Introduction and literature review

In this study, the case of Greece will be analyzed. Greece is one of the countries of the European south and the Mediterranean that has been particularly interested in attracting digital nomads in recent years and has made corresponding legal arrangements as well as digital tools for the information of digital nomads (Euronews 2022, Nanopoulos K. et al. 2021,).

In order to become the most attractive country for a digital nomad, Greece has developed a “**Digital Nomad Visa**”, which in the original is called a “digital nomad visa”. This visa is a condition of legal residence in Greece for numerous diverse professionals working remotely (<https://workfromgreece.gr/>, Soudias D. & Katsinas P. 2023)

It should be noted that this document allows each digital nomad to stay on the territory of the Greek state for a sufficiently long period of time, and includes a number of certain advantages over other types and types of visas produced in Greece.

Greece, without the slightest exaggeration, is a desirable place for specialists whose activities are not characterized by territorial attachment to the place of work, and who strive to carry out their multidisciplinary creative projects precisely in this territory and has already taken significant steps to reach this audience. 2022 survey reveals the 100 best countries for digital nomads. The country occupies the 23rd place, performing well in the criteria related to the quality of life, the feeling of security and the quality of the environment, according to <https://www.travel.gr/en/how-to-travel-en/greece-is-fast-becoming-a-top-loaction-for-digital-nomads/>, a travel specialized journal.

The rather mild Mediterranean climate that exists throughout Greece, in the understanding of digital nomads, is organically complemented by the European standard of living, a wide selection of real estate - both for purchase and for rent for various periods by agreement with the owners.

Compared to many other Mediterranean countries, Greece has a relatively low cost of living. At the same time, even in this country there are a significant number of artifacts that digital nomads from various countries will see with great pleasure (Vagena A. 2021).

There are a number of inalienable rules that must be followed. it seems possible to obtain a digital nomad visa to work and live in Greece, gradually being included in a special program for digital nomads.

Ordinary digital nomads in their daily professional activities usually use only a laptop and high-speed Internet. However, it is in Greece that they get the opportunity to combine traditional work with the development of **creative projects**, forever inspired by the ancient treasures of this multifaceted country (Mouratidis G., 2018).

For example, they can produce spatial scans of outstanding monuments of Greek architecture, sculpture and arts and crafts from ancient times. and then become the initiators of organizing and holding **3D modeling festivals**.

It is also possible to organize and conduct, on the initiative and with the direct participation of digital nomads a **festival of laser shows**, in which, instead of the traditional demonstration of a spontaneous accumulation of bright color rays, models of the treasures of ancient Greek art will appear. as well as symbols of the culture of modern Greece - both life-size and much larger.

Finally, digital nomads can also become the initiators of **organizing and hosting drone show festivals**. Over time, drones will become more advanced, cheaper, easier to operate and acquire more and more interesting features.

Drones of new generations will be able to appear in the sky at the same time in much greater numbers than is happening at the moment, and create figures of immeasurably higher complexity in a coordinated flight.

Thanks to this, they will evoke sincere admiration from the audience for the level of elaboration of details and the skill of the authors of the composition. The audience of such festivals in Greece will only increase.

All this will attract even more tourists from various countries of the world to Greece - both participants in such festivals, as well as their spectators, fans, and will contribute to improving the well-being of this wonderful country in all respects with such an ancient culture and art.

Until 2020, when Greece established the Digital Nomad Visa, such professionals had relatively few opportunities to reliably, and most importantly, legally settle in their chosen picturesque and historical place.

Unfortunately, tourist visas were not very suitable for this, since they are objectively too short-term, while in order to obtain a work visa, each digital nomad had to apply for a job in a local company, which was not at all included in the plans of the vast majority of these energetic, creative and freedom-loving of people.

It should be noted with satisfaction that digital nomadic programs are far from unique to Greece, as they have been developed on all continents since the moment when the world was very famous due to the spreading onset of the coronavirus pandemic.

And if it was a significant inconvenience for workers with orthodox thinking that many companies transferred them to long-term remote work, then for the growing population of digital nomads, this turned out to be a great chance to change their lives for the better.

Two and a half years since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic have shown that thousands of people have appreciated this completely new opportunity for them to live, exactly where it is most comfortable for them to work and satisfy their need for constant self-development and self-improvement.

But no less important is also the fact that at the same time they can remain and feel like patriots, and conscientiously continue to work for their former company, and still no less loving their native country.

In order for digital nomads working remotely to be legalized quickly and without hindrance in the chosen place, countries such as Greece, and along with this, many others, decided to develop a legal framework for this quite attractive audience.

This is how the programs of digital nomadism were formed, one of which has already found its thesis in this paper. Each digital nomads program includes not only special visas.

Along with this, digital nomads receive completely practical assistance from the host countries in settling on their territory. Being full-fledged holders of such visas, digital nomads can work freely on the territory of each such country, while in no way violating the law of any of them on the migration regime.

Each country that has established a digital nomads program benefits from the fact that representatives of this audience regularly pay taxes, and at the same time use medical care on an equal basis with the citizens of this country.

What is not at all unimportant, each of the digital nomads in such countries, without the slightest fear of being deported, turns to law enforcement agencies if any of his original rights have been violated.

The immigration of highly paid digital nomads significantly increases the economic performance of each state that has created acceptable conditions for their stay in a zone convenient for them for a period acceptable to them.

At the same time, it should be noted that digital nomads earn money abroad, as they continue to be employees of their companies, while spending the money earned in them on local goods and services.

In the course of implementing such a model, digital nomads never and under no circumstances compete with citizens of the host country, because there is always a place for them in the local labor market.

Since digital nomads do not have the right to work in companies of the host state, it is not their function to spend budgetary funds to create new jobs that can accommodate the growing number of digital nomads.

In the 2000s, the advent of broadband Internet access actively contributed to the formation of favorable conditions for the development of a productive tradition of digital nomads, and Airbnb was the first service to find accommodation, and then their number began to progressively increase.

Skype, and then WhatsApp, Wiber, Telegram and many others allowed conferences with a significant number of participants to run smoothly, which allowed digital nomads to extend their stay in the host countries.

The emergence of the PayPal system for settlements minimized the efforts of digital nomads in finding ways to receive funds from their native companies, as well as pay for goods and services anywhere in the civilized world.

Soon, the number of digital nomads, thanks to these and many other preferences, has already allowed 10 million citizens of various countries to be realized in other countries, as they say, "on the job".

Estonia became the first country in the world to introduce a digital nomads visa, after which more than thirty countries in Europe, Asia, and the Caribbean have followed its natural example.

Digital nomads visas have a number of distinct advantages over other types of visas. So, for example, compared to a tourist visa, a digital nomads visa allows you to use a significantly longer period of residence in your chosen country.

In addition, the significantly higher probability of issuing digital nomads visas encourages millions of people from all over the world to use them in comparison with a work visa, while significantly saving their nerve cells in anticipation of issuance.

And finally, compared to an investor visa, a digital nomads visa requires a significantly lower acquisition cost, which allows each digital nomads to determine the freed up funds for improving their living conditions.

Taking into account the established tradition in Dubai and other attractive cities of issuing “golden” visas to outstanding figures of science, culture, sports, etc., many tend to put the digital nomad visa in a fairly correct comparison, while not unreasonably calling it a simplified option for obtaining “golden visa”.

This is all the more relevant because in order to obtain a “golden” visa, the applicant must have sufficiently great merits in the field of professional determination. And even when some countries directly offer such individuals to become the happy owner of a “golden” visa, they often refuse.

And this is not surprising. If a person has already been able to stand out from millions of others with one or another of his talents, then he is also quite capable of arranging his life for the short term, comparable to the duration of the “golden” species.

Moreover, such people have such plans for building a creative business every minute for the next few years, so not every such invitation to apply for a “golden” visa may seem tempting to them.

As for the vast majority of digital nomads, they may be no less talented people, but still not have such a great life experience and accompanying achievements to offer them a “golden” visa.

But the desire to establish themselves in creativity abroad, without leaving their native company, is really ready to realize millions of digital nomads, which favorably distinguishes the visa intended for them from the “golden one”, which in the future they may not need either.

It should also be pointed out that the digital nomads visa provides an opportunity not only to obtain permission to enter the country, but at the same time, in case of such a need for digital nomads, also the opportunity to obtain a residence permit in the country chosen for residence.

In this way, the digital nomads visa demonstrates its undeniable advantage. The holder of a residence permit gains access to social services that apply to citizens of the host country.

In addition, if they have a residence permit, digital nomads can open a bank account in a European country that supports the digital nomads program, which will significantly strengthen their position on the territory of this state.

According to Chevtaeva & Denizci-Guillet (2021), remote work is quite popular among freelancers, as well as business

owners, developers of the most advanced software. Also among the digital nomads you can meet a lot of creators of the text content of sites.

Authors of texts for printed publications are also rushing to include themselves in the number of digital nomads, especially if their stay in the chosen country significantly brings them closer to the result of writing or research. Content managers, editors, copywriters, designers, marketers, for whom communication with the citizens of the host country is of great benefit, SMM managers, confidently choose the position of digital nomads. A special category of digital nomads are HR managers who, living abroad, can find suitable employees for their company, and have enough time to study the potential personnel of their company. Teachers, lawyers, composers, artists are also motivated to become digital nomads in their own way, for whom the country chosen to live in such a country is the highest source of creative inspiration (Chevtava, E. 2021).

Digital nomads not only contribute to local economies but are in demand as talents in new technologies. Harvard professors emphasize that "today, countries compete to attract talent, just as businesses compete to attract the most capable." (Harvard business review, 2022).

Digital nomads visas in European countries are readily used by citizens of countries that were previously Soviet Union republics. Such digital nomads need permission to cross borders, and even more so - a long stay in the territory of the states of the European Union (<https://www.schengenvisa.info.com/digital-nomad-visa/greece/>).

Greece should be considered one of the most sought-after countries for digital nomads, since the climate prevailing in it is recognized as one of the best typical for the countries of the Mediterranean basin, and also, in principle, among maritime countries in general.

For many digital nomads, a beach holiday is attractive, as well as the opportunity to take sea baths all year round, and fully feel the European quality of life, as well as the relatively low cost of living (Soudias D. & Katsinas P., 2022).

Greece for a highly demanding connoisseur can provide worthy cultural leisure, the quality of which is determined by visiting the sights, many of which have been preserved since ancient times. The population of Greece is friendly to digital nomads and hospitably offering them to try the excellent national cuisine, as well as admire the picturesque flora and diverse fauna to their heart's content.

Greece is well-disposed to digital nomads, providing them with many co-working spaces and high-speed Internet with European standards, which fully reflects the expectations of digital nomads (Vagena 2021).

The Greek digital nomad visa has the official name "Work From Greece", the consular fee for which is only 75 euros. This visa is issued for a period of residence for one year, after which it can be extended twice, and in total, if you wish, spend as much as three years in Greece. However, if desired, digital nomads can stay in Greece for a longer period. As mentioned above, it is quite possible for digital nomads to live in Greece for two years with a residence permit. At the same time, they should live in Greece permanently for at least half a year, which is half the period of validity of the residence permit, without fail maintaining during this period the initially established minimum income.

What to do if this is also not enough for some of the digital nomads, and hospitable Greece will continue to be the most favorable platform for them to conduct their daily activities? In this case, the residence permit of digital nomads can be renewed twice for 2 years, and after this period - immediately for 5 years. If a digital nomad lives in the country for nine years, then by doing so he acquires the right to apply for citizenship of the Republic of Greece. The rights and obligations of digital nomads receiving such a visa, as well as all the key requirements for the applicant, are regulated by the law of the Greek Republic, [Ministarstvo unutarnjih poslova Republike Hrvatske - Temporary stay of digital nomads \(gov.hr\)](https://www.mvd.hr/en/ministarstvo-unutarnjih-poslova-republike-hrvatske-temporary-stay-of-digital-nomads)

These requirements, first of all, include the condition that digital nomads must be citizens of a country that is not currently part of the European Union, as well as the European Economic Area as a whole. At the same time, digital nomads are required to have a minimum documented income of 3,500 euros per month, after taxes. It should be remembered that in Greece, digital nomads also pay taxes after living here for a certain period. In addition, each such digital nomad must have an annual living wage on the bank account, and, as mentioned above, perform work for a client located outside of Greece, or for their own company abroad.

To prove this, the future digital nomad can provide them with a bank statement that indicates the frequency of payments, or a tax return for the previous year, or in any case, an employment contract provided, the text of which will indicate the applicant's salary. In addition, digital nomads are not only able, but also required to rent or buy a property in one of the localities in Greece. In order to apply for a digital nomad visa, you need to collect a package of documents (OECD Territorial Reviews, Regional Policy for Greece 2020).

The first of these is a responsible statement, designed to reflect the personal data of the future digital nomad, as well as the purpose of obtaining this visa, including the need to reside in the country on its national visa. In the same statement, the future digital nomad must promise that he will only work remotely, and abroad, and not attempt employment directly in Greek companies. The freelancer confirms this readiness by providing a contract with the client, either a certificate of registration of an individual entrepreneur or a certificate of self-employment, while a digital nomad employee provides an employment contract with the seal of the employer. This document (or a certain set of contracts with several clients or employers) must be either open-ended or urgent. Moreover, its validity period should not be less than one year.

Also, a potential digital nomad provides his photo and a scanned image of each page of his passport. The medical health certificate he provided should leave the Greek authorities in no doubt that this digital nomad wants to engage in long-term health tourism without having to apply for multiple tourist visas in turn. At the same time, they must prepare a health insurance policy that is valid in state medical institutions of the Republic of Greece, as well as an agreement confirming the employment relationship with their foreign company.

If the future digital nomad intends to continue obtaining a residence permit in Greece, he will need documentary evidence of the availability of housing for this. He will oblige to pay a state fee, the amount of which is currently 1,000 euros.

The digital nomadism program is currently in pilot mode, and therefore so far only covers three Greek cities, which include Heraklion, Kalamata, and Ermoupolis.

The opening of a residence permit is carried out at the moment when the digital nomad is in the territory of Greece. To do this, digital nomad sends a package of documents to the Greek consulate. This can be done in person as a digital nomad, via email, or by registered mail. The pilot version of the digital nomads program in Greece will yet show its effectiveness. The main thing is that already at the moment Greece is starting to increase its budget through digital nomads, without resorting to an increase in industrial production and the opening of more and more new jobs (Vagena A. 2022).

## Research

A sample of 1113 adults and high educated participated in the research between May-August 2022. The Questionnaire is below.

	QUESTIONS	HOURS YOU SPEND PER MONTH	Ranking (1)	Ranking (2)	d <sub>i</sub>	d <sub>i</sub> <sup>2</sup>
1	Why do you want to become a digital nomad?	1	1	1	0	0
2	Do you adapt easily to change?	9	2	7	-5	25
3	What sacrifices are you willing to make?	12	3	10	-7	49
4	Do you have a job that allows you to work and travel?	2	4	2	2	4
5	Do you like traveling light?	11	5	9	-4	16
6	Where will you keep your residency?	5	6	4	2	4
7	Are you self-disciplined?	6	7	5	2	4
8	Do you have the necessary digital nomad equipment?	7	8	6	2	4
9	What countries do you want to visit?	4	9	3	6	36
10	How much do you spend in your digital destination?	42	10	15	-5	25
11	Do you want to make friends from destination?	21	11	12	-1	1
12	Do you participate in local activities in the digital destination?	19	12	11	1	1
13	Do you offer time for the destination local events	28	13	13	0	0
14	Do you participate in the destination's cultural events?	34	14	14	0	0
15	Do you participate in the political activities in the destination?	8	15	8	7	49
	<b>TOTAL Σd<sub>i</sub><sup>2</sup></b>	<b>209</b>				<b>218</b>

$$1 - \frac{6 \sum d_i^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

$$n = 15, n^2 = 225, n(n^2 - 1) = 3360$$

$$r = 1308/3360 = 0.38 \dots 1 - 0.38 = 0.62$$



## Findings

There is a correlation between tourist nomad's activities and spending hours in the destination. According to the research findings, Nomad Tourists spend time and activities in the destination and in favour of the destination.

There is a close ( $r = 0.62$ ) correlation between activities and spending time at the destination.

Also, from the questionnaire a number of tourist nomads' activities resulted, indicating that nomads participate in local activities (for example cultural activities) even if their job is offered in another place or country. From this point of view, tourist nomads participate in local development at the destination.

As digital nomads increase, countries worldwide have been racing to attract a larger share of this audience. Recent research shows that by the end of 2022, more than half of European workers (52%) will work remotely.

The identification of the existing problems and the recognition of the multiple benefits that economies can have from digital nomads (they can mean restarting economies in many cases) as in the case of Greece, led to the effort to attract this audience, also offering them travel opportunities.

For this reason, special programs were designed, through which digital nomads will be able to work remotely and live in a foreign country, without legal problems.

## References

1. Chevtava E. & Denizci-Guillet B, (2021), "Digital nomads' lifestyles and coworkation", Journal of Destination Marketing & Management, Elsevier, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2021.100633>
2. Gusti Ketut Gede, Kadek Eni Marhaeni, I Wayan & Gusti Agung Mirah Sanjiwani, (2020), "A Model of Community-Based Development in Digital Nomad Tourism in Intaran Village Bali", Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research, volume 544, Proceedings of the International Conference on Science and Technology on Social Science (ICAST-SS 2020)
3. OECD Territorial Reviews, Regional Policy for Greece, Post-2020, OECD (2020), Regional Policy for Greece Post-2020, OECD Territorial Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/cedf09a5-en>.
4. Hannonen O. (2021), "In search of a digital nomad: defining the phenomenon", Information Technology & Tourism <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40558-020-00177-z>
5. Ahrent, D., Cabrita, J., Clerici, E., Hurley, J., Leoncikis, T., Mascherini, M., Riso, S., & Sandor, E. (2020 September, 22). Living, working and COVID- 19. Eurofund. <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/report/2020/livingworking-and-covid-19>.
6. Bergan, T. L., Gorman-Murray, A., & Power, E. R. (2020). Coliving housing: Home cultures of precarity for the new creative class. Social & Cultural Geography, 1–19.
7. Capdevila, I. (2013). Knowledge dynamics in localized communities: Coworking spaces as microclusters. Available at:

SSRN 2414121.

8. Chevtava, E. (2021). "Coworking and coliving: The attraction for digital nomad tourists". In Information and communication technologies in tourism 2021 (pp. 202–209). Cham: Springer.
9. E. Chevtava and B. Denizci-Guillet (2021). Digital nomads' lifestyles and coworkation. Journal of Destination Marketing & Management 21 (2021) 100633 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2021.100633>
10. Nomadlist, (2020). "Best places for digital nomads",. <https://nomadlist.com/bestplaces-for-digital-nomads>
11. Nanopoulos, Konstantinos; Demiroglou, Nicholas; TaxExperts; Iliopoulou, Victoria (2021), "The rise of 'digital nomads' in Greece", International Tax Review, London
12. Vagena A. (2022), "An upcoming destination for tourism investments, digital nomads and relocation: Greece", Academia Letters
13. Soudias D. & Katsinas P. (2022), "The political imaginary of happiness in Greece.", ENA Institute for Alternative Policies, Athens, GR.
14. Soudias D. & Katsinas P. (2023), "Commodifying Greece's "Happiness of the Future", Research Centre for the Study of Democratic Cultures and Politics (DemCP)
15. Vagena A. (2021), "Second home tourism present and future. The case of Greece", International Journal of Scientific Research and Management
16. Mouratidis G. (2018), "Digital Nomadism, Travel, Remote Work and Alternative Lifestyles", Lund University, Department of Arts and Cultural Sciences
17. <https://news.gtp.gr/2021/11/17/digital-nomads-eidikoi-eksigoun-pos-ellada-mporei-proselkisei-psifiakous-nomades/>
18. <https://www.travelagewest.com/Industry-Insight/Business-Features/Digital-Nomads-Travel>
19. <https://nomadsunveiled.com/popular-remote-jobs-for-digital-nomads-to-work-from-anywhere/>
20. <https://greekreporter.com/2022/12/23/winter-greece-vacation-snow/>
21. <https://www.scmp.com/lifestyle/travel-leisure/article/3180589/bali-woos-digital-nomads-5-year-remote-working-visa-and>
22. <https://medium.com/@vagenaakr/greece-an-up-and-coming-destination-for-tourism-investments-digital-nomads-and-relocation-25ab4be4fb77>
23. <https://workfromgreece.gr/>
24. <https://www.euronews.com/travel/2021/05/25/greece-is-gold-for-digital-nomads>
25. <https://www.travel.gr/en/how-to-travel-en/greece-is-fast-becoming-a-top-loaction-for-digital-nomads/>
26. <https://www.schengenvisa.info.com/digital-nomad-visa/greece/>
27. <https://hbr.org/2022/05/how-digital-nomad-visas-can-boost-local-economies>