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# Introducing Knowmads

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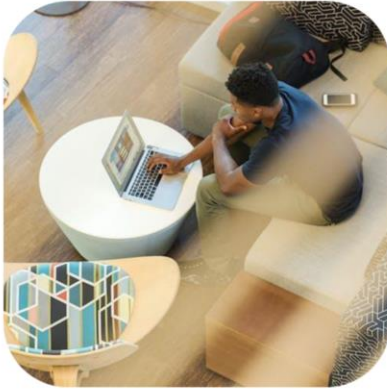


4EXPERIENCE



National University of Political Studies and Public Administration

## Knowmads – who are they?



Source: Photo by [LinkedIn Sales Navigator](#) on [Pexels](#)

- Moravec (2008) defined the knowmad as:  
*[...] a nomadic knowledge worker – that is, a creative, imaginative, and innovative person who can work with almost anybody, anytime and anywhere.*

- Additionally, knowmads are:
  - Autonomous
  - Independent but connected
  - Responsible and reliable
  - An expert in their field(s)
  - Knowledgeable
  - Continuous learners

The knowmad concept was introduced by John W. Moravec in 2008 to suggest a new trend in on the workforce market, identified as a mutation and evolution of knowledge workers, under the demanding requirements of the society and business market.

A *knowmad* is a nomadic knowledge and innovation worker – that is, a creative, imaginative, and innovative person who can work with almost anybody, anytime, and anywhere. Thus, a *knowmad* is autonomous in work, independent but connected, responsible and reliable, an expert in his/her field(s) of work, knowledgeable, and a continuous learner.

## Knowmads – how to spot them



Source: Photo by [Pixabay](#) on [Pexels](#)

- Knowmads:
  - Are trans-generational
  - Passionate for knowledge, are able to learn, unlearn and relearn
  - They perform complex jobs
  - Sometimes can be involved in multiple projects matching their different professional interests
  - Are knowledge network creators
  - Navigate through domains and specializations and create tailored multifaceted careers
  - Own sophisticated skills set and unique combinations of competencies
  - Are creating and crafting their own jobs within organizations
  - Multi-cultural intelligence.

A set of introductory coordinates about knowmads could refer to the fact that they are trans-generational, not holding characteristics of only one specific social cohort, they are passionate about learning and are as able to learn as they are to unlearn and relearn when needed. They are experts in complex roles and sometimes are involved in several professional activities in line with their interests. They are knowledge networkers by nature. Knowmads are also recognizable by their ability and habit of navigating through different domains and having unique multifaceted career backgrounds which equip them with valuable skills set combinations. Finally, knowmads prefer to create their own jobs and are multiculturally intelligent.

## Differentiating knowmads from knowledge workers

- Knowmads are evolving from Knowledge Workers under the demanding requirements of the VUCA business environment.
- Different from **knowledge workers** by:
  - Crafting and defining their jobs, eager for work autonomy
  - Focused on self management and individual performance
  - Interested in flexible working schedule and chosen work life balance
  - Employment dynamics marked by uncertainty and short-term contracts



Source: Photo by [Polina Zimmerman](#) on [Pexels](#)

Knowmads are evolving from Knowledge Workers under the demanding requirements of the volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) business environment. They approach differently both work processes and work environment.

While knowledge workers prefer employment security and long-term contracts, knowmads' employment dynamics are characterized by uncertainty and short-term projects or contracts. From a managerial control perspective, knowledge workers tend to identify with the corporate management, blend within organizational culture and aim at organizational performance while knowmads prefer self-management and individual branding and performance. From a time management perspective, knowledge workers are following a strict fixed working program and imposed work life balance, while knowmads opt for flexible working program and custom-made work life balance instead. Finally, from a job design perspective, knowledge workers tend to follow the job description and fit within the framework limits of their job, while knowmads aim to craft and design their own job and to have autonomy at work.

## Matching the volatile uncertain complex and ambiguous (VUCA) business environment



Source: Photo by [Anna Tarazevich](#) on [Pexels](#)

- VUCA business environment is characterized by:
  - Disruptive technological and social changes
  - Large scale crises
  - Need for knowledge reconfiguration
  - Intensive Global Knowledge Economy
  - Brain drain phenomena
  - New needs and consequently professions emerging
- Knowmads assets
  - Intrapreneurs (collaboration, critical thinking and complexity management skills)
  - Technological, Informational, Digital and Media literacy
  - Multicultural literacy
  - Highly adaptable

The volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) business environment is characterized by disruptive technological and social changes, large scale interconnected crises, the need of knowledge reconfiguration and innovation, and an intensified and globally overarching knowledge economy. Furthermore, under the migration forces triggered by different crises or as generations are shifting, large masses of professionals are permanently leaving the work market or migrating in different geographical areas, defining the brain drain phenomena impacting certain domains and countries.

Under the extensive digitalization, new needs, services and professions are emerging and expected to occur in the near future.

Knowmads seem to own the right set of skills and motivations to navigate through contemporary challenges towards individual and organizational success, by creatively enabling their key competencies: collaboration, critical thinking, management of complex and unprecedented situations, resilience, adaptation as well as technological, informational, digital, media and multicultural literacy.

## Sources to find out more!

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We recommend you to check these open access resources for additional information on Knowmads.



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More about the project:  
[knowmanproject.eu](http://knowmanproject.eu)

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