



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



KNOWMAN

Knowmads and their skills

TAL
TECH



National University of Political Studies and Public Administration

Knowmads – part of the new work market status quo



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



- Digital transformation is significantly impacting the jobs offer
- Relevant workforce and supply chain challenges generated or intensified by:
 - Post-pandemics environment
 - Eastern European military conflict
 - Primary materials shortages for different industries, such as automotive (semi-conductors)
- A key challenge for business is managing both internal and external resources:
 - Contingent workers
 - Artificial intelligence
 - Robotic process automation solutions (RPA)

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. According to the originator of this concept, 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

Next to other unfolding phenomena, the knowmads are part of the current work market *status quo*:

- The digital transformation process which is further impactful on the customers needs and job offers;
- Workforce dynamics and supply chain challenges in the backlash of the COVID-19 pandemics, the prolonged Eastern European military conflict as well as primary materials and food shortages in certain parts of the world.

According to MIT and Deloitte (2022), one of the main challenges for businesses in the post-pandemics environment is represented by the challenge to orchestrate internal and external resources for business continuity and development, such as contingent or project-based workers, artificial intelligence, managing Big Data or enabling robotic process automated solutions.

Knowmads skills and potential knowledge related roles



Source: Photo by [Antoni Shkraba](#) on [Pexels](#)



- Skills:
 - Creativity
 - Grit
 - Collaboration skills
 - Critical thinking skills
 - Complexity management skills
 - E-awareness
 - Media, technological, digital, informational and multicultural literacy
- Potential knowledge related roles:
 - Collectors
 - Connectors
 - Communicators
 - Creators
 - Trackers
 - Linkers

Through their skills, the Knowmads are able to navigate the troubled business environment. As main skills identified by researchers we mention creativity, grit, collaboration skills, critical thinking skills, complexity management skills, E-awareness, as well as media, technological, digital, informational and multicultural literacy. All these allow them to work independently and efficiently.

Starting from their set of transversal skills and complemented by their industries specific skills, knowmads have the potential to fill in relevant knowledge related roles within the organizations:

- Collectors, generally in charge with classification, indexation, definition of clusters of knowledge, as well as with charting process maps or establishing frameworks of knowledge.
- Connectors, also known as mediators, moderators of networkers.
- Communicators, or storytellers, authors or co-authors of knowledge sources.
- Creators, in charge with generating models, theories and systems of knowledge.
- Trackers, specialized in monitoring and analysis of knowledge, capable of identifying gaps, risks and opportunities related to knowledge.
- Linkers, focused on building relationships based on reputation and value-added capabilities.

Knowmads' needs



Source: Photo by [Antoni Shkraba](#) on [Pexels](#)



- In order to thrive within collaborations with institutions and organizations, knowmads require:
 - Knowledge management strategies and transparent directions of development
 - Learning opportunities (e-learning, trainings)
 - Growth opportunities
 - Career coaching and professional mentoring
 - Work autonomy
 - Trust from management
 - Flexible work schedule
 - Chosen work life balance
 - Openness towards geographical mobility

Based on the literature findings, Knowmads wish to thrive in their professional life. As such, they are likely to benefit greatly from and towards collaborations with institutions or organizations where the following aspects are valued:

- Formal knowledge management strategies and transparent communication of the strategic development directions followed by the organization. This component refers to the organizations' KM performance and the desire to have formal practices in place aiming to manage the creation, acquisition, transfer, sharing or transformation of knowledge, as well as the usage of existing knowledge. Additionally, knowmads thrive in collaboration with organizations which are transparent when it comes to KM strategies and decisions.
- Closely related with the need described above we can mention the need of relevant learning opportunities (e-learning, trainings), as part of a consistent KM practice which actively integrates knowmads' development.
- The work autonomy component refers to the openness and capacity of the organizations to offer independency, trust and autonomy to knowmads related to their roles and tasks. Managerial trust is closely related to the work autonomy and interconnected with the rest of the knowmads needs.
- Last but not least, knowmads require flexibility and control over their work life balance. A great advantage in their cooperation with knowmads has been noticed within projects open towards geographical mobility and hybrid working.

Sources to find out more!

- Cobo, C. (2013). Skills and competencies for knowmadic workers. In J.W. Moravec (Ed.), *Knowmad Society* (pp. 57-88). Minneapolis: Education Futures.
- Iliescu, A. N. (2021). From knowledge workers to knowmads: skills, roles, and attributes: a literature review, In *Proceedings of the 15th International Conference on Business Excellence, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania, 18-19 March 2021*.
- MIT Sloan Management Review, Deloitte. (2022). Orchestrating Workforce Ecosystems. Retrieved from: <https://sloanreview.mit.edu/projects/orchestrating-workforce-ecosystems/>
- PwC. (2022). Digital factory transformation survey 2022. Retrieved from: <https://www.pwc.de/en/strategy-organisation-processes-systems/operations/digital-factory-transformation-survey-2022.html>
- World Economic Forum. (2016). Digital Transformation of Industries. Retrieved from: <https://reports.weforum.org/digital-transformation/wp-content/blogs.dir/94/mp/files/pages/files/digital-enterprise-narrative-final-january-2016.pdf>

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



KNOWMAN

More about the project:
knowmanproject.eu

This project has been funded with support from the European Union. This document and all its content reflect the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.