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BUILDING THE FRAMEWORK: A THEORETICAL FOUNDATION FOR THE MODEL OF DIGITAL NOMADS' COGNITIVE FRAMES

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Abstract: The phenomenon of digital nomadism, first coined by Makimoto and Manners in their book Digital Nomad in 1997, has expanded with technological developments and digitalisation and the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, raising questions about new forms of professional identity. The selected research area sheds light on the dynamics of modern labour mobility and transnational knowledge transfer. Digital nomads, currently estimated at 35 million individuals, reject traditional work routines, and demonstrate the autonomy digital technologies enable. The primary goal of the research is to create a model of the cognitive frames of these individuals, with an emphasis on their role within regional innovation systems (RIS), especially in terms of motivation to act in the direction of contribution to the local community, through the transfer of knowledge and skills. We conceptualise the digital nomad as an actor who enters interactions within social fields through his way of thinking and acting. Through the creation of the model of cognitive frames, we will present their self-perception and how they conceptualise their roles, identities, and contributions within those social fields. Since we want to highlight their role as mobile professionals who own various forms of capital, we will be particularly interested in cognitive frames in connection with the transfer of knowledge, skills, and cooperation with the local environment. Research in this area will make an important contribution to understanding the motivation and digital nomads' mode of operation within regional innovation systems. The model will also be relevant for further exploration and understanding of the cognitive frames of similar segments of society. Based on this understanding the cognitive frames of the different actors in the system can be coordinated and adapted. The research will contribute new insights into cognitive predispositions. This is necessary for the successful introduction of systemic changes and adjustments aimed at creating improved conditions for the transfer of knowledge and skills.

Keywords: digital nomads, cognitive frameworks, regional innovation systems, knowledge transfer

1. Introduction

The primary goal of the research is to create a model of the cognitive frames of digital nomads, with an emphasis on their role within regional innovation systems (RIS), especially in terms of

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their motivation towards contributing to the local community, through the transfer of knowledge and skills. To achieve this goal, we ask the main research question and an additional sub-question:

RV: What are the cognitive frameworks of digital nomads as actors within regional innovation systems?

Sub-question: How do the cognitive frameworks of digital nomads manifest themselves in regional innovation systems?

To better understand the phenomenon of digital nomadism, important theories will be presented, explaining the possible causes of its occurrence, and placing it in a broader socio-cultural context. Important factors that have influenced its emergence are technological progress, globalization, and social changes in how personal identity is constructed. After that, we will proceed by examining definitions of the concept in more recent research.
To construct a theoretical frame we conducted a systematic literature review of the existing theories and relevant literature about the researched topic. In the first phase, we researched the literature and articles about digital nomads to gain a better understanding of the emerging concept and to identify the typical actor within that emerging field. We researched academic databases such as Scopus, Web of Science and Google Scholar. For the inquiry, we used a combination of keywords and Boolean operators including *"digital nomad", "coworking", "knowledge transfer", "entrepreneurship", "innovation",* etc. This phase clarified our understanding of digital nomads as a distinct group of actors, constructing an important basis for further research and modelling of their cognitive frames.
Further, we wanted to contextualise the emergence of digital nomadism by reviewing broader sociological and theoretical perspectives, especially those dealing with changes of society caused by technological development, digitalisation, and globalisation.
The final phase of the research focused on researching the connections between the identified actors, social field of regional innovation systems and cognitive frames. We wanted to explore the theoretical basis to explain the interplay between individual cognition and regional innovation.
If the regional innovation system consists of a complex cooperative relationship between individual components, our goal is to determine their placement within the system by developing a model of the digital nomads' cognitive frames. We will extract their way of thinking and acting and shed light on their role as actors within the complexity of innovation systems, more precisely their attitude towards the knowledge transfer and action within the target destination. The research will reveal opportunities for state policies that could tap into their potential by properly targeting nomads. With this, the research could contribute to the design of solutions for Slovenia and similar regions to effectively adapt and take advantage of the growing demography of mobile professionals.
We intend to verify the model with a qualitative research approach and thus reveal how digital nomads perceive themselves and their interactions within the target destination. The obtained data will be analysed and interpreted through the theory of social fields, which will form the basis of our research. With the help of other theories, we will shed light on the results from different perspectives and thus gain a deeper understanding. In this way, we will solve the research problem of understanding the functioning of digital nomads and their motivation for knowledge transfer and skills within regional innovation systems, by developing a model of cognitive frames. We will also achieve the set goal: To create a model of cognitive frames of digital nomads as actors within regional innovation systems.

2. Digital nomads - a distinct group of actors

The phenomenon of the digital nomad is, likely, a new reality, a new form of work that is rapidly gaining popularity. A new pool of professionals is being created, equipped with specific skills that can represent great potential within the target destination or innovation systems and as such are an attractive research subject.

Makimoto and Manners begin their work, Digital Nomad (1997), with an introductory thought by Craig O. McCaw that the beginnings of humanity were nomadic and that it was probably the most natural state of humanity. Mobility is in our blood. Man has always been migrating. Either for the sake of work or because of work. The authors suggest that wanderlust is part of our psychology—a strong desire to travel passed down from our nomadic ancestors, who migrated freely until industrialisation tied us to specific places. This urge to explore, they believe, is still deeply rooted in us. With time, the modern man exchanged the nomadic way of life for work in a factory and office, and the biggest move became transport to work. An average person gets to experience the true charm of travel only a few times a year, during a well-deserved vacation. The rapid technological advances that followed the first industrial revolution, especially the invention of the telephone, the Internet and digitalisation, began to change the world, the way we live and the way we work. The geographical bond began to loosen and, together with other impulses of postmodern man, the desire for a changed way of living and working began to awaken (ibid. 1997)

From the very first mention in 1997, various authors have tried to frame, define, and conceptualise the phenomenon: Hannonen (2020, 3) cites the initial findings:

"Digital nomadism has been considered as a form of creative tourism (Putra and Agirachman 2016) and a type of leisure activity (Reichenberger 2018), as a new type of location-independent workforce (Orel 2019; Wang et al. 2018) and as a new economic activity and cultural phenomenon (Wang et al., 2018)."

It is about people who travel while working, and pre-pandemic studies also defined it as a form of youth travel (Cook 2023). In addition, research finds that a digital nomad is a person who values autonomy very much and rejects the traditional nine-to-five work routine, commuting to work, and sitting in the office (Cook 2023; Hall et al. 2019; Hannonen 2021; Nash et al. 2018; Wang et al. 2018, 2020). The next thing that defines a digital nomad is, of course, the use of digital technologies and infrastructure in the context of work, and thus the formation of a new boundless identity (Cook 2020, 2023) that new technologies enable.

Moravec coins the term “knowmads” (2008, 2013) which refers to the new merging class of borderless, “new” workers and among them also digital nomads. The "knowmad" is a nomadic knowledge worker who is creative, adaptable, and capable of working with anyone, anywhere, at any time. They operate in a more flexible environment, where tasks are less defined by place. Advances in technology further support this flexibility, allowing work to occur in physical, virtual, or hybrid spaces. Knowmads can quickly adjust their work settings and methods, and this mobility opens up new possibilities in the evolving knowledge-driven economy.

According to the literature review, digital nomads are mostly entrepreneurs engaged in a whole range of activities; from digital marketing, writing blogs, business consulting, computer science, design, photography, administrative tasks, and the like. Some individuals work through short-term independent contracts, often participating in what is known as the gig economy (Nash et al. 2018), where they choose from market-offered jobs that are typically temporary. Digital nomads are ideal candidates in this case, as they have all the necessary skills, are independent, do not want a long-term contract and are available immediately.

As Moravec (2013) explains, in knowmad society, individuals distinguish between jobs and work. Jobs are positions or temporary engagements, while work is more long-term and focuses on producing meaningful outcomes. Unlike a career, which provides structure over a lifetime, a knowmad’s work consists of personally meaningful activities that they take full responsibility for. In other words, the impact, and outcomes of their work rest entirely on them.

If we talk about highly mobile individuals who possess diverse skills, are highly mobile and are creating an international network it is important to also mention the idea of network capital,

presented by John Urry (2007). He also deals with mobility, presenting the idea, which he believes is a modern version of social capital in today's world of greater mobility. If social capital is based on physical proximity, however, the essence of network capital is the ability to maintain relationships and obtain benefits (emotional, financial, and practical help) from people who may also be quite distant. This concept is made possible by new technologies and mobility that allow people to connect over longer distances. Network capital includes eight key elements such as technology, economics and social systems that enable mobility. It also encompasses the right documents, contacts, networking tools, meeting spaces, access to communication devices, transportation, and time to manage all the above. The importance of network capital is growing in proportion to the expansion of the Internet and mobile device use. Like Bourdieu's social capital, network capital is also associated with power and prestige, especially for those who travel a lot. Inequalities are created because of differences between people's ability to travel and interactions that favour more mobile ones. The essence of network capital, then, lies in the advantage gained by people who can network and are more mobile in a globalizing world. It is an important source of economic, symbolic, and cultural benefits (Mancinelli 2020, 17). It is in this capital that the potential for RIS may lie, which we will also try to highlight in the research.

Furthermore, Moravec adds a crucial point for our research:

"*Knowmads are valued for the personal knowledge that they possess, and this knowledge gives them a competitive advantage. Knowmads are also responsible for designing their own futures. This represents a massive shift from agricultural, industrial, and information-based work in which our relationships and responsibilities were static and clearly defined by others.*" (Moravec et al. 2013, 21).

He also notes that in the 21st century, employability heavily depends on individual talent. People who can innovate and adapt their skills across different areas will stimulate job growth, while those unable to do so risk being replaced by machines, outsourced, or surpassed by more flexible workers (Moravec et al. 2013).

Mancinelli (2020) summarises that digital nomads embody the search for meaning in life, by freeing themselves from a fixed job and exploring different places and cultures. The flexibility of online work is a fundamental condition for their life project. It is important to emphasise that the main difference between them and other remote workers is that they attribute to gaining cultural and personal experience through travelling the world.

Working from home and in another country does not always mean boundless enjoyment, as it is also necessary to survive and balance work and rest healthily. It has been shown that self-discipline and self-initiative are also very important in this form of work, as the limitlessness of working hours quickly meant overwork, various uncertainties, and increased loneliness (Miguel et al. 2023). On the other hand, due to the constant concern for productivity and the need for economic security, the balance between travel, work, and leisure is a complex equation that needs to be reconciled (Mancinelli 2020, 15).

Nevertheless, man is a social creature by nature and seeks connections with other like-minded people. There has been a tendency to choose specific destinations equipped with all the necessary infrastructure and favourable conditions for living and working. Entire communities of like-minded people began to form with the aim of mutual support, cooperation, and companionship (Chevtaeva 2021). This is also related to the process of gentrification – the repurposing of predominantly residential urban areas with a local population for tourism and services (Fran/search/gentrification, n.d.). The process is described by Giddens (1990) when he says that the processes that lead to the destruction of older urban neighbourhoods and their replacement by high-rise office blocks and skyscrapers often also allow for the gentrification of other areas and the emergence of new environments. It is a dual process that simultaneously involves the disappearance of the old and the transformation into new forms of urban areas, as the result of adapting to the changes brought about by the form of remote work. Coworking and co-living spaces began to appear, where all the necessary infrastructure for living and working in one place:

"The establishment of co-living spaces was a market response to the crisis of working conditions, which later affected the conventional meaning of the home, making it a cooperative and co-occurring practice: rather than being an escape from work, it is productive; Instead of being private, he's sociable; And instead of being long-term inhabited, it's mobile." (Chevtaeva 2021, 203)

The essence of such spaces is to offer nomads a sense of community and belonging in a new location. A sense of community is essential to their well-being, and it provides lower costs in addition to flexible co-living options. In this way, a dynamic workspace is created where individuals with different forms of work and skills can potentially collaborate and share ideas and experiences. Having everything they need in one place; they are often quite isolated from real life in their destination. Research has revealed an important finding: the practicality of these spaces brings benefits while also causing the segregation of nomads from the local population and culture (Chevtaeva 2021).

Many countries have already recognised the economic potential of the concept and are encouraging digital nomadism with visas that have attractive conditions of stay. Mancinelli (2020, 14) points out:

"The freedom of choice of these digital nomads was tied to some practical aspects that affected their mobility: the need for good connectivity, comfortable and affordable accommodation, shared jobs and, last but not least, an adequate visa."

Currently, there are believed to be around 35 million digital nomads in the world (Shewale 2023). On average, they are men in their thirties and mostly perform various assignments for various companies and as entrepreneurs, mostly in marketing (Cafieri 2022). Visas for digital nomads are offered by at least 58 countries around the world. (Johnson 2023). The legislation varies from country to country. It seems that only recently policies started revolving around the issue of regulation and legislation regarding this way of working, at least concerning labour taxation, insurance and so on.

According to a review of the existing literature, which sheds light on the phenomenon of the digital nomad from different perspectives, but not from the point of view of actors and their cognitive frameworks within regional innovation systems, the research on this phenomenon is very relevant from the perspective of a highly mobile, highly motivated knowledge carrier.

3. Socio-cultural context

Both Giddens (1990) and Ulrich Beck (1992) talk about how contemporary societies are increasingly marked by the risk and uncertainty arising from technological progress, environmental threats, and social change, and characterise the period of the late 20th century as reflexive modernity.

Giddens (1990, 53) distinguishes three dominant sources of modernity dynamics. The first is the separation of time and space, as the distance between them increases. The next dynamic is the mechanism of disembedding, which allows the transfer of activities from local settings to global ones, and social relations in this context can be formed over larger temporal and spatial distances. The third and final dynamic is reflexivity. All these qualities contribute to the uncertainty and riskiness of life in the modern world.

The individual and society are forced to constantly adapt to new social, environmental, and political circumstances, to self-reflection and quick reactions to these dynamics (Beck et al. 1994). To navigate the storm of change, one must rely on their skills and strengths, building on their knowledge and abilities. This leads to greater individualisation (Beck 2002). In the period of reflective modernity, traditional social structures are giving way to an increasing focus on individual autonomy, one's own choice of life courses, identity construction, and lifestyle choices (Giddens 1990).

Just as land was a key source of survival in a hunter-gatherer society, and later fossil fuels became a fundamental resource in the industrial age, today knowledge is the central source of survival for

modern man. Humanity has always used its knowledge to facilitate work, but in the modern age, the role of knowledge and its value in society has changed over time, especially in the context of the digital age and the advancement of technology. Historically, knowledge was often associated with manual labour and practical skills. With the advent of the Industrial Revolution and later the digital age, the emphasis shifted to intellectual work and knowledge, which became crucial for the implementation of new technologies and innovations (Beck 2000).

Beck (2000) further reflects on the nature of work in the changing circumstances of a globalising world and major technological advances. He also addresses the political economy of uncertainty, highlighting the reality of the end of the labour-driven society. Smart technologies such as artificial intelligence, automation and robotics are taking on more and more tasks that were once our exclusive domain. This is also reshaping our role and attitude towards work, knowledge, and technology, significantly impacting our social, economic and cultural dynamics. Knowledge has become a central source of power and progress in society. People's work is being replaced by smart technologies, and traditional employment structures with more precarious forms of work, and "lifelong" work is disappearing. Employment is becoming precarious, unstable and uncertain. Individualised forms of work, with temporary contracts, are emerging as demands for flexibility and easier dismissal of workers increase. The jobs offered become short-term and are easily terminated. More and more work is unregulated and flexible, and as a result, the labour society is turning into a risk society. There is uncertainty associated with this, as every job is subject to the threat of substitutability. Classic skills and knowledge of an individual quickly become outdated, making it essential to gain new knowledge to remain competitive in the labour market. No one dictates what you need to learn to stay relevant in the future. All the above leads to economic insecurity for most people, regardless of their economic position in society (ibid. 2000).

In his work, Baumann (2012) compares traditional modernity, characterized by permanence and rigidity, with the properties of solid materials, and the new modernity, defined by fluidity and impermanence, with the properties of liquids, coining it “liquid modernity”. The rigidity of traditional modernism limited man in his actions and individual choices. Baumann describes the process of change in liquid modernity as the melting of solids – all the characteristics that rigidly limited man in decisions, in his way of life, began to liquefy. Digital nomads embody many fundamental aspects of current modernity and can be considered one of the most "liquefied" individuals (Xiao and Lutz 2024, 4).

The emergence of new technologies is always associated with new skills that need to be acquired to compete in the labour market. Xiao and Lutz (2024, 2-3) state that Bauman also believes that the growth of the digital economy with an emphasis on entrepreneurship and innovation is an important aspect of the current modernity. One of the important characteristics of digital nomads is the mastery of digital skills and knowledge that allows them to work independently of time or location, as they can carry their work and tools wherever they go. The "liquid society" (Bauman 2000) is, so to say, the "revenge" of nomads since they are the only ones capable of mastering the fluid existence imposed by global neoliberalism, in which risk, uncertainty and individualism prevail. (Mancinelli 2020, 4)

An important factor in the existence of the digital nomad phenomenon is, among others, globalisation, which has enabled the free movement of people, goods and ideas. Globalisation is driven by modernity, which is evident in the characteristics of modern institutions, especially their detachment from local contexts and their reflective nature (Giddens 1990, 63). Modernity is characterised by a greater distance and separation between time and space compared to previous periods. The result is a stretching of relations between local and distant social phenomena. Globalisation essentially refers to these very processes, in which the links between different social contexts or regions are intertwined globally. Globalization may be interpreted as the intensified emergence of social relations that connect distant locations in such a way that events from another part of the world affect local events and vice versa (ibid., 64). Both Beck and Giddens speak of the detaching process of the individual from rigid and fixed local contexts. Globalisation, the

transience of borders, and technological developments, especially communication technologies and digitalisation, have enabled a new, flexible form of work that is not tied to a specific location. With globalisation, technological progress and related social changes, individuals begin to focus on themselves and shaping their own identity. Beck (2002) describes the distancing of one's identity from traditionality because of the previously described changes in reflexive modernity, with the term individualisation. An individual is constantly weighing, making decisions, and looking for ways to make sense of their lives, making this reflexivity the main feature of modern society (Giddens 1991).

Mancinelli (2020) states that Beck (1992) speaks of the individualisation of the individual in three ways: by moving away from traditional roles and creating new freedom, by losing the security that old norms and knowledge brought, and by creating new ways of re-engaging in new circumstances, contexts, and accepting the responsibilities of the newly formed freedom. Nowadays, individuals make decisions that bring certain risks that have been mitigated by communities and social groups in traditional societies. Nowadays, everyone must face the uncertainties that result from their own choices, and in doing so, life becomes a project of constant, not necessarily voluntary, choices.

Mancinelli (2020) further notes that in this context of search and decision-making, digital nomads break free from the rigid circumstances of traditional forms of work that do not satisfy them, in exchange for a freer way. In their story, there is unfastening – that is, their mobility, a key part of their identity and way of life. Mobility allows digital nomads to create their own life circumstances that define their lives as an individualistic project of self-realization, or as Giddens (1991) calls it—a reflective project of the self. Their mobility defines their lifestyle and becomes an element that distinguishes them from other individuals. The freedom that comes with such a lifestyle is inevitably linked to creativity in maintaining financial security by working remotely. An individual must have the qualities that enable him to live such a life, he must be very resourceful, and flexible, he must be a good entrepreneur, productive and willing to take a lot of risks.

The real drastic change in the way we perceive the workplace naturally occurred with the Covid-19 pandemic, in 2020, when the whole world was under great pressure from the spread of a new form of the virus (Xiao and Lutz 2024). For many, work moved from the office to home, and we were forced to find ways to get the job done. Many have found new freedom in this way of working, which has saved them from the schedule, commuting to work and the daily stress associated with it. People designed their working day, possibly coordinated work with the needs of school-age children and do the work when possible. The shift toward flexible working hours has demonstrated that tasks can be effectively completed without traditional schedules. Post-pandemic, many individuals have embraced work models that prioritize flexibility, enabling a lifestyle unbound by geographical constraints and reducing the stress associated with modern commuting. This approach allows the coordination of professional responsibilities with personal aspirations, minimising the time spent on daily travel between home and workplace. This way of working is currently possible only for a segment of people who master certain skills of the digitised world. All they need to do their job successfully is a good internet connection, computer equipment, and knowledge (Hannonen 2020).

Ever since the concept of modern nomadism was first mentioned, research has sought to frame the phenomenon from different perspectives. Stereotypically, most people imagine the modern nomad as someone who does their work while lying in a hammock while working on a laptop.

4.Theoretical framework

In the research, we will replace the concept of the "destination" of the digital nomad (region, city within a certain region) with the concept of regional innovation systems, which is an interconnected whole of mutually cooperating structures – social fields, as first identified by

Bourdieu (Hilgers and Mangez 2014). Social fields (Bourdieu 1986) have their own norms and rules according to which the actors within them operate and harmonise their cognitive frames. The table below shows the theoretical foundation for designing a model of cognitive frames and consequently a methodological instrument for its verification the development.

Table 1: Theoretical foundation for the design of the model of cognitive frames

Theoretical foundation	**Concepts, foundation for the design of the research instrument (interview questions)**
Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens: Risk Society Theory, Theory of Reflexive Modernity Zygmund Bauman: Theory of Liquid Modernity John Urry: Theories of mobility	Socio-cultural context – an analysis of the circumstances that contributed to the emergence of the concept and of the social field of DN.
Anthony Giddens: Structuration Theory	The actor and his agency in society (actor-structure relationship, focus on the actor, whose property is action and is a carrier of resources and predispositions)
Erving Goffman: Frame analysis; concept of frames	Interpretation of reality, how interpretations affect motivation and adaptations of cognitive frames within social fields. Actors' actions, ways of transferring skills and knowledge, and interactions.
Pierre Bourdieu: Theory of Social Practice; Concepts of habitus, field and forms of capital.	The positions of digital nomads within the RIS (social fields) and the influence of predispositions and social capital on the motivation for knowledge transfer.
Jens Beckert: The theory of Social fields	Regional Innovation Systems as Social Fields (Interactions: Institutions, Relationships, Cognitive Frames)

Source: own design

To create a theoretical framework for this research several theories were taken into consideration to position the digital nomad as an actor within regional innovation systems, shedding light on its operation from different angles. If an individual's cognitive frames serve as the foundation for their motivation, decision-making, and ultimately their actions, it is essential to consider various factors and stimuli that influence their functioning.

First, we will look at the actor's actions in regional innovation systems through the prism of Giddens' (1984) structural theory. With this theory, we can explain how innovation processes are socially constructed and we can better understand how the actions of individuals and Organizations (components within the system) affect the structural features of the region. Rončević and Besednjak Valič (2019) list the more important theories of regional innovation systems (RIS). According to Cooke et al. (1997), who is also considered to be the first to coin the term in 1992 (Asheim et al. 2011), regional innovation systems are interconnected networks of companies, organisations, institutions, and individuals within a given geographical area that collaborate and exchange knowledge to create and use innovations. These systems are characterised by dynamic interactions between different actors, including businesses, universities, research institutes, government agencies and other stakeholders. Further, Asheim and Coenen (2005) define the concept as clusters of industries surrounded by organisations that support innovation. So, it's a network of companies and institutions in a specific area that work together and develop new ideas and technologies. Almeida et al. (2011), argue that RIS is a key concept of regional development, derived from the concept of national innovation systems,

emphasising the importance of interactions between actors for fostering innovation. An innovation system is a set of actors that cooperate with the main goal of creating innovation. In this structure, an important factor is both the individual and the actor and the bearer of a certain value in the knowledge and skills that he exchanges in the interaction, as well as the institutional arrangements that these actions and the actions of the actor's co-shape.

In his research on strategies for attracting digital nomads, Zhou uses a theoretical approach in which the destination is an innovation system in which innovation occurs at the levels of actors and structure (Zhou et al. 2024). In his research, he mainly deals with how structures (destinations/systems) work innovatively in the direction of transforming and attracting actors – digital nomads. Zhou et al. (ibid.) illustrate how entrepreneurs, businesses and organisations work towards fostering innovation locally and internationally. According to Hjalager (2010, in Zhou et al. 2024), applying the innovation dimension of the destination in the context of digital nomadism shows how destinations can innovate in areas such as product or service offering, management and marketing. These innovations are part of a broader destination innovation system that includes both actor innovation and structural innovation. Actor-based innovation refers to initiatives by individuals to increase their capacities, while structural innovation involves transformative processes and institutional changes that increase the overall competitiveness of destinations (ibid.). In our research, based on the actor-structure theory (Giddens 1984), we will focus on the other side, i.e. on the actor and his agency within the system. We will explore him as a carrier of resources and knowledge and as an active, reflective individual.

Next, we will examine the digital nomad in the structure of the regional innovation system through the approach of social fields, developed by Beckert (2010). The Social Fields Approach (SOFIA) is a conceptualisation and operationalisation approach for empirical research that uses Beckert's variant of social field theory. By his theory, we understand empirical reality as a social field shaped by three social forces: institutions, social networks, and cognitive frameworks. While Beckert used this approach to analyse markets as social domains, it can also be used as an approach to analyse other social domains (Rončević and Cepoi 2022, 10).

As already mentioned, Beckert (2010) describes the market as a social field and presents its three structures. The first component is the network structure since the fields are made up of specific structures of social networks that create power differences between its components. The second component is regulatory institutional rules that allow and support certain types of behaviour while discouraging others. The third is the cognitive frameworks, which provide the mental organisation of the social environment and thus contribute to order. Actors interpret institutions and social structures according to their cognitive frameworks, as the rules are never so specific that actions and responses are predetermined in a specific situation. Indeed, theorists have shown that similar rules can lead to very different behaviours based on different interpretations of the implications of these rules in a particular situation (Edelman et al. 1999; Jackson 2005, ibid.)

Cognitive frameworks equip actors of the social field with appropriately adapted mental tools. Such a set of tools primarily enables the recognition and later correct behaviour when it comes to interpretations of events that were designed and strongly important for the development of the social field (Rončević and Besednjak Valič 2019, 332). Based on the theory of social fields, we will thus explore the forces that act on the manifestation of the cognitive frames of digital nomads in regional innovation systems. In this way, we will gain insight into their mental schemes regarding specific topics, which in turn can enable other actors and institutions to better understand and facilitate bilateral adaptation of cognitive frameworks and rules in social fields within the RIS.

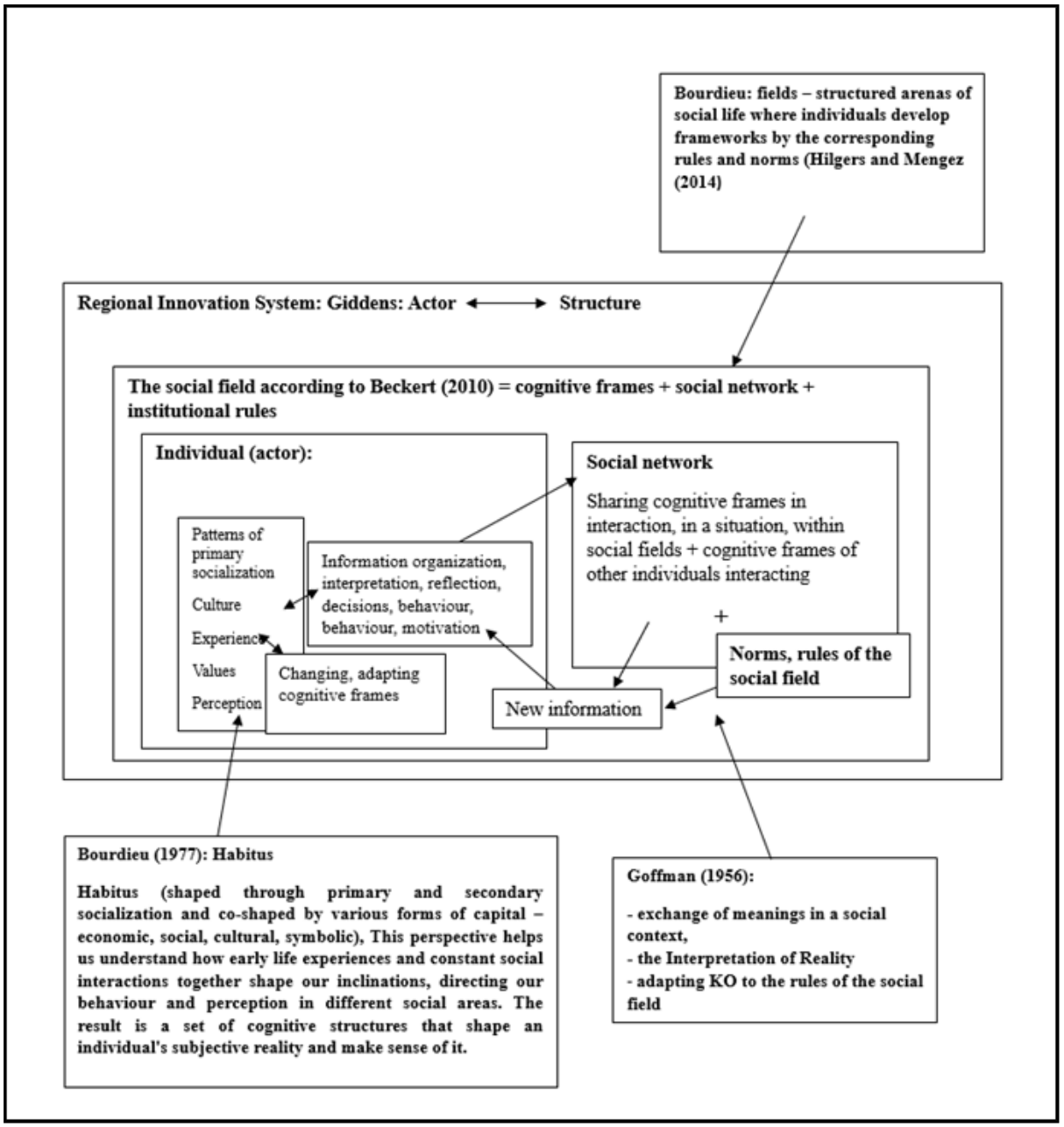
The theories of Goffman and Bourdieu are also further explored. If Giddens (1984) identifies the actor as a carrier of knowledge and resources, we will shed light on this through Bourdieu's (1977) theory of habitus. In this way, we will gain insight into the actor's predispositions and forms of capital that motivate him as such and equip him to act, especially in terms of knowledge and skills transfer. Through Goffman's (1956, 1974) theory, we can then study the interactions

between actors within social fields, interpretations of reality, and the adaptation of cognitive frameworks.

Various theorists have attempted to conceptualise the way human reality and cognition are formed from different angles. Ziem (2014) mentions that both cognitive psychology and sociology use frameworks and schemas as analytic categories to describe the structures of knowledge that help people interpret data from experience. In both scientific disciplines, the use of the term framework is said to have arisen independently and practically simultaneously. In sociology, they were first introduced by Goffman (1974), inspired by Bateson (1955), and in cognitive psychology by Filmore in 1968, as an extension of Bartlett (1932). In subsequent works, the two traditions intertwined, and the fact of the different origins of the frame theories was blurred. Sullivan (2023) proposes three types of framing, while also defining their origins: semantic frames, cognitive frames, and communication frames. Goffman (1974) defines the concept of frames as a structure that allows subjects to interpret and understand the social world around them and communicate about their reality. According to Minsky (1988, in Ziem 2014), perceptions and understanding of language are extremely complex cognitive processes. In his view, every perceptual experience activates some structure—a framework that we have acquired through past experiences, and we have many of them in our experiences. Minsky imagines the boxes as an application form with many blank fields and slots that need to be filled out. Since many of the slots of such a form are already determined by default assumptions, the frames resemble stereotypical data structures that govern the processes of understanding and are stored in long-term memory. Strydom (2009) points out that Pierre Bourdieu also made an important contribution to the cognitive component of human action when he summed up his intention in a single sentence, namely that his intention is to include in the object the knowledge that the actors who are part of the object have about the object and the contribution that this knowledge makes to the reality of the object.

With the scheme below, we transparently show the social field, which, according to Beckert (2010), consists of social forces (social network, institutional rules, cognitive frameworks), and according to Bourdieu (1977), the arenas of social life where individuals develop frames in accordance with the corresponding rules and norms. With the theories of Bourdieu, we can explain the complexity of cognitive frames, which are the sum of primary socialization-acquired patterns and experiences, values and perceptions called habitus. Individuals possess various forms of capital (economic, cultural, social), which they exchange in different situations and measure their power and influence. In a social context, according to Goffman (1956), it means interaction, following the rules of the social field, exchanged, and returned in the form of feedback to the actor, who then alters and adapts cognitive frameworks through the interpretation of reality and reflection.

Diagram 1: Schematic representation of the model of cognitive frames



Source: own design

With an introductory analysis of the socio-cultural context, we can better understand the circumstances that led to the phenomenon of digital nomads. Bourdieu's (1977) theoretical basis on habitus and the social and cultural capital that digital nomads possess is also of great importance in model design. In primary socialisation, predispositions for ways of thinking, worldview and interpretation of reality are formed. It is this part that is very important in the model we are designing, for understanding their motivations, decisions and actions.
In addition, Goffman's theory (1956) is also crucial, explaining the exchange of meanings in social contexts and the adaptation of cognitive frameworks within social fields. Digital nomads are a complex social group, constantly adapting to changing circumstances.
We analyse nomads as actors in the structure with the theoretical basis of Anthony Giddens'
His Structuration Theory emphasises the inseparability of the actor and the structure that enables the action of the actors that are at the same time the result of these actions. In addition, it theorises

about the actor's actions, motivations and predispositions and resources that actors possess and influence their decisions.
Furthermore, we understand RIS as a social field, which, according to Beckert (2010), is shaped by three forces: social networks, rules and cognitive frames. Actors adapt cognitive frames by considering and internalising the rules of the social field and the cognitive frames of the social network. The frames adapted in this way are again clamped into the net. In this way, the field is reproduced but also changed. It is at this point that we want to find out how their cognitive frameworks manifest themselves and also in relation to the motivation to share skills and knowledge that can potentially contribute to innovation in RIS.

Conclusion

Digital nomads are extremely relevant to sociological research, as they are the result of broader social changes that affect changing life courses and individualisation. These changes occurred due to trends such as globalization and the development of technology. Consequently, they also impacted the labour market.
Digital nomadism is a new, relatively little-explored phenomenon that has emerged due to specific circumstances in society. This new form of living and working attracts researchers from different disciplines. The phenomenon is explored from the perspective of tourism, work, and mobility, as well as economics, urbanism and consumerism, and last but not least, sociology.
Individuals such as digital nomads have become actors in their life narrative and as such are carriers of ambition, motivation and many skills. Their non-traditionality is reflected in the lifestyle they have chosen with a considerable degree of risk. With our research, we will obtain data on how they are involved in the global economy and what is their motivation to act towards the transfer of the knowledge they possess. This potentially means an opportunity for destination destinations to tap into their potential by aligning cognitive frames. In addition, they would point to the fact that the role of the state and its policies is to set the rules for them in a way that would benefit both parties. As also pointed out by Chevtaeva and Denizci-Guillet (2021), the fact that policymakers understand the nature and profile of the digital nomad (Sánchez-Vergara et al. 2023) is of paramount importance. The characteristics of the cognitive frames of digital nomads are greatly important for the coordination and alignment of frames with other actors within the social fields of RIS, resulting in potential policy adaptation or creation.
Wolfe (2005) points out that the RIS literature has paid relatively little attention to the labour force and labour force development processes, although this is now emerging as an important factor for the competitiveness of the regions. However, the ability to attract, train and retain talent in specific locations depends on the quality of the labour market and the characteristics of places, institutions, and policies (Asheim et al. 2011, 886).
The role of state policy is to take nomads out of the context of tourism and "lifestyle" and place them in a new context - a new form of mobile professional with specific skills that benefit the state in certain circumstances and based on mutually imposed policies. Such a change in the social sphere is possible through the mutual influence of institutions, networks, and cognitive frames (Beckert 2010 in Rončević and Besednjak Valič 2019). Therefore, the state should establish ideal conditions for the stay of digital nomads, but also determine the ways of cooperating and use their potential. Since Slovenia does not have a visa for digital nomads, our research may contribute to potential solutions.

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