



Wednesday, March 29, 2023

Relative downward mobility among digital nomads from developing countries

Shahanaz Parven, University of Palermo

Abstract

In the typical understanding of digital nomadism and international migration, workers are more detached from their employers thanks to smart working, and they prefer to relocate to countries where the cost of living is lower and Internet connectivity is higher. This presentation introduces findings from a study that shows a different position – that digital nomadism may lead individuals to travel from countries with very low costs of living to countries with higher costs of living while working for employers who are located in a third category of countries that are even wealthier than the second. A certain proportion of digital nomads comprises skilled workers, such as software engineers and researchers from developing countries, who live in places where the cost of living is very low. Upon receiving an offer from an employer in a wealthy country, such as in the United Kingdom or the United States, such a worker could decide to move to the country of the employer and subject themselves to very high costs of living. In relative terms, this would nullify the increase in income that the worker would have enjoyed if they had remained in their country of origin and had there found a job in the same sector. Instead, they move to countries with costs of living somewhere in the middle.

Biography

Shahanaz Parven is a PhD candidate in Migration Studies at the University of Palermo where she is writing a dissertation on the subject of international migration from Bangladesh to Europe, focusing on the gender aspects of family reunification and irregular migration. Shahanaz has participated in several conferences in Europe and Asia, and speaks Bengali, Russian, Hindi, and Italian.