Research Article

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Safe Places of Integration: Female Migrants from Eurasia in Lisbon, Portugal

Abstract: The article works with *(Re)Searching Needs and Hope through Visual Storytelling* which is the author's audiovisual research project containing interviews with migrants of Lisbon, the capital of Portugal. The same set of questions was asked of people with different nationalities to identify the similarities and differences within their integration process; the questions focused on the socio-cultural aspects of integration. The article compares the participants' answers regarding what helped or hindered their integration experience. The article relates these outcomes to what contributes to a migrant's feeling of safety in a new home country. The main concepts used are "integration," applying differentiating levels of integration experience, and "safe place," which originated from Yi-Fu Tan, but have been interpreted through a wide socio-cultural lens in the conclusion.

Keywords: migration, integration, home, safe place, Lisbon, Portugal

1 Introduction

The article explores the experiences of Eurasian female migrants residing in Lisbon, Portugal, based on the author's research project. Through individual interviews, participants from diverse national and cultural backgrounds share their journeys, highlighting how their integration into a new country is influenced by more than economic factors alone. The study delves into these women's self-narrated life stories, focusing on how sociocultural aspects, safety, and belonging shape their integration. By concentrating on the voices of Eurasian women, this article aims to broaden the understanding of what it means to create a "safe place" for integration in Portugal, enriching the discourse around migration in a multicultural context.

This article works with *(Re)Searching Needs and Hope through Visual Storytelling* (Koncz, 2023-2024), an audiovisual research project that contains interviews with migrants of Lisbon. The article's author created the project and interviewed the participants individually. The same questions are asked of people from different nationalities and socio-cultural backgrounds. The questions can provide a starting point for understanding the experiences and perspectives of migrants and can help to shed light on what has helped or hindered their integration into a new country. The answers can bring us closer to understanding the cultural practices and societal elements assisting one's integration. The project contains audiovisual interviews with participants from many different countries who reside in Lisbon, asking them to elaborate on the social and cultural aspects of their integration experience. The aim was to have participants elaborate on their subjective narrative of living in another country, away from their origins. It is important to note that this qualitative research works with interviews conducted as a sample of convenience; the goal of the project's first phase was to interview people from Europe and Asia living in Lisbon, and the second phase of the project focused on

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migrants from America and Africa. The interviews were conducted individually, and the interviewees were found through ethnic, cultural, and social associations.

The purpose of the research project is to analyse how a person's integration process in Portugal is not only determined by their economic condition but by several other factors as well. The project explores self-narrated life stories. Educational biographies provide a way to learn from personal narratives, offering an alternative form of education through engaging anecdotes and insightful analyses (Dominicé, 2000). Additionally, this biographical approach is used not only in the educational field but also in the cultural context of multiculturalism and migration (Keating & Solovova, 2011).

Before the article dives into the integration experiences of the selected migrants, let us have a brief overview of the migration landscape of Portugal. Portugal has served as both a source and destination for migrants, with an increasing number of people from various regions moving to the country in recent years. As of 2022, approximately 781,000 foreign citizens resided in Portugal, making up 7.4% of the population. Among these foreign nationals, around 30.7% were from Brazil (Machado & Lopes, 2023). Other significant migrant groups include Cape Verdeans, Indians, Angolans, Ukrainians, Nepalis, Bissau-Guineans, Romanians, Chinese, Bangladeshis, São Toméans, Pakistanis, US citizens, Venezuelans, Russians, and Moldovans.

One of the historical reasons for migration to Portugal is its colonial legacy, which has led to migration from PALOP (Portuguese-speaking African countries). Besides the colonial past, strong economic, legal, and cultural ties bring migration from Brazil. These flows make up the "Lusophone migratory system" (Peixoto, 2004). Another main migratory factor is the economy; Portugal has attracted migrants in search of better economic opportunities from Asia, particularly from China, India, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Pakistan, due to attractive immigration policies. Economic migration also arrives from East European countries. Geopolitics is also relevant in the migration landscape, and political instability, conflicts, and wars in regions such as North Africa and the Middle East have also driven migration flows to Portugal. Moreover, the European Union membership of Portugal has also facilitated intra-EU migration, with citizens from other EU countries moving to Portugal for work, retirement, or lifestyle reasons. (Góis & Marques, 2018).

In general, Portugal is an attractive destination for migrants and remote workers because of its weather, work-life balance (OECD Better Life Index, 2024), safety, free health care, affordable cost of living in the capital (NUMBEO Cost of Living Index, 2024), and relatively non-strict migration laws. Another factor is that remote work is fully implemented in Portugal, and English is widely spoken (EF EPI, 2023). Finally, the presence of universities and educational institutions and the country's growing tourism sector have attracted students and workers from various parts of the world.

In Portugal, there is a more dominant discourse on the post-colonialist legacy of migrations than on the migrant flows from Asia and Europe; therefore, this article focuses on migrants from these areas.[1] As this article does not work with facts, economic data, and numbers related to migration, it does not dive deeper into Portugal's migration-related statistics. It focuses on the common patterns in the interviewees' answers about the sociocultural aspects of their integration experience. This article is a comparative analysis of Euroasian female migrants' integration experiences, focusing on what a safe place of integration means to them in Lisbon.

It is crucial to clarify in what sense the article works with the concept of integration and safety. The concept of "integration" is a base of extensive debates among scholars and policymakers. In the EU, comparisons of integration across member states typically focus on four areas: employment, education, social inclusion, and active citizenship. These comparisons are based on data from sources like the EU Labor Force Survey and PISA (Eurostat, 2019; OECD, 2013). Additionally, some researchers adopt a spatial perspective, examining the sense of "belonging in place," which involves understanding and finding the basic places of daily needs, such as shops, health centres, and institutions (Åkerlund & Sandberg, 2014). Moreover, interpersonal interactions or connections – often formed through social networks – build community and foster inclusion. These interactions with natives and fellow migrants are crucial for developing the sense of belonging (Esteves & Rauhut, 2023).

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1 It is important to note that Macau, the small administrative region of China, was also a Portuguese colony.

The concept of safety for migrants includes a wide spectrum of physical, psychological, social, and economic dimensions. Physically, safety involves protection from violence and exploitation (Zimmerman et al., 2011). Healthcare access is fundamental to physical safety (World Health Organization, 2018). Access to education and vocational training also plays an important role in securing long-term economic stability (OECD, 2019). Socially, safety involves the inclusion and integration into the host community, including protection from discrimination, xenophobia, and social exclusion (Berry, 2008). Moreover, psychologically, migrants often experience uncertainty and anxiety about their legal status, which can affect their overall sense of security. Therefore, migrants need legal safety and reliable information about their rights and available services to navigate their new environment safely (Castles et al., 2014).

From a humanistic perspective, emotional connection to places is also an important integration factor. This context is connected to the thoughts of Fi-Yu Tuan, the Chinese-American geographer and humanist. His work from the '70s is profoundly relevant in today's tumultuous world marked by refugee crises, political turmoil, and the effects of climate change. Amidst these challenges, migrants particularly struggle with a sense of displacement and disconnection from their surroundings. To aid migrants effectively, it is crucial to grasp Tuan's concept of "topophilia": a deep attachment to specific places shaped by social and cultural factors. Migrants often experience a deep sense of loss and nostalgia for their homeland, reflecting their strong emotional bonds with their place of origin. This attachment can influence their ability to integrate into new environments. As migrants settle in new places, they start to develop new attachments. Creating a sense of place in a new environment is essential for their psychological well-being and successful integration (Tuan, 1990).

The article aims to comprehend migrants' profound ties to the community and belonging rooted in their socioeconomic and cultural contexts. Based on the subjective integration-related stories of the interview project participants, this article aims to widen the perspective of what safety means in the context of migration. This article focuses on the 13 Eurasian female participants of the project *(Re)Searching Needs and Hope through Visual Storytelling* (Koncz, 2023-2024). The female interviewees are between their mid-twenties and mid-thirties, and they have lived in Lisbon for between 4 months and 8 years. They are from Russia (artist), Armenia (PhD student), Italy (teacher), Slovenia (PhD student), Poland (remote worker), Singapore (on a work break), Uzbekistan (remote worker), China (PhD student), Ukraine (remote worker), Kazakhstan (tattoo artist), Nepal (office assistant) and Pakistan (digital nomad); and one from a multicultural background, from Indian and Thai-Malay parents, born and raised in Singapore (educator).

Many of the research participants did not arrive directly from their home country but from another place where they had lived before. The Polish participant lived in Spain before, the Slovenian in France, the Uzbek in Israel, and the Russian in the Netherlands. Some directly arrived from residing in another country: the Russian participant from Georgia, the Armenian and the Uzbek ones from Russia, and the Kazakh one from the Czech Republic. Moreover, the Nepalese participant arrived in Lisbon from Malta. These movements between countries reflect the globalised contemporary reality with remote work options. Besides study and work opportunities, the Polish girl refers to her Portuguese partner as motivation for moving here, and the Pakistani participant mentions easy emigration law as a reason for her relocation. In the case of the Ukrainian interviewee, the need to escape from the war caused her to settle in Portugal. These movements and motives highlight the globalised trend of relocating and living in multicultural communities. The participants can be considered cosmopolitans who have a kind of transnational identity where one's sense of self is not only defined by local or national affiliations but is instead connected to global humanity in a broad sense. (Kleingeld, 2019).

This article chose to focus on the completed first phase of the project, the Eurasian participants. There is less of a dominant investigation on migrants from Eurasia than on migrants from ex-Portuguese colonies in Portugal. Also, what makes this subgroup integration different is that they do not have such a strong historical, cultural or linguistic tie with Portugal as the ex-colonies do. The choice of focusing on the female participants of the interview project is because safety has many dimensions for women arriving alone in a new country. They can not only be discriminated against by their foreign status but can also be victims of gender-based violence. It is important to note that it is difficult to predict whether these individuals will remain in Portugal or are temporary migrants. Scholars have not reached a consensus on the duration that qualifies one as a non-

temporal migrant, with some suggesting more than 6 months (Warnes 1991), while others argue that migration involves stays of over a year (Jordan & Düvell, 2003).

The project participants are not classified as digital nomads (except the Pakistan participant who came to Portugal on a digital nomad Visa) because some are employed by local companies, others by local educational institutions, and many are remote workers. Unlike digital nomads, remote workers typically have a fixed home base and often hold a full-time contract tied to their country of residence despite not working in a traditional office setting. Portugal ranks 6th in the global index of remote work. (Nordlayer Global Remote Work Index, 2024). Remote workers, digital nomads, entrepreneurial migrants, and lifestyle migrants are all connected to the profound social changes that started in the late twentieth century. In the post-traditionalist era, social roles are no longer rigidly assigned by society. Social differentiation is now less tied to a fixed hierarchy, allowing individuals more freedom from social structures and categories and for a more "individualised" movement within society (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002).

2 Comparison between Portugal and Home Country

About the main differences between the home country and Portugal, participants from Ukraine, Slovenia, Poland, and Singapore all highlighted a common positive observation: a less accelerated pace of life in Portugal. Additionally, the Ukrainian, Slovenian and Polish respondents mentioned that Portuguese people are more open and helpful and show more emotions than they observed in their home countries. Moreover, several respondents underscored the importance of safety as a differentiating factor between their countries of origin and Portugal. This emphasis on safety carries particular weight for young women contemplating their choice of residence regarding their well-being. For instance, individuals from Pakistan and Russia consider Lisbon a safe place compared to their places of origin. In the words of the Pakistani participant:

> [...] The differences I would say primarily as a woman, the major difference between my country and Portugal is that I feel safe here, and safety starts from being able to just walk out of my apartment at any hour of the day or night and being able to do grocery shopping without the fear of someone harassing me or hurting me or violating my space and my privacy. This is the biggest difference. And then also the other big difference I feel is I know that it's hard to trust strangers generally, especially when you're in a foreign country, but I find it easier to trust other people rather than I would if I was in my own country. And it is because of this trust that I have found it very easy to settle here, and I have had a lot of help from locals (...) So my daily routine here is much more different from Pakistan. There, I was mostly just stuck at home; I wasn't able to move out, and the other good thing about being in Portugal is that I'm able to use public transports, so I have a lot of autonomy. I have a proper social life, which was non-existent in Pakistan. (Koncz, 2024a, 11th interview, 02:30-03:32, 06:50-07:00)

The Russian interviewee shares the view of Lisbon as a safe place:

> I think Portugal is actually the best in Europe, where I feel myself at home because I'm from Russia but I'm from a village in Russia. I'm like, mostly I grew up in a village and everybody is very chill and relaxed, people know each other and like people spend a lot of time outside and when I live in a big city it's really a different like mindset that everybody is around. So here in Portugal is more I feel a bit like in a village sometimes. I spend hours just looking at the sky or trees, and then I go out, and I can talk to random person outside, and it feels very like comfortable and safe in this space. Everything is a sort of community. Yeah, and at the same time, it's a big city. I mean, compared like in European scale, it's a big city. So it's a nice compromise ... I really feel a connection with the city. I feel very safe, and I'm not afraid of anything. I really feel like home somehow. (Koncz, 2024c, 18th Interview, 01:30-02:30, 10:10-10:20).

The Armenian interviewee also mentioned that she feels at home in her neighbourhood in Lisbon, and the Polish one said that she did not feel at home in Poland or Spain (where she resided before), but she does in Portugal.

3 Social and Cultural Aspects of Integration

The participants' daily life's most important cultural and social events pointed at a diverse range of activities. For instance, the Armenian participant finds joy in visiting a local cafe:

> I go to a neighbourhood cafe next to my house where I have already (...) I know people there already and that's just beautiful because most of them are 70 plus. I have a friend, she is 90. I had a coffee with her today and she paid for my coffee because she said that she didn't see me for a while and she missed me ... I sort of feel like I'm at home in a way, and that's nice; yes, that's a very important ritual ... And also, this is the place where I practice my Portuguese [...] (Koncz, 2023b, 3rd Interview, 10:26-11:47).

Some of the participants are engaged in social projects or volunteering. The Italian one actively participates in the non-profit association Sirigaita, which is dedicated to social issues, such as addressing housing crises and supporting marginalised populations. She says: "I try to be able to create something with people. It's not always easy, but it gives me a sense of accomplishment, it gives me a sense of belonging, and I really need that because I grew up in a community, and I want to stay within a community." (Koncz, 2023a, 1st interview, 09:00–09:14). The Polish participant finds greater social engagement through participating in marches, national celebrations, and manifestations. She is an active member of the cooperative Rizoma, which focuses on ecological and socially inclusive democracy, including selling locally sourced organic vegetables.

All participants engage in various artistic practices, contributing significantly to their integration into the local culture. The Chinese participant, for instance, has become a stand-up comedian in Lisbon, regularly performing for both Portuguese and international audiences. Notably, the Pakistani and Uzbek women met and formed a friendship within a local photo club called StreetPhoto LX, where they frequently embark on photo excursions in and around the city. Local drawing events have also proven to be an essential hub for migrant integration, with the Russian, Slovenian, and Kazakh participants consistently participating in drawing workshops. According to the Singaporean interviewee, these experiences contribute to the feeling of connectedness within the city, "where it's very hard for you to be lonely or alone" (Koncz, 2024b, 12th Interview, 08:49–08:55).

Moreover, music and dancing are important for fostering integration; the Russian participant started to make music in Lisbon, debuting in the underground venue, Desterro; the Polish got involved in a choir; the interviewee from a multicultural background started to organise music classes for babies and poetry sessions for adults, and the Singaporean participant immerses herself in Salsa dancing. There is a rich and engaging local scene of non-profit or donation-based social and cultural activities in Lisbon, contributing to one feeling integrated and, therefore, safe in a new place, as they provide the feeling of belonging.

4 Supporting Factors of Integration

One of the questions asked was about an interaction that has helped the interviewee feel more integrated into the local community. Both the Uzbek and Slovenian participants praised the hospitality of Portuguese people and spoke of the cultural significance of sharing long Portuguese dinners with friends. The Slovenian participant even had the heartwarming experience of being invited to celebrate Christmas with her local neighbours, who welcomed her with open arms and shared their traditions. The Pakistani participant described the kindness of her local Airbnb host, who offered to serve as her guarantor for a long-term rental after just 17 days of acquaintance and communication via Google Translate despite the language barrier. The Italian participant shared an emotional encounter: "I was walking with some friends, and I had this shawl on me, and he says, Fadista (traditional Portuguese female musician)! And I felt like I felt it was the funniest thing. But I also felt a little bit of a wink from the Portuguese people; they were like, 'You got this!'" (Koncz, 2023a, 1st Interview, 12:45–13:17).

Some participants point to local communities that have been instrumental in fostering integration for newcomers, such as the photography group, the stand-up comedy community, the food cooperative, the photo

club, and the drawing club. These diverse local communities consist of both local and migrant members, offering an ideal entry point for integration into Lisbon.

Some interviewees highlight the importance of online platforms for meeting new people and community building. The Armenian and the Ukrainian participants detailed their positive experience with Tinder, emphasising that while they didn't find a romantic partner, the dating app helped them establish friendships in their new city. Meetup is a frequently referenced platform by the participants, serving as a social media platform for local events, gatherings, and workshops. In addition, Facebook groups play a significant role in helping migrants. Participants have identified groups such as the Russian-speaking community in Lisbon and Girls Gone International, a female expat community in the city, as valuable resources for building connections and finding support.

5 Difficulties in Integration

Most participants identify bureaucracy as the primary obstacle they encounter in Lisbon. The Armenian, Kazakh, Uzbek, and Chinese participants all refer to the Immigration and Border Service because of the difficulties in reaching them via telephone or navigating communication barriers, as English is often not spoken. There are also language-related challenges regarding healthcare access, tax authority, and energy providers, as participants from Singapore and Pakistan reported. The Singaporean participant acknowledges the situation's complexity, as she has found that people can be both helpful and unhelpful in interactions with authorities, particularly when she attempted to change her address with the Tax Authority. She used Google Translate, but the administrator refused to look at her phone to identify her issue to be solved.

Furthermore, the participants from Pakistan and Italy have encountered challenges with lengthy waiting times when attempting to access healthcare services. Meanwhile, the Polish, Chinese, and Singaporean participants have underscored the necessity of cultivating patience when navigating the bureaucracy of obtaining a healthcare number or registering with a doctor. They noted that, unfortunately, these bureaucratic processes can delay one's legal status in Portugal. The Italian participant believes that Europeans, especially Italians, have an easier time navigating bureaucracy in Lisbon than other migrants. She also benefited from the European Voluntary Service, which assisted her in opening a bank account and obtaining a tax number. The Polish participant reported a similar experience; she said she had no negative experience as a migrant because she is in a privileged situation as a European white woman who does not have to deal with a lot of bureaucracy related to her migrant status.

Based on these interview answers, bureaucracy also contributes to the feeling of uncertainty for migrants in their new homes. In some cases, bureaucracy can be combined with racism and xenophobia, making it hard to access a social service, although it is hard to untangle the exact cause of the problem. The participant from a mixed background (from Indian and Thai-Malay parents, born and raised in Singapore) reported about her difficult situation when she called an ambulance because of her recurrent asthma episode:

> When I was finally taken to the hospital, the lady there didn't really care about me. I was at the triage because you're supposed to give them your details before they can refer you to a doctor. I didn't speak any Portuguese at the time. I asked her if she could help me because I was not breathing. Her whole body language showed me that she really didn't care about me because it was about 3 in the morning. Of course, I was looking so dishevelled; I was looking so messy. I hate to think that this would be a possibility, but she would think that I was a Bangladeshi worker or an Indian person, that she didn't have any care, or she'd seen so many sick people that I was just another sick person. It shouldn't matter if I'm Indian or Australian; I'm just a person who is sick and needs some care. Later on, I realised from having lots of conversations that people in the public healthcare system can also be quite racist. The lack of care that I was shown that day for me confirmed that. People can argue that even if a Portuguese person went in, they're so overworked and tired that they would also be the same. But I feel like because I didn't speak Portuguese and I was a foreigner, that's why she didn't care about trying to get me help (Koncz, 2024e, 24th Interview, 14:18-14:29).

Many migrants are proactively seeking solutions to address the bureaucratic difficulties. For instance, the Armenian participant suggests integrating AI into the Immigration and Border Services phone booking system

to enhance accessibility and decrease the number of migrants who cannot renew their expired residency permits. The Chinese participant, who previously worked at a refugee centre, created a manual containing essential contact numbers and basic Portuguese phrases for communication with the Immigration and Border Service to help ease language barriers.

Language proficiency is often a key factor in successful integration because mastering the local language is necessary for accessing services or having employment opportunities. Building social and cultural connections can be critical to successful integration, as it can help individuals feel more safe and connected to their new home and provide a support network. As previously mentioned, learning Portuguese is challenging for all participants, including those from Latin language families. The Italian participant, for instance, encounters difficulties in listening comprehension. Several participants initially learned Brazilian Portuguese but highlighted its differences from European Portuguese. They cite a variety of methods to enhance their language skills, such as Speak, a language exchange platform, the Duolingo language app, Portuguese podcast listening, and participation in intensive language classes. Furthermore, the interviewees actively practice language at local supermarkets and coffee shops and often converse with elderly residents in their neighbourhoods. All participants are deeply committed to mastering the Portuguese language. As the Uzbek participant aptly expresses, "[...] Learning Portuguese is also a way for me to express my gratitude to Portuguese people and to this country for being very welcoming." (Koncz, 2024d, 22nd Interview, 18:22–18:37).

The Polish, Armenian, Italian, and Chinese participants speak a great level of Portuguese, while the rest of the participants are still learning the language and mostly use English to get by in their daily lives. The Nepalese participant stated that her main barrier to integration is the language and feels lucky that her current family doctor speaks English. Language proficiency can be a limiting factor of integration, although it is important to note that Portugal is the 8th Most English Proficient Country in the World; therefore, English is very widely spoken by locals, although not at important institutions such as governmental offices and health care providers (EF EPI, 2023).

6 Conclusion

According to the 2024 Global Peace Index, Portugal ranks as the 7th most peaceful country globally (Vision of Humanity, 2024). This ranking reflects various factors, including low crime rates with most incidents involving non-violent offenses, political stability, and a high level of societal safety and security. The article dived into subjective reports from migrants to understand different aspects of the concept of safety.

In the summary of the project's interviews, it is clear that the Portuguese capital feels safer for some of the Asian female migrants compared to their homelands. Lisbon seems to be a welcoming city for remote workers, and online platforms offer support in finding communities. Based on the answers, social gatherings and cultural associations support integration the most. Many female participants refer to friends and cultural communities as reasons for feeling at home in their new country. On the contrary, bureaucracy, tax, and health institutions are the most challenging for the interviewees, mostly because of language barriers and waiting times. This fine-tuned balance between feeling at home on the social level and facing obstacles on the institutional level causes an anxious existence for many migrants in Lisbon. Many female participants of *(Re-) Searching Needs and Hope through Visual Storytelling* (Koncz, 2023-2024) from Europe and Asia consider Lisbon a safe place crime-wise and inclusive in community building; therefore, it is worth the bureaucratic sacrifices. This setup offers a specific kind of balance, one without full safety but with a sensation of a compromised quasi-safe place.

The article earlier introduced Yi-Fun Tuan, who works with the concept of safe places as places "as security" and "centres of felt value" (Tuan, 1977). Space is often seen as a more abstract concept, while place is a space that has been given meaning through human experiences. Migrants moving through unfamiliar spaces may initially perceive them as unsafe or hostile until they become familiar and imbued with personal and communal meanings. The transformation of space into a place where one feels safe involves both physical and psychological processes. Tuan's work helps to understand how places can become secure environments

through establishing routines, social connections, and familiarising with the local culture and geography. According to Tuan: "places are centres of felt value where biological needs, such as those for food, water, rest and procreation are satisfied" (Tuan, 1977, p. 4). He adds that safe places feel secure and spacious; "spaciousness is closely associated with the sense of being free" (Tuan, 1977, p. 52).

The safe place is in close connection with the idea of home. Based on the interviewees' answers, to feel at home, to feel in a safe place, you need to feel free (not restricted), and you also need to feel the possibility to connect to others and to be able to reach the state institutions. Therefore, these two factors, the inclusiveness of local communities and the availability of state institutions, can be added to Tuan's definition of a safe place for a migrant in a new home country. Besides feeling physically safe and biologically satisfied, human connection and access to services are the basis for a safe life in the world's modern landscape with huge migration flows.

Feeling safe is the fundamental basis of migrants' integration. Based on the interviewees' answers, there are different levels of integration because many spaces and communities are partly foreign-based. The Chinese woman does stand-up comedy both in English and in Portuguese but finds it easier to make friends with other immigrants than with locals. The participant from a multicultural background said that around 70% of international and 30% of Portuguese families come to her music classes. The Kazakh participant mentioned that of her tattoo clients, 50% are Portuguese people, and the rest are foreigners. The interviews, in general, suggest that the first level of integration is within the community of the migrant's own country, the second level is within the broad sense of the local migrant community, the third is within a mixed community of migrants and locals, and the fourth is a full integration to the local community. This last level requires full comprehension of the language, which most commonly can be achieved by having a local workplace and colleagues, therefore, it is harder to reach by remote workers. However, it is crucial to note that the perception of integration is subjective. It is strongly connected to the sense of well-being, which can be achieved on different integrational levels.

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