

Airbnb in the real estate financial chain Housing and policies in Southern European post-crisis territories

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Summary

Platform economies are a capillary presence in today's economic system, through digital transmission and physical expansion they represent a sprawling regeneration of capitalistic structure. Airbnb, as one of the main peer-to-peer rental platform, captures also the most profitable assets that drive the global economy, the real estate market. Considering the meaning that the term infrastructure can embrace in the structural analysis of urban economy, the research proposes a reflection both on the interpretation of Airbnb as a structural and infrastructural component of today's cities and on the analysis of its urbanization force. The research seeks to understand the development of Airbnb in the context of Southern European cities as an infrastructural development that finds its roots on the austerity urbanism derived from the 2008 financial crisis. The comparative analysis of Airbnb data correlated with local policies of liberalization of real estate and rental market allow a broader view on the development of Airbnb in relation with the global trend of financialization of housing, retracing the political consequence of platform urbanization. What will emerge is a complex system of different kind of infrastructures that merge and works together at different scales. The research aimed to propose a zoomed-out and trans-scalar approach in the studies of platform economies rather than a place-based analysis and thus, focus on the role of Airbnb as an economic, political and digital infrastructure and inscribing it in a political economic perspective to better understand its structure and its performances as a global trend.