

Action versus energy ground states in nonlinear Schrödinger equations

Original

Action versus energy ground states in nonlinear Schrödinger equations / Dovetta, Simone; Serra, Enrico; Tilli, Paolo. - In: MATHEMATISCHE ANNALEN. - ISSN 0025-5831. - 385:(2023), pp. 1545-1576. [10.1007/s00208-022-02382-z]

Availability:

This version is available at: 11583/2957820 since: 2022-03-09T13:56:56Z

Publisher:

Springer

Published

DOI:10.1007/s00208-022-02382-z

Terms of use:

This article is made available under terms and conditions as specified in the corresponding bibliographic description in the repository

Publisher copyright

(Article begins on next page)

A conversation on housing under platform capitalism: The contentious regulation of short-term rentals in European cities

University of California Press, 2025,
Thomas Aguilera, Francesca Artioli,
Claire Colomb

Platforms & Society

Volume 2: 1–7

© The Author(s) 2025

Article reuse guidelines:

sagepub.com/journals-permissions

DOI: 10.1177/29768624251385809

journals.sagepub.com/home/pns

Emanuele Sciuva¹ , Mara Ferreri¹, Gianluca Bei² , Francesca Artioli³ ,
Thomas Aguilera⁴  and Claire Colomb⁵ 

Introducing the book (Thomas Aguilera, Francesca Artioli, Claire Colomb)

Over the course of a decade, short-term rental (STR) platforms (such as Airbnb, Booking, VRBO, etc.) and STR operators have significantly transformed the political economy of cities and housing in many localities worldwide. Our recently published book *Housing under Platform Capitalism. The Contentious Regulation of Short-Term Rentals in European Cities*¹ explains how and why – faced with a sharp rise in STRs driven by a handful of multinational corporations – European local and national governments have developed starkly different regulatory approaches. It also studies the consequences of those regulations for urban and multi-level governance, politics and housing markets.

We are grateful to the editors of P&S as well as to Emanuele Sciuva, Mara Ferreri and Gianluca Bei² for offering us the opportunity to discuss our book in dialogue with their research, and ongoing debates about the politics and political economy of (urban) platforms. Here, we first summarise to what extent the book contributes to explaining the varieties of platform regulations and capitalisms. Following respondents' comments, we then identify further research avenues on both platforms and platform-mediated housing markets.

The book draws on comparative, multi-level research and employs mixed methods to study STR regulations in 12 major touristic European cities between the early 2010s and 2023 (Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Brussels, Lisbon, London, Madrid, Milan, Paris, Prague, Rome, and Vienna). It explains how platform-mediated STRs have gone from a wicked policy object in a legal grey zone to become

institutionalised into distinct regulatory regimes, characterised by different policy goals, intensities of regulations, implementation capacities, and political and economic clienteles. We first built an indicator to measure the intensity of regulation in each city, and to compare them. We complemented this with an ideal-typical approach that integrated the political strategies of governments, and the way in which the instruments are combined, used and justified. This led us to produce a typology that distinguishes three distinct 'worlds of short-term rental regulation' (p. 14–15). In some cities, regulation simply seeks to support and legitimise the STR market, enabling taxation and enhancing territorial attractiveness while supporting property owners and investors (World 1). In other cities, public policies aim to curb the growth of STRs to protect affordable housing for residents or mitigate the impacts of overtourism. Sometimes, this is driven by grassroots mobilisations and intense political struggles (World 3), but in others, this comes from within the governmental sphere and housing administrations (World 2).

¹DIST – Interuniversity Department of Regional and Urban Studies and Planning, Politecnico di Torino, Torino, Italy

²Dipartimento MEMOTEF, Università 'Sapienza' di Roma, Roma, RM, Italy

³Lab'URBA, Université Paris Est-Créteil, Champs-sur-Marne, France

⁴ARENES UMR 6051, Sciences Po Rennes, University of Rennes, Rennes, France

⁵Department of Land Economy, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK

Corresponding author:

Emanuele Sciuva, DIST – Interuniversity Department of Regional and Urban Studies and Planning, Politecnico di Torino, Viale Mattioli 39, 10125 Torino, Italy.

Email: emanuele.sciuva@polito.it



To explain this diversity and its political-economic outcomes, the book connects the regulation of platforms and STRs to politics and institutions, in two ways. First, it demonstrates that the diversity of regulations is shaped by broader institutional and socio-economic factors (tourism and housing market dynamics, welfare/housing regimes), as well as by political mobilisations involving citizens' movements, property owners, the hotel industry, corporate platforms, local and national governments, and the European Union. By doing so, we attach STRs and their platforms to well-established comparative research on the varieties of capitalisms (Hall and Soskice, 2001), on welfare regimes/housing systems (Arbaci, 2019), and how those respond to global pressures (such as the rise of platforms capitalism, see also Thelen, 2018). Platforms and STRs cannot be analysed separately from the broader dynamics of capitalism (see Rikap, 2024 in this journal), and cannot be separated from the politics and institutional arrangements that shape capitalism in different contexts.

Second, our analysis of STR platforms and markets explicitly connects with the policy sector of the object they intermediate, namely, *housing*. The latter is both a fundamental human need and a social right, and a rent-generating asset, notably through STRs. STR platforms share organisational features with other platforms of urban services (and are often studied alongside Uber, see Benli-Trichet and Kübler, 2022). However, they also have a foot in housing politics and institutions. We contend that this is key to explaining not only local responses to STRs, but also the political strength of platforms. The latter form a bloc with property owners' groups and STR operators, which are both an economic and political clientele (a more or less influential political force depending on local tenure and property ownership structures, as well as past housing and tourism policies). Like other platforms, STR platforms hold political and economic power linked to their institutional, instrumental and infrastructural power (Yates, 2025). Nevertheless, the differential weight of private property owners and investors is an essential variable for understanding their business power over local and national governments.

All in all, we hope the book contributes to the comparative study of the territorial politics and multi-level governance of *platform capitalism* in its variety, and provides stimulating bridges with research on the political economy of transnational firms and their political and business power.

Mara Ferreri: Data power and transnationalism in platform-mediated housing assetisation

Thank you very much for inviting me as a discussant. This nuanced and insightful book furthers theoretical and

methodological debates not just on STRs, but more broadly on the significance of studying the embeddedness of platforms. Embeddedness is understood in terms of political-economic conditions, path-dependent institutional frameworks, but also through the unpredictable arena of political contestation as a process of discursive framing, mobilisations, and sometimes unlikely alignments. Theoretical and methodological innovation is matched by in-depth and multifaceted empirical analysis, both of which challenge what I see as two 'flattening' tendencies. The first is the geographical, historical, and political 'flattening' of the technological utopianism of Silicon Valley's digital companies and their mythologies of 'anti-systemic unicorns' that disrupt existing systems, while they in fact reproduce and exacerbate dynamics of capital accumulation and wealth polarisation. The second is the flattening that emerges from universalising explanations of platform capitalism that fail to account for the multiple forms taken by capitalism, its regulation and transformations, and for the key mediating role of societal responses, institutions, and public policy (see also Bernt, 2022).

The authors' international comparative social science approach, by engaging with STR regulation as a dependent variable, raises much deeper questions around housing and wealth inequalities, rent extractivism, and governance, at times of policy entrepreneurialism by transnational corporations. Platform regulation and its growing judicialisation are but an entry point into several interrelated dynamics of contemporary urban socio-economic transformation: chiefly, housing assetisation by intermediation. As stated throughout the book, STR platforms are a hybrid object to understand and legislate upon, as they combine land use and economic activity. They are also a specific kind of platform in that they mediate access to a scarce good: housing. As such, they can only be properly understood by incorporating a sectoral perspective on housing and real estate. The growth of STR platforms has grafted itself upon an already strong search for new, profitable, rent gaps at a global scale, shaped by the demand of transnational flows of visitors and temporary residents. In this, the platform as 'facilitator of rentier relations' (Sequera et al., 2022) also becomes a facilitator of the renewed privileged position of landed capital and property ownership, supported by the national and EU-wide legal apparatuses of free enterprise and property rights. This is specifically visible through the authors' analysis of the emergence and consolidation of a 'platform-rentier bloc' as a new political subject, simultaneously a political and an economic clientele to be reckoned with. In this sense, the book can be read, fundamentally, as a political sociology of platform power and its politicisation. It is concerning this latter point that I would like to make two comments, specific to the book's topic, but which I hope will resonate more broadly.

The first comment concerns the scale of analysis and the issue of transnationalism. The study focuses on a comparison of 12 cities, with in-depth longitudinal cases on three of them, each situated within regional and national

administrative and legislative boundaries, and the transnational regulatory geographies of the European Union. The rescaling of regulatory conflict and the unfolding of political relationships across multi-level political-economic spaces is chiefly studied in terms of administrative boundaries. While this approach is helpful in challenging the flattening tendencies mentioned above, my question is whether it is running the risk of underplaying how some of the processes of politicising platforms have challenged and exceeded formal scalar divisions. In other words, I am wondering if more could be said about the transnational geographies of the politicisation of platforms, through mobilities of discursive framings, but also through concrete practices of transnational mobilisations and solidarity. On the latter, the book mentions data activism, and specifically the work of Inside Airbnb's Murray Cox, in the United States, which has been key to unlocking geolocated data and informing debates in Europe around spatial concentration, professionalisation, and multi-listings. We could add to this the practice of critical and situated international research across academic and non-academic spaces, as an important contribution to the politicisation of the debate (the point about situated knowledge in the introduction is significant). Could these practices be theorised as forms of transnational counter-power, capable of shifting grounded politics? How did the authors negotiate a scalar understanding of policy 'embeddedness' with a perhaps more fluid understanding of processes of politicisation?

My second comment concerns 'data power'. The book offers a grounded and insightful account of contentious issues around data sharing, data ownership, harvesting, and extractivism, and their significance for the implementation and enforcement of regulations. Data is what enables the differential 'infrastructural power' of platforms (Valdez, 2023) and their role as 'regulatory entrepreneurs' (Pollman and Barry, 2016). The asymmetrical power of platforms is key not just in the construction of their political legitimacy vis-à-vis city, regional, national, and transnational public institutions, but also for the extraction of rent from property more broadly. In this line, it appears to me that these insights extend beyond STRs to wider digitally mediated platforms for rental housing and its management. I am here mindful of work on dataveillance on users-tenants that is emerging from the United States and Australia (McElroy and Vergerio, 2022; Wolifson et al., 2024). Within the EU, literature remains limited, yet it might soon be the case that similar regulatory conflicts will arise, particularly around invisible forms of tenant discrimination. Here, I am also wondering whether the upcoming new EU Regulation aiming to harmonise rules on STR data generation and data sharing between platforms and public authorities, could pave the way, if appropriately politicised, for capacity building on wider public literacy about the impact of platforms on city planning, particularly concerning spatial distribution of residential and commercial activities, for instance through

opaque algorithmic discrimination and redlining (Ferreri and Sanyal, 2022). Based on the authors' understanding of the asymmetrical power of platforms to facilitate housing assetisation, but also on possibilities to resist and govern it, should data become the key arena for the politicisation of the governance of these shifts? And if not, why not?

Gianluca Bei: Regulatory timing, enforcement, and the new frontier of housing under platform capitalism

I have known the work of the authors for many years, and I must say that, for someone like me who has studied the effects of regulation in European cities, their research has served as a compass to navigate the variety of tools used, the different levels of governance involved, and the diverse ways in which STR policy-making develops. I believe the main strength of the research and book lies in the attention given to the political variable in the development of STRs and platform capitalism. In fact, the authors highlight how the institutionalisation of the phenomenon represents a crucial lens for analysing STRs in the urban context. They explained that the intensity of STR regulation depends on socio-economic variables, political traditions, past instruments, and the combination of interests among the different actors negotiating how the market should develop.

Authors moved beyond a mere analysis of regulatory tools and their objectives. This is essential because, as the authors rightly state, what really matters in the study of STR regulation is the political will of governments supported by a specific political orientation and electorate. They show how these processes of politicisation and judicialisation of STRs unfold within a context of multi-level governance, where the multiplicity of different stakeholders and interests plays a key role in shaping the socio-economic configuration of the phenomenon. In this context, the authors show how platforms seek to influence and steer regulatory processes in two ways, especially in Part Three of the book (Chapters 5, 6 and 7). First, platforms are generally reluctant to share data that are crucial for the enforcement of regulations, and when they do provide such data, it is often unreliable. In this sense, the example of Amsterdam is particularly relevant: Airbnb decided to suspend its cooperation in enforcement precisely when the government opted to tighten temporal restrictions (p. 234). Second, the platform's ability to bring together 'platform rentiers' and property managers, from the grassroots level up to the European scale, clearly illustrates the political relevance of large STR platforms as important actors within the multi-level governance of the phenomenon (Yates, 2025). Building on these introductory considerations, my discussion focuses on two main issues: first, the types, timing and enforcement of regulation; second, the evolution of the mid-term rentals (MTR) market that appears to represent the new frontier of housing under platform capitalism as I explain in this commentary.

Starting from the first issue, the authors' distinction between 'operation' and 'access' tools is very useful and apt for analysing political responses to the STR phenomenon (Chapter 3). In this context, the classification of the three 'worlds' of regulation is very insightful. The first world, typified by Italian cities like Milan, shows how governments may not just regulate but actively enable markets. The second world reveals that, in the absence of a strong electoral base of homeowners and with robust welfare/housing instruments, restrictions are more viable. While the third is demonstrated by those cities with a diffused level of ownership but with a more present action of social movements for the right to housing. It is interesting to observe how some cities, like Lisbon, shifted from the first to the third world of regulation. There, although restrictions to STRs were implemented, they came too late: the market had already reached saturation, and regulation ended up cementing existing licences. In addition, central city STR operators did not oppose restrictions as they reduced competition (Bei and Cocola-Gant, 2025). I would ask the authors if they have considered the maturity of the market prior to regulation, and whether restrictions affect only future expansion or also existing supply? I think this is a crucial point. In cities like Barcelona, as shown in the book, the dominance of professional actors and large multi-property STR renters produced monopoly rents and housing speculation. Moreover, as the authors' rightly state in Chapter 5 (p. 205), the effectiveness of regulations strongly depends on enforcement investments and strategies (Bei, 2025). In some cases, weak enforcement is due to a lack of resources; in others, like London or Lisbon, it reflects a political choice (Bei and Cocola-Gant, 2025; Ferreri and Sanyal, 2018). Why didn't the authors combine indicators of regulatory intensity with indicators of enforcement? In this way, they could show that a lack of enforcement can itself become a gateway for market access and increased informality (Bei and Cocola-Gant, 2025; Colomb and Moreira de Souza, 2023), as explained in the book.

Turning to the second point, I believe the work is a great starting point for understanding how housing under platform capitalism is expanding into MTRs (Cocola-Gant and Malet Calvo, 2023), as argued in the conclusion of the book (p. 329). Airbnb has been shaping this sector as well, which is growing due to increasing temporary mobility, such as digital nomads, lifestyle migrants and international students (Colomb and Gallent, 2022). This sector, however, remains largely unrestricted (Orozco-Martínez and Gil Alonso, 2024), even in cities with tight limitations on STRs. Indeed, in cities like New York, Berlin, Paris, and Barcelona, and also in Italy, where only registration is required, a significant share of Airbnb listings is now mid-term. Platforms such as Spotahome, Uniplaces, and HousingAnywhere contribute to this shift, allowing property owners to target temporary populations or alternate between short- and MTRs,

depending on seasonality and legal limits. Over the past 15 years, STRs have represented the dominant segment of rental housing mediated by digital platforms. However, the rise and spread of MTRs has opened a new investment frontier in rental housing, fuelled by increasing demand from temporary populations, the absence of regulatory restrictions, and, in some cases, the saturation of the STR market. Capital flows into rental housing are thus finding new avenues for accumulation, while governments are not resisting this expansion. On the contrary, they uphold favourable fiscal regimes and design strategies aimed at attracting high-income temporary populations. This frontier fosters urban transformations that move beyond tourism-driven development, creating new economic opportunities in cities increasingly shaped by diverse and overlapping forms of temporary housing and consumption. Simultaneously, Airbnb and property managers are increasingly interested in the MTR market, as explained on p. 255. Nevertheless, in some cases, tenant unions – like in Barcelona – have denounced this expanding market, arguing that banning STRs is not enough, as MTRs are on the rise (Bei, 2025). Based on the book's contribution, I think it will be interesting to see how MTRs become institutionalised and how housing regulation will evolve under platform capitalism. What is certain is that in countries like Italy, where regulating STRs is still a struggle, the mid-term market is already growing rapidly, and its politicisation is lagging far behind. There is a real risk that, once again, restrictions will come too late.

Emanuele Sciuva: Platform capitalism and the 'statification' of platforms

I would like to continue the discussion with a question asked by the authors on p. 332 of the book: '*Does platform capitalism challenge the democratic organisation of political power in European societies and beyond?*'. This led me to a deeper reflection on how economic actors – especially platforms like Airbnb – have evolved beyond mere market intermediaries to become quasi-political institutions reshaping governance, regulation, and civic participation. In this regard, the authors show that the economic and political clienteles of platforms and states do not always align, creating a space for contention when it comes to policy-making and regulations. They reveal – sometimes indirectly – how platforms' strategies toward the state are not merely reactive but programmatic: they build political clienteles, deliver public functions, and reshape governance arrangements. In this light, platforms appear not only as economic actors involved in political struggles, but as political formations with quasi-state capacities and ambitions – enacting what can be seen as a process of 'statification'. Drawing from examples in the book, and from broader literature, this dynamic unfolds along three key dimensions. While the authors address these throughout the chapters, I suggest

this could be brought together into a single conceptual frame – something that, in my view, would be essential to grasp the political programme of platforms and the contextual leverage they thereby acquire.

First, platforms increasingly take on state-like functions – collecting taxes, redistributing revenues, managing data infrastructures, and even contributing to heritage preservation or spatial planning. In the case of Airbnb, this is clearest in its role in collecting and remitting tourist taxes on behalf of municipalities, as stressed in several parts of the book. While this is often framed as a service to local governments, it signals a deeper institutional shift: core public functions are being privatised, often with limited accountability or oversight. As the authors note, cities frequently have ‘almost no oversight’ (p. 254) over these tax collection mechanisms. Besides this, Airbnb’s language in the 2021 ‘EU Host Action Plan’ and its earlier ‘Policy Tool Chest’ is emblematic of how platforms do more than advocate for favourable regulation – they claim to define public interest: terms like ‘democratising revenue’, ‘addressing incivility’, and ‘dispersing congestion’ are reframed as goals pursued by Airbnb itself, rather than state authorities. In this sense, Airbnb acts as a *para-state* – not replacing the state but inserting itself into its symbolic and functional space.

Another key dimension is the construction of political clienteles. The authors rightly emphasise this in the book, noting how Airbnb’s interests often align with rentiers, particularly in the way these alignments reshape the state’s capacity to regulate. While the so-called ‘rentier class’ is certainly a key player, I believe – building on scholars like Van Doorn (2020) and Stabrowski (2017) – that the political clientele Airbnb *brands itself to represent*, can be found more broadly among the middle class, especially that with entrepreneurial aspirations. This political base expands to all those segments of the population that, in different ways, economically benefit from the STR industry. This also links with the ‘infrastructural power’ STR platforms hold, which create, as argued in the book, ‘dependencies that include not only hosts but also the large world of connected STR operators and intermediaries that depend on platform infrastructure’ (p. 250). Through initiatives like Home Sharing Clubs, grassroots lobbying campaigns, and emotional advertising targeting young, struggling members of the middle-class, Airbnb curates a political imaginary in which the platform is not merely a business, but a lifeline for social mobility (Van Doorn, 2020). Airbnb’s political legitimacy thus rests on its ability to camouflage itself as the protector of a precarious yet aspirational middle class.

A last mechanism through which platforms expand their influence involves what Pollman and Barry (2016) call regulatory entrepreneurship – something the authors show clearly across the book. The book documents several cases where Airbnb actively shaped regulations, refused compliance, challenged municipal regulations, and later reversed course to appear cooperative when conditions were more

favourable. I found this back-and-forth particularly revealing of how platforms operate through a multi-level organisational infrastructure – engaging local, national, and supranational institutions with more agility than most state actors. From employing former public officials to forging public–private partnerships, platforms build a holistic engagement infrastructure that stands in stark contrast to slower, fragmented state bureaucracies – a point that the book’s case studies make very compelling.

In the concluding part of the book, the authors state that urban platform capitalism ‘takes diverse forms – regimes of accumulation and rent extraction – depending on the constraints and opportunities in different cities, that is, in different regulatory regimes’ (p. 330). I complement this view by arguing that varieties are also deeply contingent on how platforms ‘statify’, or differently put, how platforms perform and reshape state-like functions, through the different axes I briefly discussed here. This is where a comparative approach becomes especially productive, as it allows us to scrutinise the typology of how platforms enter, exploit, and co-produce governance arrangements programmatically and systemically. STR platforms, then, become quasi-political institutions, exerting power without accountability, acting with legitimacy without election, and governing without consent. This, in my view, is the truly disruptive innovation platforms like Airbnb bring: they embed themselves in the architecture of governance and rearticulate the scale and form of state power. The book, in this regard, provides a much-needed analytical toolkit to begin to understand this transformation, and invites us to rethink how contention and democratic governance are being restructured under platform capitalism.

In this spirit, I argue that greater efforts are now needed to make sense of the systemic ‘statification’ of platforms and how they rearrange their architecture within processes of economic intermediation, political clientele-building, regulatory entrepreneurship, and state-function mimicry. By acknowledging this evolving role of platforms, we can more critically assess the plurality of platform capitalisms and cultures (Steinberg et al., 2025) that are emerging, and their role in shaping the battlefield of future (urban) democratic governance.

Authors’ responses and way forward

We are thankful for the generous reviews, comments and questions about our book, its choices, and results. We would like to bring together those questions by proposing that they delineate two important venues for future research, into: (i) transnationalisation as a driver of regulatory convergence; (ii) the functioning and evolution of now-institutionalised STR markets.

First, what are the transnational dynamics of the politics and regulation of STRs and corporate platforms, including in relation to data production and use? This is an important question raised by Mara and Emanuele. In the book, we address this issue by examining whether regulatory

convergence can be observed as a result of rescaling (from cities to states to the European Union) and the transnationalisation of collective action (chapters 6 and 7). On the one hand, we demonstrate that the framing of the STR issue, as well as the competing claims and interest groups surrounding it, have become increasingly interconnected across cities and states. Platforms, STR operators, the hotel industry, governments of European cities and, to a lesser extent, citizens' movements have either struck international alliances or reorganised to represent their interests at multiple levels of regulatory action. In this process, corporate platforms play a crucial role since they have elaborated global strategies for policy influence, lobbied to reduce regulatory gaps between jurisdictions, while remaining extremely agile in adapting to different forms of multi-level politics and states.

On the other hand, however, this multifaceted transnational collective action had not (as of 2024) led to regulatory convergence in Europe – STR markets remain institutionalised into very different forms. This also applies to data. In the broader context of data opacity from platforms, a handful of data providers have emerged to play a global role. Some are not-for-profit, as Murray Cox from Inside Airbnb (who was a great help for our book); others are for-profit, such as AirDNA. The recent EU Regulation 2024/1028 on STR data sharing is expected to add transparency to the market. Yet, we should not overestimate the power of data in public policies: while data are crucial for empowering the administrative enforcement of STR regulations (Chapter 5), limited and imperfect data have not stopped some governments from mobilising resources and attempting to regulate the market. Conversely, the availability of data will not necessarily lead to new regulations or evidence-based regulatory convergence. So, on the one hand, data has indeed been one of the cruxes of the matter; on the other, the asymmetries now go beyond the simple issue of data. It is therefore just one vector of political conflict among others.

There is an avenue here for future research about the effects of transnationalisation on STR regulations. This could lead to studying the global politics of platform data, the ecology and nature of data providers, and the place of data in the policy process. Furthermore, this could lead to studying how platforms conduct their political activities through arbitrating between global strategies and adapting those strategies to distinct political-institutional contexts.

Second, how do the now-institutionalised STR markets function and change? This is how we can address Gianluca's questions about the STR market's maturity, the implementation of regulations, and how this is now challenged by the rise of an MTR market. The timing of the emergence of more stringent regulations is indeed key to understanding the functioning of STR markets, their providers and opponents, and thus their politics. Lisbon is a city where stricter rules limiting the possibility to turn housing into STRs were implemented after the market had already grown dramatically (in our sample, it is different


from other cities where barriers to accessing the market were developed early on, such as Paris). This relatively late-comer position (that also characterises cities that still have light regulations) entails the consolidation of STR providers who benefit from touristic land rent and defend their institutionalised advantage as market insiders. As such, they are a force opposing institutional change, *both* in the direction of market liberalisation that can lead to competitors, and in the direction of further restrictions. This is a typical argument from the sociology of markets, but it leads us to a key conclusion in our book: distinct STR regulatory regimes come with institutionalised markets, rent extraction regimes, and connected providers, interest groups and clientele. Hence, the need to now move research forward from the study of the institutionalisation of distinct regulatory regimes (as we do in the book) to the study of the variety of platform capitalisms and STRs markets.


On the one hand, this can open a research stream into the distinct forms of platforms 'statification', which is suggested by Emanuele, and state 'platformisation' (i.e., the reliance of the state on platforms to carry out the state's activities, such as taxation). This implies studying more closely the mutual political adjustments and institutional complementarities between platform operations, STR providers and clientele, and public authorities across different contexts. On the other hand, now that STR regulations are (more or less) in place, it is time to dig comparatively into their effects, limits and frontiers. Regarding regulatory limits, the processes of implementation and enforcement (and the lack thereof) are central. In our view, they are part of different institutionalised regimes, and the book dedicates a full chapter (Chapter 5) to differences in implementation efforts and the challenges of implementation. It primarily draws on qualitative data. As such, implementation is not included in our quantitative index of regulatory intensity, which measures instrumental thickness rather than administrative activities. However, it would be interesting to quantify implementation efforts as well. That could be formalised into a bi-dimensional index, an idea we invite colleagues to explore.


Finally, the frontiers of platform-mediated housing markets have shifted swiftly over the past years. The exponential growth of STRs have moved from large cities to other types of regions (coastal and mountain areas, etc.) – thus making the issue a truly national one. We are currently studying the case of France (the largest European STR market),³ to investigate regional paths of STR market consolidation, regulation and their multi-level politics. Additionally, the shift from short-term to MTRs is a global phenomenon that indeed, warrants comparative analysis, as suggested by Gianluca. That calls for investigating how STRs and MTRs – seen as two interdependent sub-markets – connect with each other, and how this connection differs across places, in terms of dominant platforms, owners/providers, and policies. While the growth of MTRs has indeed accelerated following the expansion of STRs, MTRs already


constituted a significant market in several countries and cities, sometimes with their own legal provisions, entirely separate from those designed to regulate STRs (e.g. Paris). A key challenge, therefore, is to understand whether, and to what extent, differently institutionalised segments of the housing market converge under the pressure of platform intermediation, which accelerates and intensifies the extraction of land rent. We hope that the conceptual framework developed in this book will prove useful in answering such questions and, more broadly, in analysing the future transformations of housing and cities under tech capitalism.


ORCID iDs

Emanuele Sciuva  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9228-7624>

Gianluca Bei  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4771-2964>

Francesca Artioli  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6600-2645>

Thomas Aguilera  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6101-1454>

Claire Colomb  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4990-9947>

Funding

The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Declaration of conflicting interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Notes

1. See the book's companion website: <https://strpolitics.hypotheses.org/>
2. This Conversation stems from a research seminar held at the Politecnico di Torino, Italy on 16 June 2025. We would like to thank Emanuele Sciuva and the OSMOSIS seminar series for the organisation.
3. See Eurostat data, 2024: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Short-stay_accommodation_offered_via_online_collaborative_economy_platforms

References

- Arbaci S (2019) *Paradoxes of Segregation: Housing Systems, Welfare Regimes and Ethnic Residential Change in Southern European Cities*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Bei G (2025) The spatial effect of short-term rental regulations: The comparison between Barcelona and Paris. *Cities* 158: 105603.
- Bei G and Cocola-Gant A (2025) Entitlement by registration: regulated deregulation and the formalisation of short-term rentals in Lisbon. *Antipode*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.70067>.
- Benli-Trichet MC and Kübler D (2022) The political origins of platform economy regulations. Understanding variations in governing Airbnb and Uber across cities in Switzerland. *Policy & Internet* 14(4): 736–754.
- Bernt M (2022) *The Commodification Gap: Gentrification and Public Policy in London, Berlin and St. Petersburg*. London: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Cocola-Gant A and Malet Calvo D (2023) The platformization of student housing and the rise of mid-term rentals. The case of uniplaces in Lisbon. *Tijdschrift voor economische en sociale geografie* 114(5): 431–445.
- Colomb C and Gallent N (2022) Post-COVID-19 mobilities and the housing crisis in European urban and rural destinations. Policy challenges and research agenda. *Planning Practice & Research* 37(5): 624–641.
- Colomb C and Moreira de Souza T (2023) Illegal short-term rentals, regulatory enforcement and informal practices in the age of digital platforms. *European Urban and Regional Studies* 31(4): 328–345.
- Ferreri M and Sanyal R (2018) Platform economies and urban planning: Airbnb and regulated deregulation in London. *Urban Studies* 55(15): 3353–3368.
- Ferreri M and Sanyal R (2022) Digital informalisation: Rental housing, platforms, and the management of risk. *Urban Studies* 37(6): 1035–1053.
- Hall PA and Soskice D (2001) *Varieties of Capitalism: The Institutional Foundations of Comparative Advantage*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- McElroy E and Vergerio M (2022) Automating gentrification: Landlord technologies and housing justice organizing in New York city homes. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 40(4): 607–626.
- Orozco-Martinez C and Gil Alonso F (2024) The recent rise in mid-term rentals in Barcelona: Causes and implications. *Critical Housing Analysis* 11(2): 148–160.
- Pollman E and Barry JM (2016) Regulatory entrepreneurship. *Southern Californian Law Review* 90: 383–448.
- Rikap C (2024) A fit-for-purpose platform research agenda for a broken world. *Platforms & Society* 1: 29768624241263951.
- Sequera J, Nofre J, Díaz-Parra I, et al. (2022) The impact of COVID-19 on the short-term rental market in Spain: Towards flexibilization? *Cities* 130: 103912.
- Stabrowski F (2017) People as businesses: Airbnb and urban micro-entrepreneurialism in New York City. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society* 10(2): 327–347.
- Steinberg M, Zhang L and Mukherjee R (2025) Platform capitalisms and platform cultures. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 28(1): 21–29.
- Thelen K (2018) Regulating Uber: The politics of the platform economy in Europe and the United States. *Perspectives on Politics* 16(4): 938–953.
- Valdez J (2023) The politics of Uber: Infrastructural power in the United States and Europe. *Regulation & Governance* 17(1): 177–194.
- Van Doorn N (2020) A new institution on the block: On platform urbanism and Airbnb citizenship. *New media & Society* 22(10): 1808–1826.
- Wolifson P, Maalsen S and Rogers D (2024) Discrimination in the time of digital real estate: Illustrating a rental schema in the Australian setting. *Digital Geography and Society* 6: 100088.
- Yates L (2025) *Platform Politics. Corporate Power, Grassroots Movements and the Sharing Economy*. Bristol: Bristol University Press.