

TOURISM: THE FALSE FIX - CONCENTRATION OF PROFITS AND SOCIAL DEBT



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1.

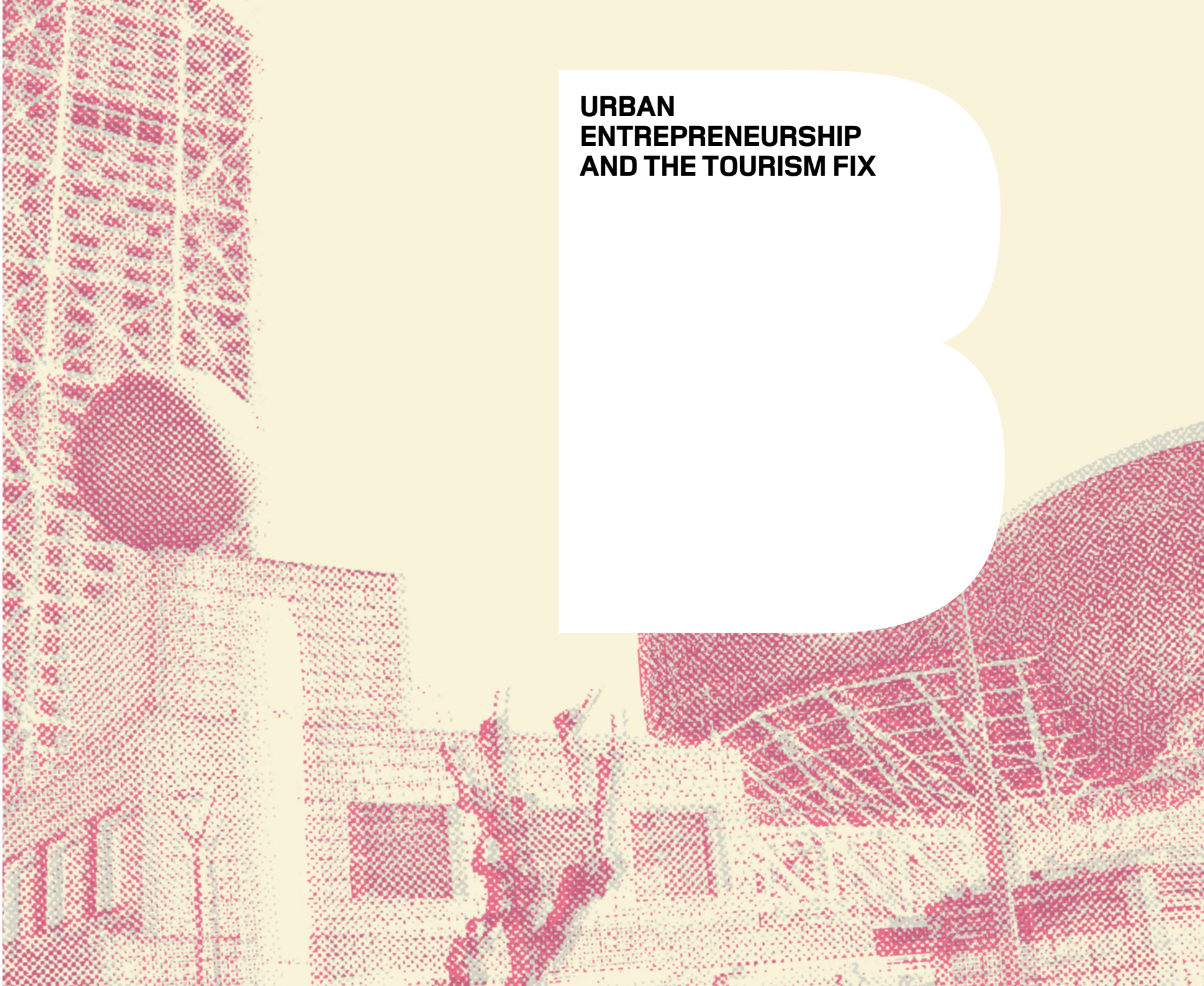
INTRODUCTION

This report aims to review the impacts of the tourism industry on the city of Barcelona, with an emphasis on social debt and concerns surrounding this urban means of production. Based on analysis of the connection between the expansion of the tourism industry and the workings of financial and real estate capitalism, the report reflects on the limits to growth of the tourism model, offers a brief review of current policy proposed at a municipal level, and proposes a several lines for action.

The second chapter presents the consolidation of the tourism model as a phenomenon connected to the development of capitalism in the Spanish state and to the transformation of the role of cities in the global economy. The third chapter offers a preliminary analysis of the philosophy of accumulation which predominates in the tourism industry and reflects on its generation of public costs. The fourth chapter presents data and arguments which demonstrate the impacts of tourism on employment, housing, social reproduction and care, generating a social debt and a care debt. In the fifth chapter we synthesise the most relevant local-level policies for governing and mitigating the effects of tourism, and offer a reflection on the limits of the industry within the competence framework of local government. Finally, in the sixth and last chapter, conclusions and recommendations are presented for continuing the discussion and implementing public policies and regulations which regulate tourism in a way which protects the city as a central space for social life and reproduction.

2.

**URBAN
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
AND THE TOURISM FIX**



The growth and development of the tourism industry in Barcelona is tightly connected, both historically and economically, to the complete penetration of the Spanish state into the capitalist production system (aiming to support the Franco regime and liberalise domestic markets) on one hand and to the (later) transformation of municipal systems of governance and their position within a global economy on the other.

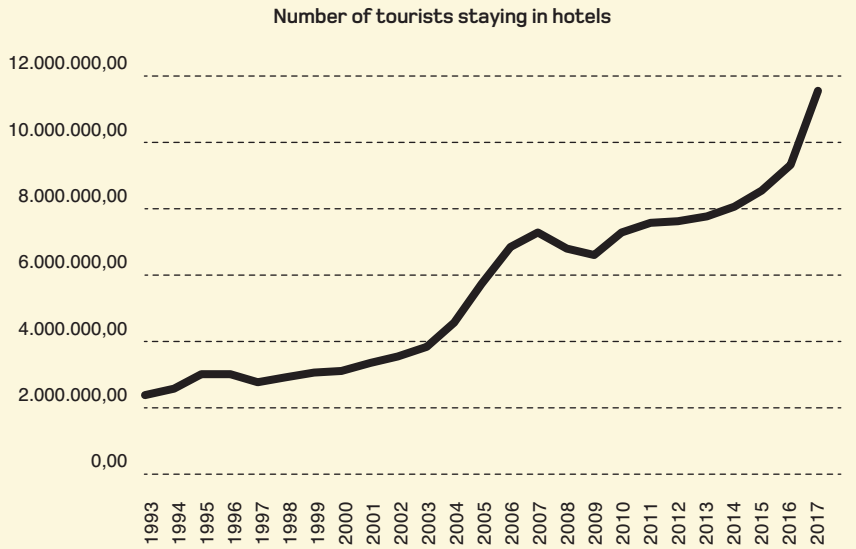
Since its integration into international markets (European markets in particular), the economy of the Spanish state has deepened its specialisation in the second circuit of capital circulation, which is tightly connected to the creation of constructed territorial features (fundamentally infrastructure and buildings). Indeed, this capitalism, hyper-specialised in the boom and bust economies of finance and property, has been diverging from the Fordist industrial model of capitalism since the 1980s (López y Rodríguez, 2010) and continues to do so. In fact, the expansion in property constitutes a “spatial fix” to the capital accumulation crisis, as it offers a way to channel large quantities of national and international capital into high-return investments, which are directed at precisely the constructed spaces and features mentioned earlier.

In fact, the tourism industry is tightly related to the spatial fix because it is so clearly anchored to particular geographical places. By definition, tourism is the commodification of the qualities and experiences connected to a certain place (the tourist destination), and in many cases its development means the expansion or reconstruction of urban areas (as evidenced in “sun and beach” tourist destinations). As such, it is part of the process of expansion of financial and real estate capitalism in the Spanish state (Murray, 2015; Yrigoy, 2014). It follows that we can speak of the “tourism fix”, both as a concrete form of the spatial fix and as a “mechanism providing a haven for financial capital which ensures a return on investment through profits derived from touristic uses” (Arias, 2018). The tourism fix is not only manifest in the construction of new destinations through new urban construction, but also in urban areas which are already consolidated (such as Barcelona). What is more, the profit accumulation strategy is not only based on the extraction of profits from land and property investments but also on the exploitation of labour in the tourism sector. The impacts of this double exploitation (of land, and also of labour) are discussed in the 4th section of this report. The tourism fix has also proven itself to be not

WHAT IS THE “SPATIAL FIX”?

The concept of a “spatial fix” was principally developed by the geographer David Harvey (2001; 2006) to define the behaviour of funds which aim to maximise their profitability either through spatial expansion or by penetrating the second circuit of capital. If the expected profitability is not achieved by investment in productive systems in the

primary circuit, capital is redirected into the secondary circuit which is primarily based on the construction of infrastructure and buildings and tightly connected with the process of urbanisation.



Source: prepared by the authors based on the Yearbooks of the City Council of Barcelona. (*) In 2017 tourists staying in tourist apartments are also counted.

only highly resilient to economic crises, but in every crisis suffered since the arrival of industry in the 1950s, tourism has occupied the space left by other failing sectors, and has recovered its pace of growth rapidly, as demonstrated by its performance in the most recent cycle after the crisis of 2008, during which time it suffered only one small setback in 2012 (Murray et al, 2017). In fact, tourism is an industry which has sustained growth worldwide during the years of the crisis, and it is projected to continue to grow at a similar rate both at European and global scales (WTTC, 2018).

The solidity of the tourism fix cannot be fully understood without considering the active role of state institutions in promoting and facilitating it and also, in the case of urban tourism, without understanding the transformation of cities and of their role within national and global economies. With the opening of national borders to the highly mobile capital of the global economy, the most central cities in national urban systems became poles of attraction for direct investment in the physical environment. It is in this context that a transition in the form of government of cities such as Barcelona occurs, from a practice fundamentally based on the decentralisation of local government from national economies and political and institutional institutions to a practice tied to a business-focused system of management based on entrepreneurship, from which a number of governance strategies emerge. The most prominent of these are promotion strategies aiming to attract capital amid growing competition with other cities (Harvey, 1989). Urban entrepreneurship arrived in Barcelona at the end of the 1980s with the celebration of the mega-event that was the Olympic Games, which catalysed infrastructural transformation and boosted the public image of the city enough to situate it in the global circuit of capital investment. Barcelona's entrepreneurial strategy was based on a philosophy of redistributing profits obtained from local economic growth (characteristic of social democracy). However, as the model has matured it has been seen how the attempt to achieve competitiveness through territorial specialisation has promoted the degradation of socioeconomic and reproductive conditions, concentrating the lion's share of economic profits in a small number of investment portfolios in the worlds of real estate and tourism.

The social crisis which began in 2008 and continues today demonstrates the unsustainability of an economic growth model based on property speculation

and the devaluation of labour, of which tourism has been a multiplying factor. At the same time, proposed solutions to the admittedly damaging effects of the tourism industry never consider the rejection of the city-business model but limit themselves to controlling and mitigating its effects. Tourism continues to be privileged and promoted¹ by public administrations, and continues to generate non-redistributed private profits through the appropriation of public resources and intensive exploitation of urban space, illegitimately extracting value from Barcelona, a city constructed collectively over generations.

¹ The new plan for tourist marketing from the City Council of Barcelona has recently been published.

CONCENTRATION OF PROFITS AND SOCIALISATION OF COSTS



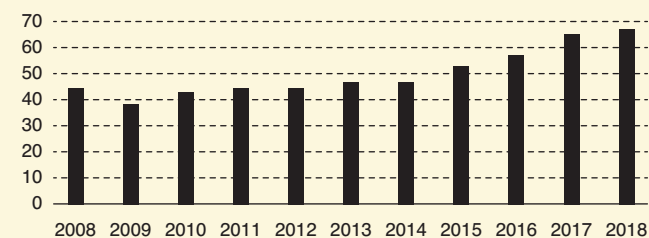
Business generated by tourism comprises between 11.59% and 14.40% of the total GDP of the city of Barcelona, according to data from a 2013 study carried out by the University of Girona, the most recent study containing this information². Compared to an earlier study carried out in 2012, the proportion of tourist activity had increased by between 0.6% and 0.7%, and there is a sustained increase from 2009, generating a recognisable counter-cyclical effect (Garriga et al, 2015). However, the arguments used to defend tourism as a solution to the economic crisis do not take into account the lack of redistribution of profits, nor the public cost, nor the social impacts on Barcelona's inhabitants.

To begin with, considering tourist accommodation only, we can take the economic behaviour of hotels. Whilst hotels have been increasing the profit obtained per room (see graph), conditions for hotel workers (especially housekeepers) are becoming ever more precarious (as will be discussed in the next section of the report).

The growth of precariousness, at a monetary level, is evident from the decrease in real terms of housekeepers' wages and from the increase in the proportion of income Barcelona's inhabitants (in general) spend on rent. These apparently disconnected facts (the increase in rents and the financial changes that hotels are making) are actually interrelated phenomena.

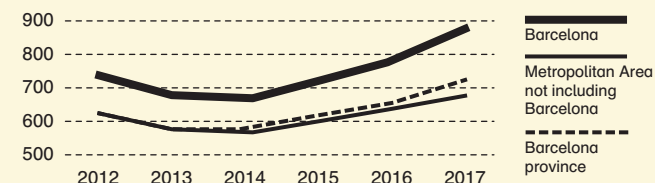
As is happening with rented housing, hotel chains are passing through a process of financialisation: a process where the hotels themselves (in common with residential properties) become financial assets. This process has been especially accentuated since the explosion of the property crisis, when hotels needed to find a way to continue to grow their capital in spite of the economic recession. This was achieved through the acquisition of their property assets by international investment funds specialising in property and Listed Investment Companies on the Property Market (SOCIMIs after the Spanish acronym) using recently invented financial engineering instruments (Yrigoy, 2016). On one hand, these manoeuvres cause the concentration of ownership and on the other, they bring an increase in the profitability of hotel chains.

Average income per available room (RevPAR) in Catalonia



Source:
prepared by the
authors based on
data from the INE.

Mean monthly rent, 2012–2017



Source:
Metropolitan Housing
Observatory

WHAT IS FINANCIALISATION?

Financialisation is a process of the current phase of the capitalist economy in which finance becomes extraordinarily powerful, permeating people's everyday lives and international, national, regional and local political decision-making. It is based on speculation in various financial products which are not tied to the real economy, which are bought and sold generating gains which are "fictitious" since they are not related to the value of a commodity but to its uncertain future value.

Globalisation, understood as the expansion of capitalism worldwide, has promoted the growth of the neoliberal paradigm of financial liberalisation, which removes barriers, regulations and control mechanisms. Political decisions, largely influenced by financial lobbies, have created

a huge portfolio of mechanisms allowing as much profit as possible to be extracted from both the productive and reproductive dimensions of the economy.

The predominance of finance is evident in many areas of everyday life. We experience the financialisation of energy, infrastructure, housing, education, healthcare, food, development aid and climate policy. Instead of financing projects in these areas (to stimulate the economy and social development), today the dominant paradigm is to maximise profits through indebtedness, without considering the value of common goods. Everything is commodifiable and everything becomes a financial product (or "asset class").

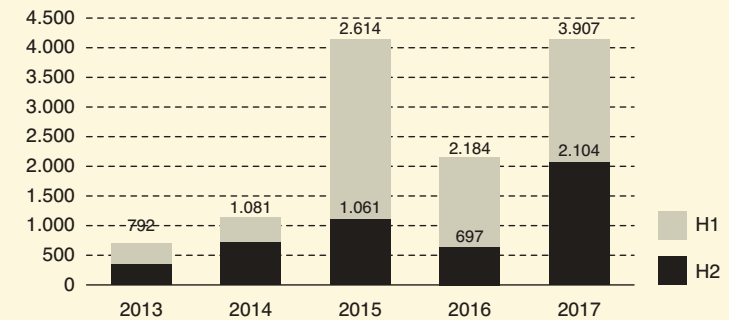
² Calculating the precise contribution of tourist activities to the overall economy is complex.

An example of this is Blackstone, a US fund which became the largest owner of rental housing in the Spanish state following the purchase of the SOCIMI Tetosa and the acquisition of assets of Banco Popular and Banco Santander (Simón, 2018), and which has also consolidated its position as one of the most active investors in the Spanish hospitality industry (Irea, 2018). The hostile takeover bids by Blackstone against HISPANIA, a SOCIMI specialised in hospitality assets, and by MINOR (international investors specialising in hotels) against the NH Hotel Group are other examples of the phenomenon of concentration of ownership, as is the fact that profits obtained from the hospitality sector are increasingly destined towards international investors. In this financialisation process, we see new actors who extract profits from the hospitality business appearing in the form of investment funds or SOCIMIs which collect revenue from hospitality assets. We also see how this financialisation process has increased the profitability of hotels themselves as measured by RevPAR (income per night of accommodation), as Yrigoy (2016) explains in his study of the subject.

Concentration of property is also evident in the tourist apartment sector, even in rental to tourists through supposedly “collaborative” platforms like Airbnb or HomeAway. Using data from the DataHippo portal³, journalists from eldiario.es estimate that 11% of advertisers account for nearly 46% of listings on the portals, and that in cities such as Barcelona, only 40% of listings are managed by hosts that only have one published listing (Sánchez y Ordaz, 2018). This estimation, obtained from data from DataHippo, has been mirrored by the publication of the official survey of licensed tourist apartments in Barcelona which revealed that, in fact, of the 9,611 licenced apartments, 4,641 are in the hands of only 374 owners (12 apartments per host on average) and that only 34.8% of owners have only one licence (Cols and Berengueras, 2018).

As will be discussed in the next chapter, one of the impacts of the tourist accommodation business on society as a whole is evident in both the displacement of residents that live in touristic areas and the displacement of small businesses

Total investment in hospitality 2013–H1 2018 (M€)



Source: Colliers International

WHAT IS A SOCIMI?

SOCIMI is the Spanish acronym for “Listed Investment Company on the Property Market”. SOCIMIs are legally obliged to invest at least 80% of their assets in urban rental property and to share the profits amongst their shareholders. This formulation, created by law 11/2009 during the PSOE government, was modified by law 16/2012 during the government of the PP, including fiscal benefits such as the tax exemption of SOCIMIs and a 95% tax rebate on property transfers, as well as the elimination of the debt ratio limit of 70%. This change in 2012 brought about an abrupt increase in the number of SOCIMIs entering the stock

markets, and demonstrates how they became a vehicle for relaunching property assets which had been damaged when the property bubble burst in 2008.

³ DataHippo is a project which was launched to create transparency around the rental platforms Airbnb, HomeAway, Housset and Onlyap in the Spanish state, through the publication of data from their databases on a massive scale from 2017. Available at: <https://DataHippo.org/es/> [last accessed 17/12/2018 20:00]

which cannot afford ever-increasing rents on premises in certain parts of the city. Tourism, therefore, generates a concentration of profits in few hands, and forces the fabric of the city into a sort of Darwinism in which only certain businesses directed at tourist consumption and large chains can survive.

However, beyond the concentration of profits, the tourism industry has largely supported its development with investment and public spending, not only through public promotion of tourism but also through intensive use of public goods and services. Although the nature of urban tourism (in which the tourist occupies public space to an increasing degree and uses public resources also available to residents) makes distinguishing use of public resources by residents and tourists difficult, there are certain expenses and pressures on public services which are clearly attributable to the development of tourism.

To begin with, the difficulties of managing public space and of achieving a harmonious co-existence with tourism in various Barcelona neighbourhoods have spawned a series of public services and experiments created expressly to control its effects. A clear example are the summer plans affecting the Old City and Gracia, which were trialled in 2016 and found to cost 600,000 euros, including additional services such as employing staff to ensure proper use of public space and manage the conflict between nightlife and residents' rest, a programme of activities to liven up public squares, inspectors to enforce closing times of entertainment establishments, increasing the presence of Guardia Urbana patrols and increased cleaning⁴.

In 2017, the summer plan was converted into the Old City Neighbourhood Plan, which remains in effect all year round due to the reduced seasonality of tourism. After an increase of 271,000 euros, in 2018 the Neighbourhood Plan had a budget of 931,000 euros and contains measures clearly aimed at managing tourism in Old City neighbourhoods including the presence of experts in social intervention and attendants in public spaces which liberated the Guardia Urba-

⁴ The news article describing the 2016 measures can be accessed online at: https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/turisme/ca/noticia/noves-mesures-de-convivencia-estival-per-a-ciudad-vieja-y-gracia_369210 [last accessed 17/12/2018 20:00]

na of its function of controlling public space⁵. In fact, the Guardia Urbana has a much stronger presence in the Old City than in other neighbourhoods, and a number of the incidents which occur have their roots in criminality associated with tourism (such as petty theft) or in "property mobbing" (see chapter 5) caused by the increased presence of "drug flats".

What is more, a recent article published on the City Council website indicates how spending on increased staffing to detect illegal tourist apartments will increase (up to 4 million euros). Another special programme with a connection to tourism is the creation of officially protected commercial premises, by which a number of businesses can have a commercial space in the centre of Barcelona at an affordable rent, to guarantee diversity in the commercial fabric of the city in the face of tourist-focused monoculture, which focuses on the needs of visitors without considering those of residents. This programme costs the City Council a total of 1.5 million euros. What is more, the "Defence Post of Labour Rights in the Old City" has been created, principally to detect abuses of workers' rights in professions related to nightlife, restaurants, hospitality and care, the first three clearly related to consumption and spaces aimed at tourists.

On top of these tourist activities we have to consider the extra pressure on public services such as healthcare, security and policing, public transport and cleaning caused by the thousands of tourists who visit Barcelona every year. In the case of transport alone, during peak tourist season 1.2 million euros from the tourist tax are spent on increased bus services and large planning efforts are required to manage busy thoroughfares. The fact that in 2017 Barcelona received 8,885,550 overnight tourists⁶ and that the average stay lasted 4.9 days implies that a minimum of 7.35% of the population of Barcelona consists of tourists who use publically funded services, not including cruise ship passengers and day-trippers.

⁵ For more information on the Neighbourhood Plan: <http://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/premsa/2017/02/19/ciutat-vella-impulsa-un-pla-per-al-foment-de-les-relacions-de-Proximidat-y-el-vecindat-a-espacio-public-y-las-escaleras-de-vecinos> / [Last accessed 17/12/2018 20:00]

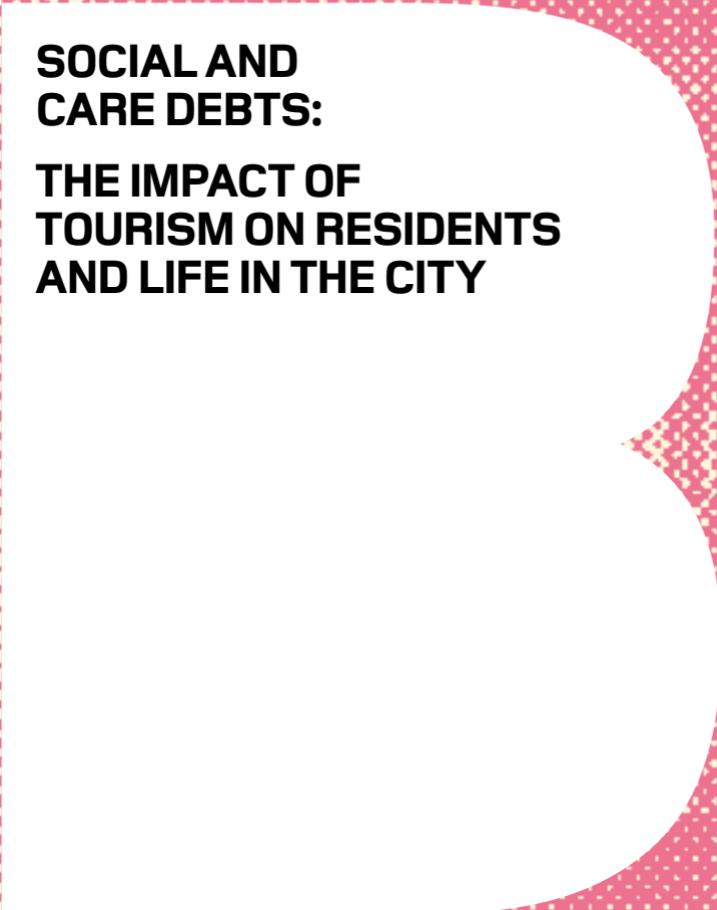
⁶ Data on the number of tourists extracted from the Yearbook of the City Council of Barcelona, which compiles the data from the Integrated Survey of the Hospitality Industry.

Finally, it is important to consider that, at the moment, it is clear that there are not sufficient mechanisms to ensure that tourism internalises the costs it generates. This approximate presentation of the public costs of tourism demonstrates that the 5 million euros which Barcelona City Council receives through the tax on stays in tourist accommodation, known as the “tourist tax”, is insufficient to compensate for the costs that the tourism industry generates. Therefore it is important, as will be reiterated in the concluding chapter, to first make an in-depth study of public costs generated by tourism and then to create mechanisms (primarily through taxes and levies) which generate more income for the public purse and ensure that profits generated by the industry are well redistributed. A first step (which is on the way to being made) would be for Barcelona City Council to move from managing 50% of the income generated by the tourist tax to 100%, a demand which is supported by the plenary session of the City Council⁷.

However, beyond the unfair distribution of profits generated by the tourism industry, tourism has a series of impacts on society, the environment and care which affect the health of the city’s social fabric. In the following sections a summary will be presented of the social and care debts generated by tourism, and of the obstacles and opportunities related to the governance of the industry, at a municipal level.

⁷ Article dated [08.12.18] can be accessed at: https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/turisme/ca/noticia/mes-recursos-de-impost-turistic-contra-los-alojamientos-il%25c2%25b7legals_744796 [last accessed 17/12/2018 20:00]





**SOCIAL AND
CARE DEBTS:
THE IMPACT OF
TOURISM ON RESIDENTS
AND LIFE IN THE CITY**

As has been demonstrated in the previous sections, not only does the accumulation of profits and the increasing profitability of tourism investments cause the concentration of profits, but the conversion of the city into a pole of attraction for these investments happens at the expense of its residents. In this section we will explore how the extractivism of the tourist industry plays out in the various areas mentioned previously. In the first and second sections, we will highlight two principal cases of extractivism in the tourism industry with strong social impacts. These impact upon housing and waged work in the sector, therefore threatening two fundamental social rights which underlie the consensual understanding of the social state which has been developing since the post-Franco transition period. Finally, in the third section we present the impact of tourism on care and demonstrate how the transformation of the city through tourism is pervaded by a destructive effect on the very possibility of the reproduction of life the neighbourhoods most affected by tourism. Each section comprises a summary of the situation in each one of the areas mentioned in which, using other studies, we evaluate the balance of effects and impacts of tourism in the city, using data to support the arguments.

The economic profitability of tourism (reflected by GDP) has grown incessantly even during times of crisis. However growth is not compensated by a “trickle-down” effect into society as a whole, whereby wealth would be shared amongst the city's inhabitants. It is becoming more and more evident that the motor driving the growth in tourism is fuelled by a philosophy of accumulation of gains through dispossession of residents. This accumulation through dispossession (extractivism in material terms) appears primarily in re-valuation and a drive towards the financialisation of housing, making housing inaccessible to local residents (rental tenants, above all) who could give it use value and causing forced displacements of neighbourhood residents by feeding the degradation of public and community resources. It also devalues labour, with a negative impact on the wages and working conditions of the (mainly female) employees in the sector. As a whole, the impacts which will be presented create a more fragmented city and increase inequalities.

4.1. COMMODIFICATION OF HOUSING

The impact of tourism on the right to housing often becomes apparent through its link with the gentrification process (understood as the displacement of local residents, to be replaced by wealthier groups), a phenomenon which is tied to the increase the quantity of hotel rooms or tourist apartments. Although classic studies of gentrification treat tourism as a consequence of an earlier process of gentrification (Arias, 2019), more and more studies are showing that the potential for profit from tourism is a gentrifying factor in itself. Whilst the origins of the study and conceptualisation of gentrification are rooted in the experience of British and American cities which are central to the global economic system, when the study of the process is applied to peripheral cities such as those in southern Europe or Latin America the key role of tourism becomes apparent (Janoshka & Sequía, 2016).

The relation between the substitution of population by class and tourism is evidenced by the fact that the displacement of the resident population is not caused by the arrival of middle- or upper-class people in the city, but is a response to the global demand for accommodation from tourists or for short-term residents (such as professionals working abroad for less than a year). In Barcelona's case, this phenomenon is strongest in the central neighbourhoods in the Old City district, where the majority of the city's tourist attractions are located. In spite of this, the gentrification process (although it is primarily residential in nature and implies displacement from and consequent abandonment of primary residences) is also related to symbolic, culture and material factors not specifically linked to housing (Cócola, 2018).

The following section will present the mechanisms by which tourism causes loss of access to housing for residents and triggers their expulsion or displacement. The increase in prices is principally caused by the reduced supply of residential rental properties due to their substitution by tourist apartments, as well as the general effects that tourism pressure has on the appreciation of land values and rents.

TOURIST APARTMENTS AND INCREASING RENTS

In spite of the fact that tourist apartments and the platforms that facilitate their commercialisation are nothing new, it is from the 2012, with the newly flexible licences generated by the transposition of the European Services in the Internal Market Directive (known as the Bolkestein Directive) through the Omnibus Law of the Catalan Parliament⁸, that they really take off, especially within the districts of the Old City and the Eixample.

As well as the abrupt increase in licensed apartments, the number of unlicensed (that is to say, illegal) tourist rental properties has also surged, facilitated by the expansion of the platform Airbnb, which makes it easy for anyone to rent out their spare rooms or apartments to tourists. Currently, using data from Data-Hippo updated on the 1st October, in Barcelona there were 27,503 apartments listed on Airbnb, three times as many apartments as have legal licences, of which 12,830 are entire apartments. Airbnb defines itself as a business situated in the new paradigm of the “sharing economy”, which in principle facilitates the sharing of underused resources (such as a room which sits empty for a certain period of the year) to maximise their economic profitability. The adverse effects of “maximising the economic profitability” of housing have exacerbated the move away from considering it a good to be used and a basic right to a focus on its use as a commodity for trade and investment.

Various studies have indicated that the economic return on short-term tourist rental apartments is much higher than that for residential rental (cases from other cities: BJH Advisors, 2016; Horn & Mérante, 2017; Wachsmuth et al, 2018; case of Barcelona: Duatis et al, 2016). In particular, the study commissioned by Barcelona City Council (Duatis et al, 2016), including three possible economic scenarios (to approximate the demand for and occupation of tourist rental apartments) calculates that tourist rental is between 2.35 (in the most conservative scenario) and 4.07 times more profitable than residential rental. The

⁸ The law which regulates the granting of tourist licences is Decree 159/2012, which specifies how law 9/2011 (part of the Omnibus Law), in the promotion of economic activity, “has created significant changes in the regulation of tourism activities and businesses”. The legal text is available through the Catalan Juridical Portal: https://portaljuridic.gencat.cat/ca/pjur_ocults/pjur_resultats_fitxa?documentId=622795&action=fitxa [last accessed 17/12/2018 20:00]

NUMBER OF TOURIST RENTAL APARTMENTS 2005–2014



Source: Barcelona City Council. PEUAT
website: <http://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/pla-allotjaments-turistics/ca/>

AIRBNB'S STRUGGLE AGAINST MUNICIPAL REGULATION FOR A FREE MARKET

In response to the harmful effects of the increase in tourist apartments and other tourist accommodation, various cities within the Spanish state and the European Union (including Barcelona) have taken measures to control the expansion of the phenomenon and mitigate its impacts on residents using legislative and planning instruments. In Barcelona's case, the PEUAT (Tourist Accommodation Plan) stands out as a planning measure which regulates the number of licences which a district can grant and prohibits tour-

ist rental of unregistered or unlicensed apartments through local regulation. The reaction of the representatives of those with property interests and associated lobbies is already evident. The following section presents a summary of two cases: the first from Europe and the second from the Spanish state.

AIRBNB'S LOBBIES IN EUROPE

The main lobby representing Airbnb and other platforms for the commercialisation of tourist apartments is Europe Holiday Housing Association (EHHA), which has intensified pressure on the European Commission during the past year. It is gaining ground and, as the Corporate Europe Observatory warns in its study (CEO, 2018), has privileged access to the Commission in the interests of the businesses it represents. As the study explains, EHHA has been gathering strength to avoid the imposition of regulations in several European cities aimed at protecting the availability of residential housing. EHHA is concentrating its efforts on ensuring existing European regulations are interpreted and transposed by cities and state in a way that serves its interests. Specifically, its attention is focused on the interpretation of the E-Commerce Directive and the Services Directive, alleging that these directives cannot oblige platforms to divulge their users' private information, making it impossible to monitor their activity to evaluate their impact or to check licenc-

es. However, the Services Directive states that the information requirements must be necessary, proportionate and non-discriminatory, and it prohibits authorities from requiring businesses to be authorised to carry out their economic activities and from establishing quantitative limits. Even so, it has been established that the Services Directive can be ignored if there are imperative reasons to do so related to the public interest. The struggle to determine the interpretation of European regulations and what constitutes the public interest is currently favourable to the EHHA, which has succeeded in getting the Commission to accept its version of the facts.

THE NATIONAL MARKETS AND COMPETITION COMMISSION

On the 13th August 2018, the National Markets and Competition Commission (CNMA, after its Spanish acronym) - a public organisation which supervises and resolves trade conflicts, and is responsible for ensuring the smooth running of markets - published a report (CMNC, 2018) alleging that no negative impact of tourist apartment and room rental could be demonstrated on residential rental. The CNMA argues that tourist rental through digital platforms like Airbnb has undoubtedly improved the competitiveness of the tourist accommodation sector, creating more accessible prices which benefit consumers (tourists) and also enables citizens to benefit from economic activity associated with tourism by becoming hosts. Above and beyond these benefits, the report specifically criticises the regulations imposed by city councils, arguing that they unfairly attack free competition and form harmful barriers to the development of economic activity for all citizens and users.

In this way, the CNMC embraces the narrative presented by the EHHA, and hits back against the imposition of regulations which it considers out of proportion, disincentivising to economic activity and bureaucratic. It also believes that these measures are unnecessary and that since they encroach on market freedom, their contribution to the public interest must be demonstrated before they are accepted.

Cases like these, evidently, are presented as obstacles to the regulation of tourist rental, which prevent solutions being found which would contribute to the eradication of its harmful effects.

obvious consequence is that, as said previously, apartments are taken off the residential market, reducing the availability of residential properties for long-term rent and generating scarcity in some neighbourhoods which, predictably, leads to an increase in rent for the remaining residential properties.

Supply scarcity in an environment with a large demand for rentals (the changing, international tourist demand discussed previously) is not the only factor which explains the impact of tourist rentals on the increase in residential rental prices. Generally, the intensification in the use of space generated by the tourist industry, which constantly constructs new consumer spaces, also exerts an upwards pressure on the price of residential and commercial property (Cocola, 2016). The rent differential which exists between tourist and residential properties (considering price per square metre) demonstrates the possibility of increasing the profitability of properties through the tourism fix. This raises market agents' expectations of growth and subsequently serves as a driver of rental price increases (though it is not the only one). Tourism, therefore, is positioned as an industry which generates ever higher expectations (until these are believed to be certainties) of property in Barcelona as a safe haven asset and as an investment with a constant high return.

The increase of rental prices experienced in Barcelona over the past two years is not only due to the impact of tourist rentals (in spite of the key role tourism plays in the configuration of the political economy of the Spanish state, which has a strongly based in property speculation). In this case, the rental price bubble is caused by the regulated deregulation of the rental market since 1985 (with the passing of the Boyer decree and the end of indefinite contracts), which has configured itself such that the contractual relation between tenant and landlord has become extremely unequal, giving all the power to the landlord and leaving tenants completely unprotected, with short-term unstable contracts and no control over the price they can be asked to pay.

The Urban Lease Law (a law which regulates the contractual relationship between landlords and tenants, last amended in 2013 to cut contracts from 5 to 3 years, making them both more profitable and more volatile), is absolutely not the only proof that, at various levels of governments and through laws, regulations and institutional architectures which are difficult to change, the commercialisation of land (including consolidated land) and property has been

established as the main financial asset of the economies of the State and of the city of Barcelona. This institutional and legal context has created a favourable environment for stimulating investment demand in existing housing in established areas for renovation and subsequent rental at astronomical prices (investments made increasingly by international investors and vulture funds, with local cooperation). The potential clients are the floating population (tourists or high-level international professionals) who are willing to pay the inflated prices.

PROPERTY MOBING

These speculation processes are also accompanied by serious situations involving "property mobbing", deliberate practices by the landlord or by potential buyers or investors aimed to force the displacement of residents – tenants with current temporary or indefinite contracts, or even owners. These aggressive practices by their very nature violate the right to the dignified enjoyment of housing, worsening living conditions. They can have serious impacts on the mental and physical health of affected residents. They become one more strategy in the speculator's toolbox to achieve higher returns on property investments and are used most often and most intensely in the central districts of the city with a high density of tourists.

The qualitative study by Cocola (2016) focussing on cases in the Gòtic neighbourhood explains how the practice of property mobbing is and has been used with de facto impunity by investors (although sanctioned by the Catalan Housing Law 2007) who wish to open new spaces for tourist rentals (both tourist apartments and hotels). The practice of harassment as a tool for forcing the displacement of the resident population and freeing up space for tourist consumer activities is not new. A study carried out in 2006 by various authors as the result of a workshop on property and town planning abuses organised by the Autonomous University of Barcelona (VVAA, 2006) noted property mobbing as a practice related to the expansion of the property market during the mid-1980s and the 1990s, with accelerated construction and the revaluation of the price per square metre of land. In Barcelona specifically, mobbing is also related to the transformation of the city into a pole of attraction for the urban tourist industry which happened during the same period. This happened through planning and cosmetic changes to urban space, including monumentalisation, driven by the local and regional administrations in relation to me-

ga-events like the Olympics of 1992 and the Culture Forum of 2004. These mark a point of inflexion in the expansion of the hospitality industry in the city.

In conclusion, the tourism industry intensifies the extraction of profits from land without generating a productive economy and becomes an obstacle to exercising the right to housing, particularly for tenants but also for homeowners. Although tourism is neither the only nor the main cause of the housing crisis, it has exacerbated its effects (Cócola, 2016). The investment of spare capital in tourist destinations, as a spatial fix, demonstrates how the property bubble is tightly linked to tourism (Cócola, 2018).

4.2. TOURISM AND THE DEVALUATION OF WORK

This section argues that, although tourism is a growing industry, the economic gains made through the activity it generates do not have positive repercussions for most people working in the industry, a fact which undermines its legitimacy as an industry. Not only does it not have a redistributive effect on profits, but the industry stands out for having particularly precarious labour conditions.

As is reflected in the cases of both the Spanish state and the city of Barcelona, the more the industry has grown the worse labour conditions have become. This section will first expose the motives behind the degradation of work in tourism; then, it will go on to describe the mechanisms which enable these work conditions to be imposed as well as their characteristics and principal effects on the (mainly female) workers in the sector.

TOURISM AND THE DEVALUATION OF WORK

We must start by considering the difficulty of defining tourism work, of demarcating what is or is not work connected with tourist consumption. In fact, it is just as highly complex to calculate total production linked to tourism (since it overlaps with the production generated by industries not exclusively catering to the tourists), as it is to know which occupations correspond only to this industry. Widely defined, according to the ILO (2017) tourism work is considered to be work activities specifically connected with accommodation, the management of activities for tourists and tours, tourist attractions and everything related to entertainment and food.

To explain the devaluation of work in tourism, we must first establish tourism as another branch of activity that has been affected by the progressive reduction of labour rights imposed over the last two decades and by the devaluation of wages, both elements of the management of the recent international economic crisis. Thus, the devaluation of tourism work is part of a post-Fordist capitalism scenario and is a consequence of the need for investment and tourism companies to maintain profit margins in a context of credit restriction. A specific example linked to the tourism industry is the recent financialisation of hotel companies to counteract the impact of the financial crisis and the lack of credit (Yrigoy, 2016) and the impact that this financialisation has had on the need to increase competitiveness through the devaluation of the salaries and work of employees.

Data from a recent study (Fernández-Kranz, 2017) shows that, in the period 2008-2015, the wages per day worked fell by 3.3% and that, in general, the wages of the new hires are a 23% lower than those who signed contracts before the crisis. Thus, while there is talk of post-crisis economic recovery due to a decrease in unemployment and an increased number of jobs, the new jobs that have been created, especially after 2014, have reduced contractual quality (in the sense that contracts are now much more flexible and temporary) and lower wages, with an increased difference between the 30% worst-paid and 30% best-paid employees (Pérez-Infante, 2015).

The tourism sector, being a sector fundamentally linked to services, is one of those that suffered most from the labour reform of 2012. This reform allows the outsourcing of personnel in various tourism-related occupations through multi-service companies, which can apply their own company agreements without necessarily having to be bound by the collective agreements made. As discussed below, this reform has caused a negative impact on working conditions in tourism, and is an example of the gradual destruction and democratic regression of the collective bargaining power of workers, forcing individualised negotiation of working conditions (Castro and Pedreño 2012), which, in aggregate, results in their degradation.

But, beyond the general dynamics of capitalism in the last decade, Ernest Cañada, in a short article (Cañada, 2017) details what characteristics of the tourism industry in particular lead it to create precarious jobs despite being one of the sectors experiencing most growth in terms of production and jobs. In the

first place, Cañada points out that tourism is an activity strongly linked to place (in fact, as we will see in the next section, this close relationship generates serious environmental and landscape impacts), since the merchandise it sells is closely linked to experiences linked to a specific destination. This close relationship with place means that offshoring (a typical spatial fix) to increase profit margins by reducing costs is not as accessible an option as in other industrial sectors. In fact, tourism specifically markets the exclusive value of its choice of destinations. Without being able to resort to territorial delocalisation in search of cheaper markets for the exploitation of labour (due to labour, political and financial conditions of other countries), tourism is an industry that promotes a devaluation of work where it is established and rooted, and that is why it is considered a pioneer industry and a field of experimentation in applying the degradations of labour rights associated with the neoliberal transformations that have established themselves in the past decade.

Secondly, tourism operates on specific timescales due to the seasonality of its economic activity, which means that the need for labour is concentrated at certain times of the year and even on certain days of the week and or hours of the day. For employers it is convenient to offer only temporary and unstable contracts. Although this seems to be a diminishing phenomenon in urban tourism in Barcelona, which receives an increasingly stable influx of tourists throughout the year, the number of visitors is also influenced by certain meetings and major events that the city hosts, and this generates short-term contracts. Finally, Cañada (2017) also points out that the little training required to work in much of the tourism sector makes it a low-wage sector that, in turn, attracts those from social sectors with few resources, both educational and relational, such female migrants. As we will see, this fact is related to the social devaluation of the reproductive tasks associated with certain jobs in the sector, and is transversally linked to questions of gender and ethnic origin.

WORKING CONDITIONS IN THE TOURIST INDUSTRY: DEGRADATION MECHANISMS, FEMINISATION AND IMPACTS ON FEMALE WORKERS

Although the systemic causes the devaluation of work in tourism are of special relevance in understanding it, it is also necessary to focus on the specific mechanisms and characteristics that facilitate it, especially when considering how to curb its effects.

In an extensive qualitative study focused on work in the hotel sector Ernest Cañada (Cañada, 2016) finds multiple mechanisms for the degradation of work, which are largely related to the massive outsourcing of the central hotel services (especially housekeeping), fruit of the legal reform of 2012. Cañada observes how wage cuts and demotions occur, generating a gradual de-professionalisation of services with the entry of untrained personnel; how contract durations and conditions change, increasing the temporariness and changeability of work schedules and generating high instability for workers; and how internal reorganisations of work processes intensify work and result in a loss of service quality. Poor working conditions obviously have an impact on both the mental and physical health of the workers.

The devaluation of tourism work affects women in particular, and migrant women even more so, since they form one of the demographic groups which are most highly represented in the sector and most affected by its devaluation. In fact, the large participation of women in tourism work is partly explained by the fact that a large part of the service work in the tourism industry, specifically in accommodation and food, is associated with reproductive work which is, in fact, considered an extension of domestic work (Moreno and Cañada, 2018). This fact is due to the political, social, economic and symbolic imposition of the division of labour that assigns jobs of little power and status to women, impeding their chances to progress professionally. In addition to the selection and progression criteria, Moreno and Cañada find that tourism work generates gender inequalities, since women are affected by sexual harassment at work, suffer a serious wage gap which meant that, in 2008, men earned 6.7% more than women (Muñoz-Bullón, 2008), and find themselves in deeply precarious work.

Daniel Albarracín and Mari-Luz Castellanos (2012) used an in-depth study of the working conditions of women employed in hotel establishments to characterise the precariousness to which they are subjected through gender-based analysis. First, they point out how the hospitality sector pioneered the outsourcing of the management of apartment management departments to companies that took advantage to restructure the way work was organised as early as the 1990s, with the harmful effects of the reorganisations widely denounced by the most long-standing members of staff. In general, working in the sector imposes a requirement of versatility, flexibility and adaptability, conditions under which it becomes very difficult to attend to the family care needs that mostly also fall

to women. Despite being a very unstable sector (it is indicated that only 32% of the staff have the same job after 10 years), it is men who manage to stay in the same workplace the longest. This is evidently related to contracts, which become temporary instead of permanent seasonal, leading to greater job insecurity for workers.

The study also shows how women, although they are more affected by temporary contracts (37% of women have temporary contracts compared to 29.9% of men) and generally suffer more discrimination, tend to normalise and internalise the inequalities (Albarracín and Castellanos, 2012), an effect which is aggravated by workers' loss of power and organisation potential. Corporate employment management strategies that seek greater efficiency result in worse working conditions: they are based on fragmented contracting, the irrational division of labour, the creation of unrecognised job titles (which do not need to carry a wage that is in line with collective agreements), the lengthening of the working day, and compensating for material and structural deficiencies with an intensification of the work, combined with a policy of using employment practices to avoid hiring new staff.

BARCELONA: NOTES FROM A POLE OF ATTRACTION FOR TOURISM

While most of the facts that have been presented in this section are characteristic of tourist work in Spain or even globally, many of them can be applied to the city of Barcelona⁹. In fact, Cañada (2017) indicates how, in cities that function as major poles of attraction for urban tourism, the working conditions of female tourism workers are even more devalued. This is because having worked in Barcelona is of great value for the CVs of people who want to develop a career in the tourism sector. Although, a priori, the causal relationship seems contradictory, the effects are the following: under the existence of a surplus of workers willing to work under any conditions in order to accumulate work experience, companies take advantage and offer internship contracts or contracts with bad conditions, exploiting skilled labour without paying its real

⁹ As mentioned, for the city of Barcelona, seasonality effects on tourist work are not so prominent, although it is not clear whether the greater stability in demand has a positive effect on the temporariness and instability of contracts. In addition, a large part of the qualitative study conducted by Cañada (2016) is based on cases and interviews carried out with workers in establishments in Barcelona.

value. The advantageous situation of Barcelona on the global scale of touristic value, therefore, works against the working conditions of the sector, instead of favouring them, as is often claimed.

It is not by chance that it is also in Barcelona where hospitality sector workers have sustained the most prolonged resistance in the Spanish state, under the new union of Las Kellys, which recently won a first and decisive victory at the Hilton Hotel in Diagonal Mar, which has recognised them as a trade union and renegotiated labour conditions, re-linking the hotel to the collective agreements and forcing the hiring of the entire workforce by the company.

4.3. IMPACT ON REPRODUCTIVE WORK AND CARE

The construction and adaptation of city neighbourhoods and spaces for tourist consumption and production moves cities away from their role as a locus of social reproduction and care. In short, as can also be seen from the cases presented in the previous sections, the progressive penetration of tourism into cities means that they lose their capacity to support a meaningful and complete lifecycle of growth, development and ageing of the population and the networks and groups they belong to.

AUSTERITY PLANNING AND THE CARE DEBT

The construction of the tourist city, as already mentioned in the introduction, occurs parallel to a wider transformation of the political economy of the city - in particular, Barcelona. The city goes from being a space for social reproduction with regard to the (industrial) national economy to a pole of attraction of capital through diverse marketing and entrepreneurship strategies, leading it towards a new relationship with the global economy. Neoliberalism breaks with the link between production and reproduction in cities, transforming cities from reserves of work for national economies into "production platforms for the global economy" (Smith, 2009).

This rupture and persistent marginalisation of the city as a locus of social reproduction intensifies after the outbreak of the 2008 financial crisis and the adoption of austerity measures. These were justified by increased public debt, generated by the illegitimate transfer of debt and private risk from the financial

Table 6. Mean salaries by sector (euros/year)			
Year 2016	Total	Female	Male
1 Industry	38,894	34,395	41,075
2 Construction	26,646	27,150	26,594
3 Vehicle repair and sales	29,031	*22,848	30,296
4 Large-scale commerce	35,588	32,389	38,022
5 Small-scale commerce	19,474	17,329	22,668
6 Transport	33,439	31,938	33,982
7 Hospitality	15,860	15,022	16,483
8 ICT	36,430	33,800	37,846
9 Finance and insurance	51,767	41,683	62,089
10 Property	25,863	24,076	28,256
11 Professional, scientific and technical professions	32,666	26,959	39,655
12 Administration and auxiliary work	20,055	17,979	22,442
13 Public administration	36,263	33,524	40,313
14 Education	26,585	25,571	28,443
15 Health	35,164	31,994	43,732
16 Social services	16,126	14,963	19,224
17 Artistic, leisure and personal services	19,066	16,621	22,132
Total	29,176	25,669	32,819
(*) Less than 100 observations			

Source: Barcelona City Council, Analysis Department -Technical Programming Cabinet -Municipal Data Office

actors causing the crisis, to states and the public purse in the form of bailouts (Cutillas and Wessling, 2013). The impact of the management of the crisis on cities gives rise to so-called austerity planning, in itself implying a deepening in the philosophy of neoliberalisation already begun decades earlier, which includes spending cuts to basic public services provided at a local level (such as education, health), the sale of assets and public property or the privatisation of basic services in cities, and the extension of the practice of infrastructure management and development in the form of public-private partnerships¹⁰ (Peck, 2012; Davies and Blanco, 2017).

Some of the social impacts derived from austerity have been mitigated thanks to the increase in care work, moving the burden onto the shoulders of women who are usually the social group that spends the most time sustaining social reproduction. This transfer generates what we call a care debt (Bayas, 2017) or the dispossession of the time and effort of women directed at taking care of life (Carrasco et al, 2014a, Herrero, 2011), and that, as analysed below, is also linked to the increase in tourist pressure in the city.¹¹ In fact, it is not a simple spatial-temporal coincidence that the adoption of austerity planning in Barcelona has gone hand in hand with the intensification of the city's international promotion program, and the development of the "Barcelona brand", which is closely linked to the growth of tourism in the city.

The "austericide", its transformation into specific policies for dismantling the welfare state, the increase in tourist pressure and the exploitation of the city as a space to be sold in international (financial) markets (through the constant revaluation of its real estate assets) are phenomena that are entirely related and that have shaped the urban scenario that prevails in Barcelona today. The city becomes a depository of economic value while destroying its use value as a locus for social reproduction.

¹⁰ For more information on the effects of public-private partnerships and some examples linked to the distribution and production of energy and infrastructure see Conde, Marta (2017)

¹¹ In one of the last reports by the ODG, Bayas (2017) explores the concept of 'care debt' to refer conceptually to all the work that women contribute to society within a patriarchal and capitalist socio-economic system, without receiving anything in return.

Although the previous sections have already presented how the economy that generates tourism undermines basic social rights, now we will specifically outline how tourism hinders social reproduction in neighbourhoods with a large tourist presence.

THE TOURIST CITY AGAINST SOCIAL REPRODUCTION AND LIFE

Urban tourism, far from existing in discrete enclaves separated from the rest of the urban fabric, has completely penetrated the daily living spaces of the city (Cócola, 2018, Arias, 2018), made possible by the expansion of rental tourist rooms and apartments.

The high number of tourist apartments is a serious obstacle to guaranteeing access to housing for residents of the neighbourhoods with the greatest tourist presence, and forces their displacement to other areas of the city as part of a gentrification process. However, Agustín Cócola's in-depth study of the impact of tourism in the Gòtic neighbourhood suggests that tourism generates a displacement effect that is not based solely on the lack of access to housing, but also on other factors caused by its step change from being a residential and commercial district to being a neighbourhood with a strong tourism specialisation, which is known as "place-based gentrification". The residents, then, are displaced by losing "the resources and references" that make their daily life in the neighbourhood possible. In summary, these losses can be described as transformations that affect the commercial fabric of the neighbourhood, uses of public space, mobility, coexistence, security, and the existence of neighbourhood networks, impacting residents with both lower-class and middle-class incomes, robbing them of their sense of belonging to the neighbourhood before they even leave (Cócola, 2016; 2018).

The loss of small local businesses and the replacement of the commercial fabric of the neighbourhood not only causes historic establishments to be displaced or closed (as denounced by neighbourhood groups), but also leads to the substitution of shops which focus on residents' consumption and reproductive needs by shops focused on tourist consumption and the floating population, with habits and needs different from those of the neighbourhood (Arias, 2018). Tourist consumption also follows consumption patterns linked to those

of the middle and affluent classes (Garcia-Herrera et al. 2007)¹², and therefore it makes products more expensive for the less affluent classes who live in the neighbourhoods with a high tourist presence, and who suffer from this commercial transformation. This phenomenon not only implies an increase in the prices of products, but also the transformation of the type of products on offer which is skewed towards a specialisation in cultural and consumer products strongly linked to tourist consumption. In the case of Barcelona, this is mainly concentrated in the neighbourhoods of Old City, which are the most penetrated by tourism (Hernández, 2014), and, for example, in the Raval neighbourhood there is a specialisation in shops linked to tourist consumption, both in terms of location and of opening hours, which differentiates them from local commerce (Carreras et al, 2016).

Although, therefore, we have seen how tourism penetrates the commercial fabric of local neighbourhoods and transforms them to suit the consumption needs of the industry, "local" experiences are increasingly sought after in the search for new spaces and sensations for the tourist experience such as "off the beaten track" tourism or the "feel like a local" experience (promoted, amongst others, by Airbnb). Tourists themselves become pioneers and find in "gentrified neighbourhoods, or those undergoing the process of gentrification, the ideal product to consume" (Arias, 2018), producing a constant dis-differentiation of the patterns of leisure and consumption of tourists and residents, followed by a transformation and subsequent re-differentiation (as seen in Old City). This dynamic, therefore, facilitates the dispersion of urban tourist consumption into neighbourhoods outside of the historical centres of cities. An example of this is the arrival of the tourism industry in post-industrial areas (Gonzalez Duran, 2017 describes the case of the left bank of the Nervión, in Bilbao).

"It's hard to live in a neighbourhood where you cannot buy everyday things, and also, as an elderly woman, I use places like dry cleaners or haberdasheries.

¹² This report, however, questions - although this has not been fully studied -, the socio-economic profile of the tourists who consume in the city of Barcelona, since this is determined by their countries of origin, and objective and relative material situations at different scales. In any case, we question the assumption that the average consumer consumes in the same way, and to the same degree and at the same price in their daily lives as they do when on vacation abroad.

It seems silly but they are basic things for me¹³. This testimony, collected by Agustín Cocola in his latest in-depth research on place-based gentrification in the Gòtic neighbourhood, shows the impact that the commercial transformation of the neighbourhood has had on daily life in a neighbourhood that is losing its diverse commercial fabric. Other testimonies collected by the same study show how the loss of basic resources for social reproduction, such as the ability to move around with children to carry out daily activities, and the hostility generated by the loss of common spaces for meeting neighbours, privatisation of public spaces and the lack of social relationships with neighbours due to the strong rotation of the floating population, erode the fabric of the neighbourhood, compromising cooperation and generating insecurity. The invasion of public space by pavement cafes has been a repeatedly denounced by the neighbourhood organisation of the Old City and immediately adjacent neighbourhoods such as Sant Antoni. Specifically, they have demanded a modification of the pavement cafe regulations to curb the expansion of the space taken up by private food and drink businesses, which have grown with the increase of tourist visitors¹⁴. “When you know your neighbours you feel safe, but when you see many different people in front of your door you do not know what’s going on¹⁵”. This reality, which affects older people according to the author of the study (Cocola, 2016), generates a feeling of insecurity that prevents the affected groups from feeling safe in the streets and discourages their relatives and friends from going to help them.

¹³ Quote from an original study by Agustín Cocola presented in 2018 publicly on the Plaza Sant Felip Neri. Link to the video of the presentation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-OkCzlteSEk&t=270s>. The original document of the investigation is not publicly accessible, but the textual citations have been obtained from the journalistic article by Carles Cols (2018): <https://www.elperiodico.com/es/barcelona/20180715/asi-viven-ultimos-vecinos-barrio-gotic-barcelona-6941355>

¹⁴ Through the Federation of Neighbourhood Associations of Barcelona (FAVB) and the Association of Neighbourhoods for Sustainable Tourism (ABTS), residents began a campaign to modify the current municipal regulation of pavement cafes through the MultiConsulta mechanism.

¹⁵ Word-for-word quotation from Cocola (2016).

THE CASE OF THE GÒTIC NEIGHBOURHOOD: DATA AND RESISTANCE

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

The Gòtic neighbourhood is the neighbourhood of Barcelona with the lowest population born in the province of Barcelona, which also shows how this neighbourhood has ceased to be an area considered suitable for making stable life plans for the local population (Cocola 2016). This phenomenon is closely related to the fact that the Gòtic is the neighbourhood of Barcelona with the largest tourist presence. Cocola (2016) uses the high ratio of tourist beds versus neighbourhoods, which rises to 1/1.04, to indicate that the neighbourhood could have more tourists than residents in the future. According to Gay and Cocola’s socio-demographic study (2016), there has been a considerable increase in the population between 25 and 39 years of age, with a much higher presence of men than women compared to the whole city. In addition, there is also the lowest proportion of children in the city, much lower than other neighbourhoods

in the city that are also in the process of gentrification but with less tourist presence: while the proportion in the Gòtic is one child from 0 to 14 years for every eight adults from 25 to 59, in Gràcia (an example of neighbourhood in the process of gentrification) the ratio is one child for every adult. In addition, 65% of the population between 25 and 39 years of age in the Gòtic is foreign and only 15% of the residents were born in Barcelona. Among the foreign population, moreover, it is seen that in the Gòtic the number of young, educated immigrants from European or American countries is increasing, while the population of Asians and Africans is decreasing, and most (of the Asians and Africans who live in the Gòtic) have few resources and live in sub-standard housing conditions, a fact closely linked to the practices of property mobbing presented in the first section of the report.

THE CASE OF THE PLAYGROUND OF THE ÀNGEL BAIXERES SCHOOL

The Gòtic is also the neighbourhood with the least public space in the Old City district. A case that exemplifies very well the tensions between the lack of space, the privatisation of space and the need for space for care and the reproduction of life is the case of the Àngel Baixeres School playground, located on the edge of the Gòtic neighbourhood on the side bounded by the Via Laietana. With the Barcino plan and the Roman Walls Walk project, it is expected that meters of public space will be gained, and the PTA of the school saw the perfect opportunity to obtain the playground the school did not have (they had already lost it in the 1940s, and chil-

dren spent their breaks on the roof which was too small). Aiming to make this space useful for citizens and to avoid its privatisation by a hotel or restaurant terrace, after a few workshops facilitated by the City Council (with the aim of planning future use of the space with the participation of neighbours and members of the PTA), a balanced solution was finally reached: during school hours, the space would be a school playground, and during non-school hours it would be a public space open to all, expected to be heavily used by local residents as well as visitors. The children have just started using the playground at the beginning of this school year.

All the cultural and material transformations mentioned strongly impact on and interfere with reproductive work, and, as with austerity planning, are compensated for by an increase in the time spent on care, or with an exodus from the neighbourhoods most penetrated by tourism to more residential areas¹⁶.

Although qualitative studies and in-depth case studies of this phenomenon are what allow us to see the effects of the presence of tourism in everyday life, it is also interesting to contrast and cross-check this information with aggregate demographic data. López-Gay and Cócola (2016), for example, demonstrate how the effects of population displacement generated by the entry of tourism can be differentiated from those of “normal” gentrification, especially seen in the fact that neighbourhoods with a strong tourist presence are characterised by a lesser presence of women, children and elderly people, and a decreased indigenous population with an increased migrant population from the European upper-middle class.

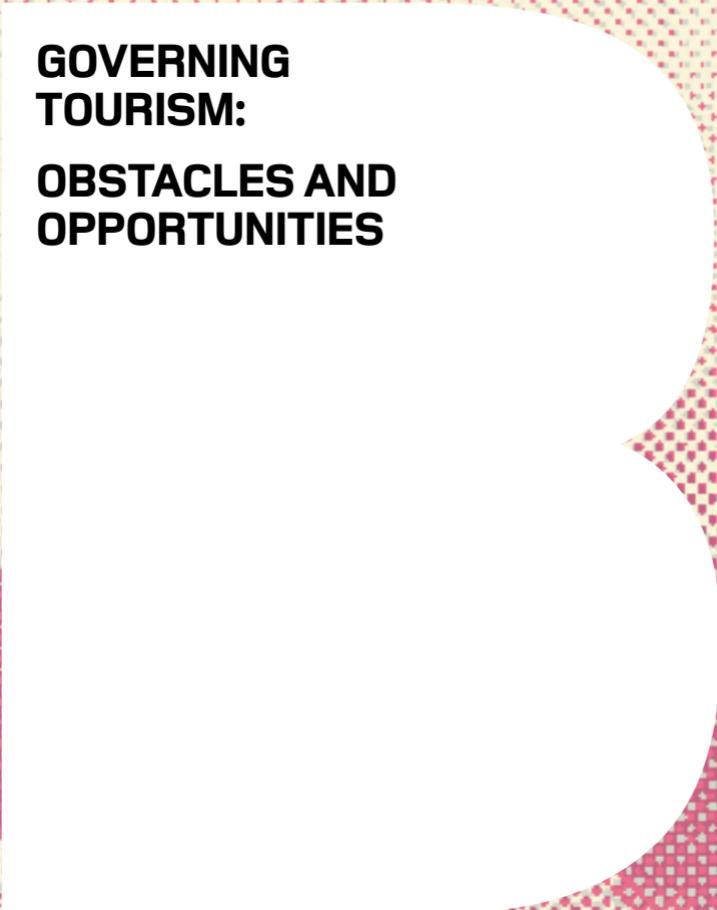
Although studies such as those mentioned above begin to address this phenomenon, it is necessary to study it more in-depth, adding a gender perspective on the difficulty of reproductive work in the neighbourhoods affected by tourism and the impact on care. This section will draw a series of first lines of contact between the research on the impacts of the penetration of tourism in local spaces for everyday life, and critical and gender-based perspectives on care and reproductive work, which disproportionately affect vulnerable groups (children and the elderly).

The loss of resources and references which was mentioned by Cócola (2018) and illustrated in our examples is closely related to the loss of reproductive capacity and the crisis of care signalled by Herrero (2011) when analysing the effects of the last social crisis of capitalism in terms of gender, and is related to the ecodependence and interdependence that emerges from ecofeminist theory. Undoubtedly, the destruction of the social fabric of neighbourhoods and their disappearance undermine both ecodependence (linked to the environment and the opportunities and resources it offers) and interdependence

¹⁶ Although the data indicate a displacement, no data have been found on the direction of this displacement, or the specific destinations of people who leave neighbourhoods with high tourist presences.

(relationships with other people), which is essential to allow a meaningful life for every person. The need to establish networks and have a diverse ecosystem (also in a commercial sense) to be able to live and the importance of cooperation to create a sustainable care system not based on exploitation are essential concepts to have in mind when analysing and re-thinking how should spaces be organised in the city and what limits should be placed on the penetration of tourism into them.

Feminist literature and perspectives with a gender component are necessary to obtain an analytical framework that allows us to capture the impacts of tourism on the reproduction of life in the city, and to find tools and alternatives to the current model.



**GOVERNING
TOURISM:
OBSTACLES AND
OPPORTUNITIES**

The relationship between tourism and the city has changed in the last 30 years, as the harmful effects of the industry on the city and its residents have become evident. In this sense, the conditions which allowed the consensus, or broad political agreement, existing at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s with respect to cities and the promotion of tourism, no longer exist today. Years of economic prosperity were brutally ended by the arrival of a social crisis that seems to have had chronic effects, and the growth of tourism in the city from the crisis years until today has not mitigated its effects, nor have the economic gains of the sector been redistributed, but the precariousness of social sectors has been increased, as have social impacts. Beyond the issues related to the economic profits of the industry, the residents of the areas of Barcelona most impacted by tourism face impacts that go beyond monetary issues and impact on the possibility of leading a meaningful life in the midst of a strong presence of visitors and floating populations.

All these effects and impacts form the evidence base supporting the fact that tourism, as we know it today, is an extractive industry that involves serious dispossession of the receiving population. This finding, together with the pressure from neighbourhood groups organised to denounce the pernicious effects of tourism, has generated the need to modify the way in which public institutions articulate their relationship with tourism. As argued in this report, this relationship must continue to change, seeking better management models and thinking about new horizons for the city of Barcelona.

5.1. ACTIONS CARRIED OUT BY THE BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL: A CRITIQUE

The current government of Barcelona, since the beginning of its term in 2015, has launched a series of processes, built a series of fundamental guidelines for public policy and developed concrete measures and instruments to govern, regulate and control tourism, and also to mitigate its negative effects. Below a series of criticisms of what we consider the main policies implemented recently to govern tourism are presented and argued for.

THE 2020 STRATEGIC TOURISM PLAN

The base document from which the rest of the government actions are implemented is the 2020 Tourism Strategic Plan (PET2020). Starting from a broad and refined diagnostic methodology involving different actors and sectors, the PET2020 starts from the premise that the city and tourism are inseparable and co-constitutive. It is for this reason that the PET2020 says that it will avoid taking “totalitarian positions”, and will focus on promoting measures and approaches aimed at making tourism a sustainable and non-incrementalist option over time, coming from the perspective of cohesion, co-creation and co-responsibility of all the agents involved, both public and private. The PET2020 also establishes the need to undertake a cost-benefit analysis, focusing on “the social return of tourism and its redistribution”. The PET2020 clearly makes a qualitative leap in diagnosis, including of the negative impacts of the industry, such as the issue of access to housing, just working conditions or environmental impacts. However, notably absent are the questions of care and gender, which have been briefly discussed in this report and create a tension between the city as a space for the development of life and the city as a commodifiable space.

Beyond diagnosis (although it does propose to implement mitigation instruments for certain negative impacts of tourism), the PET2020 does think beyond the management of the current city model. It seems immersed in the irreversibility of Barcelona's place as a world tourist destination and tourism is presented as one of the central economic activities of the city, which should continue to be protected and publicly supported. There is no clear analysis in the PET2020 of the amount of public resources that support the tourism industry (especially through tourism promotion, infrastructures and basic services), which would enable costs and benefits to be more accurately assessed, also considering social impacts. In the same direction, in the PET2020 we do not see a meta-governance vision that supports the need to reduce the weight of the tourism industry and proposes to initiate a path towards new city models and the strengthening of new economic models.

TERRITORIAL TOURIST MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Territorial Tourism Management Strategy (ETGT) is a government measure that, based on the same principles as the PET2020 (sustainability, responsi-

bility, redistribution, cohesion and innovation), develops specific decentralised measures for the neighbourhoods of Barcelona. The objectives of the ETGT are to a) enhance the multiplier effect of tourism; b) accurately value the assets of the physical environment, promoting existing assets which do not generate negative externalities; and c) mitigate the negative effects of tourism in order to guarantee residents' quality of life.

Among the specific measures proposed for neighbourhoods there are some which have strong planning potential in terms of controlling tourism, and which can effectively mitigate its effects in the short and medium term, such as the implementation of use modification instruments to prevent loss of the everyday functions of traditional markets or limiting licences for souvenir shops. However, some of the pillars on which the ETGT proposal is based do not have real transformative capacity. In the first place, although mitigation measures are necessary, they are not sufficient, since we must aim to eradicate the root causes that generate the negative impacts of the tourism industry. Mitigation, therefore, is only to be understood as a transitory measure towards a new model. Secondly, the supposed multiplier effect of tourism must be questioned: the multiplier effect of tourism, according to its theoretical champions (Archer and Owen, 1971), rests on its capacity to generate a chain effect that activates other sectors of the economy, in both the first and second sectors, and is the main argument used to justify the benefits of tourism. However, the multiplier effect has been questioned, and it has even been suggested that tourism, instead of boosting them, destroys the industries and economies that feed it, or at least, does not generate redistributive effects (Gascón and Cañada, 2017).

Thirdly, and connected with the last issue, the attempt to create value from territorial assets that have not yet been sufficiently exploited by the tourism industry evidently involves many risks that may require a considerable public effort to control. As mentioned in the document itself, which foresees criticism in this direction, the measures of the ETGT do not want to "disperse" tourism throughout the region, but to enhance the value of assets that are not in danger of generating negative externalities. The attempt to enhance the value of certain territorial assets (cultural or local businesses, for example) should be accompanied by an analysis of where the control over these assets ends up,

which is often far from the people living in the region, and even the local authorities¹⁷. The value of certain territorial assets draws visitors which generates an intensive use of the physical environment and makes land (and the rents that can be extracted from it) increase in value, generating a second re-valuation that can be very difficult for the local government to control. City councils do not have the capacity to control the demand one hundred percent, since with the boom of off-the-beaten-track tourism tourists direct their consumption interests beyond what is directly promoted. Therefore, the dangers of the spatial dispersion of tourism are real, taking into account that the demand (the number of tourists) does not stop growing. In addition, we must bear in mind that the physical environment of Barcelona is seriously 'overvalued', since wages, which are in the process of devaluation, cannot sustain life in an increasingly expensive region.

SPECIAL URBAN PLAN FOR TOURIST ACCOMMODATION

The Special Urban Plan for Tourist Accommodation (PEUAT) has been one of the most anticipated measures to effectively control the proliferation of tourist accommodation. The plan aims to curb the growth of tourist housing (HUTs, after the Spanish acronym), establishing areas of natural decline (every time a HUT closes a new one will not open, used for very congested zones), areas of zero growth (each time a HUT closes a new one can be opened) and growth zones (each time a HUT closes in a zone of decline a new one can be opened). This measure has been accompanied by an increase in staffing for the detection and inspection of illegal tourist apartments, which account for the bulk of the existing availability in the city, and has led to more than 5,000 sanctions and has forced the closure of some 2,000 tourist apartments. This necessary measure is considered an essential step in the direction of controlling the effects of tourism and defending the right to housing for the residents of the city. However, the measure could suggest ceasing to allow areas of growth, but instead to establish a gradual disappearance of tourist flats, to avoid the danger of the dispersion of tourism throughout the city.

¹⁷ In relation to other experiences of local tourism management in Central America, Gascón (2016) warns: "The principle of local self-management of tourism is based on an uncertain premise: that the local organisational and institutional structures have full control over the physical environment. However, their legislative capacity is very limited."

THE 'TOURIST TAX'

The 'tourist tax' is the name given to the tax on stays in tourist accommodation, which charges tourists over 16 years between € 0.65 and € 2.25 per night spent in tourist establishments, including cruise ships. This tax, which has existed since 2012 and is administrated by the Catalan Tax Agency, managed by the Government of the Generalitat, underwent several modifications in 2017 (mainly an increase of the amounts imposed) and led to recent disputes between the City of Barcelona and the Generalitat over the control of its income, in which the City Council asked to control 100% of the income from the tax. Finally, after several meetings of a mixed commission composed of both administrations, the City Council managed to gain control of 50% of the revenues generated by the tax.

A limitation to the redistributive and compensating effects of the tax on tourism impacts is found in the options for investing the income. According to the regulations that regulate it (Law 5/2017), "the income derived from the tax on stays in tourist establishments is intended as an endowment for the Fund for the Promotion of Tourism, regulated by the seventh section, for the fulfilment of its determined ends", purposes that respond to the promotion and improvement of the tourist services themselves. However, there is room for interpretation to allow investment in improvements in neighbourhoods and in the daily life of inhabitants, since what is good for the city and its residents is good for tourism and tourists, based on the co-constitutive relationship alluded to by the PET2020.

In spite of the importance of having a tourist tax that allows public income to be directly collected from tourist activity, the taxation of tourism has obvious limits. One of the objectives of the tax is to internalise the negative externalities of tourism, and this is undoubtedly a complicated task given the diverse nature of the sector: it is not a factory in which it is clear what the extractive factors are and what are its (differentiated) discrete negative externalities. It is a complex industry, which is inextricably mixed with the daily living space of residents. This is why it is complex to differentiate between purely "industrial" activities or spaces and those dedicated to life in the city. In addition, the low wages paid by the industry and the high residential rental prices, or the impacts on reproduction and care, are not monetisable or reversible through a single monetary solution. Taxing tourist activities (such as cruises that use highly toxic fuels), does not only finance other public policies designed to mitigate the effects of

the industry, but can also function as a way to reduce damaging production and consumption activities.

5.2. A NARROW COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK

There are limits to how far tourism can be governed from the sphere of competence of the local public administration. These limits are to be found in the narrow competence framework of the City Council, regression in the decentralisation of tourism management instruments, and the pressures exerted by lobbies representing tourism companies.

Barcelona City Council is seriously limited in its capacity to use public policy to control tourism and the negative effects it has on the interests of the city's residents. The City Council does not have the capacity to make deep legislative changes in housing; it cannot legislate on the tourist tax nor decide autonomously where to allocate the income; it does not control the Port of Barcelona (nor the airport), which would allow it to control and regulate the highly polluting activities generated by tourist traffic; it has no power over the labour legislation that allows the exploitation of workers in the tourism sector.

These limits are not insignificant, and even less so if we consider the steps backwards, de-regulations and re-regulations that have occurred in recent years. These have dismantled the instruments that empowered local administrations to control tourism directly or indirectly through the process of transposing European directives and re-centralizing the State, and have served to deepen the land and property speculation exacerbated by tourism. Some examples collected by Arias (2018) would be the various Catalan laws transposing the European Services Directive that, by modifying the Law for the Right to Housing, have facilitated the repurposing of housing for tourist use; the modification of the Catalan Urban Planning Law, which hinders the development of instruments such as usage plans or special urban plans, which could spatially regulate and plan commercial activities linked to tourism; the approval of state laws that encourage the appropriation of capital gains on consolidated urban land (Law 8/2013); and the creation of the fiscally-privileged SOCIMI structure (Law 11/2009) in order to increase the profitability of real estate assets. One could also add the reduction of the duration of rental contracts and decreased

tenant protection which came about thanks to the modification of the Law of Urban Leases in 2013, or the suspension of the Catalan Law 24/2015, which generated instruments and measures to mitigate the effects of the housing and energy poverty crises, due to an appeal of unconstitutionality filed by the Popular Party government in 2016.

These regressions in competencies and the difficulties the local governments face in governing tourism are also the result of pressure exerted by lobbies of private companies linked to tourism. The clearest example, discussed above, is the European Holiday Housing Association, a lobby which Airbnb and other online platforms for renting tourist flats act through. Through pressuring the European Commission, the EHHA is managing to influence local government policies that aim to regulate tourist rentals. As the report presented by Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO, 2018) explains, the Commission also speaks directly to national governments and ministries, surpassing local government, which, in Barcelona's case, is a body notable for bringing litigation and fines against the Airbnb platform. Local political officers were unaware that the State Government had discussions with the Commission regarding the regulation of tourist flats, when they were interviewed by the CEO.





CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSALS FOR CHANGE

The need to limit the development of the tourism industry is already commonly acknowledged, and this can be seen in the Strategic Tourism Plan of the city of Barcelona.

This industry has, until now, been presented as a 'fix' for social and economic crises. Indeed, it has functioned as a spatial fix for the accumulation crises of contemporary capitalism, but this report presents data and facts that show that tourism currently does not generate social benefits, but quite the opposite. The counter-cyclical effects of tourism in the face of crises are showing signs of exhaustion and of reaching their limits, and so the argument with which tourism has been promoted at urban level for the last decade, therefore, has been shown to be invalid by not representing the common good. The penetration and consolidation of urban tourism in the city of Barcelona, in fact, has happened thanks to a series of antisocial regulations that have been promoted by public authorities. On one hand, we have the re-launching of the property-financial bubble in relation to tourism thanks to the approval of the Omnibus Law (2011), the consequent expansion of tourist flats (2012), the modification of the regulations that regulate SOCIMIs, endowing them with considerable fiscal benefits (2012), and the relaxation of rental contracts through the modification of the LAU (2013). On the other hand, we have the labour reform of 2012 that deprives workers of protection and facilitates the outsourcing of services and the marginalisation of collective agreements, promoting the devaluation of work, both in terms of wages and of working conditions. In addition, in the face of the changing political context and with the evident need for public authorities to make policies to control the expansion of tourism and real estate, the sector's lobbies are working to stop any public initiative to protect strategic sectors to safeguard citizens' quality of life, as in the case of rent regulation or the consolidation of public housing policies.

It has also become clear that financialisation has concentrated the benefits of the tourism industry in few hands, while at a societal level, tourism generates precarious work, worsens access to housing and catalyses land revaluation processes, fostering the current rent price bubble and generating residential and commercial displacement, with the consequent erosion of neighbourhoods' community resources, which are vital for a meaningful life in the city. In addition, the costs and public spending generated by tourism are higher than

the social benefits it could generate, and far exceed the taxes directly collected from tourism, such as the tax on stays in tourist establishments.

It is urgent, then, to take a step back and find mechanisms to govern tourism. This report proposes to go beyond the mitigation and planned control of tourism in order to lay the foundations of a suspension of the growth of the industry and a plan for its decline. Many of the measures that have been undertaken during the current legislature of the City Council are compatible with and complemented by the proposals set out below. We must continue, for example, guaranteeing maximum social return from tourism, but as a means of transition towards the non-specialisation and diversification of the city's economic activities. In addition, we maintain that tourism should stop being publicly promoted, and that government efforts should focus on recovering the spaces for care and social reproduction that have been lost with the penetration of tourism into neighbourhoods.

PROPOSAL FOR BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL:

STRENGTHEN TOURISM TAXATION:

- Work must be done to increase the income coming from the taxation of the tourism industry through the creation of new tax rates, especially until 100% of income is controlled by the Council.
- Accordingly, it is necessary to continue establishing negotiations with the Government of the Generalitat to obtain complete management of the tax and to modify the regulations that regulate it.

DEEPEN RESEARCH AND DATA ON THE IMPACTS OF TOURISM

- Make an exhaustive analysis of public costs generated by tourism and the distribution of benefits it generates. Obtain specific data on the public resources invested in tourism, taking into account that it generates an intensive use of infrastructure and public services.
- Construct transition scenarios towards a new economy not based on inter-urban competition or specialisation in tourism.

INVEST IN SOCIAL MEASURES IN NEIGHBOURHOODS, INCLUDING A GENDER AND CARE PERSPECTIVE

- Part of the income from taxes on tourism will go towards measures to improve the quality of life of neighbourhoods, supporting services and essential equipment for sustaining social reproduction.
- There is an urgent need to include gender and care transversally in all studies and proposals for policies and instruments in the field of tourism.

CONTROL TOURISM LOBBIES AND STOP THE GROWTH OR SPATIAL DISPERSION OF TOURISM

- It is necessary to ensure that the relationship with the market agents of the tourism industry is one of fluid dialogue and communication, but without a transfer of resources or public powers to the private sphere. Barcelona City Council, then, should stop investing public resources in the promotion of the city as a tourist destination.
- We must avoid the dispersion foreseen by the impact of the PEUAT and the ETGT.
- It is necessary to rethink the PEUAT in a way that leads to a natural decrease of tourism in the whole city.

PUT AN END TO THE EXPANSION OF THE LAND PRICE BUBBLE

- Active purchase of consolidated urban land and housing in order to increase the public availability of rental housing throughout the city, especially in areas which are central and suffering from gentrification, and thus avoid forced displacement of residents. The acquisition of land and public housing will have a controlling effect (and possibly a decreasing effect) on prices, as the ratio of public to private housing increases. Measures such as the mandatory inclusion of 30% of rental housing with regulated prices in each new construction project or comprehensive refurbishments go in this direction.
- Finally, we must continue to find instruments that facilitate coexistence in public spaces and avoid their privatisation, as well as the implementation of urban measures that ensure commercial diversity in neighbourhoods.

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