

# COLLABORATIVE ECONOMIES A PATH TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE TRADE OR TOWARDS UNFAIR COMPETITION?: AIRBNB SPAIN CASE ANALYSIS

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#### **ABSTRACT**

The collaborative economy is a phenomenon that is defined through the use of the Internet where it is linked to networks and platforms for the purpose of using time, goods and services, this being a reality to take advantage of the benefits of the collaborative economy and promote future lines of research in a significant way, likewise, the usual means of communication give rise to tools established by the internet, such as the case of social networks and that these quickly adapt to the new collaborative business models. This document is framed by a general objective that sets out how the Airbnb platform can contribute to sustainable economic development to change consumption models in the future.

#### **KEY WORDS**

Airbnb, accommodation, collaborative, economy, P2P.

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#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The collaborative economy refers to an economic model through which its users carry out activities such as: lending, buying, selling, sharing or renting goods and services, where they take advantage of new technologies, carrying out online transactions, which implies the use of digital platforms (Irigaray, 2022).

Within the collaborative economy theme, a central element is "exchange", which it is not something new. It is necessary to mention that before the emergence of new information and communication technologies, this exchange was limited to the geographical environment and social circles. Social circles with which people were closest, it is for this reason that the world experiences accelerated and massive growth in the use of digital devices and platforms. It is when the collaborative economy gains strength, giving way to connections of great importance (Banco Santander, 2021).

This global connection has given rise to a specific process for generating trust online. The principal elements of this interconnection are: digital identification, reviews and opinions, digital communities and trust towards platforms. In this age of the Internet, image, reputation, user opinions and ratings are decisive in collaborative economies. These elements have become very important in the different sectors that comprise it, such as: transportation, accommodation, food, finance, fashion, second-hand, to mention a few. The influence is such an extent that during 2020 the impact of this economic model on Europe was 28,000 million euros (Vaughan & Daverio, 2016: 8-15).

Previous studies on collaborative economy have dealt with the subject in a conceptual and theoretical way, however, there are few works where a critical analysis and future projection of these booming economies is proposed. That is why, in this research document, the study of the collaborative economy is addressed, focusing on its advantages and disadvantages with a projection into the future, based on the principle that it is an economic model that has come to subsist permanently. For this, the research work has focused on a single sector, which is that of accommodation, specifically the case of Airbnb. The exploration has been based on a documentary review, under an analysis with a descriptive-qualitative approach and quantitative data.

The integration structure of the research work and the way in which it is presented, is having as a starting point the justification of the study and its objectives., The bases on which the collaborative economy is based are described later, followed by its current context of the collaborative economy. For later take a look at the accommodation sector. Finally mention its advantages and disadvantages and address the conclusions that have been reached.

#### 2. JUSTIFICATION

Technological developments have been an effective instrument in the socio-economic sphere, they have allowed new opportunities to be provided at a social level. The capitalist system has benefited monetary inequalities, but the collaborative consumption generates the union of society (SMF, 2019).

According to Neuburguer (2019), most companies manage mobile applications and the internet, this favors new business opportunities for investors and entrepreneurs. The economic crisis of 2008 influenced the loss of confidence of organizations and institutions. In this order of ideas, thanks to new technologies, the collaborative economy obtains its potential and expansion through communication networks. This communication system leads to the linking of content to achieve extra income or take advantage of goods and services that are underused. Therefore, the interest in addressing the Airbnb case is to know how it will contribute to sustainable economic development or confirm if it is only an enterprise based on unfair competition disguised as a collaborative economy.

# 3. OBJECTIVES

#### 3.1 General objective

Detect if the trend that Airbnb Spain keeps contributes to sustainable economic development or favors unfair competition.

# 3.2 Specific objectives

a) Know the current context of the collaborative economy through a detailed and descriptive exposition of the changes that are taking place in the accommodation sector.

- b) Identify the factors that influence the growth of the collaborative economy, developing the how, when and why of the consumption models of today's society and how new technologies have prompted the creation of new ways of exchanging goods and services with personal relationships. as a driving vehicle.
- c) Qualitatively analyze the advantages and disadvantages of the implementation of the collaborative economy in the accommodation sector (Airbnb), exemplifying with specific cases the positive or negative revolution that it is producing in them.
- d) Quantitatively analyze sample data on the use of Airbnb to determine the presence of unfair competition.

#### 4. METHODOLOGY

The relevant research questions within this work seek to find the correspondence between the accommodation sector (Airbnb) and collaborative consumption, therefore, the questions that are established are:

- 1. Is Airbnb a real example of collaborative consumption?
- 2. Is Airbnb just a digital version of traditional consumption?
- 3. What correlation exists between information and communication technologies and the collaborative economy in the accommodation sector?

The last question seeks to know the correlation between the mentioned variables and how one influences the other.

To respond to them, a systematic and qualitative documentary review is carried out, which was made from the search in the following databases: Google Scholar, Redalyc and Dialnet.

The above through the following boolean operators:

- Airbnb AND collaborative economy, Spain
- Airbnb AND sharing economy, Spain
- Airbnb AND collaborative consumption, Spain
- Accommodation AND collaborative economy, Spain
- "Airbnb peer to peer" AND Spain

• collaborative economy NEAR 2 Airbnb Spain

The boolean-logical operators AND and NEAR 2 allowed to relate the company Airbnb with the different names with which the business model under investigation is known. The above allowed expanding the location of results, where factors, causes, influences are addressed and trends.

In addition, a second boolean-logical operator was used, the inverted commas, through which it was possible to include bibliography with titles that only included the phrase described.

#### 4.1 Inclusion criteria

The full article was considered only if the following inclusion criteria were met:

- The article included its date of issue between the years 2015 and 2022.
- The article presented qualitative data in the first instance and may or may not contain quantitative data exclusively from regions of Spain.
- These were studies on the collaborative economy and its effects on the accommodation sector, specifically Airbnb.

#### 4.2 Selection process

The initial literature search returned a total of 78 articles that appeared to contain select features, of which, after removal of duplicate papers, 56 remained. Subsequently, the abstracts of all 56 articles were reviewed, of which 21 were selected for a full-text review, 35 were removed because they did not meet the inclusion criteria.

After evaluating the full text of the articles, 8 were those that were kept for review.

#### 4.3 Concentration of results

A table expressly designed for research and data analysis was used according to the categories listed in the table.

The results were organized into 4 items: region in which the document is issued, conclusion on contrast Airbnb vs. collaborative economy. In addition to complementing with statistical data such as the number of reports of illegal housing for tourist use in the

region and during the year 2019/2020 and variation of the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) generated in the region and during the year 2019/2020.

#### 5. TEHORETICAL FRAMEWORK

# 5.1 Description of the fundamental bases of the collaborative economy

#### 5.1.1 Definition

There are various angles through which the concept of collaborative economy has been tried to be defined in recent years. So, the definition of collaborative economy will be unified as productive models, consumption and/or financing based on the intermediation between supply and demand. Demand generated in relationships between equals, through digital platforms, generating greater use of existing assets and resources. These models may or may not have monetary consideration (Vender en Internet, 2019).

The sharing economy is a unique business concept that is based on new technologies and collaborative networks. Products or services are bought, sold, loaned, leased or exchanged, depending on the needs and with collaboration between people (Irigaray, 2022).

## 5.1.2 Origin

What leads part of society to understand the collaboration model as one of the main engines of development? If the first symptoms of the model as they are understood today are sought, it is necessary to move around the year 2007. In 2007 as a result of a global economic crisis, certain parameters of consumption based on possession are called into question. A part of western society had been acquiring economic obligations of a contractual nature by buying. (Espinosa and Colino, 2018: 9-21).

The houses, cars or other values generated both "purchasing power" and indebtedness. The demand generated inflation and this, in turn, increased indebtedness that led to a crisis in the consumer society (Espinosa and Colino, 2018: 9-21).

At this point, already existed the loss of purchasing power and the increase of the socalled lower-middle class and a detriment of the middle class. So, the society looked alternatives to satisfy the most basic needs and promoted changes. Parallel to this phenomenon, certain symptoms have been emerging that suggest that consumption trends may change in the coming years (Lombardo, 2015):

The strong development of social networks as means of communication where people share their experiences and expose their needs.

- The need to be careful with the environment begins to take shape and the fact of extending the life of products is fundamental.
- The consumer economy generates social differences and with the arrival of the crisis even more drastically reducing what is considered as middle class.
- Indebtedness affects the liquidity of families seeking alternatives to cover their basic needs.

All these aspects lead to the sector that is currently known as the collaborative economy. Its settlement in current consumption habits seems to be here to stay without trying to destroy an established and properly regulated system. This model offer alternatives and solutions for citizens who need it (Máynez and Gutierrez, 2016: 2-8).

#### 5.1.3 Triggers

Noelia María Salinas Lozano (2016: 18-29) defends in her work "The Collaborative Economy: Triggering factors and comparison with the market economy" the factors that trigger the collaborative economy are based on:

- 1- Technological factors.
- 2- Internet as the main communication and dissemination channel (platforms, social networks).
- 3- Economic factors.
- 4- Evolution of the unemployment rate.
- 5- Decrease in GDP.
- 6- Decrease in wages and reduction in average spending

# 5.1.4 Key features

Once the descriptive criteria of the model have been unified and some of the symptoms that suggest the emergence of a new consumption model have been detailed, a series of fundamental parameters must be established that allow an activity to be identified within the set considered as collaborative (Lombardo, 2015).

Use of information technology through platforms as tools to facilitate peer-to-peer transactions.

Generation of consumer confidence through user-based rating systems. This aspect generates a greater connection between users and providers that have not generated a previous transaction.

Time flexibility for consumers, suppliers, as well as for all those involved in the generation of the service.

# 5.2 Know the current context of the collaborative economy

#### 5.2.1 How the sharing economy works

It has been identified that the collaborative economy refers to the ecosystem of so-called exchanges or direct transactions between people to replace those carried out from company to person. These exchanges can take place in different ways (without the obligation of money involved and for reasons of exchange of assets, workforce or resource sharing). This exponential growth could not be understood if it were not for times of recession such as the 2008 financial crisis. Even more recent stages of economic and social impact such as the current COVID-19 pandemic have marked the economy (Fernández, 2022).

A boom that, valued from creativity and adaptability to the environment, is remarkable but could not occur without the support of technology. This fact therefore coincides with the rise of the Internet and the new information and communication technologies (ICT). These new technologies, together with actions led by associations based on people, generate new platforms or digital media. This has led to a rapid growth of new business models (Fernández, 2022).

The conjunction of various circumstances in this context means that this type of economy is altering the standards of the traditional capitalist economy. The foregoing, through the suppression of the so-called transaction costs or intermediary costs.

The collaborative economy takes advantage of wasted resources or resources with potential to generate new services and wealth for its suppliers. It works from an economic point of view as it is based on values of efficiency and sharing of resources or assets. The collaborative economy produces a more sustainable effect on economies (Montero, 2019).

It also works in terms of the social vertex, since its proposal aims to reach a greater number of people.

Finally, it works from an environmental point of view, due to the more efficient use of consumption and the reduction of waste.

In the personal context, human beings are increasingly proactive with the association, overcoming historical and social barriers for the so-called benefits and values of timeless property. Today the association is valued in finances, accommodation, transportation or even the valuation of the exchange of assets, knowledge, workforce or services (Banco Santander, 2021).

Some of these pillars mean that important sectors with a strong economic impact are formed within the collaborative economy ecosystem. Not without more, at the rate of 28,000 million euros of impact in Europe in 2020.

#### 5.2.2 Benefits of the sharing economy

The sharing economy encourages association consumption through digital platforms. On these platforms, users can exchange goods and services, without being subject to copyright. They interact due to the need to exchange knowledge, products or services (Consumo responde, 2022).

From the more altruistic evolution of these platforms, towards the adoption of some platforms with a professional or technical approach, to businesses that have arisen thanks to collective financing (Crowdfunding).

There is a huge ecosystem full of possibilities, with all kinds of purposes depending on the degree or desire for profit. The most remarkable thing in any case turns out to be their capacity for self-organization and the internal relationships that are generated in their business models through the so-called platform economy (Fernández, 2022).

The use of these infrastructures and also the efficient use of technological innovation makes the production and distribution of goods and services open and accessible to all. However, many private initiatives linked to or justified in the collaborative economy are actually business models with a clear profit motive. The focus of these initiatives ends up affecting models that are not based on P2P (Peer to Peer) and on which the traditional economy depends. Therefore, they end up affecting the transactions of the latter and limiting their ability to respond to what critics of the collaborative economy call unfair competition. It is for the above that it is considered that the current legislation has gaps or legal needs (Equipo Singular Bank, 2018).

Among the most prominent sectors in the context of the collaborative economy are those focused on accommodation, transport, the market for second-hand goods, restaurants, etc.

It is clear that, observing the sectors in which it operates, its regulation is necessary. The lack of regulation ends up being a means for the growth of the underground economy and forces the conflict between those who take advantage of it and those who feel affected by following the conventionality (SMF, 2019).

But the reality is that in the course of this boom in the collaborative economy, the legal system has not been provided with the precise tools for its regulation. In this sense, it is possible to find in the jurisprudence a large number of legal conflicts between technological and conventional companies. Legal commitments that have not been resolved efficiently nor have they resulted in a new, better regulated and efficient scenario. Thus, the legal regulation is lagging behind in terms of reality and making this lack of control notorious (SMF, 2019).

#### 5.2.3 Peer to Peer (P2P) entrepreneurships

In recent years, companies have emerged that, due to their intrinsic characteristics and the type of proposal they launched, have been classified as digital platforms (such as Airbnb, Uber, BlaBlaCar, etc.). Digital platforms facilitate the contracting of services between third parties, occupying a central position between providers and policyholders.

This central position and the use of digital technology allow a systematic reduction of costs associated with advertising, communication, management or execution of exchange

processes. But not only do they reduce transaction costs, moreover, they bring together large groups of users, producing enormous effects on the network (The Social media Family, 2022).

From this situation of advantage, interest is generated in terms of web positioning, for example. Effect produced by large technology companies such as Google, Amazon or Facebook betting on the development of platforms of this nature in what is already known as the bilateral market.

The two-sided market is important for technology companies in that the benefits of advertising revenue are now closely linked to the control of so-called network effects. Therefore, the struggle to gain control of them is a direct source of benefits through intermediation, marketing, etc., in what is known as network economies (Caurín, 2018).

What can clearly be understood is that the impact of the collaborative economy in the current context is enormous. It has caused a tidal effect that uncovers new forms of collaboration and that is closely related to the management proposal between people. In addition, this model has led to a reduction in historical transaction costs and an improvement in the times and forms in the provision of services (Espinosa and Colino, 2018: 9-21).

However, according to García, et al. (2016: 17-23) somehow this model also transforms the need to produce the proposal from a more professional way to a more personal and even non-professional model. But tensions inevitably arise between the so-called traditional operators, independent operators and digital platforms.

#### 5.2.4 Weaknesses of the collaborative economy

And having reached the point of conflicts that can arise between the parties, the shortcomings of the legislation are uncovered again. These shortcomings can be understood if it is understood that the current legal system is nothing more than a compendium of rules, regulations and laws based on the experience of industrial society.

The industrial society promoted the following bases:

 Need for production to incur economies of scale and reduce huge manufacturing and transaction costs.

- Obligation to professionalize as merchants under the regulation of commercial law.
- Comply with the precepts of labor law in terms of hiring and worker rights, etc.

Thus, it is now possible to understand the difficulty of regulation that can occur before individuals who carry out a commercial activity on an unusual basis. They are not understood as merchants as such and may be regulated by commercial law in many cases.

The tax system is also not prepared to control multidisciplinary transactions that can occur between people who simultaneously carry out actions as consumers and providers of multiple services (Montero, 2019).

Therefore, the close relationship that the collaborative economy has with the underground economy represents a source of concern for the tax system.

According to Rodríguez (2016), other aspects, such as the protection of consumer rights, may be in question in certain online proposals. But it is observed that at least, as far as platform management is concerned, a positive evolution of their defense is being found. This progress of the same is understood based on the fact that once the platforms have been consolidating and professionalizing, they have been better adapting their proposal. Updating and regulating those faults that could incur in the distrust of the user.

Wallapop is, to give an example, a platform for the exchange of goods that has evolved enormously since its appearance in 2013.

It has a market value in 2021 of 690 million euros and its activity generates a turnover of close to 1,000 million dollars. However, it was born thanks to the contributions of a crowdfunding portal in Barcelona. His proposal was not innovative at the time. It included the concept of other already existing proposals but its explosion was due to the use of geolocation in devices. Differentiating effect that can be taken advantage of at that time since technology allowed it. A freeware proposal that once consolidated has been concerned with the excellence and improvement of services. For example, in 2017 it signed an agreement with Correos to send parcels between individuals at no cost through the platform (limited to certain weights and measures).

But returning to the framework of the legal context, the greatest legal challenge is the activity of collaborative platforms. Although the platforms are usually limited to facilitating contracting between third parties, the reality is that they assume part of the responsibility

for their central situation. In this sense, the Court of Justice of the European Union ruled in its ruling of 12-20-2017 on the lawsuit filed against Uber. Where it was stated that the provider of that intermediary service creates in turn a service offer. Therefore, it is necessary to adapt the regulation in order to assess the level of secondary responsibility arising from the services provided (Montero, 2019).

But this new need for regulation is not exclusive to the emergence of the collaborative economy. In any evolution or emerging business model, which is normally closely linked to technology, there is an important regulatory need. The differences in response speed that occur between reality and regulation demand it. While Spanish laws are moderated under a very heavy and slow structure, technological trends are advancing by leaps and bounds.

Even those platforms that merely broadcast audiovisual content (such as YouTube) have obligations to comply with (such as copyright protection, gender and childhood protection, etc.).

Finally, and in the face of new situations arising from changing contexts, certain imbalances are produced for reasons of monopoly or dominance (Google case) (Neuburguer, 2019).

All these aspects do not mean that the figures of the collaborative economy are surprising.

According to Hernández (2019), it is estimated that by 2025 in Europe there will be a turnover close to 300,000 million euros (a figure 10 times higher than the figure of 28,000 million for the year 2015). Only 5 of the most notorious sectors of the collaborative economy (accommodation, transportation, professional services and corporate finance) will be impacted.

In summary mode, it can be said that the keys to the current context around the collaborative economy can be identified as:

The effect of the collaborative economy on the economic system is producing very noticeable changes in the consumption model and systematically impacting social and labor relations.

The lack of regulation accentuates the imbalances and emerging conflicts, but from a positive point of view it can be understood as an opportunity for improvement.

The need for a regulatory framework is essential to protect the actors involved in this ecosystem and that lays the future foundations for competition between agents on equal terms.

A proposal designed by people and for people should not incur job insecurity. It is about modeling sustainable solutions that generate employment and opportunities and better interrelate the parties.

Technological innovation is the co-agent of this change to a large extent and its assimilation is essential as a driving lever. The understanding of it and its correct application as an asset of non-abuse, represents a benefit for all (Vender en internet, 2019).

# 5.2.5 Advantages of the collaborative economy

Currently, there are many companies that have successfully implemented the sharing economy model such as Uber, Cabify, Airbnb, Wallapop, Netflix, etc. These companies are examples to analyze the advantages of this alternative to traditional business models. However, its implementation also presents some drawbacks, both for companies and for the users themselves (Caldwell, et al. 2020)

#### Advantages for users

Pricing policy: The prices of the supply of goods and services are usually lower if we compare them with those of the competitors of the classic models, that is, it is cheaper to pay for a second-hand good, sub-rent an apartment or pay for a private transport service than to buy a new good, book a hotel or take a taxi respectively.

Accessibility: The different platforms on which the products are presented, due to their high degree of usability, enable faster and more efficient accessibility. In particular, the applications installed on mobile phones allow access to the services offered by the collaborative economy from anywhere on the planet.

Income opportunities: Platforms that promote collaborative consumption make it possible for users themselves to become service providers and sellers, giving them the opportunity to profit from it, allowing many of them to live solely on the benefits and usufructs obtained with said means.

Protección del medio ambiente: La conciencia medioambiental se ve incrementada cuando se comparten automóviles en la realización de trayectos o cuando se reutilizan bienes usados. De tal manera, que la producción de bienes de equipo fabricados se reduce, se ahorran recursos y, con ello, se contribuye a la conservación y preservación del medio ambiente.

#### Advantages for companies

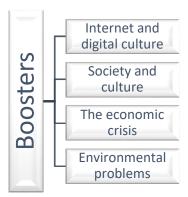
Access to user data: Through interaction and online exchange with customers, companies can capture a large amount of valuable information about the users who enter, use, work or simply inquire on the platforms. This information can be used by companies to adapt the offer to user preferences, find their target market or to directly send personalized advertising to their customers (Liu, 2017).

New business models: As stated in previous paragraphs, Airbnb, Netflix, Wallapop or Uber are good examples that the so-called sharing economy offers the possibility of combining previously established traditional industries and that if success is achieved by doing so, the opportunity to obtaining wealth and benefits is immense. To cite an example, although in some sectors the collaborative economy may be considered by some as intrusive, as in the case of the taxi industry, this model can generate new market niches and reach new customers who were previously they were not interested in the supply of that particular sector.

Efficient technologies: The use of applications to manage the business model in question allows companies to reduce costs of personnel and commercial premises.

## 5.2.6 Factors influencing the growth of the collaborative economy

This section describes the driving factors of the collaborative economy (Figure 5.1) and each of the areas in which it operates, from its growth for the coming years and how they



are influencing its development.

Figure 5.1 Key drivers of the collaborative economy

Source: Salinas 2016

# Technological factor

The technology supports interaction or connection 24 hours a day to internet users, this factor is framed by web 2.0, and each of the technological mobile devices such as tablets and smartphones, which promotes the development of technological platforms in order to generate trust for the use of online payment and collection platforms such as PayPal, therefore, digital platforms are the essential factor for the collaborative economy, since through the internet users can interact and communicate in the digital environment for the growth of all available social networks and expand globally through users, if it were not for this factor the collaborative economy would not be understood (Belk, 2014; Thierer et al. 2015), because it would not be possible to form or create the critical mass of participants in the current economy. According to the INE (2016), 81.9% of homes have an internet connection, 81.2% have a broadband connection, and 96.7% have a mobile phone and 77.1% have access. to some kind of computer.

# **Economic situation**

In this factor, worldwide there has been a radical decrease in family income, according to data from the National Institute of Statistics (INE, 2016) family income went down from 30,045 euros per family or household for the year 2009, to 26,092 euros in 2015. Due to this situation, the collaborative economy allowed people who had underutilized goods or services to obtain economic income in order to confront the fall in their income, in addition to facilitating access to these resources to people who otherwise would not have enjoyed them.

# Adoption of systems to build trust

This factor has a fundamental role, since through the economic crisis the trust of the users has been lost, in view of the corruption, scams and embezzlement leading the individual to a change. From there, Botsman (2017, citada por Menor, et al. 2019), points out that we are reaching the point where the user matters more than the organization or institutions. On the other hand, the trust of a person is already deposited in another person, where the world moves and the influencers of social networks are born where more than 50% of their consumption is done through the web, it is because this is that they do not trust elites, organizations or institutions; they place all their trust in their peers (Hulyk, 2015, citado por Hidalgo & Menor, 2022; Botsman, 2017, citada por Menor, et al. 2019).

Trust in the collaborative economy, as we discussed, is a key aspect and in order to understand it and carry it out, in addition to being part of its very nature, it is important that it exists, because without trust there is no exchange. The systems that are most used in the idea of being able to generate trust range from identity verification systems, reputation systems based on rating, comments and online evaluations are some of the most used tools today for, in the first place, that it is not an operation between strangers and secondly to get an idea of the other person.

Rachel Bostman puts on record the importance of this fact: "reputation as a currency is becoming essential, and it will function as a secondary currency, one with which you can say you can trust me" (Cañigueral, 2011), and that is, although we can have enough

money to pay for services through the platforms, if we do not have a good reputation, nobody will allow us to access them (Alonso and Miranda, 2016).

It is also important to understand that trust is always carried out in an interactive and reciprocal way and that it is usually necessary to deposit it in someone or something. Taking it into account from a more social point of view, we find the following types of trust:

Institutional Trust: It is none other than the trust we place in a group of people or an organization and we do not do it in an individual person, it is normally generated by companies, institutions or even the state itself.

Particularized Trust: that which enables us to create solid bonds with other people, normally similar to us, that is, with whom we have things in common.

Generalized trust: it is the trust that allows us to connect with unknown people or strangers. At this point, two types of links are mentioned: weak and strong (Granovetter, 1978).

Transitive trust: it is the combination of the previous two, being a person, we do not know, but very close to someone in our immediate circle

So, defining the types of trust we are going to highlight the importance of generating that trust and how to achieve it in the collaborative economy, we can understand it as four processes that consumers of the collaborative economy follow, first, a digital identification, then we look at in the ratings and opinions, then in the digital communities and finally that trust is translated towards the platforms.

What stands out from each level in the generation of trust?

Digital identification consists of having to be verified in a certain way in the online environment so as not to be anonymous, which does translate into a lot of mistrust.

Normally today people have to use their real name, verifying through their mobile, email account, and even some platforms have even gone so far as to ask for a scanned passport or even a driver's license.

Subsequently, the ratings and opinions, which are normally towards the user of someone who has consumed this "collaborative economy" can become rating systems (with scores, stars, etc.), free comments or preference rankings. Any of these systems will help us decide where we want to place our trust, highlighting here the applications and platforms

such as TripAdvisor, where we have the possibility of seeking the opinions of other users in relation to a product or experience through ratings and comments.

Thirdly, online digital communities, which are one of the highest levels of trust, since when these online communities are formed, we are interacting with strangers, but at the same time exchanging experiences and opinions, where trust is generated. much stronger, because we tend to adopt that feeling of belonging to a common group, creating another layer of trust (Cañigueral, 2011; Arroyo et al. 2017).

And lastly, trust-building mechanisms, such as reputation systems, have known how to create and build trust in one's own identity. Reputation is not the image of the organization itself, but it shows us a joint opinion of all those who are involved and who make use of collaboration platforms. In this digital context, the appreciation of the opinions and qualifications of the users will determine our perception about the brand as a personal identity, therefore, in this age of the Internet, creating a good image and maintaining a good reputation is essential for these brands. organizations, because it will be what really transmits public acceptance and comparison with other organizations.

# Society, culture and problems

Both factors are divided into changes from less perceptible aspects for individual property to shared access, each of these leading to a different lifestyle where communities and people simultaneously favor and help to obtain greater benefits by promoting this security, privacy and trust. For consumption or collaborative growth, one of the essential causes is awareness of environmental conservation (Gansky, 2010). Where, hyper-consumerism continued to be framed by buying, using and storing, in addition, it basically supported the program of programmed obsolescence; Currently, a useful life is intended, where if the owner does not use collaborative growth in the environment, another person uses it to reduce, reuse and recycle.

#### Ethical and Social Implications

If we analyze the collaborative economy from the point of view of its objectives regarding ethical and social impact, we can conclude that not all critics agree in appreciating a single channel. I believe that we can agree if we consider the birth of the collaborative economy

as a model that uses exchange goods as a system of collaboration and mutual help between users and whose approach can only lead us to think about the benefits that the same system can contribute to an economic and social model in a continuous process of change, but there are certain critics who have opted for interpreting that the system has not only not achieved the objectives set a priori, but that through certain gaps in the development processes it has generated an increase in social differences and in the distribution of powers.

To argue this content we are going to nuance both positions regarding the ethical and social intentionality they defend.

The collaborative economy understood from its intentional origin, has defended different aspects that reinforced good social work from cooperation and the use of resources with the aim of:

- Generate price controls that in many cases are symbolic and that aim to make products accessible to any consumer regardless of their purchasing power.
- Promote the second use of products advocating moderate consumption
- Optimize resources from the perspective of sharing them.
- Reuse products with the intention of promoting the care and sustainability of environments.

The collaborative economy understood from the deviation of the primary objective argues poorly resolved processes that not only do not generate social cohesion but also enhance differentiation due to gaps in their application. Examples to take into account according to the article "What is called a collaborative economy is not collaborative at all" (Navarro, 2016).

The case of UBER regarding the taxi sector. Taking into account UBER as a platform of collaborative intention, it should be analyzed that its workers, since they do not have the endorsement of the collective or do not have institutional representation, work under inferior general conditions and that they can end up benefiting the employer to the detriment of the worker.

Illegality or speculation generated from collaborative rentals, as is the case with Airbnb, or the consequences suffered by the residents of these properties who see how they deteriorate due to the passage of different users of the collaborative service.

Thus, we understand that without doubting the adequate intentionality of the collaborative economy and its important ethical-social advances, it seems that there are certain aspects to be analyzed in order to decant the implications of the system towards continuous improvement and adequate fulfillment of its objectives.

#### 5.3 A look at the accommodation sector

5.3.1 Regulatory Framework in Spain

# Regulations in Barcelona

Cities are dynamic tourist destinations subject to rapid and intense processes of touristification, a concept that has spread especially since the emergence of P2P economies. This concept alludes to the transformation that spaces experience from the functional aspect, the expansion of activities related to visitor consumption, whether direct or indirect (de la Calle, 2019: 14-25).

The transformation mentioned, of course, has positive and negative aspects, the latter being the consequence of a partial, inadequate or non-existent tourist regulation (Knafou, 1996: 3-4).

As de la Calle (2019: 14-25) points out, the growth of tourist homes is one of the consequences of touristification, which competes with conventional hotels. Its accelerated increase is due to the fact that transforming a house into a house with tourist use It is a really simple process, especially when the regulatory framework is non-existent.

Understanding as house with tourist use those homes that are frequently granted by the owner directly or indirectly to third parties and in exchange for financial compensation for their temporary stay (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2022).

An example of the above was the visual demonstration that the Barcelona City Council carried out in July 2017, installing beds in the street. This action simulated a virtual window of an accommodation platform. A visual display that carried a legend that said "That this bed is available on the internet doesn't mean it's legal." The foregoing as an action of the campaign to promote the website www.fairtourism.barcelona that seeks to generate good practices among the population when renting accommodation (Figure 5.1). The main ones being the validation of an apartment license and the complaint before the detection of illegal housing (Leon, 2017)



Figure 5.2 Campaign to make tourists aware of renting illegal accommodation

Source: Congostrina, 2017

The end to which these types of actions, such as the aforementioned campaign, aim to achieve is precisely to achieve sustainable tourism, which gives rise to harmonious coexistence between visitors and neighbors.

One of the main gaps is found in the lack of homologation of the regulations, since each Spanish region has different guidelines, as is the case of Barcelona. As Leon (2017) indicates, the City Council has strengthened its team of inspectors, has launched its website to file complaints, receiving 1,200 complaints in the first half of 2017 (the year in which this plan was implemented) and applying fines of up to €600,000 to accommodation platforms, as was the case with Airbnb. In that same year, the City Council also approved

the PEUAT (by its acronym in spanish, Special Urban Plan for Tourist Accommodation), which divided the city into four zones, in order to regulate the emergence of establishments, such as hotels and even houses for tourist use.

The four zones (Figure 5.2) that comprise the Special Urban Plan for Tourist Accommodation, Ayuntamiento de Barcelona (2022), are:

Zone 1 – of decrease: in this area are considered the areas with the highest tourist demand and therefore no new establishment can be opened.

Zone 2 – maintenance: It is the area that surrounds the previous one and it is only possible to open new accommodation establishments if another one closes.

Zone 3 – peripheral neighborhoods: New accommodation can only be opened considering the permitted density.

Zone 4 – these are zones with specific regulation.

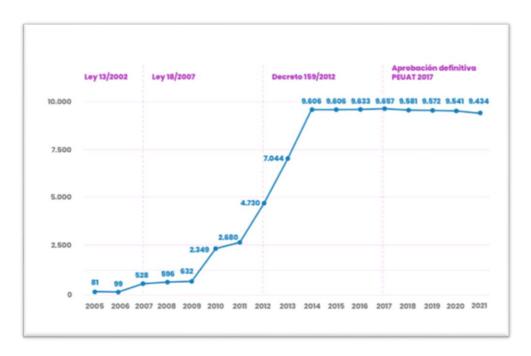




Figure 5.3 Division of Special Urban Plan for Tourist Accommodation zones

Source: Ayuntamiento de Barcelona,2022

It is worth mentioning that before reaching the Special Urban Plan for Tourist Accommodation approved in 2017, there were previous legislations that were useful at the time according to the existing supply and demand. Little by little, the growth in the number of dwellings for tourist use also demanded regulatory changes (Graph 5.1) (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2022).



Graph 5.1 Evolution of house with tourist use 2005 to 2021 in Barcelona

Source: Ayuntamiento de Barcelona,2022

# Regulations in Valencia

In the case of Valencia, at the end of 2021 a decree was published by the Council of the Valencian Government, in which it excluded houses for tourist use as an accommodation modality. Prohibiting in a formal legal way the rental of rooms in private houses for tourist use, governed by its article 47. Tourist housing is defined as complete real estate, without allowing the transfer of rooms. Likewise, the property must have the municipal urban compatibility report that guarantees its use. With the above, what the authority intends is to prevent abuses from being commented and that the standard in the house with tourist use is negligible (Sampedro, 2021).

Likewise, Sampedro (2021) points out that in the advertising aspect, tourist homes in Valencia are obliged to advertise, including mandatory registration. This allows supervision of internet advertising, which is the main means through which illegal houses with tourist use attract guests.

#### Regulations in Madrid

Regarding Madrid, its City Council in 2021 adapted the Special Accommodation Plan (PEH). The main modifications generated by the plan is that the tourist flats can only be installed on the ground floor or on the first floor, as long as there are no neighbors below. Initially, this regulation also contemplated the requirement of having independent access for renting accommodation, however, with the intervention of Urban Development, this rule was repealed (El Independiente, 2021).

# 5.3.2 Global statistics of illegal occupation in Spain

Statistics from 2020 confirm that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the problem of illegal occupation. In this same year alone, the number of complaints related to this illegal activity grew by 5% with respect to the immediately previous year, with Catalonia, Andalusia and Madrid being the regions that top the list (Figure 5.3).

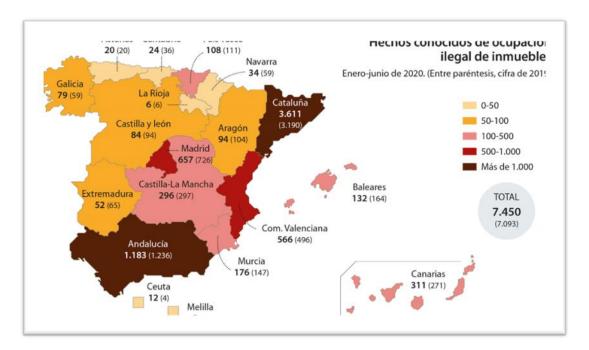


Figure 5.4 Illegal occupation of real estate in Spain January-June 2020.

Source: Ginés, 2020

# 6. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

According to what is established in the methodology, the documentary information collected is shown below.

Num.	Author	Geographic scope	Conclusion on contrast Airbnb vs. collaborative economy	Number of complaints for illegal occupation in the study region and in the year 2019/2020 (with data from epdata, 2021)	% variation of the GDP of the study region and in the year 2019/2020.
1	Rodriguez, J.M., Alonso, M. del M., Rubio, L. y Celemin, M.S.	Valencia, 2016	Airbnb is considered as an activity that has been commodified, managing to compete directly with traditional tourist accommodation. It has ceased to have relationships between equals (P2P), from the moment it obtains income from both the user and the accommodation provider (host) for each managed rental. This platform is the one with the highest market share, 27%)	496/566	2,3%/-9,4%
2	Sanz, R.	Seville, 2016	Airbnb involves a series of economic operations, such as the rental of a room that is part of the landlord's habitual residence, which is considered a genuine collaborative economy, but there is another part that is not, and that is when the rental of rooms outside the habitual residence, or complete dwellings.	1236/1183*	2,1%/-10,7%

			I	1	1
3	Aguado, I., Echebarria, C. y Barrutia, J.	Bilbao, 2021	The data reveals that in Bilbao renting for periods of more than 90 days is representative of 52.9%, while renting entire apartments is the predominant modality. With the above, it can be seen that there is a tendency to professionalize and therefore commercialize the offer. The number of professional hosts is increasing more than the number of private hosts.	111/108**	1,9%/-9,6%
4	Aguado, I. y Campo, Josu del.	San Sebastian, 2020	It has been confirmed that in San Sebastián there are few accommodations that comply with Airbnb's original idea of renting private homes for short periods of time, most of the offer is through real estate agents who have invested in this sector. The foregoing generating a touristification process that could even generate a gentrification process (migration of the resident population to peripheral areas to establish their residence).	111/108**	1,9%/-8.3%
5	Aragon, F.J. y Núñez, V.	Spain, 2015	The collaborative economy does represent a threat to 50% of the tourism industry, the other 50% see it as an	7093/7450	2,1%/-10,8%

			opportunity for innovation and market development. Technology has played a leading role in the collaborative economy and will continue to do so and will even grow, which will require an equal proportion of its legal system to mature, which currently falls short of the needs of this business model.		
6	Gil, J. y Sequera, J.	Madrid, 2018	Madrid is intervened by professional economic actors, such as specialized real estate companies, whose task is to introduce the homes that are in the common rental market, to introduce them on Airbnb, which breaks with the collaborative economy scheme.	726/657	2,5%/-10,5%
7	Garcia, D.	Granada, 2019	Airbnb in Granada is a platform that is largely used for tourist rentals, although other users also use it as an additional channel for renting properties. The offer is concentrated in the areas with the greatest tourist demand and although it is not possible to specify in this study the proportion of accommodation that corresponds to the collaborative economy and that which is related to the traditional rental of tourist homes, it has	1236/1183*	2,1%/-12,6%

			been considered that the rental of entire houses does not correspond to collaborative economies while the rental of individual rooms is.		
8	Autonomia Sur	Andalucia, 2016	The collaborative economy is also called platform capitalism. For this reason, it is necessary to create collaborative groups in order to change the production model with a view to a better distribution of wealth and to experiment with a real collaborative economy, which benefits the Andalusian inhabitants.	1236/1183*	2,1%/-10,7%

<sup>\*</sup>Andalucia \*\* Basque Country

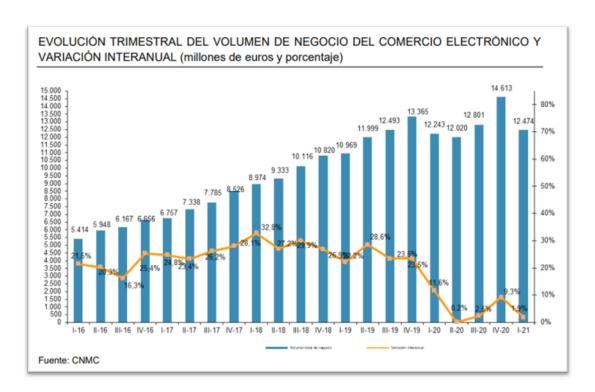
Tabla 6.1 Concentration of bibliographic research results

Source: Own elaboration

The areas in which the study data are classified are: Valencia, Andalucia, Basque Country, Madrid, plus a line that groups Spain as a country.

There are eight opinions on the consideration of Airbnb as a collaborative economy, as well as statistical data on complaints of illegal accommodation and GDP growth, these last two items with a comparison between the years 2019 and 2020.

As complementary data, there are the statistics of electronic commerce and its variations in Spain (Graph 6.2). Where a decrease is shown in the first and second quarters of 2020, this is due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which generated a drop in tourism and a slowdown in e-commerce.



Graph 6.2. Quarterly statistics of ecommerce in Spain 2016-2021

Source: Gonzalez, 2022

#### 7. CONCLUSIONS

Through the information collected, it is possible to conclude that the different regions considered (Valencia, Andalusia, the Basque Country and Madrid) agree that the relationship between equals, which is what sustains Peer to Peer (P2P) business models, does not It is something that characterizes the Airbnb venture, for being an economy that has been commodified and therefore is far from being a genuine collaborative economy. Serious consequences such as touristification and gentrification are being had, which prevents strategic tourism planning in which there can be a fair distribution of wealth, a real benefit for tourists and mainly for local communities.

Touristification can put culture at risk; the high demand of tourism for traditional articles can cause the massification of their production, that is, the artisans would manufacture products by quantity and not by quality, which reduces the value and symbolism of local art. For its part, gentrification causes the social composition of the areas to change, since residents are forced to live on the outskirts due to the high residential costs in high-tourism areas and the security of feeling they belong to a fixed neighborhood community and not itinerant.

On the other hand, one of the areas of greatest opportunity is Airbnb's legal system, although modifications have been made to its regulations, it still has weak procedures to prevent the incursion of real estate companies as its partners.

In relation to the number of complaints for illegal occupation in 2019 and 2020, all regions fell in this area except for Valencia, hence in 2021 it legally excluded VUTs (housing for tourist use) from the accommodation modality. At the country level, Spain increased its number of complaints from 2019 to 2020 by 4.80%, which confirms the lack of regulation.

Regarding the gross domestic product, all the regions presented a recession in 2020, and even at the country level it was the same situation, due to the COVID-19 pandemic that greatly affected the tourism sector and consequently the level of accommodation occupancy.

Finally, the time course of this research is from 2015 to 2021 in different Spanish communities and it can be seen that the valuation of Airbnb is similar and generalized, thus showing the need for more rigid and homogenized legal policies.

Based on the foregoing, and responding to the initially posed research questions, we have:

# Question 1. Is Airbnb a real example of collaborative consumption?

It is validated that Airbnb is not a genuine example of collaborative consumption, it is platform capitalism, as some authors call it, that is, a traditional accommodation that was only digitized, where power continues to be in the hands of companies and not of individuals as proposed by the P2P economy.

# Question 2. Is Airbnb just a digital version of traditional consumption?

Yes, Airbnb, by allowing the introduction of real estate agents, leaves individuals who wish to benefit from the collaborative economy at a disadvantage, turning the proposal into pure capitalism only now supported by digital tools.

# Question 3. What correlation exists between information and communication technologies and the collaborative economy in the accommodation sector?

They have a directly proportional relationship, that is, the greater the use of information and communication technologies, the electronic commerce operations are increased and with it tourism, since the making of online reservations is normalized and consequently the increase appears. in the demand for accommodation.

One of the limitations of this research is the fact that it does not have direct opinions from users who use the Airbn platform, since this would provide the necessary approximation to obtain greater detail about the experience and position of customers. Likewise, a future

line of research would be the exploration of rural accommodation, to find out how the collaborative economy behaves in these environments.

It is worth mentioning that, although Airbnb's precarious and insufficient legislation has been highlighted in this document, there are other drawbacks that also affect users, such as privacy, because despite the usefulness and profitability of collecting data for companies, users must take into account that said data and information are collected and stored, and that the vast majority is done practically without their realizing it. From their preferences for particular products to their possible mobility paths. Some platforms even request that user vendors or providers publicly expose information about themselves or their environment. An example of the latter would be the video of the own apartment published on Airbnb or the images of the owned vehicle offered on Wall.

Another element is the absence of guarantee, the vast majority of platforms practically function as mere intermediaries and do not guarantee the quality of the products or services offered on them. That is, users must fully trust the reviews, ratings, opinions and criticisms made by other users. In addition, in the vast majority of cases, the refund of the money sent in the transaction is not usually guaranteed if the product does not comply with what was offered or expected of it.

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