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## Gentrification in the EU South and its impact on intra-urban labour markets: A literature review

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### Référence à la session / reference to the session

C8 - Urban regeneration: plans and policies

### Résumé / Summary

This summary refers to a review paper, whose purpose is to research the recent relevant literature and position on these debates. The research subject is gentrification, as it expands in the Mediterranean EU countries, and juxtaposed with the mainstream Anglo-Saxon and continental European cases. Since its appearance in literature in 1963, gentrification has been the subject of numerous debates; lately, these debates seem saturated. However, there is a wide spectrum of under-researched aspects, mainly those revolving around gentrification's interrelation with wider structural changes, such as postfordism and post-industrial production in the Global North.

This review paper aims at linking in a direct way labour markets transformations with gentrification processes and as a part of a wider PhD research, draws influences from urban and labour geography, seeking to formulate a coherent conceptual framework. The topic of the wider research refers to the study of local labour markets and workers' agency in gentrifying urban terrains, in the Greek and Southern European context.

Regarding the review paper summarized here, there are two main research objectives: firstly, to present the southern European/ Mediterranean gentrification context in a thorough way, and to identify the main differences between this context and the prominent Anglo-saxon and continental European ones. Secondly, to define a clear connection between gentrification and intra-urban labour markets transformations towards precariousness and flexibilization.

The main points rendering the research topic relevant and original are the following: its engagement in a combined research of labour and gentrification, its focus on an under-researched context, outside the mainstream Northern-European and Northern-American scope, and lastly, its mixed approach in regards to

the triggering and expansion of gentrification.

Even though there are papers approaching the issue while counting in wider processes such as postfordism and post-industrial capitalism, relevant research is limited and does not focus on the specific connection between gentrification and local intra-urban labour markets. The work of Curran (2004) is one of the very few approaches combining gentrification with the nature of labour, therefore it will serve as a guide in the relevant section of literature review. Hence, the originality of our paper mainly stems from its twofold approach: by mixing labour and urban geography theory, it scrutinizes the impact of gentrification on precarious labour, and by raising the question how such forces affect local labour markets in general.

Furthermore, our research engages in the processes of gentrification in a varied context; relevant literature has focused primarily on the Anglo-Saxon or Northern European context. However, there is a significant input for cases outside the abovementioned two; our scope turns to the countries of the European South (Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece), with a minor added input of non-European relevant countries (such as Turkey and Egypt), and all the above juxtaposed with the widely-researched cases of northern Europe and America (in a fashion Atkinson & Bridge, 2004, approach the issue).

The third point of originality concerns our positioning on the stimulation and consolidation of gentrification tendencies. The main approaches on this aspect of gentrification are two: the demand and supply sides. The first approach engages primarily with the individuals creating and mediating gentrification tendencies; their agency is the crucial factor of transformation, and stems from their aesthetic disposition and class characteristics (see Lees, 2012). The second approach takes the agency of individuals into consideration, but places the activation of certain latent economic conditions on the forefront: hence, the root cause of gentrification is the rent gap (see Smith, 2002). Our positioning comes closer to the second approach, but draws influences from the first, plus another one as well: the institutional approach, where gentrification is conceived as a crisis management tool, with the new middle classes functioning as seeds of more effective governance (Uitermark et al, 2007). Taking into account all the above, gentrification is conceived as a process, triggered by rent gap, mediated by segments of society keen on shaping intra-urban areas, and used by governmental agencies as a transforming process that improves governance effectiveness.

The methodology of the paper, since it is a review paper, will be literature review.

The expected outcome includes the formulation of a coherent conceptual framework, regarding the connection between gentrification and labour precariousness, and a thorough identification of the elements, that distinguish south-EU, and prominent Northern EU and American contexts. The connection is expected to be of a twofold nature: on one hand, gentrification requires types of labour and sweat equity that stimulates flexible and atypical labour (Curran, 2004). On the other, such transformative processes bring new types of middle class tenants into neighborhoods, who are characterized by an inclination towards flexible and atypical labour (Stein, 2014).

Keywords: gentrification, EU South, urban labour markets

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