

UDC:

DOI: 10.5937/menhottur2600010C

Received: 23 February 2026

Revised: 11 May 2026

Accepted: 19 June 2026

Published online: 18 July 2026

Stakeholders' perceptions towards the barriers and challenges to Airbnb

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Abstract

Purpose – The current exploratory research aims to investigate the barriers and challenges to the use of Airbnb as a sharing economy platform in the most visited destinations, namely Antalya and İstanbul in Türkiye. **Methodology** – Drawing upon qualitative research, data were gathered through in-situ interviews, which were conducted with tourism stakeholders (n=28). A multiple-case study approach was adopted as the research design, and abductive content analysis was employed to analyze the data. **Findings** – The study results illustrated multilayered effects towards the challenges and barriers to the sharing economy in tourist destinations, which were grouped into two main themes: 1) regulations and 2) socio-cultural norms. Furthermore, the absence of adequate policy and managerial regulations appears to undermine residents' livability and may trigger social tensions between local residents and tourists, while weakening socio-cultural bonds within neighborhoods. **Implications** – The results indicate that the existing laws and regulations governing the sharing economy remain insufficient to address issues of trust within local communities. Furthermore, policy-related challenges and socio-cultural norms exist as barriers to the development of the sharing economy in both cities, highlighting the need for more comprehensive regulatory frameworks.

Keywords: sharing economy, peer-to-peer accommodation, Airbnb, livability, stakeholders, qualitative research

JEL classification: L83, Z38, Z32, Z39

Percepcije zainteresovanih strana o preprekama i izazovima u vezi sa Airbnb-om

Sažetak

Svrha – Cilj ovog eksplorativnog istraživanja je da ispita prepreke i izazove povezane sa upotrebom platforme Airbnb kao modela ekonomije deljenja u najposjećenijim turističkim destinacijama u Turskoj, odnosno Antaliji i Istanbulu. **Metodologija** – Polazeći od kvalitativnog istraživanja, podaci su prikupljeni putem intervjuva sprovedenih na terenu sa turističkim akterima (n = 28). Za dizajn istraživanja primenjen je pristup višestruke studije

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slučaja, dok je za analizu podataka korišćena abduktivna analiza sadržaja. **Rezultati** – Rezultati istraživanja ukazali su na višedimenzionalni efekat na prepreke i izazove povezane sa ekonomijom deljenja u turističkim destinacijama, koji su grupisani u dve glavne tematske celine: (1) regulative i (2) sociokulturne norme. Štaviše, nedostatak adekvatnih regulatornih i upravljačkih mehanizama može narušiti kvalitet života lokalnog stanovništva te podstaći društvene tenzije između lokalnih stanovnika i turista, istovremeno slabeći sociokulturne veze unutar lokalnih zajednica. **Implikacije** – Rezultati ukazuju da postojeći zakoni i propisi kojima se reguliše ekonomija deljenja još uvek nisu dovoljni za rešavanje pitanja poverenja unutar lokalnih zajednica. Takođe, izazovi povezani sa javnim politikama i sociokulturne norme i dalje predstavljaju prepreke razvoju ekonomije deljenja u oba grada, naglašavajući potrebu za sveobuhvatnijim regulatornim okvirom.

Ključne reči: ekonomija deljenja, peer-to-peer smeštaj, Airbnb, kvalitet uslova za život, zainteresovane strane, kvalitativno istraživanje

JEL klasifikacija: L83, Z38, Z32, Z39

1. Introduction

As one of the most influential and useful models of the sharing economy, Airbnb has emerged as a prominent accommodation platform over the past two decades (Güçlü et al., 2023). The emergence of Airbnb as a rental platform has not only significantly influenced the way destination marketing policies are implemented but has also transformed consumer behavior patterns (Katz & Savage, 2025; Um et al., 2025; Wang & Hao, 2026). By offering a diverse range of visitor experiences (Liu et al., 2025; Lu & Wang, 2025; Ramos-Henriquez & Morini-Marrero, 2025; Rusu et al., 2025), it was particularly appreciated and preferred by tourists during the COVID-19 pandemic (Chen et al., 2025; Hu et al., 2025; Katz et al., 2025). Despite the various benefits it offers as a short-term rental platform, Airbnb has nevertheless been criticized for contributing to overcrowding, environmental degradation, and housing shortages (Stergiou & Farmaki, 2025), as well as for raising concerns regarding security and safety in tourist destinations (Ert et al., 2025; Lee et al., 2025).

Despite its disadvantages and concerns, Airbnb is still regarded as one of the most popular sharing economy platforms offering accommodation services in tourist destinations, as it enables property owners to derive economic benefits from their underutilized properties (Hati et al., 2021; Kim & Yeon, 2025; Tanveer et al., 2025). However, numerous studies have documented the adverse impacts of Airbnb usage, which have created tensions between tourists and residents in tourist destinations. In this vein, many destinations have introduced new regulations that either partially or fully restrict the operation of Airbnb (Furukawa & Onuki, 2022; Ioannides et al., 2019). Overall, the major approaches adopted by destinations include prohibition, laissez-faire policies, and the regulation of Airbnb through limited restrictions (Nieuwland & Van Melik, 2020). The current literature remains scant in addressing the socio-political challenges associated with Airbnb usage in two of Türkiye's most popular tourist destinations, namely Istanbul and Antalya. Studies focusing on these destinations remain particularly limited when examined from the perspective of livability theory and compared with similar tourist destinations. As such, the current research seeks to address the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the major drivers to use Airbnb in Istanbul and Antalya?

RQ2: What are the substantial barriers and challenges for the effective implementation of Airbnb in selected tourist destinations?

2. Literature review

2.1. Airbnb in tourist destinations

The advent of the internet and the growth of short-term tourism rental platforms have increased the use of accommodation services such as Airbnb, along with other peer-to-peer (P2P) accommodation services, which have emerged as one of the most prominent and popular components of the sharing economy in the tourism industry (Chica-Olmo et al., 2020; Do et al., 2022; Farmaki et al., 2023; Gutiérrez et al., 2017; Sthapit et al., 2020; Torkington & Ribeiro, 2022; Zhu et al., 2021). The current literature highlights numerous economic and social benefits for the tourism sector as a whole (Eugenio-Martin et al., 2019), as well as for consumers (Tussyadiah & Pesonen, 2018), while the negative consequences associated with these platforms in tourist destinations are becoming increasingly evident (Cheng et al., 2022). As such, Airbnb is believed to have expanded its influence in ways that adversely affect traditional accommodation providers (Guttentag, 2019); therefore, it is regarded as a major competitor in the market and is often described as a disruptor of traditional accommodation operators (Alrawadieh et al., 2020; Guttentag, 2015; Morales-Pérez et al., 2022; Oskam & Boswijk, 2016).

One of its most widely recognized advantages is that it enables visitors to access accommodation services quickly and at lower prices (Böcker & Meelen, 2017; Cheng, 2016; Sthapit et al., 2021) or at a lower cost (Yakin et al., 2017). Other factors that enhance consumers' preference for Airbnb accommodation and contribute to the growing popularity of short-term rentals include authenticity, novelty, home-related benefits, social interactions, perceived value for money, enjoyment, and the sharing economy ethos (Guttentag et al., 2018; Lalicic & Weismayer, 2018; So et al., 2018; Tran & Filimonau, 2020).

Given the negative consequences affecting the hospitality industry, lodging markets, and the legal disputes associated with housing, taxation, and consumer regulations (Adamiak, 2022), along with safety and security concerns (Malazizi et al., 2018), local actors strive to introduce legal and/or administrative regulations to mitigate these emerging negative effects (Nieuwland & Van Melik, 2020). In this vein, the development of appropriate regulations to reduce the negative impacts of such sharing platforms has become a subject of considerable debate (Muschter et al., 2022), which may be addressed through the involvement of a diverse range of tourism stakeholders within an effective urban governance framework (Cheng et al., 2022; Minoia & Jokela, 2022). Besides, Airbnb may contribute to overcrowding and population displacement across neighborhoods in certain destinations (Aranda-Cuéllar et al., 2025). Overall, Airbnb has a wide range of impacts, encompassing economic, socio-cultural, and environmental dimensions (Cheng et al., 2022).

It is estimated that Airbnb operates in more than 100,000 destinations across over 200 countries (Amore et al., 2022), and its popularity continues to attract increasing attention from consumers worldwide. Among the destinations where Airbnb services are provided, Türkiye is regarded as a significant market for short-term accommodation, offering mainly seasonal Airbnb rental properties (Adamiak, 2018). One of the major challenges in Istanbul has been the absence of legal regulations aimed at controlling the supply of Airbnb properties and regulating the entry of new providers into the market (Genç, 2021). More recently, the Turkish government introduced a new amendment regulating Airbnb operations in 2023 (Antalya İl Kültür ve Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2025). According to this new regulation, Airbnb providers are required to obtain approval from all residents within the building before offering their properties for short-term rental purposes. This regulation, which applies to short-term rental platforms such as Airbnb and requires providers to obtain permits, does not

apply to properties rented for periods exceeding one hundred consecutive days (Airbnb, 2025; Erol, 2023).

2.2. Livability theory and sharing economy

Livability is described as the “ability to survive and/or fitness for life” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2025). In simple terms, the concept of livability can be divided into two main dimensions, i.e. subjective and objective dimensions of livability (Okulicz-Kozaryn & Valente, 2019). On the other hand, the concept of ‘quality of life’ denotes the quality of society and addresses citizens’ happiness (Veenhoven, 2006). Veenhoven (2000) identified ‘livability of environment’, ‘life-ability of the person’, ‘utility of life’, and ‘appreciation of life’ as the four basic qualities of life. The dimensions of livability can be utilized to determine and/or classify the quality of urban areas and cities (Momtaz & Elsemary, 2015). Central to this approach, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11, introduced by the United Nations (UN), is closely associated with the development of livable cities (Li & Fan, 2025), as it identifies several indicators considered essential for ensuring urban livability (Seraphin et al., 2024). Livability is associated with key factors such as economic prosperity and social and political stability, which have a substantial impact on residents’ quality of life and well-being (Sheikh & van Ameijde, 2022). Similarly, Auttarat and Poonsukcharoen (2023) identified social, economic, and environmental factors as essential dimensions of livable cities.

By its very nature, the impacts of tourism are multidimensional, encompassing social, economic, environmental, and physical dimensions, whereas tourism may also generate adverse effects that negatively affect human well-being and quality of life (Fu et al., 2024). In this vein, undesirable outcomes such as environmental degradation are considered negative consequences of tourism, while the economic contributions of tourism to society are regarded as important indicators of local communities’ happiness and well-being (Okulicz-Kozaryn & Strzelecka, 2017). Overall, although tourism development provides various benefits, it is also commonly perceived as a source of social challenges that may create tensions between residents and tourists within destinations (Mouratidis, 2018). Based on livability theory, which encompasses both internal capacities and external living conditions, including employability, environmental quality, congestion, and social cohesion, these factors may influence the quality of local life and consequently residents’ well-being (Lindberg et al., 2022). One of the most compelling and pivotal indicators of livability is the availability of affordable housing for local residents, together with transportation systems that support sustainable urban livelihoods (Gough, 2015).

3. Methodology

The current study aims to examine the obstacles to the use of sharing economy platforms, particularly Airbnb, in Türkiye. These factors were explored by analyzing the opinions of key tourism stakeholders in two of Türkiye’s most visited destinations, namely Istanbul and Antalya. A comparative multiple case study approach between Istanbul and Antalya was employed as part of a qualitative research methodology to generate more generalizable insights, while increasing the credibility of the study.

3.1. Antalya and Istanbul as case study regions

Türkiye’s economy is reliant on tourism revenues, i.e. it is mainly based on sea-sun-sand and cultural tourism with a peak season during Türkiye’s summer months (Okumus et al., 2012). According to statistics provided by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (2025), 18,582,322

tourists visited Istanbul, whereas Antalya hosted 15,914,250 international tourists in 2024, which accounted for more than 65% of total international tourist arrivals to Türkiye. As such, the total number of international tourists visiting the country in 2024 was 52,629,283 (Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2025), 35% of whom visited Istanbul (İstanbul İl Kültür ve Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2025), while a further 30% visited Antalya during the same year.

Table 1: Number of international tourists visiting Antalya and Istanbul by numbers and years

Years	Antalya	İstanbul	Total numbers of Türkiye
2018	12,507,435	13,432,990	39,488,401
2019	14,651,058	14,906,663	45,058,286
2020	3,256,736	5,001,981	12,734,213
2021	8,737,894	9,025,004	24,712,266
2022	12,825,999	16,018,726	44,564,395
2023	14,760,795	17,370,030	49,209,180
2024	15,914,250	18,582,322	52,629,283
2025 (Jan-Nov)	15,749,551	17,478,423	50,057,225

Source: Fennell et al., 2025; Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2025.

According to the visitor statistics, these two destinations represent almost 66% of all international visitors to Türkiye in 2024. Unlike destinations predominantly characterized by sea-sun-sand tourism, Istanbul offers a diverse range of tourism types such as culture, religious, gastronomy, health and congress tourism, which are available throughout the year. Moreover, Istanbul is considered one of the most significant cities in the country in terms of economy as well (Güçlü et al., 2023) and is the largest city of Türkiye with a population of 15,701,602 in 2024 (TUIK, 2025). On the other hand, in Antalya, together with its well-known holiday resorts, sea-sun-sand tourism (Mansuroğlu et al., 2021) is primarily preferred by international visitors through package tours (Çakar, 2018; Dörtyol et al., 2014) which is highly based on an all-inclusive system (Erol, 2025). As the largest city of the Mediterranean region of the country (Jandaghi et al., 2019), Antalya's population was 2,722,103 in 2024 (TUIK, 2025).

3.2. Case study region I – Antalya: Research participants and data collection

Within the context of purposive sampling, the research participants comprised representatives from Antalya Metropolitan Municipality, Antalya Chamber of Drivers, General Manager of a 5-Star Hotel, Türkiye's Hotel Restaurant and Entertainment Workers Trade Union, a member of the Antalya Industrialists and Business People Association, Association of Professional Hotel Managers, the Regional Director of Belek Tourism Investors Joint Venture, Sports Tourism Union Association, Kemer Touristic Hoteliers and Operators Association, Association of Turkish Travel Agencies Mediterranean Regional Representative Committee, Antalya Promotion Foundation, Association of Travel Agency Managers, Akdeniz University Faculty of Tourism, Sales Manager of a 5-star Hotel and Digital Business Development Manager of a Travel Agency.

3.3. Case study region II – Istanbul: Research participants and data collection

By using a purposive sampling strategy, the research participants invited to take part in the study comprised representatives from Istanbul University, Association of Turkish Travel Agents, the Manager of Marketing and Sales of a 5-star hotel, Reservation and Sales

Manager of a travel agency, Association of Professional Hotel Managers, the General Manager of a 5-star Hotel, Contract Manager of a travel agency, Proxy of General Manager and Director of Sales and Marketing in a 5-star Hotel, Istanbul Chamber of Industry and Trade Convention and Visitors Bureau, a member of SKÅL International Istanbul, President of Environment and Alternative Tourism Commission in Istanbul Tourism Platform, the member of Istanbul and Northern Forests Defense, The Association of Istanbul Tourist Guides and a tour guide.

By adhering to the relevant ethical considerations, participants were asked to sign a consent form to participate in the study, were briefly informed about the aims of the study, and were given a brief explanation of the semi-structured interview questions. They were informed that their participation was voluntary, that they had the right to withdraw at any time should they experience any psychological discomfort, and were assured that their confidentiality and anonymity would be protected. They were also informed about the aims and objectives of the study in relation to ethical principles and considerations prior to the interviews. Furthermore, the authors affirmed that the data would only be used for academic purposes. Interviews commenced only after informed consent had been obtained from all participants. The time and location of the interviews were determined by the participants. All interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' consent and subsequently transcribed verbatim. Following ethical guidelines, all interview data were securely stored so that only the research team could access them.

Given the COVID-19 circumstances that entailed social distancing, four participants joined the interviews via Zoom, while one participant preferred to respond to the interview questions via email in Antalya. Overall, the average duration of each interview was 25.57 minutes. In Istanbul, most interviews (n=7) were conducted in person, while the remaining interviews were conducted via Zoom (n=6) and email (n=1). The average interview duration was 26.59 minutes.

The data analysis of the present research comprised several stages, which were overall conducted by three independent human coders to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings. To analyze the data, which were examined using an abductive approach consisting of both deductive and inductive stages, three independent researchers were involved in the coding process. The abductive reasoning approach combines deductive and inductive reasoning while remaining grounded in existing theory. In doing so, it facilitates the development of concepts through the interpretation of categories, while enabling the theorization of constructs derived from interview data (Tomasella, 2022). This innovative approach often enhances the rigor of qualitative research (McKercher, 2026). To enhance coding validity, the researchers employed a second round of coding. The findings of the second round of coding demonstrated a high level of intercoder reliability, despite the fact that it contained a greater number of categories. The researchers discussed discrepancies in coding with the coders until consensus was reached for each case (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010).

First, data were deductively examined through the dimensions of livability theory, which served as the theoretical foundation of the study. As a result of this stage, categories were derived by the human coders and classified under the main themes. In the following stage, data were inductively coded and categorized after being compared with the main themes derived from deductive analysis. In the final stage, findings were grouped into two main themes based on the consensus reached among the three coders.

4. Findings and discussion

Overall, the study results have revealed many commonalities and differences regarding sharing economy platforms in both destinations. These similarities and differences were grouped into several categories that were organized under two main themes: 1) regulations (taxation) and 2) socio-cultural aspects (rental crisis, security issues, cost of housing, cultural norms).

4.1. Regulations

It is worth highlighting that the extant literature confirms that regulations governing peer-to-peer accommodation are of great importance, as their presence is vital for ensuring safety in tourist destinations. Therefore, destinations have introduced the necessary regulations since the emergence of such rental platforms (von Briel & Dolnicar, 2020). Driven by market needs and lobbying pressures, the initial introduction of regulations on sharing economy platforms was designed to protect users and owners along with securing residents' rights, while regulating taxation regimes of short-term rental platforms (Aydimitis & Poulaki, 2019). Under this main theme, participants frequently highlighted the lack of taxation-related regulations, which they argued should be supported by stronger legal enforcement mechanisms. Regarding this issue, participants shared:

People were already staying in locals' homes in Bodrum. There were no hotels back then. So yes, it's a useful model. But if you don't regulate it properly, it starts to disrupt conventional systems and wedge itself in between... In my view, the biggest legal challenge is that these companies have not approached regulation correctly. That's the core issue... (Participant 2, M, 47, Istanbul)

[...] Of course, the state has to be concerned about taxation – I won't argue with that. But the government should regulate, not ban. I actually believe banning these platforms violates basic human rights. (Participant 3, M, 36, Istanbul)

The government's role should be to ensure legal oversight – monitoring whether these platforms are paying taxes and operating within regulatory boundaries. It should also ensure user safety and overall security. (Participant 3, M, 61, Antalya)

The state can introduce regulatory frameworks. (Participant 6, M, 46, Antalya)

It can be postulated from statements provided by the informants that the successful implementation of rental platforms in tourist destinations depends on the existence of effective and robust legal regulations. Besides, it can also be argued that effective taxation monitoring would enhance transparency, as it plays a crucial role in the successful implementation of rental platforms such as Airbnb in urban contexts. The presence of such legal enforcement mechanisms is expected to increase trust as well as the quality standards of Airbnb, as stated by some of the participants:

In my opinion, the state's most fundamental and critical responsibility is the establishment of clear and functional legal regulations... In my view, the greatest shortcoming or primary responsibility lies in this legal and regulatory gap... (Participant 1, M, 34, Istanbul)

Likewise with Airbnb – just as we are required to report guests instantly through an ID registration system and fulfill our tax obligations, these platforms must also be monitored directly by the government. (Participant 6, M, 42, Istanbul)

[...] Airbnb must be thoroughly regulated. It should be monitored in terms of price and quality standards, and of course, in terms of safety. (Participant 10, F, 43, Antalya)

More recently, the government has revised the existing law regarding Airbnb, which introduced a registration requirement for visitors staying in short-term rental properties. The second regulation was related to taxation, requiring Airbnb operators and property owners to pay taxes to the government. Even though some necessary regulations have been introduced, stakeholders believe that further amendments to the legislation are still required. Regarding such issues, the opinions expressed by the participants suggest that regulations governing Airbnb should be addressed from a holistic perspective that encompasses standards related to pricing, security, safety, and taxation. This result is in line with other studies that indicated hotels generally supported stronger regulation of Airbnb in Istanbul, which seems to be vital (Alrawadieh et al., 2020). Therefore, stakeholders emphasize the need for legal enforcement mechanisms that should ensure a balanced taxation framework, while promoting safety and security and restoring the confidence of both hosts and guests in short-term rental platforms.

4.2. Socio-cultural norms

By its very nature, visitors' short-term stays in privately owned properties belonging to strangers may increase perceived risks among local communities, particularly within neighborhoods and residential districts. Consequently, fostering trust is considered vital for protecting socio-cultural norms (Huurne et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2025). One of the most compelling risks relates to issues of trust, which may potentially create social tensions between residents and tourists:

When you rent out a property to someone, as we commonly say, a 'private sphere' is created within those four walls. Once I've rented a house via Airbnb and gone inside, no one knows what's happening... For instance, someone may buy an apartment in a building where families have lived together peacefully for 20 years, and suddenly that cultural continuity is disrupted. One day a Middle Eastern guest comes, the next day a party is thrown, and the building's atmosphere changes. This disrupts social harmony. (Participant 7, M, 50, Antalya)

And of course, there's the issue of security. A few years ago in Sultanahmet, there was a police raid on an Airbnb. The guests were taken into custody because the host was on a wanted list. So due to these kinds of issues, I'd say the market remains underdeveloped... In terms of disadvantages, one commonly acknowledged issue is related to safety concerns, among others. (Participant 1, M, 34, Istanbul).

In Europe or the U.S. – especially in the U.S., where Airbnb originated – people often rent out their own homes or rooms. Sometimes it's even shared accommodation. But in Istanbul, that's not really the case. The crime rate is relatively high, and people don't always trust strangers staying in their homes. (Participant 3, M, 36, Istanbul).

People don't want strangers staying in their building. I wouldn't want it either. No one does. So yes, the local population definitely opposes this in many cases. (Participant 4, F, 35, Istanbul).

Overall, it was underscored by the participants that security and safety issues remain at the center of the debate, as visitors are worried about staying in strangers' properties, which increases tourists' perceived risk toward rental platforms (Lee et al., 2025). On the other hand, it is also commonly believed that the availability of affordable housing for local residents is undermined by rental platforms such as Airbnb (Seraphin et al., 2024) leading not only to housing shortages but also to the erosion of socio-cultural bonds in urban areas. This necessitates policy responses from both local and government-led authorities as supported by statements and opinions of the informants:

So yes, I'm firmly against turning Istanbul into a touristic or museum city. When it comes to Airbnb, the consequences are clear: rent increases, long-term residents are displaced, and people are exiled from their own cities because they can't find affordable housing under the same conditions. The examples are numerous. And I've already spoken about how the Barcelona municipality responded with serious regulations. Airbnb operations have begun in Istanbul too – that much is clear. (Participant 12, F, 65, Istanbul).

Participants' responses illustrated that the use of short-term rental platforms is likely to intensify local concerns regarding security, safety, and broader societal norms. While the reasons to develop such concerns vary and manifest beyond economic concerns within the community, the major impediment associated with the use of the Airbnb platform is believed to stem from a perceived threat to social harmony, and this perception is considered a potential driver of social tensions between locals and tourists. Overall, participant responses confirm that the adverse impacts of Airbnb in both cities, as well as across the country, persist despite the recent revision of relevant regulations. Therefore, participants widely believe that the current regulations require further revision to address the needs of both the supply and demand sides, while simultaneously responding to tourists' expectations and managing local residents' concerns regarding the negative impacts of Airbnb.

5. Conclusions

The present research examined the drivers, barriers, and challenges associated with the use of Airbnb in two of Türkiye's most popular tourist destinations, namely Antalya and Istanbul. The findings derived from both cases revealed both differences and commonalities. Even though these two most visited destinations in Türkiye are characterized by different tourism types (e.g., sea-sun-sand and cultural tourism), they play a significant role in shaping and reflecting the successes and challenges of tourism development in Türkiye. Since accommodation in Antalya is largely provided through all-inclusive package tourism, the demand for short-term rental platforms such as Airbnb remains relatively limited compared with Istanbul. Therefore, the findings of this study provide both practical and theoretical implications for the existing body of knowledge regarding the socio-political dimensions of the sharing economy in Türkiye's two most visited tourist destinations.

First, one of the most significant findings is that, compared with competing destinations in Europe, the popularity of Airbnb as a sharing economy platform remains relatively limited due to the lack of awareness. Additionally, it appears that these sharing economy practices have not yet been fully regulated or widely accepted by either the state or society in Türkiye. This highlights the importance of taxation and registration issues from a legal perspective, which require the introduction of a comprehensive and legally binding regulatory framework, a finding that is also supported by previous research (Kim, 2023).

Second, in both cases, alongside socio-political dimensions, socio-cultural norms emerged as one of the main barriers to the adoption of Airbnb in Türkiye. In other words, the short or long-term stays of tourists and visitors may conflict with community norms in residential areas and neighborhoods, potentially resulting in social tensions between host and guest communities, a finding that is consistent with prior research (Kizildere & Ozen, 2026). This stance was further supported by the study findings, which suggest that a weakened sense of community values within neighborhoods may give rise to safety and security concerns, thereby diminishing residents' livability. From a practical perspective, local residents may be reluctant to host strangers in their neighborhoods due to security concerns (Markoç, 2020).

Moreover, from an economic perspective, short-term stays facilitated through platforms such as Airbnb may exacerbate housing affordability problems for local residents, particularly in

Istanbul, where such platforms are more widely used by tourists. Consequently, these developments may undermine urban livability by increasing social and economic inequalities. This negative outcome may create inequalities in access to housing, particularly in highly demanded destinations such as Istanbul. This issue can be linked to the 'livability of the environment' dimension of livability theory (Veenhoven, 2000), as housing shortages exacerbated by rental platforms (Seraphin et al., 2024) are closely associated with residents' welfare and well-being.

Most importantly, from a practical perspective, this phenomenon appears to accelerate changes in the social fabric of local communities. In addition, the rapid expansion of short-term rentals may contribute to processes of gentrification within neighborhoods, a challenge that the findings suggest Istanbul is particularly vulnerable to (Abdul Aziz et al., 2024). Another compelling implication is that touristification may generate negative externalities, such as the displacement of local residents from urban neighborhoods, which may in turn transform these areas into leisure-oriented spaces of consumption, thereby jeopardizing the governance of tourist cities such as Istanbul (Aranda-Cuéllar et al., 2025).

Further, the study results confirm that the use of Airbnb remains relatively limited, particularly in Antalya, where demand for short-term rental platforms is low and accommodation is predominantly provided through package tours, even though the government has sought to remove existing barriers by introducing new legal regulations governing Airbnb operations. Moreover, the findings suggest that further concrete measures are still required from the government to address residents' concerns regarding the security and safety implications of Airbnb, particularly in districts and residential areas where Airbnb is widely used by tourists. Such concerns are closely associated with the physical well-being of both local residents and visitors. From the perspective of livability theory, this issue can be linked to the dimension of 'life-ability of the person' (Veenhoven, 2000).

Research participants indicated that Airbnb-driven touristification may pose significant challenges for Istanbul, as its potential adverse impacts are likely to undermine the livability and quality of life of local residents. This finding is closely related to residents' well-being and quality of life, which may be negatively affected by Airbnb-related pressures in densely populated cities such as Istanbul (see Sheikh & van Ameijde, 2022). On the other hand, the use of Airbnb as a short-term accommodation platform may also contribute to social tensions, which constitute one of the key indicators of livability theory (Lindberg et al., 2022). Such developments may ultimately erode societal quality of life (Veenhoven, 2006) and can be associated with the dimensions of 'livability of environment, life-ability of the person', and 'utility of life' proposed by Veenhoven (2000). Similarly, unfavorable living conditions fueled by Airbnb are likely to threaten the livability of cities, a concern that is closely aligned with United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 11, which emphasizes the development and maintenance of livable cities (Li & Fan, 2025).

On the other hand, one of the most compelling implications of the present research is that the COVID-19 pandemic, during which tourists increasingly preferred Airbnb, fostered demand for and enhanced the significance of visiting friends and relatives (VFR) tourism, as well as second-home tourism (Gunter et al., 2025). As a result, it is widely believed that the pandemic period positively influenced tourists' perceptions, thereby increasing demand for short-term rental platforms. Therefore, in both cases, stakeholders' opinions suggest that the use of rental platforms may enhance destination competitiveness. Given the overtourism challenges experienced in both destinations, participants indicated that Airbnb has not contributed significantly to the overtourism problem. In the case of Antalya, this may be attributed to the extensive use of all-inclusive tourism within the package tour system, which provides accommodation services. Stakeholders' views further suggest that they have

important roles and responsibilities, while recognizing the government as the primary regulatory authority responsible for ensuring the effective management and control of Airbnb operations through the introduction of appropriate laws and regulations within the framework of effective urban governance, a finding that is consistent with prior research (see Benli-Trichet & Kübler, 2022).

The major limitation of the current research is that, due to the COVID-19 measures, such as social distancing, some interviews were conducted via online communication platforms, namely Zoom and email. Another limitation of the study is that its unit of analysis was limited to tourism stakeholders in both cities. Future research may focus on investigating residents' perceptions regarding the use of Airbnb. Furthermore, future studies may explore whether the presence of Airbnb can substantially enhance the competitiveness of tourist destinations, as well as serve as a decision-support tool for potential tourists in shaping their visit intentions and destination choices.

CRedit author statement

Nurullah Cihan Ağbay: Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing, Data Curation, Formal analysis, Methodology, Conceptualization. **İsmail Uzut:** Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing, Data Curation, Formal analysis, Methodology, Conceptualization. **Kadir Çakar:** Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing, Data Curation, Formal analysis, Supervision, Project administration, Methodology, Conceptualization.

Declaration of generative AI in the writing process

During the preparation of the manuscript the authors used ChatGPT 5.5 for language editing and proofreading. After using this tool/service, the authors reviewed and edited the content as needed and took full responsibility for the content of the published article.

Acknowledgement

The preliminary findings of this research were presented as an abstract paper entitled “The Qualitative Analysis of Stakeholders' Perceptions Towards the Barriers and Challenges to Airbnb” at the Conference on Managing Tourism Across Continents 2026 (April 29–May 02, 2026, Antalya, Türkiye). The present manuscript has been substantially revised, expanded, and retitled to better reflect the scope and findings of the study.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Appendix

Table 1: Demographics of participants of Antalya

Participants	Age	Gender	Education Level	Institution & Affiliation	Position	Experience in the sector (Years)	Experience in current position (Years)	Length of interviews	Interviews date
P1	63	M	Master	Antalya Metropolitan Municipality	Advisor to the Chairman	35	2	26:17 min.	14.07.2021
P2	37	M	Master	Rixos-5-star hotel	GM	17	1	42:15 min.	11.08.2021
P3	61	M	Vocational High School	Turkey's Hotel Restaurant and Entertainment Workers Trade Union	Chairman of Regional Branch/ Vice Chairman	36	6	8:11 min.	20.09.2021
P4	51	M	Bachelor	Antalya Industrialists and Business People Association	Board Member	10	3	19:07 min.	20.09.2021
P5	52	M	High School	Association of Professional Hotel Managers	Chairman	34	3	13:32 min.	20.09.2021
P6	46	M	Bachelor	Belek Tourism Investors Joint Venture	Regional Director	20	6	15:57 min.	20.09.2021
P7	50	M	Bachelor	Sports Tourism Union Association	Chairman	30	6	45:23 min.	21.09.2021
P8	62	M	Bachelor	Kemer Touristic Hoteliers and Operators Association	Chairman	47	1	16:05 min.	21.09.2021
P9	53	M	Bachelor	Association of Turkish Travel Agencies Mediterranean Regional Representative Committee	Chairman	32	3	12:05 min.	22.09.2021
P10	43	F	Master	Antalya Promotion Foundation	Chairman	17	4	16:50 min.	23.09.2021
P11	55	M	Bachelor	Association of Travel Agency Managers	Chairman	37	3 months	13:17 min.	23.09.2021
P12	49	F	PhD	Akdeniz University Faculty of Tourism	Professor	16	2	15:27 min.	28.09.2021
P13	39	M	Bachelor	The Marmara Hotel Antalya	Sales Manager	23	7	32:24 min.	12.12.2021
P14	44	M	Bachelor	ODEON	Digital Business Development Manager	26	6	24:37 min.	16.01.2022

Table 2: Demographics of participants of Istanbul

Participants	Age	Gender	Education Level	Institution & Affiliation	Position	Experience in the sector (Years)	Experience in current position (Years)	Length of interviews	Interviews date
P1 (Zoom)	34	M	PhD	Istanbul University	Associate Prof.	4	1	28:28 min.	11.09.2021
P2 (Zoom)	47	M	Bachelor	1 - Association of Turkish Travel Agents 2 - Progo Travel 3 - ViaTransport	1- Association of Turkish Travel Agents Head of Highway Tourism Specialization 2- Co founder 3- Cofounder	15	2	25:38 min.	11.09.2021
P3 (in-situ)	36	M	Bachelor	CVK Park Bosphorus (5*)	Marketing & Sales Manager	17	6	16:45 min.	14.09.2021
P4 (in-situ)	35	F	Master	Leptis Magna-Travel Agency	Reservation and Sales Manager	12	3	10:48 min.	16.09.2021
P5 (in-situ)	49	M	Bachelor	1 - Association of Professional Hotel Managers 2 -Ramada Old City (4*)	1- Regional board chairman 2- GM	25	1- 3 2- 15	29:27 min.	20.09.2021
P6 (in-situ)	42	M	High School	Holiday Inn Istanbul Airport (5*)	GM	23	11	18:37 min.	29.09.2021
P7 (in-situ)	36	M	Bachelor	PEGAS Turistik	Contract Manager	13	5	27:43 min.	29.09.2021
P8 (in-situ)	45	M	Bachelor	Makel Hotel (5 *)	Proxy of GM and Director of Sales & Marketing	25	1 (Deputy GM) 10 (Director)	26:42 min.	02.10.2021
P9 (email)	53	M	PhD	Istanbul Chamber of Industry and Trade Convention and Visitors Bureau	GM	28	3	--	08.09.2021
P10 (in-situ)	59	M	Bachelor	1- SKAL 2- Universal Travel 3- Turkish International Event Association	1- Accountant of SKAL Istanbul 2- Business partner 3- President of Turkish International Event Association	37	1- 2 2- 20 3- 2	18:14 min.	11.09.2021
P11 (Zoom)	51	F	Vocational High School	1 - Istanbul Tourism Platform 2 - Geos Travel Agency	1- President of Environment and Alternative Tourism Commission 2- Agent Owner	13	1- 2 2- 13	11:37 min.	12.09.2021
P12 (Zoom)	65	F	Master	1 - Istanbul City Defense 2 - Northern Forests Defense	Member	8	8	18:33 min.	26.10.2021
P13 (Zoom)	56	F	Bachelor	The Association of Istanbul Tourist Guides	Deputy President	36	2	42:25 min.	28.10.2021
P14 (Zoom)	29	M	Master	Freelance	Tour Guide	11	9	62:44 min.	19.12.2021