

The Challenge of Urban Regeneration in a Post-Socialist City. Gentrification in Supilinn - a District that Recovered

Piirkonna taaselustamine postsotsialistlikus linnas. Gentrifikatsioon Supilinnas

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Abstract

This article observes the gentrification process in a post-socialist country of Estonia. In socialist countries, the land and properties belong to the state and therefore, the real estate market which kick-starts the gentrification process is absent. Not until socialism collapsed, countries became independent, and ownership reforms were established did properties gain value and became objects of sale. In Estonia, the real estate market started to develop after the Republic of Estonia regained independence in 1991, and the land was returned to their legal owners. Due to this historical peculiarity, the gentrification process in Estonia has some differences compared to the process occurring in Western countries.

This review article deals with the gentrification process happening in a post-socialist region. In the analysis of the gentrification process development, three waves of gentrification are described, the differences between them are highlighted, and the time of their occurrence is determined. This case study deals with a small district of Tartu called Supilinn, which represents a classic case of gentrification.

Key words:

Gentrification, waves, post-socialist city, spatial planning, Estonia.

1. Introduction

The development of prerequisites for gentrification started a long time before the gentrification process even started. The first industrial revolution in Europe at the end of the 18th century and

19th century when the industry that had congregated in the cities and needed more labour force entailed a soaring increase in urbanisation.

Industrialisation in Estonian territories took place in 1860-1915 when Estonia was part of the Russian Empire (1721–1917) and depended on the industry development in Russia. Livonian peasantry laws eliminated slavery in 1816 in Estonia and 1819 in Livonia. Half a century later, the ban on leaving one's place of residence was revoked by the Passport Law established in 1863. This abrogation gave an impetus to the soaring increase in the urban population. When in 1863, the percentage of urbanisation was 8.7, then by the year 1913, the number had grown to 23¹.

During the Soviet period (1940-1991) the urbanisation growth continued, and by 1989 it had reached 72%². A massive increase in the number of people who live in cities was one of the reasons why the goal of the nationally established residential programme, which aimed to eliminate the lack of housing within ten years, during the second half of the 1950s was not fulfilled. Although a mass construction was actively commenced, they could not fulfil the growing need for more housing. At first, the plan was to demolish the cheap rental housing districts built in the 19th century and rebuild them, but due to the constant housing deficit, most of the slums in post-socialist cities assigned for demolition were left untouched. Amortised housing without amenities was unpopular, but due to the lack of better living spaces, they were still in use. In post-socialist countries, these are the regions where gentrification takes place.

As early as the 1990s gentrification has gained the interest of Estonian researchers. The research mostly involved case studies of two major towns, Tallinn^{3,4,5,6} and Tartu, where gentrification was studied. The latter includes the study of the onset of gentrification and the meeting of requirements necessary for the onset of gentrification^{7,8}, the historical milieu and architectural values^{9,10}, the course of gentrification in the region¹¹, the issues of gentrification process due to

¹ Ainsaar, M. 1997. Eesti rahvastik taani hindamisraamatust tänapäevani [Estonian population from Liber Census Daniae up to nowadays] Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus. (In Estonian)

² Eesti Vabariik. Maa. Rahvas. Kultuur 2013. [Estonia. Land. People. Culture 2013]. TEA encyclopaedia special edition of entsüklopeedia eriväljaanne / responsible editor-project manager A. Loog, editors E. Helme etc. (In Estonian)

³ Feldman, M., 2000. Gentrification and Social Stratification in Tallinn: Strategies for Local Governance. Viin.

⁴ Paadam, K., ed., 2002. Changing Neighbourhoods in Tallinn: Mustamäe, Kalamaja, Kadriorg. Tallinn: Tallinn Technical University Press.

⁵ Kurist, K. 2004. Gentrifikatsiooni eeldused ja uurimise võimalused Kalamajas teooriate põhjal. [Preconditions for Gentrification and Ways to Study It in the Kalamaja District Based on Theories], Bachelor thesis, Estonian Institute of Humanities, Estonia. (In Estonian)

⁶ Kiisa, H., 2009. Gentrifikatsioon Tallinnas [Gentrification in Tallinn], Bachelor thesis, Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia. (In Estonian)

⁷ Männik, K. 2003. Gentrifikatsioon Eestis - Supilinna näitel. [Gentrification in Estonia, Based on the Example of the Supilinn District], Bachelor thesis, University of Tartu, Estonia. (In Estonian)

⁸ Männik, K., 2008. Gentrifikatsiooniprotsess. Tartu Supilinna näitel, aastatel 2003-2007. [Gentrification, the Case of Tartu Supilinn 2003 Through 2007], Master Thesis, Estonian Arts Academy, Estonia. (In Estonian)

⁹ Nutt, N. 2003. „Supilinn – Eesti stiilipuhtaim agul“ [Supilinn – the Most Stylish Slum in Estonia] (Unpublished final's thesis). Estonian Academy of Arts, Tallinna, Estonia. (In Estonian)

¹⁰ Hiob, M., Nutt, N., Nurme, S., De Luca, F. 2012. Risen from the Dead. From Slumming to Gentrification. Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences, 92–105.

the peculiarities of the post-socialist countries development^{12,13,14} gentrification in the context of spatial planning of the environment¹⁵, the friendliness of the gentrification area¹⁶ and social processes occurring in the gentrification areas¹⁷.

2. *Gentrification and gentrification waves*

In general, the unpopular and poor city districts becoming popular and wealthy can be called gentrification. This process had attracted the attention of researchers since the 1960s, when sociologist Ruth Glass started using the term 'gentrification'^{18,19,20}. Glass used this term in order to mark the process of middle-class people moving into slums. As a result of this process, the character of the region changes in a short period. A poor district becomes a residential area for the wealthy middle class²¹. The region becomes tidy, processes that raise the quality of the area occur, dwellings are renewed, the neighbourhood image is improved, and real estate values increase: these are considered to be the positive effects of gentrification²². However, many studies highlight the negative impacts of gentrification, which are manifested in the crowding out of the so-called poorer residents^{23,24}, which, in turn, results in the homelessness problem^{25,26}.

¹¹ Nutt, N. 2012. "MINA ELAN SIIN" - elavustumine Supilinnas. ["I Live Here" - Gentrification in the Supilinn District], *Acta Architecturae Naturalis*, 2, 93–110. (In Estonian)

¹² Nutt, N., Hiob, M., Kotval, Z. 2016. Supilinn, Tartu—The Lively Vernacular Against Urban Renewal: A Lefebvrian Critique. *Space and Culture*, 2, 1–13.

¹³ Nutt, N., Hiob, M., Nurme, S. 2012. The story of "ugly duckling". The run-down slum that survived the socialist system of government has turned to desirable residential area. In: 15th International Planning History Society (IPHS) Conference São Paulo Brasil 15-18 July, 2012.

¹⁴ Nutt, N., Hiob, M., Nurme, S., Salmistu, S. 2013. Gentrification in a Post-Socialist Town: The Case of the Supilinn District, Tartu, Estonia. *Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences*, 109–123.

¹⁵ Hiob & Nutt, 2016 Hiob, M., Nutt, N. 2016. Spatial Planning in Estonia – From A Socialist to Inclusive Perspective. *Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences*, 47E, 63–79.

¹⁶ Nutt, N. 2017. Ühiskondlike normide muutumine ja omaks võtmine gentrifitseerimisprotsessi käigus Tartu Supilinna kogukonna näitel. [The Change and Acceptance of Social Norms in Gentrification Processes by the Example of Supilinn Community in Tartu]. Master Thesis, University of Tartu, Estonia. (In Estonian)

¹⁷ Griffith, J. M., 1996. Gentrification: Perspectives on the Return to the Central City. *Journal of Planning Literature*, 1996, vol. 11, no. 2, pp. 241-255.

¹⁸ Griffith, J. M., 1996. Gentrification: Perspectives on the Return to the Central City. *Journal of Planning Literature*, 1996, vol. 11, no. 2, pp. 241-255.

¹⁹ Atkinson, R., 2004. The Evidence on the Impact of Gentrification: New Lessons for the Urban Renaissance? *European Journal of Housing Policy*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 107-131.

²⁰ Brouillette, S., 2009. Literature and Gentrification on Brick Lane. *Criticism*, vol. 51, no. 3, pp. 425-449.

²¹ Griffith, J. M., 1996. Gentrification: Perspectives on the Return to the Central City. *Journal of Planning Literature*, 1996, vol. 11, no. 2, pp. 241-255.

²² Atkinson, R., 2004. The Evidence on the Impact of Gentrification: New Lessons for the Urban Renaissance? *European Journal of Housing Policy*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 107-131.

²³ Anderson, A., Platt, J., Skelton, I., Butler, G., Chorney, P., Funk, E. and Grant, B., Social Investment in the Inner City: Community and Capital in West Broadway, Winnipeg, 2005, *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 8-31.
Atkinson, R., 2000. The Hidden Costs of Gentrification: Displacement in Central London. *Journal of Housing and Built Environment*, vol. 15, no. 4, pp. 307-326.

²⁴ Atkinson, R., 2004. The Evidence on the Impact of Gentrification: New Lessons for the Urban Renaissance? *European Journal of Housing Policy*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 107-131.

In Western countries, gentrification manifested most expressively in the 1950s and 1960s during the restoration and renewal of post-war cities. In the 1980s this term was only used for the moving middle-class residents, but soon it was understood that this process is extensive. In more thorough research, several periods aka waves with different characteristics were distinguished. According to the general approach, the first wave is compiled of pioneers who occupy the unpopular area by moving there. Representatives of specific occupations form the second wave. The third wave consists of a wealthy middle class who wish to live in the currently popular area. The people moving into the area at the beginning of the process represent creative fields of work and form a so-called cultural capital. As the popularity of the region increases, it becomes an attractive object of sale and desirable merchandise for the wealthy middle class.

According to the gentrification theory, gentrification is a process that starts when specific prerequisites have been fulfilled, and it moves in waves, simultaneously changing its inhabitants. A suitable situation where all the requirements necessary for gentrification have been met may develop a long time before gentrification in the area can be determined. The people moving into the area who represent creative fields of work such as artists, actors, musicians, and others do not start gentrification by solely being there. However, as the first wave of gentrification, they carry a significant role in creating a suitable situation for the start of gentrification.

One of the preconditions for the start of gentrification as a process is close proximity to the city centre and amortised housing whose value can be increased with relatively small investments. The existence of real estate is not enough; it also needs to be an article of merchandise. In socialist countries, the land and real estate belong to the country and therefore, the real estate market necessary to kickstart gentrification is absent. Not until socialism collapses and the Ownership Reform Act is established after countries have gained independence does the real estate market develop. Due to this historical peculiarity gentrification has not occurred in post-socialist countries simultaneously to the Western countries. It developed significantly later.

Changes in the area that give reference to gentrification start happening after the second wave of gentrification has arrived. Visible changes in the streets that refer to the start of gentrification are construction activities which are gaining momentum, and this primarily stands for the renovation of dilapidated buildings. This process confirms that the second wave, which includes people with a steady income and enough purchasing power to buy cheap real estate, has arrived. At the same time, the real estate owner's wish to sell their property cheap is also necessary. When the activities of the first wave, who periodically become active, attract attention to the region, then the second wave organises the way of life in the region making it more orderly with active and regular activities. In addition to the physical space, the second wave also organises the social environment by forming organisations and organising events. During the second wave, the physical and social changes which enable to recognise gentrification occur in the region. It can be

²⁵ Atkinson, R., 2000. The Hidden Costs of Gentrification: Displacement in Central London. *Journal of Housing and Built Environment*, vol. 15, no. 4, pp. 307-326.

²⁶ Atkinson, R., 2004. The Evidence on the Impact of Gentrification: New Lessons for the Urban Renaissance? *European Journal of Housing Policy*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 107-131.

said that the second wave is the most active gentrifier in the gentrification process as it has the most activities. Thanks to the activities of the second wave, the region rapidly becomes popular and becomes attractive to the middle-class residents of the third wave. The attraction is caused by the new contemporary buildings whose price compared to old renovated buildings is higher and affordable only for the middle-class people. However, the middle-class also wants a different living environment which means the region needs to be even more organised. As a result, the region loses more and more of its peculiarities and becomes more similar to other regions. The region's originality that the first wave helped to create and the second wave tried to maintain and protect, disappears.

3. Case study – Supilinn district

A large area of the 21st century Supilinn was part of Tartu already in the 17th century. Plots that were initially used as gardens had buildings built on step by step and previously used paths were built into streets. When in the mid-18th century, the plot owners of Supilinn were wealthy citizens, then by the end of the century, the majority of properties belonged to the common people²⁷. The reopening of the university at the beginning of the 19th century entailed an increase in the population of Tartu which, in turn, resulted in the construction of rental housing. At the beginning of the 19th century, only 250 people lived in Supilinn. However, by the end of the century, the number had increased ten times. Based on the 1897 Russian census, the majority of Supilinn residents were unskilled workers²⁸.

In the 20th century, the construction of residential buildings and of a network of streets gained momentum. Soon after Supilinn district had been developed, which was during the beginning years of the Republic of Estonia, it was suggested to demolish the area in order to solve the issue of unsanitary slum conditions. Second World War practically did not touch Supilinn. Demolition was put into the agenda with grande re-building plans in the 1944 comprehensive plan of Tartu²⁹. Although Stalin's death in 1953 had an impact on the city planning ideology and monumentality was replaced with the glorification of scientific achievements, the comprehensive plan of Tartu compiled in 1974 to 1976³⁰ continued to be radical towards Supilinn. In addition, many large-scale demolition works were planned in the 1978 heritage conservation plan for the old town of Tartu³¹. The first time the region was highlighted as a valuable region was in the 1986 reconstruction

²⁷ Teedema, L. 2010. Supilinna asustuse kujunemine 1704-1899. [The development of the settlement in Supilinn in 1704-1899] Master's thesis, University of Tartu, Estonia. (In Estonian)

²⁸ Berendsen, V., Maiste, M. 1999. Esimene ülevenemaaline rahvaloendus Tartus 28. jaanuaril 1897 [The first census of Russia in Tartu, Jan 28th 1897]. Tartu: Eesti Ajalooarhiiv (National Archives of Estonia). (In Estonian)

²⁹ Tartu linna generaalskissa. 1944. [General Plan of Tartu, 1944], Archives of Tartu city government, planning and land management department. (In Estonian)

³⁰ Tartu linna generaalskissa, 1974-1976. [General Plan of Tartu, 1974-1976], authors of architectural sections M. Meelak, M. Port, O. Zhemtshugov, R. Kivi. State project design institute Eesti Projekt, Archives of Tartu city government, planning and land management department. (In Estonian)

³¹ Tartu vanalinna kaitsetsooni detailplaneerimise projekt, 1978. [Detailed plan of Tartu old town protection zone, 1978], author R. Kivi. Vabariiklik Restaureerimisvalitsus. Archives of Tartu city government, planning and land management department. (In Estonian)

concept for Supilinn³². In the 2005 comprehensive plan of Tartu³³ Supilinn was defined to be a milieu valuable area where buildings, structure of plots and network of streets must be preserved. The long-term demolition plan of the area had had a destructive effect on the housing stock. Supilinn had become a wooden city district with an old and amortised housing stock located on the side of the city centre. The architectural image of the region had been shaped by the buildings built during the Russian Empire period. The prerequisites for the start of gentrification had been fulfilled.

4. Methodology

Several research methods were combined for the gentrification study of Supilinn. In the analysis of scientific journals, the most critical topics, which created the necessary background for the preparation of the case study, were selected. A testimonial about the region was compiled based on the quantitative data from national databases and statistical researches (Tartu and the Citizens of Tartu 2003, 2008, 2013, Statistical overview of Tartu, 1998-2015).

The first method to identify gentrification was an observation. This method has been used in many other gentrification studies in Estonia (Männik, 2003; 2008). It is practical to use observation for the initial determination of the gentrification process as it is easy to use, and it enables the researcher to carry out the study in a short time. At the same time observation solely is not sufficient enough for an in-depth analysis. However, combined with other methods in the longitudinal study (2000-2019) observation helps to monitor the progress of the gentrification process. Observations were carried out in 2005, 2010 and 2016.

In 2011 unstructured in-depth interviews were carried out with 11 key persons who were the most active residents of Supilinn and well-known opinion leaders living outside the area. Results of the interview were used to compile a questionnaire. The questionnaire aimed to obtain knowledge about the residents of Supilinn, about one's wishes and visions for the future. The questionnaire was conducted in 2011.

Parallel to previously mentioned methods, the ethnographic method was also used, and it formed a methodological backbone for the study. The use of scientific, ethnographic research method in the study of the region enabled the researcher to simultaneously be a theorist and a field worker which, in turn, enabled to observe all the elements of the system in context and analyse them based on the existing environment. Participant observation was used as a research method which considers the researcher to be an organic part of the study object. This position enabled to place the observations into context, determine the causes of formed assessments and opinions and see the hidden connections. The holistic approach of the study allowed to view all the occurred events

³² Tartu Supilinna rekonstrueerimise kontseptsioon, 1986. [Reconstruction conception of Supilinn in Tartu, 1986]. State project design institute Eesti Projekt, Archives of Tartu city government, planning and land management department. (In Estonian)

³³ Tartu linna üldplaneering. 2005. [Comprehensive Plan of Tartu, 2005], Tartu, Estonia: Tartu City Government. Archives of Tartu city government, planning and land management department. (In Estonian)

as a continuous row of events that have root causes in the past and other simultaneously occurring events.

5. Results

First wave

In addition to the prerequisites (cheap real estate, proximity to the town centre) the residents of the area, the so-called first wave of gentrifiers have a role in the gentrification process. At the beginning of the restoration of independence period when Estonia regained independence (1991) the inhabitants of Supilinn were formed by different groups of residents. They were the building owners from the first independence period who had lost their houses when the Soviet regime expropriated the buildings and left only one apartment for the owner to use. Tenants, to whom the Soviet power had given these expropriated aka state apartments, lived in other apartments. The tenants from buildings without amenities were in the national list to get new apartments with amenities, and some of them received these apartments in apartment blocks of new districts. When the Soviet regime ended the houses were returned to their legal owners and tenants became forced tenants.

Most of the region's tenants lacked interest during the Soviet times to renovate the apartments they were using. Hence, the technical situation and sanitary conditions of the region had become terrible (see Illustration 1 and 2). Also, there were many temporary tenants, such as students who rented small rooms during their studies or squatted the apartments or attics left empty.

When by the end of the 1990s (1999) only about a hundred properties had been returned to their owners (111)³⁴, then five years later (2005) the number had already increased to 257 properties³⁵ out of 334. Many landlords who got their properties back did not wish to move into Supilinn as it was an unpopular region and thus, sold their houses. As a result, favourable conditions were created for the start of gentrification because low priced real estate became available near the city centre.

The first wave of gentrification had moved into the region primarily due to the circumstances and lack of a better option. Creative people, artists, musicians, writers, and professors and students as is inherent to the university town were among them. The romantic atmosphere and slum milieu was a favourable environment for creative activities. Musicians composed songs of a little wooden town and artists painted romantic views of dilapidated slums. The region offered much impetus for creative work and creative people, in turn, enriched the area with their presence. As a result of all this, the region became more attractive, which stands for the increase of fame, not popularity. As is characteristic to creative people, they received attention due to their loud speeches and underground lifestyle. This way the first wave created an image for the region with its presence. The old romantic slum milieu fascinated the so-called second wave gentrifiers.

³⁴ Tartu statistiline ülevaade [Statistical overview of Tartu], 1999, Estonia: Tartu City Government. (In Estonian)

³⁵ Tartu statistiline ülevaade [Statistical overview of Tartu], 2005, Estonia: Tartu City Government. (In Estonian)



Illustration 1 and 2. Soviet period Supilinn waiting for demolition. On the left: 1992, Herne 6. Source: ERM Fk 2018:57, Duglas, H. On the right: 1992, Oa 3 courtyard house. Source: Tartu City Museum TM F 985:3, Duglas, H.

Second wave

Low real estate prices gave a push for the second wave of gentrification to arrive. The second wave moves into the region because they enjoy the milieu and appreciate the proximity of the town centre. The arrival of the second wave was noticeable in streets as the houses were renovated (see Illustration 3 and 4) and the region, in general, had become more organised.



Illustration 3 and 4. Houses renovated at the end of the 1990s. Source: Nutt, N. 2012.

The values of creative people living in the area (first wave) and young active newcomers overlapped and favourable conditions to work together emerged. This collaboration became the basis for a civic organisation Supilinna Selts, established in 2002, which drew together the most active members of the region. The second wave led the arrangement of public space as well as the social environment (see Illustration 5 and 6). They started to publish a local newspaper “Supilinna Tirin” and organise events for tidying up the neighbourhood. Volunteers started to organise a city district’s festival “Supilinn Days” every spring. In order to communicate and exchange information, they started to use social media such as Facebook, a mailing list and a web page for the organisation. Also, the district’s symbolism was developed (flag, coat of arms, logo).



Illustration 5 and 6. The organisation Supilinna Selts in action. On the left: event for removing the cobblestones of Marja street. Source: Haamer, N. 2003. On the right: procession with Supilinn flags in the honour of the best house of Supilinn. Source: Nutt, N. 2012.

The region became tidier, which increased in the district's popularity. In 1998 more than half (60%) of Tartu's residents³⁶ thought that Supilinn is an unsuitable place to live. Five years later, the number dropped to half (50%) and in 2008, the number had dropped to 25%³⁷. The increase in the region's popularity entailed an increasing pressure to build, which was manifested in the demolition of old and building of new houses. A drastic change occurred at the end of 2007 when the economic depression arrived, and it directly influenced the real estate and housing market. At the beginning of the 2000s, increased incomes had enabled more and more people to take home loans. The increase of real estate-related investments in 2004-2007 was the reason for the economic boom and overheating. As early as 2007, the economic growth rate started to slow down step by step with the turn of the economic cycle. Although the Estonian economy tried to adjust to it, the country's GDP dropped 5.1% after the sudden drop in the trade volume of the world economy. Even more abrupt was the change in 2009 when due to rapidly decreased domestic consumption and demand from foreign markets made the GDP drop to 13.9%³⁸. As a result of economic depression the construction activities in Supilinn stopped, many real estate businesses declared bankruptcy and housing projects remained unfinished. The second wave gentrifiers, who were opposed to significant renewals in the area, hoped that the gentrification process had stopped and the third wave would not follow the second. However, this opinion was premature because, after a while, the economic environment became stable, and the real estate market was restored.

Third wave

In 2000-2010, despite the economic depression, 27 new apartment buildings were built in Supilinn. In 2010-2019 there were 35 new apartment buildings built, and as a result by the year 2019 out of 343 houses 62 are new apartment buildings.

³⁶ Tartu ja tartlased, 2008 [Tartu and the Citizens of Tartu 2008]. Tartu, Estonia: Tartu City Government. (In Estonian)

³⁷ Tartu ja tartlased, 2003 [Tartu and the Citizens of Tartu 2003]. Tartu, Estonia: Tartu City Government. (In Estonian)

³⁸ European Commission, 2010 https://ec.europa.eu/info/index_en [Accessed 10 October 2019].

The different set of values of the third wave gentrifiers who moved into these apartment buildings can also be seen in the streets. The milieu of the district has changed, an old ramshackle slum is more and more rapidly being replaced by an organised city environment. New apartment buildings are surrounded by car parks that can be accessed only through a remote-controlled gate. Not only the surroundings of new houses have contributed to the change in the environment but also the modernisation of old houses. Car parks have replaced sheds and laundry rooms with no use. The third wave gentrifiers' ideas about the region and visions for the future are significantly different from the first and second wave's ideas. Today (2009) Supilinn has become a highly valued residential area where the real estate square meter is more expensive than in other city districts (2000-3000 EUR/m² in Supilinn, 1700-2700 EUR/m² in Karlova, 1500-2000 EUR/m² in Annelinn³⁹). There are currently (22.11.2019) 74 new apartments for sale in the real estate portal out of which 16 have been booked even before they have been built. Vigorous construction activities and new buildings being built is an everyday phenomenon. The population in general and population density in the region have also increased in recent years. The wealthy middle class that has arrived in recent years forms the third wave and is shaping Supilinn according to its visions (see Illustration 7 and 8).



Illustration 7 and 8. New Supilinn. On the left: New Selleri street in Supilinn. Source: Nutt, N. 2019. On the right: car park in the yard of a new apartment building. Source: Nutt, N. 2016.

6. Discussion

Literature dealing with gentrification⁴⁰ has pointed out that in order to start the gentrification process, the prerequisites must be fulfilled. These included the region's proximity to the town centre and presence of cheap amortised real estate whose value can be increased with small investments. Gentrification theory also states that the process runs in waves. The first wave is formed by the so-called pioneers who occupy the unpopular area. The second wave includes people with specific occupations, and the third wave is formed by the wealthy middle class who wishes to live in the currently popular area.

³⁹ Kinnisaraportaali <https://www.kv.ee>. [Accessed 1 October 2019].

⁴⁰ Atkinson, R., 2004. The Evidence on the Impact of Gentrification: New Lessons for the Urban Renaissance? *European Journal of Housing Policy*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 107-131.

In the study of Supilinn, the fulfilment of necessary prerequisites was identified. These entailed the existence of cheap amortised real estate and its proximity to the town centre. Although the determination of prerequisites was not complicated in Supilinn, the identification of gentrification waves turned out to be complicated. In practice, gentrification can be determined not until after the second wave has arrived because only then do the changes become visible in the region. The creative field representatives, who belong to the first wave, shape the image of the region with their presence, which is a necessary precondition for the second wave to come. Therefore, the first wave by its nature is more of a prerequisite itself for gentrification to start and has similar characteristics to gentrification waves. However, the presence of the first wave does not signify the start of gentrification, but it is a precondition for gentrification to start, which is confirmed by the interest of researchers who study gentrification and it did not occur until the second wave had arrived. The first study was carried out in 2003⁴¹ when the visible changes in the streets that refer to gentrification could be determined.

The first wave of Supilinn is compiled of people who lived in the area already in the Soviet period. They also included creative people with low or irregular incomes and university students. Therefore, the first wave has been in the area a long time before gentrification process started. The gentrification in post-socialist countries is triggered by the change in land ownership, which in Estonia occurred in 1991 when the Soviet regime collapsed. During the ownership reform established in Estonia after the restoration of independence the land and properties, which had belonged to the state at the time of the Soviet period, were returned to their legal private owners and land became an object of sale. As a result of this process, gentrification could start. Therefore, it can be said that gentrification in Supilinn started in 1991.

The overwhelming start of the second wave can be considered to be in 2002 when the district's organisation was created. After the second wave had arrived clearly visible changes occurred in the region and district became popular. The second wave led the activities in the region for approximately 15 years.

In 2017 the values of new active people from the third wave and the so-called second wave activists' got into conflict. As a result, the annual spring festival format changes and the underground concert becomes a family event. Drastic and rapid changes also occurred in the streets. Increase in private cars led to parking problems, and the construction of new houses started to follow the architectural trends of the 21st century.

The durations of gentrification waves in Supilinn are different. As is inherent to a region with post-socialist past, gentrification starts when the change in land ownership is established and when the so-called first wave creative people are already there. The second wave arrives approximately ten years later and forms an organisation in 2002 that connects the region's residents. Around fifteen years later, in 2017, the resident's values get into a conflict which can be accounted for the arrival of the third wave.

⁴¹ Männik, K. 2003. Gentrifikatsioon Eestis - Supilinna näitel. [Gentrification in Estonia, Based on the Example of the Supilinn District], Bachelor thesis, University of Tartu, Estonia. (In Estonian)

7. Conclusion

This article viewed the gentrification process in a post-socialist country of Estonia. In socialist countries, the land and real estate belong to the state, which is why the necessary real estate market for the start of gentrification is absent. Not until socialism collapsed, the countries became independent, and ownership reforms were established did the real estate gain value and become an object of sale. In Estonia, the real estate market emerged after the restoration of independence (1991) when the land was returned to their legal owners. Therefore, gentrification started later in post-socialist countries than in Western countries.

Supilinn, a small district of Tartu was under observation as a case study, and it is a classic case of gentrification. The article describes in a post-socialist area the gentrification process, analyses its development, describes the gentrification waves and determines the time of change between different waves.

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