

## REVIEW

# Evolution of the relationship between gentrification and urban planning

## Evolución de la relación entre gentrificación y planificación urbana

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### ABSTRACT

This article examines the evolution of the relationship between gentrification and urban planning during the period 2018-2023, using a mixed approach that combines bibliometric and scientometric analysis. The study focuses on how urban planning policies have influenced gentrification patterns and the social, economic and environmental dynamics of cities. As gentrification has gained prominence as a mechanism of urban revitalization, it has also raised concerns about the displacement of vulnerable communities and disruption of the social fabric. This analysis provides a comprehensive view of emerging trends in the literature on gentrification and urban planning, highlighting the need for more inclusive and sustainable approaches in urban policy formulation. The main currents of thought and challenges facing contemporary cities were identified, key recommendations were offered to mitigate the negative impacts of gentrification and promote equitable urban development.

**Keywords:** Social Displacement; Social Equity; Gentrification; Urban Planning; Urban Renewal.

### RESUMEN

Este artículo examina la evolución de la relación entre gentrificación y planificación urbana durante el período 2018-2023, se utilizó un enfoque mixto que combina análisis bibliométrico y cientiométrico. El estudio se centra en cómo las políticas de planificación urbana han influido en los patrones de gentrificación y en las dinámicas sociales, económicas y ambientales de las ciudades. A medida que la gentrificación ha ganado protagonismo como un mecanismo de revitalización urbana, también ha suscitado preocupaciones sobre el desplazamiento de comunidades vulnerables y la alteración del tejido social. Este análisis proporciona una visión integral de las tendencias emergentes en la literatura sobre gentrificación y planificación urbana, se destacó la necesidad de enfoques más inclusivos y sostenibles en la formulación de políticas urbanas. Se identificaron las principales corrientes de pensamiento y los desafíos que enfrentan las ciudades contemporáneas, se ofrecieron recomendaciones clave para mitigar los impactos negativos de la gentrificación y fomentar un desarrollo urbano equitativo.

**Palabras clave:** Desplazamiento Social; Equidad Social; Gentrificación; Planificación Urbana; Renovación Urbana.

## INTRODUCTION

In the last decade, gentrification has emerged as a central theme in the study of urban planning,<sup>(1,2,3,4,5,6,7)</sup>

generating significant debates on its social, economic and cultural implications. This phenomenon, characterized by transforming urban neighborhoods through the arrival of new residents with greater purchasing power, has been driven by public policies seeking to revitalize deteriorated urban areas.<sup>(8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18)</sup> However, gentrification has also brought complex challenges, such as the displacement of vulnerable communities and the disruption of affected neighborhoods' social and cultural fabric.

Historically, urban planning has been seen as a tool to promote economic development and improve the quality of life in cities.<sup>(19)</sup> In this context, gentrification has been perceived as a means to revitalize urban areas that have experienced disinvestment and decline. However, as this process has spread, concerns have also arisen about its effects on social equity and inclusion.<sup>(20,21,22,23,24,25,26,27)</sup> In particular, green gentrification, combining environmental improvements with urban renewal, has sparked considerable debate about balancing ecological benefits with social justice.

The baselines of this study focus on the evolving relationship between gentrification and urban planning, exploring how urban policies have influenced patterns of gentrification and how these, in turn, have affected the social and spatial structure of cities. This approach is fundamental to understanding the dynamics of urban transformation and the long-term implications for social cohesion and sustainability. The importance of this study lies in its ability to provide a deeper understanding of the forces shaping contemporary cities and to offer recommendations on how urban policies can be designed to promote more inclusive and equitable development.

## METHOD

A bibliometric and scientometric review methodology was adopted to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the evolution of the relationship between gentrification and urban planning during the period 2018-2023.<sup>(28,29,30,31)</sup> This methodological approach allows for mapping academic production and examining emerging trends in the literature, providing an in-depth understanding of how these dynamics have developed in recent years.

Definition of the temporal range and selection of the database.

The study period spanned from 2018 to 2023, a temporal range selected to capture the most recent and relevant research in gentrification and urban planning. Recognized academic databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar were used for their wide coverage and robustness in indexing social sciences, urbanism, and public policy studies.

### Search strategy and inclusion criteria

The search strategy was developed by using a combination of specific keywords, such as “gentrification,” “urban planning,” “urban development,” “sustainability,” and “social equity.” Filters were applied to ensure that the selected articles were peer-reviewed, available in open access whenever possible, and published within the established time range. Inclusion criteria considered empirical studies, theoretical reviews and case analyses explicitly addressing the interaction between gentrification and urban planning.

### Bibliometric analysis

Bibliometric analysis was the study's first phase, and tools such as VOSviewer and CiteSpace were used. These tools allowed the visualization of co-authorship networks, co-citation analysis, and the identification of the most relevant topics and influential authors in the field. The bibliometric indicators examined included the number of publications per year, the geographical distribution of studies, and the evolution of keywords used in the literature. This analysis provided a solid quantitative basis for identifying major trends and areas of focus in gentrification and urban planning research.

### Scientific metric analysis

In the second phase, a scientific metric analysis was conducted to assess the structure and dynamics of scientific production in the field. This analysis included the study of impact indicators, such as the H-factor of the most cited authors and journals, as well as the analysis of collaboration patterns between institutions and countries. The scientometric approach made it possible to identify the predominant currents of thought and areas of innovation at the intersection of gentrification and urban planning.

### Qualitative analysis

A qualitative analysis of the selected studies was conducted to complement the quantitative analyses. This analysis focused on identifying and coding emerging themes, recurring patterns, and critical approaches in the literature. An inductive approach was used, which allowed themes to emerge from the data rather than imposing predefined categories. NVivo software facilitated the management and analysis of the qualitative data, facilitated a detailed exploration of how the relationship between gentrification and urban planning has been addressed in different contexts, and facilitated a detailed exploration of how the relationship between gentrification and urban planning has been addressed in different contexts.

### Validation and triangulation of results

To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, a triangulation technique was employed, comparing the results of the bibliometric, scient metric and qualitative analysis. This triangulation allowed us to contextualize the findings within the existing literature's framework and ensure that the conclusions accurately reflected the trends and dynamics in the field of study.

### Limitations of the study

Despite the robustness of the methodology employed, there are inherent limitations to the bibliometric and scientometric approach. One possible limitation is the dependence on the selected databases, which could have excluded relevant studies not indexed in these sources. In addition, the qualitative approach, although in-depth, only allows for the generalization of the results to some urban contexts.

This methodology is designed to provide a comprehensive and detailed view of the evolving relationship between gentrification and urban planning; a solid basis for the formulation of more equitable and sustainable urban policies was provided.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Through the VOSviewer software, a map of categories and conceptual nodes most addressed in the sources consulted was achieved. It reflects the interrelationship between categories (203) and the dependence between them (2606 relationships) (figure 1).

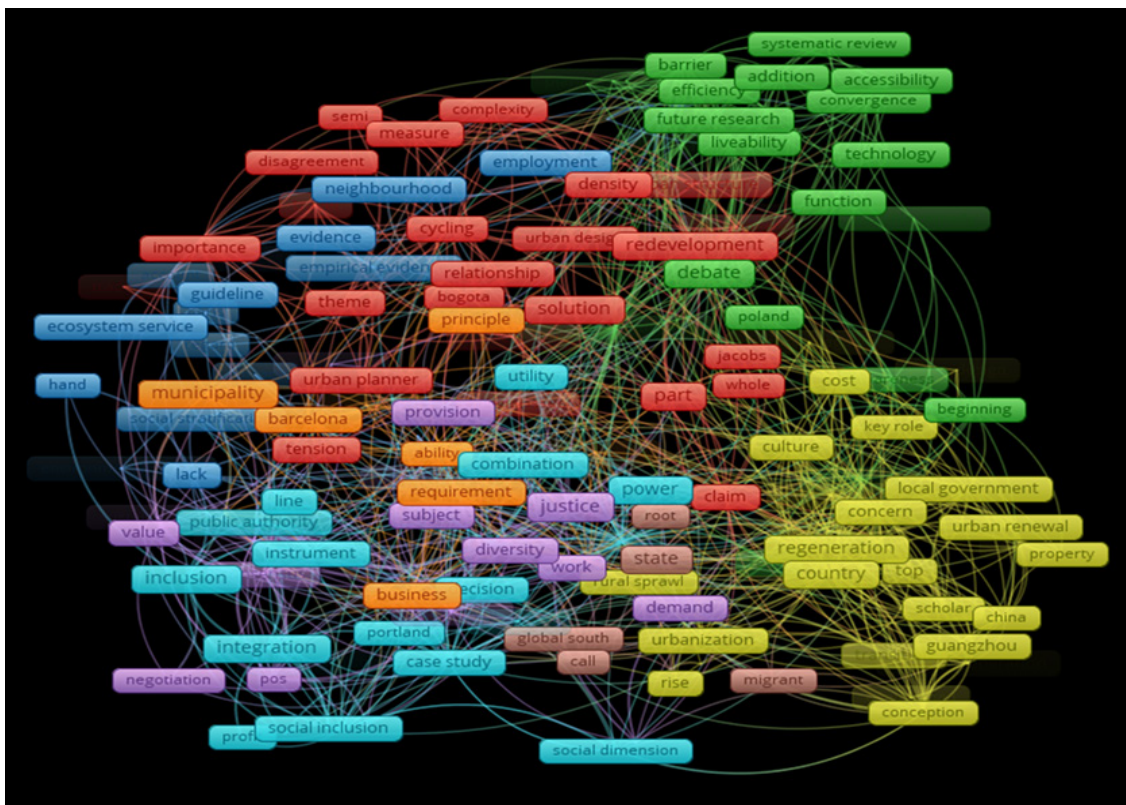


Figure 1. Map of categories

By analyzing the bibliometric and scientometric trends on the relationship between gentrification and urban planning in 2013-2023, several key trends that reflect the evolution of research in this field were identified. This was possible through the detailed analysis of the sources consulted (table 1).

Table 1. Search indicators		
Indicators	Aspects	Totals
Years	2023	15
	2022	10
	2021	10
	2020	12
	2019	5
	2018	9

Types of works	Review articles	5
	Research articles	54
	Book chapters	2
Number of journals consulted	-	22
Most consulted areas of knowledge	Social Sciences	61
	Environment	30
	Business	17
	Agriculture and Life Sciences	15

1. Increase in green gentrification research: a notable trend is the increase in studies on “green gentrification,” which examine how introducing green infrastructure in urban areas contributes to the displacement of vulnerable communities. These studies have focused on the socio-spatial effects and implications for environmental justice, with significant growth in the literature since 2014. (32,33,34,35,36,37,38,39,40,41) This line of research highlights the need to develop urban policies that balance environmental benefits with social equity.

2. Urban renewal and sustainability: urban renewal has evolved to include physical improvements and broader considerations of economic, social and cultural sustainability. Since 2013, there has been a notable increase in studies exploring comprehensive approaches to urban renewal, especially in developing countries. (42,43) These studies highlight the importance of innovative governance models and community participation to ensure equitable urban development.

3. Geographic research concentration: most research on gentrification and urban planning has been concentrated in North America and Europe. (44,45,46,47,48,49) However, increased academic output has recently been observed in Asia and Latin America. (50,51,52,53,54,55,56,57,58,59,60,61,62,63,64,65,66) This pattern reflects a centralization of knowledge that may influence how urban policies are approached in different geographic contexts, suggesting the need to diversify perspectives in research.

4. Social impact and displacement: studies have highlighted the social impact of gentrification, especially in terms of displacement and the transformation of the social fabric of neighbourhoods. This aspect has gained importance in recent research, focusing on how urban policies can mitigate these negative effects and promote social cohesion. (67,68,69,70)

5. Interdisciplinarity and innovative approaches: finally, research in this field has adopted an increasingly interdisciplinary approach, integrating knowledge from geography, environmental studies, sociology, and economics. This trend reflects an evolution towards more holistic approaches that seek to address the complexity of modern urban dynamics and propose more effective solutions to the challenges of gentrification.

With this in mind, a keyword density map was developed; 16 clusters and 177 items were related from 667 links. The main nodes focused on urban planning, equity, social inclusion and environment, as shown in figure 2.

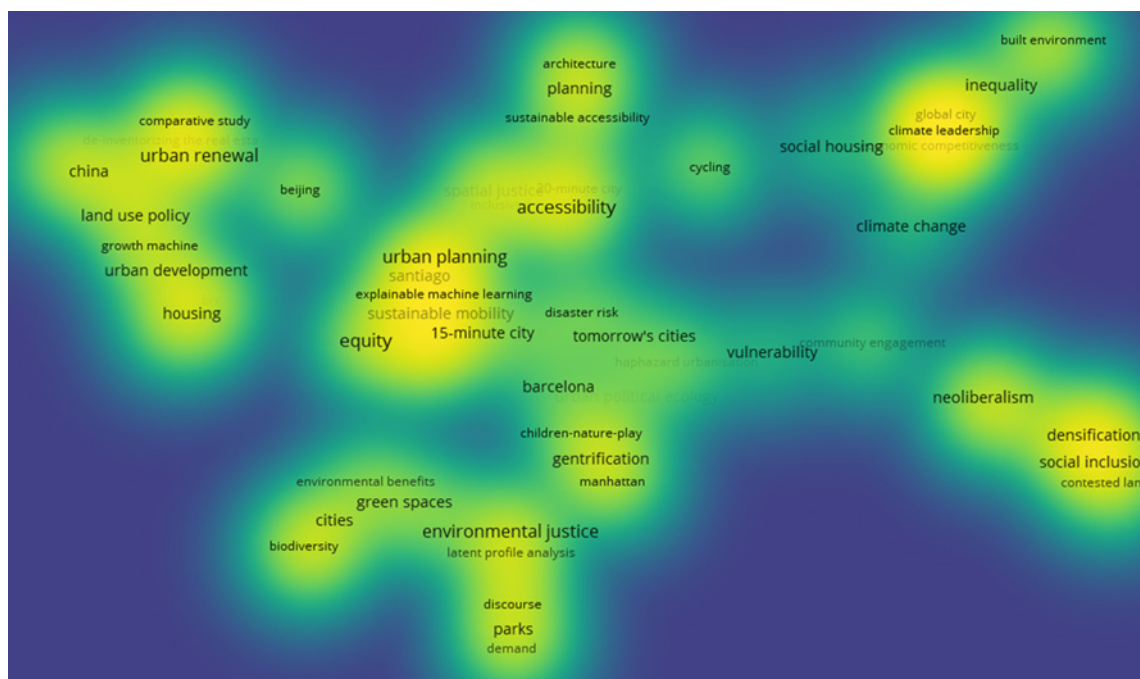


Figure 2. Keyword density map



The relationship between the categories identified in the gentrification and urban planning research reflects these urban processes' inherent complexity. It highlights the need for integrated approaches considering multiple dimensions of urban development. In examining the intersection of trends, deep connections can be observed between green gentrification, sustainable urban renewal, social impact and displacement, geographic concentration of research, and interdisciplinarity. Prominent among the sources consulted are Geography (n=37), Political Science (n=36) and Urban Planning (n=29) (figure 3).

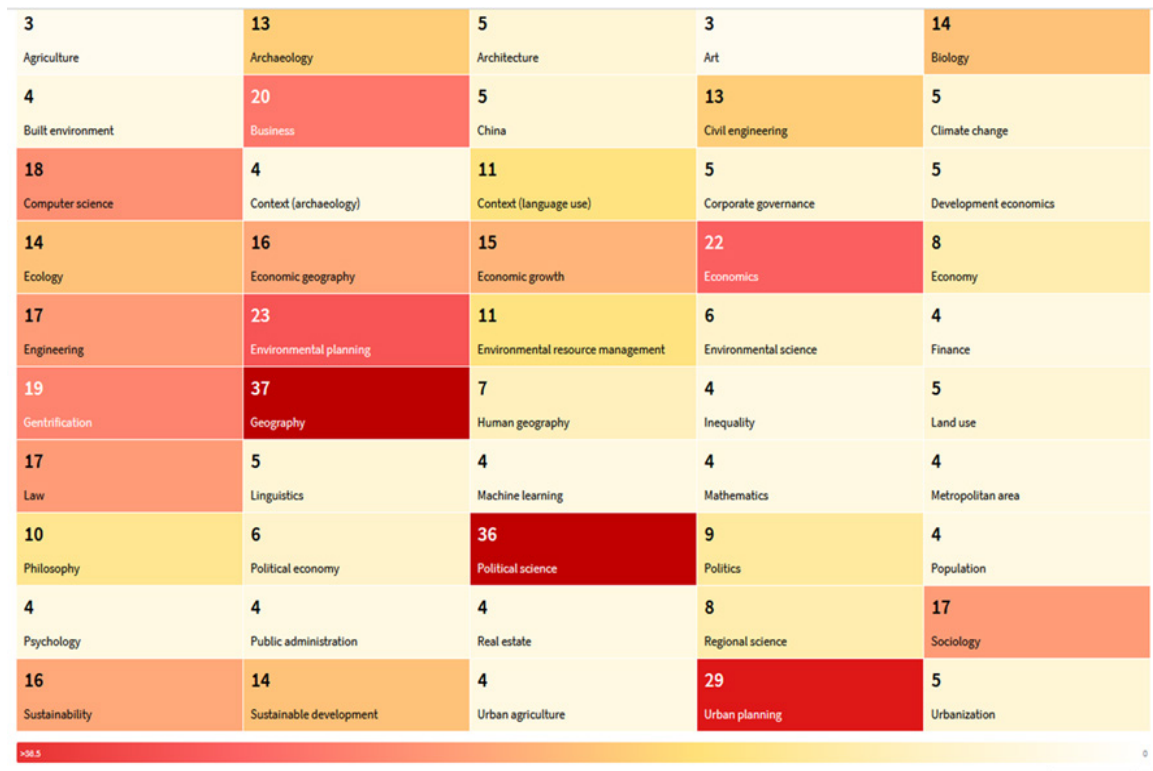


Figure 3. Publications by areas of knowledge

The most prominent authors and institutions are shown in the following figures (figures 4 and 5). Figure 4 represents a relational graph of prominent authors in 2020 and their relationship, elaborated through the VOSviewer software. Isabelle Angelovski stands out as a relational point among the remaining 22 authors that make up the graph.

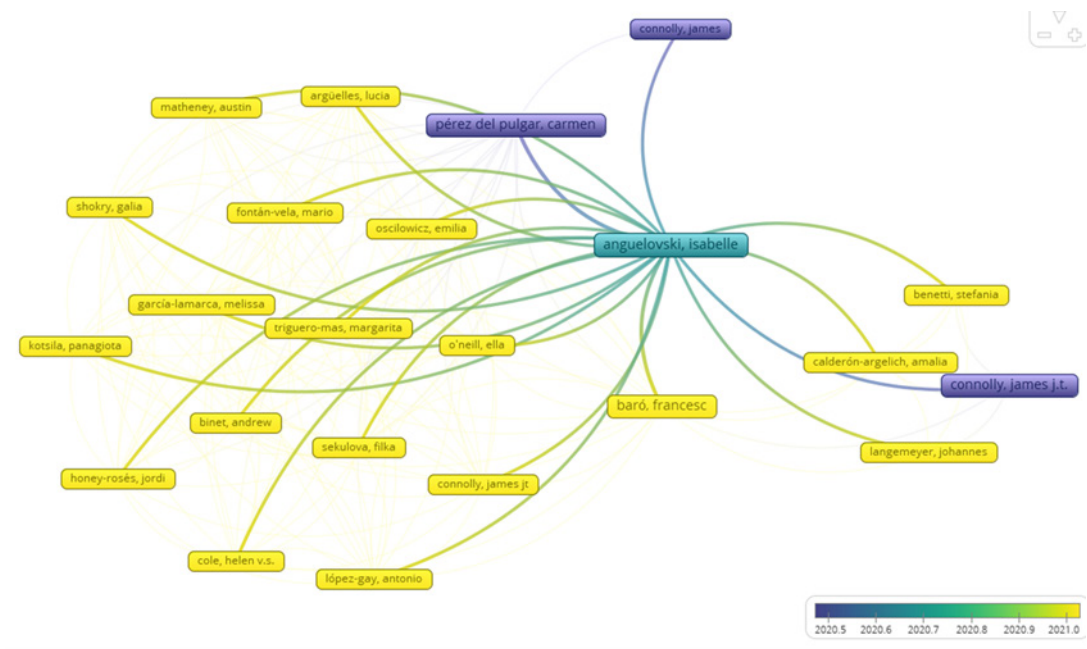


Figure 4. Author network

Figure 5 evidences the frequency of publications by leading authors in the period between 2018 and 2023 on the subject in question.



Figure 5. Number of publications by authors

The previous figure was obtained from the Lens.org platform. There is a certain homogeneity of frequencies ( $n=2$ ), with North American and Asian authors standing out. The figure below (figure 6) shows the frequency index by country. The USA ( $n=17$ ) and China ( $n=15$ ) stand out.

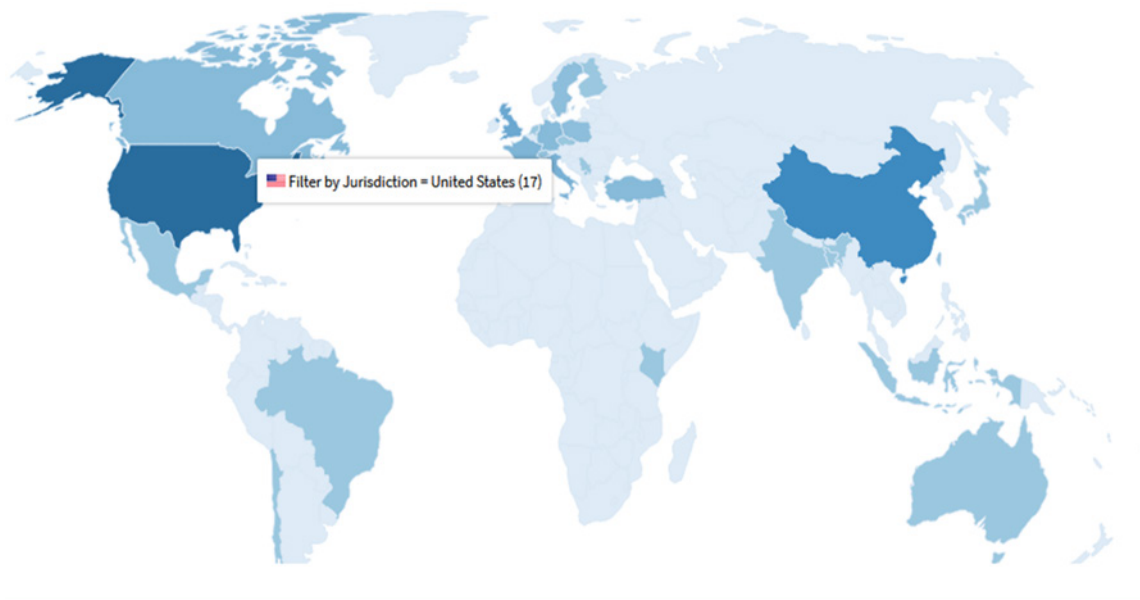


Figure 6. Highlighted countries

Table 2 shows the list of the top 30 journals on the subject according to the h-index. It also includes their names, Scopus quartile, country, region and main areas of knowledge to which they contribute.

Table 2. h-index of journals on the topic					
Title	SJR Quartile	H index	Country	Region	Areas
Landscape and Urban Planning	Q1	211	Netherlands	Western Europe	Environmental Science; Social Sciences
Urban Studies	Q1	174	United Kingdom	Western Europe	Environmental Science; Social Sciences
Journal of Urban Economics	Q1	132	United States	Northern America	Economics, Econometrics and Finance; Social Sciences
International Journal of Urban and Regional Research	Q1	130	United Kingdom	Western Europe	Social Sciences
Cities	Q1	127	United Kingdom	Western Europe	Business, Management and Accounting; Social Sciences

Nature Sustainability	Q1	115	United Kingdom	Western Europe	Agricultural and Biological Sciences; Energy; Environmental Science; Social Sciences
Habitat International	Q1	114	United Kingdom	Western Europe	Environmental Science; Social Sciences
Journal of the American Planning Association	Q1	114	United Kingdom	Western Europe	Social Sciences
Computers, Environment and Urban Systems	Q1	112	United Kingdom	Western Europe	Environmental Science; Social Sciences
Environment and Planning B: Urban Analytics and City Science	Q1	110	United Kingdom	Western Europe	Engineering; Environmental Science; Social Sciences
Journal of Urban Health	Q1	109	Germany	Western Europe	Medicine; Social Sciences
Regional Science and Urban Economics	Q1	96	Netherlands	Western Europe	Economics, Econometrics and Finance; Social Sciences
Environment and Urbanization	Q1	90	United Kingdom	Western Europe	Environmental Science; Social Sciences
Housing Studies	Q1	89	United Kingdom	Western Europe	Environmental Science; Social Sciences
Urban Geography	Q1	89	United Kingdom	Western Europe	Social Sciences
Journal of Planning Education and Research	Q1	87	United States	Northern America	Social Sciences
Urban Affairs Review	Q1	85	United States	Northern America	Social Sciences
Urban Ecosystems	Q1	78	United States	Northern America	Environmental Science; Social Sciences
Housing Policy Debate	Q1	75	United Kingdom	Western Europe	Environmental Science; Social Sciences
Urban Climate	Q1	75	Netherlands	Western Europe	Earth and Planetary Sciences; Environmental Science; Social Sciences
European Urban and Regional Studies	Q1	74	United Kingdom	Western Europe	Environmental Science; Social Sciences
Urban Education	Q1	72	United States	Northern America	Social Sciences
Journal of Real Estate Finance and Economics	Q1	71	Netherlands	Western Europe	Business, Management and Accounting; Economics, Econometrics and Finance; Social Sciences
Journal of Urban Affairs	Q1	71	United Kingdom	Western Europe	Social Sciences
Journal of Contemporary Ethnography	Q1	64	United States	Northern America	Social Sciences
Journal of Urban Design	Q1	60	United Kingdom	Western Europe	Arts and Humanities; Social Sciences
Journal of Housing and the Built Environment	Q1	57	Netherlands	Western Europe	Social Sciences
Economic Development Quarterly	Q2	55	United States	Northern America	Economics, Econometrics and Finance; Social Sciences
Housing, Theory and Society	Q1	55	United Kingdom	Western Europe	Social Sciences
Journal of the Urban Planning and Development Division, ASCE	Q2	55	United States	Northern America	Engineering; Social Sciences

The rankings of the top ten journals that have dealt with the subject are shown in figure 7.












	Title	Type	↓ SJR	H index	Total Docs. (2023)	Total Docs. (3years)	Total Refs. (2023)	Total Cites (3years)	Citable Docs. (3years)	Cites / Doc. (2years)	Ref. / Doc. (2023)	%Female (2023)	
1	<a href="#">Nature Sustainability</a> 	journal	7.366 Q1	115	250	516	9291	10802	379	18.52	37.16	34.58	
2	<a href="#">Journal of Urban Economics</a>	journal	4.314 Q1	132	69	163	3330	1135	159	5.84	48.26	21.15	
3	<a href="#">Landscape and Urban Planning</a>	journal	2.358 Q1	211	213	608	15700	5988	607	9.05	73.71	42.05	
4	<a href="#">Journal of the American Planning Association</a>	journal	2.228 Q1	114	70	168	4839	870	117	3.57	69.13	52.02	
5	<a href="#">Computers, Environment and Urban Systems</a>	journal	1.861 Q1	112	90	306	5976	2552	306	8.41	66.40	33.05	
6	<a href="#">Urban Studies</a>	journal	1.806 Q1	174	226	547	14628	3365	540	5.47	64.73	43.03	
7	<a href="#">Cities</a>	journal	1.733 Q1	127	476	1317	36243	9903	1310	6.90	76.14	42.77	
8	<a href="#">Journal of Urban Health</a>	journal	1.673 Q1	109	108	262	4550	1300	238	4.35	42.13	54.22	
9	<a href="#">International Journal of Urban and Regional Research</a>	journal	1.636 Q1	130	65	201	4090	870	190	3.68	62.92	47.41	
10	<a href="#">Habitat International</a>	journal	1.630 Q1	114	160	353	11965	2797	352	6.90	74.78	37.24	

Figure 7. Rankings of the main journals on this subject

### Interrelationship between green gentrification and sustainable urban renewal.

Green gentrification, although initially driven by environmental objectives, such as the creation of green spaces and the improvement of ecological infrastructure, has been revealed as a phenomenon that affects the physical environment and the social fabric of urban communities. The trend towards sustainable urban renewal has integrated these aspects, seeking to balance the need for environmental sustainability with the preservation of social equity. However, implementing green infrastructure can sometimes trigger gentrification processes, resulting in the displacement of low-income residents, which contradicts the principles of inclusive sustainability.

#### Social impact and displacement in urban planning

Social displacement resulting from gentrification has become a central issue in urban planning. Policies that seek to revitalize blighted urban areas must navigate the delicate balance between improving the physical conditions of the environment and avoiding the exclusion of original residents. Research shows that, without an appropriate approach, urban interventions can significantly transform the social character of neighbourhoods by eliminating diversity and exacerbating existing inequalities. This challenge underscores the need for urban planning that is not only sustainable but socially equitable.

The geographic concentration of gentrification and urban planning research in regions such as North America and Europe has generated a knowledge base that, while robust, may not be fully applicable in other geographic contexts, such as Asia and Latin America. The recent expansion of research in these regions reflects an effort to diversify perspectives and tailor policies to specific local contexts. However, the centralization of knowledge in developed regions remains a challenge that must be addressed to ensure that proposed solutions are globally relevant and effective.

The increasing interdisciplinarity in gentrification and urban planning research reflects the complexity of modern urban dynamics. Integrating knowledge from geography, sociology, economics, and environmental studies has allowed for more holistic approaches considering the multiple dimensions of urban development. This interdisciplinary approach enriches academic analysis and provides a stronger basis for formulating public policies that can effectively address the multifaceted challenges of gentrification and urban planning.

The relationship between these categories reveals that gentrification and urban planning are deeply interconnected phenomena that require a multidimensional and equitable approach. Urban policies must be



designed to integrate environmental, social and economic concerns, ensuring that urban improvements benefit all residents without exacerbating existing inequalities or causing unnecessary displacement. Diversifying knowledge and adopting interdisciplinary approaches are crucial to advancing the understanding of these phenomena and developing policies that promote truly inclusive and sustainable urban development.

The study's findings underscore the importance of adopting an integrated approach to urban planning that simultaneously considers environmental, social and economic dimensions. Green gentrification, while beneficial from an ecological point of view, can trigger social displacement processes if not carefully managed. Therefore, urban policies must be designed to ensure that improvements in environmental infrastructure do not compromise social equity or contribute to the exclusion of the most vulnerable residents. This requires a more holistic approach that encompasses environmental sustainability, social justice, and community cohesion.

Displacement of low-income communities remains one of the most persistent challenges associated with gentrification, especially in regions where Western perspectives have dominated research. Diversifying knowledge through a more inclusive approach incorporating perspectives and experiences from different regions is crucial to developing more effective policies tailored to local realities. This also implies greater international collaboration and exchange of best practices between different urban contexts.

The study highlights that interdisciplinarity is essential to address the complexity of contemporary urban challenges. Integrating knowledge from different disciplines has enabled the development of innovative approaches that address gentrification from multiple angles. This approach enriches academic research and provides a stronger basis for formulating public policies that can effectively respond to the multifaceted challenges facing cities today. Collaboration across disciplines is key to developing solutions that are truly sustainable and equitable, ensuring that the benefits of urban development are distributed fairly among all residents and that the benefits of urban development are distributed fairly among all residents.

## CONCLUSIONS

Gentrification has emerged as a complex phenomenon in the context of urban planning, transforming not only the physical landscape of cities but also their social fabric. As urban areas are revitalized, housing prices and the cost of living often increase, which can displace low-income communities. This process highlights the need for urban planning that seeks economic development and considers all inhabitants' well-being, thus promoting a more inclusive and equitable approach.

Urban planning should be an instrument that facilitates sustainable urban development. This implies the creation of attractive and functional spaces and the implementation of policies that protect vulnerable communities from the adverse effects of gentrification. Sustainability in this context refers to the ability of cities to grow and adapt without sacrificing the social and cultural diversity that characterizes them. Therefore, urban planners must integrate strategies that foster social cohesion and equity in access to resources and opportunities.

Furthermore, the relationship between gentrification and urban planning must be approached from a critical perspective that recognizes social dynamics and their actors. Land use and urban development decisions often reflect economic interests that may not align with the needs of local communities. Therefore, planning processes must be participatory, allowing residents to be heard and considered in decision-making. This will strengthen social equity and contribute to creating more resilient and just urban environments.

The evolving relationship between gentrification and urban planning underscores the importance of a holistic approach prioritizing sustainability and social equity. As cities continue to face challenges related to growth and transformation, urban planners must work collaboratively with communities to develop win-win solutions. This will help build prosperous, inclusive and just cities for all their inhabitants.

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#### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

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