**Gentrification**

Gentrification occurs when areas that were previously poor and perhaps even derelict become popular among people with relatively high disposable incomes.

These areas are usually in the old inner city areas of urban centres in High Income Countries. Prior to gentrification, these areas were relatively undesirable for living: they often were dilapidated, polluted, with poor quality services. Their location near the Central Business District was not an asset because the housing was cramped and poor quality, and social problems such as crime and drug use may have been common.

From the point at which deindustrialisation began to occur – around the 1970s and 1980s especially – several factors combined to make these areas more attractive, especially to a younger population who were keen to locate near to work and nightlife in the CBD:

* Closure of the light industry that used to occur here
* Increasingly high costs for housing in the rest of the city
* Low housing costs due to poor quality of buildings
* Willingness of city authorities to support redevelopment
* Historic buildings with character were vacant and could be renovated
* Reduced population density as previous inhabitants become more affluent and move elsewhere; or the ‘ghettoisation’ of inner city areas is amplified due to White Flight (white residents move out as the area is perceived to be dominated by other racial and ethnic groups, especially in the United States), leading to a loss of population
* Relocation of some residents to government-built housing in other parts of the city, especially the edge of the urban area
* Minority groups grouping together in these areas for community and safety, e.g. the LGBT quarters of many HIC cities
* Liberalisation of social norms creates a demand for spaces in which people can express themselves more freely than in other areas of the city
* Young people get married and have families much later in their lives than they used to, so they are more willing to live in a less ‘family friendly’ area
* The process can be ‘jump started’ by infrastructure development such as rail or metro stations

Gentrification occurs in stages. The ‘pioneers’ of the gentrified community begins to move in and update the housing stock (note: they renovate, rather than demolish); they are followed by others, until the new inhabitants have upgraded enough of the area for it to become more desirable to a wider section of the population. At this point, rental prices in the area may increase beyond the **affordability** of the original inhabitants, who may be forced to **relocate**. This is known as **‘displacement’**. This has led to accusations that gentrification has a negative impact on communities.

## Re-urbanisation and urban renewal

Urban renewal is very similar to gentrification, except rather than being led by individuals who move into an area, it is usually a government-led plan to improve neglected areas within the existing urban area. In some cases this appears almost identical to gentrification (the improvement of the existing housing stock, retaining most of the features of the area) but gentrification is usually driven by the ‘organic’ improvements that come about because places are popular among young professionals, while re-urbanisation can be strongly influenced by planners. Planners frequently don’t redevelop existing buildings but demolish them and build new ones. This latter type of improvement is often accompanied by deliberate planning for changes to services, employment opportunities, and transport networks.

**Sourced from:** <https://geographycasestudysite.wordpress.com/inward-population-movements/>)