

The impact of the industrial revolution on cities since 1780

[History](#), [Revolution](#)



The Impact of the Industrial Revolution on Cities since 1780 One of the longest-lasting and most significant impacts of the industrial revolution that took place from the end of the eighteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century was the mass migration of the populace from rural areas to cities in what has come to be known as urbanization. Urbanization changed the daily lives of individuals who had to adjust from self-sustaining life on farms to depersonalized lives in bigger cities with a newfound dependence on services that sometimes weren't provided. Because of this sudden and overwhelming growth and the discontent to which it gave rise, urbanization also had an impact on the entire economic and governmental systems of the developing nations.

Before the industrial revolution took force in England, most of the population lived in rural areas. In fact, over the course of the nineteenth century the population rate of towns would grow from 16% to 54% (Roberts, 348). Up until this time the government's response to civil services in cities was based on the laissez-faire concept of leaving people to their own devices. Because most citizens lived in agricultural areas such necessities as transportation, water and sanitation were not deemed necessary concerns for government interference. The sudden and overwhelming influx of the populace into tight, centralized location forced the government to reconsider this method of governance. With the construction of factories and housing for the labourers sent to work in those factories, cities were faced with newfound and critical needs to reorganize their policies on sewage, travel infrastructure and water supplies. Although the industrial revolution led to terrible working conditions for men, women and even children, and sparked the era of pollution and

environmental and ecological exploitation, it was also the driving force behind development and modernization of public transportation, schooling, and health care (Roberts, 351).

As a result of people moving into a centralized location from all parts of the country, cultural distinctions created by geography began to amalgamate. The collapse of a cultural definition for people which had been defined by historical and geographical circumstances created a need for a new collective identity. This need was exploited by trade unions. The mechanization of industrial society created a new breed of wage earners the city-dweller forced to become a low-paid, overly worked factory labourer who found himself at the mercy of business interests. Whereas citizens in rural and agricultural areas were politically as well as geographically distanced from being significantly impacted by great social movements, migration into impersonal cities acted to make citizens looking for a new identity in the dehumanizing atmosphere in which they found themselves much more open to radically progressive ideas. In a way, one impact of the industrial revolution on cities was ultimately the creation of a more distinct and obvious class divide which eventually resulted in socialist revolutions around the world.

The industrial revolution led to significant changes in all aspects of life, and this included an accelerated growth in cities that led to widespread changes in the social, economic and political lives of individuals as well as the social, economic and political imperatives of the nation's leaders to abandon the laissez faire attitude in order to provide services which had not been deemed conducive to expanding wealth. Ironically, one of the offshoots of

urbanization may have been to reveal that the distribution of wealth under the new capitalistic structure was patently unfair, giving rise to another revolution, the communist revolution.