

# Why did the population of the uk rise dramatically between 1760 and 1870

[Sociology](#), [Population](#)



In this essay I am going to discuss how the population of the UK rose and fell and why.

Basically there are only four factors in which the population of the UK had changed these are; the birth rate, the death rate, emigration and immigration. I am going to explain how each of these factors had a part in the change of population.

Firstly I will discuss birth rate, and how it caused the surge of population changes.

Firstly, Age and Sex of the Population was one factor which caused a change in the population. In 1851 roughly 50% of the population of England and Wales were under 23.

The industrial towns generally had a greater proportion of younger people than rural areas. In those parts of the rural areas the number of old people was above average. Since there were few women of child-bearing age the birth rate tended to be lower. Due to the higher amount of jobs available many people migrated from the countryside to towns. Having a job meant that they could settle down earlier and get married. In addition the towns offered far greater opportunities of finding a partner than the countryside.

Secondly, family size was another factor to the problem of population surge. In the eighteenth and nineteenth century there was little control of the amount of children people wanted. Women continued to have children during their child-bearing years one of the reasons for this was because they thought that their children would die by the age of five. Many families had as

many as ten children this was considered normal. Despite the movement to towns large families with a healthy rural environment made it possible for the population of the agricultural counties to grow.

Marriage and Employment played a huge part also in the growth of the population.

It was thought that the earlier a person married the earlier they could settle down, however in the eighteenth century many young men had to undertake long terms of apprenticeship as a result they couldn't get married and start a family early.

During the industrial revolution apprenticeship began to decline, nevertheless a fall in the craftsmen and rise in the factory worker.

Due to the people migrating to towns there were a larger proportion of younger people which could marry and settle down earlier. Many historians believe that this was one of the main reasons that the birth rate of the population in the eighteenth and nineteenth century had risen.

This would have only had a slight effect because of the change over from the agricultural industry to the domestic industry in the period after 1790.

The Speenhamland system was thought to have helped farm workers because it gave the farmers with a large family a greater income than that of a single person. Moreover, this was also considered as a main reason to the growth in population because of the sharp rise in the population between 1795 and 1834.

Infant Mortality was a main factor in the populations change.

High birth rates itself didn't necessary mean that the population would survive it also depended on the death rate and whether or not the child would survive the perils of infancy. The percentage of children who dies in London before the age of five between 1730 - 1749 was 74. 5% this means that out of 100 children on a quarter would survive but by 1810 - 1830 the percentage had decreased by 42. 5 percent thus only 32 children dying out of 100.

In 1880 23. 8% of infants in England and Wales die before the age of five.

The infant mortality rate for the death of children less than one year in 1841 - 1870 for England and Wales stayed the same at 15. 4%

I will now discuss the death rate and how this made a great impact on the population.

Firstly, in the seventeenth and eighteenth century epidemic diseases were very common. Epidemic diseases caused a lot of death between the seventeenth and eighteenth century.

Smallpox was an uncontrollable disease that caused many deaths in the seventeenth century. In early eighteenth century the disease was tackled by the inoculation which helped the disease from spreading although it was not until the introduction of vaccination by Edward Jenner in 1796 that it was proven an effective way of controlling the disease.

In London, 1750, just under a tenth (800) of every 10, 000 were killed by the smallpox disease, by 1860 the rate had dropped dramatically to only 100 deaths out of every 10, 000.

Another epidemic disease was the great plague. This was a disease carried by the fleas of the black rat nevertheless by the eighteenth century the plague ceased to be a problem because for some unknown reason the black rat was overtaken by the brown rat.

The worst disease of the nineteenth century was of cholera. The first outbreak of cholera was from Sunderland in 1831. As a result it caused the death of over 50, 000 people. Furthermore, in 1849 there was yet another outbreak with 55. 000 deaths.

Secondly, alcoholism also caused a stir in the population change between 1720 and 1751.

Alcoholism caused the death of large numbers of people, from the result of 'cheap gin'. This was available at a very low price. The poor saw gin as a cheap way to forget their problems. Literally a child could walk in and buy some gin that was how serious it was.

Moreover, medical advances saw the reduction of death rates in the eighteenth century.

Better cleaner hospitals for example the extermination of the wooden beds for the iron beds; higher standards of nursing, advances in surgery, new

medicines and drugs and higher births in hospitals were the main things that lowered the death rate.

Some historians said that the medical care did 'more harm than good'

There were good as well as bad hospitals around in the eighteenth century.

Many of the medical advances had been made by the 1870's. Higher survival rates were made possible by the use of anaesthetics and better infant care; however the overall death rate still may not have been affected much.

Hygiene, sanitation and public health was another cause for the population change. Modern towns of Georgian Britain lacked things we take for granted these things include; running water, mains drainage and effective heating.

The rapid growth of towns began to cause serious problems these include overcrowding, lack of pure water, filthy damp rooms, conditions in which vermin thrived (rats, mice and lice), lack of adequate means of getting rid of rubbish and filth and inadequate drains and lack of main sewers.

The fall in death rate after 1870 suggests that the appalling urban living conditions of the early nineteenth century kept the death rate high.

Furthermore, during the Industrial Revolution many advances were made in personal hygiene.

No longer did people have to wear wool which couldn't be washed and usually had lice in them. Wool was replaced by a cheaper and better cloth, cotton.

Cotton was cheap because it was being mass produced. This meant that poor people could wear clothes.

Moreover, soap was also made cheap and was no longer a luxury for rich people; therefore there was no excuse for dirty clothes or dirty bodies.

Cheaper coal was also being distributed; this meant that people could boil water and kill the germs and bacteria inside the water, cleaner clothes and drier homes.

Lastly, diet was another main factor that changed the population. The death rates fell because of the substantial improvements in the production of food in Britain by the Agricultural revolution. Successful harvests in 1730's brought down the price of bread making it cheaper. Cheaper food meant that more people could survive. Also the use of roots and green fodder crops meant that meat didn't need to be killed or salted to get through the winter.

Not only did Britain have healthier, cheaper food they also consumed vitamins and proteins to give the body resistance to diseases.

Improvement in transport mainly railways after 1840 helped to make it easier for farmers to deliver food to the market nonetheless people were no longer reliant on the success of the local harvest and local farmers who supplied meat, vegetables and milk. Although the food prices were dropping and the supply of food was rising there were still many poor people who lived at starvation level.

There were often complaints about the quality of the food for example shops users would use rat droppings as chocolate flakes. This led to a lot of food poisoning and death.

More death had occurred during the 1840's when the potato crop failed in Ireland and Western Britain this not only caused the death of up to a million but also caused the great number of Irish people emigrating.

Another cause for the population decrease was because of emigration however the population didn't decrease. Emigration is when someone leaves one country and lives in a different country for example you leave the UK to go and live in the USA.

Over 6 million people emigrated from Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales to overseas between 1840's, 1850's and 1860's.

The most number of people that emigrated was that of Ireland at a total of 3, 927, 000 which was an estimate of 2/3 of the total. This was because of the potato crop that failed in Ireland. Despite the emigration of over 6million people the UK's population still continued to rise.

Some of the Scots and Irish migrated to England where they worked, the Scottish done engineering work whereas the Irish done labour work.

Lastly immigration, Immigration is when some enters a country for example a person from abroad comes to live in England.



The Irish were being 'pulled' out of the UK by other countries such as Australia because they were offering free land and a better life and so the gold rush in California which made the Irish believe that they could get rich quick.

The Irish were also being pushed out because of the failed potato crop, they had to make a choice stay in Ireland and starve to death or go abroad where you can get free land and food.

So in conclusion the rise in population was because of the high birth rate and low death rate, age of the population, family size, marriage and employment and some medical advances. The high death rate was because of the epidemic diseases, hygiene and alcoholism.

In my opinion I believe that the cause for the rise in population was because of the high birth rate and low death rate.