

How successful were
the liberal
governments of 1896
to 1915 in dealing
with the p...

[Government](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In the period 1896 - 1915, the condition of Italy was relatively in a terrible state in many ways with various political, economic and social problems that hindered the country's progress. Italy's Liberal Governments during this period were generally very unsuccessful in dealing with these inherited and growing problems clearly contributing to the end of Liberalism in Italy. More so, the Liberal Government under the rule of Giolitti saw Italy progressing in some circumstances regarding the socio-economic concerns. Nonetheless, it is very comprehensible that the Liberal Governments lacked solving the problems that they faced.

The Liberal Government's major issue following unification was Italy's economic progress due to various problems. The economic situation in Italy after Unification was lacking modern communications such as roads due to a limited degree of industrialisation. This was a huge problem for the Liberal's to solve because it meant that Italy was industrially declined in comparison to most of Europe. As of this decline, the Liberal's tried to put an end to the Economic backwardness by increasing industrial production. This occurred by essentially increasing the percentage of the workforce in industry.

Industrial giants such as Fiat and Pirelli employed more workers to help contribute to the increased percentage working in industry from 13% in 1871 to 23% in 1913. This proved successful for the Liberal's in ways that they improved industrial output. However, the workforce for industry being 23% was still approximately half than that of the workforce for agriculture being 57%. Accordingly, the Liberal Government did not heavily improve industrialisation successfully. Moreover, this increase in industrial workforce

did prove to widen the north-south divide socially because of industry situating mainly in the north of Italy.

To conclude, you would say that the Liberal Government failed to deal with this inherited problem although it did increase the industrial workforce but insignificantly achieving their aim. Thus, you would deduce that it left Italy with little preparation for war and accordingly the social problems that were caused. It appears to be that the Liberal Government had worsened the north-south divide caused by their merely achieved aim in improving industry. Heavy tariffs and taxes on Italian exports also enforced by the Liberals completely ended Italian export industries especially in silk trade.

Judging this, unemployment increased primarily in the south causing social unrest. The Government's improved industrial development had also caused redistribution of the population all over Italy, densely populating the towns and cities that were not prepared for this overcrowding and influx. As of this, the enforced economic changes, Italy had an augmenting number of social problems combining with the Liberal Government's inherited problems. Firstly, this was the great north-south divide that was very difficult to unite due to the south being extremely backward and poor and the north being more developed in every way.

This social inequality is clearly outlined in reasonable living standards in the north but widespread low living standards of the south. The government's inherited social problem was also education. The north had improving education standards - with high literacy rates however, this was clearly inverse to the south's high illiteracy rates figuring over 88% and low education levels. As a result, the Government dealt with this, by trying to <https://assignbuster.com/how-successful-were-the-liberal-governments-of-1896-to-1915-in-dealing-with-the-problems-they-faced/>

improve education in the south and so by 1913, the percentage of illiteracy had decreased to 65.3% proving a successful improvement.

One of Giolitti's policies of reform was to make anti-malarial drugs free especially in poverty-stricken areas of the south. This policy had considerably improved the health for most people in the south of Italy. Furthermore, there was a more obvious inherited problem for the Liberals. This was the percentage of the population who spoke the Italian language, because only 2.5% spoke it. This occurred due to the Italians speaking their regional languages in states like Venice and Rome. Prior to these inherited problems, we would conclude that the Government had hugely reduced adult illiteracy rates especially in the south from 88% to 65.%. The Liberals had also efficiently improved health services especially in the south by enforcing free anti-malaria drugs mainly in the southern areas of Italy. However, the Liberals had failed in solving all of the problems because of factors such as unemployment remaining high and the southern problem still remaining prevalent on a whole. Although, it is fair to judge that the Liberal Government was fairly successful in dealing with the various social problems it had faced causing significant improvements as stated before.

However, the outstanding social problems had led to an increase in the support of socialism and also leading to an increased fear of communism stressing political problems for the Liberal Governments to deal with. The Liberals had dominated politics generally for a long period of time. However the Liberal Government had lost out on support hugely by 1915 under Giolittionism. The Liberal Government's general aims were to stabilise Italian

politics, end the church state division and obviously gain support for Liberalism.

This is true in every way, because only 2% of the population (middle class/wealthy landowners) elected from the North of Italy. This clearly meant that the Liberal Government's aim was to maximise their support for a sustained period of time. However, in some cases of Giolittionism, the Liberals have been too geared to the needs of the wealthy and have not met the needs of the poor. This meant that the Liberal's had to try and work for the benefit of the poor and other groups including moderate socialists and Catholics to deal with this problem i. . Transformismo. However this proposed " fair government" did not solve the major political issue, which were the differences between these other groups and the Liberal Government that was clearly outstanding under Giolitti's political system. This made it fairly easy for Giolitti to lose support when enforcing policies and so the Liberal Governments fell through fairly quickly on a whole. From what I can judge from the Liberal Political system, there were various threats posed against the Liberal Governments from the far left and far right.

This was because the working class solely turned their support to other groups who also wanted reform and revolt. As to this, the Liberal Government's failed terribly in successfully dealing with political problems in the period 1896-1915. This was because of not being able to improve the political system for the benefit of other groups thus leaving politics stagnated outlining their failure. Overall, from what I can conclude, we can say that the Liberal Governments had not successfully dealt with the problems they faced in the period 1896-1915.

<https://assignbuster.com/how-successful-were-the-liberal-governments-of-1896-to-1915-in-dealing-with-the-problems-they-faced/>

This had ranged from their control of society which, although experienced in some case a slight improvement but in every case failed terribly in improving the main north-south divide that outlined Italy's divide in society. Their control over the economy had responded to some sort of improvement in terms of industrialisation, yet they still lacked in efficiently industrialising the country for a war or modernisation. Furthermore, we can deduce that the Liberal's were ineffective in predominantly improving the political system for which lead to the end of Liberalism in Italian politics.