

# **Students in the Post-Industrial City**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper will explore evidence of the dramatic growth in student populations in post-industrial cities in the UK and consider the potential implications of this growth. There has been relatively little attention paid to this growing population – the assumption perhaps being that their (typical) transience means that they do not have lasting impacts at the local or regional level. On the contrary, though, this paper argues that it is this very transience that is of interest – it perpetuates the presence of a large group of people who share similar characteristics, that are distinct from the local population (younger, no dependants, disproportionately middle class and better qualified) that is constantly refreshed as each cohort is replaced by a successor. This paper develops a framework in which the impacts of student populations on local and regional economies can be systematically addressed: as workers (well qualified and flexible); as residents (spatially concentrated) and as consumers (with high disposable income and particular cultural and creative demands and impacts on the night time economy). It is argued that these effects might be of particular (and potential) significance for the economies of post-industrial cities, with their need to reverse population and economic decline, while also suggesting that there may be a range of negative effects on disadvantaged local communities and neighbourhoods.

**Key Words:** student population, cities, implications of growth