

Communism: Notes for IAS Exam

Communism is a political, economic ideology and movement whose ultimate goal is the establishment of a communist society, namely a socioeconomic order structured upon the ideas of common ownership of the means of production and the absence of social classes, money and the state.

The concept of communism is important from the [IAS Exam](#), point of view.

Basic understanding of Communism

Communism is an umbrella term that encompasses a range of ideologies. The term's modern usage originated with Victor d'Hupay, an 18th-century French aristocrat who advocated living in "communes" in which all property would be shared and "all may benefit from everybody's work. It gained more prominence after the writer Karl Marx published *The Communist Manifesto* in 1848.

Communism is usually distinguished from socialism. The modern definition and usage of socialism settled by the 1860s, becoming the predominant term among the group of words associationist, co-operative and mutualist which had previously been used as synonyms. Instead, communism fell out of use during this period. An early distinction between communism and socialism was that the latter aimed to only socialise production while the former aimed to socialise both production and consumption (in the form of free access to final goods). However, Marxists employed socialism in place of communism by 1888 which had come to be considered an old-fashioned synonym for socialism. It was not until 1917 after the Bolshevik Revolution that socialism came to refer to a distinct stage between capitalism and communism, introduced by Vladimir Lenin as a means to defend the Bolshevik seizure of power against traditional Marxist criticism that Russia's productive forces were not sufficiently developed for socialist revolution.

A distinction between communist and socialist as descriptors of political ideologies arose in 1918 after the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party renamed itself to the All-Russian Communist Party, where communist came to specifically mean socialists who supported the politics and theories of Bolshevism, Leninism and later Marxism–Leninism, although communist parties continued to describe themselves as socialists dedicated to socialism.

Relevant Questions related to Communism

What are the countries which have a communist forms of government?

The nations that are or were communist forms of government are as follows:

- China
- Stalinist Russia
- North Korea
- Cuba

What is the difference between Communism and Socialism?

The main difference is that under communism, most property and economic resources are owned and controlled by the state (rather than individual citizens). While under socialism, all citizens share equally in economic resources as allocated by a democratically-elected government.

What is the main aim of communism?

According to communist writers and thinkers, the goal of communism is to create a stateless, classless society. Communist thinkers believe this can happen if the people take away the power of the bourgeoisie (the ruling class, who own the means of production) and establish worker control of the means of production.