The 1970s

The microprocessor, and the first machines beyond the planets.

Intel put a computer on a chip, Voyager set out for the outer planets, and smallpox was driven to its last case. It is also the decade the West's growth began to slow.

What rose

1971. Intel's 4004, the first commercial microprocessor. Source: Intel 4004

1973. The first handheld mobile phone call. Source: Mobile phone

1977. Voyager 1 and 2 launch. The last natural case of smallpox occurs. Source: Voyager program

1978. Louise Brown, the first child born through IVF. Source: Louise Brown

What fell or stalled

Productivity growth slowed sharply after 1973 across the West. Source: Penn World Table via Our World in Data

Total fertility in Europe fell below 2.1 by the mid-1970s. Source: Our World in Data

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ascentofthewest.com/years/1970s/