

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN

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Annotation. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, commonly known as the United Kingdom (UK) or Britain, is a country in Europe, off the north-western coast of the continental mainland. It comprises England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The United Kingdom includes the island of Great Britain, the north-eastern part of the island of Ireland, and many smaller islands within the British Isles.

The national flag of the United Kingdom is the Union Jack, also known as the Union Flag. The design of the Union Jack dates back to the Act of Union 1801 which united the Kingdom of Great Britain and the Kingdom of Ireland (previously in personal union) to create the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. The flag consists of the red cross of Saint George (patron saint of England (which also represents Wales)), edged in white, superimposed on the saltire of St Patrick (patron saint of Ireland), also edged in white, which are superimposed on the saltire of Saint Andrew (patron saint of Scotland). Wales is not represented in the Union Flag by Wales's patron saint, Saint David, because the flag was designed whilst Wales was part of the Kingdom of England.

Key words: capital, parliamentary, residents, republic, monarch, Queen Elizabeth II.

Crucial information	
OFFICIAL NAME:	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
FORM OF GOVERNMENT:	Constitutional monarchy with parliamentary government
CAPITAL:	London
POPULATION:	57,5million
OFFICIAL LANGUAGE:	English
MONEY:	Pound sterling
AREA:	93,635 square miles (242,514 square kilometers)
MAJOR RIVERS:	Thames, Severn, Tyne

Geographical position.

The United Kingdom, island country located off the northwestern coast of mainland Europe. The United Kingdom comprises the whole of the island of Great Britain—which contains England, Wales, and Scotland—as well as the northern portion of the island of Ireland. The name Britain is sometimes used to refer to the United Kingdom as a whole. The capital is London, which is among the world’s leading commercial, financial, and cultural centres. Other major cities include Birmingham, Liverpool, and Manchester in England, Belfast and Londonderry in

Northern Ireland, Edinburgh and Glasgow in Scotland, and Swansea and Cardiff in Wales.

The United Kingdom comprises four geographic and historical parts—England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. The United Kingdom contains most of the area and population of the British Isles—the geographic term for the group of islands that includes Great Britain, Ireland, and many smaller islands. Together England, Wales, and Scotland constitute Great Britain, the larger of the two principal islands, while Northern Ireland and the republic of Ireland constitute the second largest island, Ireland. England, occupying most of southern Great Britain, includes the Isles of Scilly off the southwest coast and the Isle of Wight off the southern coast. Scotland, occupying northern Great Britain, includes the Orkney and Shetland islands off the northern coast and the Hebrides off the northwestern coast. Wales lies west of England and includes the island of Anglesey to the northwest.

Apart from the land border with the Irish republic, the United Kingdom is surrounded by sea. To the south of England and between the United Kingdom and France is the English Channel. The North Sea lies to the east. To the west of Wales and northern England and to the southeast of Northern Ireland, the Irish Sea separates Great Britain from Ireland, while southwestern England, the northwestern coast of Northern Ireland, and western Scotland face the Atlantic Ocean. At its widest the United Kingdom is 300 miles (500 km) across. From the northern tip of Scotland to the southern coast of England, it is about 600 miles (1,000 km). No part is more than 75 miles (120 km) from the sea. The capital, London, is situated on the tidal River Thames in southeastern England.

The archipelago formed by Great Britain and the numerous smaller islands is as irregular in shape as it is diverse in geology and landscape. This diversity stems largely from the nature and disposition of the underlying rocks, which are westward extensions of European structures, with the shallow waters of the Strait of Dover and the North Sea concealing former land links. Northern Ireland contains a westward extension of the rock structures of Scotland. These common rock structures are breached by the narrow North Channel.

On a global scale, this natural endowment covers a small area—approximating that of the U.S. state of Oregon or the African country of Guinea—and its internal diversity, accompanied by rapid changes of often beautiful scenery, may convey to visitors from larger countries a striking sense of compactness and consolidation. The peoples who, over the centuries, have hewed an existence from this Atlantic extremity of Eurasia have put their own imprint on the environment, and the ancient and distinctive palimpsest of their field patterns and settlements complements the natural diversity.

Population.

During 2022 United Kingdom (UK) population is projected to increase by 430,570 people and reach 68,992,721 in the beginning of 2023. The natural increase is expected to be positive, as the number of births will exceed the number

of deaths by 236,539. If external migration will remain on the previous year level, the population will be increased by 194,031 due to the migration reasons. It means that the number of people who move into United Kingdom (UK) (to which they are not native) in order to settle there as permanent residents (immigrants) will prevail over the number of people who leave the country to settle permanently in another country (emigrants).

The population lives mostly in towns, cities, and their suburbs. Four out of every five people live in towns.

English is the official language of the UK. Besides standard literary English, there are several regional and social dialects. A well-known example is the cockney of East Londoners. The Scottish and Irish forms of Gaelic survive in some parts of Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Wales is officially bilingual, Welsh is spoken by about a fifth of its population. Welsh is the first language is most of the western counties of Wales and at least formally has the same status as English. Nowadays there is a growing movement in Wales and Scotland for a revival of national culture and languages.

Political parties in the UK.

Before the 19th century, the political landscape in the UK was dominated by the Whigs and the Tories. The Whigs were made up of most of the prominent aristocratic dynasties agitating for Protestant succession and subsequently enjoyed the support of the wealthy merchants and emerging industrial interests. The Tories were mostly associated with the Church of Scotland; the landed gentry and the Church of England. Towards the mid 19th century, the Whigs evolved into the Liberal Party while the Tories became the Conservative Party. The Labour Party emerged in the place of the Liberal Party in the 1920s. The Conservative and Labour Parties are the major political players in the UK although there are other many parties.

Conservative Party

The Conservative Party has a centre-right position in UK's politics. The party garnered the largest number of seats in the House of Commons at the last election in 2015 and is thus the party that formed the government. The party's chair is Theresa May who is currently the UK's Prime Minister. Among the major views of the party is the belief that free markets in addition to individual achievement drive economic growth. The party advocates for supply-side economics, a theory which stipulates that reduced income tax rates triggers GDP growth and thus amounts to the same or more revenue collected by the government from the lesser tax on the additional growth. This theory is in line with the party's advocacy for tax cuts. The Conservative Party has established a wide range of global alliances including ties with the US. Other views of the party are restrictions on trade union, a strong national defense, fiscal conservatism, and deregulation.

Labour Party

The Labour Party occupies a centre-left position in UK's politics. After garnering 231 seats in the 2015 election, the Labour Party assumed the place of the

Official Opposition. Jeremy Corbyn is currently serving as the party's chair. The party initially favored socialist policies including the redistribution of wealth, a belief in publicly funded education and healthcare, government intervention, and public ownership of strategic industries. The Labour Party began embracing several free market policies in the mid-1980s under the leadership of Neil Kinnock, Tony Blair, and John Smith. The party's current political stand has been described as 'Third Way.'

Scottish National Party

The Scottish National Party is the third-largest in the UK in terms of membership. The party has the majority of seats in the Scottish Parliament as well as the majority of representatives in the Parliament of the UK. The party is currently under the leadership of Nicola Sturgeon. The Scottish National Party is associated with Scottish Nationalism, and it has been at the forefront in agitating for Scottish independence. Being a social democratic party, some of its views include investments in renewable energy, construction of affordable social housing, progressive personal taxation, same-sex marriage, and government-subsidized higher education.

Liberal Democrats

In 1988, the Social Democratic Party and the Liberal Party merged into the Liberal Democrats. Tim Farron is the party's current leader. The Liberal Democrats advocate for civil liberties, electoral and constitutional reform, environmentalism, progressive taxation, European integration, drug decriminalization, and human rights laws.

Emerging Trends

The UK's two party system which is dominated by the Conservative and Labour Parties has been decreasing in popularity. Smaller parties have been registering increasing support such as the Scottish National Party which is pushing for Scottish independence. Another rising party is the Green Party of England and Wales as well as the Green Party in Northern Ireland. The Green Party advocates for peace and non-violence, environmental consciousness, social justice, and grassroots democracy. The UK Independence Party has garnered support due to its stances on British Nationalism, Economic liberalism, immigration, and exit from the EU.

Famous people in the UK.

With a rich and storied past, it's no surprise that the pages of history are filled with the names of people from Great Britain. Stephen Hawking, William Shakespeare, Paul McCartney and J.K. Rowling and royals including Queen Elizabeth II, Prince William, Kate Middleton and Princess Diana are all part of Great Britain's rich heritage.

Queen Elizabeth II

Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain was the longest-reigning monarch in British history. She celebrated 70 years on the throne in June 2022 with her Platinum Jubilee.

Queen Elizabeth II was born Princess Elizabeth Alexandra Mary on April 21, 1926, in London, to Prince Albert, Duke of York (later known as King George VI), and Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon.

At the time of her birth, most people did not realize Elizabeth would someday become the queen of Great Britain. Elizabeth, nicknamed Lilibet, got to enjoy the first decade of her life with all the privileges of being a royal without the pressures of being the heir apparent.

Queen Elizabeth II became queen on February 6, 1952, and was crowned on June 2, 1953. She was the mother of Prince Charles, heir to the throne, as well as the grandmother of Princes William and Harry. As the longest-serving monarch in British history, she tried to make her reign more modern and sensitive to a changing public while maintaining traditions associated with the crown.

Elizabeth died on September 8, 2022, at age 96.

William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare was an English poet, playwright and actor of the Renaissance era. He was an important member of the King's Men company of theatrical players from roughly 1594 onward.

Known throughout the world, Shakespeare's writings capture the range of human emotion and conflict and have been celebrated for more than 400 years. And yet, the personal life of William Shakespeare is somewhat a mystery.

There are two primary sources that provide historians with an outline of his life. One is his work — the plays, poems and sonnets — and the other is official documentation such as church and court records. However, these provide only brief sketches of specific events in his life and yield little insight into the man himself.

Isaac Newton

Physicist

Sir Isaac Newton PRS MP was an English physicist and mathematician who is widely regarded as one of the most influential scientists of all time and as a key figure in the scientific revolution. His book *Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica*, first published in 1687, laid the foundations for most of classical mechanics. Newton also made seminal contributions to optics and shares credit with Gottfried Leibniz for the invention of the infinitesimal calculus. Newton's *Principia* formulated the laws of motion and universal gravitation that dominated scientists' view of the physical universe for the next three centuries. It also demonstrated that the motion of objects on the Earth and that of celestial bodies could be described by the same principles. By deriving Kepler's laws of planetary motion from his mathematical description of gravity, Newton removed the last doubts about the validity of the heliocentric model of the cosmos. Newton built the first practical reflecting telescope and developed a theory of colour based on the observation that a prism decomposes white light into the many colours of the visible spectrum. He also formulated an empirical law of cooling and studied the speed of sound. In addition to his work on the calculus, as a mathematician

Newton contributed to the study of power series, generalised the binomial theorem to non-integer exponents, and developed Newton's method for approximating the roots of a function.

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