

Batna 2 university

Department of English

Course: CCL

Level: 1ST YEAR

Groups:

United Kingdom: Country and People

Introduction

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, commonly known as the United Kingdom (UK) or Britain is a sovereign country located off the northwestern coast of the European mainland. The United Kingdom includes the island of Great Britain, the northeastern part of the island of Ireland, and many smaller islands. Northern Ireland is the only part of the United Kingdom that shares a land border with another sovereign state, the Republic of Ireland. Apart from this land border, the United Kingdom is surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean, with the North Sea to the east, the English Channel to the south and the Celtic Sea to the south-west, giving it the 12th-longest coastline in the world. The Irish Sea separates Great Britain and Ireland. The United Kingdom's 242,500 square kilometres were home to an estimated 66.0 million inhabitants in 2017.

The United Kingdom is a unitary parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy. The current monarch is Queen Elizabeth II, who has reigned since 1952, making her the world's longest-serving current head of state. The United Kingdom's capital and largest city is London, a global city and financial centre with an urban area population of 10.3 million. Other major cities include Birmingham, Manchester, Glasgow, Leeds and Liverpool.

The United Kingdom consists of four constituent countries: England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Their capitals are London, Edinburgh, Cardiff, and Belfast, respectively. Apart from England, the countries have their own devolved governments, each with varying powers, but such power is delegated by the Parliament of the United Kingdom, which may enact laws unilaterally altering or

abolishing devolution. The medieval conquest and subsequent annexation of Wales by the Kingdom of England, followed by the union between England and Scotland in 1707 to form the Kingdom of Great Britain, and the union in 1801 of Great Britain with the Kingdom of Ireland created the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Five-sixths of Ireland seceded from the UK in 1922, leaving the present formulation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. There are fourteen British Overseas Territories, the remnants of the British Empire which, at its height in the 1920s, encompassed almost a quarter of the world's land mass and was the largest empire in history. British influence can be observed in the language, culture and political systems of many of its former colonies.

The United Kingdom is a developed country and has a high-income economy and has a very high Human Development Index rating, ranking 14th in the world. It was the world's first industrialised country and the world's foremost power during the 19th and early 20th centuries. The UK remains a great power, with considerable economic, cultural, military, scientific and political influence internationally. It is a recognised nuclear weapons state and is sixth in military expenditure in the world. It has been a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council since its first session in 1946. It has been a leading member state of the European Union (EU) and its predecessor, the European Economic Community (EEC), since 1973. A referendum in 2016 resulted in 51.9% of the turnout being in favour of leaving the EU, which is currently scheduled to take place on 31 October 2019. The United Kingdom is also a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, the Council of Europe, the G7, the G20, NATO, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Interpol and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

1/ Four Nations

The term "United Kingdom" has occasionally been used as a description for the former kingdom of Great Britain, although its official name from 1707 to 1800 was simply "Great Britain". The Acts of Union 1800 united the kingdom of Great Britain and the kingdom of Ireland in 1801, forming the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Following the partition of Ireland and the independence of the Irish Free State in 1922, which left Northern Ireland as the only part of the island of Ireland within the United Kingdom, the name was changed to the "United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland".

Although the United Kingdom is a sovereign country, England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are also widely referred to as countries. The term "Great Britain" conventionally refers to the island of Great Britain, or politically to England, Scotland and Wales in combination. It is sometimes used as a loose synonym for the United Kingdom as a whole.

The term "Britain" is used both as a synonym for Great Britain, and as a synonym for the United Kingdom. Usage is mixed, with the BBC preferring to use Britain as shorthand only for Great Britain and the UK Government, while accepting that both terms refer to the United Kingdom, preferring to use the term UK rather than Britain. The UK Permanent Committee on Geographical Names lists "United Kingdom" and "UK or U.K." as shortened and abbreviated geopolitical terms for the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The adjective "British" is commonly used to refer to matters relating to the United Kingdom. People of the United Kingdom use a number of different terms to describe their national identity and may identify themselves as being British, English, Scottish, Welsh, Northern Irish, or Irish; or as belonging to a combination of different national identities.

2/Languages of the United Kingdom

The UK's official language is English. It is estimated that 95 per cent of the UK's population are monolingual English speakers. 5.5 per cent of the population are estimated to speak languages brought to the UK as a result of relatively recent immigration. South Asian languages, including Punjabi, Hindi, Bengali and Gujarati, are the largest grouping and are spoken by 2.7 per cent of the UK population. According to the 2011 census, Polish has become the second-largest language spoken in England and has 546,000 speakers. In 2019, some three quarters of a million people spoke little or no English.

Four indigenous Celtic languages are spoken in the UK: Welsh, Irish, Scottish Gaelic and, as a second language only, Cornish. All are recognised as regional or minority languages, by the European Union. As it is an EU member state, this therefore obliges the UK government to provide them specific measures of protection and promotion. In the 2001 Census over one-fifth (21 per cent) of the population of Wales said they could speak Welsh. In the same census in Northern Ireland 167,487 people (10.4 per cent) stated that they had "some knowledge of Irish". Over 92,000 people in Scotland had some Gaelic

language ability. The number of schoolchildren being taught through Welsh, Scottish Gaelic and Irish is increasing.

It is compulsory for pupils to study a second language up to the age of 14 in England. French and German are the two most commonly taught second languages in England and Scotland. All pupils in Wales are taught Welsh as a second language up to age 16, or are taught in Welsh.

3/Migration

The United Kingdom has experienced successive waves of migration. The Great Famine in Ireland, then part of the United Kingdom, resulted in perhaps a million people migrating to Great Britain. Throughout the 19th century a small population of German immigrants built up in England and Wales in 1861. London held around half of this population. The German immigrant community was the largest group until 1891, when it became second to Russian Jews. England has had small Jewish communities for many centuries. After 1881, Russian Jews suffered bitter persecutions and some left Russia by 1914. Around 120,000 settled permanently in Britain, becoming the largest ethnic minority from outside the British Isles. This population had increased to 370,000 by 1938. After the Second World War, there was significant immigration from the colonies and newly independent former colonies, many from the Caribbean and Indian subcontinent, partly as a legacy of empire and partly driven by labour shortages.

Immigration is now contributing to a rising population with arrivals and UK-born children of migrants accounting for about half of the population increase between 1991 and 2001. In 2013, approximately 208,000 foreign nationals were naturalised as British citizens. The main countries of previous nationality of those naturalised in 2014 were India, Pakistan, the Philippines, Nigeria, Bangladesh, Nepal, China, South Africa, Poland and Somalia.

Emigration was an important feature of British society in the 19th century. Between 1815 and 1930 around 11.4 million people emigrated from Britain and 7.3 million from Ireland. Estimates show that by the end of the 20th century some 300 million people of British and Irish descent were permanently settled around the globe. Today, at least 5.5 million UK-born people live abroad, mainly in Australia, Spain, the United States and Canada.

4/Geography of the United Kingdom

a/Topography of the UK

The total area of the United Kingdom is approximately 244,820 square kilometres . The country occupies the major part of the British Isles and includes the island of Great Britain, the north-eastern one-sixth of the island of Ireland and some smaller surrounding islands. It lies between the North Atlantic Ocean and the North Sea. In 1993 10 per cent of the UK was forested, 46 per cent used for pastures and 25 per cent cultivated for agriculture.

The United Kingdom lies between latitudes 49° and 61° N, and longitudes 9° W and 2° E. Northern Ireland shares a 360 km land boundary with the Republic of Ireland. The coastline of Great Britain is 17,820 km long. It is connected to continental Europe by the Channel Tunnel, which is the longest underwater tunnel in the world.

England accounts for just over half (53 per cent) of the total area of the UK, covering 130,395 square kilometres. Most of the country consists of lowland terrain, with mountainous terrain north-west including the Cumbrian Mountains of the Lake District, the Pennines, Exmoor and Dartmoor. The main rivers and estuaries are the Thames, Severn and the Humber. England's highest mountain is Scafell Pike (978 metres) in the Lake District.

Scotland accounts for just under a third (32 per cent) of the total area of the UK, covering 78,772 square kilometres. Scotland is the most mountainous country in the UK and its topography is distinguished. The fault separates two distinctively different regions; namely the Highlands to the north and west and the Lowlands to the south and east. The more rugged Highland region contains the majority of Scotland's mountainous land. Lowland areas are flatter and home to most of the population including Glasgow, Scotland's largest city, and Edinburgh, its capital and political centre, although upland and mountainous terrain lies within the Southern Uplands.

Wales accounts for less than a tenth (9 per cent) of the total area of the UK, covering 20,779 square kilometres. Wales is mostly mountainous, though South Wales is less mountainous than North and mid Wales. The main population and Industrial areas are in South Wales. Wales has over 2,704

kilometres of coastline. Several islands lie off the Welsh mainland, the largest of which is Anglesey in the north-west.

Northern Ireland, separated from Great Britain by the Irish Sea and North Channel, has an area of 14,160 square kilometres and is mostly hilly. It includes Lough Neagh, which is the largest lake in the British Isles by area. The highest peak in Northern Ireland is Slieve Donard in the Mourne Mountains at 852 metres.

b/Climate of the United Kingdom

The United Kingdom has a temperate climate, with plentiful rainfall all year round. The temperature varies with the seasons seldom dropping below -11°C (12°F) or rising above 35°C (95°F). The prevailing wind is from the south-west and bears frequent spells of mild and wet weather from the Atlantic Ocean. The majority of the rain falls over the western regions; the eastern parts are therefore the driest. Atlantic currents, warmed by the Gulf Stream, bring mild winters; especially in the west where winters are wet and even more so over high ground. Summers are warmest in the south-east of England, being closest to the European mainland, and coolest in the north. Heavy snowfall can occur in winter and early spring on high ground.

UNITED KINGDOM & REPUBLIC OF IRELAND



NORTH
ATLANTIC
OCEAN



- LEGEND**
- Country Boundary
 - Major Road
 - River
 - Major City
 - Sea Port
 - Country Capital
 - Airport
 - Point of Interest
 - Lake

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