

The United Kingdom

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is the official name of the British Kingdom. It is situated on the British Isles, which consist of two large islands, Great Britain and Ireland, and about 5,000 small islands. Their total area is over 244,000 square kilometers. The population of the UK is over 57 million people.

The UK is washed by the Atlantic Ocean in the north and the North Sea in the west. The two islands are separated by the Irish Sea.

The UK is made up of four countries. They are England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Their capitals are London, Cardiff, Edinburgh and Belfast. The capital of the UK is London.

The scenery and the landscape of Great Britain are very diverse. There you can find flat valleys and high land, forests and lake areas. The highest mountain peaks are Ben Nevis in Scotland and Snowdon in Wales. The rivers in Great Britain are not long. The Thames is the most important waterway in the country, though the longest river is the Severn.

The climate of Great Britain is temperate and mild. The warm waters of the Gulf Stream influence the climate of the British Isles. There is a lot of rain in autumn and winter. The weather in Britain is very changeable and the English even say they have no climate but only weather which through centuries has become a favorite topic of conversation with the British.

The UK is a highly developed industrial country. It is the largest producer and exporter of machinery, electronics, textile, aircraft and navigation equipment. One of the chief industries of the country is shipbuilding.

The UK is a parliamentary democracy with a constitutional monarch. The Queen is the Head of State, but she has no power. The Queen is a symbol of the country's history and its traditions. The real power in the country belongs to the British Parliament and to the British Government.

The British Parliament consists of two Chambers: the House of Lords and the House of Commons. The House of Lords can offer and change laws. It can delay laws. The House of Commons makes laws about the policy of the country, taxes and many other things.

There are three main political parties in Great Britain. They are the Labour, the Conservative and the Liberal parties.

I have always been interested in the history of Great Britain, its world famous literature and music, rock music in particular. I hope that one day I'll be able to visit this country and see its sights with my own eyes.