THE UNITED KINGDOM

The United Kingdom is in the North of Europe and it includes the island of Great Britain, the North-eastern part of the island of Ireland and some smaller islands. It is the union of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The island of Great Britain 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. The Irish sea separates Great Britain from Ireland. Northern Ireland shares a border with the Republic of Ireland to the South and West.

The main river in Great Britain is the Thames, the mountains are not very high: the highest mountain is Ben Nevis in Scotland that is 1,345 metres high.

The United Kingdom is a Constitutional Monarchy, the King or the Queen is the head of the Anglican Church, a Christian religion that doesn't recognise the Pope as the religious leader.

The country is governed by the Parliament and the Prime Minister; the Parliament is made up of the House of Lords and the House of Commons. The elections take place every five years.

The capital of the United Kingdom is London, that is also the capital of England; Cardiff is the capital of Wales, Edinburgh is the capital of Scotland and Belfast is the capital of Northern Ireland.

The United Kingdom has 8 recognised public holidays during the year: Christmas, Boxing day (the day after Christmas), New Year's day, Good Friday, Easter, May Day, Spring Bank Holiday and Late Summer Bank Holiday. There is not a national holiday, however, in the common sense of the word. Every part of the United Kingdom celebrates its patron saint: in the Christian religion every country is entrusted to a saint for protection: England celebrates Saint George on April

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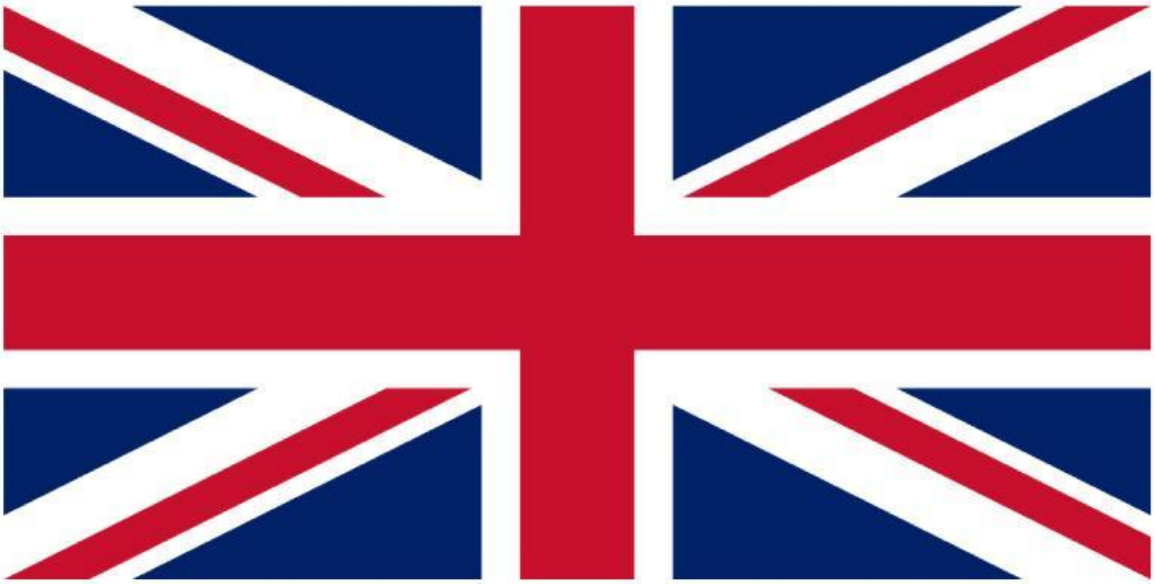
23rd, Wales celebrates saint David on march 1st, Scotland saint Andrew on November 30th and Northern Ireland Saint Patrick on March 17th.

These saints' crosses form the national flag of the United Kingdom, that is called Union Jack.



The red cross on a white background is the flag of England (cross of saint George)

The white diagonal cross on a blue background is the flag of Scotland (cross of Saint Andrew)

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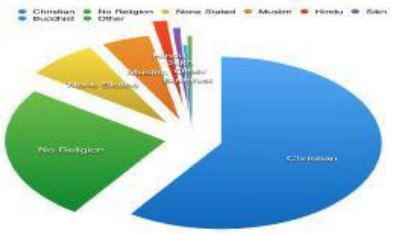
The red diagonal cross on a white background is the flag of Northern Ireland (cross of Saint Patrick)

The flag of Wales is not represented in the Union Jack, it is the image of a red dragon on a green and white striped background.

The United Kingdom is no longer a member of the European Union.The currency is the British Pound, the official language is English but in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland the original Gaelic languages are learnt in schools and many signs on the streets are in English and Scottish or Irish or Welsh.



The main religion is Christian as you can see in the pie chart.

England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are divided into counties. The largest and most populated city in the United Kingdom is London, followed by Birmingham.

TRUE / FALSE QUESTIONS

1.	The United Kingdom is in the North of Europe	**T**	**F**
2.	The capital of Scotland is London	**T**	**F**
3.	Northern Ireland is not part of the United Kingdom	**T**	**F**
4.	Great Britain is an island	**T**	**F**
5.	The Pacific Ocean is around Great Britain	**T**	**F**
6.	The United KIngdom is a Republic	**T**	**F**

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7. The flag of the UK is called Union Jack **T** **F**
8. There are 10 public holidays in the UK **T** **F**
9. On the flag of Wales there is a dragon **T** **F**
10. The main religion in the UK is Christian **T** **F**

QUESTIONS

1. What separates Great Britain from Ireland?

   _____

2. What is the capital of the United Kingdom?

   _____

3. What is the highest mountain in the UK?

   _____

4. What is the main river in Great Britain?

   _____

5. What is the Anglican Church?

   _____

6. Describe the Union Jack._____

7. What is the official language in the UK? Are there other languages?

   _____

8. Describe the flag of Wales.

   _____

9. Is the United Kingdom in the European UNion?

   _____

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