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PART ONE

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland



Map of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland



Chapter One The Country

1. Official Name, National Flag, National Anthem and National Capital

1.1 Official Name

The official name or the full name of the country is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.^①

The name refers to the union of the island of Great Britain, the small nearby islands (but not the Isle of Man^② or the Channel Islands^③), and the northeastern part of the island of Ireland. It is usually shortened to the United Kingdom, or UK.

People often get confused with the terms of “United Kingdom”, “Great Britain”, “Britain”, “England” and “the British Isles”.

The name “United Kingdom” refers to the union of what once were separate countries, England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. Then in 1922, the Irish Free State (predecessor of the Republic of Ireland^④) stopped being part of the Union. So now only the northern part of Ireland is included in the United Kingdom.

“Great Britain” conventionally refers to the island of Great Britain, or politically to England, Scotland and Wales in combination. It is also the largest island of the British Isles, the biggest island in Europe, and the

ninth largest island of the World. The term “Great Britain” is often used incorrectly as a synonym for the United Kingdom. Instead, the United Kingdom and Great Britain are not equivalent since the United Kingdom is a state formed from the union of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

“Britain” also refers to the larger island of the two main islands of the British Isles (the other being Ireland). Britain contains modern-day England, Wales and Scotland. But the term “Britain” is more commonly used as a political term: an alternative name for the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, or UK for short.

“England”, as are Wales and Scotland, is a part of Great Britain. England is the largest of the three political divisions within the island of Great Britain. About 84 percent of the total population of the United Kingdom lives in England, and the national capital is there, so the name “England” is often wrongly used in reference to the whole United Kingdom, the entire island of Great Britain, or the British Isles. This is not only incorrect but

can cause offence to people from other parts of the United Kingdom.

“The British Isles” (不列颠群岛) is a geographical name but not a name of the country. The British Isles are a group of islands off the northwestern coast of continental Europe that include the islands of Great Britain, Ireland, the Isle of Man, the Channel Islands, Shetland Islands, the Isle of

Wight, and many other smaller surrounding islands. There are two countries located on the islands: the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the Republic of Ireland. The British Isles are the largest group of islands in Europe, with a total area of about 315,159 km² and a combined population of about 70 million.

Notes

- ① The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was the formal name of the United Kingdom from January 1, 1801 until April 12, 1927. Then it was changed to the current name of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland by the Royal and Parliamentary Titles Act of 1927. The change acknowledges that the Irish Free State is no longer part of the Kingdom.
- ② The Isle of Man (or the Isle of Mann) (马恩岛) is a self-governing Crown dependency (有自治权的皇家属地), located in the Irish Sea at the geographical center of the British Isles. Its head of state is Queen Elizabeth II. The island is not part of the United Kingdom but the foreign relations, defense, and ultimate good-governance of the Isle of Man are the responsibility of the government of the United Kingdom.
- ③ The Channel Islands (海峡群岛) are in the English Channel, off the French coast of Normandy. They fall into two separate self-governing bailiwicks (自辖区): the Bailiwick of Guernsey and the Bailiwick of Jersey. They are British Crown dependencies, but neither is part of the United Kingdom.
- ④ The Republic of Ireland is an independent state occupying about five-sixths of the island of Ireland. On December 29, 1937, Ireland became the successor state to the Irish Free State, itself established on December 6, 1922. On Easter Monday, April 18, 1949, Ireland became the Republic of Ireland, formally free of allegiance to the British Crown and the Commonwealth of Nations. The republic became a member of the United Nations on December 14, 1955.

Questions for Thought

1. What are the differences among “Britain” “the British Isles” “Great Britain” “England” and “the United Kingdom”?
2. Is it true that the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has been the official title of the British state ever since 1922? And why?
3. Can “England”, like the term “Britain”, be used as a short form to refer to the UK? And why?
4. What are the four historic countries or parts of countries that make up the United Kingdom?

1.2 National Flag

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland uses the royal banner commonly known as the Union Flag^① or, popularly, Union Jack^② as its national flag.



National flag of the United Kingdom

The current design of the Union Flag dates from the union of Great Britain and Ireland on January 1, 1801, making it one of the oldest flags in the world. It is also one of the most recognizable flags in the world as its design and colors have been the basis for a number of other flags including other Commonwealth countries^③ and British overseas territories^④.

The formation of the British national flag came about as the result of the progressive

merging of the inhabitants of the British Isles under one ruler:

◎ 1606—The first Union Flag was created by merging the English flag (the red cross of Saint George) with the Scottish flag (the diagonal white cross of Saint Andrew on a blue background), and used at sea.

◎ 1707—During the reign of Queen Anne, the first Union Flag was, by royal proclamation, made “the national flag of Great Britain, for use ashore and afloat.”

◎ 1801—The addition of Ireland to the United Kingdom added the Irish flag (the red Saint Patrick’s cross) to the flag and the present Union Flag was formed.

The flag consists of the red cross, outlined in white, of St. George, the patron saint (守护神) of England, representing England, and the diagonal white cross, on the blue field, of St. Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland, representing Scotland. The diagonal red cross on the white field is the cross of St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland. When the cross of St. Patrick was inserted into the

flag in 1801, it represented all of Ireland, but in 1922 most of Ireland became a separate country and since then the cross has only represented Northern Ireland.

Wales is not represented in the Union Flag^①. This is because, when the first version of the flag appeared, Wales was already united with England and was therefore represented by the flag of England. The flag of Wales, a red dragon on a field of white and green, dates from the 15th century and can be seen throughout Wales, though not as frequently as the country's official flag.

The national flag of the UK can be flown by any individual or organization in Great Britain on any day of their choice, but the Flags Regulations (Northern Ireland) restricts the use of the national flag on Government buildings in Northern Ireland (except on specific days).

The national flag is flown from Government buildings at half-mast (降半旗) over the death of the sovereign, a member of the British Royal Family, a former British Prime Minister, a foreign head of state, or on other days the sovereign sometimes declares.

Notes

- ① The national flag of the United Kingdom is called the Union Flag because it symbolizes the administrative union of the countries of the United Kingdom. It is made up of the individual flags of three of the Kingdom's countries all united under one sovereign—the countries of England, Scotland and Ireland (since 1922 only Northern Ireland has been part of the United Kingdom).
- ② “Union Jack” was officially acknowledged as an alternative name for the Union Flag by Parliament in the early 20th century. The term “jack” refers to the flag that is flown from the bowsprit (船首桅杆) of a ship, often denoting nationality.
- ③ Commonwealth countries (英联邦国家) are the countries who are members of the Commonwealth or the Commonwealth of Nations (英联邦), which is an association of 53 independent sovereign states with 2.3 billion people scattered over all the inhabited continents, most of which were former British colonies, or dependencies of these colonies. The British monarch serves as its symbolic head, and the meeting of the 53 Commonwealth heads of government takes place every two years.
- ④ The British overseas territories (BOTs) are 14 territories, which are under the sovereignty of the United Kingdom, but do not form part of the United

Kingdom itself. They all share the British monarch (currently Queen Elizabeth II) as head of state.

- ⑤ Some Welsh people complain that Wales is not represented in the Union Jack and there have been proposals to include the Dragon or the flag of Saint David on the Union Flag. However, it is said that when the flag was designed, Wales was not a kingdom but an integral part of the Kingdom of England, and the red cross with a white background can be considered to represent Wales within the Union Jack.

Questions for Thought

1. When was the present British national flag adopted?
2. Why wasn't the flag of Wales put into the Union Flag?
3. Some countries' national flag still includes the basic design and colors of the British national flag. What are they?
4. Is it true that the national flag of the UK can be flown by any individual or organization on any day of their choice in Northern Ireland? And why?
5. How do you understand and explain the two terms "Commonwealth countries" and "British overseas territories"?

1.3 National Anthem

The present national anthem of the United Kingdom is *God Save the Queen* (《神佑女王》). It originated in a patriotic song first publicly performed in London in 1745, which came to be known as the national anthem at the beginning of the 19th century.

The words used today are those sung in 1745, substituting "Queen" for "King" where appropriate. The writer of the lyrics and the composer of the music of the song are

unknown. Beyond its first verse, it has many historic and extant versions: Since its first publication, different verses have been added and taken away, and even today, different publications include various selections of verses in various orders. In the United Kingdom, protocol and tradition demand that the first verse is the only verse sung, although sometimes the second verse or the third verse are sung in addition to the first verse on rare

occasions, although there are actually five verses in the full version of the song.

The words of the song, like its title, are adapted to the gender of the monarch, with “King” replacing “Queen”, “he” replacing “she”, “him” replacing “her”, and so forth, when a king reigns. The words of the first verse of the song^① are as follows:

God save our gracious Queen,
Long live our noble Queen,
God save the Queen!
Send her victorious,
Happy and glorious,

Long to reign over us;

God save the Queen.

The national anthem is used in the United Kingdom and its territories and dependencies^②, and a number of Commonwealth realms^③. It is played whenever the Queen makes a public appearance, and is played by the British Broadcasting Corporation every night before closedown. It is also sung at the end of all Remembrance Day^④ services, medal ceremonies for Team GB^⑤ and English football matches.

Notes

- ① The Chinese translation of the first verse is: 神佑女王, 祝她万寿无疆, 神佑女王! 常胜利, 沐荣光, 孚民望, 心欢畅, 治国家, 王运长; 神佑女王!
- ② The word “dependencies” here refers to the Crown dependencies (英国皇家属地), which are not part of the United Kingdom nor the British overseas territories, but self-governing possessions of the British Crown. They comprise the three island territories off the coast of Great Britain: the Bailiwick of Guernsey, the Bailiwick of Jersey and the Isle of Man.
- ③ A Commonwealth realm (英联邦国家) is any one of the 16 sovereign states within the Commonwealth of Nations that each has Elizabeth II as their respective monarch and head of state. The 16 countries include Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Jamaica, Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Papua New Guinea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tuvalu, Barbados, Grenada, Solomon Islands, Saint Lucia, the Bahamas and the UK.
- ④ Remembrance Day (阵亡将士纪念日), sometimes known informally as Poppy Day, Armistice Day or Veterans Day, is a special day set aside to remember those who (either members of the armed forces or civilians) were killed in times of the two world wars and other conflicts. It is observed on November 11 every year in many Commonwealth countries.

- ⑤ Team GB is officially known as the Great Britain and Northern Ireland Olympic Team, representing the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, run by the British Olympic Association since 1999. Because the letters “GB” are the abbreviation for Great Britain, which is only one part of the country, some people suggest a change to use UK or Britain to replace GB. But many others argue that the letters “GB” have been a recognized abbreviation for the United Kingdom for many years, and GB is the 2-digit ISO country code (国际标准化组织国家代码) for the United Kingdom. UK, on the other hand, is the 2-digit ISO code for Ukraine.

Questions for Thought

1. What is the title of the present national anthem of the UK?
2. When and where was the predecessor of the UK national anthem first publicly performed?
3. Who is the author of the UK national anthem?
4. How many verses are there in the UK national anthem? How many verses are usually sung on official occasions?
5. On what occasions is the UK national anthem played?

1.4 National Capital

Besides being the capital city of England, London is the national capital of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.



A recent view of the City of London's skyline

London is the largest city in the United Kingdom. It is the political, financial, cultural and artistic center of the country, and also a major port. It is in the southeast of England, built along the River Thames. The city spreads across an area of 1,572 km² from its center on the River Thames. It is home to Britain's central government, royalty, national collections, and major attractions, and exerts a considerable impact upon the arts, commerce, education, entertainment, fashion, finance, healthcare, media, professional

services, research and development, tourism and transportation. London ranks 26th out of the world's 300 major cities for economic performance. It is one of the largest financial centers and has either the fifth or sixth largest metropolitan area GDP. It is one of the most-visited cities as measured by international arrivals and has the busiest city airport system as measured by passenger traffic.

London has a recorded history that goes back about 2,000 years, to its founding by the Romans, who called it Londinium. The city has experienced plagues^①, devastating fire^②, aerial bombardments^③ and terrorist attacks^④. Today's London is not only a historical and multi-cultural city, but also one of the most significant world's capitals of finance, fashion, arts and entertainment.

London has a wide range of peoples, cultures and religions, and more than 300 different languages are spoken within the city, ensuring it becomes one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the world. Its estimated mid-2018 municipal population (corresponding to Greater London) was 8.9 million, the second most populous in Europe, and accounted for 13.4% of the UK population.

London draws increasing numbers of visitors from all over the world, not only to the attractions of its theaters, cinemas, museums, galleries, shopping streets, restaurants, hotels and nightclubs, but also to its historic treasures such as Westminster Abbey^⑤, Big Ben, the Houses of Parliament^⑥ and Buckingham Palace^⑦. In addition, London has the vast green spaces of Hyde and Richmond parks, exciting street markets and many distinctive old pubs. And as a city of numerous attractions, it was the most-visited city in Europe in 2018.

London has hosted the Olympic Games, the greatest sporting event in the world, on three occasions, in 1908, 1948 and 2012. The 2012 Olympics makes London the first city that has hosted three modern Summer Olympic Games. London is the only city in the United Kingdom to have ever hosted the Olympics; the United States is the only country to have hosted Summer Olympics on more occasions^⑧ than the UK. No city in the UK has hosted the Winter Olympic Games.

London established a sister city relationship with Beijing on April 10, 2006 and was officially twinned with^⑨ Shanghai on March 31, 2009.

Notes

- ① London lost at least half of its population during the Black Death in the mid-14th century. Between 1348 and the Great Plague of 1665 there were 16 outbreaks of plague in the city.

- ② The Great Fire of London broke out on Sunday, September 2, 1666 in the southern part of the city. Fanned by an eastern wind, the fire swept through the central parts of the city. On Tuesday night the wind fell, and on Wednesday the fire became weak and finally died out on Thursday. The fire destroyed about 60% of the city, but the number of lives lost was surprisingly small; it is believed to have been 16 at most.
- ③ During World War I, London experienced its first bombing raids carried out by German airships (飞艇), which killed around 700 people and caused great terror. During World War II, London, as many other British cities, was bombed extensively by the German Air Force. The heaviest bombing took place between September 7, 1940 and May 10, 1941. During this period, London was subjected to 71 separate raids, receiving over 18,000 tonnes of high explosive. London suffered severe damage and heavy casualties. By the end of the war, just under 30,000 Londoners had been killed by the bombing, and over 50,000 seriously injured, tens of thousands of buildings were destroyed, and hundreds of thousands of people were made homeless.
- ④ The July 7, 2005 London bombings were a series of terrorist attacks on London's public transport system during the morning rush hour. The suicide bombings were carried out by British Muslims who were motivated by Britain's involvement in the Iraq War. At 08:50, three bombs exploded within 50 seconds of each other on three London Underground trains. A fourth bomb exploded on a double-decker bus nearly an hour later at 09:47. The bombings killed 52 people and the four suicide bombers injured 700, and caused widespread disruption of the city's transport system. The series of suicide bomb explosions constituted the largest and deadliest terrorist attack on London's transit system in history.
- ⑤ Westminster Abbey (威斯敏斯特教堂) is a large, famous Gothic church in Westminster, London, just to the west of the Palace of Westminster. It is the traditional place of coronation (加冕) and burial site for British and later still (and currently) monarchs of the Commonwealth realms.
- ⑥ Don't confuse Westminster Abbey with Westminster Palace (or the Palace of Westminster) (威斯敏斯特宫, 又称议会大厦). The Palace of Westminster is the meeting place of the two Houses of the Parliament of the United Kingdom.

Commonly known as the Houses of Parliament, the Palace lies on the north bank of the River Thames in the City of Westminster, in central London. It is close to the government buildings of Whitehall.

- ⑦ Buckingham Palace, originally known as Buckingham House, was built in 1703 by the Duke of Buckingham as his London home. Located in the City of Westminster, the Palace today is used not only as the home of the Queen, but also for the administrative work for the monarchy. It is here, in the State Rooms, that the Queen receives and entertains guests invited to the Palace. And it has also been a rallying point for the British people at times of national rejoicing and crisis.
- ⑧ The United States is the country that has hosted the maximum number of Olympic Games. It has hosted the Summer Olympics four times: in St. Louis, Missouri in 1904, in Los Angeles in 1932, in Los Angeles again in 1984, and in Atlanta in 1996. It has also hosted the Winter Olympic Games four times: in Lake Placid, New York in 1932, in Squaw Valley in 1960, again in Lake Placid in 1980, and finally in Salt Lake City in 2002.
- ⑨ “Twin with” means to pair a city or town with another in a different country (使不同国家的两个城市结成友好城市). The terms “twin towns” “partnership towns” “partner towns” and “friendship towns” are most commonly used in Europe; and the term “sister cities” is generally used for agreements with towns and cities in the Americas.

Questions for Thought

1. Why do people say London is a city with some bitter experiences in its history?
2. Why is London so attractive to visitors from all over the world?

2. Location and Size



Location map of the UK in Western Europe

2.1 Location

The United Kingdom is an island nation situated northwest of the European continent between the Atlantic Ocean and the North Sea, and comes within 34 kilometers of the coast of northern France, from which it is separated by the English Channel^①. The UK is connected to continental Europe by

the Channel Tunnel^②, the longest underwater tunnel in the world. Beneath the English Channel, the Channel Tunnel links the UK with France.

The United Kingdom shares a land border with Ireland, and shares maritime borders with France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway, Germany, Denmark and Iceland.

2.2 Size

The total area of the United Kingdom is approximately 244,110 km² comprising of the island of Great Britain, the northeastern one-sixth of the island of Ireland (Northern Ireland) and numerous smaller surrounding islands.

England is the largest part of the country, located in the south of the island, with an area of 130,395 km², accounting for 53 percent of the total area of the UK. It shares land borders with Scotland to the north and Wales to the west; the Irish Sea is to the northwest, the Celtic Sea to the southwest and the North Sea to the east, with the English Channel to the south separating it from continental Europe. Most of England comprises the central and southern part of the island of Great Britain in the North Atlantic. London, the capital of both England and the United Kingdom, is located in southeastern England.

Scotland, with an area of 78,772 km², occupies the northern third of the island of Great Britain. It is the second largest part of the UK, accounting for about a third (32%) of the total area, sharing a border with England to the south and is bounded by the North Sea to the east, the Atlantic Ocean to the north

and west, and the North Channel and the Irish Sea to the southwest. Located in the southeast of Scotland, Edinburgh, the capital city of Scotland, lies on the east coast of the Central Belt, near the North Sea.

Wales is bordered by England to its east, the Atlantic Ocean and the Irish Sea to its north and west, and the Bristol Channel to the south, with an area of 20,779 km², accounting for less than a tenth (9%) of the total area of the UK. Situated on the narrowest part of the South Wales coastal plain, Cardiff is the capital, the largest city and the most populous county of Wales.

Northern Ireland, separated from Great Britain by the Irish Sea and the North Channel, covers an area of 14,160 km² on the island of Ireland, accounting for 6 percent of the total area of the UK. It shares a border with the Republic of Ireland to the south and west. Lying on Northern Ireland's eastern coast, Belfast is the capital city of Northern Ireland.

From the southern coast of England to the north of Scotland, it is about 1,000 kilometers long, and the widest part of Britain is about 480 kilometers. The total boundary length of 8,352 kilometers includes a coastline of 7,918 kilometers and a land boundary with the Republic of Ireland of 434 kilometers.

Notes

- ① The English Channel (英吉利海峡) is the body of water that separates England from northern France, and joins the North Sea to the Atlantic. It is about 560 kilometers long, and varies in width from 240 kilometers at its widest to

only 34 kilometers. It is the smallest of the shallow seas around the continental shelf of Europe, covering an area of some 75,000 km².

- ② The Channel Tunnel (英吉利海峡隧道), shortened to be called the Chunnel or alternatively the Euro Tunnel, is a tunnel between England and France under the English Channel. It is only for trains. Some of the trains in the Channel Tunnel carry automobiles as well. It is 50.5 kilometers long and connects Cheriton, Kent in the United Kingdom to Coquelles near Calais in northern France. The Channel Tunnel has the longest undersea portion of any tunnel in the world.

Questions for Thought

1. Where is the UK located geographically?
2. What is the United Kingdom geographically and politically composed of?
3. Of the four main territories of the UK which is the second largest in area?
4. How long is the UK's land border with the Republic of Ireland?
5. How long is the UK from the southern part of England to the northern part of Scotland?
And how wide is it from east to west?

3. Terrain, Rivers and Mountains



Terrain of the UK

3.1 Terrain

The British landscape, though very varied from the Grampian Mountains (格兰扁山脉) of Scotland to the lowlands of England, can be divided roughly into two kinds of terrain—highland and lowland. The highland area comprises the mountainous regions of Scotland, Northern Ireland, North England and North Wales. Gently rolling hills, long valleys, plains and basins break up the lowland area in the east and southeast (many coastal areas are low lying, especially in the east and south of England). The 10 tallest mountains (over 1,214 meters high above sea level) in the UK are all found in Scotland. The lowest point of the UK is in the Fens of East Anglia, in England, parts of which lie up to four meters below sea level.

Most of England consists of rolling lowland terrain, divided east from west by more mountainous terrain in the northwest (Cumbrian Mountains of the Lake District, 英格兰湖区的坎布里亚山脉) and north (the upland moors of the Pennines, 奔宁山脉的高地沼泽) and limestone hills of the Peak District. The lower ranges include the limestone hills of the Isle of Purbeck, Cotswolds, Lincolnshire and chalk downs of Southern England (英格兰南部的白垩质高地).

Scotland's terrain is varied, and it can be divided into three regions: the Highlands in the north, the Central Lowlands, and the Southern Uplands (北部的高地、中部的洼地和南部的高原). Scotland is the most mountainous country in the UK. The Highlands cover more

than one-half of Scotland and include the Grampian Mountains. The range's highest peak, Ben Nevis, is also the highest point in the British Isles.

Wales is mostly mountainous, though South Wales is less mountainous than North and Mid Wales. Mountains which consist of rounded, grassy uplands cut by long narrow valleys, cover most of Wales, particularly in the northern and central regions. Elsewhere the terrain is marked mainly by long, rolling hills at 300 to 600 meters above sea level. A few mountainous areas occur in the south. Lowland areas include major river valleys, which are most extensive in the east and south.

Northern Ireland is mostly hilly. It consists of rounded hills and low mountains, separated by broad valleys. Its principal mountain ranges include the Mourne Mountains in the southeast and the Sperrin Mountains in the northwest. Where the mountains extend to the sea, the coasts are marked by cliffs and steep slopes.

3.2 Rivers and Lakes

3.2.1 Major Rivers

Being a relatively small island, the UK's rivers are not very long and only a few are navigable, but they have been major sources of communication and travel since ancient times. Rivers also act as borders between people and serve as boundaries

between geographical and administrative areas.

The two longest rivers in the UK are the River Severn in the southwest of England and the River Thames, which flows through the capital.

The River Severn is 354 kilometers in length, flowing through both Wales and England. It begins in Wales and enters the Atlantic Ocean near Bristol in England. Only one stretch of the river is navigable, but there is little traffic, other than small tour boats and canoes.

The River Thames (navigable) is the second longest river in the United Kingdom, the longest river entirely in England, and also the deepest river in the country. It is 346 kilometers in length, flowing through Oxford and London.

After them are the River Trent, which is 298 kilometers long, and drains rainfall from large areas of central England. The River Clyde (176 kilometers), which flows through the city of Glasgow and through the industrial heartland, is Scotland's most important river and serves as a transportation outlet to the Atlantic Ocean. The River Bann is the longest river in Northern Ireland with a total length of 159 kilometers. The River Dee (140 kilometers) is navigable and is the principal river of Wales.

3.2.2 Major Lakes

The UK has many lakes in all four of its constituent countries. Lough Neagh (内伊湖)^①, in the center of Northern Ireland, is the

largest freshwater lake (which provides 40% of the water supply of Northern Ireland) in Britain, with an area of 383 km². It is followed in size by Lower Lough Erne, also in Northern Ireland with an area of 109.5 km², and Loch Lomond (洛蒙德湖)^② in Scotland with an area of 71 km². The largest freshwater lake in England is Windermere with an area of 14.73 km², and Bala Lake (4.84 km²) is the largest in Wales. The deepest lake in the UK is Loch Morar in Scotland with a maximum depth of 309 meters. Loch Ness, also in Scotland, seconding at 230 meters, is the largest by volume and contains nearly double the amount of water in all the lakes of England and Wales combined. The longest lake in Britain is Loch Awe in Scotland with a length of 41 kilometers.

3.3 Mountains

The UK is home to a number of mountains but many of the tallest peaks are situated in Scotland. It is estimated that 56 of the highest mountains of the European nation are situated in Scotland.

There are 94 mountains with a height of above 610 meters in the UK: 82 in Scotland, 7 in Wales, 4 in England and 1 in Northern Ireland.

The highest mountain is Ben Nevis in Scotland, with a height of 1,344 meters above sea level. The second highest one is Ben Macdui in Scotland with a height of 1,309 meters, followed by Braeriach in Scotland (1,296 meters), Cairn Toul in Scotland (1,291 meters), Sgor an Lochain Uaine in Scotland

The Latest Survey of the United Kingdom and the United States

(1,258 meters), and Cairn Gorm in the Scottish Highlands (1,245 meters).

The highest mountain in Wales is Snowdon (1,085 meters). The second highest mountain in Wales is Carnedd Llewelyn with a height of 1,064 meters, while Glyder Fawr is the third and has a height of 1,001 meters. The other mountains in Wales are Y Garn, Elidir, Fawr, Tryfan, Aran Fawddwy, Y Lliwedd, Cadair Idris, Pen y Fan, etc.

In England, the highest mountain is Scafell Pike (978 meters). There are many other mountains in England such as Helvellyn, Skiddaw, Great Gable, Cross Fell, Pillar, and Fairfield, to name a few.

In Northern Ireland, the highest mountain is Slieve Donard with a height of 850 meters. Some other mountains located there are Slieve Commedagh, Slieve Binnian, Slieve Bearnagh, Sawel Mountain, among others.

Notes

- ① The word “lough” is Irish. It means “lake”, and is pronounced like “lock”.
- ② The word “loch” is Scottish. It also means “lake”, and is pronounced like “lock”.

Questions for Thought

1. How do you describe the geography of the UK?
2. What are the longest and deepest rivers and lakes in the UK?
3. Which parts of the UK are mountainous?
4. How many mountains are there in the UK with a height of above 610 meters?
5. Which part has more mountains with a height of above 610 meters, Wales or Scotland?
6. What is the highest mountain in the UK? How high is it?

4. Natural Resources

Britain has a variety of natural resources including coal, oil, natural gas, iron ore, tin, zinc, gold, chalk, salt, clay, limestone, gypsum, lead, silica, and so on. Primary energy production accounts for 10 percent

of UK GDP, one of the highest shares of any industrial nation.

Compared with many other countries, Britain has considerable reserves of coal, which have been mined for more than 300

years. For most of the 19th and 20th centuries, coal was Britain's richest natural resource, meeting most of the nation's requirement for energy. But today coal can be produced more cheaply in other countries, so many British coal mines have closed. According to a research on British energy production, British coal production in 2017 was 3 million tons and coal's share of primary energy supply had fallen to 5 percent by 2017. The UK government has announced plans to completely phase out coal in the UK by 2025.

Natural gas was discovered in 1965 and a large oil field was found in 1970 under the North Sea and new supplies are still being found today. Gas and oil have been particularly important in replacing coal as a fuel for generating electricity. Today the United Kingdom is not only self-sufficient in oil supply, but has become one of the major oil exporters in the world and it is also one of the world's largest gas producers.

Britain was the first nation to build a large iron and steel industry. Rich deposits of iron ore were found in central England.

At one time the county of Cornwall boasted 2,000 tin mines and it was a world leader in tin production. However, since the end of World War II, the tin-mining industries have been hard hit—by competition from cheaper overseas producers, and by changes in government policy. The country's last surviving Cornish tin mine was closed in 1998, but reopened in 2001.

Britain's main commercial minerals are those used in the construction and building

industries such as sand and gravel, limestone and gypsum. They are normally mined from the surface in quarries using heavy machinery.

Because the UK is an island nation, the country has great potential for generating electricity. In 2016, total electricity production stood at 357 terawatt hours (TWh, 万亿瓦时), generated from coal, gas, oil, wave power, tidal power and wind power. Wind power contributed 15% of UK electricity generation in 2017, and 18.5% in the final quarter of 2017. Nuclear power provides around 25 percent of total annual electricity in the UK, but this has gradually declined as old plants have been shut down. In 2012, the UK had 16 reactors. All but one of the reactors will retire by 2023. It intends to build a new generation of nuclear plants from about 2018. In recent years much research has devoted to developing solar energy. The government said that 4 million homes across the UK will be powered by the sun within 8 years, representing 22,000 megawatt (MW, 兆瓦) of installed solar power capacity by 2020. UK solar photovoltaics (太阳能光伏) installed capacity at the end of 2017 was 12.8 gigawatt (GW, 十亿瓦), representing a 3.4% share of total electricity generation.

Renewable energy in the UK can be divided into the generation of renewable electricity, the generation of renewable heat and renewable energy use in the transport sector. In 2017 renewable production generated 27.9% of total electricity, 7.7% of total heat energy, and 4.6% of total transport energy.

Questions for Thought

1. What are the major resources of the UK?
2. What is the richest natural resource of the UK?
3. When and where was natural gas discovered in the UK?
4. What are the sources for electricity production in the UK?
5. How does the UK use and develop the new and renewable energy?

5. Climate

Situated off the northwest coast of Europe, Britain has a unique climate—so much so that a popular exam question of the past is “Britain does not have a climate, it only has weather—discuss”. Such a statement has been made because weather conditions can vary so much from day to day, as well as from season to season. Having said this, Britain, in general, has a temperate oceanic climate: cool summers and relatively mild winters, with plentiful rainfall all year round.

Temperature varies on a daily, seasonal and geographical basis. In the summer, the average temperature can be as hot as 32°C but mostly it only reaches 27°C. The average temperature for Britain in the winter is about 4.4°C.

There are also regional variations—the south is usually warmer than the north, while the west is wetter than the east. In general, the more extreme weather tends to occur in the mountainous and hilly regions where it is often cloudy, wet and windy.

As an island country, Britain has a steady

rainfall throughout the whole year, though amounts of the rainfall can vary greatly across the country (generally the further west and the higher the elevation, the greater the rainfall). The average annual rainfall in Britain is about 1,000 millimeters. There is far more rain in the north and west than in the south and east. Most rainfall in Britain comes from North Atlantic depressions, which roll into the country all the year round and are particularly frequent and intense in the autumn and winter. They can on occasions bring prolonged periods of heavy rain, and flooding is quite common.

In Britain, springs are the period from March to May, and are generally a calm, cool season. Summers last from June to August and are the warmest and usually the sunniest season. Autumns last from September to November, and can sometimes be a cold season—very low temperatures and heavy snowfall have been recorded in recent years. Winters are defined as lasting from December

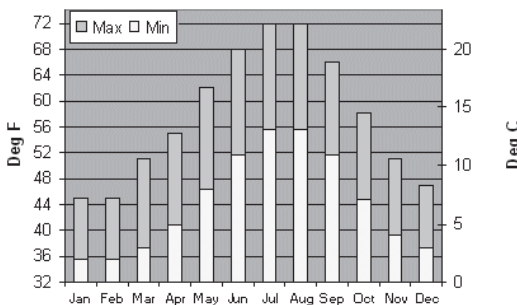
to February. The season is generally cool, wet, windy and cloudy.

What influences the weather in Britain? The principal factors that influence the country's climate include its northerly latitude (which ranges from 50° to 60° N), the close proximity to the Atlantic Ocean, and the warming of the surrounding waters by the Gulf Stream (a warm current of the northern Atlantic Ocean). The weather can be notoriously changeable from one day to the next but temperature variations throughout the year are relatively small.

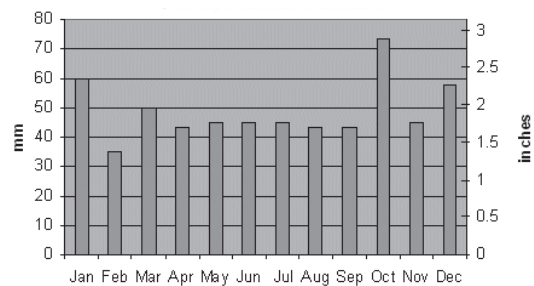
The best months to travel in Britain are probably May, June, September and October. These months generally have the

most pleasant temperatures and less rain. July is on average the warmest and driest month. The sunniest parts of the Britain are along the south coast of England. Around the coasts, January and February are normally the coldest and rainiest months, but inland there is little to choose between January and February as the coldest month.

Due to climate change, the Met Office (the United Kingdom's national weather service) estimated in December 2009 that the average annual temperature in the country is to increase by 2°C and the warmest summer day to increase by 3°C by the 2050s. Average winter rainfall is also likely to increase and most areas will see a slight decrease in annual rainfall.



Temperature in each month



Rainfall in each month

Questions for Thought

1. What is the British climate and weather like?
2. How do you understand the saying that Britain has no climate but weather?
3. What is the average temperature in Britain in the summer?
4. What is the average temperature in Britain in the winter?
5. What are the principal factors influencing the weather in Britain?
6. What are the best months to travel in Britain?

6. Major Cities and Scenic Spots

6.1 Major Cities

6.1.1 London

London, the capital of both England and the United Kingdom, is one of the world's leading business, financial and cultural centers, and its influences in politics, education, entertainment, media, fashion and arts all contribute to its status as a major global city. London is also a major port, 65 kilometers from the mouth of the River Thames.

At its core, the ancient City of London still retains its limited medieval boundaries. London has been the center of many important movements and phenomena throughout history, such as the English Renaissance, the Industrial Revolution and the Gothic Revival. In light of this, the city has become one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world which has increased over the years due to the city's economic growth. London has four World Heritage Sites: Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey including Saint Margaret's Church; the Tower of London; Maritime Greenwich; and Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Guildhall and St. Paul's Cathedral are two of the city's landmarks. The Tower Bridge over the River Thames has also become one of the symbols of the city. The West End of London includes many of the city's major tourist attractions, as well as business and administrative headquarters.

London is a major global center of higher education teaching and research and has the greatest concentration of top-class universities in the world. To mention just a few, Imperial College London, established in 1907, is ranked eighth globally in the QS World University Rankings, ninth in the World University Rankings, and 24th in the Academic Ranking of World Universities in 2018–2019. University College London, established in 1826 as London University, is one of the top-rated universities in the UK. As of 2018, 33 Nobel Prize winners have been affiliated with it as alumni, faculty or researchers. King's College London, established in 1829 by King George IV, is ranked 31st in the 2019 QS World University Rankings. The London School of Economics, founded in 1895, has been described as the world's leading social science institution for both teaching and research. The London Business School is considered one of the world's leading business schools.

London ranks 26th out of world's 300 major cities for economic performance. The economy of the London metropolitan area—the largest in Europe—generates about 30 percent of the UK's GDP. London is one of the largest financial centers, and has either the fifth or sixth largest metropolitan area GDP. Over half of the UK's top 100 listed companies and over 100 of Europe's 500

largest companies have their headquarters in central London, and 75 percent of Fortune 500 companies have offices in London.



A latest view of London

6.1.2 Edinburgh

Recognized as the capital of Scotland since at least the 15th century, Edinburgh is the seat of the Scottish Government, the Scottish Parliament and the Supreme Courts of Scotland. Edinburgh has an estimated population of 536,775 (World Population Review 2020), which makes it the second most populous city in Scotland and the seventh in the United Kingdom^①.

The city's historical and cultural attractions have made it the United Kingdom's second most popular tourist destination (after London), attracting over one million overseas visitors each year.

The city enjoys its reputation as a chief intellectual center of the Enlightenment led by the University of Edinburgh. It is renowned for its beautiful architecture, earning it the nickname Athens of the North. The Old Town and New Town districts of Edinburgh together

were listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1995.

There are three universities in Edinburgh. The University of Edinburgh, founded in 1582, is the sixth oldest university in the English-speaking world and one of Scotland's ancient universities. It is ranked as the sixth best university in Europe by the US News' Best Global Universities Ranking, and seventh best in Europe by the Times Higher Education Ranking. And it is placed 18th in the QS World University Rankings for 2019. Alumni of the university include three Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom and 23 Nobel Prize winners. Heriot-Watt University, established in 1821, began as the world's first mechanics' institute. Napier Technical College, founded in 1964, gained university status in 1992.

Edinburgh has the strongest economy of any city in the United Kingdom outside London, and it is the second largest financial center in the United Kingdom (after London). According to the Center for International Competitiveness, it is one of the most competitive large cities in the United Kingdom.



Edinburgh's New Town



Edinburgh's Old Town

6.1.3 Cardiff

Cardiff is the capital and largest city of Wales, and its principal finance and business services center. Located in southeastern Wales, Cardiff is the base for most national cultural and sporting institutions, and for Welsh national media, and it is also the seat of the National Assembly for Wales. It was made a city in 1905, and proclaimed capital of Wales in 1955, the Europe's youngest capital city. The most significant modern development is that of Cardiff Bay, where the old docklands are being transformed in a characteristic "inner harbor".

Cardiff is the eleventh-largest city in the United Kingdom, and the latest estimate of Cardiff's population is 470,816 (World Population Review 2019). Cardiff is part of the Eurocities network of the largest European cities. It is one of the most significant tourist centers and one of the most popular visitor destination cities in the UK.

Cardiff is home to four major institutions of higher education. Cardiff University, founded in 1883, is by far the strongest research-focused university in Wales and was ranked 188th in Best Global Universities internationally and 19th nationally. Cardiff Metropolitan University, as of 2019, is ranked as the top "new" university in Wales by the major university guides—The Guardian University Guide. University of South Wales is the second largest university in Wales in terms of its student numbers, and in 2019, the university entered the top five percent of universities in the world in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings and the 99th out of 127 UK universities. And the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama is the National Conservatoire (艺术学院) of Wales, and part of the University of South Wales Group, with an ambition to make an ever more central contribution to the cultural life of Cardiff, to Wales, and to the international arts industry.

Cardiff is the main engine of growth in the Welsh economy. Though the population of Cardiff is about 10% of the Welsh population, the economy of Cardiff makes up nearly 20% of Welsh GDP. It is the principal finance and business services center in Wales, and as such there is a strong representation of finance and business services in the local economy. The city is one of the largest coal shipping ports in the world, and a center of iron and steel industry in Britain.



Cardiff City Hall

6.1.4 Belfast

Belfast is the capital of Northern Ireland and the largest urban area in North Ireland and the second-largest city on the island of Ireland, also the economic and political center of Northern Ireland. Belfast began as a castle built in 1177 by an Englishman named John de Courcy on the shores of Belfast Lough, which provided the city with its own port, but the present city is a product of the Industrial Revolution.

Belfast is an important industrial, commercial and cultural center of Northern Ireland. It is also the center of shipbuilding, linen, man-made fiber and aircraft of the country. Agricultural and livestock products are its chief exports. Belfast has been the fastest-growing economy of the 30 largest cities in the UK over the past decade. Belfast has an estimated population of 623,029 (World Population Review 2019). As an important and historic city, it is filled with spectacular landmarks and monuments, most of which date back to many hundreds of years.

Belfast has three higher education

institutions. Queen’s University Belfast, founded in 1845 as “Queen’s College, Belfast”, is ranked 173th in the world according to the 2020 QS World University Rankings. The Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2020 placed it 28th out of 93 in the UK. The University of Ulster, created in its current form in 1984, maintains a campus in Belfast. It is the largest university in Northern Ireland and the second-largest university on the island of Ireland, after the federal National University of Ireland. Belfast Metropolitan College, created in 2007, offers both vocational education and academic qualifications, and is Northern Ireland’s largest college.



Belfast City Hall

6.2 Major Scenic Spots

In the United Kingdom, there are many world-known scenic spots such as Westminster Palace, Westminster Abbey, the British Museum, Tower of London, the Houses of Parliament, Buckingham Palace, Hyde Park, St. Paul’s Cathedral, Greenwich Royal Observatory, the River Thames, Lake District

of Cumbria, Scottish Highlands, Millennium Stadium, Giants Causeway and Causeway Coast, Canterbury Cathedral, etc. They attract tourists from all over the world. At night, visitors particularly enjoy the hundreds of theaters and pubs there.

6.2.1 Westminster Palace

Westminster Palace, also known as the Palace of Westminster or the Houses of Parliament, is the meeting place of the two Houses of Parliament. It lies on the north bank of the River Thames in the heart of the London borough of the City of Westminster, close to the historic Westminster Abbey and the government buildings of Whitehall and Downing Street. Among the original historic buildings is Westminster Hall, used nowadays for major public ceremonial events. The Palace of Westminster was the principal residence of the kings of England from the middle of the 11th century until 1512. The Old Palace is a medieval building complex which was destroyed by fire in 1834, and the New Palace that stands today is its replacement. The Palace of Westminster has been a Grade I listed building since 1970 and part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1987.



Westminster Palace

6.2.2 Westminster Abbey

Westminster Abbey, in the city of Westminster, London, England, located just to the west of the Palace of Westminster, is a living church, part of the Church of England, continuing a 1,400 year tradition in this place. It is, with a Gothic style, an architectural masterpiece of the 13th to 16th centuries, and its oldest parts date back to the year 1050.

The coronation of Kings and Queens has taken place in Westminster Abbey since the coronation of William the Conqueror in 1066, and many of the Kings and Queens of England and of the United Kingdom are buried there.

At the South Transept of Westminster Abbey is Poets' Corner where many poets, playwrights and writers such as Chaucer and Dickens were buried and commemorated.

Over 3,000 people are buried in the church and there are over 600 monuments and memorials. There have been 16 royal weddings at the abbey since 1100. Prince William of Wales (grandson of Queen Elizabeth II) and Miss Catherine Middleton married at the Abbey on April 29, 2011. Today it is still a church dedicated to regular worship and to the celebration of great events in the life of the nation.

In 2017, Westminster Abbey received 1.5 million visitors, according to UK's Association of Leading Visitor Attractions.



Westminster Abbey

6.2.3 The British Museum

The British Museum, located in the Bloomsbury section of London, is a museum of human history and culture. The British Museum was established in 1753. It includes the British National Museum of Antiquities and Ethnography and the British National Library. The British Museum, the British Museum of Art, and the Louvre in Paris are three major museums in the world. The collections of the British Museum, around eight million objects, are amongst the largest and most comprehensive in the world, and originate from all continents, illustrating and documenting the story of human culture from its beginning to the present. The Museum is an encyclopedia of nature and of art.

Today, the museum has a largest online database of objects in the collection of any museum in the world, with 2,000,000 individual object entries, 650,000 of them illustrated.

As with all other national museums in the United Kingdom, the British Museum charges no admission fee. In 2019, the museum received 5.9 million visitors from

different parts of the world, according to UK's Association of Leading Visitor Attractions.



The British Museum

6.2.4 The Tower of London

The Tower of London is one of the essential London attractions and one of the world's most iconic tourist sites. Standing on the bank of the River Thames, this great royal fortress was founded by William the Conqueror in 1078. It is the oldest palace and fortress in Europe and enjoys the prestigious honor of being a World Heritage Site.

The tower as a whole is a complex of several buildings set within two concentric rings of defensive walls and a moat. It is made up of three "wards", or enclosures. The innermost contains the White Tower and is the earliest phase of the castle, and it is the center of today's castle; encircling it to the north, east, and west is the inner enclosure, built during the reign of Richard the Lionheart (r.1189–1199). Finally, there is the outer ward which encompasses the castle and was built under Edward I.

The Tower of London was used as a royal residence until Elizabethan times. It was also a very important prison of state^②.

In 2019, the Tower of London received 2.84 million visitors according to UK's Association of Leading Visitor Attractions.



The Tower of London

6.2.5 St. Paul's Cathedral

St. Paul's Cathedral, standing at the head of Ludgate Hill, where, according to tradition, a Roman temple once stood, is the seat of the Bishop of London. The Anglican cathedral is the biggest and most well-known church in London and is a Grade I listed building, and it is also a typical example of the architecture of the Renaissance. One of its most eye-catching features is its huge dome, which is among the highest in the world and one of the most distinctive features of the London skyline. The present building was completed in 1710 on the site of an even larger mediaeval cathedral that

was destroyed in the Great Fire of London in 1666.

Apart from its architectural glamor, St. Paul's Cathedral is a symbol of Britain's history. Since the first service took place here in 1697, it has been a place where people and events of overwhelming importance to the country have been celebrated, mourned and commemorated, for instance, the funerals of former prime ministers Winston Churchill and Margaret Thatcher; the wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer; the thanksgiving services for the Silver, Golden and Diamond Jubilees and the 80th and 90th birthdays of Queen Elizabeth II.

The Cathedral received 1.57 million visitors in 2019 according to UK's Association of Leading Visitor Attractions. The tourist entry fee at the door is £20 for adults (January 2019, cheaper online), but no charge is made to worshippers.



St. Paul's Cathedral

Notes

- ① The ten most populous cities in the UK are London, Birmingham, Glasgow, Leeds, Sheffield, Bradford, Edinburgh, Liverpool, Manchester, and Bristol. Edinburgh ranks seventh.
- ② The prison was particularly for high status and royal prisoners, such as the Princes in the Tower and Princess Elizabeth (later Queen Elizabeth I), who was held by her half sister Mary I on suspicion of being concerned in a plot against the throne.

Questions for Thought

1. What are London's four World Heritage Sites?
2. Why is Edinburgh considered the United Kingdom's second most popular tourist destination?
3. How did Westminster Abbey function in history?
4. What are the three major museums in the world?

7. Administrative Division

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is made up of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. These parts are governed by the central government in London. They have special administrations, but no their own parliament (excluding Northern Ireland prior to 1970). Laws are commonly passed in Parliament with separate acts for England and Wales, for Scotland, and for Northern Ireland. Each of the four parts has its own traditions and style of local government. Besides, the UK also has 17

dependent territories (14 overseas territories, and 3 Crown dependencies).

7.1 England

England comprises the central and southern two-thirds of the island of Great Britain, in addition to a number of small islands of which the largest is the Isle of Wight. England is politically divided into nine administrative divisions: Northeastern England, Northwestern England, Yorkshire

and Humber, Eastern Midland, Western Midland, Eastern England, Greater London, Southeastern England, and Southwestern England. Greater London, known as the London region, has a different system for local government, and is further divided into 32 London boroughs plus the City of London. The other regions are made up of metropolitan and non-metropolitan counties and unitary authorities. The counties are further divided into districts (which can be called cities, boroughs) and parishes which cover only part of England.

7.2 Scotland

Scotland comprises the northern one third of the island of Great Britain. Between 1889 and 1975, Scotland was divided into boroughs and counties, which were then replaced by regions and districts. Since 1996, for the purposes of local government, Scotland has been divided into 32 subdivisions, known as local authorities, or councils (29 unitary authorities and 3 island authorities).

7.3 Wales

Wales has 22 borough councils, unitary authorities (including the cities of Cardiff, Swansea and Newport, which are unitary authorities in their own right), which are responsible for the provision of all local government services, including education, social work, environmental and road services. Below these in some areas there are

community councils, which cover specific areas within a council area. The unitary authority areas are known as “principal areas”. Elections are held every four years under the first-past-the-post system.

7.4 Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland was created as a distinct division of the United Kingdom on May 3, 1921. For over 50 years it had its own devolved government and parliament, but these institutions were abolished in 1973. Repeated attempts to restore self-government finally resulted in the establishment in 1998 of the present Northern Ireland Executive and Northern Ireland Assembly. Northern Ireland consists of six historic counties and these counties are no longer used for local government purposes; instead, there are 11 districts of Northern Ireland which have different geographical extents. These were created in 2015, replacing the 26 districts which previously existed.

7.5 Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies

The British overseas territories are 14 territories of the United Kingdom which, although they do not form part of the United Kingdom itself, fall under its jurisdiction (管辖范围). Most of the permanently inhabited territories are internally self-governing, with the UK retaining responsibility for defence and foreign relations. Three are inhabited only

by a transitory (暂住的) population of military or scientific personnel. They all share the British monarch (currently Queen Elizabeth II) as head of state. Collectively, the territories encompass a population of 250,020 and a land area of about 1,727,570 km².

The British Crown dependencies are three island territories off the coast of Great Britain that are self-governing possessions of the Crown but not sovereign states. And they do not form part of either the United Kingdom or the British overseas territories. Internationally, the dependencies are considered “territories for which the United Kingdom is responsible”, rather than sovereign states. They are not member states

of the Commonwealth of Nations, but they do have relationships with the Commonwealth and the European Union^①.

The 14 overseas territories are: British Antarctic Territory; South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands; British Indian Ocean Territory; Akrotiri and Dhekelia; Pitcairn, Henderson, Ducie and Oeno Islands; Falkland (Malvinas) Islands^②; Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha; Anguilla; British Virgin Islands; Cayman Islands; Montserrat; Gibraltar; Bermuda; Turks and Caicos Islands.

The three Crown dependencies are: the Bailiwick of Guernsey, the Bailiwick of Jersey, and the Isle of Man.

Notes

- ① The European Union (EU) is an economic and political union of 27 European countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden. In January 2020, the United Kingdom left the EU following a 2016 referendum. The EU was established on November 1, 1993 upon the foundations of the pre-existing European Economic Community (欧洲经济共同体). Taken as a whole, the EU has a population of about 447 million, 5.8% of the world population, as of February 2020. In 2020, the EU has a combined GDP of \$20 trillion international dollars, a 14% share of global gross domestic product by purchasing power parity (PPP).
- ② Falkland Islands (福克兰群岛) are also known as Malvinas Islands (马尔维纳斯群岛) in Argentina. The British troops took control of the Islands from the Spanish forces in 1833, and in 1840 the Islands became a Crown colony of the

British nation. The Islands are in the South Atlantic Ocean, about 480 kilometers east of Argentina and Argentina claims to own the Islands. The territorial dispute between Argentina and Britain led to a six-week military conflict in 1982. China has supported Argentina in its claims over the Islands. Today, over 3,000 people live on the Islands. Under the British Nationality (Falkland Islands) Act 1983, Falkland Islanders are British citizens and the official language is English.

Questions for Thought

1. What are the metropolitan and non-metropolitan counties in England?
2. How was the present Northern Ireland Executive and Northern Ireland Assembly formed?
3. What are the differences between British overseas territories and Crown dependencies?