



# UNITED KINGDOM

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and  
Commonwealth Realm

## Type of Government

Parliamentary Democracy with  
a Constitutional Monarchy

## Government Structure

### Executive -

The Chief of State is the Monarch which is a hereditary position whose duties are largely ceremonial.

The Head of Government is the Prime Minister who is a member of the House of Commons, chosen by the House of Commons, and is usually the leader of its majority party.

### Legislative -

The bicameral Parliament consists of the House of Lords (788 members elected in many different ways) and the House of Commons (650 members elected by popular vote).

### Judicial -

The new highest court is the Supreme Court which has 12 members appointed by the Monarch on the advice of the Prime Minister. There are also other courts.

## Constitution

There is no written constitution. The rights of citizens are protected by many different documents from English history.

## The Flag

The flag is called the Union Jack. It has a blue field and has crosses representing Saint George (patron saint of England), Saint Patrick (patron saint of Ireland), and Saint Andrew (patron saint of Scotland).

**Capital:** London

**Independence:** January 1, 1801 (United Kingdom established)

**Population:** 64,088,222 (rank = 23)

**GDP per capita:** \$41,200 (rank=39)

**Ethnicity:** White 87%, Black 3%, Indian 2%, Pakistani 2%, Mixed 2%

**Religion:** Christian 60%, Muslim 4%, Hindu 1%, Unspecified/None 33%

**Literacy:** Male 99%, Female 99%



Royal Coat of Arms



The British Isles



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CIA World  
Factbook



Fact Monster

## **Civil Rights/Freedoms**

Rights of citizens are protected by such important documents as Magna Carta, the English Petition of Rights and the English Bill of Rights. The United Kingdom is also a member of the European Union, and the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights protects citizens' rights.

## **Suffrage (voting)**

All citizens 18 years of age and older.

## **Political Parties**

Major parties are: The Conservative Party, The Labor Party, and The Liberal Democratic Party. Minor parties are: Democratic Unionist Party, Party of Wales, Scottish National Party, Sinn Fein, Social Democratic and Labor Party, Ulster Unionist Party.

## **Current Issues**

CIA World Factbook: <http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>

Fact Monster, Countries of the World: <http://www.factmonster.com/countries.html>

Human Rights Watch: <http://www.hrw.org/home>