

7. The United Kingdom

The United Kingdom consists of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The capital is London. It is one of the world's leading financial, industrial and cultural centres with about 9 million inhabitants. It is visited by lots of tourists year by year. Several famous tourist attractions can be found in the city such as Buckingham Palace, the Houses of Parliament and Big Ben, London Eye, the Tower, Westminster Abbey and many other beautiful historical sights.

The capital of Wales is Cardiff. It is an important port.

The capital of Scotland is Edinburgh. It is famous for its historic buildings and vivid cultural life.

The capital of Northern Ireland is Belfast. It is an industrial centre and port. Other major cities in the UK are Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester and Glasgow.

The UK is a parliamentary democracy with hereditary monarchy, meaning that there is a monarch, but the effective power belongs to the government, which is part of parliament and responsible to it, but also normally dominates it. The government consists of about a hundred politicians under the Prime Minister. The monarch is always the previous monarch's eldest son, or eldest daughter if there is no son. The present monarch is Elizabeth II who belongs to the House of Windsor and who has been the monarch for more than 60 years.

There are a lot of fascinating landmarks in the UK, such as Stonehenge the famous prehistoric monument. The White Cliffs of Dover are known as the gateway of Britain. Edinburgh Castle stands high above the historic city of Edinburgh in Scotland. Windsor Castle, Canterbury Cathedral and many others.

In the UK, most people belong to the Anglican Church, but there are also many Roman Catholics and the number of Muslims is also one and a half million.

Sources: Bajnóczi Beatrix, Haavisto Kirsi: Kérdések és válaszok angol nyelvből. Maxim Kiadó, 2003.