

UNITED KINGDOM: BASIC DATA

- GEOGRAPHY** The United Kingdom is located on the continental shelf off the northwest coast of Europe. Total land area is 244,100 km², of which 76% is arable and pasture, 10% forested, and 10% urban.
- CLIMATE** Temperate with few extremes in temperature. In London, the hottest month is July (13-22°C), and the coldest month is January (2-6°C). The driest months are March and April (37 mm average), and the wettest month is November (64 mm).
- POPULATION** 57.72 million (1991)
- MAIN CITIES**
- | | | | |
|------------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| London | 6,794,000 | Leeds | 712,000 |
| Manchester | 2,591,000 | Glasgow | 689,000 |
| Birmingham | 993,000 | Sheffield | 526,000 |
- TIME** United Kingdom is GMT (summertime, 1 hour ahead).
- MEASURES** The imperial and metric systems are used. Business activities are increasingly being conducted in metric terms.
- LANGUAGE** English is the predominant language in the United Kingdom. In Wales, Welsh has equal validity in the administration of justice and conduct of government business.
- LEGAL SYSTEM** The UK legal system is a common law system, consisting of statutes and a large body of case law reflecting legal principles developed through decisions of the courts over many centuries. There is a separate legal system in Scotland.
- RELIGION** The UK is predominantly Christian and Protestant, and 10% of the population is Catholic. There are growing communities of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, and the second largest Jewish community in Europe.
- EDUCATION** Full-time education is compulsory to the age of 16. Approximately 16% of the 18-20 age group attends further or higher education, and about 6% attends university.
- SOCIAL LIFE** London can claim to be the major centre of cultural life in terms of the number of theatres, art galleries and facilities for concerts, ballet and opera. Many regions and towns have strong cultural associations with literary and artistic interests.
- CURRENCY** The unit of currency in the United Kingdom is the pound sterling (£) which is divided into 100 pence (p).
- HOLIDAYS** Statutory holidays are as follows: January 1, January 2 (Scotland only); March 17 (N.Ireland only); Good Friday; Easter Monday (not Scotland); 1st and last Monday in May; July 12 (N.Ireland only); 1st Monday in August (Scotland only); last Monday in August (not Scotland); December 25, December 26 (not Scotland).