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OIB Geography essay

“Why is London a global city?”

Being the capital of the United Kingdom, London has been rapidly growing since it's founding in year 43 AD by the Romans. Since then, it has greatly benefited from the development of the United Kingdom: industrialisation of the UK, which lead into the United Kingdom becoming a colonial empire. That has built up into granting the United Kingdom the position of the European power player, a position from which London could only benefit. Now London is considered as one of the most influential cities in the world: a global city.

London today serves as one of the main hubs of Europe: both economically and transport-wise. London's Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted, London City and London Southend airports manage and receive flights from all around the world, as well as from the Great Britain itself. In fact, they see more than 100 thousand flights per month. It is also an economic hub by housing 33% European HQ's of the Global Fortune 500. It also houses one of the biggest stock exchanges in the world, rivalling the Wall Street's stock exchange. The City of London, London's economic centre, also houses 30% of world's currency exchanges, more than New York and Tokyo combined, as well as 40% of world's equities trade. London's businesses are mainly international, ranging around 80% of London's companies. London generates around 20% of the United Kingdom's GDP. In London we also can find some of the biggest media distributors, like the BBC and other national newspapers. Another big factor in London's economy is the East London Tech City, also known as the Silicon Roundabout. The Tech City welcomes all kinds of scientific and technological companies. It will also be one of the first to receive a geoTLD, a geographic Internet domain.

On a more social level, London features a very big variety in it's population: nearly a third of the city's population is from black, asian or other ethnic minorities. There are 50 non-indigenous communities with a population of more than 10,000. 300 languages are spoken throughout the city, and there are large communities representing the majority of the world's religions. It is also one of the most popular tourist centres in the world, with 14 million international visitors per year, making it Europe's most visited city. With it's 240 museums and galleries, 32 borough, as well as being home to more than 300 theatres, 500 cinema screens and around 12,000 restaurants, it is a big touristic centre, each year powering up the UK's budget with 15 billion GBP per year. London is also home to the largest concentration of Higher Education in Europe: 43 universities like the Imperial College, University College or King's College. It houses around 4,500 world-class researchers and renowned medical and clinical trial centres. London is also the greenest city of it's size in the world: 40 % of the city's size are green spaces.

As we can see, London is considered as a global city because of the very big economical activity it houses, being a major transports hub. It is also home to a very varied culture, with a very varied population, as well as a developed educational centre. It is also considered as one of the most ecological cities of it's size.