The United Kingdom is a country in northwestern Europe. The official name is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The United Kingdom consists of four political divisions - England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. London is the capital and the largest city.

The United Kingdom occupies an area of over 244,000 sq km and has a population of over 58 million.

The United Kingdom has a mild climate. The climate is influenced by the Gulf Stream.

The United Kingdom has a rich history. The British started the Industrial Revolution. They founded the largest empire in history. They have produced some of the world's greatest scientists, explorers, artists, and political leaders. Queen Elizabeth II is the head of the state. The prime minister is the head of the government.

The United Kingdom is an important manufacturing and trading nation.

The country is one of the world's largest producers of tractors. British factories also make railway equipment and machine tools.

The Industrial Revolution began in Britain's textile industry. Today Britain remains an important producer of cotton and woolen textiles. Many British farmers practice mixed farming. Farmers in almost every part of the country raise sheep for meat and wool

France, Germany, and the United States are Britain's leading customers and suppliers. A growing proportion of the country's trade is with the members of the European Community, which the United Kingdom joined in 1973.