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Absolventská práce

Great Britain

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Great Britain

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Situation

Great Britain, the official name is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, is situated on over 1000 islands, which are called the British islands and lie between the Northern sea and the Atlantic ocean, north-west of continental Europe. The biggest of these islands is Great Britain, which is the largest island of Europe and the third most populous island in the world. Between Great Britain and continental Europe there is a channel, which is only 31 kilometres wide in its most narrow place because Great Britain was a peninsula of Europe before the last ice age. Now only the Channel tunnel, which is beneath the English Channel, links Great Britain with France.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland consists of four parts – England (the largest), Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (the smallest).

Geography

The island is marked by low, rolling countryside in the east and south, while hills and mountains predominate in the western and northern regions. But these hills and mountains aren't high. The highest mountain of Great Britain is Carrantouhill on the south-west coast which is 1040 meters high.

Great Britain has many lakes and British rivers are short through but they are very furcate with big estuaries. That is because Great Britain is surrounded by the sea and because it has got wet climate. The main British rivers and estuaries are Thames, Severn and Humber estuary.

Great Britain is in the north temperate climate zone. British climate is very wet and the difference between air temperature in summer and in winter is small. So there are cold summers and genial winters. That is because British islands are warmed by hot Gulf Stream which streams from Canada to Europe across the Atlantic ocean.

Population

The population of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is about 60 million people. The most of people live in England where one of the highest population density in the world is (383 people per 1 square kilometre). About a quarter of all people in Britain lives in the south-east region of Great Britain around London.

The biggest church in Britain is the Church of England which 26% of all people in the country belong to. There is the British King (or Queen) on the top of the Church of England. Apart from that there are many other churches in the United Kingdom (the Church of Scotland, the National church of Wales, "National" church of Northern Ireland, Roman Catholicism, Islam etc.)

The official language of the United Kingdom is English. English is an Indo-European, West Germanic language. It is the first language for people in many countries (the United Kingdom, the USA, Australia, Ireland, Canada etc.) and many people use English as their second language. The immigrants speak French, German, Polish and Spanish.

The celebrities of Britain are for example music groups The Beatles, Queen, Black Sabbath etc., inventors Sir Isaac Newton (who made Laws of Gravitation), James Watt (who construed first steam engine in the world), Charles Darwin (who gave account of evolution theory) etc, painters sir Joshua Reynolds, Thomas Gainsborough etc., actors Rowan Atkinson, Ewan McGregor, Catherine Zeta Jones etc.

Government and Politics

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is a constitutional monarchy with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain and Northern Ireland as the head of the state. The monarch of the UK serves as the head of the state of fifteen other Commonwealth countries, putting Britain in a personal union with those other states. The United Kingdom has fourteen overseas territories around the world, the last remaining territories of the British Empire. Though Britain is a monarchy, it has a parliament with the Prime Minister, the constitution etc. The British Parliament edits and passes all acts because the Queen has only representative status. But for English people their Queen is one of the national emblems as the national flag etc.

Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales each has a devolved, unicameral legislature and its own government or Executive, led by the First Minister.

Cities and conurbation

The capitals of countries of Britain are Belfast (Northern Ireland), Cardiff (Wales), Edinburgh (Scotland) and London (England). Apart from these there are many others cities in the United Kingdom (Dover, Liverpool, Birmingham, Glasgow etc.)

The capital city of the United Kingdom is London. There are about 8 257 000 people. It is one of the world's bussines, finacial and cultural centres. London also has influence in fashion, politics, entertainment, art, education and media. There are many beautiful historical landmarks. For example Buckingham palace, Tower bridge, Building of Parliament, Tower of London etc. There lives the English King (or Queen) with his (her) family at Buckingham palace.

Economy

The British economy was mature already in the Middle Ages above all because Britain had many plantations all over the world. The English people were progressive, that is why the Industrial revolution started in 18th century just here. The British economy was concentrated on heavy industry (shipbuilding, coal mining, and steel production) and textil industry.

Now the service sector makes the most of British GDP (73% of GDP – gross domestic product). The biggest part of service sector makes the financial service. London is the biggest financial centre in the world and the major centre of international bussiness and commerce. It is the leader of three command centres for the global economy (along with New York and Tokyo).

Though the most of British economy is in the service sector, the manufacturing sector is important too. There is the motor industry in the United Kingdom.

The agricultural sector is a very small part of economy (only 0.9% of GDP).

Though the United Kingdom is one of the first members of the European Union, their currency is not the euro but it is the British pound because the British people do not want it.

Information sources

When I did this work I used this Information sources:

internet sites: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Kingdom

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/London>

and a book “Velká Británie a Irsko”, Olympia, Praha, 1990 ISNB 27-052-90.