

0'00

Hi everyone! I'm Hannah, an English teacher at Virtually Fluent and in today's video we're going to talk about the differences between the United Kingdom, Great Britain and the British Isles. To read this blog in written form head over to our website, the link is in the description below. In the blog on our website, you also have access to a free mini-lesson on the topic of nationalities.

0'38

For being such a small island, my country is quite complicated when it comes to the name. We have the United Kingdom, Great Britain, and the British Isles. But in order to understand what each of these mean, we first need to learn about four individual countries.

1'01

England is a country that first identified itself as "Engla land" following the invasion of the Jutes, Saxons and Angles in the 5th century. We are a small country bordered by Scotland and Wales and surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean, the Irish Sea, the English Channel and the North Sea.

1'27

The capital of England is London, which is the most populated city by far. From a population of 68 million people, almost 10 million are from London. To provide

more perspective, the second-largest city is Birmingham, with just 2 million people.

1'51

The country is ruled by the UK government, but each of the 48 regions (called “counties”) have some local responsibilities, such as council tax, education, public transport, libraries and waste disposal amongst many other things.

2'13

There is a lot of rivalry between regions. Most notably, the “North-South divide”. Typically, the northern counties are industry-based and politically left-wing, whilst the south is service-based and typically centre-right. There is not a physical divide between the north and south, but there are many jokes and jokes amongst stereotypes the English people about those on the other side of the line.

2'47

Wales is perhaps the most different country in our kingdom. Although English is still the main language, around 20% of the population speak Welsh as the primary language and 75% of people can understand, read or write Welsh.

3'08

Wales only has six cities: the capital city is Cardiff, then there is Bangor, St David's, St Asaph, Swansea and Newport. Wales has beautiful landscapes, parks and castles, but the main industries are mining and manufacturing.

3'31

Scotland is the modern English for Scotia (in Latin) meaning land of the Scots. Scotland is to the north of England and accounts for around one third of the land on our island. Scotland has a small population of 5.5 million people and the

capital city is Edinburgh. Other populated cities include Glasgow, Aberdeen and Dundee. This country is also known for its beautiful landscapes, castles and lakes and here are many small Scottish islands, such as Skye, Mull and Lewis & Harris with beautiful views of the sea.

4'14

The main language is English, but Scotland also has a history of Scottish Gaelic and Scots language, but these aren't spoken by many people. Some words still exist, like "loch", which means "lake" in modern English. I'm sure you have heard of Loch Ness!

4'35

Northern Ireland has a long history of invasions given its location as a small island on the west of England, Scotland and Wales. The capital city is Belfast, but Derry is another important city. The population in Northern Ireland is about 1.8 million, so it's the smallest country in our kingdom.

4'59

The main language in Northern Ireland is also English, but Irish Gaelic was the dominant language before the 17th century. The accent of the Northern Irish people is also quite different to England too.

5'11

There's been a long-standing rivalry between the two main religious groups in Northern Ireland- Roman Catholics and Protestants. And religion is also closely related to politics. Roman Catholics are often nationalists, who support the unification of Ireland (so Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland). Protestants are often unionists, who support the United Kingdom. This rivalry

became extremely intense in the 1900's and sadly led to lots of deaths and street wars on the streets of Northern Ireland and England.

5'49

So, now we know all about England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. So which countries belong to Great Britain, The United Kingdom and The British Isles?

6'00

Great Britain is the word to represent England, Scotland and Wales together. It was formed in 1707 by the Acts of Union. And this term is used in the Olympics and other global sports.

6'16

The United Kingdom (UK) is the word to represent England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales together. It was formed in 1800 in an Act of Union and involved all of Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales, but in 1922, the Republic of Ireland gained independence, so this left only Northern Ireland as part of the UK. Nowadays, the official name is "The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland". And this is the name used by the UK government, our passports and more official documents.

6'53

The British Isles represents all of Ireland, England, Wales, Scotland, the Isle of Man, Shetland, Orkney and many smaller islands too.

7'05

Although we generally work together as one united kingdom, when it comes to sport (especially rugby and football) it's each country to its own!

7'16

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