# Information Guide

## United Kingdom

A guide to information sources on the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

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Information sources in the ESO database

- United Kingdom – External / Internal / Regions

General information

- United Kingdom: GOV.UK [Government information and services]
  - Key facts
- European Union: European countries: United Kingdom
- United Nations: Data: Country profiles: United Kingdom
- Wikipedia: United Kingdom
- United States: CIA: The World Factbook: United Kingdom
- United States: State Department: Background Note: United Kingdom
- BBC News: Country Profile: United Kingdom
- Encyclopaedia Britannica: World data: United Kingdom
- Guardian Newspaper Ltd: UK News: British identity and society
- Find websites on the United Kingdom through Google

Agricultural information

- United Kingdom: Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
  - Agriculture in the United Kingdom
  - DEFRA economics and statistics
- United Kingdom: Northern Ireland: Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
- United Kingdom: Scotland: Agriculture and Rural Development
- United Kingdom: Wales: Environment and countryside
- European Commission: European Network for Rural Development: Country Information
- FAO: Country profile: United Kingdom
- OECD: Agriculture and Fisheries: United Kingdom
- Organic Europe: Organic farming in European countries: United Kingdom

Competition policy information

- United Kingdom: Department of Trade and Industry: Consumer and competition policy [archived February 2006]
- United Kingdom: Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)
  Note: From 1 April 2014 the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) replaced the Competition Commission and the Office of Fair Trading.
  - United Kingdom: Competition Commission [archived March 2014]
  - United Kingdom: Office of Fair Trading [archived March 2014]
- United Kingdom: Office of Communications (OFCOM)
- United Kingdom: Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem)
- United Kingdom: Office of the Rail Regulator
- OECD: Competition: United Kingdom

Culture and language information

- United Kingdom: Department for culture, media and sport
- United Kingdom: England: The Arts Council of England
- United Kingdom: Northern Ireland: Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
- United Kingdom: Scotland: Arts, Culture and Sport
- United Kingdom: Wales: Culture and Sport
  - Welsh Language
• Council of Europe/ERICarts: Cultural Policies in Europe: [Country information]
• UNESCO: [World Heritage Sites]
• European Commission: DG Education and Culture: [Europe and culture]
• SIL international: Ethnologue: [Languages of the World]
• Euromosaic: [Regional and Minority Languages in the European Union]
• University of the Highlands and Islands: [European Minority Languages] [select language]

Defence and security information

• United Kingdom: [Ministry of Defence]
• United Kingdom: [British Army]
• United Kingdom: [Royal Air Force]
• United Kingdom: [Royal Navy]
• United Kingdom: Intelligence Agencies:
  o [MI6 Secret Intelligence Service (SIS)]
  o [MI5 Security Service]
  o [Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ)]
• United Kingdom: [UK Delegation to NATO]

Economic information

• ESO: United Kingdom: [Economic situation]
• United Kingdom: [Department for Business, Innovation and Skills]
• United Kingdom: Northern Ireland: [Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment]
• United Kingdom: Scotland: [Business, Industry and Energy]
• United Kingdom: Wales: [Business and Economy]
• United Kingdom: [Treasury]
  o [The UK economy]
  o [Weekly economic indicators]
  o [Forecasts for the UK economy]
  o [International issues] [archived April 2010]
  o [Economic data]
• United Kingdom: Northern Ireland: [Department of Finance and Personnel]
• United Kingdom: Scotland: [Finance]
• United Kingdom: [Bank of England]
• United Kingdom: [London Stock Exchange]
• European Commission: DG Economic and Financial Affairs: Economies of the Member States:
  o [United Kingdom]
  o [Stability and Convergence Programmes]
• European Commission: DG Taxation and Customs Union:
  o [Taxation and customs duties in the EU Member States] [information papers and studies with country-specific information]
  o [Taxation and customs duties in the United Kingdom]
• IMF: [Country Information]
• OECD: [Economic Survey of the United Kingdom 2015]
  o [Overview 2015]
• OECD: Key tables from OECD: Country statistical profiles: United Kingdom:
  o [2015 edition]
• UNCTAD/WTO: International Trade Centre: [Country Information]
• World Trade Organization (WTO): [United Kingdom and the WTO]
• World Bank: United Kingdom at a glance
• United States Commercial Service: Country Commercial Guide: United Kingdom

Education information

• United Kingdom: Department for Education
• United Kingdom: Northern Ireland: Department of Education
• United Kingdom: Scotland: Education and Training
• United Kingdom: Wales: Education and skills
• European Commission: Study in Europe: Country profiles [for United Kingdom, link to British Council website]
• European Commission: Youth Partnership: Country Sheet on Youth Policy in the United Kingdom
• Eurydice: Eurypedia - The European Encyclopaedia on National Education Systems:
  o England
  o Northern Ireland
  o Scotland
  o Wales
• Council of Europe/UNESCO/European Commission: ENIC: Country profiles: United Kingdom [offers links to national education authorities and information sites]
• Council of Europe: Cultural Cooperation: Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights: United Kingdom
• OECD: Education: United Kingdom
• UNESCO Institute for Statistics: Education in the United Kingdom
• World Bank: EdStats: Summary education profile
• TheCompleteUniversityGuide.co.uk: Universities in the United Kingdom
  o England
  o Northern Ireland
  o Scotland
  o Wales
• EuroEducation: European Education Directory: Education Systems:
  o United Kingdom – England
  o United Kingdom – Scotland
  o United Kingdom - Wales
• Nation Master: Education in the United Kingdom: Statistics
• Wikipedia: Education in the United Kingdom

Employment information

• United Kingdom: Department for Work and Pensions
• United Kingdom: Northern Ireland: Department for Employment and Learning
• United Kingdom: Scotland: Employability
• United Kingdom: Wales: Jobs Growth Wales
• European Commission: DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion:
  o European Employment Strategy: Europe 2020 in the United Kingdom
  o European Employment Strategy: National Action Plans [choose year and country]
• EurWORK: European Observatory of Working Life: Country information
• European Trade Union Institute (ETUI): National Industrial Relations in the United Kingdom
• Federation of International Employers: Pay and working conditions across Europe
• OECD: Employment: United Kingdom
• International Labour Organization (ILO): NATLEX: United Kingdom
Energy information

- United Kingdom: Department of Energy and Climate Change
- European Commission: DG Energy: ManagEnergy:
  - National Energy Agencies
  - National Energy Actors
  - National Action Plans [select country]
- International Energy Agency:
  - Country information
  - Country-specific statistics
- United States: Energy Information Administration:
  - Country Analysis Brief
  - United Kingdom Overview [find statistics, forecasts, analyses and reports]

Environmental information

- United Kingdom: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
  - Environmental protection
- United Kingdom: Northern Ireland: Department of the Environment
- United Kingdom: Scotland: Environment
- United Kingdom: Wales: Environment and countryside
- United Kingdom: Centre for Environment, Fisheries, and Aquaculture Science
- United Kingdom: Natural Environment Research Council
- United Kingdom: England and Wales: Environment Agency
- United Kingdom: Scotland: Scottish Environment Protection Agency
- European Commission: DG Environment: LIFE Programme: United Kingdom
- European Environment Agency:
  - European Environment Information and Observation Network (EIONET): Country Information Sources
  - State of the Environment Reporting Information System (SERIS): United Kingdom
  - European Network of the Heads of Environment Protection Agencies (EPANET): United Kingdom
- European Environmental Bureau: United Kingdom
- FAO: Specialised Country Profiles and Information Systems [choose a thematic database]
  - Forestry Department: United Kingdom [follow ‘select a country’ on the left-hand bar]
  - Food security and safety: United Kingdom
- OECD: Environment: United Kingdom
- Friends of the Earth International: England, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Greenpeace International: Greenpeace UK

European policies and relations with the EU

- United Kingdom: Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)
  - UK and the European Union
- United Kingdom: HM Treasury
  - The Euro [archived April 2010]
  - UK policy on Economic and Monetary Union [archived April 2010]
  - European economic reform
  - Europe 2020: UK National Reform Programme 2013
- United Kingdom: Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)
  - Policy Area: Europe
  - European structural and cohesion funds [archived March 2010]
  - State aid
  - UK Higher Education International Unit (IU)
• EU and International Science and Innovation [archived February 2012]
  • United Kingdom: Department for Communities and Local Government
    • Cities and regions [archived August 2010]
      ▪ European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN) [archived May 2010 – currently under review]
      ▪ European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) [archived May 2010 – currently under review]
  • United Kingdom: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
  • United Kingdom: Department for Work and Pensions
    • European Social Fund (ESF) in England 2007-2013
    • European funds
  • United Kingdom: Northern Ireland:
    • Office of the First Minister: European Policy and Coordination
    • Office of the Northern Ireland Executive in Brussels
  • United Kingdom: Scotland:
    • Scottish Parliament: European and External Relations Committee
    • Scottish Executive EU Office
  • United Kingdom: Wales:
    • Welsh Government: Wales and the European Union
    • National Assembly for Wales: European and External Affairs Committee
    • The European Commission Office in Wales
  • European Union: Countries: United Kingdom in the EU
  • European Commission:
    • Representation in the United Kingdom
    • EU information in the UK
  • European Commission: Enterprise Europe Network: United Kingdom
  • European Commission: DG Economic and Financial Affairs: United Kingdom
    • Stability and Growth Pact
    • Stability and Convergence Programmes [select country]
    • United Kingdom and the euro
  • European Commission: InfoRegio: Cohesion Policy and the United Kingdom
  • European Commission: Press release database: RAPID [choose period required and add ‘GB’ to keyword field]
  • European Parliament: Information Office:
    • United Kingdom
    • Office in Edinburgh
  • Council of the European Union: Public document register
  • European Investment Bank: Finance contracts signed/Loans for United Kingdom
  • Special EU Programmes Body: Peace IV Programme: Overview
  • United Kingdom: UK network of Euro Documentation Centres
  • Council of Europe: Member States: United Kingdom
  • OECD: The United Kingdom and the OECD

Geographic information and maps

• EUROPA: Functioning of the European Union: Map of the EU [click on ‘map’, then on country]
• FAO: Country profiles and mapping information system: Country maps
• Lonely Planet: Map of England
• MapsOfWorld.com: United Kingdom maps
• University of Texas: Perry Castañeda Library Map Collection: United Kingdom

Health information

• United Kingdom: Department of Health
• United Kingdom: Northern Ireland: Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
- United Kingdom: Scotland: [Health and Social Care](#)
- United Kingdom: Wales: [Health and Social Care](#)
- EUROPA: Your Europe: Citizens: Health: National contacts in the [United Kingdom](#)
- European Commission: DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion: Social Protection in the EU [find country- related information on social security systems]
  - Health and Long-term Care
  - Social protection systems in EU Member States and the European Economic Area: [MISSOC – Mutual Information System on Social Protection](#)
- European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA):
  - Country situation overview: [United Kingdom](#)
  - European legal database on drugs: [Country profiles](#) [select country]
  - National reports on the drug situation
  - National strategies [documents and country profiles]
  - Legal Text search [find national drugs legislation]
- OECD: Health: [United Kingdom](#)
- World Health Organisation:
  - Country Information
  - Regional Office for Europe: [Country Information](#)

### Human rights information

- United Kingdom: [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#)
  - The British Institute of Human Rights
- Council of Europe:
  - European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI): [Country report](#)
  - European Commission on Human Rights: [United Kingdom](#)
- European Committee for the Prevention of Torture: [State documents and visits](#)
- Council of Europe: Venice Commission: [United Kingdom](#)
- European Court of Human Rights:
  - [Country Fact Sheets 1959-2010](#) [select country]
  - [Violation by Article and by State 1959-2012](#)
  - [Statistics on Judgments by State 1959-2010](#)
- United States: State Department:
  - [2014 Human Rights Report](#) [select country]
  - Previous versions
  - [International Religious Freedom Report for 2013](#)
  - Previous versions
- Amnesty International: [Country Index](#)
- Human Rights Watch: [United Kingdom](#)
- Reporters Without Borders: Freedom of Information in the [United Kingdom](#)

### Intellectual property information

- United Kingdom: [United Kingdom Intellectual Property Office](#)
- European Patent Office: [United Kingdom Intellectual Property Office](#)
- World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO): Member States: [United Kingdom](#)
  - Search facility for national laws and treaties on intellectual property (IP): [WIPO Lex](#) [select country in list]
- IPmenu: [United Kingdom](#) [guide to intellectual property web resources]

### Investment information

- United Kingdom: [UK Trade & Investment Department](#)
• United Kingdom: Northern Ireland: Invest Northern Ireland
• United Kingdom: Scotland: Scottish Development International
• United Kingdom: Wales: Business and Economy
• OECD: Investment: United Kingdom
• OECD: Industry and Entrepreneurship: United Kingdom
• United States: US Commercial Service: Doing Business in the United Kingdom
  o Country Commercial Guide

Justice and home affairs information

• United Kingdom: Home Office
• United Kingdom: Ministry of Justice
• United Kingdom: Northern Ireland: Courts and Tribunals Service
• United Kingdom: Scotland: Law, Order and Public Safety
• United Kingdom: Wales: Courts and Tribunals Judiciary of England and Wales
• European Commission: European Judicial Network in civil and commercial matters: Country information
• Council of Europe:
  o European Commission for Democracy through Law: Documents on the United Kingdom
  o Group of States against Corruption (GRECO): Evaluations
• European Court of Justice: National and international legal sites
• OECD: Bribery and Corruption: United Kingdom
• United States: Law Library of Congress: Law online: United Kingdom
• University of Bern: International Constitutional Law: Countries: United Kingdom
• EUDO Observatory on Citizenship: Citizenship laws and policy: United Kingdom

Living and working information

• United Kingdom: GOV.UK [Government information and services]
• United Kingdom: Department for Work and Pensions
• European Commission: DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion: EURES: Living and Working: United Kingdom
• EUROPA: Your Europe: Business [find factsheets with specific information on individual Member States]
• EurWORK: European Observatory of Working Life: National Surveys: United Kingdom
• JustLanded.com: United Kingdom

Media information

• United Kingdom: Independent regulator and competition authority for the UK communications industries: Ofcom
• European Broadcasting Union: Active Members
• European Journalism Centre: European Media Landscape: United Kingdom
• European Newspapers Publishers Association (ENPA): Newspapers on-line
• ABYZ News Links: Europe Newspapers and News Media: United Kingdom
• Newslink: European Newspapers: United Kingdom
• Online Newspapers:
  o England A-K
  o England L-Z
  o Wales
• Radiomap: Radio Stations in United Kingdom
Political information (including elections)

- ESO: United Kingdom: Political situation
- ESO: United Kingdom: Political situation: Elections
- United Kingdom: GOV.UK [Government information and services]
  - A-Z of national government departments
  - Information about government in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales
  - European Union
- United Kingdom:
  - Parliament
  - Prime Minister
  - British Monarchy
- United Kingdom: Foreign & Commonwealth Office: UK Embassies Overseas
- United Kingdom: Northern Ireland:
  - Executive of Northern Ireland
  - Northern Ireland Assembly
- United Kingdom: Scotland:
  - Scottish Executive
  - Scottish Parliament
- United Kingdom: Wales:
  - Welsh Executive
  - National Assembly for Wales
- United Kingdom: Electoral Commission
- OECD: Public Governance: United Kingdom
- OECD: Regulatory Reform: United Kingdom
- Agor: Political resources online: United Kingdom
- Wikipedia: Politics of the United Kingdom
- Wikipedia: Elections in United Kingdom

Public management information

- United Kingdom: GOV.UK [Government information and services]
- United Kingdom: Government spending
- Europa: European countries: United Kingdom
- OECD: Public Governance: United Kingdom
- EPSI: European Public Sector Information platform: Search [choose country or use the directory to specify a topic]

R&D information

- United Kingdom: Research and development
- United Kingdom: Office of Science
- United Kingdom: Department of Business, Innovation and Skills
- European Commission: CORDIS: Community Research and Development Information Service:
  - R&D gateway: Map-based search
  - United Kingdom
- European Commission: DG Research and Innovation:
  - Horizon 2020 [click on map to select country]
  - European Research Area 2014 [click on map to select country]
- European Commission: Innovation Union:
  - Research and Innovation performance in the United Kingdom, 2014
- European Regions Research & Innovation Network (ERRIN): United Kingdom
England

England does not have a regional structure of government like Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. There has been discussion as to whether there should be some form of regional government at an English level or that of sub-regions within England.

In 1994 a Government Office Network was established to bring together the offices of individual central government departments in each English region and therefore provide a more efficient and integrated service. The Network worked for thirteen central government departments, implementing policies and programmes on the ground (including those with a European dimension), monitoring and reporting on local priorities and responding to civil emergencies.

As part of the June 2010 Government’s commitment to localism, decentralisation and the rolling back of regional government, Ministers announced the abolition of the Government Office for London and a review of the case for the abolition of the remaining Government Offices. On 22 July 2010, the UK Government announced that it intended to abolish the remaining eight Government Offices.

The June 2010 UK Government confirmed its intention to also abolish Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) and support the creation of Local Economic Partnerships (LEPs, later called Local Enterprise Partnerships), to be in place by March 2012 at the latest. It was also indicated that some of the RDAs’ functions would continue at a national, rather than local, level. The UK Government published a White Paper ‘Local growth: realising every place’s potential’ in the autumn of 2010 clarifying the future way forward. A House of Commons Library Standard Note ‘The abolition of regional government’ (2013) provides further details of the current position.

By spring of 2012 there were thirty nine agreed LEPs across England. Some saw the Local Enterprise Partnerships as a first step to revive English regions. As of February 2015, 24 local Enterprise Zones could be counted throughout the country.

The greater responsibilities and powers given to government in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales (as well as the referendum which was held on Scottish
independence) have begun to revive a debate for England to have greater regional powers. More information on this topic can be found through ESO.

Local government structures in England are explained in this House of Commons Library Standard Notes guide published in February 2015).

- **Northern Ireland**
  - [Northern Ireland Executive](#)
  - [Northern Ireland Assembly](#)
    - Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister
      - Report on its Inquiry into consideration of European issues (2010)
    - Special EU Programmes Body
  - United Kingdom: [Northern Ireland Office](#)

- **Scotland**
  - The referendum on Scottish independence was held on 18 September 2014, and the majority voted for no independence, though the difference in opinions was not substantial, with 2,001,926 (55.3%) voting against independence and 1,617,989 (44.7%) voting in favour.
  - The Scottish Government
    - Europe
      - Action Plan for European Engagement (archived page, plan updated in 2015)
      - European Structural and Investment Funds
    - South of Scotland European Partnership
    - Eastern Scotland European Partnership
  - The Scottish Parliament
    - European and External Relations Committee
  - Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)
  - United Kingdom: [Scotland Office](#)
  - Find more information on the 2014 referendum in Scotland on independence and subsequent developments through ESO

- **Wales**
  - Welsh Government
    - Topics
      - Europe
        - Annual Reports and Work Programmes
      - Welsh European Funding Office
    - National Assembly for Wales
      - Research Service: Europe
      - Europe Matters
      - Europe: Policy updates
  - Welsh Local Government Association
    - WLGA and Europe
  - [Cardiff EDC](#)
    - Wales and Europe
  - United Kingdom: [Wales Office](#)

**Social information**

- United Kingdom: [Department for Work and Pensions](#)
- United Kingdom: Northern Ireland: [Department for Social Development](#)
- United Kingdom: Scotland: [People and Society](#)
• United Kingdom: Wales: People and communities
• European Commission: DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion: Social Protection in the EU [find country-related information on social security systems]
  o Pensions
  o Long-term Care
• European Commission: Social protection systems in EU Member States and the European Economic Area: MISSOC – Mutual Information System on Social Protection
• Council of Europe: European Social Charter: Country Factsheets: United Kingdom
• OECD: Insurance and Pensions: United Kingdom
• OECD: Social and Welfare Issues: United Kingdom
• UNICEF: Information by Country: United Kingdom
• United States: SSA: Social security programmes throughout the world: United Kingdom [2010-2011]

Statistical information

• United Kingdom: Office for National Statistics (ONS)
• United Kingdom:
  o UK National Statistics
  o UK snapshot [ Archived January 2011]
• United Kingdom: Northern Ireland: Statistics and Research Agency
• United Kingdom: Scottish Executive: Statistics
• United Kingdom: Welsh Government: Statistics & Research
• Eurostat: Country profiles: United Kingdom [select from list]
  o Eurostat: Europe in figures
  o Eurostat: Regional yearbook
• OECD: Country Statistical Profiles: Statistics on the United Kingdom
• UNESCO: Institute for Statistics: Country and Regional Profiles: United Kingdom
• United Nations: Statistics Division: Millennium Country Profiles [select country]
• World Bank: Key data and statistics: United Kingdom
• NationMaster: Key data and statistics: United Kingdom
• Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives CESSDA Catalogue [search system]

Tourism information

• United Kingdom: British Tourist Authority
• United Kingdom: England: English Tourist Board
• United Kingdom: Northern Ireland: Northern Ireland Tourist Board
• United Kingdom: Scotland: Scotland’s National Tourism Board
• United Kingdom: Wales: Wales Tourist Board
• Guardian Newspaper Ltd: Travel: United Kingdom
• The Telegraph: Destinations: United Kingdom
• Lonely Planet: United Kingdom
• Trip Advisor: Europe Tourism: United Kingdom
• Rough Guides:
  o England
  o Scotland
  o Wales
Transport information

- United Kingdom: Department for Transport
- United Kingdom:
  - British Airways
  - National Rail
- United Kingdom: Northern Ireland: Regional Development
- United Kingdom: Scotland: Transport Scotland
- United Kingdom: Wales: Transport
- European Commission: DG Mobility and Transport:
  - Road Safety in the UK
- Wikipedia: Transport in the United Kingdom

Weather information

- United Kingdom: National Meteorological Agency: Met Office
- BBC Weather Centre: Climate Guide and five day weather forecast: United Kingdom

Martha Kubiniec
ESO Editorial Assistant
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