



Boundary representations are not necessarily authoritative.

BACKGROUND

Land and Climate. Located north of England on the island of Great Britain, Scotland covers 30,421 square miles (78,789 square kilometers) and is about the same size as South Carolina. Scotland's famous Highlands, which include the Grampian Mountains and the North West Highlands, are in the north. Upland wilderness areas surround the central urban valley, which is often referred to as the Central Belt of Scotland. Mineral wealth has made this region the wealthiest and most populated area. Scotland has more than 800 islands, 130 of which are inhabited.

Throughout the country, rugged mountains, green valleys (*glens*), deep blue lakes (*lochs*), and offshore islands provide beautiful scenery. The climate is generally temperate and wet, although it differs from east to west. Rain falls more than 200 days per year; in the west it falls 250 days per year. The west coast and island areas experience high winds and heavy rainfall and have large areas of marsh and peat bogs. The east, with its fertile agricultural land, is colder, drier, and less windy. Summer temperatures average 60°F to 70°F (15–21°C), while daytime winter temperatures usually remain above freezing (36°F, or 2°C).

History. The Scots are descendants of Celtic peoples. Scotland is named after the colony of Scots who came from Ireland in the sixth century and united with the original inhabitants (Picts) in the ninth century. The Scots fought for many years against Vikings from the north and English from the south. Finally, King James VI—son of Mary, Queen of Scots (Mary Stuart)—came to the English throne as King James I and united England and Scotland under one monarch in 1603.

Since that time, the histories of Scotland and England have intertwined. In 1707, the Scottish and English Parliaments

were united by the Act of Union, which founded the constitutional monarchy of the Kingdom of Great Britain. The kingdom became known as the United Kingdom (UK) in 1801 when Ireland was joined to the union. Scotland shared England's industrial revolution, took part in the great British Empire that spanned the globe, and experienced the trials of the world wars. Despite its close ties with England and its function in the kingdom, Scotland has remained a distinct political and cultural entity. Actually, local histories of the individual cities and towns tell far more about the people of Scotland than does the political history of the UK.

A budding nationalist movement that reemerged in the 1970s gained momentum in the early 1990s. Some Scots wanted outright independence from the UK, but most just wanted Scotland to have more control of its own economy and politics. In 1997, the most popular proposal was to avert actual independence by creating a Scottish parliament within the UK with limited tax-raising powers. As the Labour Party supported this proposal, it won the majority of Scottish seats in May 1997 elections. Soon thereafter, the Labour Party approved constitutional reforms and called for a vote on the matter. In September 1997, Scottish voters overwhelmingly supported a referendum creating their own parliament with tax-raising powers.

THE PEOPLE

Population. Scotland's population of about five million is decreasing slightly. Most Scots live in crowded urban areas; only about 350,000 people live in the rugged Highland and island regions. Nearly half the population lives within 40 miles of Glasgow. Glasgow is the largest city (700,000 residents),

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followed by Edinburgh (440,000) and Aberdeen (200,000). Although roughly 90 percent of the population is of Scottish origin, small minority groups have immigrated from England, Ireland, India, Pakistan, and Hong Kong and live in larger cities. English settlers comprise a substantial part of the population in some rural areas. Scots account for less than 10 percent of the total population of the UK, which also includes England, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

Language. English is the official language; however, Gaelic (a Celtic language and Scotland's original tongue) and Scots (an English dialect spoken for centuries in the lowlands) are also spoken. Highlanders speak English with a soft, melodic accent, while city dwellers may have a strong local accent. Gaelic is spoken by about 70,000 people, particularly those living on the Outer Hebrides and in parts of Glasgow. Although Gaelic is the primary language in some areas, residents also speak English; shop and street signs are in Gaelic and English. Learning Gaelic has become a popular pastime in many areas. Scots is spoken in Aberdeen and some rural areas.

Everyday conversation includes many terms derived from Gaelic and Scots. For example, the word for dull is *dreich*. A *brae* is a hill; a *bairn* is a baby. Scots also use certain English words and idioms unique to their culture. For example, to *turn the crack* means "change the subject," and *Aye* means "yes."

Religion. The Church of Scotland (or Presbyterian Church) is the official church, but people may worship as they choose. While the Church of Scotland has the most members (about one million), Roman Catholics, Baptists, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Methodists, and other groups are represented. Christenings and communions are significant events, and religious marriages are most common. Religion is still very important in the Highlands, but the rest of Scotland is increasingly secular; church attendance is falling. Most Scottish youth today have little interest in religion.

General Attitudes. Scots are proud of their heritage. They have a strong sense of their national identity, which is expressed in their view of politics and through their traditional culture. Scots are offended by those who refer to Scots as English. They see Scotland as the most independent nation within the UK and often will emphasize its differences. When asked of their nationality, most English will respond "British," while Scots universally identify themselves as "Scottish."

Scots are known for their courtesy and their reserve with acquaintances. Often critical and very independent, the Scottish character has been described as a "combination of realism and reckless sentiment," including rashness, moodiness, and the ability to relentlessly persevere. They are frequently critical of institutions, such as the monarchy, national and local authorities, and church authorities. Honesty, integrity, and generosity are valued. Loyalty to family and friends, the ability to work hard, and a sense of humor are also highly regarded. Scots share a more socialist mindset than other members of the UK. This is reflected in their strong support of left-of-center political parties.

Divisions between the working class and the middle class are present, although they are somewhat less apparent than in England. Social status is usually measured by occupation and education. Education and employment goals usually vary among classes. Land ownership is highly concentrated; a relative few own the majority of the land. Attitudes also differ from region to region. Those on the west coast tend to have a more relaxed view toward life than their eastern counterparts. They are perceived as softer in character and less ambitious

than those in the east. People living on the east coast are considered hardworking, quiet, reticent, and single-minded.

Personal Appearance. Popular European fashions are worn in Scotland. However, climate also influences the choice of clothing. Woolen sweaters are popular during the cooler months. Lighter fabrics are more common in the summer.

Scottish men often wear the traditional tartan kilt on formal occasions, particularly for weddings, graduations, banquets, and dances. The kilt is a heavy pleated tartan skirt worn only by men and accessorized with several traditional items. Tartan patterns (or plaids) originated in the Highlands. Regions or clans developed distinctive patterns that now associate the wearer with his or her background. Native Scots seldom wear other tartan garments, although women may wear tartan skirts. When they marry, women wear long white traditional wedding dresses.

CUSTOMS AND COURTESIES

Greetings. Scots usually shake hands when meeting for the first time. However, handshakes are used less often than in other European countries and are generally light and nonaggressive. Scots do not stand close to each other when greeting or speaking. Hugging is reserved for people they know well.

Scots can be somewhat formal, yet friendly, in their greetings. In formal situations, one might say *Good morning/afternoon, Mr./Mrs. . . . How do you do?* In less formal situations, *Hi, Hello, or How are you today?* is used. Among friends one might say *Hiya or Aright?* In the northeast, *Fit like?* replaces *How are you?* The Gaelic equivalent is *Ciamar a tha thu* (pronounced KEE-MIR A HA OO). People often use *Cheers* as a parting phrase. To say good-bye from a distance, one may lift the hand up to the height of the head while walking away.

Most Scots use first names to address each other; professionals are addressed by their title and surname. Nicknames are used between friends and between husbands and wives. People are referred to as *laddie* (male) or *lassie* (female). The terms *wifey* (female), *mum* (mom), and *chap* (male) may be used also.

Gestures. Scots generally do not use their hands when speaking. A pat on the shoulder may be acceptable when expressing appreciation or agreement. It is impolite to pass through someone's line of vision (while shopping, for example). Shouting in public is rude, as is spitting, littering, and displaying intimate affection. It is polite to offer seats to the elderly on buses and trains.

Visiting. Scots, particularly those in the Highland areas, take pride in their hospitality. Visits to the home are usually prearranged. Only close friends and family drop by unannounced. The custom of enjoying *afternoon tea* around 3 p.m. on a daily basis is no longer common; more common is coffee at 11 a.m. However, friends may be invited to drop by on weekends for *afternoon tea*. During these visits, hosts serve a drink and cake or *biscuits* (cookies). When hosts invite friends for *tea* in the evening, they usually serve a formal meal. Scots are open and candid in conversation and have a keen but subtle sense of humor. Religion, salary, and (less often) politics are topics to be avoided. When formally invited to a home, one customarily brings a small gift, such as flowers, or a bottle of wine. Guests usually offer their gift to the hosts upon arriving.

Outside of the home, most social interaction takes place in pubs (*public houses*). People go to pubs not only for drinks but also for meals and socializing. It is quite common for entire families to go to a pub.

Eating. Proper table etiquette is important and admired. Scots use the continental style of eating, with the fork in the left hand and the knife in the right. They consider it impolite to begin eating before everyone present has been served. Asking for and accepting second servings is appropriate. A person indicates that he or she is finished eating by placing the fork and knife together on the plate. Breakfast is usually cereal (sometimes porridge), coffee or tea, and toast. Lunch is a light meal often consisting of sandwiches, soup, and a drink. Dinner is the main meal of the day and is served around 5 or 6 p.m. In restaurants, a common tip is about 10 percent. Tipping is not required in pubs.

LIFESTYLE

Family. In urban areas, families are small and tend to keep to themselves. Although relatives visit often, families remain separate from each other. The elderly prefer to stay in their own homes and remain independent as long as possible rather than live with their married children. About half of all families live in rented homes or apartments (*flats*). Scotland is lacking in good family facilities. All Scots value home ownership. While the husband is regarded as the head of the home among older couples, younger couples are more likely to make decisions jointly. A majority of women now work outside of the home, and this proportion continues to increase. Women still have a greater share of household responsibilities, although this is changing among younger couples. Single-parent families are common.

Highland areas were originally defended by tribal groups called clans. Although early Highland families were loyal to their clan, the organizations have little influence over contemporary Scottish society. For native Scots, the family is more important than the clan. This has been the prevailing attitude since the clan system was dismantled in the early 19th century. However, each clan is still headed by a chieftain, whose role is mainly symbolic. Chieftains can be of either gender.

Dating and Marriage. Dating in Scotland is different from dating in the United States. Individuals come to know each other in the context of a social circle. Only as a relationship progresses do they begin to date apart from the group. Rather than dating many different people, Scots date one person at a time. Popular activities include going to discos, the cinema, or pubs, or just hanging around with groups of friends in town centers. People also enjoy going to dances featuring traditional Scottish music. Little socializing is done at school. Living together before or instead of marrying is becoming more common, although it is not always accepted. Couples usually marry in their mid- to late twenties, but some choose to marry later.

The bride may give sugar almonds or a small posy of dried flowers to special guests or to those who have helped with the wedding. A *scramble* or *pour-out* is a bag of small change that the best man scatters onto the pavement or road after the bride and groom have driven away. Small children scramble to get as much of it as possible.

Diet. While daily meals usually are not elaborate, many Scottish dishes are complex and exquisite. The normal diet includes *mince* (ground meat) and *tatties* (potatoes), *fish suppers* (fish and chips seasoned with salt and vinegar), stews, beef, lamb, *neeps* (boiled turnips), and simple vegetables. *Haggis*, a national dish, is made from ground sheep entrails that are mixed with oats and spices, tied in a sheep's stomach, and cooked. *Stovies* (roast beef, onions, and potatoes) are also

common. Fast food and *take-away* (Chinese, Indian, fish and chips) are popular with the younger generation. Baked items such as cakes and *biscuits* (cookies) are well liked, as are scones, oatcakes, and *black buns* (a fruit cake on a pastry base). Scots enjoy sweet desserts. Typical desserts, known as *puddings*, include *crumbles* (fruit pies), ice cream, and trifle. Beer, lager, and Scottish whisky are common drinks.

Recreation. *Football* (soccer) and rugby are favorite sports among the Scottish. Basketball, volleyball, and badminton are played in the high schools. Swimming, aerobics, fishing, and going to the gym are also popular. The Scots invented golf in the 1500s; it is still one of their favorite games. Scotland's golf courses are spread over the rolling green countryside and are considered some of the world's best. The Highland Games, which resemble track meets, are held in the late summer. During the winter, many people enjoy skiing and curling. Curling involves two teams of four players who slide granite stones over ice to reach a target. *Shinty*, a Celtic sport similar to hockey, is common in the Highlands.

The Highland bagpipe was used throughout Scotland's history as an instrument of celebration and of war. It is used today mostly for ceremonial and sporting occasions, although many enjoy bagpipe music for private listening. Scots like to watch television, videos, and movies. Social drinking is common, as are lounges and pubs.

The Arts. Arts festivals, such as Glasgow's Mayfest and the Edinburgh International Festival (one of the world's largest arts festivals), are popular. Instruments used in Scottish music include the bagpipes, the fiddle, the cello, and the *clarsach* (a small harp). Folk music is prevalent; people enjoy writing new folk songs and performing traditional ones.

Scottish dancing is performed in many countries. A *ceilidh* is a traditional dance enjoyed by many. Some *ceilidh* dances are the Dashing White Sergeant and the Highland Schottische. Highland dances, the reel, and Scottish Country Dancing are other prominent types of dance.

Several respected Scottish writers have advanced Scotland's literary tradition. In recent years, more women writers have been recognized. Writers are becoming more experimental and developing new styles while preserving a distinctly Scottish literary flavor.

Holidays. Scotland celebrates many UK holidays. Official holidays include New Year's Day, Easter, Christmas, and Boxing Day (26 Dec.). New Year's Eve is known as *Hogmanay* and is the biggest holiday of the year; people drink and dance all night long. Virtually everything closes down for Christmas, including restaurants and shops. Boxing Day comes from the old British tradition of giving small boxed gifts to service workers the day after Christmas; it is now a day for visiting and relaxing. Banquets called *Burns Suppers* honor poet Robert Burns on his birthday (25 Jan.). *Haggis* is always served at these suppers. Other holidays include May Day, celebrated 1 May or the first Monday in May, and Remembrance Day, held the Sunday closest to 11 November. Scots also enjoy local holidays, such as spring and autumn holidays. To most Scots, local holidays are as significant as national ones.

Commerce. Businesses generally are open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. Government offices stay open until 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Small towns have a local half-day during the week when most shops close for the afternoon. Most shops are open Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Glasgow and Edinburgh are the main centers of business, and major stores often remain open until 8 p.m. at least one

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night a week. Most large stores open on Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

SOCIETY

Government. The UK's constitutional monarchy, with Queen Elizabeth II as head of state, is a parliamentary system. The 1,200-member House of Lords has limited legislative power, although it is the highest judicial body in the land. Laws are passed in the 659-seat House of Commons, whose members are elected by the people. Scotland has 72 seats in the House of Commons. The leader of the majority party is appointed as prime minister by the queen. The prime minister, currently Tony Blair, selects a cabinet and runs the government. Elections are held at least every five years, but the prime minister has the power to call for early elections.

The Scottish Executive is the local government of Scotland. It is led by a first minister (currently Jack McConnell) and handles many of the nation's day-to-day concerns, including health, education, housing, and law enforcement. Scotland's Parliament comprises 129 elected members. Most tax, foreign affairs, defense, and social security responsibilities remain with the UK. Scotland maintains its own legal system, related to but different from that of England.

Economy. Many Scots are employed in technology, fishing, manufacturing, forestry, tourism, and textiles. Whisky is also an important industry. Several newer industries, such as chemicals, have taken hold in Scotland. Agriculture is intensive and efficient. Potatoes, vegetables, and grains are among the most important agricultural products. The discovery of oil in the North Sea has brought economic growth to the area. Scotland has many fine ports from which the UK conducts trade. The currency of the UK is the British pound sterling (GBP). Scotland also issues its own bank notes, which are legal tender throughout the UK, although sometimes English shopkeepers illegally refuse to accept them.

Real gross domestic product per capita has more than doubled in the last generation. However, Scotland has a larger gap between the wealthy and the poor than in some other European countries. Likewise, the UK's middle class is not so prosperous as that of other developed nations.

Transportation and Communications. Scotland is linked by international and domestic air services. Railways also connect most parts of the country, except in the northwest. Because of increased traffic, Scotland intends to invest substantial resources over the next decade in improving its rail network. Most people own cars. Following the British tradition, traffic moves on the left side of the road. On single-lane roads, vehicles must pull over to allow oncoming traffic to pass. Drivers customarily exchange waves in these situations. Buses, taxis, and underground railways are common in the cities. The public transportation system is excellent. Telecommunications are well advanced, with international fiber-optic cable links and satellite systems. There are a number of daily newspapers, and nearly every home has a television. Home computers are commonplace, as is access to the internet and e-mail.

Education. Education is free and compulsory for students between ages six and sixteen, although most begin school a bit earlier. Scotland has its own education system, which offers

DEVELOPMENT DATA

Human Dev. Index* rank	13 of 175 countries
Adjusted for women	11 of 144 countries
Real GDP per capita	\$24,160
Adult literacy rate	99 percent (male); 99 (female)
Infant mortality rate	5 per 1,000 births
Life expectancy	75 (male); 80 (female)

more subjects but less depth than the English system. The examinations given at the completion of secondary school are not the same as those in England. Both public and private schools are available in Scotland. Private schools receive some state funding and are subject to some control. Scotland's first Gaelic-only school opened in 1999. There are various vocational schools and 13 universities. Students come from a wide range of social backgrounds to pursue four-year degree courses. Undergraduate education is free, and funds often are available for postgraduate study. The universities of St. Andrews, Glasgow, and Aberdeen were founded in the 1400s.

Health. The UK's National Health Service provides, on the basis of taxation, free medical treatment and many other social services. Individuals pay only for prescriptions and some dental services. Medical facilities are advanced. Private medical care is also available. Private services are usually more up-to-date than public services, and the wait for treatment is usually shorter. Scotland has a high rate of lung cancer and heart disease; the UK has one of the worst rates of coronary disease in the Western world.

AT A GLANCE

Events and Trends.

- In early 2004, the leader of the Scottish Parliament announced plans to keep Scotland's shrinking population from falling below five million by changing visa requirements to allow visitors to stay longer and by encouraging more people to move to Scotland. The first minister called the population decline "the greatest threat to the country's future prosperity."
- Since 1997, Scotland has been planning and constructing a new Parliament building. However, construction has been plagued with problems, including the death of the main architect, and costs have spiraled from an original 40 million pounds in 1997 to 400 million pounds in late 2003. The building may be finished in 2004.
- At the 2002 opening of Parliament, Queen Elizabeth announced that pubs would no longer be forced to close by 11 p.m. By extending pub hours, the government hopes to reduce the binge drinking and alcohol-related crime common at pubs' closing time. The effort is part of a general crack-down on a rising wave of street crime.

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