



Wales

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Wales

Wales is one of the four constituent nations of the United Kingdom. It is part of the island of Great Britain. It borders England to the east, the Irish Sea to the north and west, and the Bristol Channel to the south. It covers 20779 km² and in 2011 had a population of 3,063,456 people. Wales has a coastline of over 2700 km, and its shape is largely mountainous, with the highest peaks in the northern and central areas, including Snowdon, the highest peak. The nation is located within the temperate zone and enjoys a variable ocean climate. The current holder of the Welsh throne is Prince Charles, the eldest son of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

The Welsh national identity emerged among the Celts after the Roman withdrawal from the island in the 5th century and the conquest of the south-east of the island (now England) by Germanic-speaking peoples, first Saxons and Angles, then Norse Vikings and, finally, Danish Vikings. The poorly Romanized Celtic peoples maintained political independence, language and traditions in the areas further west, corresponding to present-day Wales and Cornwall. Wales is now considered one of the modern Celtic nations.

Llywelyn ap Gruffudd's death in 1282 marked the completion of The Conquest of Wales by Edward I of England, although Owain Glyndŵr briefly returned independence to what is now modern Wales at the beginning of the 15th century. The entire Principality of Wales was annexed by England and incorporated into the English legal system through laws of 1535 and 1542. In the 19th century an independent policy developed in Wales; Welsh liberalism, personified at the beginning of the 20th century by David Lloyd George, was replaced by the growth of socialism and the Labour Party. Over the course of the century, Welsh nationalism grew: Plaid Cymru, the Welsh National Party, was formed in 1925 and the Welsh Language Society in 1962. Established in 1998, the National Assembly for Wales holds responsibility for a number of matters subject to devolution.

At the beginning of the industrial revolution, the development of mines and metallurgical industries transformed the nation from an agricultural society to an industrial one; exploitation of the South Wales Coalfield caused a rapid increase in the Welsh population. Two-thirds of the population live in South Wales, mainly in Cardiff (the capital), Swansea and Newport, as well as in the nearby valleys. Today, traditional heavy industries and extractions are in decline, and the Welsh economy relies on the public sector, services and tourism. Wales' gross value added in 2010 was 45.5 million pounds.

Although Wales share political and social history with the rest of Britain, and the vast majority of the population speak English, the nation has maintained a distinct cultural identity, and is officially bilingual. More than 560,000 people in Wales speak Welsh, and this language is spoken by the majority of the population in parts of the north and west of the nation. From the late 19th century onwards, Wales gained its reputation as a "land of singing", partly because of the eisteddfod tradition. In many international sporting events, such as the World Cup, the Rugby World Cup and the Commonwealth Games, Wales participates with its own national teams, although Welsh athletes compete together with the British team at the Olympic Games. Rugby union is seen as a symbol of Welsh identity and expression of national consciousness.



this is the flag of Wales



this is Harlech Castle



this is the Caernafon castel



this is Bodiam Castle



and this is the map of Wales