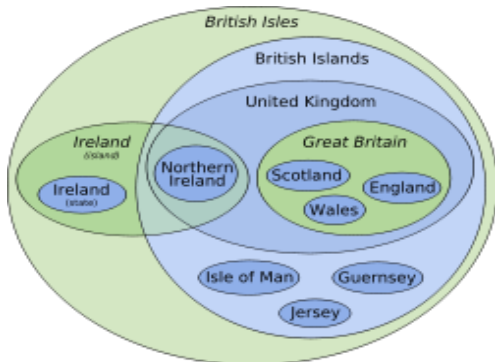


GEOGRAPHY 8.6. UK Case Study

1. & 2. The British Isles and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The **British Isles** is a group of islands off the northwestern coast of Europe. The group consists of two main islands, **Great Britain** and **Ireland**, and numerous smaller islands and island groups, including: the Hebrides, the Shetland Islands, the Orkney Islands, the Isles of Scilly, and the Isle of Man. Some also include the Channel Islands in this grouping.

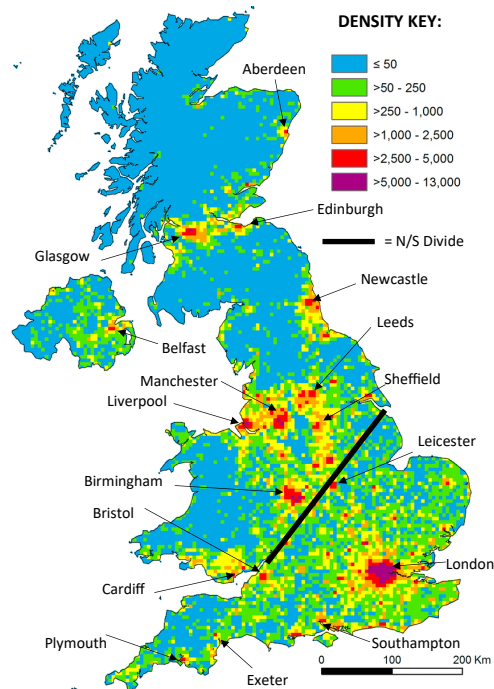


The **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland** is a union, or 'country of countries', made of three countries and a province. The three countries are **England**, **Scotland**, **Wales** from the island of Great Britain, and the province of **Northern Ireland** being the fourth member—located on the island of Ireland.

6. North-South Divide - The contrast across Great Britain

Feature	The South	The North
Relief	With the exception of the south-west, a largely flatter relief with rolling, gentle hills.	Larger hills and mountain ranges—particularly the Pennines of northern England and Scottish and Welsh mountains
Climate	Warmer in general thanks to a lower altitude and latitude. Considerably drier—with the exception of the south-west	Cooler and wetter due to the relief of the land and higher latitude. Storms coming in from the Atlantic tend to hit the exposed north with more force.
Transport	London-centric transport routes spread out across the country from the capital. Again, the south-west has limited routes.	Beyond Liverpool, Manchester and Leeds, transport links become increasingly sparse.
Population	Generally more evenly distributed across the south and east of the southern region. The huge population centre of London in the south-east dominates (see density map below).	Very unevenly distributed. A cluster of cities in central England are separated from urban areas in the north-east of England and the Scottish cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh.
Economy	Considerably wealthier region of the country with modern UK industry, tourism and banking and finance creating a wealthy population	Higher levels of unemployment from old-industry going into decline such as mining, steel and ship-building. A distinctly less wealthy part of the UK.
Life expectancy	'Southerners' statistically live around 1 year longer than the UK average of 81 years.	'Northerners' statistically live around 1 year less than the UK average of 81 years.

4. UK Population Distribution



The UK has an **uneven population distribution**.

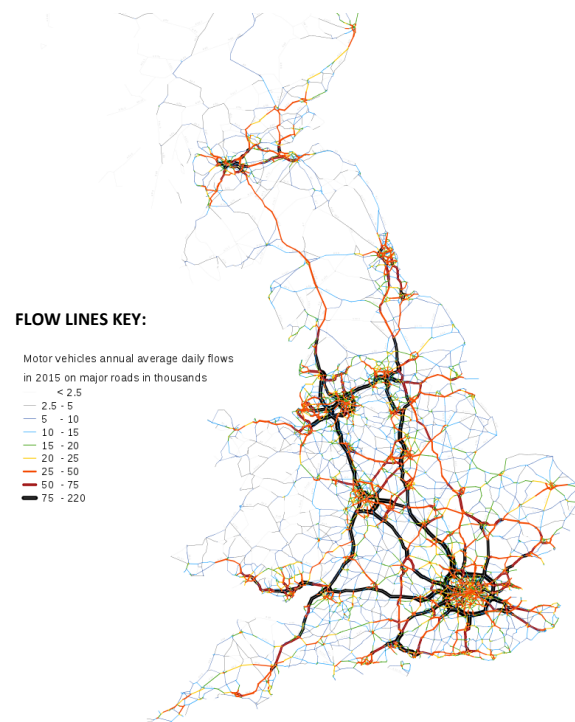
There is a clear **correlation** where dense population centres are located (as shown as orange up to purple on the **Density map** - left) and flatter, low-lying relief (as shown by the **relief map** - right). At the same time, low density of population occurs in the upland areas of inland Wales, northern Scotland, and inland south-west England.

So, why is the population concentrated into lowland areas and coastal locations? Think: water, building, resources, accessibility and trade links!

3. UK Relief (topographical) map (showing height)



UK Traffic flow lines



7. The UK's links with the wider world

Telecommunications: The UK is the global hub of modern communication via fibre optic cables that spread across the world.

Politics: The UK is an influential global player as part of the G7, UN and NATO.

Cultural: The UK has a rich past in global multiculturalism; the leader of the commonwealth.

Trade: Media arts, robotics and aerospace technology along with banking and finance are core to the UK economy.

Transport: London's Heathrow airport is the busiest in the world—link the UK to world

Proportional flow lines show values of data between locations with wider arrows or lines. The above map shows a pattern whereby the lines (along major roads) are a different colour and wider to show a greater value. For example, the M25 circular motorway around London is clearly very heavily used and has the greatest flow of traffic. You'll notice how badly connected the south-west is however (with the exception of the M5), as the traffic-flow values are low as a result of smaller roads

Situated between 50-59° North, the UK has a mild and wet (maritime) climate overall. The prevailing wind (dominant wind direction) comes from over a relatively mild southern North Atlantic Ocean. As such, the UK experiences plenty of rainfall the year round—especially in the west. The relief of the land here, encourages the moisture-rich tropical maritime air to cool, condense and produce rainfall as it is forced to rise over the hills and mountains as it blows over the country from west to east. At the same time, the temperatures are moderated and therefore rarely extreme; staying mild during winter as the North Atlantic still contains warmth from the previous summer, and yet kept relatively cool during summer as the North Atlantic has yet to fully warm during these months, so any wind coming in off the sea brings with it a classic, cool sea breeze.

5. UK Climate (SW Example)

