

## Scotland History

Scotland is a country that is part of the United Kingdom. It covers the northern third of the island of Great Britain, with a border with England to the southeast, and is surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean to the north and west, the North Sea to the northeast, the Irish Sea to the south, and more than 790 islands, including the Northern Isles and the Hebrides.

The Kingdom of Scotland emerged as an independent sovereign state in the European Early Middle Ages and continued to exist until 1707. By inheritance in 1603, James VI of Scotland became king of England and Ireland, thus forming a personal union of the three kingdoms. Scotland subsequently entered into a political union with England on May 1, 1707 to create the new Kingdom of Great Britain. The union also created a new Parliament of Great Britain, which succeeded both the Parliament of Scotland and the Parliament of England. In 1801, Great Britain entered into a political union with Ireland to create the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland (in 1922, the Irish Free State seceded from the United Kingdom, leading to the latter being renamed the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in 1927).

Within Scotland, the monarchy of the United Kingdom has continued to use a variety of styles, titles and other royal symbols of statehood specific to the pre-union Kingdom of Scotland. The legal system within Scotland has also remained separate from those of England and Wales and Northern Ireland; Scotland constitutes a distinct jurisdiction in both public and private law. The continued existence of legal, educational, religious and other institutions distinct from those in the remainder of the UK have all contributed to the continuation of Scottish culture and national identity since the 1707 union with England.



The head of the Scottish Government is the first minister of Scotland, who is supported by the deputy first minister of Scotland. Scotland is represented in the United Kingdom Parliament by 59 MPs. Scotland is also a member of the British–Irish Council, and sends five members of the Scottish Parliament to the British–Irish Parliamentary Assembly.

Scotland is divided into 32 administrative subdivisions or local authorities, known as council areas. Glasgow City is the largest council area in terms of population, with Highland being the largest in terms of area. Limited self-governing power, covering matters such as education, social services and roads and transportation, is devolved from the Scottish Government to each subdivision.

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