

United Kingdom



Four Countries United for God's Kingdom

The United Kingdom is made up of four countries: England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. The United Kingdom is multi-cultural and has many different religions represented in most of the major cities. The country as a whole is very prosperous, but faces numerous social challenges, mainly secularism and pluralism. Though some social hostilities are present, the United Kingdom remains blessed with religious freedom and great potential to share the good news with the one third of its citizens who do not associate with any religion. God has divinely orchestrated the United Kingdom to be a place of great ethnic diversity. This is a huge advantage for mobilizers and go-ers, as they can have experience working with and living alongside different ethnicities without having to leave the UK.



NUMBER OF EVANGELICALS

High

The United Kingdom has a rich history of Christianity. For more than 450 years, the Church of England, the established church, was central to public life and policy. Yet despite this long tradition, today's evangelical church, made up of nearly 5 million people, is in decline as the nation succumbs to rampant secularism. Though more than 50% of their citizens claim Christianity, less than 9% are evangelical in their faith. With more

than one third of the country not identifying with any religion, secular social norms are increasing and evangelicals are engulfed by a society that seems to be quickly forgetting the gospel.

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CULTURAL BRIDGES

**Few Bridges to the Unreached
but opportunities to learn**

Low

Because the United Kingdom has an average Median Cultural Distance of 33.1, it does not share many cultural similarities with the 30 UPG nations on our list. The United Kingdom is not within 10 median points of cultural distance of any other countries. The countries closest to the United Kingdom on the list are Malaysia (14), Israel (22), and Singapore (25). It should be noted that Israel is missing the Indulgence measurement.

Interestingly, the countries that are culturally farthest away are all located in the Middle East: Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Iraq. The countries on the Mobilization Index that are culturally closest are, in descending order, Costa Rica, Australia, and the United States of America.

Nevertheless, the United Kingdom continues to grow more culturally diverse, offering evangelicals incredible opportunities to develop their cultural intelligence. As the UK evangelical church exists in a diverse region, potential goers can learn and practice relating to a variety of cultures while still in the UK! It is also worth noting that the fastest growing churches are made up of believers of African descent. Praise God for providentially setting up the UK church to hold a glimpse of the diversity awaiting us in Heaven!

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STRATEGIC ACCESS

Access to UPGs Without Leaving Home

Low

With access to 4,928,000 unreached in-country and 18,754,000 regionally, the United Kingdom scores Moderate on the Strategic Access index.

With a growing number of Muslims and other migrants, there is great opportunity to preach the gospel to unreached people groups within their country. The UK is home to a vast number of ethnic groups. Large numbers of South Asians also call the UK home. Indians and Pakistanis make up 2.5% and 2.0% respectively of the overall population. Some of the large ethnic groups living in the UK are Chinese, Portuguese, and Romanian.¹ This offers great opportunity to the body of Christ in the UK, as they can love their foreign neighbors without having to leave their own borders.

Pray that the UK church would see the opportunity the Lord has given them and send workers into the field within their own borders!

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RELIGIOUS FREEDOMS

Great Freedoms but Increasing Hostilities

High

According to Pew Research, the United Kingdom has a low level of religious restrictions and hostilities. Yet while government restrictions of religious freedom are low, social hostilities are increasing.² Religious believers tend to face discrimination when their beliefs clash with societal norms, a cultural situation which is quickly becoming the new normal.

Numbers of reported hate crimes against Muslims have tripled since 2015, and anti-semitic incidents have also risen since 2015. In relation to Christianity, there have been sporadic cases of harassment or violence throughout the U.K.

Despite certain social hostilities, legal restrictions are relatively low.³ Therefore, mission mobilization ministries and other Christian ministries are free to promote and work without restriction. Praise God for setting up the UK government and societal freedoms to be open and available for the gospel to be spread!

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PROSPERITY

Equipped with the Means to Go and Send

Very High

With a Legatum Prosperity Index ranking of 13, the United Kingdom scores very high in terms of overall prosperity. The only country with a higher

ranking on the Mobilization Index is Australia with a ranking of 10.

The United Kingdom performs best in regards to Business Environment and Market Infrastructure and lowest in Health. Praise God that he has equipped this country with the physical means to go out to the nations and make disciples.

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CURRENT SENDING

Sending Numbers Surpassing our Prayer Goal Very High

Current sending estimates for the United Kingdom are around 9,500 with the majority ($\pm 60\%$) of that sending being workers sent abroad cross-culturally.

One prayer goal of the Mobilization Index is to see 0.1%, or 1 in a 1,000, of a nation's evangelical church mobilized to the unreached. Though around 6,000 cross-cultural missionaries, or about 0.12% of the United Kingdom's evangelical church, has been mobilized, numbers of those sent specifically to the unreached are yet to surpass the 0.1% goal.

Praise God that he has given such a heart of sending to the UK evangelical church! Ask that he would continue to direct hearts to the unreached.

If 1 in every 1,000 of the United Kingdom's evangelical church was mobilized for cross-cultural mission work to the unreached, the church would be sending only $\pm 6,000$ missionaries. Imagine the impact the church could have if this number doubled or even tripled in the next decade or two. Pray for a revival and an increase in sending numbers from the United Kingdom.

About 0.12% of the United Kingdom's evangelical church has already been mobilized for cross-cultural mission work.



MOBILIZATION POTENTIAL

A Perfect Storm of Opportunity Very High

Of the countries on the Mobilization Index, The United Kingdom ranks the second highest on the Legatum Prosperity Index, the highest in regards to its Generosity Score, and 6th on the World Giving Index.⁴ These factors would appear to be strong indicators for mobilization potential, yet the evangelical church in the United Kingdom appears to be on the decline. The Anglican, Baptist, and Presbyterian churches decreased by 18%, 6%, and 19% respectively since 2012. There was also an 11% increase in the Pentecostal church in the same 9 year period.⁵

Thus, even though the United Kingdom ranks high in both generosity and prosperity, it appears the potential to mobilize is only Moderate due to the decline of the church.

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Obstacles:

Christianity is on the decline in the United Kingdom. In a 2016 study, just 9% of the population are practicing Christians (meaning they regularly read the Bible, pray, and attend a church service at least monthly).⁶

The UK does not share many cultural similarities with UPG countries, especially when compared to other Mob Index countries.

Opportunities:

The wealth and generosity of the evangelical church in the United Kingdom has a unique opportunity to steward their resources for

the advancement of the Kingdom across the globe.

The United Kingdom is already sending 6,000 workers cross-culturally! The nation has a great potential to increase their sending and reach the prayer goal of sending 0.1% to the unreached!

Prayer

Pray for the ongoing efforts of the various mobilization ministries in the United Kingdom.

Pray for believers to find their most strategic role in seeing Christ proclaimed among the nations.

Pray that the church would engage the providential opportunity to share the gospel with Muslims, Hindus, and many other migrant workers in the United Kingdom.

Praise:

Praise God for the growth of the evangelical church in the United Kingdom.

Praise God for the provision of the UK church through financial and economic support.

Endnotes

- 1 Office for National Statistics. "Ethnicity and National Identity in England and Wales." December 11, 2012. ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/articles/ethnicityandnationalidentityinenglandandwales/2012-12-11.
- 2 Pew Research Center. Religious Restrictions Around the World: Appendix F. August 2019. pewforum.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2019/08/Pew-Research-Center_Religious-Restriction-Around-World_Appendix-F_2019-08.pdf.
- 3 Citizens Advice. "Your Right to Freedom of Religion and Belief." citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/civil-rights/human-rights/what-rights-are-protected-under-the-human-rights-act/your-right-to-freedom-of-religion-and-belief/.
- 4 Legatum Institute. "The Legatum Prosperity Index." prosperity.com/rankings?pinned=&filter=.
- 5 Evangelical Alliance. "Church Membership." eauk.org/church/research-and-statistics/church-membership.cfm.
- 6 Evangelical Alliance. "UK Church Leaders: What Are the Challenges and Opportunities for Evangelism Today?" eauk.org/church/research-and-statistics/uk-church-leaders-what-are-the-challenges-and-opportunities-for-evangelism-today.cfm.