**Wales**

Wales (Welsh: Cymru;[1] pronounced kəmrɨ/ (help·info)) is a constituent country[2] within the United Kingdom, located in the west of Great Britain, sharing a land border with England to its east and the Irish Sea and Atlantic Ocean to the west. Wales has a population estimated at three million and is a bilingual constituent country, with English the language spoken by the majority, and Welsh the native tongue.

Originally (and traditionally) one of the six Celtic nations, a distinct Welsh national identity emerged in the early 5th century, after the Roman withdrawal from Britain.[3] The Edwardian conquest in the 13th Century brought about centuries of English occupation, and Wales was eventually annexed to the English legal system with the formation of the Laws in Wales Acts 1535–1542, creating the legal entity known today as England and Wales. Distinctive Welsh politics developed in the 19th century eventually leading to a devolved legislature and government in 1999, with the formation of the National Assembly for Wales in Cardiff Bay. Today, Wales continues to share political and legal structures to varying degrees with the United Kingdom, while now maintaining more direct ties with various international bodies[4][5] and the business world.[6][7][8][9] The Assembly Government has also increased its direct links with the European Union, although foreign policy remains the reserved responsibility of the UK Government.[10][11]

The capital Cardiff (Caerdydd), located in the more urbanised South Wales, is Wales' largest city with 317,500 people.[12]. Cardiff has been a prosperous city since the Victorian era,[clarify] when it was the biggest coal port in the world.[13][14] Two-thirds of the Welsh population lives in South Wales, with another concentration in northeastern North Wales.

Wales is known for its divergent and often spectacular landscape,[15] and tourism is popular throughout the land.[16][17] From the late 19th century onwards, Wales acquired its popular image as the "land of song", attributable in part to the revival of the eisteddfod tradition.[18] Historically, the Welsh tradition for storytelling was an oral one, handed-down over the generations. Vocal performers - actors, singers and speakers - are celebrated in Wales today, often attaining international success.[19][20] Wales has in recent years undergone a cultural revival,[citation needed] and the rapidly-developing capital is the home of the largest media centre in the UK outside of London.[21][22]

Wales is sometimes referred to as a Principality. Llywelyn the Great founded the Principality of Wales in 1216, and following the Edwardian Conquest, Owain Glyndŵr briefly restored its independence in the early 15th century. Traditionally the British Royal Family have used the courtesy title 'Prince of Wales' for the Heir Apparent to the reigning monarch.