### National Emblems of the United Kingdom

The United Kingdom (abbreviated from "The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland") is the political name of the country which consists of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (sometimes known as Ulster).

Great Britain is the name of the island which is made up of England, Scotland, Wales, whereas the British Isles is the geographical name of all the islands off the north-west coast of the European continent. In everyday speech "Britain" is used to mean the United Kingdom.

The flag of the United Kingdom, known as the Union Jack, is made up of three crosses. The upright red cross on a white background is the cross of the 1st George, the patron saint of England. The white diagonal cross on a blue background is the cross of St. Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland, The red diagonal cross on a white background is the cross of St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland.

The Welsh flag, called the Welsh dragon, represents a red dragon on a white and green background.

St. George's Day falls on 23 April and is regarded as England's national day. On this day some patriotic Englishmen wear a rose pinned to their jackets'. A red rose is the national emblem of England from the time of the Wars of the Roses (15th century).

St. Andrew's Day (the 30th of November) is regarded as Scotland's national day. On this day some Scotsmen wear a thistle in their buttonhole. As a national emblem of Scotland, thistle apparently first used in the 15th century as a symbol of defence. The Order of the Thistle is one of the highest orders of knighthood. It was founded in 1687, and is mainly given to Scottish noblemen (limited to 16 in number).

St. Patrick's Day (the 17th of March) is considered as a national day in Northern Ireland and an official bank holiday there. The national emblem of Ireland is shamrock. According to legend, it was the plant chosen by St. Patrick to illustrate the Christian doctrine of the Trinity to the Irish.

St. David's Day (the 1st of March) is the church festival of St. David, a 6th-century monk and bishop, the patron saint of Wales. The day is regarded as the national holiday of Wales, although it is not an official bank holiday.

On this day, however, many Welshmen wear either a yellow daffodil or a leek pinned to their jackets, as both plants are traditionally regarded as national emblems of Wales.

In the Royal Arms three lions symbolize England, a lion rampant - Scotland, and a harp - Ireland. The whole is encircled and is supported by a lion and a unicorn. The lion has been used as a symbol of national strength and of the British monarchy for many centuries. The unicorn, a mythical animal that looks like a horse with a long straight horn, has appeared on the Scottish and British royal coats of arms for many centuries, and is a symbol of purity.

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## Symbols of the United States of America

### A great variety of symbols

There are a great variety of symbols that represent the United States of America. Here we can mention the US flag, known as the Stars and Stripes, the Great Seal of the USA, the bald eagle, America’s national bird; the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, the Jefferson Memorial, the US Capitol, the Statue of Liberty, the Gateway Arch, the White House, Independence Hall, the Alamo, Mount Rushmore, Uncle Sam, which is a cartoon figure designed by Thomas Nast and lots of others. Let’s take a closer look at some of the most popular ones.

### US flag

The US flag, which has 13 horizontal stripes, 7 red and 6 white which stand for the original 13 states, represents the growth of the nation. 50 white stars in the top left hand corner stand for America’s 50 states. The flag is also called “Old Glory”.

### Great Seal

The Great Seal pictures an American bald eagle holding a ribbon in its beak. There is the USA’s motto written on the ribbon, which says “Out of many, one”. The design for the Great Seal was adopted by the Congress on June 20, 1782.

### The bald eagle

The bald eagle has also been the national symbol of the USA since 1782. It holds an olive branch with 13 olives and 13 leaves in one foot, which symbolizes peace, and 13 arrows in the other foot. The number of arrows stands for the original 13 colonies and the arrows symbolize strength.

### The Statue of Liberty

The Statue of Liberty is a huge sculpture located on Liberty Island in New York Harbour. This monument was presented to the US by France in 1884 as a symbol of friendship. It pictures a woman who has escaped the chains of tyranny as the broken chains lie at her feet. There is a torch in her right hand, which is a symbol of liberty, and a tablet in her left hand with the inscription “July 4, 1776” – Independence Day of the USA.

***Political System of Russia***

Russia is a democratic federative state based on rule of law and a republican form of government. State power in Russia is exercised by the President, the Federal Assembly, the Government and the courts.

One of the basic principles of constitutional government is the division of powers. In accordance with this principle, power must not be concentrated in the hands of one person or one institution, but must be divided among the legislative, executive and judicial branches of power. The division of powers requires that there be a clear delineation of responsibilities and a system of checks and balances so that each branch of power can offset the others.

The President is at the summit of the system of state power. He ensures that all the state institutions are able to carry out their responsibilities and keeps watching over them to ensure that no institution can encroach on another's prerogatives, attempt to usurp power in the country or take over another's powers.

The president of Russia is the governments chief executive, head of state, and most powerful official. The president is elected by the people to serve a four-year term. The president, with the approval of the lower house of parliament, appoints a prime minister to serve as head of government. The prime minister is the top-ranking official of a Council of Ministers (cabinet). The council carries out the operations of the government.

Each institution of state power is only partially responsible for enforcing the Constitution. Only the President has the responsibility of safeguarding the state system, the state's sovereignty and integrity overall. This is the guarantee that the other state institutions and officials can exercise their powers in a normal constitutional fashion.

The President's place in the state power system is tied to his constitutional prerogatives regarding, above all, the executive branch of power. Legally, the President is distanced from all the branches of power, but he nonetheless remains closer to the executive branch. This closeness is reflected in the specific constitutional powers the President exercises as head of state.

The origins of this constitutional situation lie in the particularities of the way the government is formed in Russia. The Constitution does not link the process of forming a government to the distribution of seats in parliament among the different political parties and fractions. In other words» the party with the majority in parliament could form the government, but the government does not have to be formed according to this principle. Both approaches would be in keeping with the Constitution. But a situation where the governments makeup does not reflect the parliamentary majority can be a source of problems for many aspects of the executive branch's work, especially law-making. Such problems could reduce the effectiveness of the executive branch's work and make it unable to resolve pressing tasks.

In order to overcome such a situation, the Constitution gives the President a number of powers that he can use on, an ongoing basis to influence the government's work. These powers include approving the structure of the federal executive bodies of power, appointing deputy prime ministers and ministers, the right to preside government meetings, exercise control over the lawfulness of the government's action, and direct subordination of the security ministries to the President. The President has the right to dismiss the government or to accept the Prime Ministers resignation, which automatically entails the resignation of the government as a whole.

The President works with two consultative bodies — the Security Council and the State Council. The President chairs these two councils. The system of Presidential power includes the Presidential Plenipotentiary Envoys in the Federal Districts.