

The United Kingdom's international relations

TEST

1. Why doesn't the UK have the euro?
2. Give one argument for the euro.
3. Give one argument against the euro.
4. Give two ways that we can benefit from being EU citizens
5. Give one reason why the European Parliament is unpopular/
6. Name one law that was changed in 2000 to bring the UK into line with Europe.
7. Before countries were part of the Commonwealth they were part of the British what?
8. At first what did the Commonwealth do mainly?
9. Why has the UK economic links with the Commonwealth lessened?
10. Who is the head of the Commonwealth?
11. Which country was banned from the Commonwealth in 2002?
12. Why were they banned?
13. Name 2 things that Commonwealth members discuss when they meet.
14. Why did the UN set up the first International Criminal Court in 1998?
15. If a country breaks the rules, what 2 things can the UN do?
16. Where have the UK's armed forces acted as UN peacekeepers?
17. As a UN member, the UK has to help poorer countries. Which organisation does she donate money to in order to help this?

UK relations within Europe: Information to include:

- Some background information on the euro
- Pros and cons of the euro
- Is the European Parliament popular?
- What rights do we get in the EU?
- How does the European Parliament affect UK laws?

UK relations within the Commonwealth: Information to include:

- When and how was it first formed?
- What sort of countries are in it (think about the history bit)?
- How has the role of the Commonwealth changed over time?
- What kind of things do they discuss and take action on?
- Do they have any real power- give a reason for your answer

UK relations with the rest of the world: The UN

- When was it formed and what does it aim to achieve?
- What kinds of things do they do when countries break the laws?
- What does the UK do to economically support poorer countries?
- How do they help in a time of war- with examples?

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European Union

Commonwealth

United Nations

The United Kingdom and the Wider World

Relationship with Europe

The UK is one of the 10 largest economies in the world. Our wealth depends on trade with the rest of the world- especially Europe. In 2008, the value of the UK's exports was nearly £207 billion. 67% went to the European Union.

What are the UK's political and legal relationships with Europe?

The UK joined the EU in 1975. By 2009, there were 27 countries in it.

AIMS OF THE EU

- Original aim was to stop war as the countries would work together
- Gives European countries more power if they all work together
- Promote economic and social progress e.g. help people earn enough money
- Speak for the EU on an international scale e.g. makes Europe more powerful if everyone works together
- Introduce European citizenship e.g. people can move easily around Europe
- Make Europe free, secure and fair
- Protects human rights in all EU countries

What are the UK's cultural relations with Europe?

- Sporting links e.g. the Ryder Cup where a European team plays against an American one
- Many towns and cities have twinning projects- in these projects people visit each other including school exchanges
- Links between UK and European zoos have led to lots of projects. E.g.: 18 zoos are co-operating on protecting endangered animals like the Asiatic tiger

What is the impact of EU decisions on citizens of the UK?

Here are some of the decisions made by the EU in 2008 and 2009

- 2 big UK car-makers were given loans to make environmental friendly cars
- Patients in the UK were allowed to go to Europe to get quicker medical treatment

What are the pros and cons of being in the EU?

| Good things | Bad things |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• EU members can live, work and study in any other EU country• EU members have taken joint action to reduce pollution• It is easier to do business across Europe• EU promotes peace and since it has existed there have been no wars between its members | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The UK may lose important powers to the EU- this can threaten our independence• It is expensive- UK taxes help poorer EU countries• If we do too much business, we may miss out on trade with important countries like China and India |

The United Kingdom and the British Commonwealth

In the 20th the British Empire began to break up as the colonies started to become independent. This was usually done peacefully and many of the colonies wanted to keep links with the UK. So, the British Empire was founded with the Queen at its head... These countries traded with each other. These trade links have become less important as the EU has become more important.

There are 53 countries in the Commonwealth e.g. Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India and many African countries BUT no European countries are in it.

Today the aims of the Commonwealth are:

- Increase cultural understanding between developed and developing countries
- Encourages democracy
- Helps economic development

The Commonwealth Games is the most famous event now for this organisation.

How does the United Nations (UN) help resolve international conflict?

What is the United Nations (UN)?

This is the biggest organisation that the UK is in. It was started after WW2 to try to keep peace in the world. Today nearly every country in the world is a part of the UN. All the countries promise to stick to the UN charter- this shows the purpose and rights of the members.

According to the UN Charter - the UN has 4 purposes:

- To keep international peace and security
- To develop friendly relations between the nations
- To work together to solve international problems
- To promote human rights

The UN is not a government and it does not make laws.

Resolving disagreement and conflict

The UN wants all countries to get on. But some difficult topics for them to resolve have been- the spread of nuclear weapons, care for the environment and use of the sea. It is difficult to sort these out because there are 200 member countries and so lots of different views.

There are often arguments between countries. These arguments are often about land or resources. The UN's International Court of Justice tries to sort these out. It is based in the Hague, in the Netherlands. The UN General Assembly elects 15 judges who work at the court for 9 years so that there is no bias.

In countries where people are at risk of violence or there is no peace- then the UN send in a peacekeeping mission. The jobs of the peacekeeping mission are:

- Keep the peace

- That any former fighters follow human rights law
- That fair elections take place for a new government

The first UN peacekeeping mission was set up in 1948. It was sent to the Middle East to protect Israel and their Arab neighbours. Sometimes the UN soldiers will fight to protect people, but their main aim is to be peaceful.

In more extreme cases, the UN Security Council can apply sanctions (e.g. 'stop trading with countries if they don't stick to the rules- this happened to Zimbabwe because they have such bad human rights record). Sanctions have also been applied to Iraq when it invaded Kuwait in 1990.

Why does the UK follow the UN agreements on human rights, international relations and the environment?

The UK is an important part of the UN because we are one of the 5 permanent members of the UN Security Council. This is important because the UN Security Council makes important decisions about global security. The UK is especially keen to support UN agreements because we really support the idea of democracy.

How effective is the UN in resolving international conflicts and emergencies?

The International Court of Justice and the UN peacekeeping missions have respect and support from most governments in the world. This means the UN is usually successful. There are some countries that don't respect the UN- e.g. Iran and North Korea- they feel that the UN has too much power.

It is also difficult when the UN tries to work where there is a rebellion or where there is a terrorist organisation. In these cases the groups don't like to follow international humanitarian law and the UN has much less power to persuade them to act properly and safely.

The UN does not have its own army. They use the peacekeeping missions which are made up of soldiers from lots of different countries. This can be a problem because they sometimes don't get on.

The cost of the UN peacekeeping mission is over £3 billion a year. The UN mission commanders often get annoyed by how long it takes for the UN to supply them with weapons as it has to be discussed by so many people. The length of time for their equipment to be agreed often means that they don't succeed.