

Linguistic variation in the UK

The English language is the official language of the UK. It is spoken monolingually by about 95% of the British population. In addition, there are seven other Minority Languages:

1. **Welsh**: It is spoken natively in Wales and by some in England. Historically, it has also been known in as "British", "Cambrian", "Cambric" and "Cymric".)
2. **Scottish Gaelic**: it is the native language of the Gaels of Scotland. It is developed out of Old Irish.
3. **Scots**: It is a West Germanic language variety spoken in Scotland and parts of Ulster in the north of Ireland. It is sometimes called **Lowland Scots** to distinguish it from Scottish Gaelic.
4. **Cornish**: It is the first language in Cornwall in the late 18th century. Since the early 20th century, Cornish is spreading and it has a growing number of second language speakers.
5. **Irish**: It is also known as **Gaelic**. It belongs to the Indo-European language family. It is originated on the island of Ireland.
6. **Ulster Scots**: It is also known as **Scots-Irish** and **Ullans**. It is the dialect of the Scots language spoken in parts of Ulster in Ireland.
7. **British Sign Language** (for deaf people).

In addition to these languages, there are many dialects and regional accents that vary amongst the four countries of the UK, as well as within the countries themselves.

Scottish English, Welsh English, and Hiberno-Irish are varieties of English distinct from both English English and the native languages of those countries.

Also the RP (**Received Pronunciation**, also known as the **Queen's English** or **Oxford English**) is the accent traditionally regarded as the standard for British English. RP is an accent; i.e. it is concerned only with pronunciation; not with vocabulary or grammar. It has a high social prestige.