

London is the capital city of England and the United Kingdom, and the most populous city in the European Union.

London is one of the world's major business, political and cultural centers. It is a leader in international finance, politics, education, culture, communications, entertainment, fashion and the arts and has considerable influence worldwide. It is widely regarded as one of the world's major global cities, and has been an important settlement for nearly 2000 years.

London has an estimated population of 7.5 million (as of 2005) and a metropolitan area population of between 12 and 14 million.

London has an extremely cosmopolitan population, drawing from a diverse range of peoples, cultures and religions, speaking over 300 different languages.

The city is an international transport hub and a major tourist destination, counting iconic landmarks such as the Houses of Parliament, Tower Bridge and Buckingham Palace amongst its many attractions, along with famous institutions such as the British Museum and the National Gallery.

London's vast urban area is often divided into a large set of districts. One area of London which has a strict definition is the City of London (usually just called The City), the principle financial district of the UK.

The West End (actually in Central London) is London's main entertainment and shopping district, with locations such as Oxford Street, Leicester Square and Piccadilly Circus acting as tourist magnets.

Meanwhile, the eastern side of London contains the East End - the area closest to the original Port of London, known for its

high immigrant population, as well as for being one of the poorest areas in London.

London is one of the most visited cities on Earth, and the city is home to many tourist attractions. Many of London's historic

sights are world-famous. The City of London is home to St Paul's Cathedral, with the Tower of London and Tower Bridge just outside

its official boundary. The Houses of Parliament, Westminster Abbey and Buckingham Palace bring visitors to the City of Westminster

to the west, which also counts many of London's top museums and galleries amongst its attractions, including the British Museum,

the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square, London Zoo and Madame Tussaud's. Royal attractions are always popular □ as well as the

various palaces, Horse Guards Parade is a ceremonial photo opportunity, whilst nearby Downing Street is home to the Prime Minister.