

Components of British Identity

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ABSTRAKT

Bakalářská práce se zaměřuje na identitu obyvatel Spojeného království Velké Británie a Severního Irsku. Analyzuje možné komponenty jejich identity a to ve čtyřech okruzích: loajalita koruně, náboženství, kultura a sport. Práce zkoumá, zda jednotlivé státy sdílí stejnou identitu tím, že každý stát je podroben analýze ve všech čtyřech okruzích. Práce se snaží vypíchnout nejdůležitější body z každého okruhu a tím poskytuje ucelenou charakteristiku každé ze zemí Spojeného království. K dosažení komplexních výsledků je v práci využit dotazník, pomocí kterého byl získán pohled samotných Britů. Práce má za cíl zjistit, zda britské státy sdílejí stejnou (tj. britskou) identitu nebo si ponechávají či utvářejí identitu vlastní.

Klíčová slova: Britská identita, identita, britishness, Velká Británie, Anglie, Skotsko, Wales, Severní Irsko

ABSTRACT

This Bachelor thesis focuses on the notion of identity in the citizens of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. It analyses possible components of identity through the four following topics: loyalty to the crown, religion, culture and sports in all four states in an attempt to find out whether the states share the same identity or retain their own identity. The most important points from each of the four areas are emphasised in order to create an overall characteristic of each country. To achieve complex results, a questionnaire is used in the work. It gathers the point of view of the British themselves. The aim of the work is to determine whether the British states share the same (i.e., British) identity, or whether they retain and create their own identity.

Keywords: British identity, identity, Britishness, Great Britain, England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	11
I THEORY	12
1 BRITAIN AND BRITISHNESS	13
1.1 The Definition of Identity	14
1.2 The Identity of the UK	14
2 LOYALTY TO THE CROWN.....	16
2.1 Creation of the United Kingdom	16
2.2 The evolution of the monarchy in the UK	17
2.3 England in the monarchy	18
2.4 Scotland in the monarchy	19
2.5 Wales in the monarchy	21
2.6 Northern Ireland in the monarchy.....	23
3 RELIGION.....	26
3.1 Religion in England	26
3.2 Religion in Scotland	27
3.3 Religion in Wales	28
3.4 Religion in Northern Ireland.....	29
4 CULTURE.....	31
4.1 Culture in England.....	31
4.2 Culture in Scotland	32
4.3 Culture in Wales	33
4.4 Culture in Northern Ireland.....	34
5 SPORTS.....	35
5.1 Sport in England	35
5.2 Sport in Scotland	36
5.3 Sport in Wales	37
5.4 Sport in Northern Ireland.....	38
II ANALYSIS	40
6 INTRODUCTION TO ANALYSIS	41
6.1 The Questionnaire.....	41
6.1.1 The General Questions	41
6.1.2 The Questions about British Identity.....	41
6.1.3 The Questions about Loyalty.....	42

6.1.4	The Questions about Religion	42
6.1.5	The Questions about culture	42
6.1.6	The Questions about Sports	43
7	DATA	44
7.1	Respondents	44
7.2	The English	45
7.2.1	The English and British identity	45
7.2.2	The English and their loyalty	47
7.2.3	The English an religion	49
7.2.4	The English and culture	50
7.2.5	The English and sports	51
7.3	The Scots	51
7.3.1	The Scots and their identity	51
7.3.2	The Scots and their loyalty	53
7.3.3	The Scots and religion	55
7.3.4	The Scots and culture	55
7.3.5	The Scots and sports	56
7.4	The Welsh	56
7.4.1	The Welsh and their loyalty	58
7.4.2	The Welsh and religion	60
7.4.3	The Welsh and culture	61
7.4.4	The Welsh and sports	61
7.5	The Northern Irish	62
7.5.1	The Northern Irish and British identity	62
7.5.2	The Northern Irish and their loyalty	64
7.5.3	The Northern Irish and religion	66
7.5.4	The Northern Irish and culture	67
7.5.5	The Northern Irish and sports	67
7.6	Overall Data	68
7.6.1	The classification of the respondents	68
7.6.2	British identity	68
7.6.3	Regional identity	69
7.6.4	The monarchy	70
7.6.5	Religion	72
7.6.6	Culture	74

7.6.7 Sports	74
CONCLUSION	76
BIBLIOGRAPHY	78
LIST OF GRAPHS	84
APPENDICES	86

INTRODUCTION

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is well known all around the world. It has been one of the greatest and the most powerful countries in the world for centuries. Nowadays, it is known due to its functional monarchy with the longest serving Queen in history. It is also known because of its language that is spoken within Great Britain and beyond. These are some of the aspects that unite Britain and help create the British identity. This identity has been developing for centuries, but it seems not to be developing anymore for one simple reason. The United Kingdom is not as united as it used to be. As there are four different states in the United Kingdom, there must be four different identities. Apart from people increasingly speaking not only English, but Scottish, Welsh and Irish, they also seem to want freedom, e.g., Scotland that has already attempted to leave the union. Although it was not successful, it most certainly was a sign that Great Britain may be coming to its end, and along with the British identity.

The perception of British identity is very subjective, but once we call it British identity, it should be typical for all British citizens. The theme of British identity is very topical due to the Scottish referendum for independence. It has made British citizens suddenly think of reasons of this referendum. And one of the reasons there is certainly the identity. Once Scotland or any other nation leaves the others could follow and that would be the end of British identity – whatever it may mean.

The work will be exploring the identity of British people from the perspective of all four nationalities. The aim is to get a complex view of the identities in Britain and to find out how different the individual states are, how much they have in common and whether there is such a thing as the British identity. The work will not only analyse the available theory, but it will also be supported by own research in a form of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to explore the notion of identity in the UK from the point of view of British people themselves. They are to provide different unbiased views as the questionnaire collects data from all four British nationalities.

The aim of the work then is to prove that there is not only one national identity in in the UK and that the British states have their own regional identity which they developed throughout the time. Therefore, I believe that the British identity is a construct losing its original meaning as the states do not share the same values, if they ever did, and they are indeed unique countries with own regional identities.

I. THEORY

1 BRITAIN AND BRITISHNESS

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (more informally referred to as Britain or the UK) consists of four different countries: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. It also includes four subsequent cultures named English, Scottish, Welsh and Irish. But in fact, in the United Kingdom there are many more different cultures than these four due to the process of immigration. This makes Britain a very multicultural state and it raises a question whether the British identity or Britishness actually exists or not.

Should we accept that British identity truly exists, and that there are some features that make Britain British, everyone interprets British identity differently. British identity is a construct, which was created in the United Kingdom for political unity and there is not any clear definition to describe it. The best way to find out is to ask the British people. Here are some answers to the question what does Britishness mean to the British:

“Holding certain values, beliefs and behaviour which people who live in Britain tend to display. For me, the best of Britishness would be a belief in the rule of law, fair play, moderation in politics: common decency. Someone whose great grandparents were born in Britain. Persons who put Britain before themselves. Persons who, if their families are arrivals, are prepared to accept the British way of life and laws above their natural instincts. When in Rome do as the Romans do... Stiff upper lip, slightly conservative, fish and chips, tea, history, old Empire.”¹

As we can see British identity is a very complex phenomenon and its perception is highly subjective. The first thing someone could realize is that Britishness is another word for Englishness. It is somehow the word which expresses being British, but it actually means English and Englishness, which is taking over the Scots, the Welsh and the Irish. For example if someone raises a question what is the difference between British and English culture, people will be confused and probably will not find any differences, because British basically means English. They are the same. The same for the language; the

¹ Andrew Gamble and Tony Wright, ed., *Britishness: Perspectives on the British Question* (Oxford: John Wiley and Sons, 2009), 62.

British language is the English language.² And taking into consideration some other aspects such as education, television, press, or even the Crown and the Queen of Britain herself one suddenly realizes that is really is the same. Britishness may indeed be Englishness.

1.1 The Definition of Identity

Speaking about the identity, it can be said that national identity is not something that is invented by the government or the queen (when it comes to the United Kingdom). It is more of a feeling or belonging among certain type of people. The identity is not only about who people think they are. It is also about what other people think about them. For example the United Kingdom can be identified as a very dominant country, especially because of its strong position in the world among countries in the past (often referred to as a superpower, a hegemon, etc.).

The first time one can speak about *Britishness* is the 18th century when England, Scotland and Wales united in 1707 and set up common features like the constitutional monarchy, parliament or church.³ Britishness started to gain popularity in the 19th century because of Britain's imperial position in the world. Everyone associated Britain with monarchy, the Queen or its power in the world.

Nowadays, Britain is once again trying to define its identity, mainly because there are many different races and cultures inhabiting Britain. Moreover, Wales, Northern Ireland and especially Scotland have every right to feel less comfortable because of English dominancy. People often confuse England as Britain. , It is often being perceived the same way.⁴ Considering this fact, other countries are understandably trying to define their own regional identity.

1.2 The Identity of the UK

Generally, the identity in the UK is hard to define. Especially in some areas such as England, more specifically London, which has become very multicultural. But speaking about the identity of Britain, there are some elements that connect the whole United

² Murray Pittock, *Celtic Identity and the British Image* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).

³ Jeffrey Stephen, *Scottish Presbyterians and the Act of Union* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2007).

⁴ Krishan Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

Kingdom.⁵ It is the official anthem of the UK; it is the same for all the four states. England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland all have their own national anthem also, but these are only the unofficial versions. Taking part at an official event, only the British anthem is being used. The British anthem is about the monarch, i.e., Her Majesty, the Queen Elizabeth II, and constitutional monarchy. The anthem connects the UK citizens and such the British anthem could be seen as one of the features of British identity, as well as the national flag of the UK.

The flag is a national symbol for all the citizens of the United Kingdom and the name itself represents its position: The Union Jack. When one looks at the flag, they can see the representation of England, Scotland and Ireland in it. It was firstly used in the 17th century when James I. succeeded to the throne and combined the cross of Saint George with the cross of Saint Andrew, creating the first united flag. After that, the cross of Saint Patrick was added to the flag; it was in the early 19th century. When Ireland gained the independence in 1921, nothing changed in the flag and it stayed the same as it is known today.⁶ So even though Ireland left the Union, the original flag did not change. Yet, there is no representation of Wales in the flag.

A significant part of British identity is the constitutional monarchy. It has been upheld in the United Kingdom for centuries and it became one of the most typical British features and a tradition. Even though the monarch has only a symbolic role in ruling the monarchy, the Queen also approves important documents and statements (i.e., she give her royal assent).

These days, Britain is considering the possibility of leaving the European Union and that would be a big change not only for Britain itself, but for its national identity. Despite Britain losing the connections and trade partners, its identity might actually strengthen. It would once again be the strong independent country from the past.

⁵ David Morley and Kevin Robins, *British National Studies: Geography, Nationality and Identity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

⁶ "Union Jack," The Official Website of the British Monarchy, accessed March 17, 2016. <http://www.royal.gov.uk/MonarchUK/Symbols/UnionJack.aspx>.

2 LOYALTY TO THE CROWN

As said, one of the most typical features in making British identity is the constitutional monarchy. It has been upheld in the United Kingdom for centuries, but nowadays, there are certain tendencies to split the Kingdom, especially from Scotland.

2.1 Creation of the United Kingdom

The oldest kingdom on the British Isles is Scotland, which was established in the first half of the 9th century. The Kingdom of England was created later at the beginning of the 10th century. Then Wales, which was founded in the 12th century, became the part of the Kingdom of England in the 16th century.⁷ That was the creation of two main kingdoms in today's United Kingdom – the Kingdom of England, which also included Wales; and the Kingdom of Scotland.

The so called Union of the Crowns was the first step in the creation of the United Kingdom. It started with James VI, who was the King of Scots. He was accessed to the thrones to rule England, Ireland and Scotland and it all happened in 1603.⁸ The Union was however dynastic and personal, which means that the kingdoms were united, they had the same monarch and were ruled by the same dynasty, but they remained separate and distinct.

The Acts of Union in 1707 were more successful with the union of these two kingdoms. At first, there was the Union with Scotland Act, which was passed in 1706 by the English parliament. After that, in 1707, the Union with England was passed by the Scottish parliament and they together formed the Parliament of Great Britain.⁹

The other Acts of Union came into force in 1800, when Ireland joined Great Britain. The Kingdom of Ireland was in the personal union by the 18th century and during the Acts of Union 1800 created the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

In 1919, after the Irish Republican Party Sinn Féin was elected, they declared the country's independence from Great Britain. It was the start of the Irish revolution, led by the Irish Republican Army. The war lasted 2 years and ended in the Anglo-Irish Treaty, the

⁷ Norman Davies, *The Isles: A History* (London: Macmillan, 1999).

⁸ "The Crowns United," The 400th Anniversary of The Union of The Crowns, accessed March 17, 2016, <http://uotc.scran.ac.uk/story/06/>.

separation of Ireland and creation of the Irish Free State.¹⁰ Since the separation of Ireland, Northern Ireland is struggling to define its identity.

2.2 The evolution of the monarchy in the UK

The monarchy in the United Kingdom has been writing its history for a very long time. In the past, there were two separate independent monarch kingdoms before: the Kingdom of England and Kingdom of Scotland, peacefully ruling until the beginning of the 17th century when Queen Elizabeth I. of England died. Suddenly, there was no one to take the English throne, because Elizabeth I. was unmarried and childless so the only one available was her cousin James VI, who was back then the King of Scotland.¹¹ When he became the King of England, he was all at once a king of two countries. That is the early beginning of the monarchy in the United Kingdom.

In the 13th century, Wales joined the monarchy, uniting with the Kingdom of England. The monarchy then became more powerful, but during the reign of King John of England, Magna Carta was created and signed. It is one of the milestones in the history of the monarchy in the United Kingdom, because it actually reduced the power of monarchs. It was edited a few times and it became a very important document in the future, especially for upholding the right for freedom.

The first sign of the United Kingdom came at the beginning of the 17th century, because both the Kingdom of Scotland and Kingdom of England started sharing one monarch, called James VI, the King of Scots. He was the first one, who tried to create a bigger monarchy by uniting the two separated ones. He was not quite successful, because although the kingdoms formally had the same monarch, they physically remained separated.

The monarchy was finally established in 1707 with the Acts of Union when the parliaments of the kingdoms united and established a new strong monarchy called the

⁹ “Union of the Crowns,” www.parliament.uk, accessed March 17, 2016, <http://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/evolutionofparliament/legislativescrutiny/act-of-union-1707/overview/union-of-the-crowns/>.

¹⁰ Tom Garvin, *The Evolution of Irish Nationalist Politics* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillian Ltd., 2005).

¹¹ “Union of the Crowns,” www.parliament.uk, accessed March 17, 2016, <http://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/evolutionofparliament/legislativescrutiny/act-of-union-1707/overview/union-of-the-crowns/>.

Kingdom of Great Britain. So the monarchy became much stronger with two kingdoms united and being ruled by one monarch.

When Ireland joined the Kingdom of Great Britain, the monarchy reached its strongest point, ruling the whole British Isles. Although Ireland separated from the Kingdom in 1921, it still remained a very powerful country and became an important part of the future.

2.3 England in the monarchy

England has the greatest power in the monarchy of the United Kingdom. Not only because it is one of the founding countries, but also because a lot of kings and queens were born Englishmen. Its power was not so strong in the past, but through the years, England has been slowly taking over the Great Britain. Although it did not seem like that in the early beginnings of the Kingdom, because it was a Scot, who laid the foundations of the United Kingdom with his effort of creating a bigger empire and uniting “his” Kingdom of Scotland and the Kingdom of England. With a Scottish founder, the United Kingdom started its existence.

From that time on, it was the descendants of Scots to reign the monarchy. The House of Stuarts inherited the throne after Elizabeth I of England and they ruled the monarchy with a little break during the years 1653-1659, when Oliver Cromwell took the throne, until the death of Anne, the last of the Stuarts.¹² Then there was a long period of time lasting almost two centuries, during which there was no English or Scottish dynasty, but a German one, called the House of Hanover. Despite being German the succession of this dynasty was another “Scottish thing”, because it was the Scottish parliament which allowed them to take the throne. The mother of the first monarch from the Hanoverians was also the granddaughter of James VI, the Scottish founder of the United Kingdom.¹³ So once again the Scottish dynasty was in charge.

The first, let us say truly English dynasty on the throne was the Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, which has been ruling successfully till now. It does not sound English at all. It was George V, the first monarch of the dynasty, who returned Englishness to the British

¹² “The Stuarts,” The Official Website of The British Monarchy, accessed March 17, 2016, <http://www.royal.gov.uk/HistoryoftheMonarchy/KingsandQueensoftheUnitedKingdom/TheStuarts/TheStuarts.aspx>.

monarchy by renaming the Saxe-Coburg and Gotha to the House of Windsor.¹⁴ This new dynasty made it through two world wars and now it has the longest serving monarch Elizabeth II. Although the role of the monarch lost its original power, it is still a very popular figure in the United Kingdom even these days.

Based on the development of the dynasties in the United Kingdom, the loyalty of England to the Kingdom is gradually growing, also because all the power has been situated in London, the capital of England. It is the home of the Houses of Parliament, the Buckingham Palace and other important parts of the monarchy.

2.4 Scotland in the monarchy

The role of Scotland in the monarchy has been changing throughout the centuries. It was one of the founding kingdoms, but then it slowly lost the importance and which escalated in the referendum about Scotland leaving the United Kingdom. Although it was not successful, it showed that people in Scotland do not unanimously agree with the monarchist tradition in their country and they voiced a tendency to leave.

At the beginning Scotland was satisfied with joining the Kingdom of England to create the new monarchy. The first two monarchs were Scottish and with an interruption from William of Orange, the Scottish dynasty ruled on.

The first big change in the monarchy was the Scottish Reform Act from 1832. The same act was passed in England and Wales at that time. The Representation of the People Act as the official longer version was set up by Francis Jeffrey and Henry Cockburn.¹⁵ It was a big step not only for Scotland, but for the whole monarchy. The people gained more power in the elections; it gave them the sense of greater freedom in voting as well as the lust for more power.

And in Scotland, they raised their voices in 1853 through the Home rule movement for a Scottish assembly. That year the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish

¹³ "The Hanoverians," The Official Website of The British Monarchy, accessed March 17, 2016, <http://www.royal.gov.uk/HistoryoftheMonarchy/KingsandQueensoftheUnitedKingdom/TheHanoverians/TheHanoverians.aspx>.

¹⁴ "The House of Windsor," The Official Website of The British Monarchy, accessed March 17, 2016, <http://www.royal.gov.uk/HistoryoftheMonarchy/KingsandQueensoftheUnitedKingdom/TheHouseofWindsor/TheHouseofWindsor.aspx>.

¹⁵ W. Ferguson, "The Reform Act (Scotland) of 1832: Intention and Effect," *The Scottish Historical Review*, no. 139, (1966): 105-114.

Rights was also established.¹⁶ It plays an important role in the Scottish history and it is one of the milestones of the Scottish independence, because this body was the first one to disagree with the Union.

Despite the Scottish efforts, it was Ireland who came up with the Irish Home Rule Bill. Although it was not passed by the House of Commons, it inspired the Scots and gave them hope for the future that it is possible.¹⁷ The next step was taken in 1920, because the Scots National League was set up by Scottish nationalists. It was a political organization supporting the independence for Scotland. A few years later, it was followed by the National Party of Scotland, which transformed into the Scottish National Party in 1934.¹⁸

When the Scottish National Party started to support all-out independence in 1942, John MacCormick decided to leave the Party and to form a new body called the Scottish Covenant Association. It turned out that this Association was very successful among people, because it organized a petition about the Scottish assembly that was signed by more than two million people.¹⁹ However, it was worthless, because the Party was a non-partisan political organization and it did not have any political support.

The presage of dissatisfaction and possible separation of Scotland was the Scotland Act, passed in 1978. It intended to establish a Scottish Assembly and to devolve legislature. In favour of coming into force, the Scotland Act needed to be subjected to a “post-legislative” referendum to actually approve the Act. The referendum, held in 1979 passed with almost 52% of people voting for the Assembly and 33% of voters against it. With the Act, many advantages came to Scotland. Scots gained the power to introduce primary legislation and also gained responsibility about education, the environment or health.²⁰

The Scots were one step closer to the independence with their Second devolution referendum from 1997. The people believed that it would be maybe the last step to their independence. The referendum was held after elections in which the Labour Party won. The referendum was approved thanks to 74% of people voting for it. A little bit after that,

¹⁶ “Early Scottish History And The Union,” BBC, accessed March 17, 2016, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/special/politics97/devolution/scotland/briefing/history.shtml>.

¹⁷ Alvin Jackson, *Home Rule: An Irish History 1800-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2003)

¹⁸ Richard J. Finlay, “Independent and Free: Scottish Politics and the Origins of the Scottish National Party 1918-1945,” *The Journal of Scottish Historical Studies* 15, no. 1 (May 1995): 199, accessed March 17, 2016, <http://dx.doi.org/10.3366/ssh.1995.15.15.127>.

¹⁹ Jack Brand, *The National Movement in Scotland* (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1978).

the Parliament of the United Kingdom approved the Scotland Act.²¹ It was the basis for a new Scottish Parliament.

The last step to independence should have been made in 2014, as Scotland once again raised a referendum about their independence. Namely it was the Scottish National Party, the winner at the last Scottish Parliament elections. The Scottish Independence Referendum Act was passed a year before by both the Scottish and the United Kingdom governments and it set out all the arrangements for the referendum. The Scots were rather optimistic about the referendum, because Scotland had come a long way for this moment, so the expectations were very high. Unfortunately, the referendum was not passed with 45% of people voting for the approval.²² It is that when this referendum was not passed that there is only a small chance for another one, but no one knows.

It was certainly a great chance for Scotland to have its final word and to separate from the United Kingdom. Even though Scotland did not succeed in separating, its loyalty to the Kingdom is somewhat diminished.

2.5 Wales in the monarchy

Wales is probably the most loyal country together with England. Not only because of its geographically close position to England and to London which is the headquarters of the monarchy, but also because of the merge with the Kingdom of England in the 16th century. However, there have also been tendencies to gain at least some power in the monarchy. These efforts though did not evolve in the separation yet.

Wales merged with England in 1536 to create the United Kingdom, but until that moment, Wales was a principality and it had been trying to gain its independency. Instead of that, the Welsh king Henry became also the king of England in 1485, ruling both Wales and England at the same time.²³ When Wales and England merged, Henry became the king of the whole Kingdom of England.²⁴ Despite the Welsh king being on the throne, Wales

²⁰ Taylor Brian, "1979 Remembered," BBC, accessed March 17, 2016, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/special/politics97/devolution/scotland/briefing/scotbrief1.shtml#1979>.

²¹ "The Devolution Debate This Century," BBC, accessed March 17, 2016, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/special/politics97/devolution/scotland/briefing/c20scot.shtml>.

²² "Scottish Independence Referendum," GOV.UK, accessed March 17, 2016, <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/scottish-independence-referendum/about>.

²³ "History of Wales," HISTORY WORLD, accessed March 21, 2016, <http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=ac17>.

²⁴ Ibid.

had to accept the truth that they are no longer independent. Even though England gave Wales the principality status via administrative changes, it was still a part of the kingdom.

After the Act of Union in 1536, Wales was getting swallowed by The Kingdom of England and nothing was going on for a couple of decades. Wales raised its voice after many years in 1886 with the idea of political devolution presented by Cymru Fydd (Young Wales).²⁵ The efforts were not successful; however, it was an inspiration for any Welsh devolution activities in the future.

Some bigger efforts of achieving devolution started to appear after the Second World War when certain powers shifted from Westminster to Wales. People created petitions about creating the post of the Secretary of Wales or a Council of Wales, the second of which was successfully created in 1948. But it was not enough for Wales and in 1964 the Welsh office with a Secretary of Wales was established. It had a responsibility for housing, local government and roads at first, but with the years passing by, other areas like education, health or trade were included.²⁶ This was a remarkable step for Wales on their road to its possible independence.

The first referendum was held on 1st March 1979, peculiarly on the Saint David's Day and people were to decide if an Assembly of Wales should be created. The referendum was not passed, because nearly 80% of people voted against it and if one looks at the map of voters, he realizes that the vast majority of people voting against were those living at the borders with England.²⁷ It seems that the geographical connection to this country did not allow them to take such a big step against the otherwise useful union.

Nevertheless, the "second try referendum" in 1997 was passed successfully, even though it was only the matter of tenths of one percent. The voters were again divided into two groups: the ones at the borders and the others). The first group was mostly against it, but they did not have that strong a voice as last time. The National Assembly for Wales was created a year after the referendum and it brought more power to the hands of Wales.²⁸

²⁵ "Cymru Fydd - Young Wales," BBC, accessed March 21, 2016, http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/history/sites/themes/society/politics_cymru_fydd.shtml.

²⁶ "The History of Welsh Devolution," Cymru National Assembly for Wales, accessed March 21, 2016, <http://www.assembly.wales/en/abthome/role-of-assembly-how-it-works/Pages/history-welsh-devolution.aspx>.

²⁷ Gwynfor Evans, *The Fight for Welsh Freedom* (Ceredigion: Y Lolfa, 2000).

²⁸ *Ibid.*

In 2006, Wales gained even more power with the Government of Wales Act, establishing the Welsh Government separated from the National Assembly and reforming the electoral system. With passing time, it was all about the increasing power of Wales. In 2011, there was another devolution referendum in order to make laws on all matters, which was passed without a problem this time. The final piece of power was gained in 2014 with the Wales Act dealing mainly with the taxes.²⁹ The power of Wales has been slowly growing and as people feel the power another possible devolution may come, and the thoughts about leaving the Kingdom may seem more real.

However speaking about Wales and its loyalty to the Crown, it is not as bad as when it comes to Scotland, but with the increase of power, it is to be expected that sooner or later even Wales as the country close to the centre of the monarchy will again start thinking about their independence. The referendums show that even the most loyal people at the borders with England are changing their view and the gap between Wales and the United Kingdom is getting bigger in younger generations.

2.6 Northern Ireland in the monarchy

Northern Ireland has not been a part of the United Kingdom for a long time. It will be only a hundred years in 2021. It will probably stay in the monarchy for some time despite the location, the Irish Free State next to it and some fights over the state.

Ireland as a whole had been in the monarchy for about 120 years until the first half of the 20th century. It apparently did not like being in the monarchy so it started to take care of itself by a couple of Acts, via which it wanted to gain their independency back. It all ended in separation from the United Kingdom and years later in establishing a fully independent state.

But the United Kingdom did not really want Ireland to leave. Starting with the Government of Ireland Act in 1920, Ireland was separated into two parts: the Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland. Each part was given some power and both states were supposed to remain part of the United Kingdom. However, Southern Ireland fought for its independency in Irish Civil War and in 1922, it separated from the UK.³⁰

²⁹ "Devolution in The UK," The National Archives, accessed March 21, 2016, <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/ukdev.htm#part3>.

³⁰ Robert Kee, *The Green Flag: A History of Irish Nationalism* (London: Penguin, 2000).

The reason, why the northern part of Ireland stayed loyal was shown in the Irish general elections from 1918. The whole north of Ireland was dominated by the Unionists, who were the supporters of the UK. They, of course, did not support the Revolution and remained in the monarchy.³¹ Northern Ireland received self-government, although it was still in the monarchy due to the Government of Ireland Act. In the early years, Northern Ireland had to deal with the Irish Revolutionary Army, which did not agree with Northern Ireland staying in the UK. The protests were so strong that Northern Ireland set up the Royal Ulster Constabulary, which was the police force dealing mainly with the IRA members.³² Having unionist Prime Ministers, Northern Ireland was ruled by unionists who took control of the country. They even discriminated the Catholics, who were in the minority. They also started practicing so called gerrymandering (i.e., manipulating the boarders).³³ The voters or religions were separated to achieve better results in the election. The Ulster Unionist Party was given a majority in the Parliament of Northern Ireland in 1929, which led to their 50 year one-party rule. And that was bad for Northern Ireland, as it led to very serious political and religious problems.

The biggest conflict among the area of Northern Ireland was called the Troubles. It was basically the struggle about the identity of Northern Ireland with two parties standing against each other. In the first group there were the loyalists or unionists, who stood for the United Kingdom and for staying in the monarchy. They were supporting their argument by calling themselves British. The other group was called the nationalists or republicans and they were trying to enforce the independency. They strongly disagreed with being in the monarchy and they were calling themselves Irish.³⁴ And it was the Irish who started it, because they had had enough of loyalists and their discrimination of them. So they started a campaign to end discrimination in Northern Ireland.

The whole conflict lasted for about 30 years and left behind thousands of casualties. In the end, both the Irish and British government signed Belfast Agreement, in which they agreed on the statuses of both countries, their relationship between each other and between

³¹ John Patrick McCarthy, *Ireland: A Reference Guide from the Renaissance to the Present* (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2006).

³² Jonathan Bardon, *A History of Ulster* (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 2001).

³³ David McKittrick and David McVea, *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of the Northern Ireland Conflict* (London, Penguin, 2001).

³⁴ *Ibid.*

the UK. Issues about the rights or justice were included. The Agreement was confirmed by the voters from Ireland and it came into force in 1999.³⁵ Despite the conflict having ended, there are still two groups of people who will probably never really like each other.

Nowadays, Northern Ireland is still not sure whether it should stay in the UK or to leave it. Considering the number of unionists, one cannot expect them to leave the UK soon, but one day, who knows.

³⁵ David McKittrick and David McVea, *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of the Northern Ireland Conflict* (London, Penguin, 2001).

3 RELIGION

Religion has been very important in the United Kingdom. Well, it was certainly important and popular back in the history. These days, there are more people with no religion than there was before. Although, religion is a component of British identity, it has been losing its popularity as we shall see below.

Exploring the development of religion in the United Kingdom, one finds out that there the only one type of prevailing religion in the UK for about 1,400 years is Christianity. Brought in by the Romans, Christianity has been the main religion with a little break during the 5th and 6th century, when the Anglo-Saxons introduced paganism. Since 7th century, Christianity has been basically the main religion in the UK.³⁶ Even though religion has been declining, it is still one of the key symbols of the UK.

3.1 Religion in England

Religion has played a significant role in British history, as Christianity first appeared in the 2nd century. The evidence comes from the times of Roman Britain and Christianity stayed in the area of England until the 5th century. That was the time when the Romans left Britain.³⁷ In the same century, the Anglo-Saxons came from the area of nowadays Germany, invading Eastern England to slowly take over the whole country.³⁸ It was not only about coming to England, but about spreading their faith which was paganism. Christianity was re-introduced in England by Roman Catholics with the help of Irish-Scottish missionaries.

The big moment for Christianity not only in England was when Church of England, established in the 16th century became independent. Thanks to the English Reformation, the Church of England broke away from both the Roman Catholic Church and the Pope. The British monarch became the representation of the Church.³⁹ Since the Reformation, the Church of England had been growing and expanding until the 20th century. The

³⁶ John Ashton Cannon, *A Dictionary of British History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

³⁷ Hugh Kearney, *The British Isles: A History of Four Nations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

³⁸ "Britain's Spiritual History," BBC, accessed April 6, 2016, http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/paganism/history/spiritualhistory_1.shtml.

³⁹ "An Ancient Church," The Church of England, accessed April 6, 2016, <https://www.churchofengland.org/about-us/history/detailed-history.aspx>.

immigration brought many different religions as well as different cultures. Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism were introduced and started to gain popularity as London became a multicultural city.

Religion, i.e. Christianity, has built a strong position in the whole Britain, but the impact of immigrants on religion is getting bigger. The loss of one of the symbols of Britain is getting more serious these days, as Britain is not only losing the support of the Church of England, but also the number of non-religious people is increasing. According to the Office for National Statistics, between 2001 and 2011, the number of people in England who identify themselves as Christian has decreased drastically from 71.7% to 59.3%. Compared to that, the percentage of non-religious people has increased from 14.8% to 25.1%.⁴⁰ This change is not so big, but indicates a decrease in popularity of religion in England.

Christians will be a minority the UK in 2050. One in nine people will be Muslim. The reports claim a huge increase of non-religious people in the next three and half decades.⁴¹ It is speculating whether Britain is a Christian country or not. Some people even claim it is not and that Britain should stop acting as a religious country. That would mean to renounce one of the biggest British characteristics.⁴² That is surely an interesting argument,

3.2 Religion in Scotland

The story of religion in Scotland is quite similar to the English one, as well as the percentage of people's faiths. As it is not such a metropolitan country for immigration, the increase of new immigrant faiths is not very significant.

The first signs of religion came with the Roman occupation. Christianity was brought in mainly by the missionaries from Ireland. However, the Irish and Scottish Christianity differed from the Roman's one. The biggest difference was in the calculation of Easter. It was also strongly influenced by monasticism, in which abbots were more important than

⁴⁰ "Religion in England and Wales," Office for National Statistics, accessed April 6, 2016, <http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/religion/articles/religioninenglandandwales2011/2012-12-11>.

⁴¹ John Bingham, "Christianity on Course to Be Minority Religion in UK," The Telegraph, accessed April 6, 2016, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/11512794/Christianity-on-course-to-be-minority-religion-in-UK.html>.

⁴² John Bingham and Steven Swinford, "Britain Is No Longer a Christian Country And Should Stop Acting As If It Is, Says Judge," The Telegraph, accessed April 6, 2016,

bishops. During the Norman period, monasticism underwent a couple of reforming processes and became even stronger in Scotland. The Scottish church also established independence from England in the Norman period. Another reformation called a Protestant reformation took place in Scotland in the 16th century. During this reformation a Presbyterian church was created by Calvinists. Presbyterianism was restored after the Glorious Revolution.⁴³

A more significant milestone in the history of Scottish religion appeared in the 18th century during a reformation, in which the Church of Scotland was created. The Church of Scotland did not last very long without any protests. In 1834 the Ten Years Conflict about the Church broke out and ended up in the Great Disruption of 1843 which created a separated Free Church of Scotland. Then, in 1921, the Church of Scotland Act was passed and according to it the Church was recognised as fully independent. This Church was recognised as a national church and it could also unite with the United Free Church of Scotland. The Monarch also became a member of the Church.⁴⁴

Exploring the numbers, it is the Church of Scotland which suffered the most with a 10% decline in supporters between 2001 and 2011. The biggest numbers these days are held by non-religious people who indicated the growth of 9% ahead of the Church of Scotland. There are also other religions, such as Hindu, Buddhist or Islam, but their pace of growth is slower.⁴⁵ Despite the fact that religion has gone a long way and became an important part of Scotland, the situation in this country is similar as in English. The overall number of religious people is falling down as young Scots are not being led to faith and prefer not having a religion.

3.3 Religion in Wales

In Wales the most popular religion is Christianity, as well as in England. Since these two countries united, the tendencies have been very similar, of course. However, even Wales is drifting further apart from the UK and England regarding religion.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/12036287/Britain-is-no-longer-a-Christian-country-and-should-stop-acting-as-if-it-is-says-judge.html>.

⁴³ Jenny Wormald, *Court, Kirk and Community: Scotland, 1470-1695* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991).

⁴⁴ "History," The Church of Scotland, accessed April 6, 2016, http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about_us/how_we_are_organised/history.

For Wales, the beginning of Christianity is the same as for England and Scotland, being introduced by the Romans. But the breaking moment for Welsh religion and Welsh identity came during the Age of Saints, between 5th and 7th century. Monastic settlements were being established all around the country by religious leaders with the main one, Saint David, who later became the patron saint of Wales.⁴⁶ It was the main period of time when Celtic Christianity was being spread.

However, due to the English conquest of Wales, Welsh dioceses fell under the Anglican Church. But starting in 1904 with the Welsh Revival, Welsh Christianity became alive again. It is believed that about 100 000 people became Christians during that time. It continued with the Welsh Church Act from 1914 when some dioceses separated from the Church of England. And it all led to the establishing of new Church of Wales in 1920.⁴⁷

These days, the trend in Wales is the same as in other British countries. The loss of 15% Christians was registered during the years 2001-2011. The rise in the numbers of non-religious people in Wales is also significant with the increase of 16%.⁴⁸ People in Wales seem to be shifting away not only from Christianity, but from religion in general.

Although, Christianity is still the religion number one in Wales, it is expected to lose its position, maybe not in the immediate years, but surely in the following decades. It is on its way to be a minor religion, as the immigrant religions are gaining supporters and more people are becoming non-religious.

3.4 Religion in Northern Ireland

The religious tradition in Northern Ireland could be considered as the most loyal because of its close connection to the Republic of Ireland, which is strongly religious. Although being separated almost 100 years ago, religion still plays a major role in the identity of Northern Ireland. In addition, it does not tend to decline as in other British countries where non-religious people will soon be in majority.

⁴⁵ "Religion And Belief In Scotland Today," Faith And Belief In Scotland, accessed April 6, 2016, <http://faithandbelief.div.ed.ac.uk/>.

⁴⁶ "The Age of Saints," BBC, accessed April 6, 2016, http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/history/sites/themes/religion/religion_age_of_saints.shtml.

⁴⁷ "The Revival," BBC, accessed April 6, 2016, http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/history/sites/themes/religion/religion_revival.shtml.

⁴⁸ "Religion in England and Wales," Office for National Statistics, accessed April 6, 2016, <http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/religion/articles/religioninenglandandwales2011/2012-12-11>.

The biggest conflict over religion in Northern Ireland took part in the second part of the 20th century and it lasted for 30 years. It is also known as the Northern Ireland conflict. Northern Ireland was basically split into two parts with one wanting to remain the part of the UK and the second wishing to join the Republic of Ireland. The problem was closely connected to religion, because unionists, who were sympathising with the UK, were mostly Protestants, while nationalists who wanted to create the united Ireland were mostly Catholics as the majority of Irish people. The problem was that the Catholic minority was discriminated by the Protestants majority. In the end, Northern Ireland remained part of the UK thanks to the Good Friday Agreement and the referendum, in which majority of people voted for staying in the UK.⁴⁹

The major religion is the same as for the rest of the United Kingdom: Christianity. But as Northern Ireland is influenced by the Republic of Ireland, the type of Christianity is Roman Catholic, whereas the Church of Ireland is far behind in the popularity. The supporters of Protestants are situated in the north by the sea; Catholics are mostly in the south and the west. Among Christians, Roman Catholicism is the main religion with 40% believers and it is the only main religion which is actually still growing. It is not so remarkable, but the growth is noticeable. It could mean that people are shifting their belief to support the return to the Republic of Ireland. Nevertheless, the second most popular religion is Protestantism with the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, holding 19% of people and slowly decreasing.⁵⁰ The trend of the increase in the number of non-religious people which can be seen in other British countries is not so remarkable here, but it is present.

⁴⁹ David McKittrick and David McVea, *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of the Northern Ireland Conflict* (London: Penguin, 2001).

⁵⁰ Mark Devenport, "Census Figures: NI Protestant Population Continuing to Decline," BBC, accessed April 6, 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-20673534>.

4 CULTURE

The biggest similarities and the smallest gap between English and British culture holds the cuisine. When one thinks about the United Kingdom's cuisine, the first thing that comes to their minds is fish and chips, full English breakfast including bacon, fried eggs, sausages or beans. Last but not least, there is also the very typical afternoon tea; being served at about 5PM. Language has become more and more important for each of the countries on the British Isles. The states started to prefer their regional languages.

4.1 Culture in England

English culture is closely connected to the British one as it is frequently used interchangeably. British cuisine is famous for its fish and chips being served since 1870; sausages from Roman times, English sandwiches since 1762, full English breakfast since 18th century or the afternoon tea.⁵¹ All these are symbols of England as well and at least every European associates it with England and the UK as well.

Language which is spoken the most in the United Kingdom is English, of course. It is spoken by about 93% of the UK population. In England, the number of English speaking people will be similar, but in the big cities, especially in London, there are many other language minorities due to immigration. The other languages are for example Polish, Hindi or Punjabi, which is the language brought from India.⁵² As England is a popular country for immigration, the number of foreign languages will be increasing.

The similarity to the UK is also proven when it comes to the national symbols. Speaking about the national animal, it is a lion for the United Kingdom. The same animal represents England. The lions are also in the Royal Arms of England.⁵³ These lions are also used in the official football badge for the English national team.

Although there is no official anthem of England, at most of the events or sport matches, the Britain's official one (God Save the Queen) is played. Curiously enough, this year a petition will be held and if it reaches 100 000 signatures, the MPs will discuss the

⁵¹ Ellen Castelow, "Traditional English Breakfast," HISTORIC UK, accessed April 30, 2016, <http://www.historic-uk.com/CultureUK/Traditional-English-Breakfast/>.

⁵² Natalie Evans, "2011 Census: The Main 20 Languages Spoken in the UK," Mirror, accessed March 30, 2016, <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/2011-census-top-20-languages-1563629>.

⁵³ "Coats of Arms," The Official Website of The British Monarchy, accessed March 30, 2016, <http://www.royal.gov.uk/MonarchUK/Symbols/Coatsofarms.aspx>.

possibility of a new anthem of England.⁵⁴ This may be a sign that even the English people wish to do away with the connection and the dependence on the UK.

Among other English symbols belongs St. George, as a patron of England, symbolised by St. George's Cross in both the English and British flag. The last English national symbol is the Tudor Rose which was firstly introduced in the 13th century.⁵⁵

4.2 Culture in Scotland

The typical traditional food in Scotland is considered to be Haggis, which is a savoury pudding made of meat. But what is Scotland worldwide known for, is Scotch whisky, which is being sold worldwide. What makes Scotch whisky so special and unique is that it must be produced in a matter specified by the law, as well as it must age in special oak barrels for a certain amount of time. Among the most known Scotch brands are Johnnie Walker, Ballantine's, Chivas Regal or Grant's Scotch.⁵⁶ Although, the Scottish whisky is not as popular as the Irish one, people still associate Scotland with its true Scotch.

The most spoken language in Scotland is English, but there is also Scots and Scottish Gaelic, which is spoken mainly in the north.⁵⁷ Despite having own Scottish languages, English will still be the number one language for some time simply because the number of speakers of the other languages is very small.

St. Andrew is a patron of Scotland. St. Andrew came with the representation of Scotland, which is a Saltire. St. Andrew's day is also an official flag day in Scotland and during that day; the Saltire is being flid as well as the Union Jack.⁵⁸ Scottish nationalists though disagree with the Union Jack on this day, fighting at least for some independence from the flag of the UK.

⁵⁴ Michael Wilkinson, "Petition Launches to Adopt New English National Anthem," Telegraph, accessed March 30, 2016, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/12124219/Petition-launches-to-adopt-new-English-national-anthem.html>.

⁵⁵ NIKITA, "Red Roses and White: A Brief History of the Tudor Rose," Royal Central, accessed March 30, 2016, <http://royalcentral.co.uk/historic/red-roses-and-white-a-brief-history-of-the-tudor-rose-55675>.

⁵⁶ "The Production of Whiskey," Whisky.com, accessed March 30, 2016, <https://www.whisky.com/information/knowledge/production.html>.

⁵⁷ "Scotland's Languages," TRACS, accessed March 30, 2016, <http://www.tracscotland.org/scotlands-languages>.

⁵⁸ "Political Row over Flag Flying," BBC, accessed March 30, 2016, 2016, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/scotland/1587906.stm.

The other truly Scottish symbol is a piper wearing a tartan kilt with a hat. In Scotland, there are also many festivals throughout the year, celebrated in these traditional and typical clothes.

4.3 Culture in Wales

Despite being close to England and to the centre of the UK, Wales has a very different culture and Welsh language is also gaining popularity. Since 1993, when the Welsh Language Act was passed, it has become common to provide websites or books in both English and Welsh language. It is also guaranteed by the law that both languages have an equal status in the country. Further importance of the Welsh language was established in 2011 and from that year on, the Welsh language is an officially recognised language in Wales.⁵⁹ Although, the number of Welsh speakers in Wales has fallen within the years 2001-2011, it is still about 19% who can speak in Welsh language.⁶⁰ The majority of the speakers are located by the sea in the north, so far from the English borders.

The other Welsh symbol is its anthem. Although it is not the official anthem of Wales, but only a national one, it is very popular among Welsh people. The anthem went down in history as it is the first national anthem to be sung at the beginning of a sport event. It is played before the Welsh rugby game, which is the national sport of Wales.⁶¹ That could be a factor which would make it even more “nationalistic” for the Welsh people.

Wales has also its patron called St. David, who is considered the patron saint of Wales. He came with idea of leek as a national emblem of Wales, because according to the legend, he wanted to identify Welsh soldiers by making them wear the leek. It was in a battle with the Saxons. Saint David's day is also being celebrated to honour this patron on 1st March with leek worn on this day.⁶²

⁵⁹ “The Welsh Language,” North Wales Police, accessed March 30, 2016, <http://www.north-wales.police.uk/about-us/welsh-language/legislation.aspx#>.

⁶⁰ “Census 2011: Number of Welsh Speakers Falling,” BBC, accessed March 30, 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-20677528>.

⁶¹ “The Anthem in More Recent Years,” BBC, accessed March 30, 2016, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/music/sites/anthem/pages/anthem-today.shtml>.

⁶² “Saint David of Wales,” Britain Express, accessed March 30, 2016, <http://www.britainexpress.com/wales/history/david.htm>.

4.4 Culture in Northern Ireland

As Northern Ireland is geographically separated on the island and it was a part of Ireland for a long time, its culture is expected to be different to the UK, and more similar to the Irish culture.

When speaking about the language, English is the most spoken one, despite that, in Northern Ireland two more regional languages are recognised. These languages are there because of two neighbouring states – Ireland and Scotland. The Irish language is spoken by almost 6% of people and Ulster-Scots is spoken by 2% of people. These languages are spread mainly at the borders with Ireland and at the sea by Scotland.⁶³ English is still the first language, however, these two regional languages are considered as culturally significant.

People in Northern Ireland are still divided so when it comes to the national flag, unionists prefer the Union Jack or the Ulster Banner, whereas nationalists use the Flag of Ireland. Some other groups even use the Flag of St. Patrick (St. Patrick Saltire).⁶⁴

But it is Saint Patrick who connects them all. He is a patron of the whole Ireland and the national symbol. People from all over the world recognize Ireland thanks to Saint Patrick. As well as other states, Ireland accepted the national day called St. Patrick's Day, being celebrated on 17th March. It is one of the biggest events in the whole Ireland; Saint Patrick's Day is also popular in other countries and it is widely spread.

The other feature is also connected with Saint Patrick's Day, and that is a shamrock. This green plant is a popular reference to Ireland. It is also said that Saint Patrick used it as a metaphor for the Holy Trinity.

⁶³ "Languages of Ireland," Ireland, accessed March 30, 2016, <http://www.ireland.com/en-us/about-ireland/must-know-information/languages-of-ireland/>.

⁶⁴ Thomas H. Eriksen and Richard Jenkins, eds., *Flag, Nation and Symbolism in Europe and America* (London: Routledge, 2007), 102-106.

5 SPORTS

The United Kingdom has given birth to many popular sports of today. But different sports are typical for different countries. Football is the most significant sport which comes from the United Kingdom. Then there is rugby, cricket, tennis or athletics. The athletics is the only sport which connects all the nations in the United Kingdom, because the sportsmen compete together at the Olympic Games, representing the United Kingdom and wearing the UK flag.

5.1 Sport in England

Football is certainly the number one sport in England. Ten thousands of people attend the matches every game week, even though the prices are rising, even though the weather is bad and even though their favourite team loses matches. Football is a form of religion in England and that is a reason for Englishmen to consider it a part of English identity.

England truly is the cradle of the game of football, because the first evidence of football in England comes from the 14th century. England takes the first place in many categories. It has the oldest football clubs in the world, with the official registered oldest one, Sheffield F.C., founded in 1857. England runs the world's oldest competition, founded in 1871, the first football league in the world, played since 1888, and the first ever played football match, played in 1863. England also developed the modern passing game of football in the early 1870s.⁶⁵

But it is not only about the history. England was the host for the both FIFA World cup and UEFA European championship in the years 1966 and 1996. In the EURO 1996, they made it to the semi-final and they won the World cup in 1966. One would say that England is not such a successful national team, but they are more successful with English clubs in the European competitions. Many people who watch football, consider the English Premier League the best football league in the world, not only because of the success of English teams in the European competitions, but also because of the attractiveness of the league. In the last couple of years, smaller clubs were given more money, so they can buy better

players and they can compete with the best teams in England and that makes English Premier League a much more interesting competition than any other. And fans in England know it and are coming to every single match of their favourite team so the stadiums are often sold out, even though they have capacities of 50, 60 or 75 thousands. Last but not least, in England, fans are often of wide range of ages. One can see a young excited boy, or loyal old woman all dressed in the club's colours. This makes English football special and people consider it as a part of their identity, because they do not only watch football, they live it.

5.2 Sport in Scotland

Scotland is a very popular country at sports, because it invented several international ones, including golf or rugby. Football also takes an important part of history.

When it comes to the most Scottish sport, it would be golf. Scotland is the birthplace of golf, which has been played there since the 15th century. Scotland invented the rules, the first courses and clubs were Scottish. It is the home for over 550 courses with the Old Course at St. Andrews as the most known. Scotland holds the first place for the world's first Open Championship in 1860. It is also the most successful country in it. Golf itself is also popular among the visitors of Scotland, so it very profitable for Scottish economy. And what makes golf so special is that it is a sport not only for rich people, but plenty of other people play it, as well as it is for all the life categories.⁶⁶ Scotland has also many great golf players, including James Braid. He was a five times winner of the Open Championship, founder of the first PGA (Professional Golf Association), great course designer and one of the greatest golf players in history.⁶⁷ One would hardly find a more typical sport in Scotland.

Rugby is a significant sport in Scotland both now and in the history. It evolved from football and therefore both sports have some similarities. The most interesting one is that the first international match of both football and rugby was played in Scotland between England and Scotland itself in 1871. It was just one year after the first international football

⁶⁵ "History of Football – Britain, the Home of Football," FIFA, accessed March 30, 2016, <http://www.fifa.com/about-fifa/who-we-are/the-game/britain-home-of-football.html>.

⁶⁶ "History of Golf," International Golf Federation, accessed March 25, 2016, <http://www.igfgolf.org/about-golf/history/>.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

match between these countries.⁶⁸ Scotland was also one of the founders of popular Home Nations Championship, now called Six Nations, being played by Scotland, England, Wales, Ireland, France and Italy. Scotland has taken part in every Rugby World Cup since the beginning and that makes it very special.

Although, it could seem that England is much more important in football history, it is not true. It was Scotland, which stood behind the first ever international football match. Together with England, they played the match in Hampden Park in 1872. Scotland is written in the history of football one more time with the first football club, called the Football Club of Edinburgh. Even though it was not an official one, it was the first club dedicated to football, calling it the football club.⁶⁹ With the increasing base of football fans, one can only speculate about its future in the Scottish sport identity.

Unlike England, the number one sport in Scotland cannot be easily determined. Although golf would be the most probable one, rugby and football should also be taken into account.

5.3 Sport in Wales

The most popular sport in Wales is surely rugby. According to some people, rugby is a symbol of Welsh identity, as well as an expression of national consciousness, because it is seen that way by people.⁷⁰ And it is known among the people from all over the world especially thanks to many Welsh successes in rugby.

Although, rugby was brought to Wales from England in 1850, it soon became very popular among the people of Wales. Welsh Football Union (later Welsh Rugby Union) was formed in 1881 so Wales could play international matches. The first match was played right in the same year and it was against England. The teams consisted mainly of college students who studies in England, but at the end of 19th century, the true Welsh professionals started playing rugby.⁷¹ That was the beginning of the Welsh rugby identity.

⁶⁸ "The History of Scottish Rugby," Scottish Rugby, accessed March 30, 2016, <http://www.scottishrugby.org/about-us/history>

⁶⁹ "Football," SCOTLAND: The Official Gateway to Scotland, accessed March 25, 2016, <http://www.scotland.org/about-scotland/sport/football/>.

⁷⁰ John Davies, Nigel Jenkins, Menna Baines and Peredur I. Lynch, *The Welsh Academy Encyclopaedia of Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008).

⁷¹ David B. Smith and Gareth W. Williams, *Fields of Praise: Official History of the Welsh Rugby Union, 1881-1981* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1980).

Nowadays, the Welsh Rugby team is ranked as a Tier-1 nation by World Rugby. Wales competes in many prestigious competitions. Firstly in its domestic competition, called Guinness Pro12 competing with Welsh, Scottish, Irish and Italian teams every year. Wales also participates annually in the European Challenge Cup, as well as in the European Rugby Champions Cup with teams from England, France, Scotland, Ireland and Italy. These nations meet at the Six Nations Championship every year since 1883. But the most prestigious is the Rugby World Cup which is played every 4 years.⁷² Wales is rated fourth in the World Rugby rankings with New Zealand, Australia and South Africa at the top spots.⁷³ It does not matter that Wales is fourth, it still makes the best rugby team in the United Kingdom.

5.4 Sport in Northern Ireland

It is not easy to pick one, most typical sport in Northern Ireland. As it was a part of Ireland for a long time, Northern Ireland shares the common interest for rugby. But these days, football and cricket are gaining popularity thanks to recent successes at the international scene.

Rugby can be considered as a sport of Ireland but it is also played in Northern Ireland. Both Ireland and Northern Ireland are connected by rugby and compete with one governing body called Rugby Football Union. In Ireland, there are four provinces, one of which is from Northern Ireland. It represents the whole Northern Ireland and it is quite successful with one title and two second places in the Pro12 competition with other teams from Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Italy.⁷⁴ Rugby is also known as it connects the people in Northern Ireland. For example Catholics and Protestants do not like each other, but when rugby is being played, they unite and support their team together. Watching rugby in Northern Ireland is like a family reunion according to James Hutchinson and it is principally because Northern Ireland has only one team in Pro12 rugby competition.⁷⁵ This

⁷² "The WRU," WRU, accessed March 25, 2016, <http://www.wru.co.uk/eng/thewru/index.php>.

⁷³ "World Rugby Rankings," World Rugby, accessed March 25, 2016, <http://www.worldrugby.org/rankings#mru>

⁷⁴ "Guinness Pro 12 Table," Ulster Rugby, accessed March 25, 2016, <http://www.ulsterrugby.com/fixtures/league-tables.php#.VvVS7OLhDIU>.

⁷⁵ Amanda Ferguson, "In Northern Ireland, Rugby Spans the Sectarian Divide," Reuters, accessed March 25, 2016, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-rugby-union-world-ireland-politics-idUKKCN0S827N20151014>.

is the right way how sport should work. It should connect people, not divide them. At least this is what rugby does in Northern Ireland.

Cricket is popular in Northern Ireland also thanks to Ireland. This sport was in minority, but the Irish Cricket Team made a success recently, which enticed many people to try this sport too. Starting in 2007, the Irish Cricket Team made Irish people watch cricket, because the team have qualified for the first time and they also made it to the Super 8 stage. Even though, the Irish team did not make it through the group stage in the next two world cups (2011, 2015), the 2007 success was big enough for people to start playing cricket.⁷⁶

The last sport worth mentioning in Northern Ireland is football. Although it does not have a rich history, the breakthrough could come this year, as Northern Ireland has qualified for the European Championship for the first time in its history. As well as rugby and cricket, football has the only organising body for both parts of Ireland. Northern Ireland did not reach any success with domestic team or the national team, citizens who watch football are mostly fans of the Scottish or English teams. Anyway, this Championship can change it all, because the national footballers are already heroes for qualifying and with some minor success, football can become more important in Northern Ireland.

Talking about sport in the United Kingdom, it will be very interesting to watch the football EURO 2016 in France and the reason is simple. All the UK countries except for Scotland have qualified for the final stage. Wales and Northern Ireland succeeded to qualify for the first time in the history and they stand a chance to prove that they are strong enough to make a huge success in Europe just by themselves.

⁷⁶ "History," Cricket Ireland, accessed March 25, 2016, <http://www.cricketireland.ie/about/history>.

II. ANALYSIS

6 INTRODUCTION TO ANALYSIS

Identity is a complex issue. Therefore, British identity can be understood in many different ways, as well as any other identity. Different nationalities have different opinions about it. Even more so, when it comes to British identity, because Britain, or more precisely the UK, consists of four states, four possibly different opinions. In addition, other European countries could also see British identity differently. The theoretical part takes the point of view of an impartial observer, while the practical part is exploring the matter through a questionnaire researching the view of the English, Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish people regarding their identity.

6.1 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire (see Appendix 1) itself was designed to explore British identity from the point of view of the born British people. It was sent to all of the four British nationalities in order to get a complex view and then to compare all the responses among themselves. The questions were closely connected to the theoretical part and focused on each of the topics in that part, i.e., loyalty to the crown, religion, culture and sports.

6.1.1 The General Questions

At the beginning, general questions to get the basic information about the respondents were asked. The questions were related to the gender, age and education. After that, people were divided according to their place of origin into four groups: the English, Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish.

6.1.2 The Questions about British Identity

The following questions explored British identity itself. The respondents were asked these questions:

Do you think British identity exists?

Do you consider yourself as a person with British identity?

If so, what are the features of British identity?

Despite being British, is regional identity more important for you?

6.1.3 The Questions about Loyalty

The following set of questions was designed to explore the notion of loyalty to the crown. In the first part, the questions were about the support of the constitutional monarchy and about the loyalty to the monarchy. This was the first point where the respondents expressed their opinion about the other states as well. In connection to the monarchy, there were two questions about exiting the UK; firstly about Scottish separation from the UK, based on the referendum which was held there lately and secondly about Britain leaving the EU (i.e., Brexit). The respondents were asked these questions:

Do you support the continuation of the monarchist tradition of the UK?

Do you feel the sense of pride in British monarchy?

Do you think that the UK countries are evenly loyal to the crown?

According to you, which country is the most loyal?

According to you, which country is the least loyal?

As a citizen of the UK, would you approve of Scotland's separation from the UK?

Do you approve of the UK leaving the European Union?

Do you think it would be better for the UK countries to split and become independent?

6.1.4 The Questions about Religion

This set of questions was designed to explore the importance of religion in both British and their own regional identity. In these questions it could be seen how people feel about religion and its role among British countries. People were also asked about the future of religion in the UK, comparing the importance of it in the history and nowadays. These questioned were asked in this section:

Are you religious?

Is religion an important part of your personal identity?

Is religion an important part of British identity?

Do you consider the UK as religious?

Which religion is the most common in the UK?

Which religion do you personally affiliate with?

Will religion be important in the UK in the future?

6.1.5 The Questions about culture

In the next part, the respondents were asked about culture. Firstly about the first language and the official anthem, because even though they are British, their first language

may not be English or they may not really accept the official anthem as their own. The next questions focused specifically on the individual culture of every British country. Again, the respondents were given a chance to say what they think about the culture of other British states. These questions were asked:

Should each country have its official anthem?

Which language do you consider as your first?

Why do you consider the language you mentioned above as your first?

What is most typical for the UK when it comes to the culture?

What is most typical for England when it comes to the culture?

What is most typical for Scotland when it comes to the culture?

What is most typical for Wales when it comes to the culture?

What is most typical for Northern Ireland when it comes to the culture?

6.1.6 The Questions about Sports

The last part was about sport in the UK. People could express their opinions about the role of sport in British identity when choosing the most typical sports for each country. They were also asked about their regional sportsmen compared to the British ones to find out whether they are more proud of the British ones or the regional ones. They were specifically asked following questions:

When it comes to sports, are you more proud of your regional sportsmen rather than the British national ones?

Do you approve of English, Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish sportsmen competing together at the Olympic Games for the UK?

Do you feel rivalry when it comes to the sport matches among the UK countries?

What is most typical sport in the UK in your opinion?

What is most typical sport in England in your opinion?

What is most typical sport in Scotland in your opinion?

What is most typical sport in Wales in your opinion?

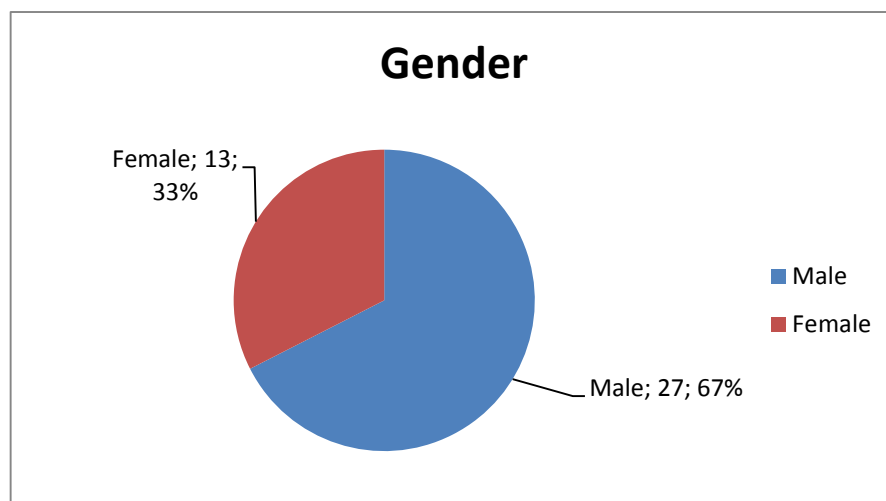
What is most typical sport in Northern Ireland in your opinion?

7 DATA

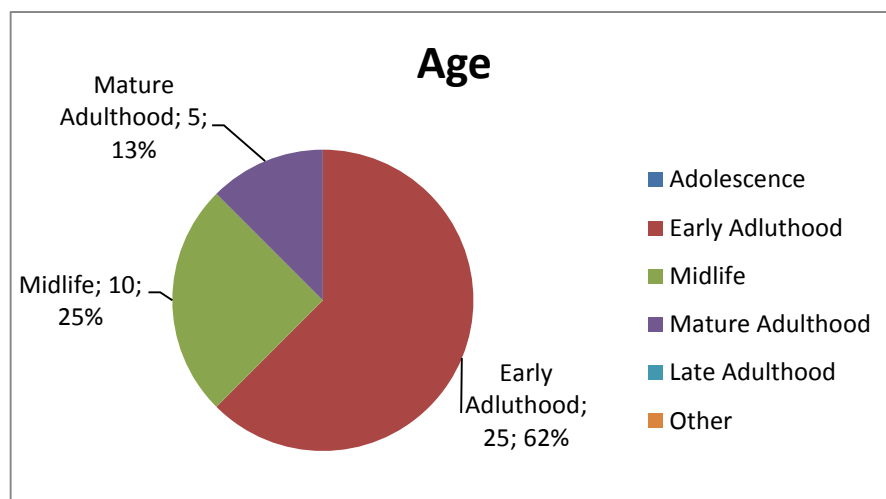
The results of this questionnaire were very interesting. Some very different opinions have been recorded, but in the end the thesis statement was proven, considering both overall results and results of each nation.

7.1 Respondents

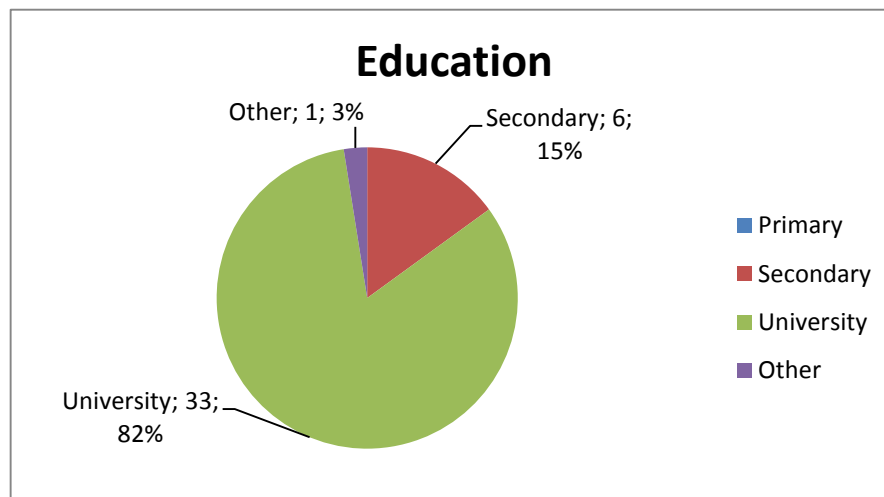
There were 40 respondents in total, 10 from each country, mostly students with university education. As the questionnaire was anonymous, the respondents were given code names according to their place of origin and their number in the sample group (England E1 – E10, Scotland S1 – S10, Wales W1 – W10, Northern Ireland N1 – N10). The participants are characterised in the charts below:



Graph 1 – Gender (Overall)



Graph 2 – Age (Overall)



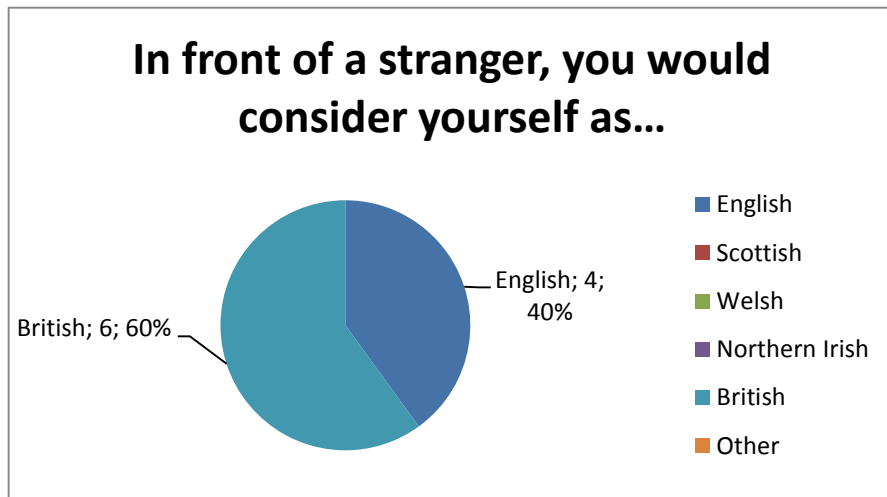
Graph 3 – Education (Overall)

7.2 The English

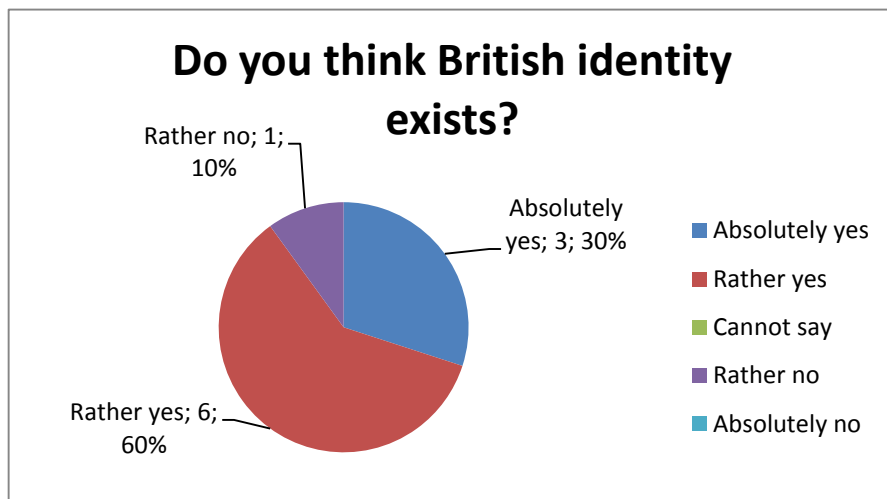
7.2.1 The English and British identity

Almost half of the English respondents consider themselves British, arguing that they were born either in Britain or in England (see picture 4).

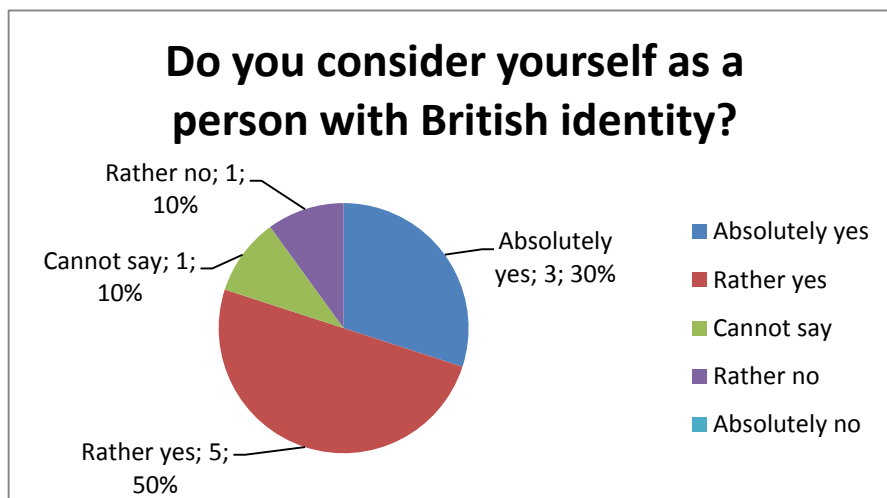
Here are some of their claims: *“Because I was born and live in the UK.”* (E5) But it was the older people who consider themselves British, while young student prefer to call themselves English, e.g. *“I am from an island of more than one nation.”* (E10) Also, the majority of people born in England think that British identity exists (see picture 5), supporting it by the monarchistic tradition and the Queen. *“It’s (features of British identity) a sense of history and tradition.”* (E9) Anyway, there is also a division between British and English “supporters” when the participants were to decide they are a person of British identity (see picture 6). People who consider themselves British claim that they are also a person with British identity since they live in Britain. Some people who consider themselves English claim the same thing and some people are not sure. When it comes to regional identity, it is again people who consider themselves British for whom regional identity is not important (see picture 7). People considering themselves English are divided, some of them are not sure while for some of them regional identity is important. *“Each region is unique, with their own accents, cultures, traditions and histories. We may be British, but we are all uniquely British.”*



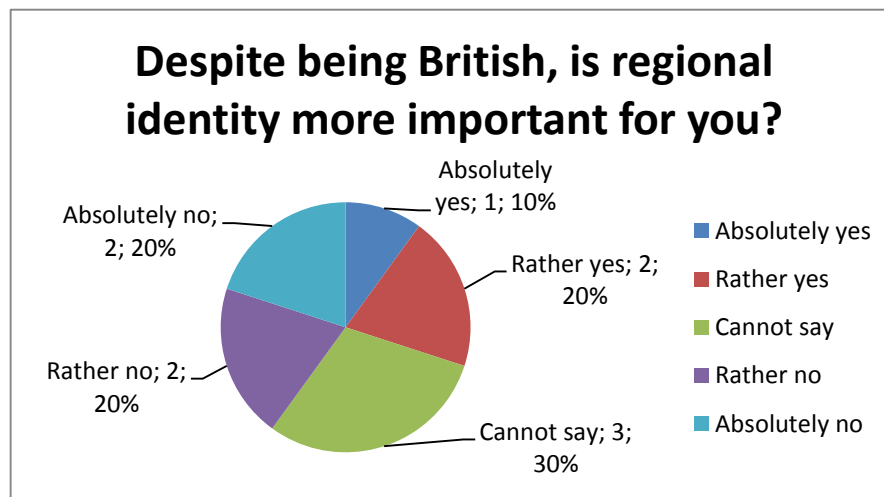
Graph 4 – Identification (The English)



Graph 5 – British identity (The English)



Graph 6 – British identity 2 (The English)



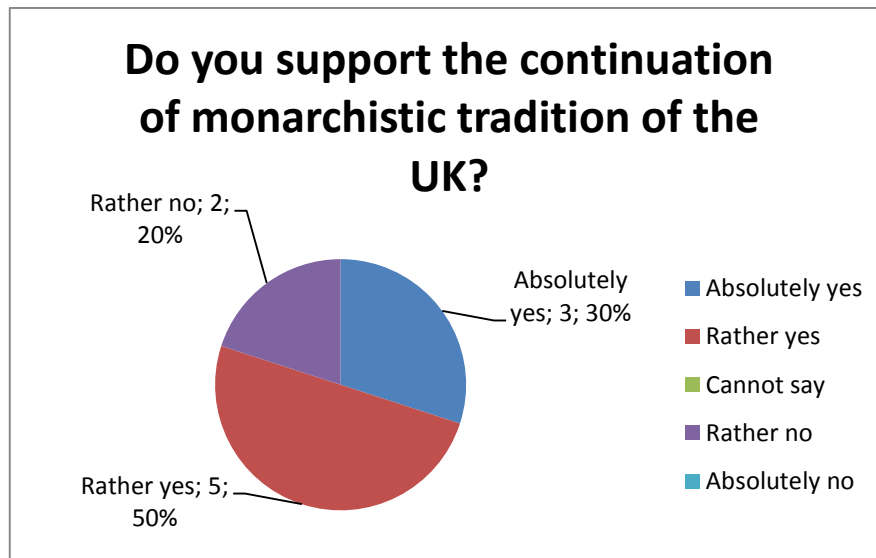
Graph 7 – Regional identity (The English)

7.2.2 The English and their loyalty

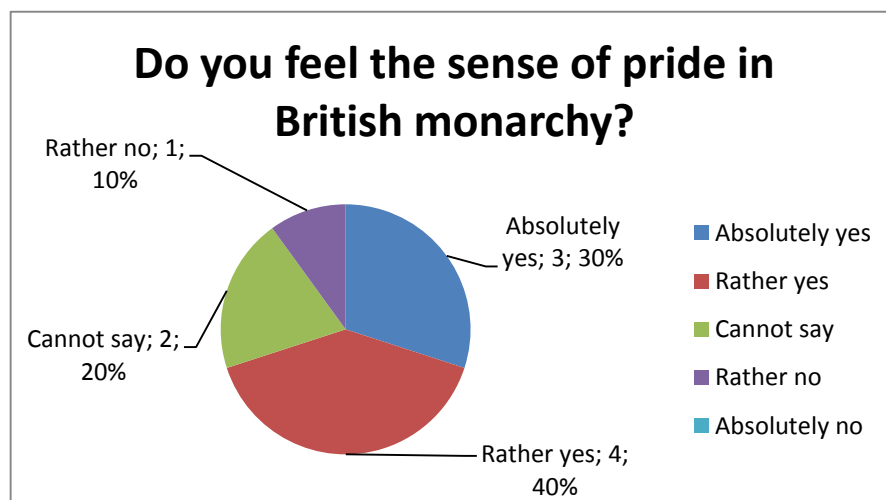
The vast majority of people considering themselves British support the monarchy and its continuation while people considering themselves English more or less do not support the monarchy (see picture 8). The same goes for the sense of pride in British monarchy (see picture 9). English people do not feel any sense, on the other side the British people do and support it with the arguments of tradition and power. *“I believe tradition does hold a place in British identity and having a connection to the monarchy is something that is unique and often associated particularly to Britain. From the Queen's addresses on public holidays to their humanitarian effort as international ambassadors there are clear benefits to a monarchy. However, I believe the main issues come around public-based funding and lack of connection beyond superficial links with the monarchy.” (E7)*

English people are not quite sure about the loyalty of the countries. (see picture 10 and 11). Despite the fact that all of the people chose England as the most loyal, some of them chose Scotland as the least loyal while others claim that Northern Ireland is the least loyal. The majority voted for Scotland though. English born people were also divided on the issue of Scotland's separation. *“Scotland is the least loyal, based on the Scottish referendum for Scottish independence.” (E8)* Despite no one strongly disagreeing with its separation, overall, English born people would rather not let it separate. None of these people would approve of the UK leaving the EU either; saying that it is beneficial for the UK. *“There are clear benefits and costs to leaving a trade union and separating entities both economically and otherwise. Having free movement and restriction-free trading would have to be analysed in careful depth in order to see the real implications of breaking away from the*

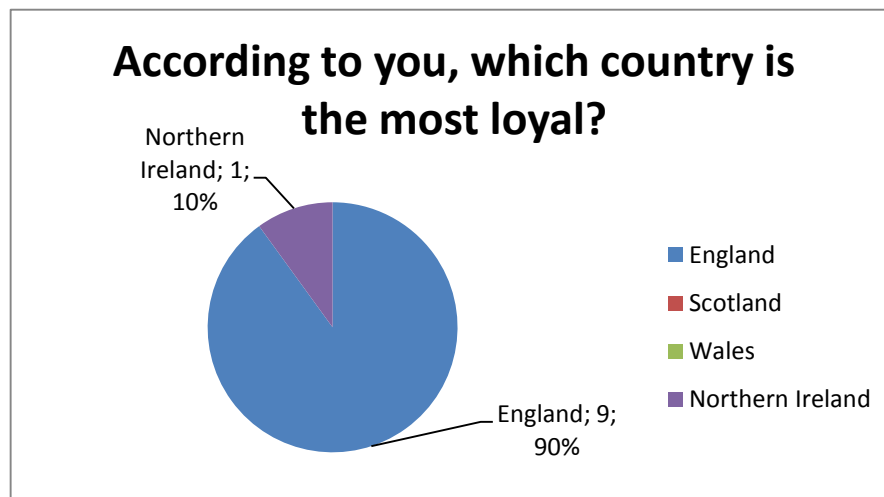
EU but I believe it to be a net loss if the UK were to leave.” (E7) English born people more or less united and claimed that it would not be better for the UK countries to split and become independent. “Economically, politically and geopolitically we are stronger together.” (E8)



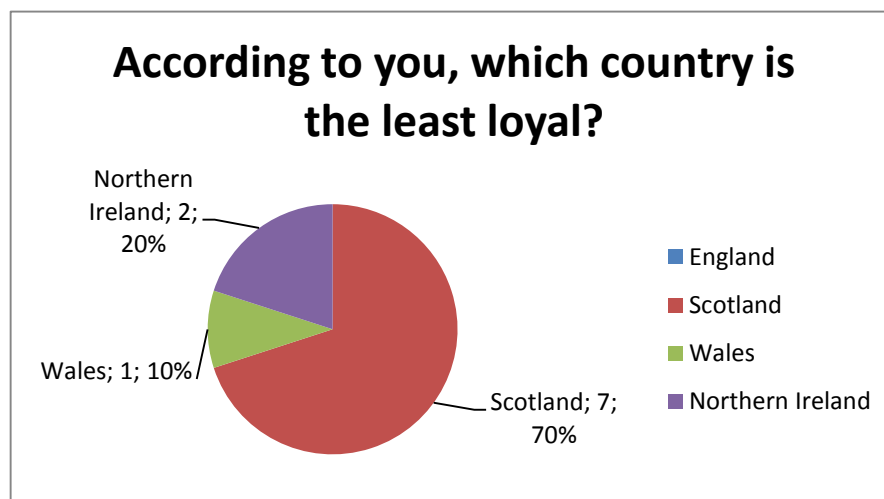
Graph 8 – The continuation of the monarchy (The English)



Graph 9 – The sense of pride in the monarchy (The English)



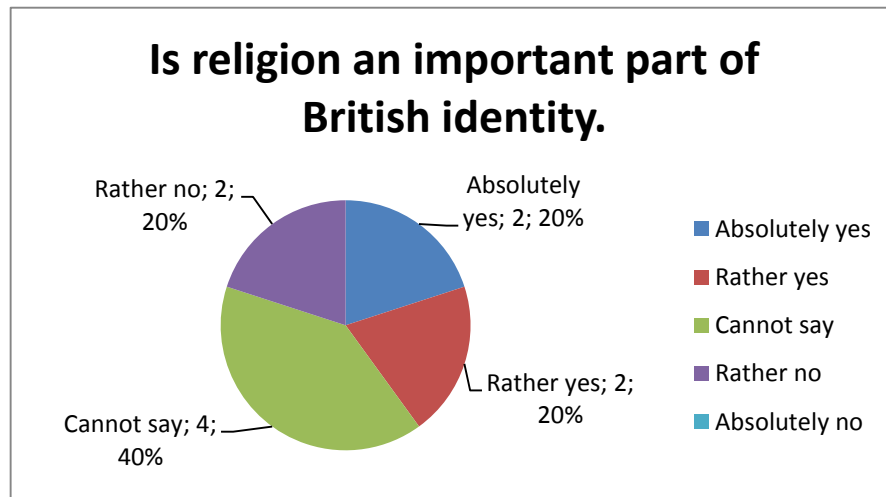
Graph 10 – The most loyal country (The English)



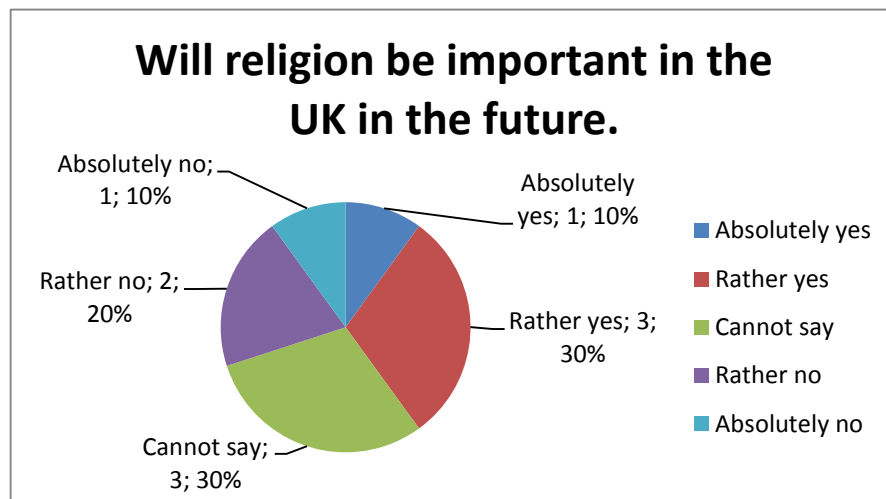
Graph 11 – The least loyal country (The English)

7.2.3 The English an religion

The majority of English born people are not religious and they also say that religion is not an important part of their personal identity. When it comes to British identity, people mostly cannot say, but on the other hand, no one really disagrees that religion is an important part of British identity (see picture 12). English people are very tolerant of religion. *“I think it is medieval hocus pocus and was a form of controlling the masses. Other people however have the right to have their own beliefs also.” (E1)* English born people more or less consider the UK as religious, stating that Christianity is the most common religion in the UK. On the other side, English born people are not quite sure whether religion will be important in the UK in the future (see picture 13). *“There is a multiple of religions in the UK, I cannot foresee which will prosper or fall.” (E10)*



Graph 12 – Religion in British identity (The English)



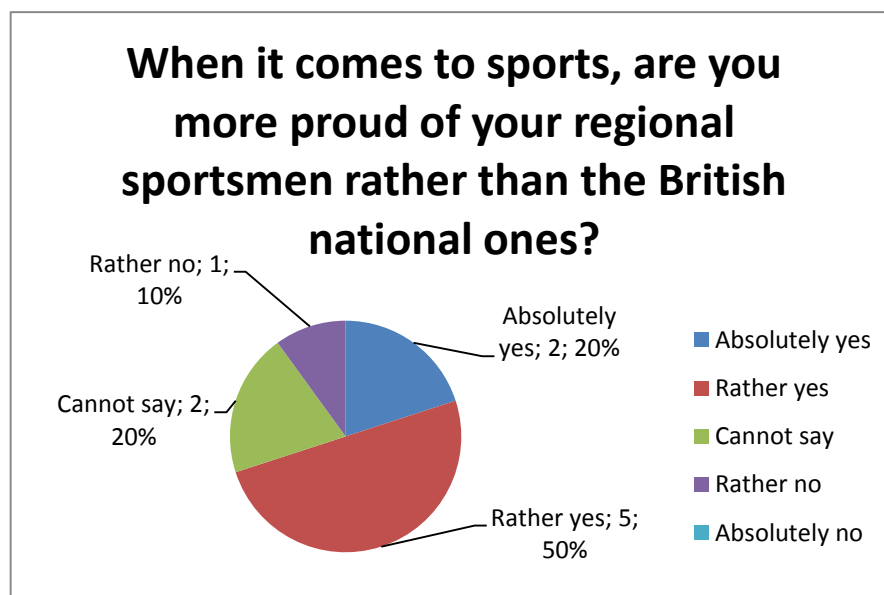
Graph 13 – Religion in the future (The English)

7.2.4 The English and culture

English born people stayed on the side of the union, as they would not agree with each country having the official anthem. All of them consider English as their first language, mainly because it is the only one they can speak. English born people were talking about the most typical cultural elements in the UK basically being the same as the culture in England, stressing the anthem, the Queen, monarchy, fish and chips and sometimes football. When it came to the description of other nationalities, people were saying more less the same things such as different food, traditions, national symbols or landscape. Some English born people marked Scotland as traitors and Northern Ireland as an absolutely different country because of its location.

7.2.5 The English and sports

Regarding sports, almost all English born people are more proud of their regional (see picture 14) sportsmen, because it reminds them where they come from. *“I follow the football team of my hometown – it makes us tribal.” (E4)* However, they have a different opinion about competing at the Olympic Games, because they mostly approve of all the nations competing together. On the other side, most of English born people do not feel rivalry in the sport matches among the UK countries. It could be true, because English people consider all of them as their neighbours within one state. The most typical sport in the UK is same as the one in England – football. English people again consider the same popular sport of England and of the UK. For Scotland, they chose mostly golf and rugby. Rugby is also the most popular sport in Wales according to them, while in Northern Ireland it is rugby and football according to them.



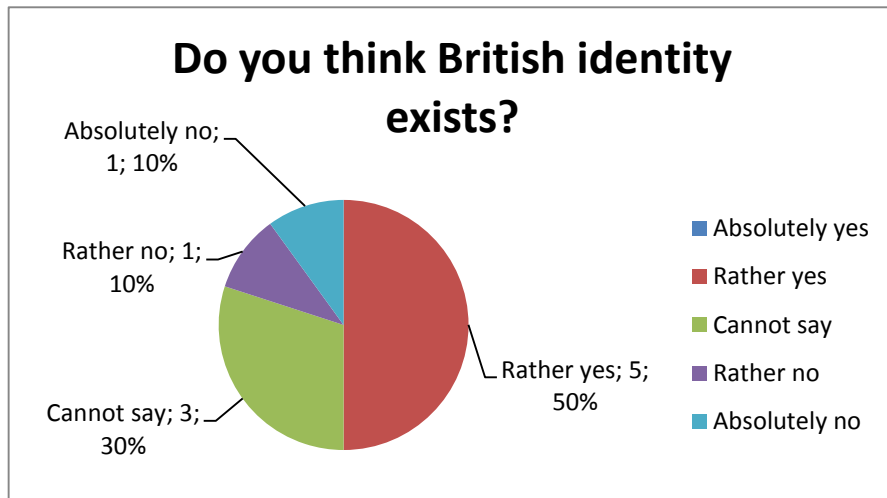
Graph 14 – Sports (The English)

7.3 The Scots

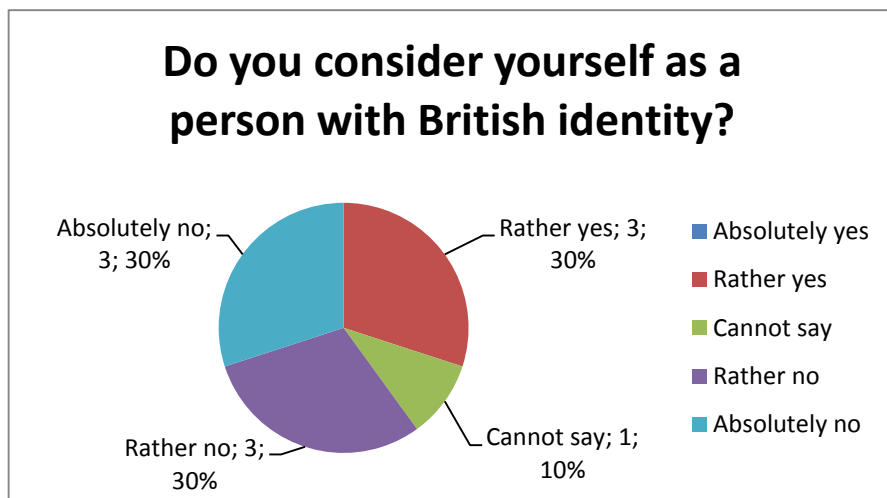
7.3.1 The Scots and their identity

The second point of view was taken from the Scottish perspective. All of the Scottish respondents consider themselves as Scottish with no exceptions so there is a strong feeling of regional pride as some of the Scots have written. *“I am proud of being Scottish.” (S8)* Scots are not sure if British identity exists (see picture 15), because some of them admit its

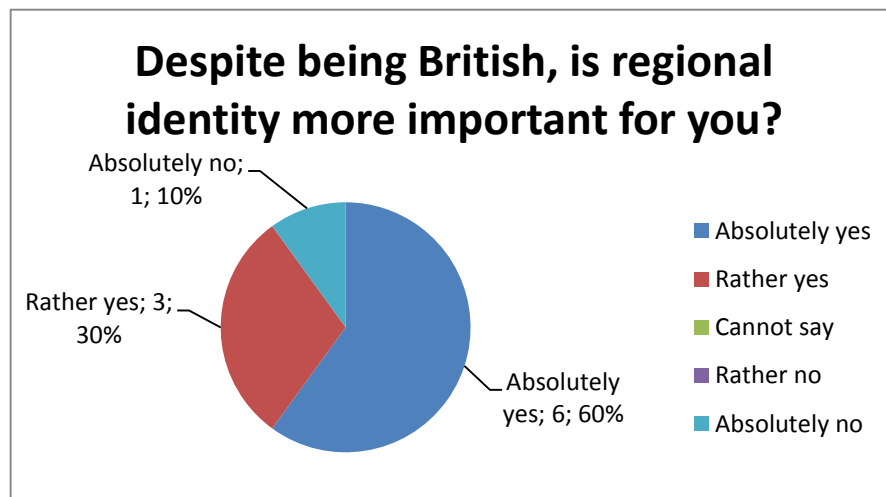
existence and some cannot say so. However, almost none of the Scots consider themselves as a person with British identity and regional identity is surely more important for them (see pictures 16 and 17). Some Scottish people seem to feel even hostile towards the UK. “I’m Scottish. Britain is a joke.” (S2)



Graph 15 – British identity (The Scots)



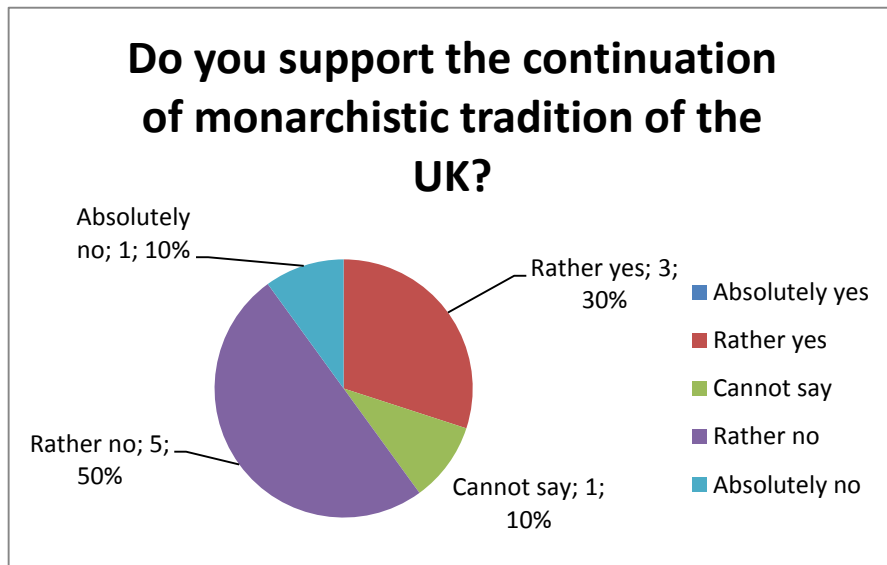
Graph 16 – British identity 2 (The Scots)



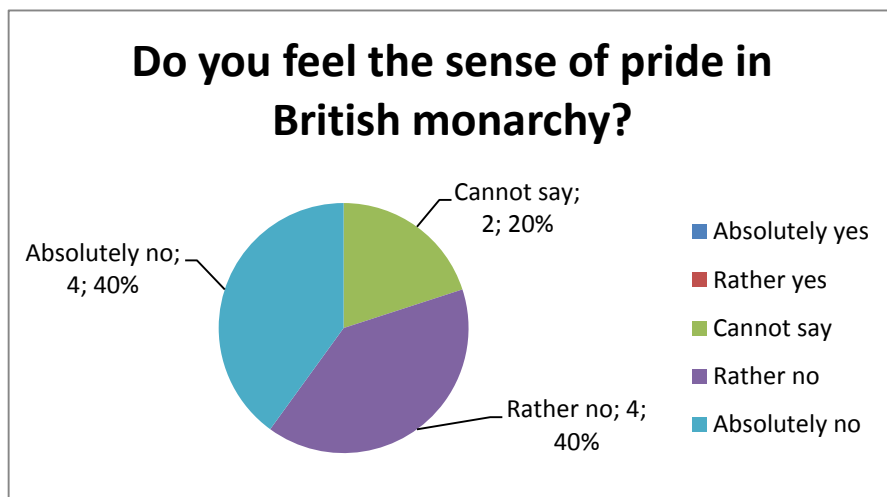
Graph 17 – Regional identity (The Scots)

7.3.2 The Scots and their loyalty

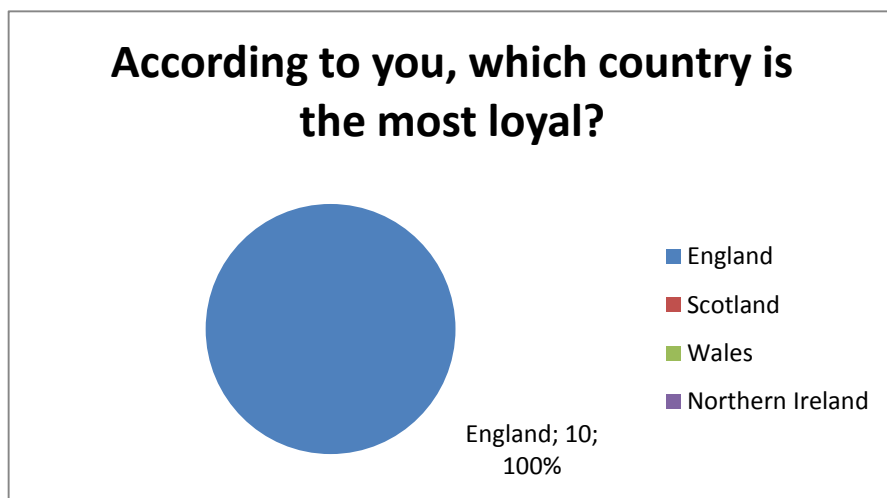
Connected to the fact that some of the Scots are fed up with the UK, Scottish people do not support the continuation of British monarchy and are not proud of the monarchy (see pictures 18 and 19). They argue that the monarchy is outdated and it is pointless. *“To me they are just another family which gets too much money spent on them where there are people all over the world in need.”* (S4) Scots are also sure that the countries are not evenly loyal to the crown, choosing England as the most loyal and mostly themselves as the least loyal (see pictures 20 and 21). They commented that they would rather be independent and that their decreasing loyalty is based on the Scottish referendum for Scottish independence. *“Scotland goes for independence.”* (S9) Also, almost 100% of Scots would approve of Scotland’s separation from the UK; on the other hand, Scots were not sure whether to let the UK leave the EU. Some argued that there are many advantages to being in the EU and that the countries must stick together. *“In such dark times we must stick together. (In Europe) Scotland is its own country I do not recognise the authority of David Cameron's government.”* (S1) Anyway, the majority of Scots would approve of the UK splitting, some said that Scotland should definitely separate, but they were not sure about the future of other countries. *“For us, (Scotland) it would be surely better (to split and become independent).”* (S10)



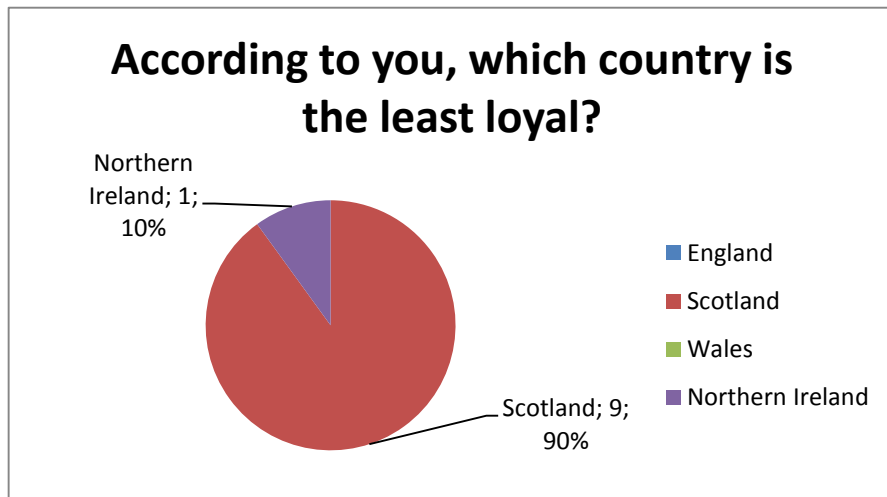
Picture 18 – The continuation of the monarchy (The Scots)



Graph 19 – The sense of pride in the monarchy (The Scots)



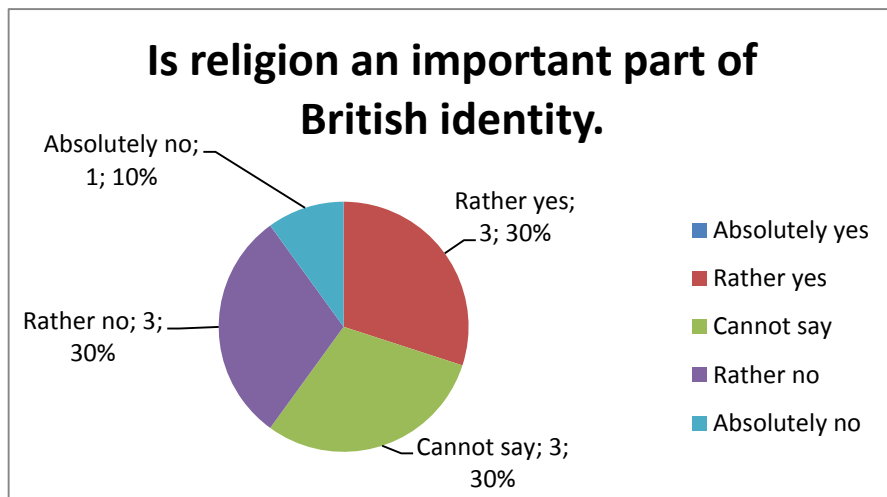
Graph 20 – The most loyal country (The Scots)



Graph 21 – The least loyal country (The Scots)

7.3.3 The Scots and religion

The vast majority of Scots are not religious and do not find it important when it comes to their identity. But speaking about British identity, some say that religion is important in the UK and some are not sure (see picture 22). There are also people who think that Britain is rather not religious, but they admit it was religious before. Scots also do not think that religion will be important in the UK in the future, claiming that it is rapidly losing its popularity among people. *“Religion is less important.” (S3) “Religion is irrelevant.” (S2)*



Graph 22 – Religion in British identity (The Scots)

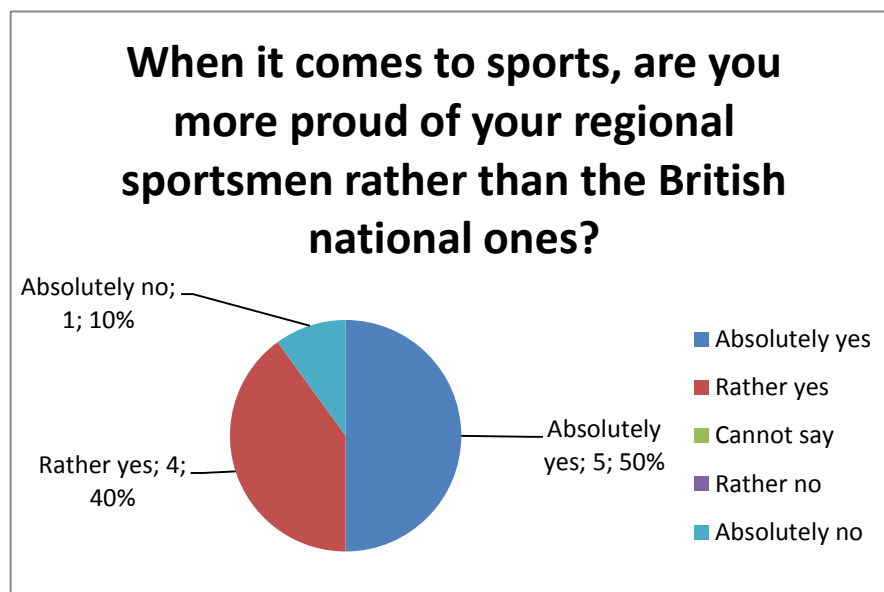
7.3.4 The Scots and culture

Half of Scots consider English as their first language; the second half claims it is the Scottish language. They refer to their nationality when they mention Scottish as their first language. Scottish people cannot see many differences between the UK and England in

culture. They name things like monarchy, the language or the national foods. Speaking about the English culture, they speak about traditions, with traditional food. They speak the same way about themselves, mentioning traditions as well as their costumes like kilts, or they mention drinking the alcohol, especially whisky. Wales is being described by the accent, singing, sheep and rugby. Northern Ireland is seen by Scots as religious with beautiful nature, Guinness and Irish language.

7.3.5 The Scots and sports

Scottish people are very proud of their regional sportsmen as almost all of them like regional sportsmen rather than the British ones (see picture 23). The Scots also mostly do not like seeing all the nations competing under the same flag. In contrast with the English people, Scots feel rivalry when it comes to the sport matches among the UK countries. On the other side, they claim that the most typical sport for both England and the UK is football, and as their own national sport they see mostly football as they are getting better on the international scene. The most typical sport in Wales is rugby for sure. And the most typical sport in Northern Ireland according to them is rugby, too.

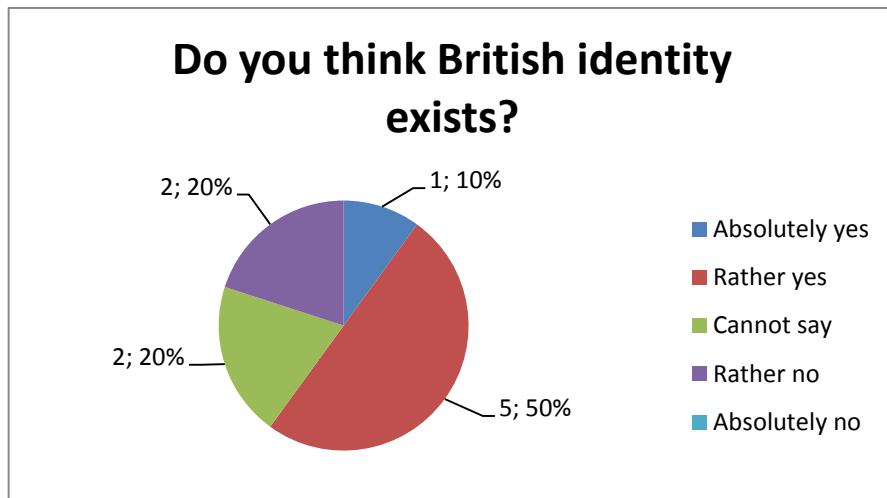


Graph 23 – Sports (The Scots)

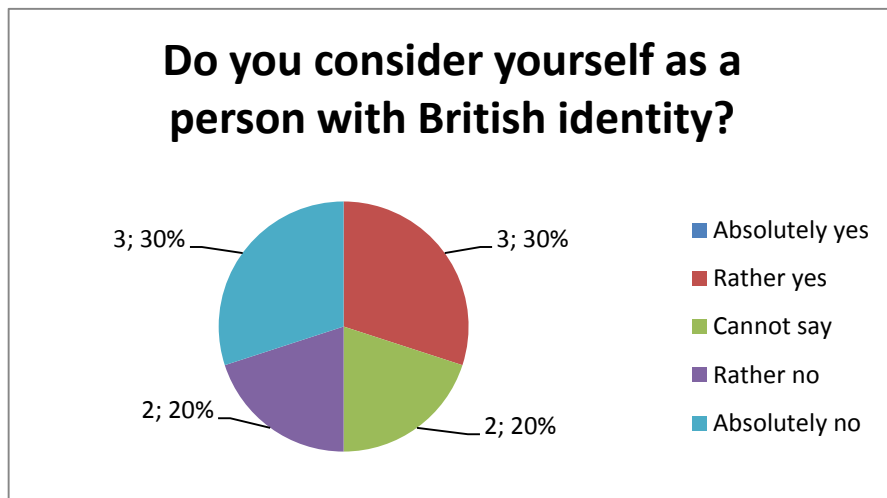
7.4 The Welsh

Welsh people are not so tied with the British status, because almost all of them consider themselves Welsh and the reason is the same as for the previous two nationalities – it is the place where they were born. Welsh people think that British identity exists (see

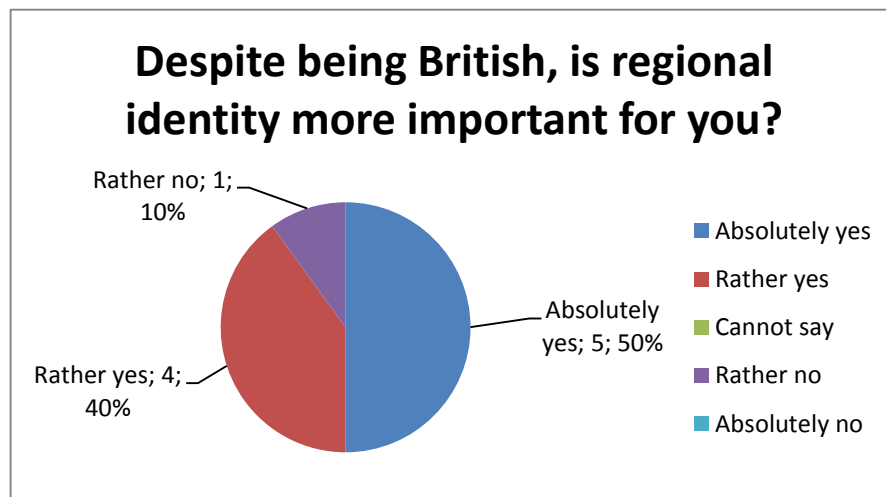
picture 24); they comment that it basically means to be born within the UK. They do not consider themselves as a person with British identity though (see picture 25). Considering regional identity the Welsh people are indecisive, but overall, regional identity is more important to them (see picture 26). *“Even though British identity is being more encouraged I still feel regional heritage is important.” (W2)*



Graph 24 – British identity (The Welsh)



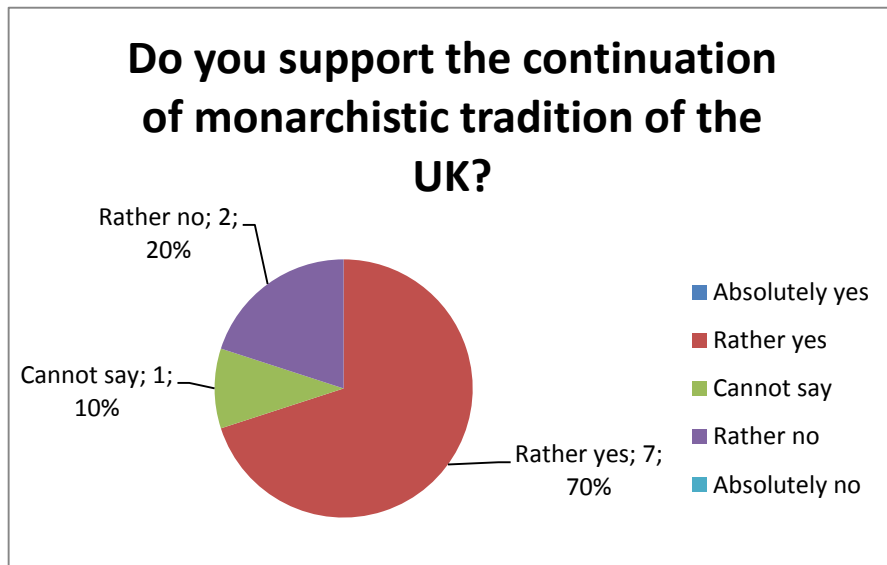
Graph 25 – British identity 2 (The Welsh)



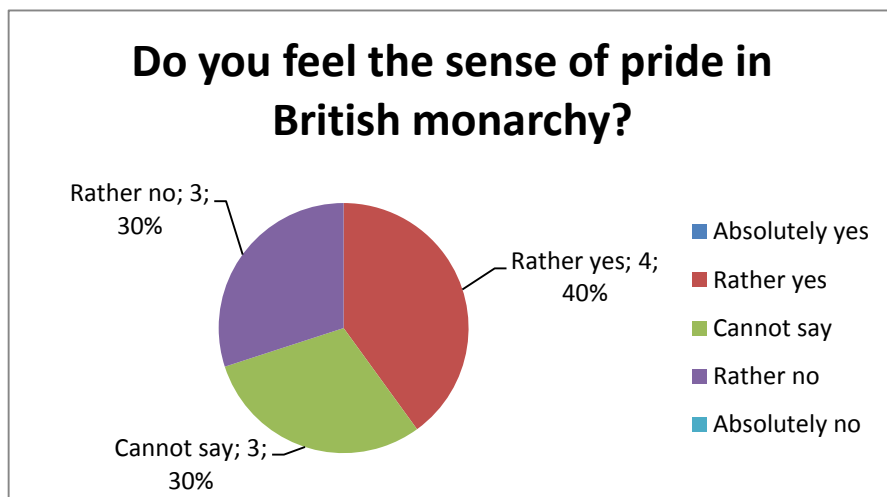
Graph 26 – regional identity (The Welsh)

7.4.1 The Welsh and their loyalty

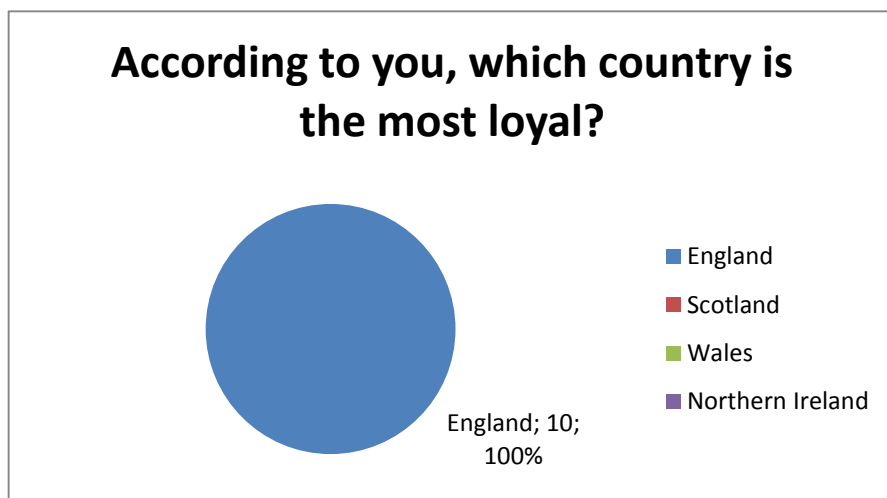
More than half of Welsh people support the continuation of the monarchy (see picture 27). On the other side, they are divided regarding the feeling or the sense of pride in British monarchy (see picture 28). They have no problem with the Queen and the system; they also say that it is a tradition. *“I have no problem with the Queen.” (W1)* They chose England as the most loyal country and majority of them chose Northern Ireland as the least loyal (see pictures 29 and 30). They say that Scotland has not been loyal for a while. *“A lot of people from Scotland desire independence.” (W3)* Welsh people were divided in their answers about the separation of Scotland from the UK; they mostly do not know what to say about it. They are also sceptic about the UK leaving the EU. *“The EU provides a lot of benefits.” (W4)* The Welsh people vary in their opinions about the splitting of the UK countries. *“While I know Wales would not be able to manage independently I feel some other countries would benefit from splitting from the UK.” (W7)*



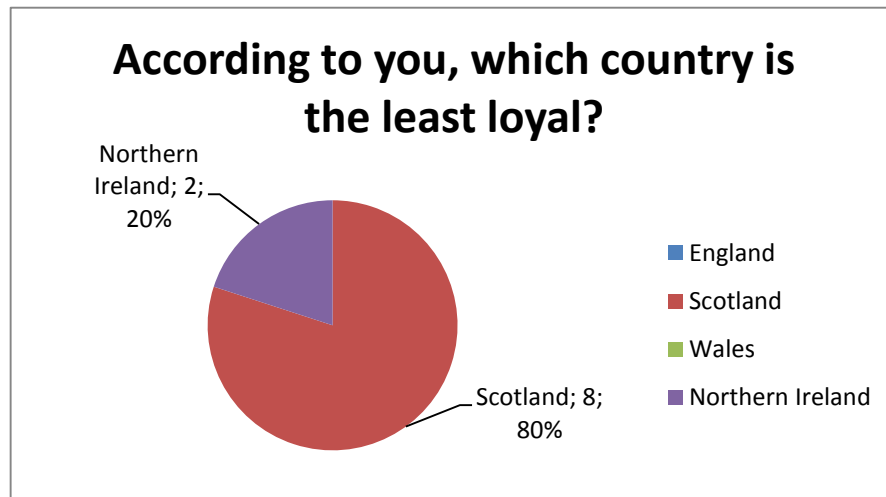
Graph 27 – The continuation of the monarchy (The Welsh)



Graph 28 – The sense of pride in the monarchy (The Welsh)



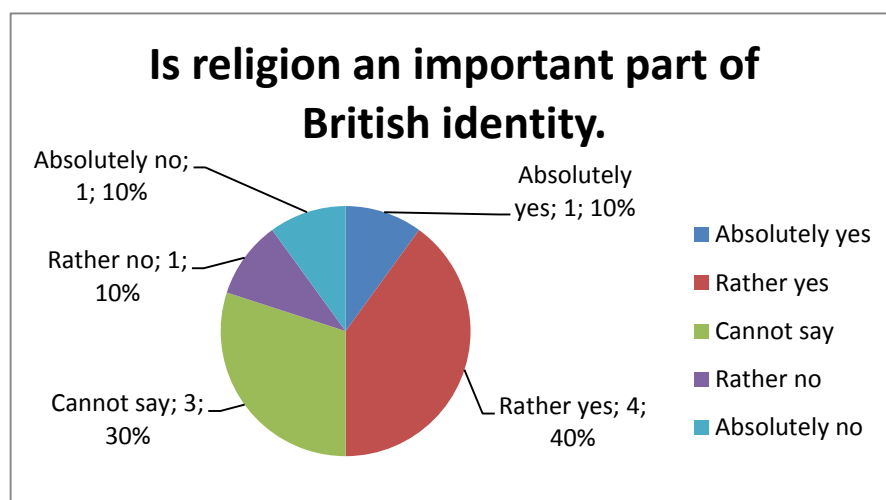
Graph 29 – The most loyal country (The Welsh)



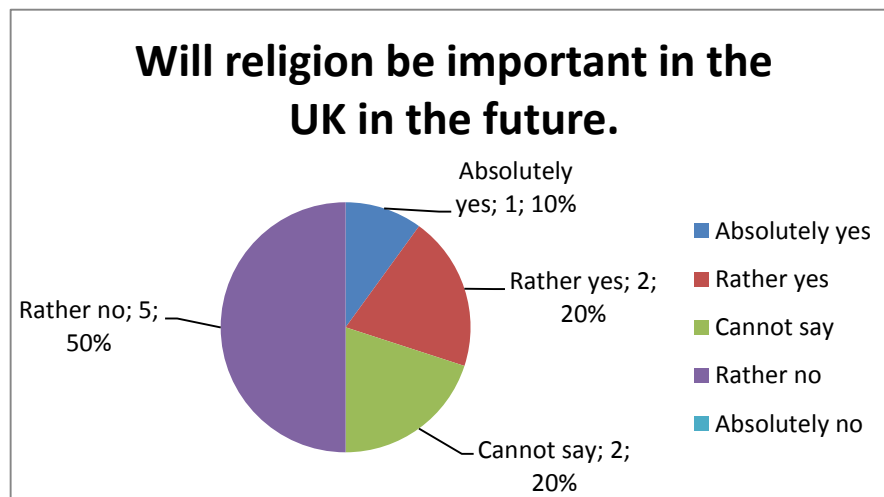
Graph 30 – The least loyal country (The Welsh)

7.4.2 The Welsh and religion

When it comes to religion, Welsh people are more or less religious, but they admit that religion is not so important for them. They share both positive and negative opinions about religion as a part of British identity (see picture 31). *“The decline of religion is remarkable.” (W9)* *“There are a lot of religious people in the UK, it’s a tradition.” (W4)* They mostly even do not consider the UK as religious and that reflects the fact that religion surely is dying. The Welsh also more or less do not think that religion will be important in Britain in the future (see picture 32). However, religious Welsh people claimed that they are Christians, and also that Christianity is the most common religion in the UK.



Graph 31 – Religion in British identity (The Welsh)



Graph 32 – Religion in the future (The Welsh)

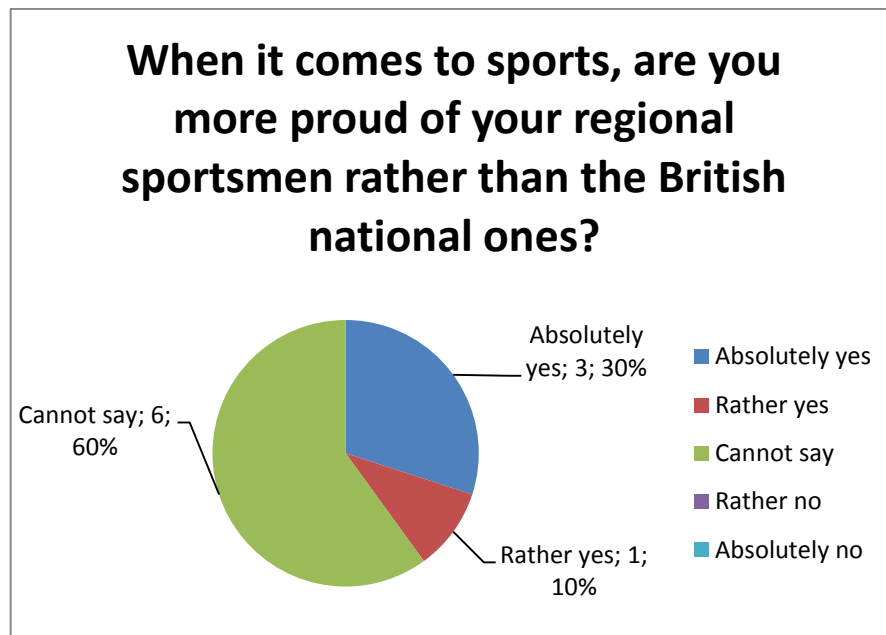
7.4.3 The Welsh and culture

The majority of Welsh respondents do not think that each country should have its official anthem, more of them also consider English as their first language. Some claim that they can speak both, English and Welsh. Even though they may speak English, apparently, they are keener on their regional identity. *“I’m used to speaking Welsh more than English.” (W7)* The responses about culture varied a little, but Welsh people mostly mention clothes and food as the main cultural identification. For both England and the UK it was fish and chips and beer, for Scotland it was the kilt for Wales it was the singing culture and for Northern Ireland they picked Guinness.

7.4.4 The Welsh and sports

Although some Welsh people are proud of their Welsh sportsmen and are not afraid to write that they are proud Welshmen, more than half of them are not sure about their regional sportsmen (see picture 33). The Welsh people are also quite not sure whether to approve of English, Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish sportsmen competing together for the UK at the Olympic Games. They are proud of being themselves but they may be a little afraid of the situation when they are just by themselves. Anyway, they do feel rivalry when it comes to the sport matches among the UK countries. The most typical sport for both England and the UK is football, according to them. Some says that football is the most typical for the UK, because it dominates in England. Golf is the most typical sport for Scotland and rugby in their country. Some of them chose football and some chose rugby as

the most typical sport in Northern Ireland. It reflects that the diversity in Northern Ireland is being seen by the other states, too.

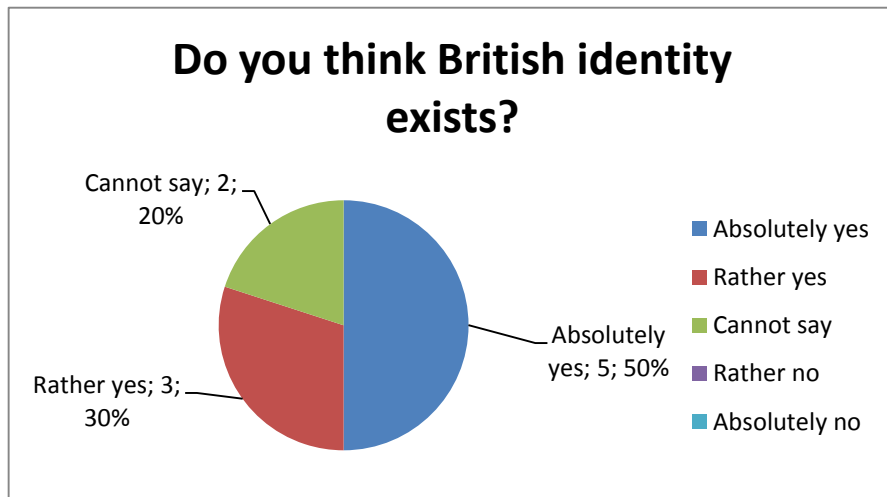


Graph 33 – Sports (The Welsh)

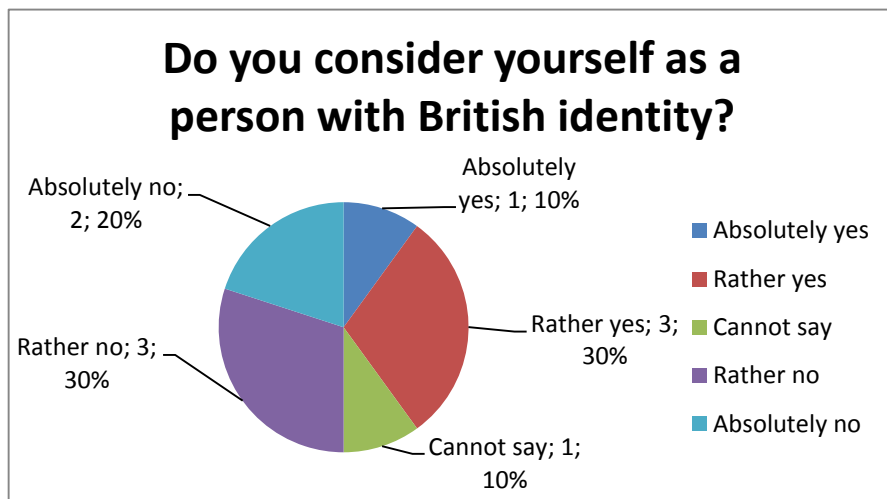
7.5 The Northern Irish

7.5.1 The Northern Irish and British identity

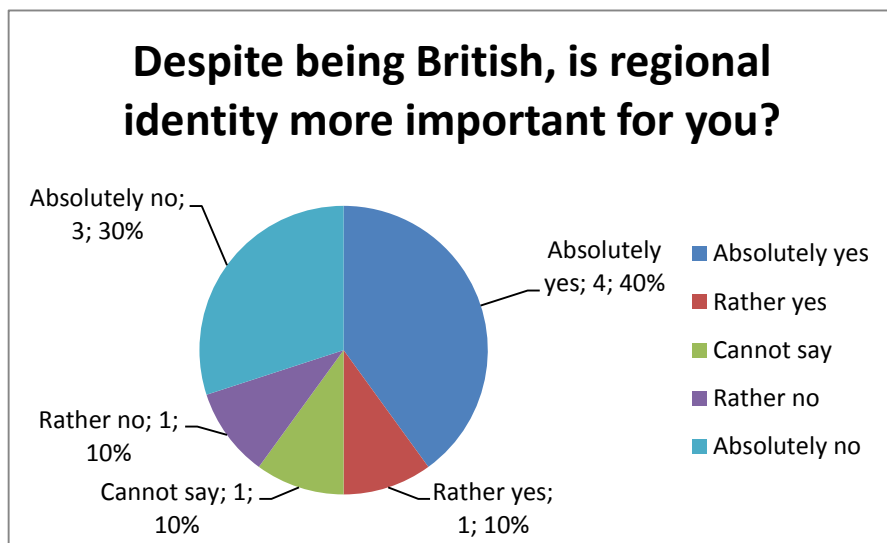
People from Northern Ireland varied greatly in their responses. Despite the majority claiming that they feel and identify themselves as Northern Irish, some are still more British. *“I describe myself as British as we are part of the United Kingdom and I was brought up in the Protestant faith.”* (N6) On the other hand, there were people who referred to their ancestors. *“My ancestry is best represented by the term Northern Irish as it includes Ulster Scot, Northern England, and native Ulster.”* (N3) People from Northern Ireland are quite sure that British identity exists (see picture 34) and they state that it means to be born in the British Isles or to be somehow connected to Britain. *“Being born in Britain (is a feature of British identity).”* (N2) The division among the Northern Irish is displayed in the following two questions (see pictures 35 and 36), because overall, they are not sure if they are more British or Northern Irish. *“I’m a British subject with a unique experience of subjugation.”* (N5) *“Northern Ireland is unique.”* (N4) *The Northern Irish are divided also in the sense of regional identity. “For me, class is more important than either.”* (N7) *“N.I. is different to the UK for many reasons. Some not so good but it’s good to remember our history.”* (N6)



Graph 34 – British identity (The Northern Irish)



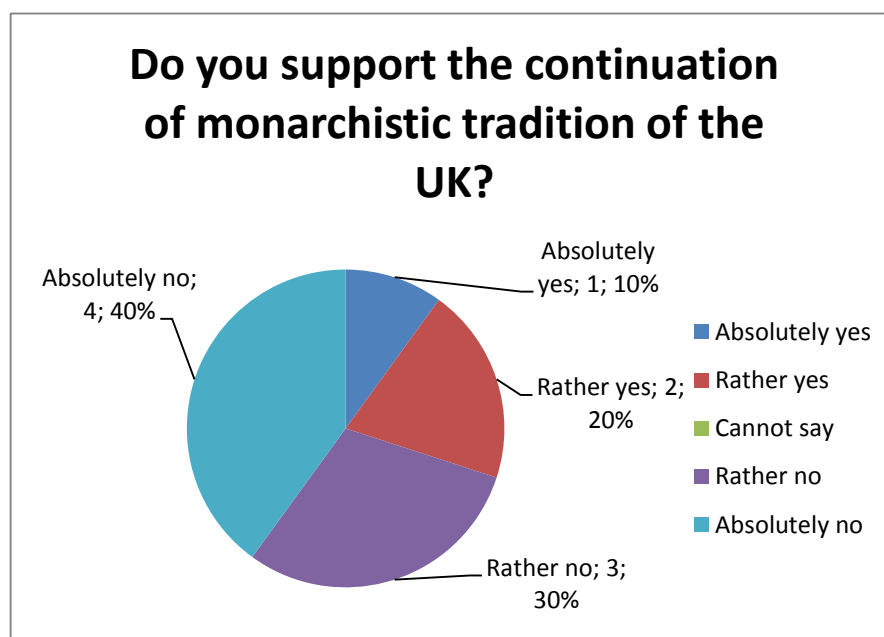
Graph 35 – British identity 2 (The Northern Irish)



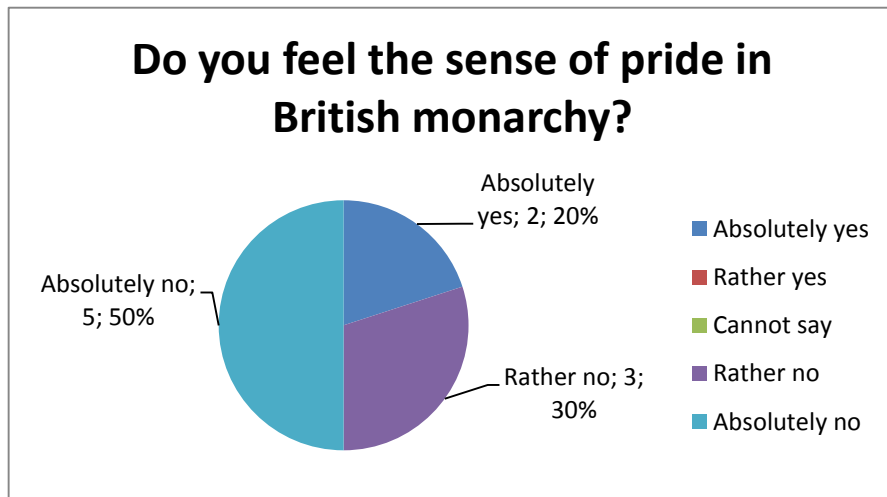
Graph 36 – Regional identity (The Northern Irish)

7.5.2 The Northern Irish and their loyalty

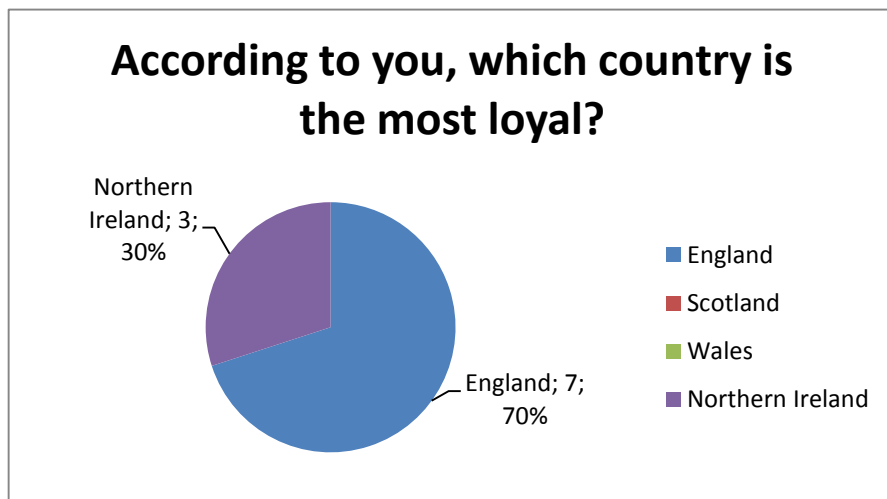
People from Northern Ireland mostly do not support the monarchy; they even do not feel proud at being part of it (see pictures 37 and 38). On the other hand, some admit that the monarchy is somehow useful. *“Although they do cost the taxpayer, they bring a lot of tourism to the UK in various events such as the royal wedding and the Queen’s birthday celebrations. They are seen as the face of the UK and other countries love them.”* (N6) According to Northern Irish people, the UK countries are not evenly loyal to the crown, but they vary a little bit in the answers (see pictures 39 and 40). Although the majority voted for England as the most loyal, the others think that Northern Ireland is the most loyal. The least loyal is Scotland, according to them. However, the Northern Irish picked Northern Ireland and Wales also as the least loyal. People from Northern Ireland would approve of Scotland’s separation from the UK, but would rather not let the UK leave the EU, because they are aware of the benefits. Northern Irish people do not think that it would be better for the UK countries to split. *“It’s sad, but N.I. relies greatly on being part of the UK.”* (N4) *“N.I. needs influence from a more liberal country.”* (N7)



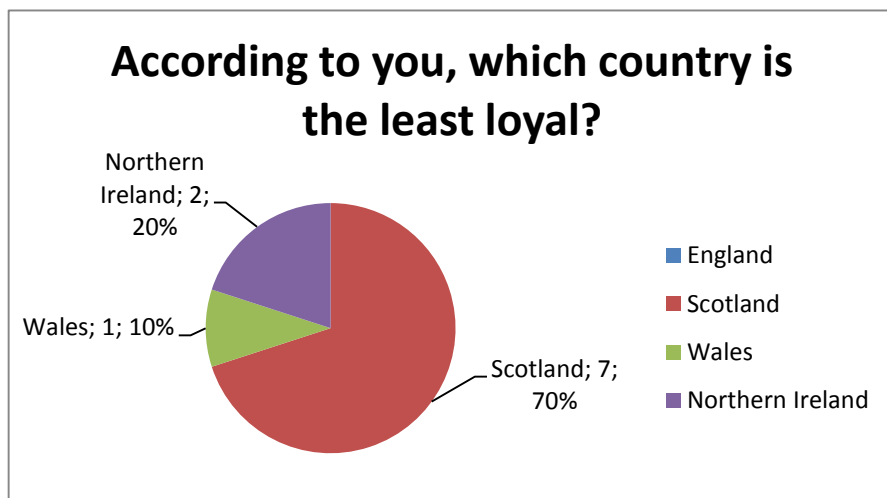
Graph 37 – The continuation of the monarchy (The Northern Irish)



Graph 38 – The sense of pride in the monarchy (The Northern Irish)



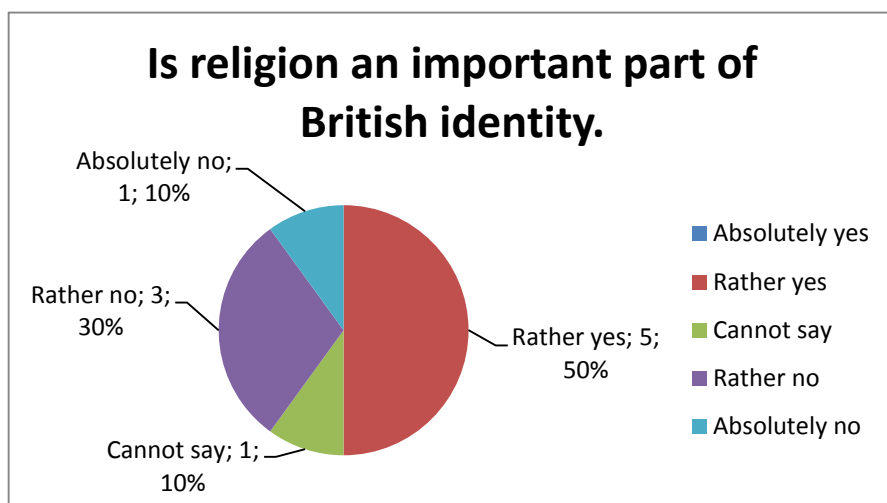
Graph 39 – The most loyal country (The Northern Irish)



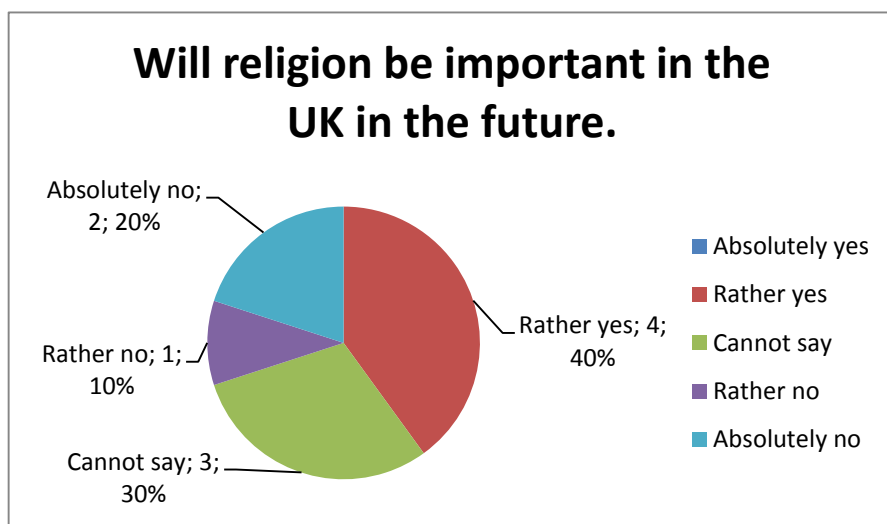
Graph 40 – The least loyal country (The Northern Irish)

7.5.3 The Northern Irish and religion

People from Northern Ireland are mostly not religious so religion does not play any role in their lives, but they are not sure if the UK is religious and if religion is a part of British identity (see picture 41). *“It’s a multi-cultural society with many believers and non-believers.”* (N4) When they say there is any religion in the UK, it is Christianity, according to them. Overall, they are really not sure whether religion will be important in the future (see picture 42). *“This is the information age and the facts are out there.”* (N5) *“Political party leaders tend to come across as religious and it’s almost frowned upon if you are not religious.”* (N6)



Graph 41 – Religion in British identity (The Northern Irish)



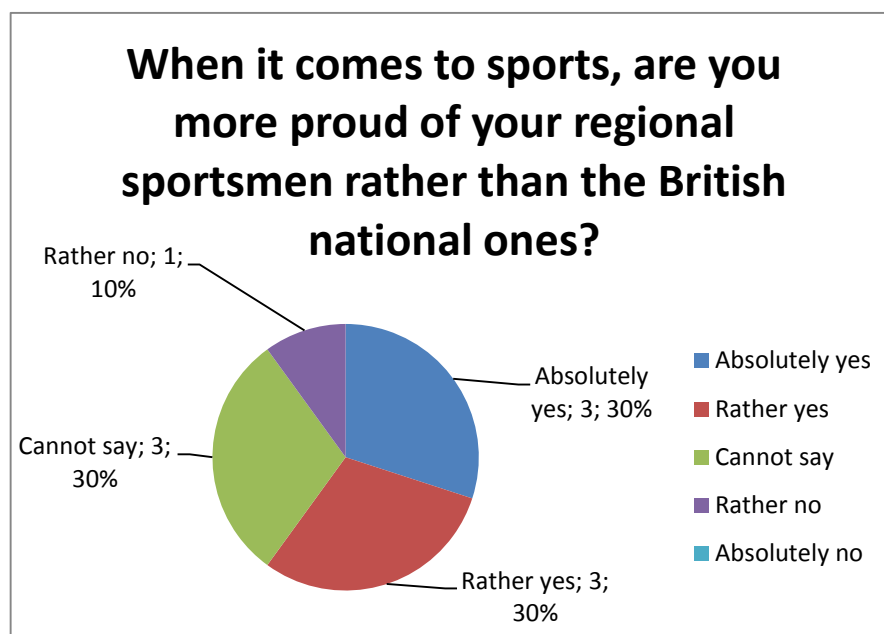
Graph 42 – Religion in the future (The Northern Irish)

7.5.4 The Northern Irish and culture

Northern Irish people are divided when it comes to the official anthem, because more than half of them want it and the other does not. Mentioning the first language, most of the respondents admit, that it is English, because it is the only one they can speak or the only one they speak fluently so Irish language is not so popular there, maybe for now. People from Northern Ireland associate the UK with the royal events and royalism. Some of them mention royalism together with ethnic diversity in the English culture. Speaking about the other states, the popular things are traditions and food with language, like haggis for Scotland and pints and rugby for Wales. For Northern Ireland they list music making, drinking and conflicts.

7.5.5 The Northern Irish and sports

The Northern Irish are mostly proud of their regional sportsmen (see picture 43), saying that they feel more inspired and that they have to be proud of their local talents. *“It’s like supporting your hometown heroes, they feel closer.”* (N3) They also feel rivalry among the UK teams and they do not mind all the nations competing together for the UK. They generally agree that football is both in the UK and England considered as a national sport. In Scotland, it is football mostly with golf and for Northern Ireland the majority of them chose football.



Graph 43 – Sports (The Northern Irish)

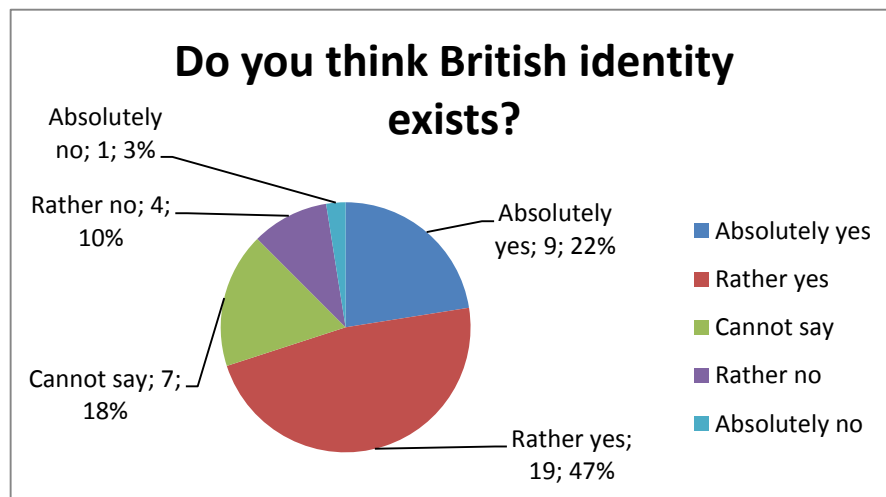
7.6 Overall Data

7.6.1 The classification of the respondents

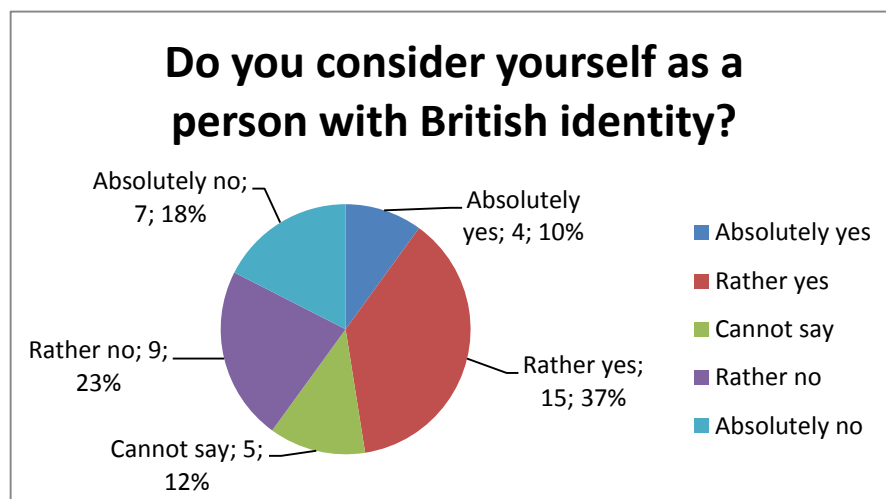
Overall, 40 respondents participated in the research, representing 4 places of origin - England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The purpose was to make the survey more objective and unbiased by ensuring proportional representation. When asked how they would identify themselves in front of a stranger the respondents mostly answered according to their place of origin. Despite that, 9 out of 40 people considered themselves as British (see picture 44) which means that British identity is partly present and people do not hesitate to admit it. When they asked why they identify themselves as they do, the vast majority of the answers referred to their regional nationality.

7.6.2 British identity

When it came to British identity itself, 28 out of 40 people agreed that British identity exists (see picture 45). When asked about the components of British identity, the responses differed. This question has shown that even though there is a notion of British identity, it is not anything particular and answers differ with nationalities. Some of the respondents said that everyone who was born in the UK has British identity. The monarchy or the Queen was mentioned a few times, but the rest of the responses were different. On the other hand, British identity does not seem to be very important in British people's lives (see picture 46), because not even a half of them consider themselves as a person with British identity. This claim was also strongly influenced by their birthplace. Although their responses varied, they mostly argued that they are a person with British identity, because they were born in Britain. Some refer to their family background as they inherited the identity from their parents.



Graph 44 – British identity (overall)

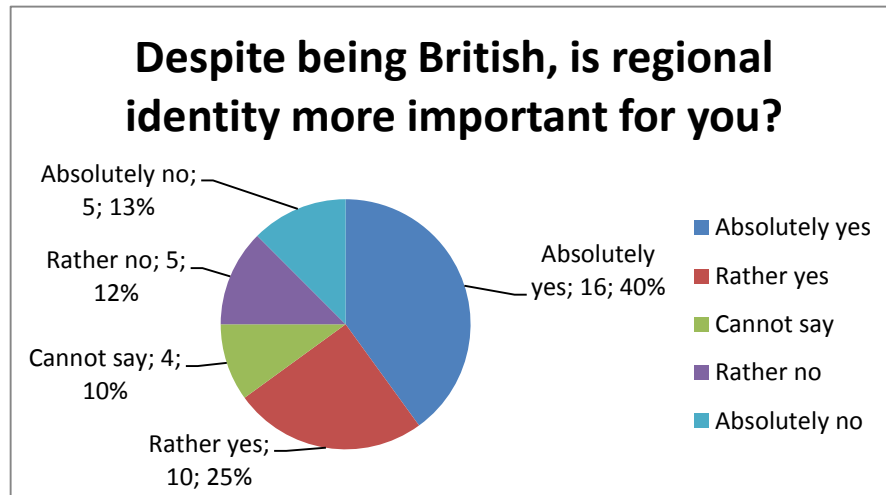


Graph 45 – British identity 2 (overall)

7.6.3 Regional identity

When it came to regional identity though, 26 out of 40 respondents admitted that regional identity is more important than British identity (see picture 47). This question shows that the respondents claim to have a certain identity from the past which they inherited for example, maybe they were forced into some identity, but these days, they rather have different one. It was also mentioned that each region is unique, with their own accents, cultures, traditions and histories and that people may be British, but they are all uniquely British. That virtually means that all the people are British, no matter where in the UK they live, no matter what they think, but being British differs with the location. This person obviously wants to stay British, he is proud to be British, but his regional identity takes an important part in his life. His idea could be applied to the Czech Republic, because

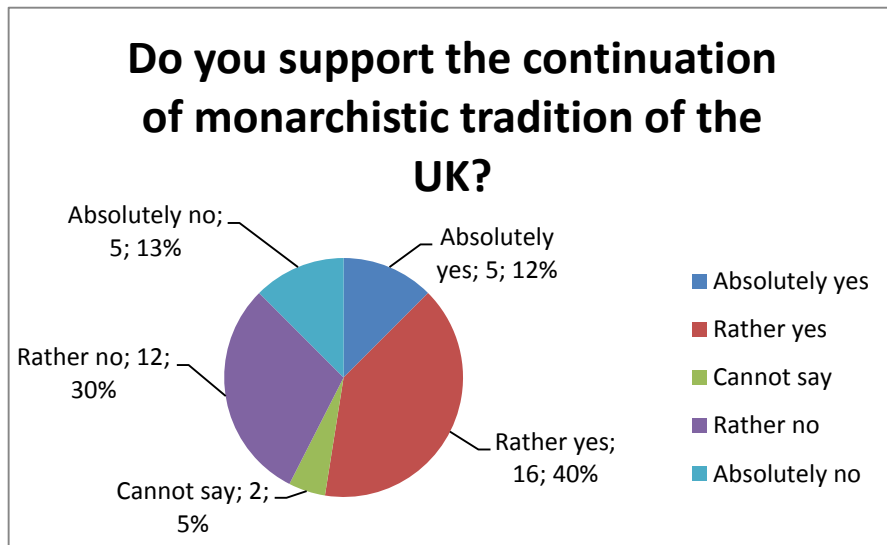
we all are Czech citizens, some from Bohemia, some from Moravia and some from Silesia, and despite the fact that some people appreciate their regional identity, some are surely proud to be also Czech.



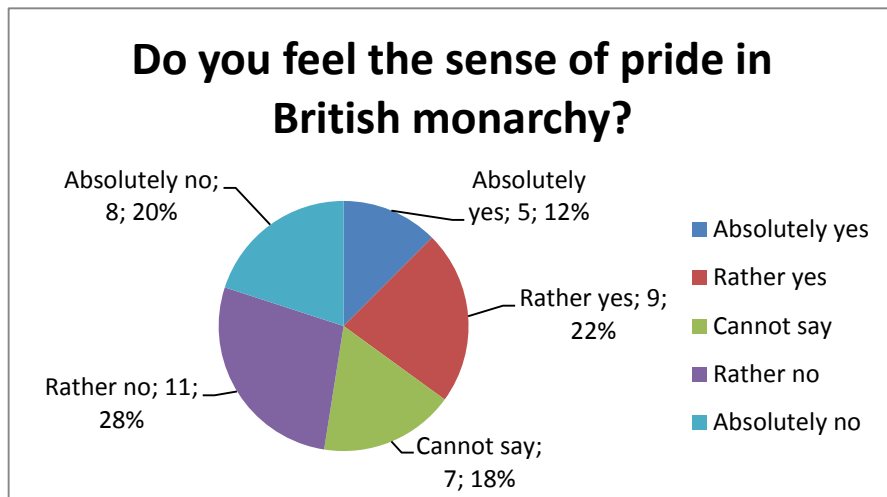
Graph 46 – Regional identity (overall)

7.6.4 The monarchy

When asked whether they support the continuation of the monarchist tradition of the UK, the responses divided into two halves, as 21 out of 40 want the monarchy to continue (see picture 48). The majority of the positive responses were supported with the tradition of the monarchy and the Queen. It seems that the history is a strong element for British people and they identify themselves with it. The negative responses argued that this system is pointless or it is a waste of resources. Well, even though some people do not support it and are not proud of it, the monarchy still seems to be a rather significant feature and it brings tourism to the UK as mentioned above. Yet almost half of the respondents do not feel the sense of pride in British monarchy (see picture 49).



Graph 47 – The continuation of the monarchy (overall)



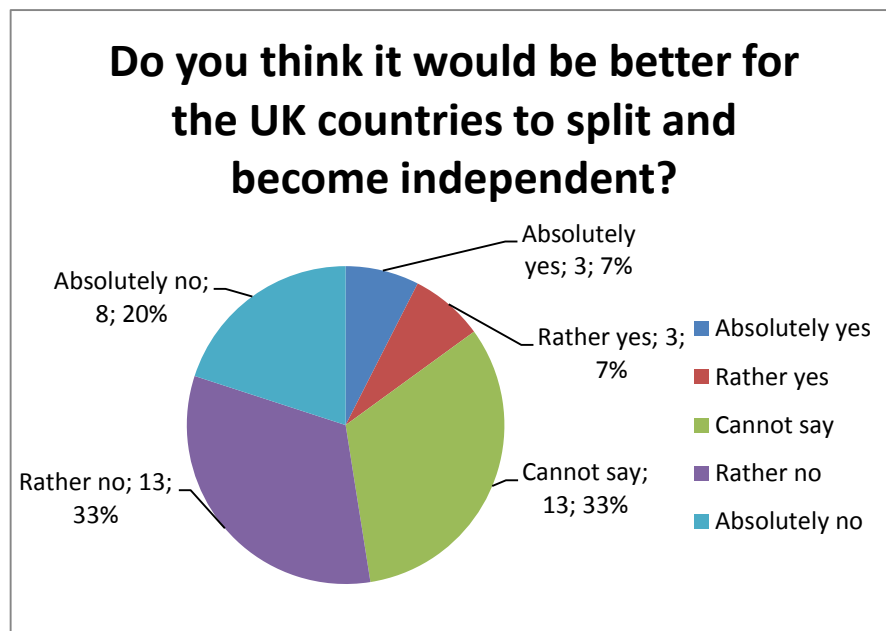
Graph 48 – The sense of pride in the monarchy (overall)

The next 3 questions focused on the loyalty of the individual countries to the crown. Almost 75% of all the respondents think that the countries are not evenly loyal to the crown, considering England as the most loyal country and Scotland with Northern Ireland as the least loyal countries. According to the respondents, England is the most loyal country, basically because of its location. They say that all the power of the monarchy is situated in England, i.e., the government and the Queen. They also use history; that England has been the most powerful nation of all the other countries while they were mostly oppressed. On the other side, 80% of the respondents think that the least loyal country is Scotland, supporting their decision with the Scotland’s countless efforts to leave the UK. Northern Ireland is considered as the second least loyal country in the UK and

according to the survey it is mainly because it is furthest away and still closely connected to the Republic of Ireland, i.e., religiously and culturally different from other countries.

The next question was connected to the Scotland's efforts to separate and people were asked about letting Scotland separate from the UK. Only 9 out of 40 people would be against it which means that the British people apparently became used to the idea and they do not really care or mind anymore. There was also the question with the latest content about the UK leaving the EU. The respondents were mostly against it, saying that the UK would lose the possibilities to trade and it would lose many benefits associated with the EU. On the other side, more than 30% of people could not decide, stating that there are some advantages, as well as disadvantages to staying in the EU.

The respondents also think that it would not be better for the countries to split, as only 15% of them approve of it (see picture 50). The main argument against the separation was that the countries would fail on their own and they simply must stick together. The residents simply feel stronger when they are all united. On the other hand, there were responses calling for a change, that the UK causes more problems and misunderstandings or that again, other countries are oppressed by England.



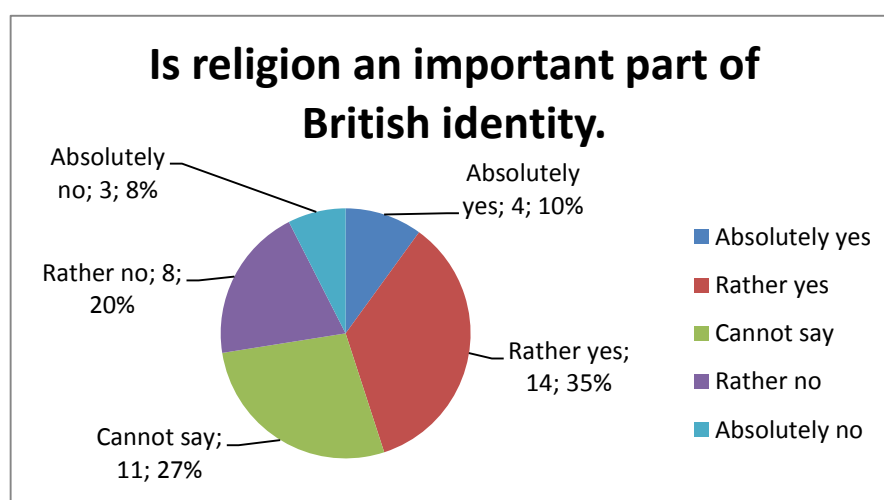
Graph 49 – The UK counties to split (overall)

7.6.5 Religion

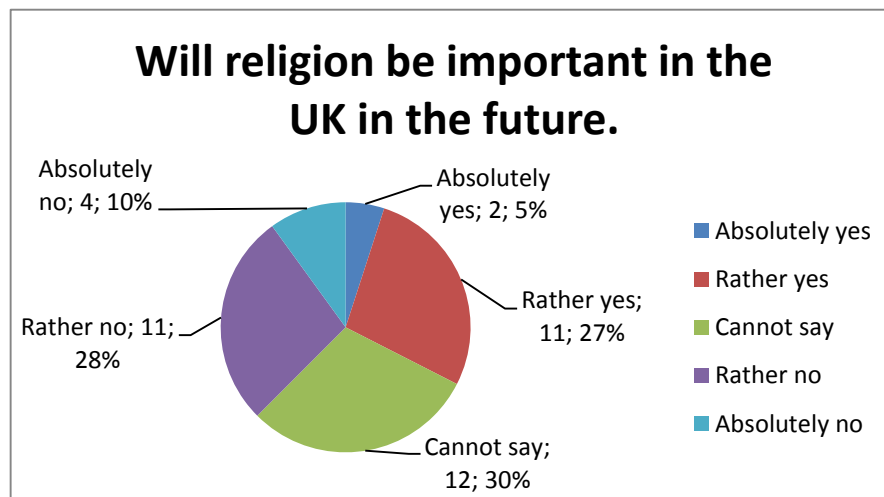
The next part of the questionnaire focused on religion. About 70% of people do not consider themselves as religious. That expresses the religious trend in the UK; people

nowadays are changing their religious beliefs and actually prefer not to be religious. These non-religious people confirmed that in the next question, because for 68% of people religion is not an important part of their personal identity. But when it comes to British identity, people are not quite sure if religion is important or not (see picture 51). The responses also differed in the answers; some said that religion is irrelevant these days in the UK which used to be religious. Some claim that the UK is very multicultural and full of believers as well as non-believers. Religious supporters describe the UK as traditionally religious with strong religious history. The responses vary in the religious question about the UK, because only 43% of people consider the UK as religious. This fact also proves that the UK is losing its religious profile, but when people had to pick the most common religion, all of them voted for Christianity.

Overall, more than half of the respondents were non-religious; the others claimed to be Christians. People were also not sure about the position of religion in the future (see picture 52). About 38% of respondents think that religion will somehow not play an important role in the future, 30% of people are not sure about what to think. They argue that religion is disappearing or that people's ideas have changed. Religious supporters appeal to the traditional value of it and that religion connects people so it should remain part of British identity in the future. Nevertheless, no one can really say so, it is hard to predict and the only thing that determines its future are statistics, according to which religion is slowly dying.



Graph 50 – Religion in British identity (overall)



Graph 51 – Religion in the future (overall)

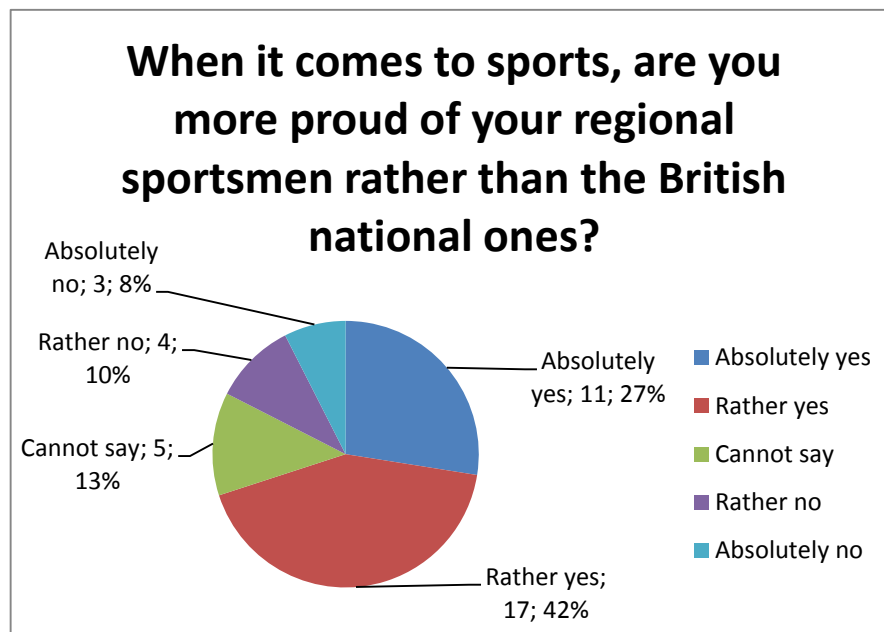
7.6.6 Culture

The following set of questions explored the culture. Firstly, the respondents were asked about the national anthem. Half of the people think that each country should have its own official anthem and only 32% disagree with it. That is also a sign that the countries call for and would allow each other more freedom and might be tired of their unity. Although, unity was displayed in the language section, as the vast majority consider their first language to be English. They say that it is the only language they can speak or that it is their native language. Only a minority of the respondents chose Scottish, Irish and Welsh also. After that, there was the first and the only open question about the most typical features of culture in Britain. As it was an open question, the responses were various and people mentioned a lot of things. What was mentioned repeatedly, however, was the language, the flag, pubs, fish and chips, multicultural society and diversity. As shown, the British culture cannot be simply determined, because everyone has a different view and opinion about it. People's opinion about the culture in each country was inspired by their answers regarding British culture. The aspects mentioned the most times were the language, the accents, traditions or being born in the UK. Some respondents claimed that the cultures are more or less the same and some of them said that the culture of the English is the same as the British one.

7.6.7 Sports

The last part of the questionnaire focused on sports and showed how important regional sport identity is for people. They claimed that regional sportsmen are more

important for them (see picture 53). The respondents claimed how proud they are when their national teams play; some said that they are supporting their local football teams. Also, 28 out of 40 approve of all four countries competing together as one British team but feel rivalry when it comes to the sport matches among the UK countries. Only 6 out of 40 people do not feel rivalry in the sport matches and it also shows the connection between people and their regional identity even in sports. When asked about the most typical sport in the UK, 34 out of 40 respondents chose football, but in England it was 37 for football. Yet again the perceptions of the UK and England are similar. In Scotland, the most popular sport is also football, followed by golf. The most popular Welsh sport is rugby according to 36 out of 40 respondents. Only Northern Ireland is not sure about their most typical sport, as people voted for rugby and football almost equally. These results have proven that Northern Ireland is split in half (geographically and otherwise), because rugby is being played in Ireland and football is more typical for England and Scotland. Therefore the division is not only political or religious.



Graph 52 – Sports (overall)

CONCLUSION

British identity proved to be very hard to define as both theoretical and practical part have shown. There were certain elements shared by all four nations, such as the English language, British monarchy or just being born in the UK. However, as the theoretical part demonstrated the individual states are very different from each other, which was proven in the analysis by a questionnaire survey among UK citizens. People are especially proud of their regional identity, which is synonymous with their place or region of birth.

England is seen as the most loyal country to the crown, mainly due to the location of the centre of the monarchy. Scotland is the least loyal one, due to its recent attempt to leave the UK. Although it was not successful, nearly half of the Scots supported the separation. Northern Ireland is also seen as not very loyal, as people are basically divided into two groups – one group supports the Union and the other one is on the side of Ireland. Wales is the most loyal with England, as they are close to each other, and historically they were in the same kingdom the longest, which means they have shared the most past. The questionnaire has proven the original assumption that the majority of British people consider Scotland as the least loyal and England as the most loyal.

At the beginning, religion appeared to be one of the elements that connect British people, but that is no longer true. Actually, religion connects Britain these days also in a different way, i.e., the fall in the number of religious people is more or less the same in each country of the UK. Although Britain has been strongly religious for centuries, religion is disappearing nowadays. The UK is then turning into a non-religious state, which was proven by a higher number of non-religious respondents. Also, only 35% of the respondents think that religion will be important in the future.

The major differences were found in culture. There are different languages typical for each country, national cuisine and traditions. For example in England, they have fish and chips; in Scotland they have haggis and kilts; in Wales, they have the Welsh language and leeks; and in Northern Ireland, they have Irish language and Guinness.

Strong regional identities could also be seen in sports, as only 3 out of 40 people are more proud of the British than their regional sportsmen. The national sports differed a little. Although, the most popular is of course football, there is also rugby in Wales or golf in Scotland.

As both parts of the thesis have confirmed, the British people cannot be easily divided as they are just too different. But their strong regional identities might one day cause that the United Kingdom will indeed divide officially and completely.

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LIST OF GRAPHS

Graph 1 – Gender (Overall)	44
Graph 2 – Age (Overall)	44
Graph 3 – Education (Overall).....	45
Graph 4 – Identification (The English)	46
Graph 5 – British identity (The English)	46
Graph 6 – British identity 2 (The English)	46
Graph 7 – Regional identity (The English).....	47
Graph 8 – The continuation of the monarchy (The English)	48
Graph 9 – The sense of pride in the monarchy (The English)	48
Graph 10 – The most loyal country (The English)	49
Graph 11 – The least loyal country (The English)	49
Graph 12 – Religion in British identity (The English).....	50
Graph 13 – Religion in the future (The English)	50
Graph 14 – Sports (The English)	51
Graph 15 – British identity (The Scots)	52
Graph 16 – British identity 2 (The Scots).....	52
Graph 17 – Regional identity (The Scots)	53
Picture 18 – The continuation of the monarchy (The Scots)	54
Graph 19 – The sense of pride in the monarchy (The Scots).....	54
Graph 20 – The most loyal country (The Scots)	54
Graph 21 – The least loyal country (The Scots)	55
Graph 22 – Religion in British identity (The Scots)	55
Graph 23 – Sports (The Scots).....	56
Graph 24 – British identity (The Welsh)	57
Graph 25 – British identity 2 (The Welsh)	57
Graph 26 – regional identity (The Welsh)	58
Graph 27 – The continuation of the monarchy (The Welsh)	59
Graph 28 – The sense of pride in the monarchy (The Welsh)	59
Graph 29 – The most loyal country (The Welsh)	59
Graph 30 – The least loyal country (The Welsh).....	60
Graph 31 – Religion in British identity (The Welsh).....	60
Graph 32 – Religion in the future (The Welsh)	61

Graph 33 – Sports (The Welsh)	62
Graph 34 – British identity (The Northern Irish)	63
Graph 35 – British identity 2 (The Northern Irish)	63
Graph 36 – Regional identity (The Northern Irish)	63
Graph 37 – The continuation of the monarchy (The Northern Irish).....	64
Graph 38 – The sense of pride in the monarchy (The Northern Irish).....	65
Graph 39 – The most loyal country (The Northern Irish)	65
Graph 40 – The least loyal country (The Northern Irish).....	65
Graph 41 – Religion in British identity (The Northern Irish)	66
Graph 42 – Religion in the future (The Northern Irish).....	66
Graph 43 – Sports (The Northern Irish).....	67
Graph 45 – British identity (overall).....	69
Graph 46 – British identity 2 (overall).....	69
Graph 47 – Regional identity (overall)	70
Graph 48 – The continuation of the monarchy (overall).....	71
Graph 49 – The sense of pride in the monarchy (overall).....	71
Graph 50 – The UK counties to split (overall)	72
Graph 51 – Religion in British identity (overall).....	73
Graph 52 – Religion in the future (overall)	74
Graph 53 – Sports (overall).....	75

APPENDICES

P I The Questionnaire.

APPENDIX PI: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Components of British Identity

Hello,

My name is Jakub Macháček. I study English for Business Administration at Tomas Bata University in Zlín and I am writing my Bachelor thesis about British Identity. I would be grateful if you helped me with my research. The questionnaire is anonymous and it is designed to take five minutes. Thank you very much for your time.

*Required

1. Gender *

Mark only one oval.

- Male
 Female

2. Age *

Mark only one oval.

- Adolescence (12-19)
 Early Adulthood (20-34)
 Midlife (35-49)
 Mature Adulthood (50-79)
 Late Adulthood (80+)
 Other: _____

3. Education *

Mark only one oval.

- Primary
 Secondary
 University
 Other: _____

4. Place of origin within the UK *

Mark only one oval.

- England
 Scotland
 Wales
 Northern Ireland
 Other: _____

5. In front of a stranger, you would identify yourself as.. *

Mark only one oval.

- English
 Scottish
 Welsh
 Northern Irish
 British
 Other: _____

6. Why do you identify yourself as you mentioned above? *

7. Do you think British identity exists? *

Mark only one oval.

- Absolutely yes.
 Rather yes.
 Cannot say.
 Rather no
 Absolutely no.

8. If so, what are features of British identity?

9. Do you consider yourself as a person with British identity? *

Mark only one oval.

- Absolutely yes.
 Rather yes.
 Cannot say.
 Rather no.
 Absolutely no.

10. Please elaborate on your answer above.

*

11. Despite being British, is regional identity more important for you? *

Mark only one oval.

- Absolutely yes.
 Rather yes.
 Cannot say.
 Rather no.
 Absolutely no.

12. Based on your answer above, why do you think so? *

13. Do you support the continuation of monarchistic tradition of the UK? *

Mark only one oval.

- Absolutely yes.
 Rather yes.
 Cannot say.
 Rather no.
 Absolutely no.

14. Do you feel the sense of pride in British monarchy? *

Mark only one oval.

- Absolutely yes.
 Rather yes.
 Cannot say.
 Rather no.
 Absolutely no.

15. Based on your answers on two questions above, why do you think so? *

16. Do you think that the UK countries are evenly loyal to the crown? *

Mark only one oval.

- Absolutely yes.
 Rather yes.
 Cannot say.
 Rather no.
 Absolutely no.

17. According to you, which country is the most loyal? *

Mark only one oval.

- England
 Scotland
 Wales
 Northern Ireland

18. According to you, which country is the least loyal? *

Mark only one oval.

- England
 Scotland
 Wales
 Northern Ireland

19. Why do you think these countries are (not) loyal? *

20. As a citizen of the UK, would you approve of Scotland's separation from the UK? *

Mark only one oval.

- Absolutely yes.
 Rather yes.
 Cannot say.
 Rather no.
 Absolutely no.

21. Do you approve of the UK leaving the European Union? *

Mark only one oval.

- Absolutely yes.
 Rather yes.
 Cannot say.
 Rather no.
 Absolutely no.

22. According to your response to the question above, why do you think so? *

23. Do you think it would be better for the UK countries to split and become independent? *

Mark only one oval.

- Absolutely yes.
 Rather yes.
 Cannot say.
 Rather no.
 Absolutely no.

24. Please, comment on your answer *

25. Are you religious? *

Mark only one oval.

- Absolutely yes.
 Rather yes.
 Rather no.
 Absolutely no.

26. Is religion an important part of your personal identity? *

Mark only one oval.

- Absolutely yes.
 Rather yes.
 Cannot say.
 Rather no.
 Absolutely no.

27. Is religion an important part of British identity? *

Mark only one oval.

- Absolutely yes.
 Rather yes.
 Cannot say.
 Rather no.
 Absolutely no.

28. Please elaborate on your answer above. *

29. Do you consider the UK as religious? *

Mark only one oval.

- Absolutely yes.
- Rather yes.
- Cannot say.
- Rather no.
- Absolutely no.

30. Which religion is the most common in the UK? *

Mark only one oval.

- Christianity
- Islam
- Hinduism
- UK is rather non religious
- Other: _____

31. Which religion do you personally affiliate with? *

Mark only one oval.

- Christianity
- Islam
- Hinduism
- I am not religious.
- Other: _____

32. Will religion be important in the UK in the future? *

Mark only one oval.

- Absolutely yes.
- Rather yes.
- Cannot say.
- Rather no.
- Absolutely no.

33. Why do you think so? *

34. Should each country have its official anthem? *

Mark only one oval.

- Absolutely yes.
- Rather yes.
- Cannot say.
- Rather no.
- Absolutely no.

35. Which language do you consider as your first? *

Mark only one oval.

- English
- Scottish
- Welsh
- Irish
- Other: _____

36. Why do you consider the language you mentioned above as your first? *

37. What is the most typical for the United Kingdom when it comes to the culture? *

You can also mention why do you think so.

38. What is most typical for England when it comes to the culture? *

You can also mention why do you think so.

39. What is most typical for Scotland when it comes to the culture? *

You can also mention why do you think so.

40. What is most typical for Wales when it comes to the culture? *

You can also mention why do you think so.

41. What is most typical for Northern Ireland when it comes to the culture? *

You can also mention why do you think so.

42. When it comes to sports, are you more proud of your regional sportsmen rather than the British national ones? *

Mark only one oval.

- Absolutely yes.
- Rather yes.
- Cannot say.
- Rather no.
- Absolutely no.

43. Please, comment on your answer above. *

44. Do you approve of English, Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish sportsmen competing together at the Olympic Games for the UK? *

Mark only one oval.

- Absolutely yes.
- Rather yes.
- Cannot say.
- Rather no.
- Absolutely no.

45. Do you feel rivalry when it comes to the sport matches among the UK countries? *

Mark only one oval.

- Absolutely yes.
- Rather yes.
- Cannot say.
- Rather no.
- Absolutely no.

46. What is most typical sport in the UK in your opinion? *

Mark only one oval.

- Football
- Rugby
- Golf
- Motorsports
- Athletics
- Cricket
- Tennis
- Other: _____

47. You can mention why do you think so

.....

48. What is most typical sport in England in your opinion? *

Mark only one oval.

- Football
- Rugby
- Golf
- Motorsports
- Athletics
- Cricket
- Tennis
- Other:

49. You can mention why do you think so

.....

50. What is most typical sport in Scotland in your opinion? *

Mark only one oval.

- Football
- Rugby
- Golf
- Motorsports
- Athletics
- Cricket
- Tennis
- Other:

51. You can mention why do you think so

.....

52. What is most typical sport in Wales in your opinion? *

Mark only one oval.

- Football
- Rugby
- Golf
- Motorsports
- Athletics
- Cricket
- Tennis
- Other:

53. You can mention why do you think so

.....

54. What is most typical sport in Northern Ireland in your opinion? *

Mark only one oval.

- Football
- Rugby
- Golf
- Motorsports
- Athletics
- Cricket
- Tennis
- Other:

55. You can mention why do you think so

.....