# Worldflags

Drawing flags with TikZ

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## **1** Introduction

*Worldflags* is a package for drawing flags using TikZ. Currently the national flags of all independent nations are included, additionally some other flags of various organizations; there's more to come.

A particular flag is selected via a parameter; for national flags that is the two-letter country code (i. e. the domain name). A flag can be drawn in two ways:

- As a single TikZ-picture within ordinary text.
- As a picture element *within* a TikZ-picture.

The appearance of a flag (size, frame etc.) can be adapted using optional parameters.

The description of every flag resides in a particular flag description file worldflag\_xx.tex, wherein xx is the parameter for selecting a particular flag, as listed in section 4. That saves memory and computing time on the one hand, as only the required flags have to be loaded. On the other hand, the package can easily be extended by adding new flag description files.

Some flags with complicated emblems (e.g. Afghanistan, Ecuador) require a lot of memory. Thus an expansion of T<sub>E</sub>X's main memory size is recommended.

The flag descriptions are based on the construction sheets in [1] (thanks to Mello Luchtenberg for that great website), complex emblems have been taken from the svg-files on Wikipedia and have been translated into Tikz via Inkscape (with a reasonable amount of manual post editing).

### 2 Usage

#### 2.1 Flags as single TikZ-pictures

Commands:	
\worldflag[opts]{xx}	draws the flag $xx$ with the optional parameters <i>opts</i> as a particular TikZ-picture.
\flagsdefault[opts]	sets default values for the options <i>opts</i> for subsequent flags.
Options:	
width=dimension	sets the flag width, default: 15 mm.
length=dimension	sets the flag length; if set to 0 pt (default), the length is calculated according to the proper aspect ratio of the flag.
framewidth=dimension	sets the line width of the frame around the flag, de- fault: 0.2 mm.
<pre>framecolor=colorname</pre>	sets the color of the flag frame, default: black!60.
stretch=number	controls stretching and shrinking of geometric shapes when the aspect ratio differs from its proper value.
grid	causes a millimeter-grid drawn on the flag as an aid for constructing new flags.
noemblem	supresses the drawing of an emblem, which is part of many flags.
emblem	enforces the drawing of an emblem onto the flag which is otherwise supressed (currently only applies to the flags of Austria and Germany).
emblemdefault	restores the default behavior for drawing emblems.

 $\mbox{worldflag{xx}}$  draws a flag, selected by the parameter *xx*, as a single TikZ-picture. Section 4 lists all available flags and their selection code *xx*. Various properties of the flag can be specified with additional optional parameters as key-value pairs.

\flagsdefault[opts] specifies default values for the Options opts for subsequent flags.

The *width* of a flag defaults to 15 mm, it can be overridden with the option width. If one of the dimensions *width* or *length* is set to 0 pt (which is the default value for *length*), its value results from the proper aspect ratio width/length, which is proprietary to every flag. E. g. the Swiss flag is quadratic, it has an aspect ratio of 1:1, the British flag has an aspect ratio of 1:2. If width is set to 0 pt, *length must* be specified. If both dimensions are specified, flags loose their proper aspect ratio but get the same size:

Code:	Result:
<pre>\worldflag{CH} \worldflag{GB} proper sizes\\[6pt] \worldflag[length=22.5mm]{CH} \worldflag[length=22.5mm]{GB} distorted</pre>	proper sizes
	distorted

If both width and length of a flag are specified, which differs from ist proper aspect ratio, some geometries on the flag will unavoidably get distorted. There is presumably no general rule whether certain *distances* on the flag should remain unchanged in that case, or certain *ratios* – as flag owners do not intend to distort their flags – but that behavior can be influenced for many flags applying the option **stretch**. If stretch is set to 0 (which is default), certain *distances* and *sizes* on the flag remain unchanged, when the flag is stretched; if set to 1, certain *ratios* remain unchanged in that case. Values within the range of 0...1 are possible to get a compromise between both cases.

The following examples illustrate that behavior:

Canada: stretch stretch

**stretch=0** The *size* of the maple leaf remains unchanged.

stretch=1 The ratio of the widths - maple leaf and pale - remains unchanged; the maple leaf has to shrink.



Denmark: **stretch=0** The *distance* from the vertical bar to the hoist remains unchanged.

stretch=1 The ratio of the distances to the hoist and to the fly remains unchanged.

Code:	Result:
<pre>\flagsdefault[width=12mm] \worldflag{DK} \worldflag[length=18mm]{DK} \worldflag[length=18mm,stretch=1]{DK}</pre>	

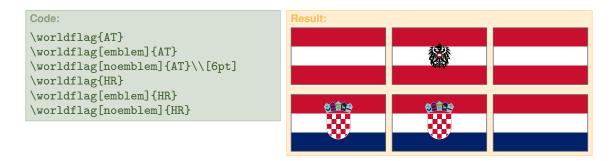
The option grid causes a millimeter-grid drawn over the flag. That is primarily a measuring aid for the construction of new flags.

The options framecolor and framewidth set the color and the line width of the frame drawn around the flag, respectively. The default value for the line width is 0.2 mm, the default color is black!60. If framewidth is set to 0 mm (or 0 pt), no frame is drawn at all.

Code:	Result:
<pre>\flagsdefault[framecolor=blue] \worldflag[grid]{IT} \worldflag[framewidth=1mm]{IT} \worldflag[framewidth=0mm]{IT}</pre>	

Many flags have an emblem on it, e.g. a coat of arms or a special symbol. Those emblems are often very complex and require a lot of computing time and memory. The depiction of such an emblem can be supressed with the option noemblem, either for the sake of saving computing time (for dafts) or just because simplified version of the flag is required. Some countries distinguish between a *civil* flag without an emblem and a *state* flag containing an emblem.

Some flags don't have an emblem by default, but an emblem is available for special purposes. In that case the depiction of the emblem can be enforced with the option emblem. Currently that only applies to the country flags of Austria and Germany (more will come). The option emblemdefault restores the default behavior for drawing emblems.



The emblem (i. e. the coat of arms) in the Austrian flag is supressed by default, the emblem in the Croatian flag is depicted default.

#### 2.2 Flags as picture elements within a TikZ-picture

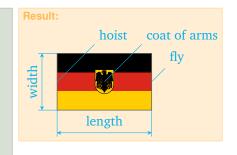
Within a Tikz-picture the flags are available as *pic*-Elements named **worldflag**. A particular flag is selectet with the option **country**. Unlike *nodes*, *pic*-elements cannot be referenced by name, but named nodes and coordinates within the *pic*-element can be referenced. Hence every flag has special coordinates for referencing:

-0 center of flag	
<pre>-nw upper left corner ("north-west")</pre>	-n top edge center ("north")
-ne upper right corner ("north-east")	-e fly edge center ("east")
-sw lower left corner ("south-west")	-w hoist edge center ("west")
-se lower right corner ("south-east")	-s bottom edge center ("south")

Commands:	
\pic (xy) [country=xx,	<pre>] at pos {worldflag};</pre>
	draws the flag <i>xx</i> and gives it the name <i>xy</i> ; the flag is centerd at the coordinate <i>pos</i> .
\flagsdefault[opts]	sets default values for the options <i>opts</i> .
Ontiona	
Options:	
width=dimension	sets the flag width, default: 15 mm.
length=dimension	sets the flag length; if set to 0 pt (default), the length is calculated according to the proper aspect ratio of the flag.
framewidth=dimension	sets the line width of the frame around the flag, de- fault: 0.2 mm.
<pre>framecolor=colorname</pre>	sets the color of the flag frame, default: black!60.
stretch=number	controls stretching and shrinking of geometric shapes when the aspect ratio differs from its proper value.
grid	causes a millimeter-grid drawn on the flag.
noemblem	supresses the drawing of an emblem onto the flag.
emblem	enforces the drawing of an emblem onto the flag.
emblemdefault	restores the default behavior for drawing emblems.
$rotate=\alpha$	rotates the flag $\alpha$ degrees around its center.
turn= $\beta$	rotates the flag $\beta$ degrees around the (imaginary) flagpole.
hang= $\gamma$	lets the flag "hang down" $\gamma$ degrees from the (imaginary) flag pole.

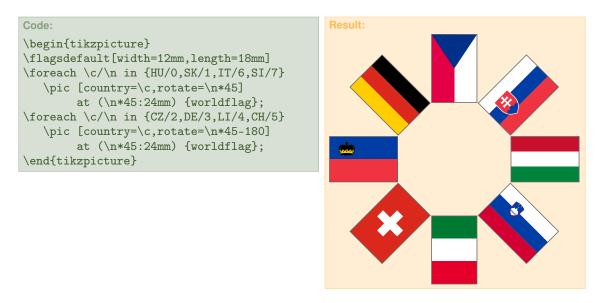
The following example illustrates the usage of the special coordinates:

```
Code:
\begintikzpicture[draw=cyan,>=stealth,x=1mm,y=1mm]
\draw (de-e)--++(45:5) node [above right,cyan]
{fly};
\draw (de-w)-++(45:14)
    node [above right,cyan] {hoist};
\draw (de-0)-++(45:14)
    node [above right,cyan] {coat of arms};
\draw (de-nw)-++(-5,0) (de-sw)-++(-5,0);
\draw (de-nw)-++(-5,0) (de-sw)-++(-5,0);
\draw [<->] ($(de-nw)-(4,0)$)--($(de-sw)-(4,0)$)
    node [midway,above,rotate=90,cyan] {width};
\draw [<->] ($(de-sw)-(0,6)$)--($(de-se)-(0,6)$)
    node [midway,above,cyan] {length};
\endtikzpicture
```



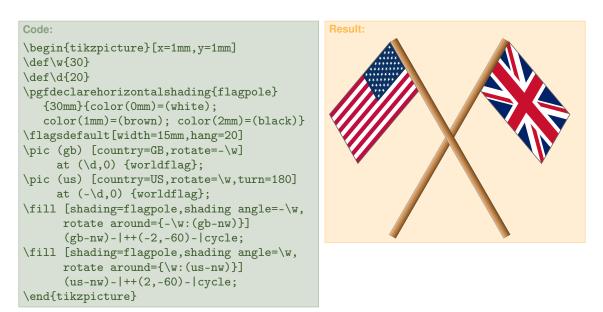
The option **rotate** causes the flag to be rotated around the flag center with a given angle in degree.

Note: That option is not proprietary to flags, it is a general option for *any* pic-element. Hence it is *not* possible to give it a default value with the command flagsdefault.



The option **turn** lets the flag rotate around the imaginary flagpole with a given angle  $\beta$  (in degrees). The length of the flag will *seemingly* shrink with a factor of  $\cos \beta$ . With a value of  $\beta = 180$  the flag will just appear mirrored. The option hang lets the flag "hang down" from the imaginary flagpole with a given angle  $\gamma$  (in degrees); the flag will be sheared and compressed accordingly.

The following example shows a combination of rotate, turn and hang.



### 3 Internals

This section is intended for those who want to *extend* the worldflag package and create new flags. Those who just want to *use* the package and draw existing flags, need not read it.

Evey flag resides in a particular "flag description file" named worldflag\_xx.tex, wherein xx is the code for selecting a flag. Extending the package with new flags is quite easy: Just a flag description file for every new flag has to be written and put into a directory, where T<sub>E</sub>X can find it. No configuration files, no other actions; that's it.

#### 3.1 Flag description file

Every flag description file has the following structure:

① This command calculates the flag length, which will be stored in the dimension register \flaglength, from the flag width, which is stored in the dimension register \flagwidth (or vice versa) using the proper aspect ratio of the flag. That aspect ratio has to be specified with the two parameters y (width) and x (length). Those parameters have to be interger numbers, their absolute values don't matter.

Furthermore, two nested scopes are opened: The outer scope sets the drawing unit to \flagwidth (note: the top edge of a flag has always a *y*-coordinate of 1) and performs the coordinate transformation according to the options turn and hang. The inner scope shifts the coordinate system to the flag center.

In the sequel, the special coordinates -0, -n, -ne, -e, -se, -s, -sw, -w and -nw are established – as described in section 2.2.

- ② Every flag has proprietary shadings of colors. Hence even common colors have to be redefined for every flag separately.
- ③ TikZ commands for drawing and filling of shapes make up the core of a flag description file. A couple of macros (see section 3.3) for common geometric figures facilitate the creation of the flag image.

- ④ This command draws a rectangular frame around the flag. The line width, set with the option framewidth, is stored in the dimension register \flagframe; the frame color, set with the option framecolor, is stored in the macro \framecolor. For non-rectangular flags (e.g. Nepal) the flag frame has to be programmed "manually".
- ⑤ This command draws a millimeter-grid onto the flag, if invoked with the option grid and closes the two previously opened scopes.

#### 3.2 Variables

A couple of properties of a flag are kept in variables, which are either dimension registers or macros. Those variables are set by the user, specifying options or are calculated internally. They are used in the code for the flag description, but need not be set directly.

Dimension registers:	
\flagwidth	width of the flag (vertical extent)
\flaglength	length of the flag (horizontal extent)
\flagframe	line width of the flag frame
Macros:	
\framecolor	color name of the flag frame
\viewangle	angle of the rotation around the flagpole
\hangangle	angle of the "hanging down" from the flagpole
\flagstretch	conrols stretching of certain geometries, when stretch- ing the entire flag
\StretchFactor	factor for stretching of certain geometries according to \flagstretch

\flagwidth and \flaglength specify the width and length of a flag. They are set by the user with the options width and length or are calculaterd from each other by \AspectRatio internally. \flagwidth is the unit for coordinates and lengths in the flag description.

The properties of the flag frame are kept in the variables \flagframe and \framecolor; they can be set with the options framewidth and framecolor.

 $\StretchFactor$  is a factor for stretching certain *x*-coordinates, when the whole flag is stretched (or compressed), i.e. when the aspect ratio differs from its proper value. It is calculated by  $\AspectRatio$  from the variable  $\flagstretch$ , which itself is user-specified with the Option stretch.

#### 3.3 Commands

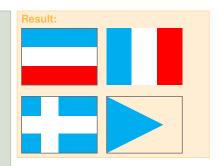
	y see section 3.1
\EndFlagDescription	see section 3.1
$AspectRatio{y}{x}$	calculates the dimensions of the flag and the variable \StretchFactor; called by \BeginFlagDescription. draws the rectangular frame around the flag.
\GridCode	draws a millimeter-grid onto the flag; called by \EndFlagDescription.
Geometric flag elements:	
$\t c_1 \\ c_2 \\$	partitions the flag into two horizontal stripes with the colors $c_1$ and $c_2$ .
$hstripesIII{c_1}{c_2}{c_3}$	three horizontal stripes with the colors $c_1, \ldots$
$hstripesIV{c_1}{c_2}{c_3}$	four horizontal stripes with the colors $c_1, \ldots$
$vstripesII{c_1}{C_2}$	partitions the flag into two vertical stripes with the colors $c_1$ and $c_2$ .
$vstripesIII{c_1}{c_2}{c_3}$	three vertical stripes with the colors $c_1, \ldots$
$hbar{c}{y}{w}$	horizontal bar with the color $c$ and the line width $w$ at the $y$ -coordinate $y$
$\nabla c^{c}_{x}^{w}$	vertical bar with the color $c$ and the line width $w$ at the $x$ -coordinate $x$
$\chevron{c}{x}$	isosceles triangle at the hoist with the color $c$ and the vertex at the $x$ -coordinate $x$
$starV{c}{p}{r}{\alpha}$	5-pointed star as a compex polygon with the fill color $c$ , an outer raduis $r$ , an angle $\alpha$ at the coordinate $p$
$\operatorname{starVI}{c}{p}{r}{\alpha}$	6-pointed star as a compex polygon with the fill color $c$ , an outer raduis $r$ , an angle $\alpha$ at the coordinate $p$
$starn{c}{n}{p}{r_1}{r_2}$	{ $\alpha$ } n-pointed star with the fill color <i>c</i> , an outer raduis $r_a$ , an inner raduis $r_i$ and an angle $\alpha$ at the coordinate $p$
$moon{c}{p_1}{r_2}{r_2}$	crescent moon with the fill color $c$ , as a difference set of two generating circles with the radii $r_1$ , $r_2$ , and cen- ter coordinates $p_1$ and $p_2$
$UnionJack{x_1}{y_1}{x_2}$	$\{x_2, y_2\}$ Union Jack between the coordinates $(x_1, y_1)$ and $(x_2, y_2)$

The macros \hstripesII, \hstripesIII, \hstripesIV, \vstripesII, \vstripesIII partition the flag into an according number of horizontal or vertical colored stripes. \hbar draws a horizontal bar of given width and color at a specified *y*-coordinate across the flag; \vbar does the same vertically. \chevron draws an isosceles triangle with a given height

over the hoist. Those macros need to know the variables \flagwidth and \flaglength which have to be defined, if called outside a flag description file:

Code:

```
\newdimen\flagwidth\flagwidth=15mm
\newdimen\flaglength\flaglength=20mm
\begin{tikzpicture}[x=\flagwidth,y=\flagwidth]
\begin{scope}\hstripesIII{cyan}{white}{red}
   \FrameCode\end{scope}
\begin{scope}[shift=(1.5,0)]
   \vstripesIII{cyan}{white}{red}
  \FrameCode\end{scope}
\begin{scope}[shift={(0,-1.2)}]
   \hbar{white}{0.5}{0.3}
  \vbar{white}{0.5}{0.3}
  \FrameCode\end{scope}
\begin{scope}[shift=(1.5,-1.2)]
  \chevron{cyan}{1}\FrameCode\end{scope}
\end{tikzpicture}
```



Note: A flag needs no background.

The following commands don't require the variables \flagwidth and \flaglength; they can be used arbitrarily outside a flag, anywhere in a TikZ-picture.

**\Union Jack** draws the Union Jack (which is part of a couple of flags) between a lower left and an upper right point. Their coordinates  $-x_1$ ,  $y_1$ ,  $x_2$ ,  $y_2$  – are separate parameters, which *must* be specified as dimensions (i. e. using a unit), not just as numbers. The colors **blue**, **red** and **white** can be redefined arbitrarily.

The various types of stars \starV \starVI \starn and \moon are self-explanatory. In the following example \starn and \moon are overlayed with the generating circles.

Code:	Result
<pre>\begin{tikzpicture}[x=1mm,y=1mm]</pre>	
$UnionJack{Omm}{Omm}{15mm}$	
\colorlet{blue}{cyan}	
\definecolor{red}{rgb}{0.8,0,0}	
$UnionJack{32mm}{0mm}{47mm}{15mm}$	
$\begin{scope}[shift={(12,-28)}]$	
$starV{cyan}{(0,17)}{6}{0}$	
$starVI{cyan}{(22,17)}{6}{0}$	,
$starn{cyan}{9}{(22,0)}{8}{3}{0}$	
\draw[gray] (22,0)circle(8) (22,0)circle(3);	
$moon{cyan}{(0,0)}{8}{(4,2)}{7}$	
$\operatorname{draw}[gray]$ (0,0)circle(8) (4,2)circle(7);	
\end{scope}	
\end{tikzpicture}	

## 4 Flags

### 4.1 Country Flags



Brunei	Bulgaria	Burkina Faso	Burundi
(BN)	(BG)	(BF)	(BI)
Cambodia (KH)	Cameroon (CM)	Canada (CA)	* * * * * * * Cape Verde (CV)
Central African Rep. (CF)	Chad (TD)	★ Chile (CL)	China (CN)
Colombia (CO)	Comoros (KM)	Congo, Democratic Rep. (CD)	Congo, Republic (CG)
Cook Islands	Costa Rica	Cote d'Ivoire	Croatia
(CK)	(CR)	(CI)	(HR)
Cuba	Cyprus	Czech Republic	Denmark
(CU)	(CY)	(CZ)	(DK)
Djibouti	Dominica	Dominican Republic	Ecuador
(DJ)	(DM)	(DO)	(EC)

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Egypt	EL Salvador	Equatorial Guinea	Eritrea
(EG)	(SV)	(GQ)	(ER)
Estonia	Eswatini	Ethiopia	Fiji
(EE)	(SZ)	(ET)	(FJ)
Finnland	France	Gabon	Gambia
(FI)	(FR)	(GA)	(GM)
+ + + +		*	
Georgia	Germany	Ghana	Great Britain
(GE)	(DE)	(GH)	(GB)
Greece	Grenada	Guatemala	Guinea
(GR)	(GD)	(GT)	(GN)
*		<u>2</u>	* * * * * *
Guinea Bissau	Guyana	Haiti	Honduras
(GW)	(GY)	(HT)	(HN)
Hungary	Iceland	India	Indonesia
(HU)	(IS)	(IN)	(ID)

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	الله اکبر		XX
Iran	Iraq	Ireland	Israel
(IR)	(IQ)	(IE)	(IL)
			*
Italy	Jamaica	Japan	Jordan
(IT)	(JM)	(JP)	(JO)
			*****
Kazakhstan	Kenya	Kiribati	Kosovo
(KZ)	(KE)	(KI)	(KO)
Kuwait	Kyrgystan	Laos	Latvia
(KW)	(KG)	(LA)	(LV)
		*	C*
Lebanon	Lesotho	Liberia	Libya
(LB)	(LS)	(LR)	(LY)
Liechtenstein	Lithuania	Luxembourg	Madagaskar
(LI)	(LT)	(LU)	(MG)
		0	
Malawi	Malaysia	Maledives	Mali
(MW)	(MY)	(MV)	(ML)

		*	
Malta (MT)	Marshall Islands (MH)	Mauritania (MR)	Mauritius (MU)
٩	* * * * *		
Mexico (MX)	Micronesia (FM)	Moldova (MD)	Mongolia (MN)
	$\bigstar$	*	$\mathbf{\star}$
Montenegro (ME)	Morocco (MA)	Mozambique (MZ)	Myanmar (MM)
Namibia (NA)	Nauru (NR)	Nepal (NP)	Netherlands (NL)
		•	
New Zealsnd (NZ)	Nicaragua (NI)	Niger (NE)	Nigeria (NG)
<b>North Korea</b>	North Macedonia	Norway	Oman
(KP)	(MK)	Norway (NO)	(OM)
Pakistan	Palau	★ Panama	Papua New Guinea
(PK)	(PW)	(PA)	(PG)

Pakistan (PK)

Palau (PW)

Papua New Guinea (PG)

6		*	
Paraguay (PY)	Peru (PE)	Philippines (PH)	Poland (PL)
Portugal (PT)	Quatar (QA)	Romania (RO)	Russia (RU)
**			
Rwanda (RW)	St. Kitts & Nevis (KN)	St. Lucia (LC)	St. Vincent (VC)
★★★ ★ Samoa (WS)	San Marino (SM)	Sao Tome & Principe (ST)	Saudi Arabia (SA)
(₩3)	(31/1)	(31)	(3A)
*			
Senegal (SN)	Serbia (RS)	Seychelles (SC)	Sierra Leone (SL)
(*** **	<b>.</b>		***
Singapore (SG)	Slovakia (SK)	Slovenia (SI)	Solomon Islands (SB)
Somalia (SO)	South Africa (ZA)	South Korea (KR)	South Sudan (SS)

			*
Spain	Sri Lanka	Sudan	Suriname
(ES)	(LK)	(SD)	(SR)
_	+	* *	*
Sweden	Switzerland	Syria	Taiwan
(SE)	(CH)	(SY)	(TW)
****			
Tajikistan	Tanzania	Thailand	Timor-Leste
(TJ)	(TZ)	(TH)	(TL)
*	+		<b>(</b>
Togo	Tonga	Trinidad & Tobago	Tunisia
(TG)	(TO)	(TT)	(TN)
C*			
Turkey	Turkmenistan	Tuvalu	Uganda
(TR)	(TM)	(TV)	(UG)
			*
Ukraine	United Arab Emirates	United States	Uruguay
(UA)	(AE)	(US)	(UY)
C	0		**** * * *
Uzbekistan	Vanuatu	Vatican	Venezuela
(UZ)	(VU)	(VA)	(VE)



European Union (EU)



United Nations (UNO)



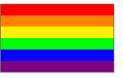
Red Cross (RedCross)



Olympics (Olympics)



Jolly Roger (JollyRoger)



Rainbow flag (Rainbow)

### 5 Links

- [1] http://www.vexilla-mundi.com: Comprehensive website with flags of all nations including construction sheets, historical flags, flags of many cities and regions.
- [2] https://www.fotw.info: Website of the FOTW ("Flags Of The World"), vexillological association and internet resource; many background informations about flags and vexillology.
- [3] https://www.welt-flaggen.de: Flags of and information about all countries of the world; contains flag quizzes.
- [4] https://www.nationalflaggen.de: Provides various images and animated gifs of all national flags.