

Monarchies in Commonwealth Realms

Many British colonies that were granted independence from the United Kingdom became Commonwealth Realms, formerly known as Dominions. Queen Elizabeth II was recognised as Head of State and Sovereign Monarch of the newly independent nations with a distinct title (i.e.; "Queen of Jamaica"). The Queen is represented by a Governor General.

Some nations changed their constitutions and became republics, replacing the Queen and Governor General with an elected President as Head of State.

Former Realms:

From 1956 to 1992 Queen Elizabeth II lost numerous titles as more than a dozen nations became republics. Nearly all of them remained in the Commonwealth. There are a total of 18 former realms which are now republics:

	Became Dominion or Realm	Time as Dominion or Commonwealth Realm	Governors General	Monarchy abolished	First President
Ireland	1922	15 years, 3 days	3	December 29, 1937	Newly appointed
India	1947	2 years, 5 months, 11 days	2	January 26, 1950	Newly appointed
Pakistan	1947	8 years, 7 months, 8 days	4	March 23, 1956	Incumbent Governor General
Ghana	1957	3 years, 3 months, 26 days	2	July 1, 1960	Newly appointed
South Africa	1910	51 years	12	May 31, 1961	Incumbent Governor General
Tanganyika (Tanzania)	1961	1 year	1	December 9, 1962	Incumbent Prime Minister
Nigeria	1960	3 years	2	October 1, 1963	Incumbent Governor General

Uganda	1962	1 year	1	October 9, 1963	Newly appointed
Kenya	1963	1 year	1	December 12, 1964	Incumbent Prime Minister
Malawi	1964	2 years	1	July 6, 1966	Incumbent Prime Minister
Guyana	1966	3 years, 8 months, 24 days	3	February 22, 1970	Incumbent Governor General
The Gambia	1965	5 years, 2 months, 6 days	2	April 24, 1970	Incumbent Prime Minister
Sierra Leone	1961	9 years, 11 months, 22 days	5	April 19, 1971	Incumbent Governor General
Ceylon (Sri Lanka)	1948	24 Years, 3 months, 18 days	4	May 22, 1972	Incumbent Governor General
Malta	1964	10 years, 2 months, 23 days	2	December 27, 1976	Incumbent Governor General
Trinidad & Tobago	1962	13 years, 11 months, 1 days	7	August 1, 1976	Incumbent Governor General
Fiji	1970	16 years, 11 months, 27 days	3	October 7, 1987	Resigned Governor General
Mauritius	1968	24 years	7	March 12, 1992	Incumbent Governor General

Newfoundland was a Dominion from September 26, 1907 until February 16, 1934. It then reverted to colonial status due to economic problems and then later became a Province of Canada by referendum on March 31, 1949.

Referenda:

Before they broke with the monarchy, several nations held national referenda on whether or not their citizens supported the adoption of a republican constitution.

	Date of referendum	Yes vote
Ireland	July 1, 1937	56.5%
The Gambia	November 24, 1965 April 24, 1970	65.85% 70.45%
Ghana	April 17 - 30, 1960	88.47%
South Africa	October 5, 1960	52.3%
Australia	November 6, 1999	45.13%
Tuvalu	April 30, 2008	35.02%
St. Vincent & The Grenadines	November 25, 2009	43.71%

The most successful republican referendum was held in Ghana in 1960 achieving an 88.47% yes vote.

The referendum in South Africa held in 1960 required only white European people to vote. Even then, it only achieved a small majority approval of only 52.3%. If African or Asian people had been allowed to vote, the result may have been very different.

Two referenda were held in The Gambia. Even though the first one in 1965 passed in percentage, it did not reach the required two-thirds majority needed to pass the referendum, causing it to fail. This was achieved in a second referendum held in 1970.

Three nations (Australia, Tuvalu and St. Vincent & the Grenadines) have voted to retain the Queen as their Head of State as republics were rejected.

Current Realms:

Today 16 countries remain as Commonwealth Realms under Queen Elizabeth II. Prior to the reign of Queen Elizabeth II, they were known as Dominions of the Crown. The Queen is represented by a Governor General in all except the United Kingdom.

	Time as Dominion or Commonwealth Realm	Became Dominion or Realm	Population (approximate)	Present Governor General (male in blue, female in pink)
United Kingdom	305 years	May 1, 1707	60,000,000	
Canada	145 years	July 1, 1867	33,000,000	David Lloyd Johnston
Australia	111 years	January 1, 1901	20,000,000	Quentin Alice Louise Bryce
New Zealand	105 years	September 26, 1907	4,000,000	Sir Jeremiah Mateparae
Jamaica	50 years	August 6, 1962	2,700,000	Sir Patrick Linton Allen
Barbados	46 years	November 29, 1966	280,000	Sir Elliot Fitzroy Belgrave
The Bahamas	39 years	July 10, 1973	300,000	Sir Arthur Alexander Foulkes
Grenada	38 years	February 7, 1974	89,000	Sir Carlyle Arnold Glean
Papua New Guinea	37 years	September 16, 1975	5,700,000	Sir Michael Ogio
Solomon Islands	34 years	July 7, 1978	550,000	Sir Frank Ofagioro Kabui
Tuvalu	34 years	October 1, 1978	11,000	Sir Iakoba Taeaia Italeli
St. Lucia	33 years	February 22, 1979	17,000	Dame Calliopa Pearlette Louisy
St. Vincent & The Grenadines	33 years	October 27, 1979	12,000	Sir Frederick Nathaniel Ballantyne
Antigua & Barbuda	31 years	November 1, 1981	69,000	Dame Louise Agnetha Lake-Tack
Belize	31 years	September 21, 1981	290,000	Sir Colville Norbert Young
St. Kitts & Nevis	29 years	September 13, 1983	39,000	Sir Cuthbert Montraville Sebastian

Summary

Until 1952, at the start of the reign of Queen Elizabeth II, the British Monarch held one title in all of the then British Dominions as Monarch of Great Britain and Ireland and the British Dominions Beyond the Seas. The Monarch was also Emperor (or Empress) of India until 1948.

Queen Elizabeth II became the first British Monarch to adopt distinctive titles in each of her Realms, in addition to being Queen of the United Kingdom, but also as Queen of Canada, Queen of Australia, etc. The Queen also added to each title that she was Queen of her other Realms and Territories, thus, officially replacing the term 'dominion' with 'realm'. Additionally, the Queen is recognised by all members of the Commonwealth of Nations as Head of the Commonwealth, a title adopted by her father King George VI in 1950 when India became the first republic within the Commonwealth.

Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa were the first Commonwealth Realms, and remained realms for the longest period of time. Jamaica has been a realm for the same length of time as South Africa. Here are Queen Elizabeth II's longest-held titles, which are all still current:

Queen of Canada	60 years
Queen of Australia	
Queen of New Zealand	
Queen of Jamaica	50 years
Queen of Barbados	46 years

Present-day republics in which the Queen reigned the longest as Sovereign were Mauritius, Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and Fiji.

Queen of Mauritius	24 years
Queen of Ceylon	20 years
Queen of Fiji	17 years