

## The Queen at 96: Canadians support growing monarchy abolition movement, would pursue after Elizabeth II dies

*Prospects of 'King Charles' and 'Queen Camilla' received coldly by Canadians*

**April 21, 2022** – While Canadians may from their hearts be toasting Queen Elizabeth II on her 96th birthday, enthusiastic congratulations over a rare personal milestone do not translate into widespread support for the institution the oldest ever British monarch represents.

The latest public opinion data on the future of the monarchy in Canada from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds people in this part of the realm more supportive of other nations severing ties with the British monarchy, while at least half of the country hope to do the same here in the future.

Indeed, three-in-five say that it is the right decision for countries such as Barbados and Jamaica to free themselves from British colonialism. Further, half (51%) say Canada should not remain a monarchy in coming generations. One-quarter (26%) would keep this tradition and form of government in place, while a similar number are unsure (24%).

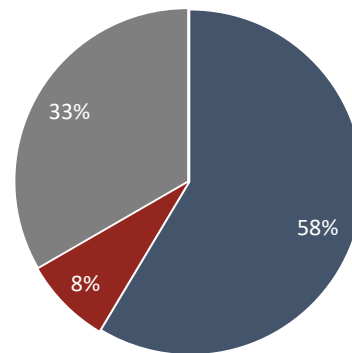
While some of this shift may be attributable to evolving mores and values, it also may be driven by the current line of succession. While 55 per cent of Canadians are supportive of remaining a constitutional monarchy as long as the Queen reigns, this drops to 34 per cent for the same arrangement under "King Charles".

As to changing times, when asked about the values that are represented by the Royal Family, a handful (5%) say that these are modern, while ten times that many (49%) say that they are outdated.

### More Key Findings:

- Three-in-five (59%) Canadians say they will be affected when the Queen dies. Those 55 years of age and older are most likely to say this, including three-quarters (76%) of women in that age group.

Is it the right decision or the wrong decision for countries to sever ties with the British monarchy?  
(All respondents, n=1,607)



■ Right decision ■ Wrong decision ■ Don't know/ Can't say

### METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from April 5-7, 2022 among a representative randomized sample of 1,607 Canadian adults who are members of [Angus Reid Forum](#). For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 2.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding. The survey was self-commissioned and paid for by ARI. Detailed tables are found at the end of this release.

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- Half of Canadians say the Royal Family is no longer relevant to them personally, while 25 per cent say it is just as relevant as ever (23%), or more so (2%).
- The Queen is viewed favourably by 63 per cent of Canadians, edging out Prince William (60%) for top spot. Three-in-ten view Charles in this way (29%) and 13 per cent say the same of Prince Andrew.

### **About ARI**

*The **Angus Reid Institute (ARI)** was founded in October 2014 by pollster and sociologist, Dr. Angus Reid. ARI is a national, not-for-profit, non-partisan public opinion research foundation established to advance education by commissioning, conducting and disseminating to the public accessible and impartial statistical data, research and policy analysis on economics, political science, philanthropy, public administration, domestic and international affairs and other socio-economic issues of importance to Canada and its world.*

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#### **Introduction**

The legacy of the British monarchy is perceived differently across the Commonwealth. For some countries, it is an esteemed part of the national tradition – even if outdated or less relevant than it used to be. For others, it is a [symbol of colonial oppression](#), with a history that contributed to hampering the expression of unique domestic identities. In recent decades, movement away from the monarchy has spread.

The Caribbean island of Barbados – a longtime constitutional monarchy like Canada – cut ties with the Crown in November 2021, declaring itself a republic. Functionally, an elected governor general has stepped in to replace the Queen as the nation's head of state – a role that is largely symbolic. More recently, Jamaican officials made it known that they too will pursue cutting ties with the monarchy. Fifteen Commonwealth countries – including Canada – [continue to operate](#) with the Queen as head of state. An anti-monarchy discussion [continues in Australia](#), which held a referendum in 1999, and ultimately voted to continue with the status quo.

For Canadians, there are two aspects to this equation. The first is an apparent and relatively deep affection for Queen Elizabeth II, which has sustained an interest in the monarchy across generations. The

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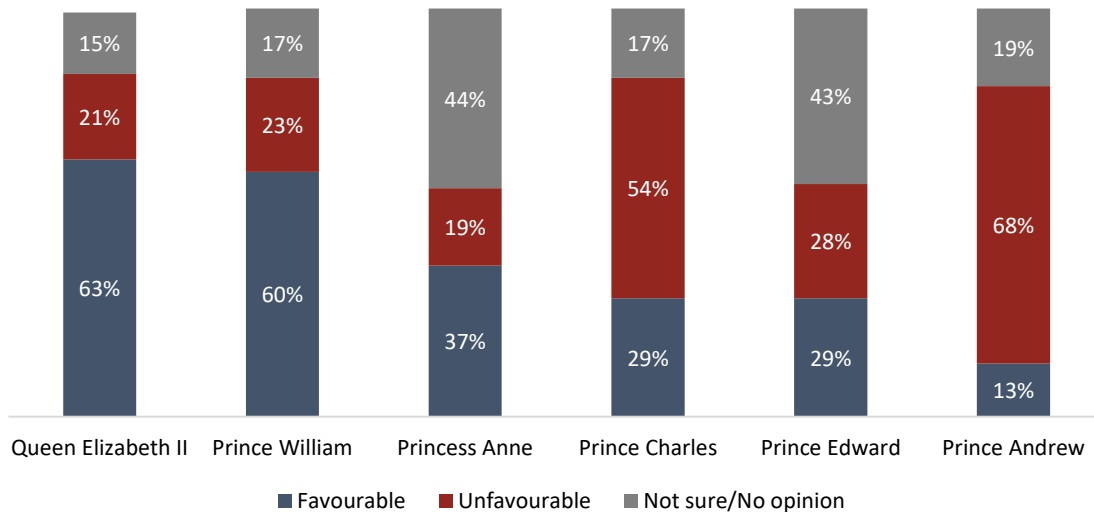
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second, however, is a burgeoning desire to move on from the monarchy after the beloved figurehead dies and passes the crown down the line of succession.

**Part One: Love for the Queen, little left for the rest of the Royals**

Indeed, Queen Elizabeth II continues to be viewed favourably by a majority of Canadians. Three-in-five (63%) say they have favourable views of Canada’s head of state, three times as many as who say the opposite (21%). Among her descendants, only Prince William, second in line for the throne, is viewed as favourably. Prince Charles, who will ascend the throne when Elizabeth dies, is viewed unfavourably by more than half of Canadians (54%). Prince Andrew, who [recently settled a sexual abuse lawsuit that connected him to sex offender Jeffrey Epstein](#), is viewed the most unfavourably of the Royals presented to respondents. As for the Queen’s other children, Princess Anne and Prince Edward, pluralities of Canadians express no opinion:

**Favourable or unfavourable views of the Royal Family  
(All respondents, n=1,607)**



Older Canadians hold much more affection for the Royals in general and the Queen and her grandson Prince William specifically. Still, more than half of all demographic groups view Queen Elizabeth favourably, the only royal that is the case. However, for the lesser-known Royals – Princess Anne and Prince Edward – Canadians under 55 are much more likely to hold no opinion, or not who the person is, than hold a negative or positive opinion:

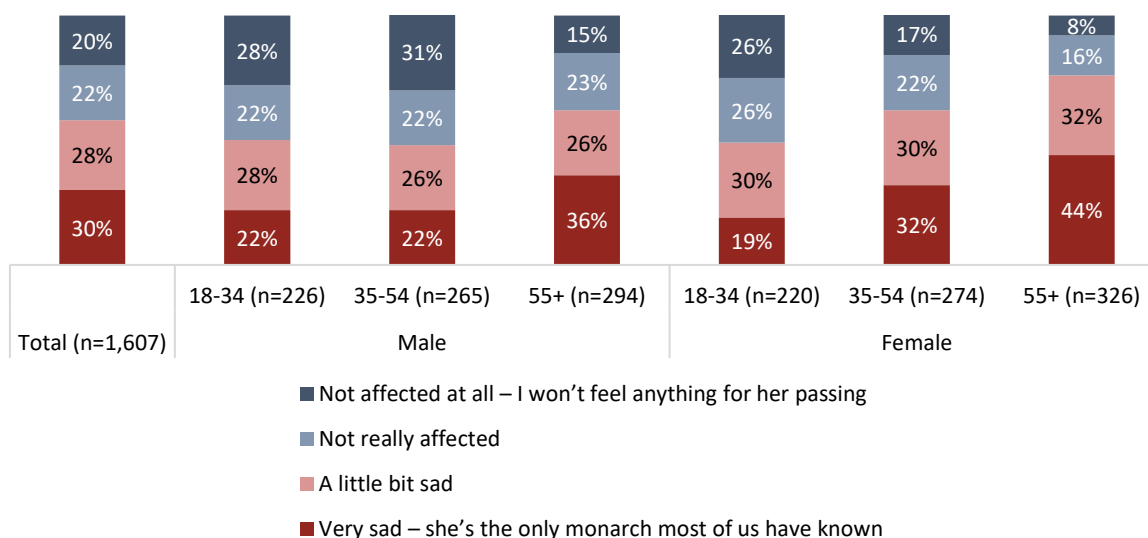
Favourable views of the Royal Family							
	Total (n=1,607)	Male			Female		
		18-34 (n=226)	35-54 (n=265)	55+ (n=294)	18-34 (n=220)	35-54 (n=274)	55+ (n=326)
Queen Elizabeth II	63%	56%	55%	68%	54%	63%	78%
Prince William	60%	45%	52%	63%	45%	64%	79%
Princess Anne	37%	27%	24%	50%	24%	36%	54%
Prince Charles	29%	24%	31%	32%	16%	31%	36%
Prince Edward	29%	20%	18%	37%	15%	27%	46%
Prince Andrew	13%	13%	11%	19%	8%	12%	14%

### Sadness when the Queen dies

For most Canadians, Queen Elizabeth II is the only monarch they have known. This year the Commonwealth celebrates her Platinum Jubilee marking the 70th anniversary of her accession to the throne. More than half of Canadians say they will feel sad when she dies, including three-in-ten who say they will be very sad.

At least half of all demographics say they will be upset at the Queen’s death, though older Canadians are much more likely to feel melancholy:

### Putting aside how you feel about Canada as a constitutional monarchy, how will you feel personally when the Queen dies?



### Waning relevance for the Royal Family in Canada

Despite high levels of appreciation for the current monarch, half of Canadians feel the Royal Family is irrelevant to themselves personally. A further one-quarter (26%) believe it’s becoming less relevant. Just

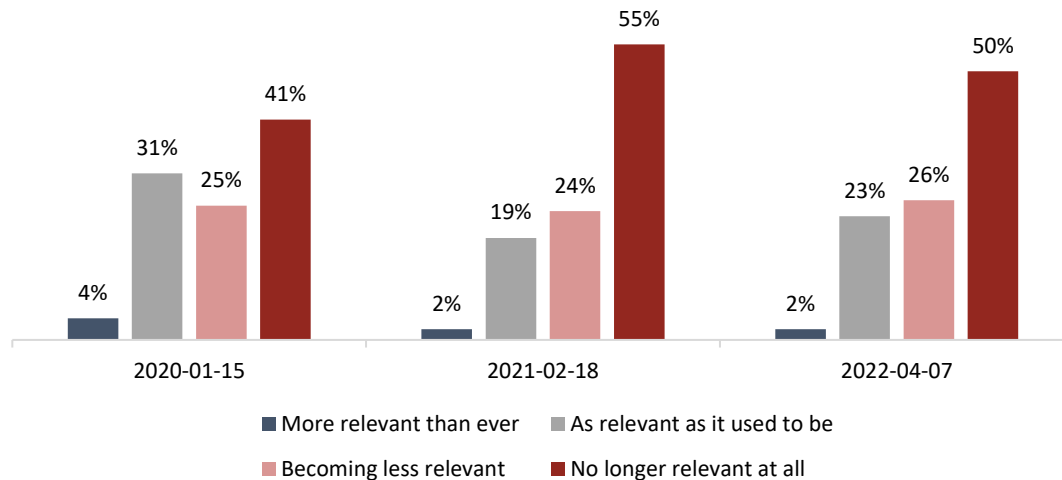
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one-quarter (23%) believe the Royals are as relevant as ever and few (2%) believe they are becoming more relevant.

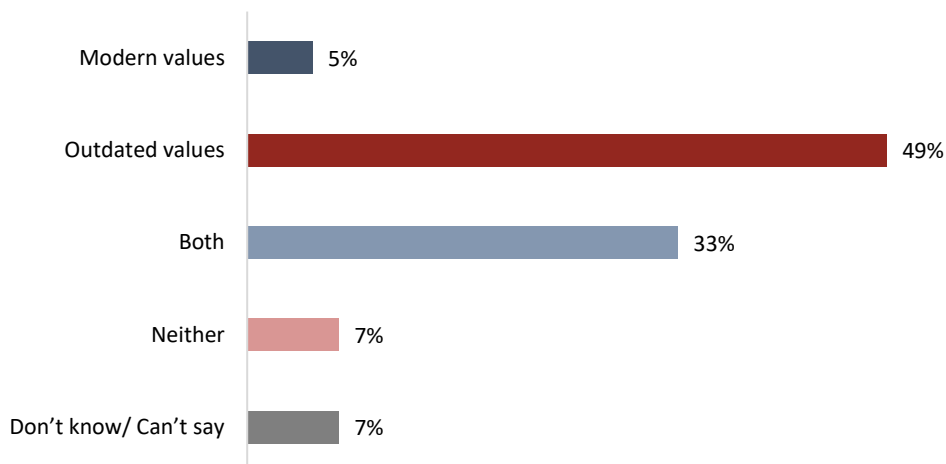
These measures have remained more or less consistent in the last year, but represent an increase in Canadians who believe the Royals are no longer relevant at all from data taken two years ago:

**Thinking about the Royal Family, how relevant is it to you personally these days?**



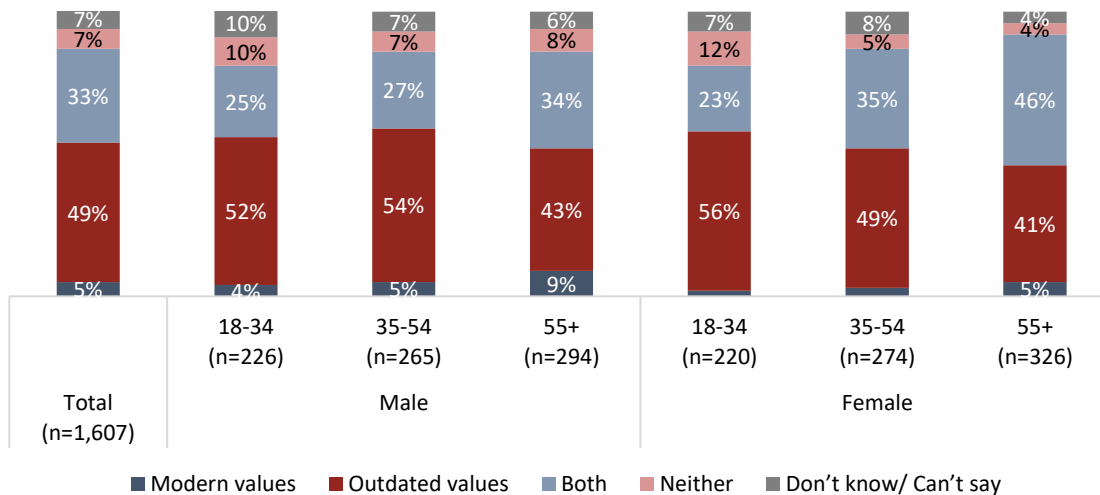
Dovetailing with the above data, half (49%) of Canadians believe the Royal Family are more representative of outdated values than modern ones. One-third say the family reflects both modern and outdated values equally. One-in-20 believe the Royals are more representative of modern values than old-fashioned ones, as many who say the House of Windsor represent neither set of values at all:

**In your opinion, what kind of values does the Royal Family reflect?  
(All respondents, n=1,607)**



For every demographic group except women over the age of 54, a plurality believe the Royal Family is more representative of outdated values. For women aged 55 and older, instead, a plurality believe the House of Windsor represents both modern and historical values. Overall, older Canadians are much more likely to see the Royals reflect modern values:

**In your opinion, what kind of values does the Royal Family reflect?**



**Part Two: Canadians join anti-monarchy movement?**

The monarchy abolition movement is nothing new, though it has moved slowly. India introduced its own post-colonial constitution in 1950, leaving the British crown behind. Pakistan followed in 1956. In the 1970s, Sierra Leone, Guyana, Malta, and Trinidad and Tobago cut ties with the British Royal Family as well, among others.

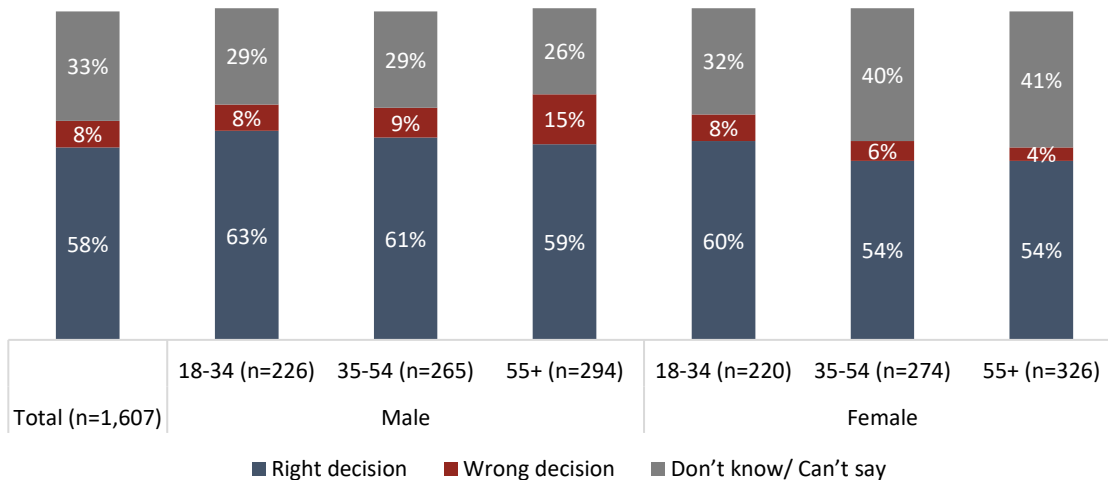
Recently, an attempted celebration of the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee in Jamaica turned into further evidence of the Royal Family’s waning influence. That country [surprised Prince William and Kate, Duchess of Cambridge, with news it was following the path of Barbados](#) and cutting ties with the monarchy last month.

Barbados’ decision last year to take this step is seen by some as the first in an inevitable cascade of nations looking for this extra degree of independence. For their part, Canadians feel that countries making this decision are following the right path – three-in-five say this (58%). Furthermore, those who do not say it is the right decision largely withhold judgement, while one-in-twelve (8%) say that this is the wrong choice:

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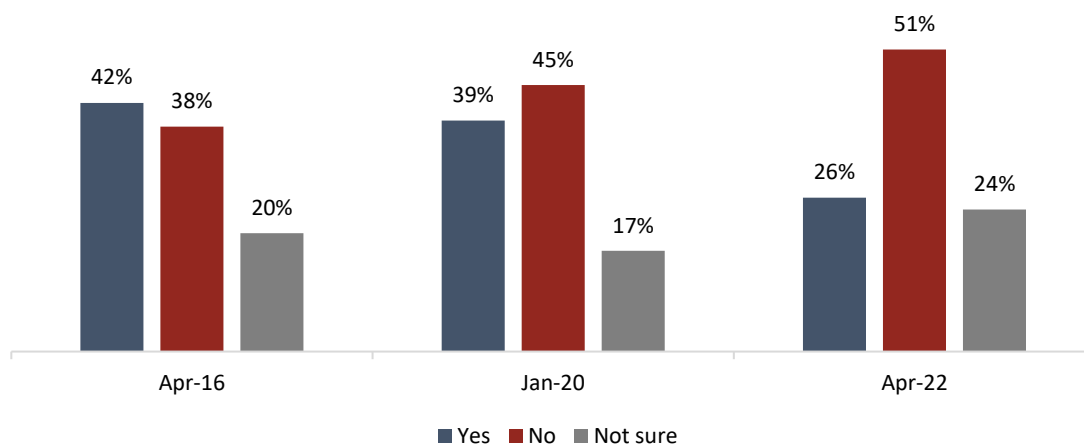
**How do you feel about this? Is it the right decision or the wrong decision for those countries to sever ties with the British monarchy?**



**Half would follow suit, pursue abolition**

The natural question then becomes – what about Canada? Canadians have become more amenable to the idea of creating a new chapter in the nation’s history. The public are divided about what should replace the constitutional monarchy, but just half (51%) now say that they oppose continuing on in this way for coming generations, a two-to-one margin over those who say the nation should continue with the Royals:

**And what about Canada? Do you think Canada should continue as a constitutional monarchy for generations to come?**



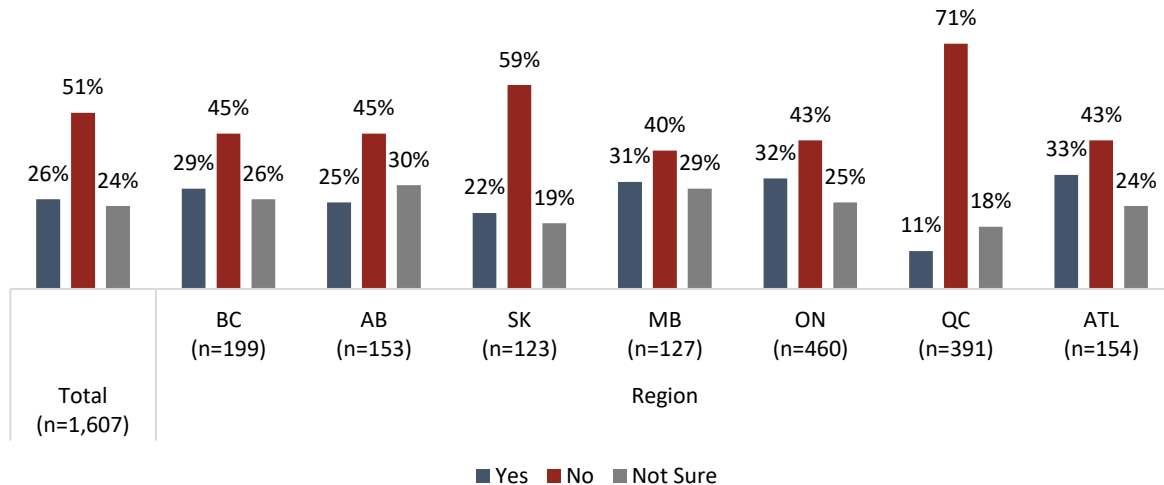
Quebecers are the most in favour of abolishing the constitutional monarchy. There, seven-in-ten (71%) say that system of government should not continue for generations to come. Three-in-five (59%) in

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Saskatchewan agree. In other provinces, opposition to an indefinite royal reign over Canada stabilizes at a plurality:

**And what about Canada? Do you think Canada should continue as a constitutional monarchy for generations to come?**



**Canadians cold on ‘King’ Charles, ‘Queen’ Camilla**

Part of the evidently growing call to become a republic may be predicated upon opinions of the replacement options in the line of succession. After Queen Elizabeth II dies, Prince Charles will ascend to the throne as King. Asked how they would feel about recognizing Charles as head of state, one-in-three (34%) are supportive, while two-thirds oppose the idea. Even stronger opposition greets the prospect of recognizing Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, Charles’ second wife after the late Diana, Princess of Wales, as queen consort. Queen Elizabeth has stated that it is her “sincere wish” that this title be given, rather than princess consort.

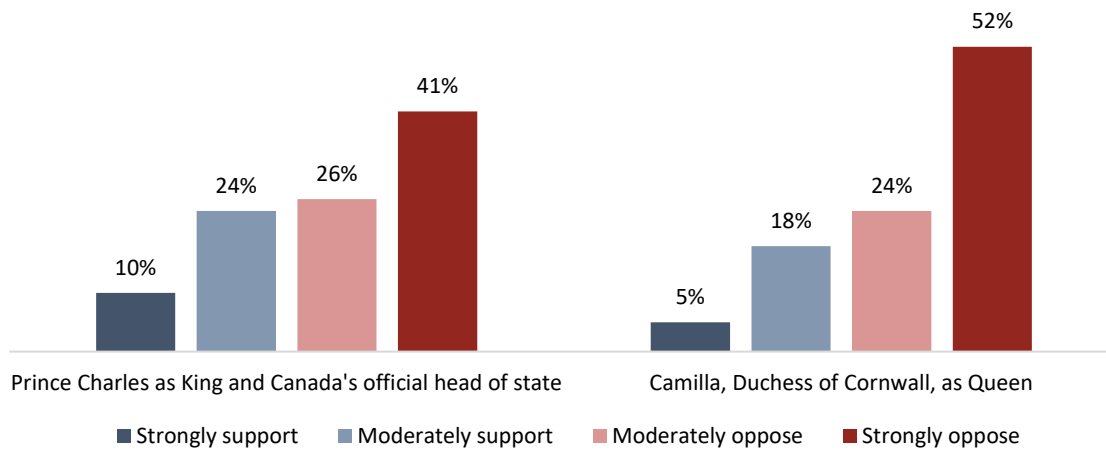
In contrast, William and Kate have been very popular in their trips to Canada, leading some royal observers to believe Charles has been jealous in the past of the attention paid to William and Kate. The reception for Charles and Camilla, however, has sometimes been lukewarm. The Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall will have their popularity tested again when they return to Canada for a three-day trip in May.

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**And when Queen Elizabeth dies, would you support or oppose recognizing each of the following:  
(All respondents, n=1,607)**



**Opponents of monarchy say it's worth changing the constitution**

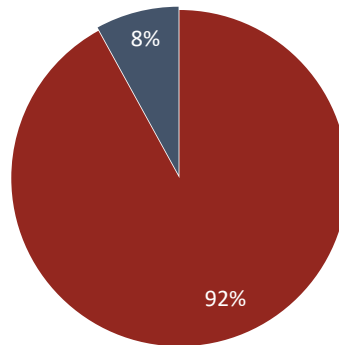
A significant barrier remains in the way if Canada were to go down the path of severing itself from the crown: the constitution. In order to remove the Queen as head of state, there would need to be [unanimous consent in the House of Commons, the Senate and each of the provincial legislatures](#). Reopening the constitution also could lead to provinces raising other grievances, such as [Alberta's bid to change the equalization formula](#). Notably, as well, [Quebec has never formally ratified the constitution](#).

Respondents who say Canada should not remain a constitutional monarchy overwhelmingly still want Canada to follow through and change the constitution even if the process represents a political Pandora's box. Fewer than one-in-ten (8%) change their mind when confronted with the difficulty of changing Canada's system of government:

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**Which is closer to your point of view, should Canada:  
(Among those would NOT remain a constitutional monarchy, n=815)**



- Try to change the constitution to cut ties with the monarchy even if it is difficult
- Stick with the monarchy because changing the constitution is difficult

*For detailed results by age, gender, region, education, and other demographics, [click here](#).*

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