

Uncharted Realms

The future of the monarchy in the UK and around the world

Lord Ashcroft KCMG PC

May 2023



Lord Ashcroft Polls

@LordAshcroft

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Introduction by Lord Ashcroft

On 6 May 2023, Westminster Abbey witnesses the Coronation of a head of state not just for the UK, but for 14 other countries around the world from the Caribbean to the Pacific. Yet aside from anecdotal evidence and occasional small-scale surveys, there is little reliable data as to how people in these countries – including the UK itself – see their relationship with the Crown, or what they think about the idea of a monarch at the apex of their political system. In that sense, they are the “uncharted realms”.

As we begin a new chapter in the history of the monarchy, I wanted to look in detail at how people around the world see its place in their country, and what role, if any, they think it has in their national life. To that end, in the months leading up to the Coronation we have surveyed 22,701 people throughout all 15 countries in which King Charles III is head of state. We have also conducted 44 focus groups with people of different backgrounds in the UK and in eight of the so-called “Commonwealth realms”: Australia, The Bahamas, Belize, Canada, Jamaica, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.

This is the kind of exercise Lord Ashcroft Polls usually deploys to scrutinise views of political leaders, parties, issues and campaigns. But while the King doesn't need to be elected, the institution of the monarchy does need the public's consent. A monarchy that lost the support of the people would quickly find itself on borrowed time.

Among many other things, we asked people about the role and relevance of the monarchy in their country, if they think it is unifying or divisive, how it should modernise, what if anything they would rather see in its place, whether they benefit from their ties with the UK, the significance in the debate of Britain's colonial history, what they think of individual royals and the various controversies that surround them, how they would vote in a referendum on keeping the monarchy or becoming a republic, and what they think their country would choose in such a referendum tomorrow or in the future. The results, I think, paint a fascinating picture not just of how the people in each of these countries see their relationship with the Crown, but how they see Britain and indeed how they see themselves.

Within the UK, the position looks secure. The country would vote to keep the monarchy by a comfortable margin. After years of turmoil people especially value a constant presence above the grim spectacle of day-to-day politics, value the work of individual royals and believe the monarchy brings huge economic benefits to the nation. At the same time, there is wide recognition of a need to move with the times and many – especially in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and in minority communities – feel the institution is only for some types of people, not including themselves.



The personal conflicts and dramas that have beset the royals in recent years reinforce some people's already negative views. But the same stories undoubtedly engage the public and highlight one of the monarchy's greatest strengths – that it is both a public institution and a human family, inspiring interest and occasional sympathy. At home, for now at least, the King has time and goodwill on his side.

Around the world, the picture is more mixed. In six of the 14 Commonwealth realms, more voters said they would choose to become a republic in a referendum tomorrow than would stay as a constitutional monarchy, and those in some other countries favoured the status quo only by small margins.

As readers will see from what follows, these choices have more to do with how people see their own country and its relationship with Britain and the Crown than with what they think of the new King or his family.

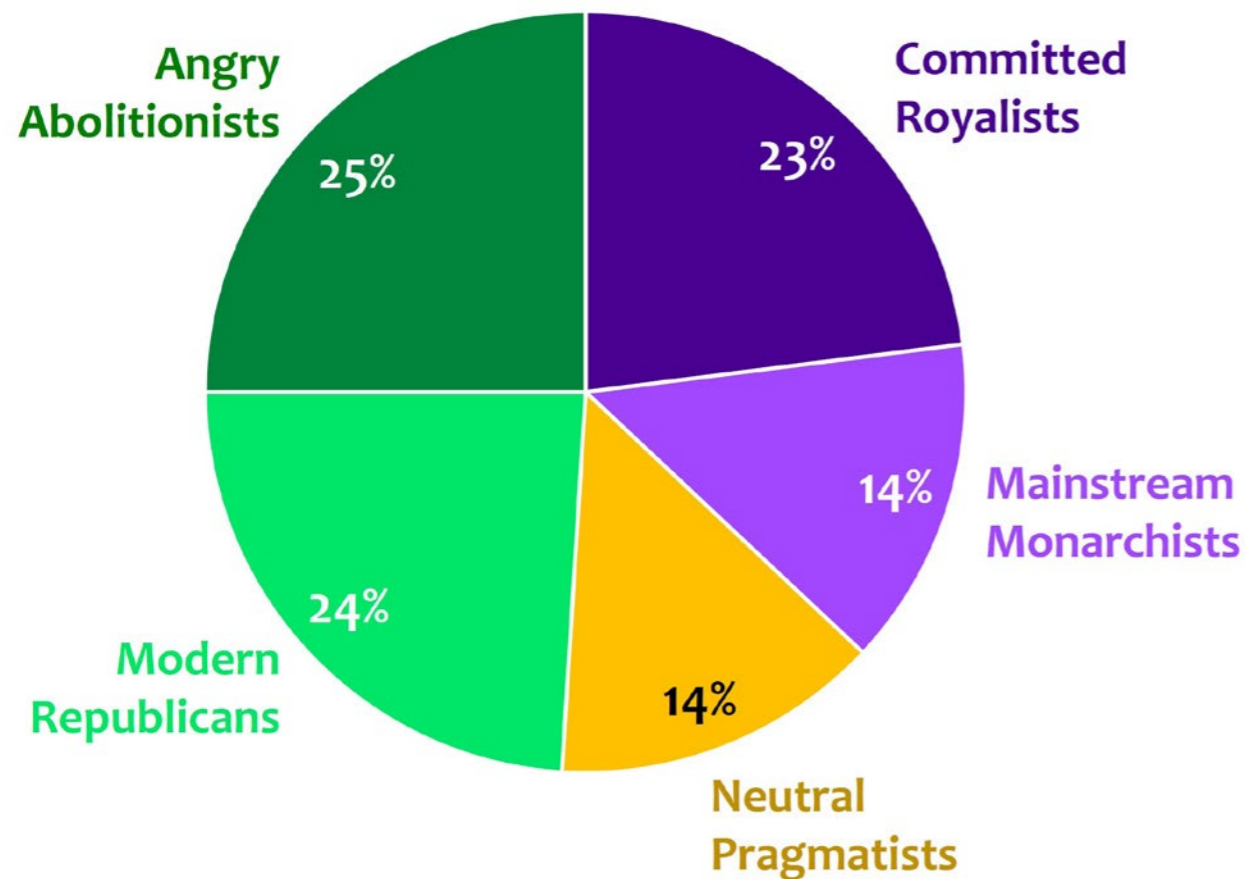
We often find a tension between, on the one hand, people's view of their national character, their wish to assert independence and a desire to break away from historical wrongs and, on the other hand, the stability and reassurance that many believe the monarchy still offers. Those who believe the arrangement cannot be justified then ask themselves whether the likely alternative would be an improvement – or enough of one to justify the time and political energy that would have to be diverted from other priorities to make it happen.

Rightly, the line from the Palace is that the monarchy's place in each country is a matter for that country's people. Clearly, the royals cannot campaign, but Britain can consider how much these relationships matter and how far we are willing to invest in them.

**Lord Ashcroft KCMG PC
May 2023**

I. The Disposition of Forces

In the spring of 2023 we polled over 22,000 people throughout the UK and the 14 other countries in which King Charles III is the head of state. Our analysis of the overall findings reveals the existence of five distinct groups – represented in different proportions throughout the Commonwealth realms – each with a particular combination of opinions and attitudes.



Committed Royalists (23%)

Committed Royalists make up just under a quarter of the total population of this group of countries. They are the least likely to think the monarchy needs to scale back or to modernise in order to survive. They think the monarchy is a good thing for their country, and in some cases the only source of stability and unity which their country possesses. They believe that the King can unite everyone regardless of their political preference and are more inclined to believe that the royal family connects more with ordinary people than most politicians. They would therefore vote to maintain the monarchy in any referendum by a very wide margin. They have little time for questions about the colonial or racial legacy of the monarchy as an institution. They have an overwhelmingly positive view of all royals past and present, except for the Duke and Duchess of Sussex.

Mainstream Monarchists (14%)

Mainstream Monarchists, who make up around 1 in 7 of the Commonwealth realms population, take a favourable view of all members of the royal family, and would vote overwhelmingly to keep the monarchy in any referendum. They believe the monarchy is a good thing for their country and see the King as a unifying figure who cares about people and does a better job at connecting with them than many politicians do. They see the monarchy as a force for stability and continuity, though not necessarily the sole source of these things. Overall, this group is the most sceptical of the charges laid by the Duke and Duchess of Sussex against the royal family but also the most likely to feel sympathy for both parties. They nonetheless believe the royal family needs to modernise in order to survive.

Neutral Pragmatists (14%)

Another 14% of the Commonwealth realms population are Neutral Pragmatists, who would tend to vote to retain the monarchy – though often because they believe the alternative might end up being worse. They see the monarchy as a source of unity and stability and believe that the King and the royal family care about the countries over which they reign. They overwhelmingly see the royal family as an asset for the UK, but believe that the monarchy needs to be scaled down and modernised in order to survive. They have a fairly nuanced view of living royals, though they are noticeably less favourable towards the Duke and Duchess of Sussex and particularly the Duke of York.

Modern Republicans (24%)

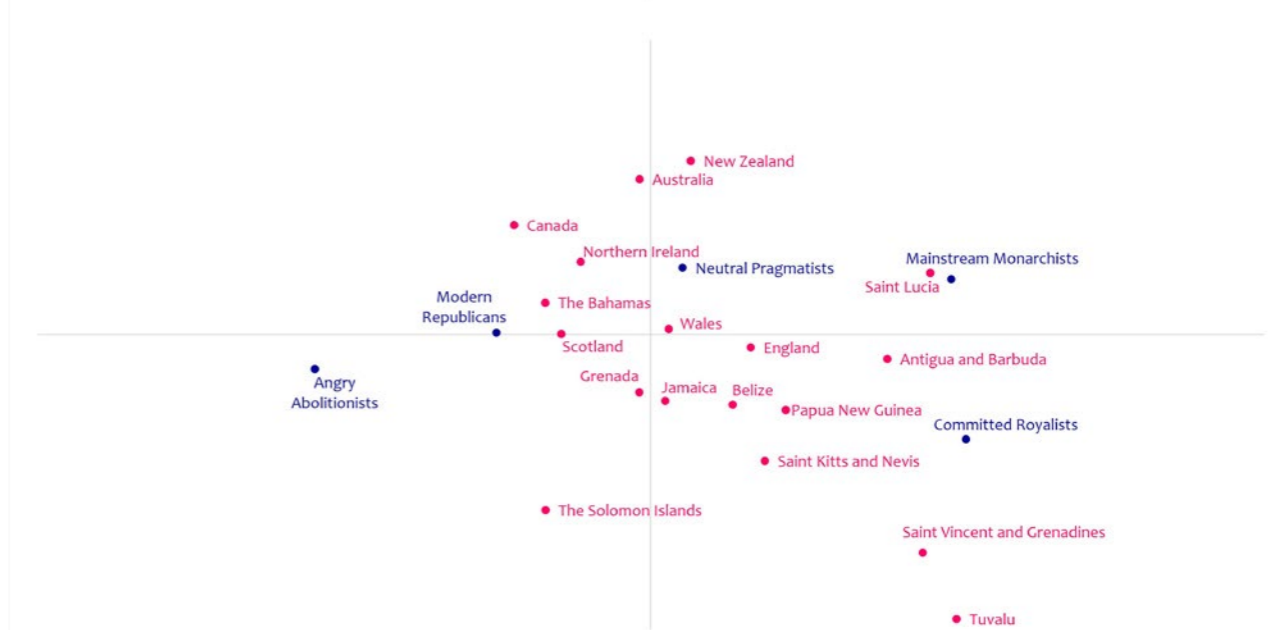
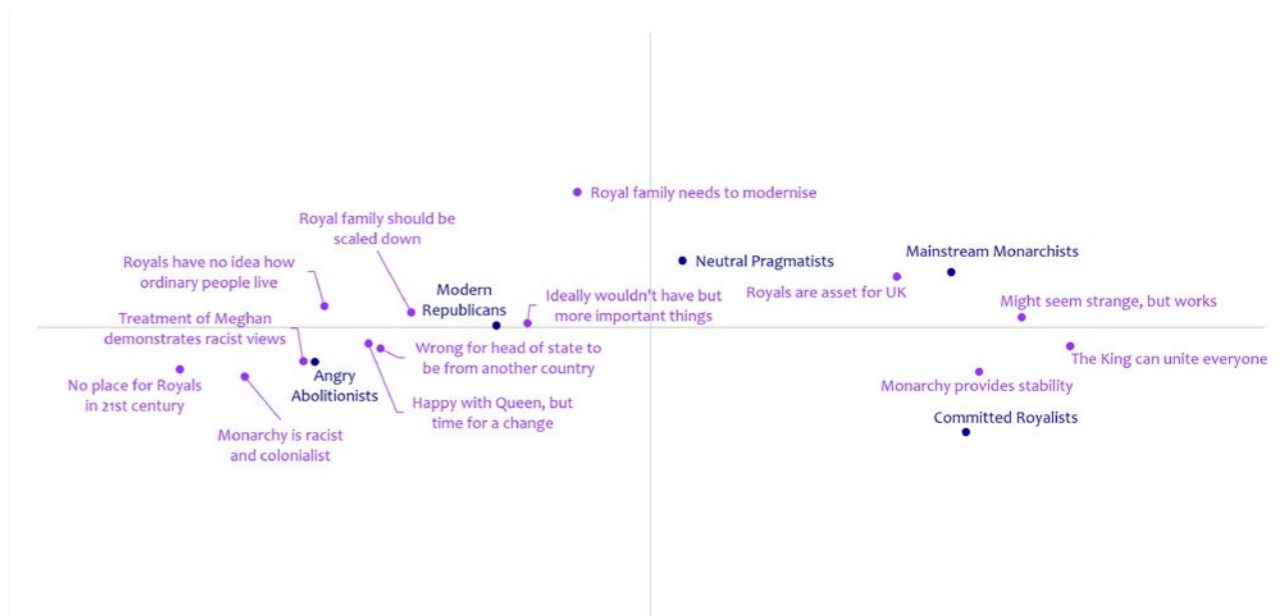
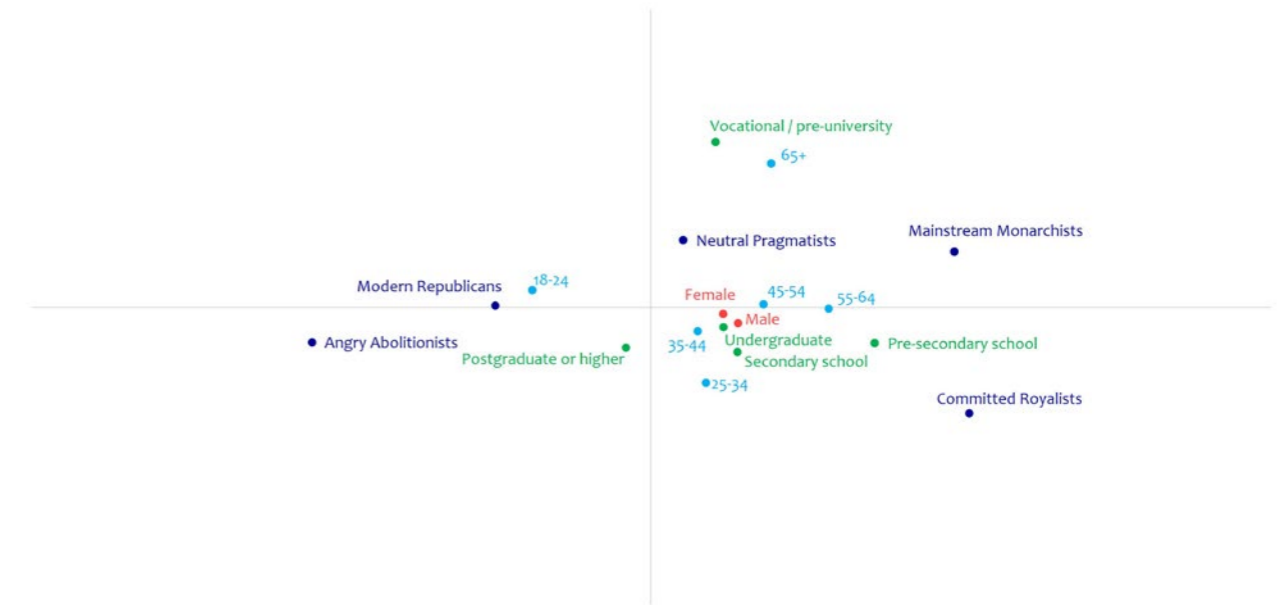
Modern Republicans constitute just under 1 in 4 of the population in the countries concerned. They would vote by a comfortable majority for their country to become a republic in the event of a referendum and would rather have a homegrown head of state they disagreed with than a non-political King. They are more likely to view the monarchy as divisive than unifying, and believe the institution brings a racist and colonialist legacy, even as many acknowledge its staying power. While they think there may be more important issues to tackle at the moment, most see the passing of Queen Elizabeth as an opportunity to reduce the size and the role of the monarchy, if there is to be one at all. They are warmer towards the Duke and Duchess of Sussex than other living royals and have more sympathy with them than with the King and Prince William.

Angry Abolitionists (25%)

Angry Abolitionists make up the final and most anti-monarchy quarter of the Commonwealth realms population. They show little favourability towards any members of the royal family past or present, including the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, and would vote overwhelmingly for their country to become a republic in a referendum. They see the monarchy as divisive and anachronistic and think it has a legacy of racism and colonialism which renders it unfit for the modern world. They believe the King and the royal family care little or nothing for their country and do a worse job than politicians in connecting with people. They are the group most likely to believe the accusations levelled at the royal family by the Duke and Duchess of Sussex and to be most sympathetic towards Harry and Meghan – though even more lack sympathy with either side.

The monarchy: demographic and attitudinal maps

These maps show how people's attitudes to the monarchy relate to other information about them, such as demographic characteristics like age and level of education; where they live; and which of the above 'segments' they belong to according to their answers in our poll. The closer the plot points are to each other, the more closely related they are; if they are far apart on opposite sides of the vertical centre line, they are inversely related.



2. The People and the Crown

In most of our focus groups around the world, some participants saw the monarchy as an important symbol of heritage and history. Some, particularly in Britain, also felt the monarchy was almost a defining part of their country's history and character. Many in the UK also thought the royal family enhanced the country's prestige on the world stage, bringing in overseas visitors and boosting the economy.

“ I quite like having a royal family. I think it's just part of Britain. I've grown up here so I'm used to it, and I can't imagine being without it.”

 Scotland


“ When we do a state visit, nobody else can offer what we can. People might come to the UK and go, Great, dinner with Rishi Sunak. If there's a state visit, red carpets rolled out and it's the royal family, I think that's something.”

 Northern Ireland

“ It's nice to have a constant. There is a bit of comfort in having something that doesn't change, especially as such a young country. Having that history there gives a different perspective.”

 New Zealand

“ When I was at school in Nigeria, even our nursery rhymes – ‘I've been to London to look at the Queen’. We already saw Britain, we saw the monarchy. It was a positive thing.”

 England



Many also spoke of the monarchy as a source of stability and continuity, and valued having a layer of governance above their elected politicians. This was particularly the case in countries which had undergone recent political upheavals, including the UK

“ We've seen that the government can change really quickly, like literally in a month. So it provides some stability. And as the UK becomes less of a world power, the soft power they're trying to leverage worked well when the Queen was alive.”

 Northern Ireland

“ They're not political, that's what I like. I don't want a monarch called Boris or Queen Liz Truss. Because we're really great at electing people, aren't we?”

 Wales



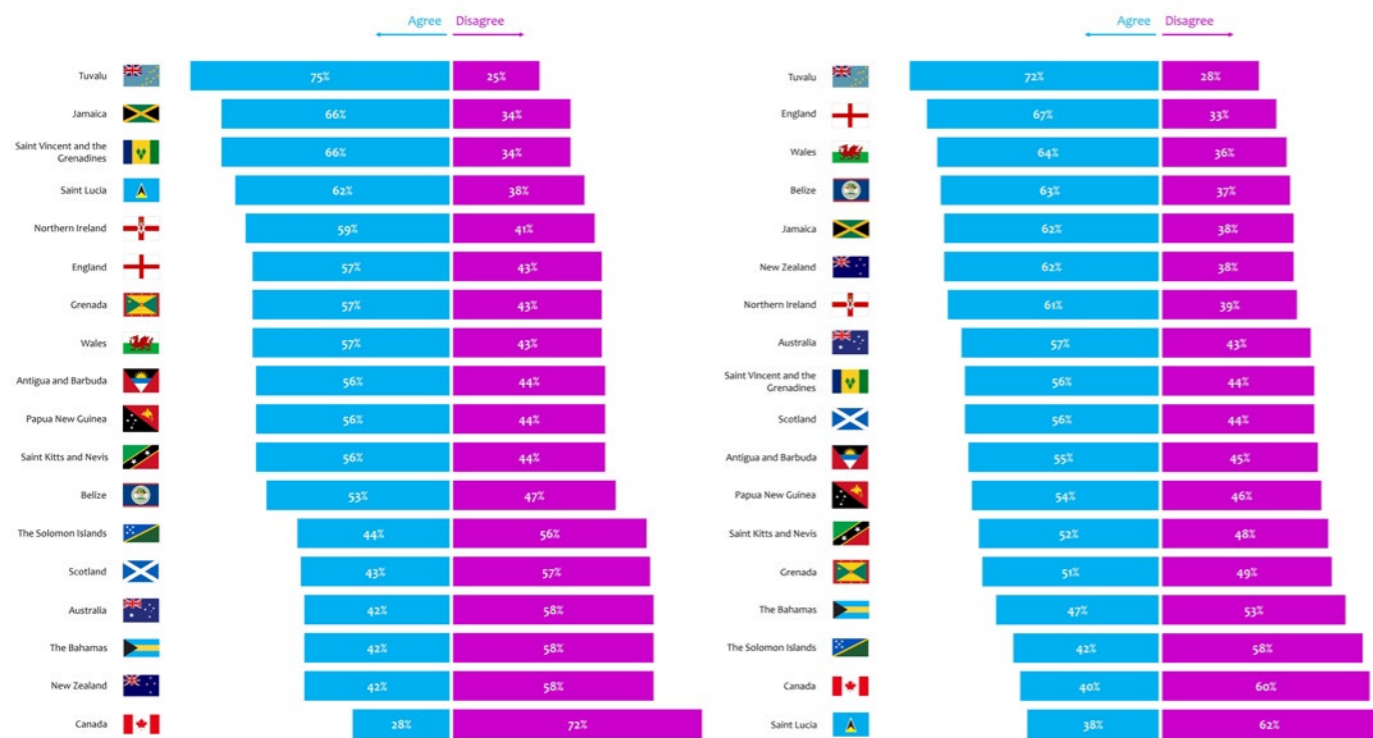
In our poll, respondents in most countries and nations were more inclined to agree than disagree that *“the King can unite everyone in my country, no matter who they voted for”*. There were six notable exceptions, Australia, The Bahamas, Canada, New Zealand, Scotland and the Solomon Islands.

Participants in all but four nations (The Bahamas, Canada, St Lucia and the Solomon Islands) were more likely to agree than disagree with the statement *“the monarchy means we have more stability in my country than we would have without it”*. Agreement with this statement was strongest in England and Tuvalu.

Here are some things people have said about your country and the monarchy. Please say whether you agree or disagree with each statement.

The King can unite everyone in my country, no matter who they voted for

The monarchy means we have more stability in my country than we would have without it



However, many participants outside the UK felt that the monarchy had little relevance in their country today. Most acknowledged that the King wielded no real power (*“They’re not interfering in any of the political decisions. They have their own problems in Windsor”* (Canada)) – and while some were content to see the institution as a harmless enough oddity, others wondered why it still had even a symbolic role in their nation’s affairs.

Some participants were genuinely unsure what role or purpose the monarchy had in their country, even in theory. This was not only the case in countries outside the UK.

“In school we’re not really taught about it. Nobody really knows what impact it’s going to have if there was a monarchy or if there wasn’t.”

Canada

“The time we think of them is when we’re thankful for the Victoria Day holiday. God bless her soul, we get a day off work.”

Canada

“What do they actually do all day? What is their role, their responsibility? What does Charles do, what does William do? What is their daytime job?”

England

“The story of the monarchy is beautiful, but it’s no longer real to the modern day. I don’t know why we have to bring allegiance to the King. Is it a sentimental thing? I don’t know why it’s still there.”

Canada

“I’m sure people in the UK feel more connected but we have no visibility. We don’t know on a day-to-day basis what difference they make in our lives. Why do we need them?”

Australia

“It’s not about being for or against them, it’s about us not seeing them play any part. They’re almost like a vestigial organ. They’re there, but they have no functionality.”

Australia

“They probably work hard over there. I’m sure they spend their days opening hospitals and going to charity events and have more input. But here, I honestly don’t know what they do. They have no relevance.”

New Zealand

“

But Jamaica is already a well-known country through music, our athletes... We've already put ourselves on the map. And we're already an inclusive country. All the reasons people say we need a republic, Jamaica has already done that.

Jamaica

”



National character

There was little sense in any of our non-UK groups that being under the Crown was a defining part of who they were as a nation, or how they thought they were seen by outsiders. However, several participants around the world said being part of a monarchy (and all they believed monarchy stood for) was at odds with what they considered their country's character, or that they had outgrown what felt like a very old-fashioned institution: *"I think in Scotland we're past the notion that monarchy is relevant"* (Scotland); *"We don't really consider the monarchy part of our culture. Like, we're very welcoming, and the monarchy is the opposite of that."* (Canada); *"We're still a very young country and sort of finding our feet. We've used the English system as a base, but I think we're at the point where we're starting to explore other options"* (New Zealand).

“ It doesn't sit well with the Kiwi way. I think New Zealand is all about making your own stamp, that nobody's better than anybody else. We can rub shoulders with each other and be equal. The further we go as a nation, the less relevant they seem to be.”

 New Zealand

“ It has very little to do with the Canada we live today. Toronto is very multicultural, you see all sorts of ethnicities and hear different languages, whereas I feel the monarchy just represents one type.”

 Canada

“ It doesn't align with Australian values. Looking at the history of the UK and colonisation, every wrong thing that's linked to the monarchy, it's high time we moved away from those things. And when you look at the Aboriginal people, how people from the UK just came and grabbed their land – I think people don't want to relate themselves to that anymore.”

 Australia

Some saw this tension differently, however. As a man in Jamaica said, discussing their neighbour's decision to become a republic: *"Barbados is a small country making a big step. Everybody is like, 'oh, Barbados exists!' But Jamaica is already a well-known country through music, our athletes... We've already put ourselves on the map. And we're already an inclusive country. All the reasons people say we need a republic, Jamaica has already done that."* (Jamaica).

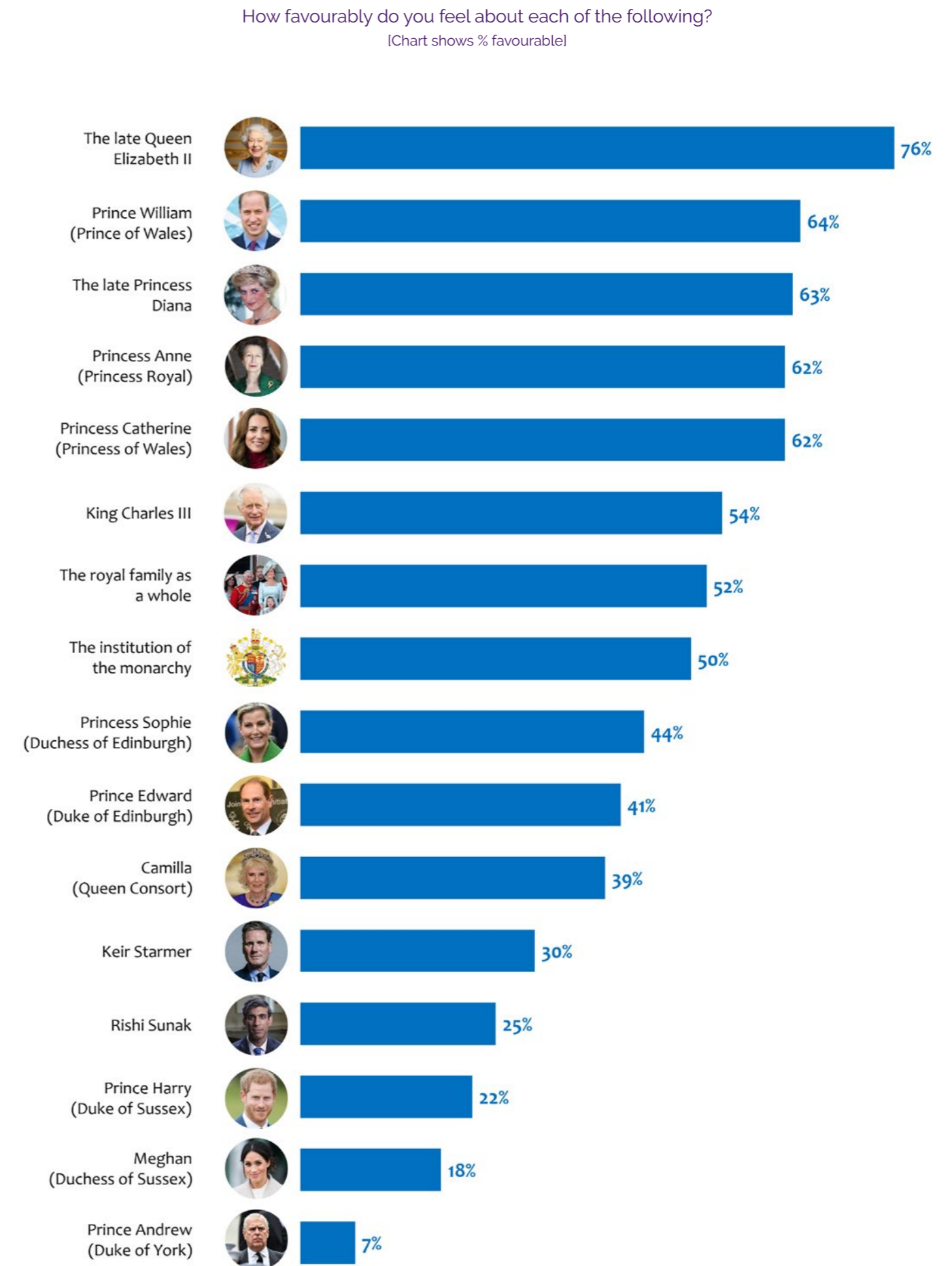
Few in our focus groups could think of specific examples of things they would like to do as a country but were prevented from doing by being under the Crown – one exception being The Bahamas: *"The Privy Council says they don't want the death penalty and we follow what they say. But some people are a menace to society and need to be dealt with. I don't like being told what to do."* (The Bahamas).

3. The Royals

We asked in our poll how favourable people felt towards members of the royal family, the institution of the monarchy, the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition. Queen Elizabeth was regarded the most favourably, followed by Princess Diana. The highest scoring living royal was Prince William, followed closely by the Princess Royal (who came second only to Queen Elizabeth in Scotland): *“Princess Anne is never in the limelight but she’s coined as the hardest working royal. She didn’t want all the pomp, she didn’t give her children titles. She told them they had to go out and get jobs, and they’ve done that”* (Wales); *“I like her. She’s in the background quietly working away. And she told that photographer to naff off”* (Scotland).

The Princess of Wales was next, followed by the King, who scored slightly higher than the royal family as a whole and the institution of the monarchy. Focus groups also mentioned the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh in favourable terms: *“I like Edward and Sophie. They’re quite sort of common and bringing up their children right”* (Northern Ireland); *“They seem to go about their business quietly, under the radar. She seems very nice and down-to-earth”* (England). All royals received higher favourability ratings than Rishi Sunak and Keir Starmer, with the exceptions of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex and the Duke of York.

Whatever their view of the institution and its role, most in our groups took a positive view about the work of individual royals. Among other things, people often mentioned the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, the Invictus Games, advocacy of conservation and environmental causes, sustainable agriculture, mental health, promotion of heritage industries and crafts, and many charitable causes.



The King

Asked what they thought about the new King, many people's immediate reaction was that he had a hard act to follow. Queen Elizabeth had won worldwide respect and admiration partly through sheer longevity and length of service – beginning with her work during World War Two – in a way that her successor would simply be unable to match.

Despite the familiarity of the Queen, many realised that they actually knew more about King Charles than they did about his mother: *"we've watched him grow up,"* as several observed. They talked about his active interest in areas including conservation and the environment, farming, architecture, his stewardship of the Duchy Estate and work to spread opportunity through the Prince's Trust.

Another recurring theme in people's comments was sympathy. This was partly for having to endure intense public scrutiny at a time of deep personal sadness: *"I thought it was really sad that he didn't have time to actually grieve. Then people are slagging him off for getting irritated with a pen. The man was just exhausted and in mourning for his mother"* Northern Ireland. Several also noted that his views and actions had had much more public exposure than had been the case for the Queen, and that any mistakes and flaws were therefore much more on show: *"The Queen was able to grow into the role and there was a bit of mystique, because there were just newspapers, not 24/7 social media, so things could be kept under wraps"* (England). At the same time, this meant that some found the King a more accessible figure: *"The Queen was more of a seen-and-not-heard sort of person. Because I grew up with Charles and because he was Prince of Wales, he's more approachable and I suppose more tangible."* (Northern Ireland).

“ He seems to have a cool demeanour, but we don't know what he's going through. He's been at his mother's side all these years and seen all the sacrifices she's made. That's big shoes to fill.”



Belize

“ As much as I don't like the monarchy, I have respect for the current King. Despite his mistakes he has done some good in the world.”



Scotland

“

The Queen was more of a seen-and-not-heard sort of person. Because I grew up with Charles and because he was Prince of Wales, he's more approachable and I suppose more tangible.

Northern Ireland

”

Many were more critical, however, describing him as an “oddball” or an aloof and apparently somewhat cold character. Some old stories about privileged or entitled behaviour had also stuck: “Allegedly he had someone to put toothpaste on his toothbrush every morning. Is that true, or no?” (Northern Ireland). A few also mentioned more recent reports involving large donations to his charities: “I’m concerned about the cash for honours. It’s beyond belief that he wasn’t involved. ‘Oh, it’s for my charity.’ Who carries a million pounds in notes?” (Scotland)

“What matters more is the role and whether you do it with integrity, with the interests of the countries you lead at heart. He has yet to prove who he is. Maybe he’ll do a great job. But historically, the only things we’ve ever heard about him were unflattering.”



The King’s two marriages inevitably played a large part in many people’s views about him. Around the world, some took a very critical view – especially those who admired Princess Diana but were indifferent to the monarchy more broadly: “Diana was a for the people, wasn’t she? She was like a normal person, like the rest of us. And that’s why she had such mass appeal. And when damage was done to her, that’s why people probably went off Charles in their droves” (New Zealand); “He stood before the world in 1981 and promised to forsake all others, and he didn’t” (Wales).

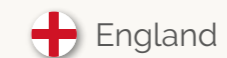


However, many took a more sympathetic view, noting that his private life had in fact been anything but private: “We know about his personal life, Diana, the tantrums. Whereas before, things probably went on that didn’t come out in public” (England). Many also said they recognised it as a human story and were pleased that the King had found happiness: “I think it’s harsh to judge an individual on who he fell in love with, who he was allowed to marry. His life wasn’t his own” (Wales).

“I have to say I do admire Charles. He loved Camilla, he went against public opinion and married her, he’s brought her along and given her a place.”



“Camilla has turned it round. She wasn’t so popular at first because of Diana, but she’s an incredibly hard-working royal. She’s been so dignified. I’ve got a lot of respect for her. I think she’s done nothing but good.”

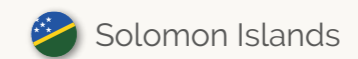


Whatever their other views, people often made a point of saying that it was very early to judge and that the King should be given time to grow into the role. Several noted that he already seemed happier and more relaxed than he had once appeared, as well as more mature and reflective.

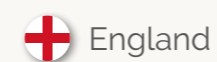
“He’s quirky and he’s got his own views. I think he’ll modernise and move it forward and get rid of the ones who need to be got rid of.”



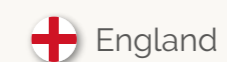
“We don’t know who he really is. He really loves planting trees and stuff. We don’t judge people just from their appearance or whatever happened in his life.”



“The Queen was like the British symbol, so when she passed it seemed like she took a huge part of the monarchy with her. But maybe we’ve not given him time to prove himself yet. I’m curious to see what change he might bring.”



“His visit to Germany, he was out there greeting people and chatting to people, and he looked much more comfortable doing it than he used to.”



When to speak out?

There were mixed views as to whether the King would or should continue to make his views known on issues close to his heart, and the extent to which other royals should do so. Some felt he could be a force for good in the areas he had previously been associated with, especially the environment: *"He's been banging on about sustainability for a very long time. Since he's become King he hasn't had time to talk about it, but it would be good to see what he has to say and how much influence he could have on businesses or organisations that would make a difference in that respect."* (England)

“ I actually feel sorry for Charles. I've always felt he's got a conscience and would like to affect things more. But when he was a prince he couldn't because his mum was the head of state, and now he's the head of state. He had to zip it.”

 Scotland

Others thought the royals should play a bigger role in holding politicians to account, if only behind closed doors: *"When it was all going wrong with Boris I was expecting the Queen to go in and give them a thick ear. I don't understand why she didn't tell Boris 'you're ruining my country, stop it!'"* (Scotland); *"There's no point in Kate and William advocating for all these charities when the government is actually withholding money from them. They should be and saying, 'right, we've been to these charities and they have no money. Why are you not providing the money?'"* (England).

However, the discussion also highlighted the pitfalls of royal involvement in public affairs: *"Policymaking is definitely not for them. Our elected representatives may be a bunch of idiots, but that's what they were elected for. One of my concerns about Charles is that he's shown a willingness to stick his oar into places where it ought not to be"* (England); *"We don't want him lecturing us about traveling in a petrol car, do we?"* (Wales)

“ I agree with him talking about sustainability, but they have these great ideas and everyone else has to get on with it. Like the bins. He doesn't have to put up with his blue bag, his white bag and his orange bag outside his terraced house, and only two rubbish bags every fortnight.”

 Wales

In our poll, respondents in all countries were closely divided as to whether they thought members of the royal family *"should speak out on controversial public issues"* or *"should keep their views to themselves."* In most places, those who wanted to keep the monarchy wanted royals to speak out, while those preferring a republic were more likely to want them to keep quiet. In only two countries – the UK and St Lucia – did most monarchists want royals to keep their views private, and most republicans want them to speak out.



Heirs and successors

In our focus groups, views about the Prince and Princess of Wales were generally very positive. Frequent descriptions included *"approachable", "classy", "warm", "fresh", "humorous", "personable"* and *"of the times"*: *"I like William. He's been in the Forces, and he's married a lovely young lady. He's seen the world and mixed with a lot of different walks of life, which is a good thing"* (Northern Ireland); *"I like seeing their little family, all the different things they do. When the little one was being a little monkey, I thought, 'they're just a normal family'. It's quite heart-warming"* (Wales).

In several of the groups people said they would like to see the King hand over to William sooner rather than later – or saw them as being more likely to renew the institution and win support among the rising generation: *"The Queen never put a foot wrong, whereas Charles has done a lot wrong. He's the face of the monarchy and he's human, but he's also done some things that don't make him look good. But William is doing exceptionally well, and I think people are invested in that."* (New Zealand)

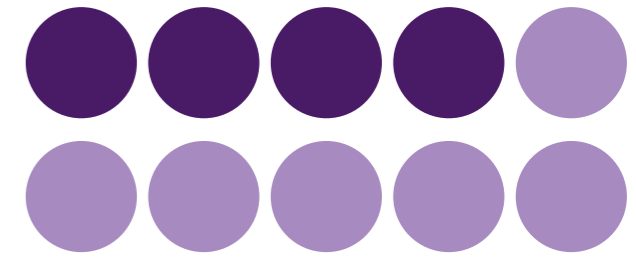
“ He's younger, he's vibrant, he thinks different. He would do a better job.”

 Belize

“ If Will and Kate were here, the crowds would be twice or three times the size as if it was Charles.”

 New Zealand

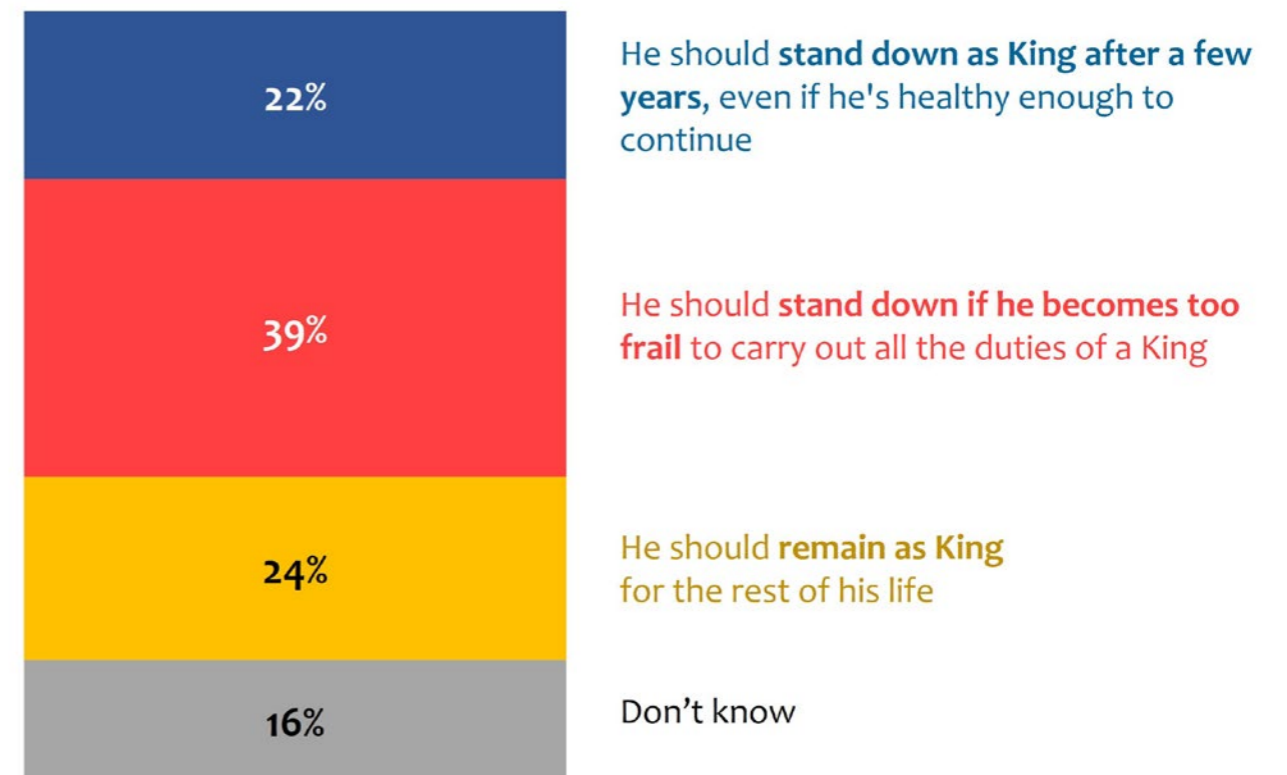
People in several of our groups around the world contrasted their approach to public relations with that of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex – whether positively (*"They try and live their lives like the Queen did. Keep private things private, don't air your dirty laundry"* (Wales)) or more wryly (*"She's what they're looking for, right? A cover page for a novel, a fairy-tale, a princess, someone who's not too out there, who will listen and take directions"* (Canada)).



Just under 4 in 10 – said they thought King Charles should stand down if he becomes too frail to carry out all the duties of a King.

In our poll in Great Britain, we asked people how long they thought King Charles should remain on the throne. Just under a quarter said he should remain as King for the rest of his life. More than 1 in 5 said he should stand down and let Prince William accede after a few years, even if he is healthy enough to continue. A plurality – just under 4 in 10 – said they thought he should stand down if he becomes too frail to carry out all the duties of a King.

King Charles is currently 74 years old. Some people think he should serve as King for the rest of his life, while others say he should stand down at some point and allow Prince William to take over (even if Charles is healthy enough to continue). Which of the following is closest to your view?



The California branch

In nearly all our focus groups around the world, people had paid some attention to the story of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, and opinion was divided everywhere. There was widespread sympathy for Prince Harry over his early life, the death of his mother, and his decision to step away from royal life. Many participants, especially younger ones, were also inclined to accept the version of events put forward in Harry's book and the couple's various TV appearances. Even if they acknowledged that only one side of the story was being aired, many believed there was some substance behind their accusations, especially when it came to the treatment of Meghan and attitudes to race within the royal household (though others argued that any clash probably came from her "American" approach rather than any racial tension). "Americans have this biggity personality where when I go someplace, they have to switch to what I want them to switch to, and that's where she went wrong" (Belize).

Often these people said the stories simply confirmed their own assumptions: "She married into a family where you have some people who have been around since racism was a thing. So it's kind of expected" (Jamaica); "I bet they'd never had a person of colour enter that house. Even the Corgis probably said something" (England).

“ If we think the entire establishment welcomed Meghan with open arms we're living in cloud cuckoo land, because they quite clearly didn't.”

 Scotland

“ I think it's more than her being a person of colour, but also being a non-British person and a non-person within the royal line or anything.”

 Jamaica

“ They were so brutal to those kids. I think Harry deserves to live the life he wants to live away from the monarchy.”

 Canada

“ The way Meghan was treated by the family was borderline racist. But with the history it has, extremely traditional, conservative, isolated, does it surprise me? Not really, it just confirmed things for me.”

 Canada

This view was far from universal, however. Some questioned accusations that Meghan had been shocked at the constraints of royal life, saying she must have known what she was getting into, or had tried to impose her own style too quickly. Many criticised the couple for making a public spectacle out of private family matters while knowing the family would not respond, making financial gain from an institution they supposedly wanted to move away from, and – especially – courting publicity despite claiming to want to protect their privacy (*"their actions don't match their narrative at all"* (Northern Ireland)). Some also felt their complaining tone sat uneasily with their privileged lives: *"They want to give the illusion of relatability, but they are still very wealthy, upper-class people in a different echelon of society. The marketing is relatability, but I don't think they really are"* (Jamaica); *"They come off as spoiled brats"* (New Zealand); *"Both their parents had a horrible marriage, their childhood kind of sucked. But that's no different from a lot of other people who don't whine about it endlessly. They had it pretty good compared to a lot of people. And it's a bit hypocritical. The only currency they have is the institution they've made a big show out of rejecting"* (England).

Others emphasised that they were only hearing one version of events: *"I don't think there's anyone blameless. I don't think there's anyone in that family who could put their hands up and say they've treated everyone 100% correctly"* (Scotland).


“ Meghan knew what she was getting into. The monarchy stands for something, and when you're there you're expected to be a certain way. You need to get in and fall in line, and then you can make changes. You can't come in and say 'okay, I'm here now, we're going to change it'. You have to crawl, then walk, then run. She came in and wanted to sprint.”

 Belize

“ There are always disagreements if you've got siblings, but I wouldn't dream of maligning my brother or sister in public just because they did something to annoy me.”

 Scotland

“ If my brother was with a white girl, I'd ask what colour the baby was going to be! It's not racist, it's just family chat.”

 England

“ I believe the part about them not wanting to be famous, moving to Canada. But then you went to Hollywood! I mean, you can't get any more limelight than that.”

 Canada

“ It was 'we don't want the publicity, we don't want the attention, we just want to live our lives. Now stay tuned for our documentary and my book'.”

 Scotland

“

I don't think there's anyone blameless. I don't think there's anyone in that family who could put their hands up and say they've treated everyone 100% correctly

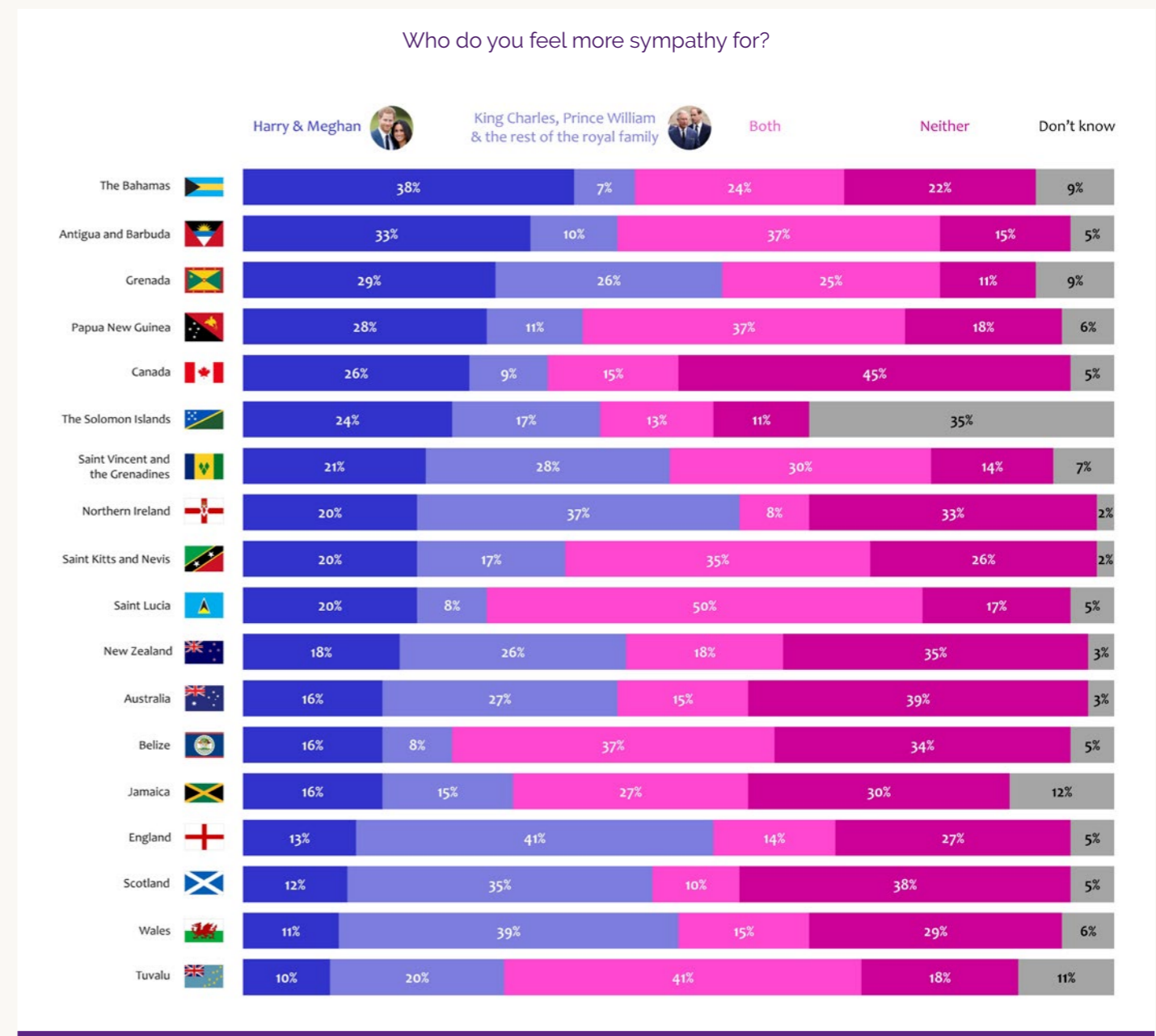
Scotland

”



Though many thought the story cast the institution in a bad light, some also saw it as a reminder that the royals were after all human. It was also evident that for some, the drama had made them more engaged with the royal family, whatever their views about the characters involved: *"It shows that the royal family is not as beautiful and majestic as in the pictures. They're like all the humans on earth, they try and do the best they can with the family they're with. The fact that they have these problems creates sympathy for them"* (Canada); *"It's like an Asian family drama. They all live in this one big house, Meghan is the 'bad' daughter-in-law who's made Harry bad, but William and Kate are the good son, the good daughter-in-law. People want to know what happens. It's like a Bollywood movie."* (England)

We asked our poll respondents whether they felt more sympathy for Harry and Meghan; for the King, Prince William and the rest of the royal family; felt sympathy for both; or felt sympathy for neither. Those in The Bahamas were the most likely to say they had more sympathy with the Sussexes, while people the UK were the most likely to side with the King and the rest of the royal family. People in Canada and Australia were the most likely to say they sympathised with neither.



The Royal Kardashians?


In our focus groups this led to a broader discussion about the extent to which controversies surrounding members of the royal family tarnish the monarchy itself, and indeed whether the institution can be separated from the individuals who comprise it. Some thought the personalities concerned were irrelevant: *"I don't think they have a significant enough effect on us to actually worry about who the person is. We have a constitutional monarchy, but it doesn't affect us day to day. I couldn't care less what they do with their private lives"* (New Zealand).

However, the prevailing view was that human interest stories dominated news about the royal family, and that this inevitably influenced how people felt about the monarchy in general: *"They've been bred and trained their whole life to be the monarch's representative, so you can't separate the two, the personality from the role"* (Australia); *"It's impossible to separate the two. Henry VIII and his wives – that's what you remember, isn't it? It's a part of history, it's all intertwined, it all makes a difference"* (England).

Several participants in different countries described the Netflix drama *The Crown* as a documentary: *"that showed a different light on what was happening within the Palace and the day-to-day reality"* (Jamaica). (This was less true in the Pacific islands: *"We know William is next in line, but the gossip, who's dating who, we don't talk about those things here"* (Papua New Guinea)).

Many likened recent news about the royal family to a soap opera or said they had come to see royals as celebrities rather than statesmen or public servants. For some, this helped to humanise the institution: *"You can appeal to emotion and not just be robotic. A part of being majestic is people being able to connect to you and hold you to that. If I can't connect to you, you're almost like an object, you're like a placeholder"* (The Bahamas); *"We're endeared to the human side of people. That's why we like Americans, because they do what they want. The British are usually about tradition and sticking to what is supposed to be"* (Jamaica).

“ The drama is part of it. You need the bad characters and the good characters. People like it because it's real life. It's not a reality show, it's a real show”


 England

Others noted that the institution had survived similar or worse storms in the past: *"It's not the first time we've had royal scandals. There was the abdication of the King!"* (Scotland). Even so, many felt that news about family relationships, who was entitled to which house, or alleged criminal behaviour tended to undermine or trivialise the institution – especially since such stories were now *"on everyone's phones, not just in OK! Magazine"* (Scotland).

“ We don't see them doing much in New Zealand. With social media, they just seem like figures and it's a popularity thing. They're just like the Kardashians, really.”

 New Zealand

“ It's like a soap opera. It feels like a bunch of British celebrities.”

 Australia

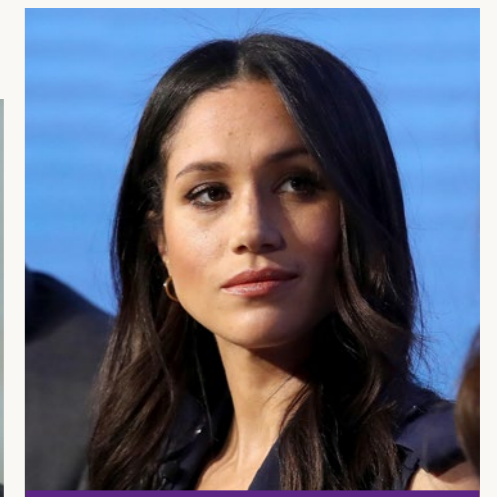
“ They're acting like spoiled children. It's like your mom passed on assets to be divided up and then everyone was just selfish and said 'No, I want this, I want that.'”

 Jamaica

“ These stories prove they're regular human beings. Marriages fail, people cheat, people lie. It's a good thing because they're seen as normal and relatable.”

“But then what's the point of them being there?”

 Belize





“

The Duchy, the farms, the Prince’s Trust. I think there’s an element that he at least half gets what’s going on in the world. He’s kind of seen how the other half live. But Rishi, I’m not sure.

Northern Ireland

”

The relatability factor: Windsor v. Westminster

In our poll, people in most countries thought elected politicians did a better job of connecting with ordinary people than members of the royal family, but by widely varying margins – from 4 points in Australia to 32 points in The Bahamas and 34 points in Canada. People in Jamaica were precisely divided on this question. Respondents thought royals did a better job in this regard than politicians by narrow margins in Belize, Papua New Guinea and St Kitts and Nevis, and by wider margins in St Lucia, St Vincent and The Grenadines, and Tuvalu. British respondents said royals did a better job than politicians in this respect by 68% to 32%.

In our UK groups, several felt that leading politicians seemed no more in touch – and sometimes considerably less so – than the King and other members of the royal family. They argued that despite their obvious wealth and different way of life, royals seemed to go out of their way to meet and take an interest in people from all walks of life, while politicians’ efforts to do so looked rare and inauthentic. A few were more sceptical about royal efforts in this regard: *“I think it’s pretty patronising when you see them going to food banks and things. It’s just rubbing it in, the future King in his thousand-pound suit giving someone poor a tin of Aldi beans”* (Scotland).

“ I would say Rishi is more out of touch, actually. I think the royal family are more of the people. They meet heads of state and things, but they also meet people on the street. I don’t see Rishi doing that.”

🇬🇧 Northern Ireland

“ The royals were born into it. But when these people get elected, their heads get bigger and bigger, and they think they’re something they’re not.”

🇬🇧 England

There was also a feeling that the sheer familiarity of the royal family made it easier to relate to them than to here-today, gone-tomorrow politicians: *“Because they’ve always been there, we feel like we own them, we feel like we know them. We don’t know them, I know that. But that’s just how we all are”* (England). For some, the perception that politicians were ambitious and had to strive, while royals were assured of their position, also played a part: *“The royals were born into it. But when these people get elected, their heads get bigger and bigger, and they think they’re something they’re not”* (England).

4. Ties that bind?

The English connection

Participants around the world were much more likely to see the monarchy as a British – or English – institution than something in which their own country fully shared. Groups in different parts of the world said that the UK had once been an important force in terms of culture, trade, security and even everyday customs. Some also acknowledged what they regarded as a positive impact on their country's development.

“ Growing up, we did a lot of English things. We were taught table manners and etiquette.”



Belize

“ I see the monarchy as British, but we are part of it. It's like a mother country. So I feel we are part of Britain, part of the Commonwealth. They can support us, we can help each other.”



Papua New Guinea

“ When our parents were growing up, the influence of the monarchy was strong, but I don't really see it now. It's just the Queen's birthday, when we stay at home and half the population gets drunk.”



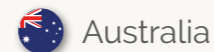
Papua New Guinea

“ Trade, sport, the judicial system, the Westminster system. Even though we've separated from the Privy Council and we have our own Supreme Court, there's a lot of legacy that's come through into our constitutional systems, so I think we benefit from it.”



New Zealand

“ There have been so many wars and so on over the years, Australia could look very different right now if it wasn't for the UK and other countries we've had alliances with. We'd be very different without the support of the monarchy over those years.”



Australia

“

Growing up, we did a lot of English things. We were taught table manners and etiquette.

Belize

”

However, many said this was now largely a distant memory, for a number of reasons including a looser relationship with the UK, the declining influence of the UK across the board, and the growing importance of relationships with other countries. In most places the United States was now the dominant cultural and commercial influence, though several also mentioned growing ties with China.

“To me, the UK in the entire world has drastically declined. We’re looking at the Americans, Germans, Japanese, China. Britain’s superpower influence is no longer there.”

 Belize


“It’s as simple as tea versus coffee. My parents’ generation, it’s tea. My generation and younger, it’s coffee. It’s as simple as that, we have moved on.”

 Belize


“The Solomon Islands was saved by Britain years back, and we have that history. Then we had our independence, back in the 1940s. There’s a mutual relationship, but we haven’t seen the impact after they left us. I don’t see anything positive that Britain is doing.”

 Solomon Islands

“Britain is just like a distant memory. If anything, we’re just following in the footsteps of whatever the US is doing.”

 Australia


“We need a visible presence that’s actually here to do work. The new American embassy will probably be the biggest building downtown. America and China have more presence here than England does.”

 The Bahamas

“This week we have three big visits, from the USA, China and someone else. They’re more present. Britain is always like a big brother that always stands by.”

 Solomon Islands

“We did this agreement where we get loans from the Chinese government and they provide the workforce as well. So the funds come in but they go back to China.”


 Papua New Guinea

“Once the UK was a great trade partner and we had great reciprocal benefits on visas. But those days are long gone. We’ve negotiated trade agreements with other major players and developed those relationships, so it’s not so crucial to us now.”


 New Zealand

There was also a feeling that many in the UK felt even less of a connection to their country than they did to the UK.

“I was in London in August and the customs officer asked where we were from, so we said ‘The Bahamas’. And he was like, ‘Oh, where is that?’ I thought that was interesting.”

 The Bahamas

“They care because we are part of the Commonwealth. But we’re just another small island in the Pacific.”

 Solomon Islands



What's in it for us?

Majorities in all countries except the Solomon Islands (which was divided) said they considered the royal family to be an asset to the UK. Indeed, those in Australia, New Zealand, The Bahamas, Papua New Guinea, St Lucia, St Vincent and The Grenadines and Tuvalu were even more likely to say this than participants in Britain (68% of whom thought this was the case).


However, people in most places were quite evenly divided as to whether or not the King and the royal family care about their home country. Those most likely to think they did care were in Britain (76%), Tuvalu (72%) and St Vincent and The Grenadines (62%); those most likely to think the royals did not care about them were in Canada (64%), The Bahamas and the Solomon Islands (both 62%).

In our international focus groups, some felt that their country's relationship with the UK brought tangible benefits such as visa-free travel, scholarship programmes, membership of a wider global network, and a greater sense of security than they might otherwise have. This was particularly the case in Belize, given the historic dispute with Guatemala.

However, the more prevalent view was that their association with the UK seemed to bring few if any practical benefits, at least in ways that were visible to them. Some wondered if the UK was doing more behind the scenes in terms of support and advocacy: *"Whether they're fighting for us behind the scenes I don't know. But why are we constantly being blacklisted in financial services? So if you could stand up and say something, it would be great. There has to be some political alliance, but we just don't know. We feel like we're always fighting for ourselves."* (The Bahamas)

Many questioned why they owed allegiance to a country or institution that seemed to offer little in return. This was felt particularly keenly by participants in Jamaica, who cannot travel to the UK without a visa and feel the US offers more practical support. People in the Solomon Islands echoed the point about visa requirements, saying it made the relationship feel one-sided: *"there are some benefits, but other countries coming in can get a visa on arrival, while we have to apply to travel to a certain country. They are taking advantage of our little island nation, and we're letting it happen"* (Solomon Islands).


“ I don't know if it's a false sense, but there's a sense of security of being part of the Commonwealth. You've got a whole army behind you if Australia gets into trouble, especially with everything political that's going on at the moment.”

 Australia

“ If you're under 35 and want to travel to the UK and Europe, that's pretty handy, having this legacy benevolence that we get from the UK, giving our young people a three-year working visa. I don't think other countries give us that.”

 New Zealand


“ Yes, we're part of the monarchy. But we haven't received any sort of aid or help to make us feel as if we're part of it.”

 Solomon Islands

“ When I was growing up I remember going out to St George's Caye where the army did their water training. And I felt good – these men were walking up and down, nobody's stealing stuff off the island. You see them driving in their nice big trucks. And when they left, you felt, shoot, Guatemala could come in at any time, so that sense of security kind of left. So it's less likely that people would say 'we don't need them.'”

 Belize

“ After Hurricane Dorian you had places like Canada and the US open their borders for relocation. Whether England was doing something in the background, we don't know. It would have been great if someone had said 'this is how we can help,' then we can see the effects of your presence. But we do know the US Coast Guard showed up.”

 The Bahamas

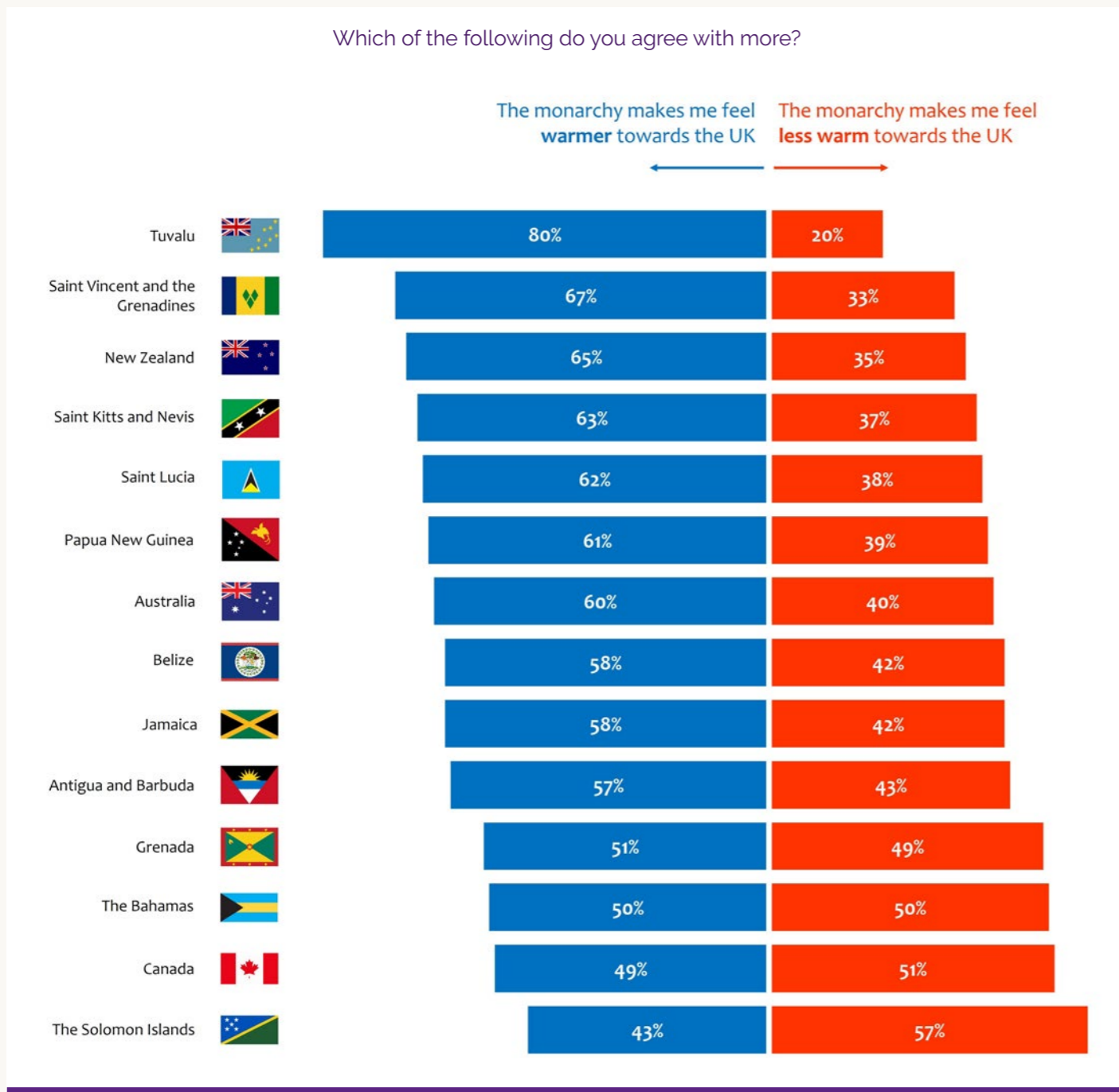
“ To top it all off, even to travel to England we need a visa! We shouldn't need one if they're the head of state. We don't get any benefits, we don't get to travel to the UK visa-free, so why are we even part of it?”

 Jamaica

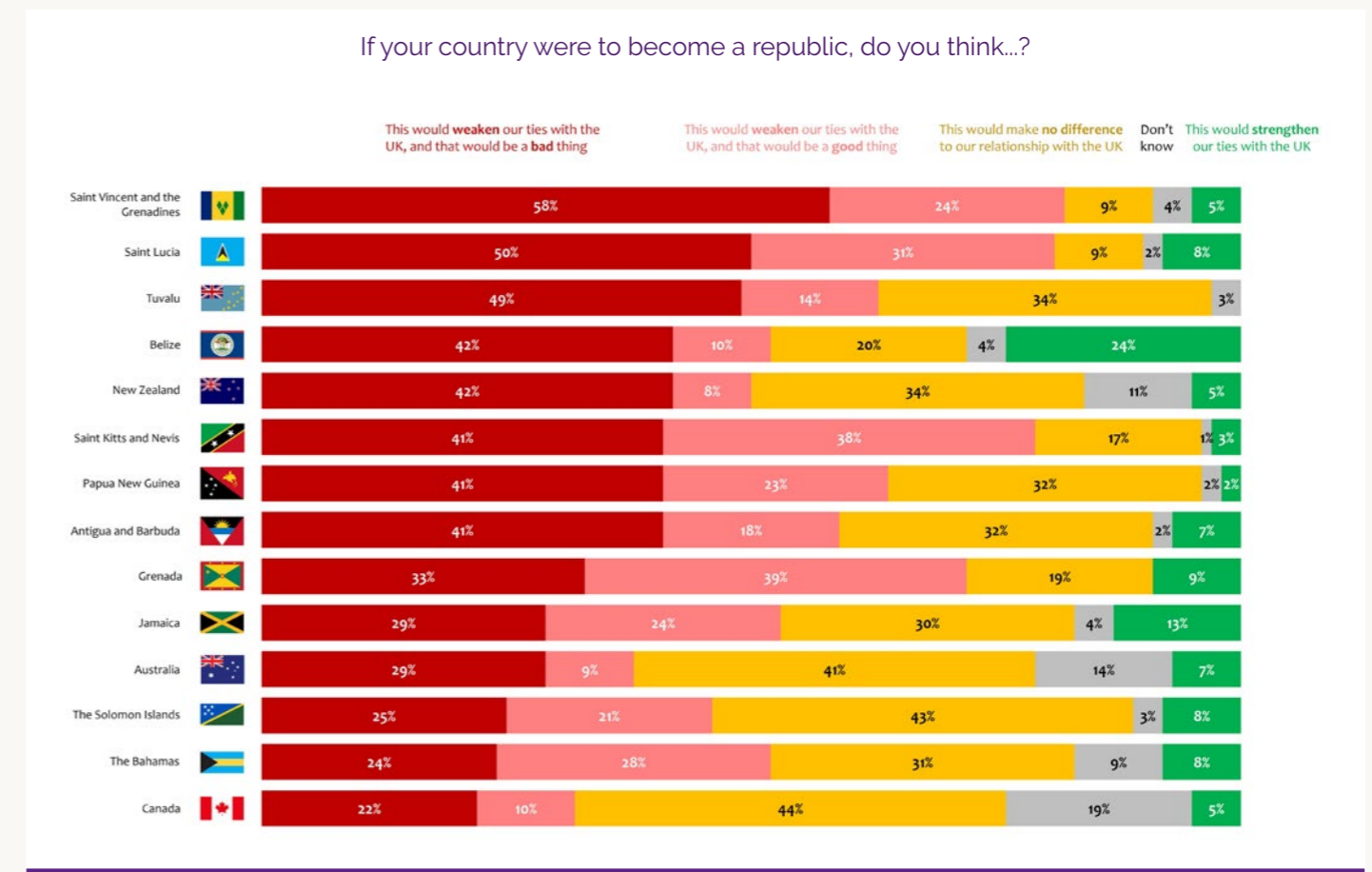
“ America do more for Jamaica than England. Opportunities, business, loans, gifts. A lot of American companies open in Jamaica. We never get anything from England, an ambulance, a plane...”

 Jamaica

In our poll, only Canada (by 2 points) and the Solomon Islands (by 14 points) said the monarchy made them feel less warm rather than warmer towards the UK. However, some countries were closely divided on the question, with between one-third and a half saying "less warm" in all other Commonwealth realms except Tuvalu.



There was a wide range of views in different countries as to whether leaving the monarchy and becoming a republic would make any difference to their country's ties to the UK – and if so, whether that would matter. In Australia, Canada and the Solomon Islands, more than 4 in 10 said their becoming a republic would make no difference to their relationship with Britain. In Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and The Grenadines and Tuvalu, pluralities thought cutting ties with the Crown would weaken their bond with the UK, and this would be a bad thing. In some countries, a sizeable minority (up to 39% in Grenada) said that such a move would weaken their ties with the UK, and that this would be a good thing.



In Britain, around 1 in 5 participants said they liked the idea of sharing a head of state with other countries around the world, and would be sad if they decided to end their links with the Crown. Slightly fewer overall – though nearly a quarter of those in Scotland – said it made no sense in this day and age for the King to be head of state in foreign countries. Just over half said they didn't mind either way.



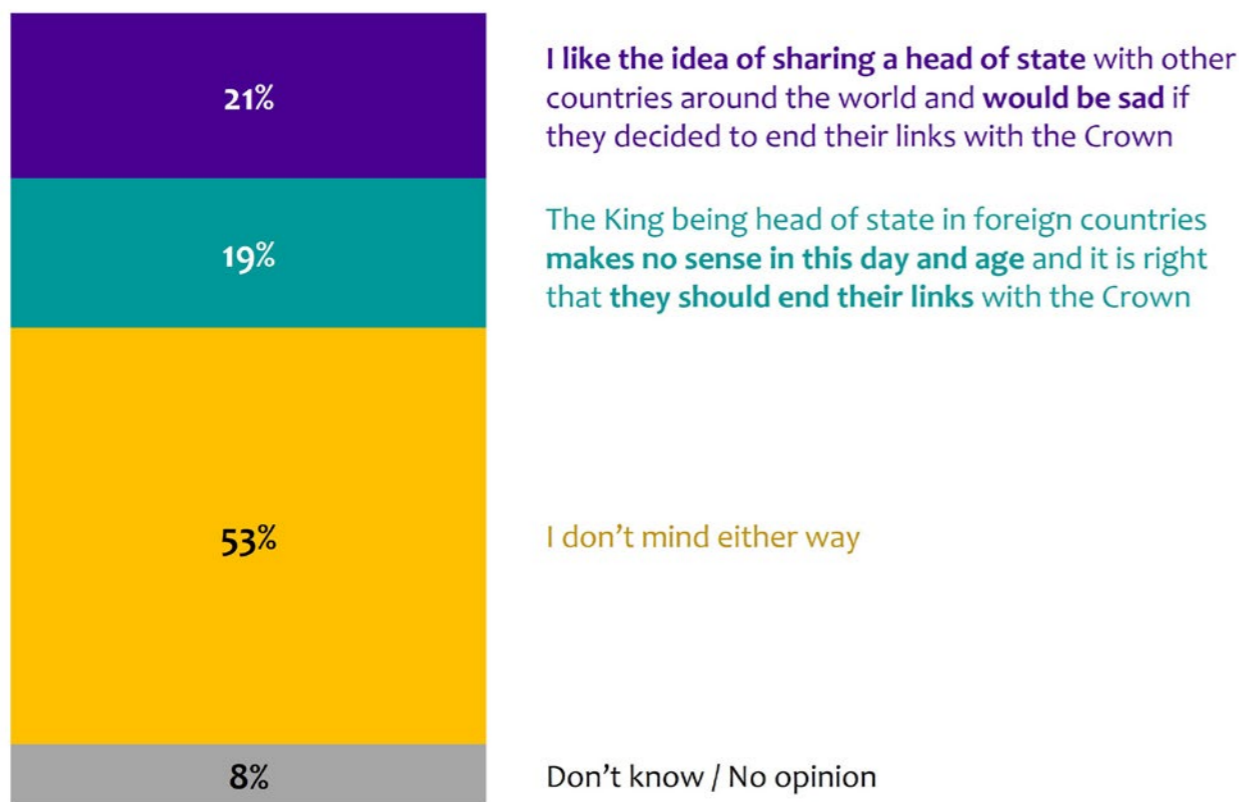
In Britain, around 1 in 5 participants said they liked the idea of sharing a head of state with other countries around the world, and would be sad if they decided to end their links with the Crown.

The Commonwealth

In our poll, clear majorities in all countries said they were happy to remain part of the Commonwealth, and would wish to remain so even if their country were to become a republic.

Membership of the Commonwealth was something participants often said they valued about their relationship with the UK. This was particularly the case in countries that were smaller or more distant from their other allies around the world. People talked about the benefits of community and cooperation and the reassurance of being part of a group in an unstable world – though few had any idea what the Commonwealth did in practical day-to-day terms: *“It’s a group of countries all over the planet, who are there for the common welfare, democracy, peace, the environment, tackling corruption in government, human rights... But I don’t ever hear what they’re doing, or progress reports or their intentions”* (Canada). Some appeared to believe that being part of the Commonwealth and having the King as head of state amounted to the same thing.


As you may know, the king is also head of state in 14 countries around the world outside the UK, including Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Jamaica and Papua New Guinea. Some of these countries are debating whether to continue their links to the Crown, or to become republics with their own heads of state. Which of the following best describes your own view?



“ We are just sort of Pacific islands. I think it’s allowed us to have greater influence than perhaps we would if we were just the Republic of New Zealand down at the bottom of the world. I’m not sure we’d get that credence in the international community.”

 New Zealand

“ Given the geography, it does give us a kind of power, some acknowledgement around the northern hemisphere.”

 Australia

“ There’s no disadvantage, and we cannot deny that the UK is such an integral part of our history. And I don’t think community is bad and I guess that’s what the Commonwealth does.”

 Jamaica

“ Being part of the Commonwealth is good for us because we’re a developing country and we’re covered by a big umbrella.”

 Papua New Guinea



Enduring friendship or colonial legacy?

The connection between the monarchy and Britain's colonial history was among the most hotly debated topics in our focus groups, both around the world and in the UK itself. Sharply different views were expressed on the subject, and individuals themselves were sometimes torn between what they saw as the advantages of their contemporary relationship with Britain and the Crown on the one hand, and the history that brought it about on the other: *"I sit comfortably with the monarchy because it doesn't really impact my life. But if I were to delve into the history, I probably wouldn't want anything to do with it"* (New Zealand); *"Our culture is that we were raised to serve, in a sense, and we still have that mindset, that we're serving, honouring the hierarchy. It's not bad, because in some ways they got us to where we are now. But it's not good because we're not surpassing where we are"* (The Bahamas).

“ We were once a colony of the UK and we have gone past that – slavery, abolition, everything. So for you guys and the monarchy still to be there – them being removed is kind of symbolic to us that we’re really free.”

 Jamaica

“ They were very controversial throughout history, but it's not like it was then. I like their accent, they're very pleasant, they seem welcoming. It's not like I'm repulsed to be associated with them. I like to take tea sometimes.”

 Canada

Participants in the UK were in many cases more bemused by the Commonwealth and its purpose. Though many took a positive view about global networks and collaboration (*"Diplomatic relations, economic and political. I think there's a high value to that"* (Scotland)), people often questioned its purpose beyond being *"a big sports event"*. There was also a widespread view that the body seemed *"a bit of a relic"* (Northern Ireland), and the idea of being in a group with former colonies made some uncomfortable and even embarrassed: *"Every time a country is mentioned, you always think about what effect we've had on that country. How did it become part of the Commonwealth? What did we steal from them? We're all a bit more awakened to what's going on historically."* (England)

“ Why are we in this group with all these countries that are so different from us that we plundered and abused?”

 Scotland

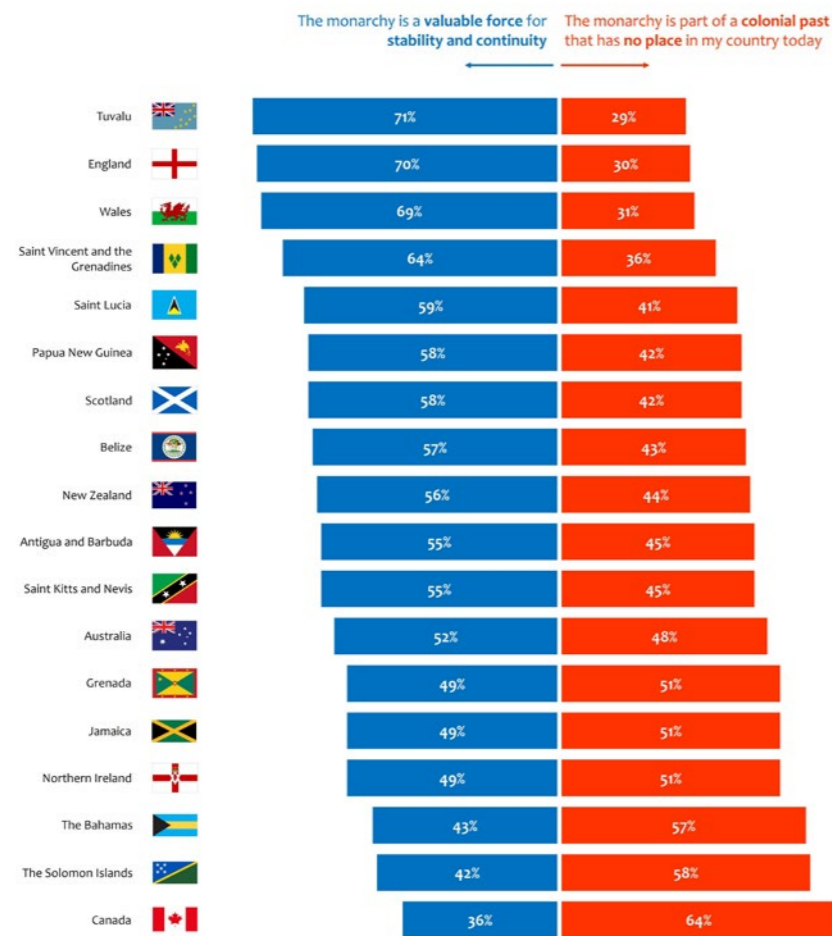
British participants were equally divided. The prevailing opinion was that however regrettable, history cannot be altered: *"Probably no historical monarchy is going to have a clean slate. You'd be remiss not to acknowledge it, but you can't change what's happened"* (Scotland). However, some participants from Asian, African and Caribbean backgrounds said the monarchy's role in colonial history inevitably affected how they saw the institution today: *"There is that connotation of the history of the British Empire. It wasn't nice, right? And for that reason I have resentment towards certain aspects of the royal family because of the history that they've got"; "There was the Koh-I-Noor diamond that was in the Queen's crown. That is a constant reminder to everybody, especially those from India. Whether they wear it or not, it's in their hands, isn't it?... Somebody needs to actually recognise that errors were made"; "It's about showing that you're in touch with everyone and you understand their emotions and what they've been through. Like the partition. You acknowledge that it was wrong"* (England).

This was by no means a universal view among these groups, however. Some argued that it would be wrong to see Britain's role in its former colonies as having been entirely negative, especially those that had since become independent republics: "I'm from Zimbabwe myself. When Britain was there, they colonised the country, but things were getting built. When the president took over, he, er, didn't really help that much"; "I'm from Nigeria which was part of the British colonial empire. They built roads and all those things. For 60 years now in Nigeria we've not been able to conduct a free and fair election, no roads, nothing" (England).

We asked in our poll which of two statements people tended to agree with more: that the monarchy is "a valuable force for stability and continuity", or "part of a colonial past that has no place" in their country today. In all but six countries and nations, (The Bahamas, Canada, the Solomon Islands, Grenada, Jamaica and Northern Ireland – the latter three by just 51% to 49%), the perception that the monarchy is a force for stability and continuity took precedence.



Which of the following statements do you agree with more?



The groups discussed the speech Prince William made during his 2021 Caribbean tour in which he expressed his "profound sorrow" over slavery. There were mixed reactions to these remarks – some said they appreciated the sentiment but wanted to see some practical action, others thought it worthless without something tangible to go with, while a few said nothing could change the past: "I appreciate it, but what about actions? 'Because of that, we're going to do this'"; "You've already extracted our resources, it builds your country, and we're trying to recover many moons after and still can't. So I mean, a sorry..." (Jamaica).

Despite the calls for a tangible expression of the UK's regrets over slavery, there was considerable debate in the Caribbean groups over the idea of reparations. Many, though by no means all, thought the idea sounded good in principle ("What does it do if they pay? You can't change history"; "You can't change what's been done, but you can change where you're going" (The Bahamas)). However, participants were doubtful that any such payments would help them, or lead to any long-term benefits.

“ The King should be the one to say sorry. And with some money.”



Jamaica

“ And those reparations are going where again? The Treasury? If there's no transparency over how that money is going to be distributed and no systemic change...”



The Bahamas

There were widely varying opinions on this issue in the UK. Some, especially those from African and Caribbean backgrounds felt strongly that not only an apology from the King but some kind of accompanying action was needed, otherwise any statement would be seen as “something someone in the press office told him to say”: “They need to put their hands up and say yes, we did it, and not just on one occasion. It needs to be a continuous thing, acknowledging all the countries they went into and the slavery and how they accumulated that wealth, and a question of whether there are reparations. I’m not saying those individuals today are responsible, but it would go somewhere to heal the relationships and integrate other communities”; “If they’re going to apologise for something, there has to be an action behind it. The royal family has massively enriched itself through slavery and colonialism for hundreds of years. So if you’re going to apologise there has to be some kind of restitution or corrective action. I don’t know what that is.”



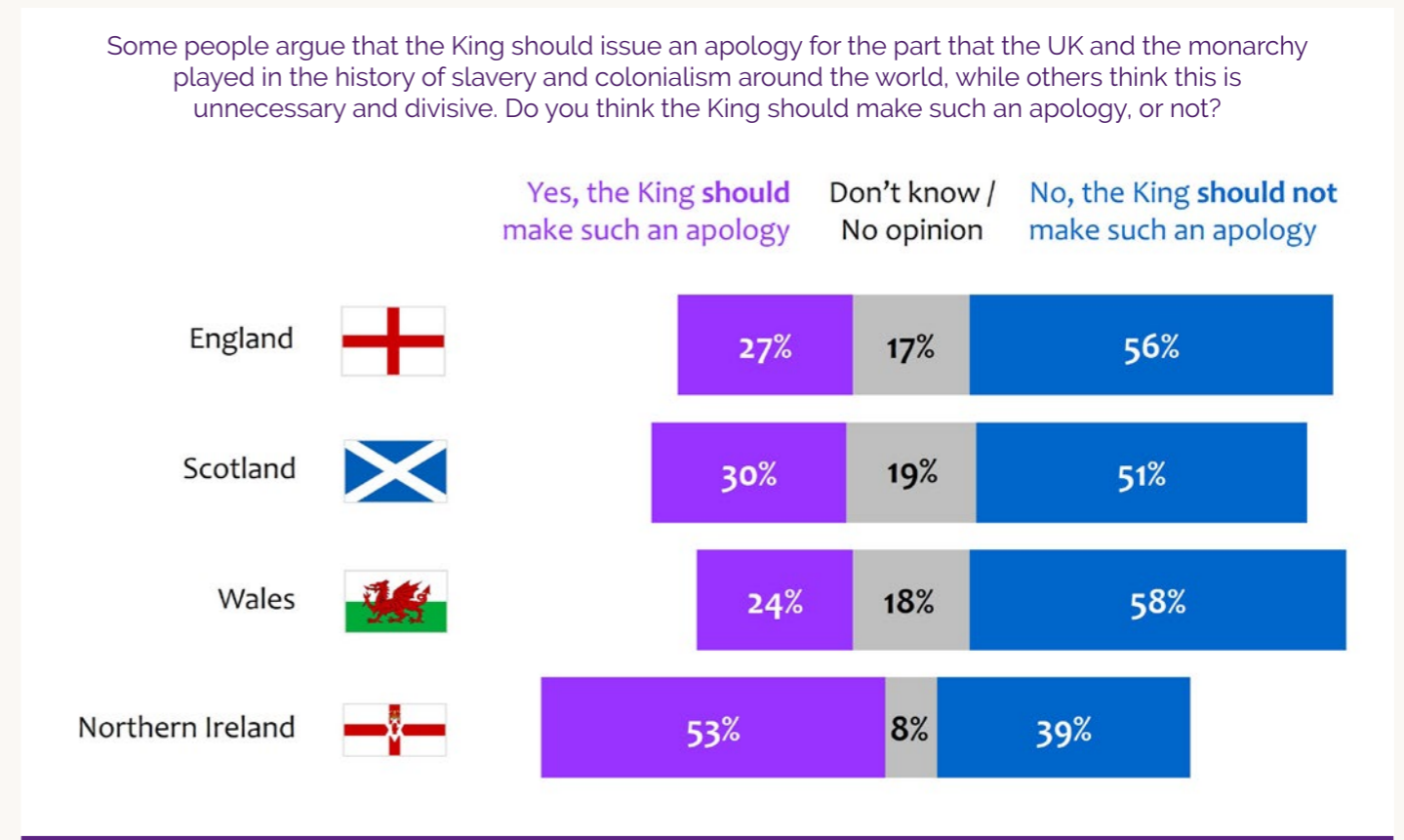
Again, however, this was not a universal view among these communities: “I feel the apology at this point is not necessary. It’s just going to stir up, you know, bitter wounds. It didn’t happen during our own time. You know, I mean, the dead are gone. It’s in the past. Let it go with the past and get buried with the past.” More generally, our UK participants tended to resist the idea of an apology and, especially, reparations: “It’s like rewriting Roald Dahl books. It was a point in time. We would be apologising all the time for everything, we could go back to Rome, we could go back to Boadicea.”

“ If we’re going back 200 years, we were one of the first countries in the world to outlaw slavery. The British Navy freed 150,000 slaves. Why should we apologise to anyone?”

 Wales

In our poll, clear majorities in England, Scotland and Wales opposed the idea of the King issuing an apology for the part the UK and the monarchy played in the history of slavery and colonialism. Participants in Northern Ireland took the opposite view. Those who voted Conservative in 2019 opposed an apology by 81% to 9%, and Lib Dems by 49% to 33%; Labour voters supported the idea by 46% to 35%, as did 2019 SNP voters by 47% to 34%. Higher-income people and those with degrees were more likely to support an apology than lower-income people and those who finished their education earlier, and 18-24 year-olds were more than three times as likely to back the idea as those aged 65 or over. Those from Asian (50%) or black African or Caribbean backgrounds (59%) were more than twice as supportive of the idea as white respondents (25%). In Northern Ireland, 85% of strongly unionist respondents were opposed, while 92% of strong nationalists and 7 in 10 neutrals were in favour.

More than half (57%) of those in Britain who said they would vote for a republic tomorrow said the King should make an apology. 73% of those who would vote to keep the monarchy said he should not.



Indigenous peoples

For participants in Australia and New Zealand in particular, discussions about the legacy of colonialism included the extra dimension: the treatment of indigenous people and the ways in which their countries were coming to terms with the issue. Opinions on the question were mixed: while some thought it was now an entirely domestic matter: *"I don't know that they have a role to play. We now look towards our own leaders, our own parliament. We all know how it started, but I think in recent years our politicians have been handling it better"* (New Zealand); *"I don't think I'd want them to get involved. It's now a conversation for Australia"* (Australia).

There was also a view that the monarchy was inextricably part of this history and could play at least a symbolic role in recognising past wrongs: *"It's fundamental to the reconciliation because our founding document is the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 signed by the Crown, and everything since then is what we're trying to reconcile. So the Crown is fundamental to that, because any resolution to this process has to involve the Crown"* (New Zealand).

“ For me the priority is reconciliation with indigenous Australia. The monarchy is linked to colonialism so is a significant part of that issue, so it might help is to take a symbolic step to say right, we're stepping away from our past while acknowledging that it's still there”



Participants in our Australian groups overwhelmingly thought reconciliation with indigenous people was a more important and more immediate question than the debate over whether to become a republic. At the same time, some felt the monarchy looked increasingly outdated in this context: *"We're in a kind of woke environment where young people are getting more educated about what's happened in history, we're getting back to calling places by their indigenous names and things like that. So the way Australia is going at the moment, the monarchy is really kind of left behind"* (Australia).

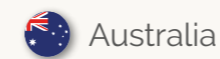
Nice of you to drop in

Outside the UK, participants often mentioned royal visits as one of the few tangible manifestations of the monarchy in their respective countries. Most people's reactions were neutral or positive: *"It's good for the kids, knowing our history. And then to meet the individuals who are part of our history"* (The Bahamas); *"It gives people a sense of partnership with the UK and the monarchy, so at least they know we are their subjects. It's worth the effort for them to visit"* (Solomon Islands); *"It's a really big thing for Papua New Guinea. We have public holidays, don't go to work, schools stay home, we welcome them. People don't grumble, they're happy"* (Papua New Guinea).

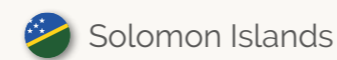
Some said such visits seemed rare given their supposedly close relationship with the UK, or wryly observed that long-postponed public works somehow seem to become feasible when a royal arrival is imminent: *"At least we got a little road paved"* (The Bahamas).

However, some took a more negative view, feeling that the visiting royals were merely going through the motions or questioning the cost: *"You only think about it when you hear someone from the royal family is coming to Canada and the amount of money it's going to cost taxpayers;"* (Canada); *"The government had to lay out a list of how much they spent. \$70,000 on flowers alone!"* (The Bahamas). Participants in the Caribbean had noted the protests that accompanied the then Duke and Duchess of Cambridge on their 2021 tour, but often said that these were more isolated than the media had suggested: *"There were no protests here. We're not that kind of people. We'll grumble amongst ourselves but we're not going to go on national TV like Jamaica and other countries."* (The Bahamas)

“ Don't just come here for a holiday and be around. Be here for a reason, to do something useful. You've got no other jobs to do than be useful.”



“ A visit is important for us, but it shouldn't be just a visit. We need more direct contact.”



“ The last couple of years Kate and her husband came here. They were just continuing the tradition, what the Queen did. They went to all the Caribbeans that they're supposed to. It was time for it, and that's it.”



5. Retain, Reform, Replace?

Can the monarchy change?

In our poll, people in most countries were more likely to agree than disagree that *“the royal family should be scaled down and its costs significantly reduced”*. The highest levels of agreement were in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the UK itself, where more than two thirds agreed. (People in St Lucia and St Vincent and The Grenadines were slightly more likely to disagree than agree with this proposition). In Britain, 92% of those who would vote for a republic agreed with the statement, but so did a clear majority (58%) of those who wanted to keep the monarchy.

In a separate question, almost as many British pro-monarchy voters (73%) as pro-republic voters (80%) agreed that *“the royal family needs to modernise in order to have any chance of surviving.”*

Many in our focus groups around the world thought there were ways in which the monarchy could better reflect the modern world, both in terms of its cost and the way it operated. People also recognised that the King had already signalled his intention to implement reforms: *“he wants to get rid of all the deadwood”* (Northern Ireland); *“whether that actually happens, we’ll see.”* (England). Some argued that *“some kind of restraint”* should be shown in planning the coronation: *“spending huge sums of money on a ceremony when people can’t afford to pay their bills is a really bad look”* (England).



However, people often stressed the importance, in its place, of pageantry – the spectacle of formal occasions like a coronation, which they saw as unique and distinctively British, and which underlined tradition and continuity and drew the attention of the world.


“The whole world is under massive pressure, economically speaking. It’s offensive to see all that money and the crowns and the diamonds. Can we just turn it down a notch?”

 Australia

“They’d probably be a little bit more relatable if he wasn’t taking his golden coach to go get a crown. But the British pageantry is very impressive. It’s world-class and unique. It wouldn’t sail here, but you wouldn’t want to lose it.”

 New Zealand

“I’m not a royalist, but I think if you’re going to do it, do it properly. If you watered down the ceremonies, you’ve lost it completely.”

 England


“The bling is the thing that makes it.”

 Scotland

Many who valued the “pomp and circumstance” of set-piece ceremonies nevertheless often thought there was scope to save money by dispensing with “hangers-on” and other associated costs: *“They need to keep the front-of-house pageantry going to make it special. But things like the entourage – instead of travelling with 30 people, travel with 15.”* (Scotland); *“You hear reports all the time about how much it cost to paint Frogmore Cottage, and then it’s ‘oh, she wore this dress twice’. I’ve got dresses that are 20 years old!”* (Wales); *“I like the army and the horses and the parades. But maybe the third and fourth homes...”* (England).

Some thought the way the institution went about things occasionally seemed very outdated, even within the overall context of tradition: *“The protocols are very dated. His mum had died and he was going round all the different countries and cities. He should be mourning the death of his mum, not worrying about his royal duties”* (Northern Ireland). People also argued that a more stringent attitude should be adopted towards royals who step out of line.

“Inappropriate behaviour shouldn’t be tolerated. Not three strikes and you’re out, but ‘sorry mate, or Mrs, you’re out’. Because it’s ‘you’re embarrassing not just me, but the whole entire country’”

 England

Time to have the debate?

Many of our focus group participants felt that the death of the Queen had prompted people to question the monarchy's role and the part it should play in the future: *"When the Queen was alive the monarchy was almost above criticism in a way, because she was held in such esteem. But now I think people have made a distinction between Charles as an individual and the monarchy, and there's more questioning. Is it time to change and modernise?"* (Scotland); *"Now that the Queen's gone, I don't think we need a change overnight. But I think the conversation needs to be started, we need a roadmap. And it might be a 20, 30, 50-year roadmap that thinks about becoming completely independent"* (New Zealand).

This was reflected in our poll. In Australia, The Bahamas and Canada, majorities agreed that they were happy to continue with the monarchy under Queen Elizabeth, but now it was time for change.

Some, notably in our Jamaica and New Zealand groups, said the fact that the issue was being actively debated in neighbouring countries had provoked discussion at home. This worked both ways, however. While some in Jamaica said it had been a *"wake-up call"* when Barbados decided to become a republic, a few felt their country was already secure enough in its identity not to have to assert itself through constitutional change. Similarly, New Zealanders were watching the Australian debate with interest (*"if it's perceived to have gone well over there we'll probably have a good think about it"*), they would not automatically follow their lead (*"we might stay with it just to piss them off"*).

Few in our groups around the world thought that reviewing the Crown's position in their country's constitution was an immediate political priority. Many argued that day-to-day issues were more important, and that governments which put the question at the top of their agendas would soon find themselves in trouble, even in countries like Australia where the issue had been part of the governing party's election platform: *"There are a lot of issues at the moment with the economy and inflation and crisis and recession. The government are going to look really bad if they start pushing this instead."* (In fact, none of our Australian participants thought the future of the monarchy had been a major issue in the 2022 election campaign, let alone in their own voting decisions.) Many simply took these commitments with a pinch of salt, including those in the Caribbean whose governments were also formally committed to leaving the monarchy: *"No offence to him [PM Andrew Holness] but political promises in Jamaica don't mean anything. According to him Jamaica is supposed to be a first-world country by 2030. And that's not happening."*

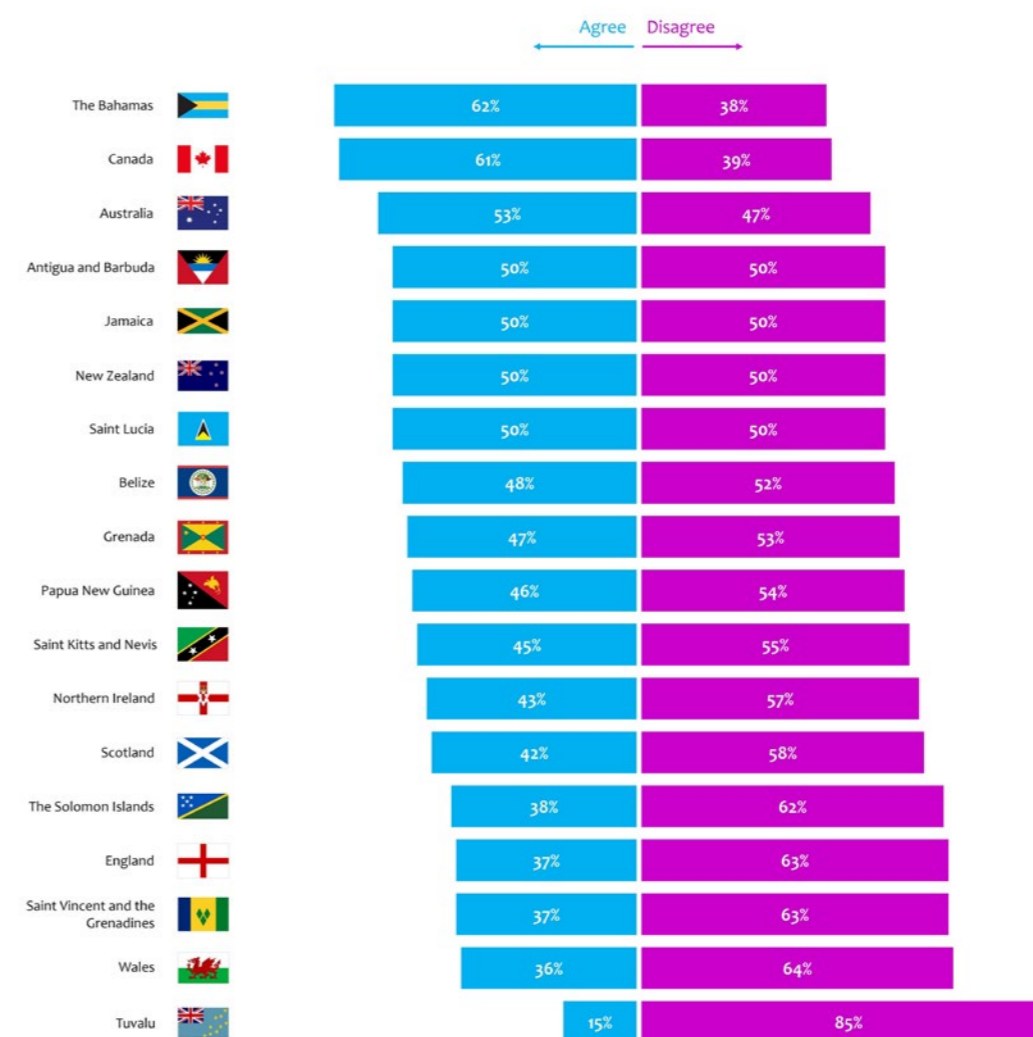
“It’s an intellectual exercise for people of elite status and mindset to think and talk about. Being part of the monarchy or not isn’t going to change the price of rice.”



Jamaica

Please say whether you agree or disagree with the following statement

"I was happy to continue with the monarchy under Queen Elizabeth, but now I think it's time for change."



It was also evident that many people who did not currently feel strongly about the issue would quickly take a position in any referendum campaign: *"I'm just not passionate enough to fight for them, or for change either. I wouldn't go out to push to change anything. But if I was asked, I would probably vote to move away from monarchy"* (Australia); *"I all of a sudden felt quite insecure when we talked about that. I can't imagine us not having a monarchy, but I didn't think it bothered me until I thought about what would replace it. Maybe I care more than I thought"* (Northern Ireland).

In our poll, majorities in all but two countries (St Lucia and St Vincent and The Grenadines) agreed with the statement *"in an ideal world we wouldn't have the monarchy, but there are more important things for us to deal with."* Agreement was highest in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Jamaica, where at least 75% concurred.

What would we replace them with?

Our focus groups around the world discussed what they would want to take the place of the monarchy if they were to do away with it. People often asked why anything would need to be put in its place at all, underlining that the Crown's role in a parliamentary system is not always widely understood: *"If we woke up tomorrow and were no longer part of this, I don't think anyone would be fazed. And there wouldn't be a huge rush to replace it. Why wouldn't we just continue with our own government that we have?"* (Canada)

Groups in all countries tended to agree that they would want to know exactly how things would change before deciding whether or not they wanted to keep the monarchy, what would be involved, and how much it would all cost: *"Is it as simple as printing new money three years from now? Then sure, let's do it. But if it's going to cost millions and millions of dollars over ten years, I don't care enough"* (Canada).

“ I would want to know what they were going to replace it with, that's for sure. I don't trust the government just to figure it out one day.”

 Canada

Though some liked the idea of greater accountability and potentially faster decision-making, many were dubious about the prospect of an executive presidency. This was partly because they associated the idea with the United States, which few considered a model they wanted to emulate (*"if I had to choose between the British and American system, we'll stay with the British"* (Canada)). Another reason was that people took such a dim view of their countries' elected leaders: *"What we really need here in Belize is a body above the government that will hold them accountable because the corruption is terrible"* (Belize).


“ We haven't had a great run out of politicians. We're very dubious about them. They're flavour of the month today and we want to run them out of town with burning torches a couple of years later.”

 New Zealand

“ I don't just want to jump up and say 'yes, I want to be a republic' and then lose things I didn't know we had because we had the monarchy.”


 Belize

“ We don't have another option. I don't trust the government. If we move to a republic, the people who have the money are still going to be in charge.”

 The Bahamas


The idea of a ceremonial president above parliament and the prime minister had an appeal for some. In that the individual would at least be from the state which they headed, and would be able to devote all their attention to their country: *"Maybe having someone who actually lives here would put them a little bit more in touch with what's going on in the country than someone who lives abroad"* (Canada); *"It would be nice to have someone more visible who can actually do things, who's on the ground, supporting charities and all that stuff, because right now, the King or Queen, we only see them in magazines, on social media. If we brought that position back to New Zealand, maybe we'll get someone who can actually do good for society"* (New Zealand).

“ An Australian ceremonial president might be more identifiable. He'd probably chug beer out of his boots, like the guy who lives three doors down. Whereas I don't know anyone in my life that I would say, oh, you remind me of Prince Charles.”

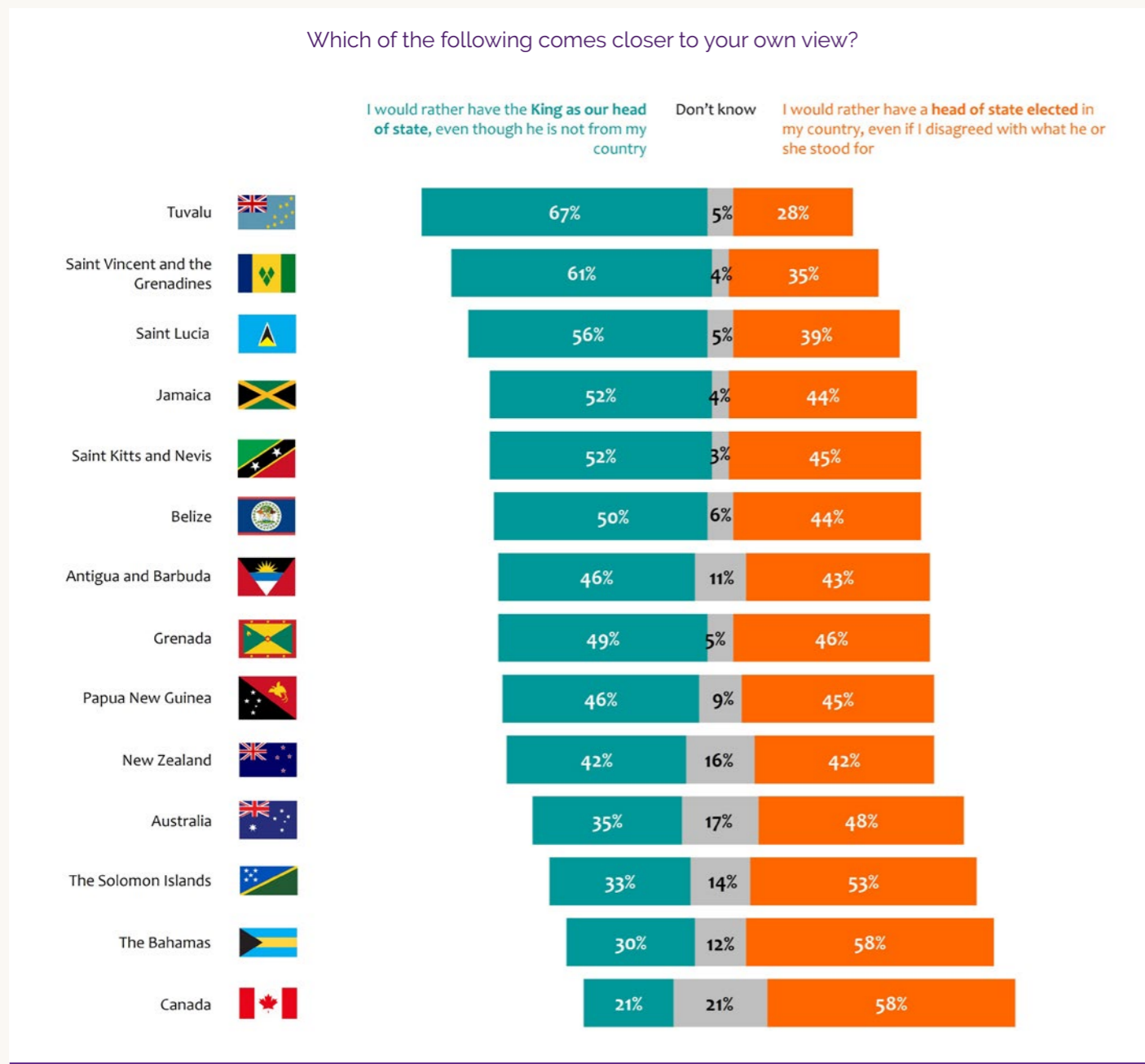
 Australia

There was also a widespread view, however, that replacing one largely ceremonial head of state with another would be an expensive indulgence resulting in no meaningful change.

“ A ceremonial president would mean replacing a monarch with a phoney monarch. What's the point of that? I can't imagine the cost of doing something like this and then elevating one person to head ribbon cutter.”

 Australia

In the Commonwealth realms, we asked in our poll whether people would rather have the King as head of state even though he was from a different country, or a locally elected head of state whom they disagreed with politically. Though many were quite closely divided, only Australia, The Bahamas, Canada and the Solomon Islands said they would rather have a head of state elected in their country even if they disagreed what they stood for – perhaps reflecting the misgivings about the various presidential options that we heard in our focus groups.



Reasons to change

In our focus groups, participants were asked to sum up what they considered the best arguments for replacing the monarchy, and the best arguments for keeping it. Arguments for change tended to highlight values such as modernity, progressiveness, equality, control, independence and self-determination. Breaking away from colonial history was also an important factor for many.

“Someone visible, present. As opposed to reading about them in a gossip magazine.”

New Zealand

“We should be governing our own country. There’s always going to be other issues to deal with but I think it should just be done, get rid of it, and Canada should govern itself.”

Canada

“A chance to move forward even more as a self-determining nation with a clearer identity that’s detached from outside entanglement.”

New Zealand

“The two problems are that power is inherited, not elected; and that physically you’re on the opposite side of the world.”

Australia

“We don’t feel the influence of the monarchy and their presence is not felt in the country anyway. I don’t think we have anything to lose if we were to cut off from the monarchy.”

Papua New Guinea

“A fresh start for Scotland, so we can find our own identity.”

Scotland

“A modern multicultural country looking more towards the Pacific and Australia than towards England.”

New Zealand

“Be a grown-up country. We talk about the ‘mother country’. Why would you stay in the shadow of your mother?”

Australia

“I think it’s the point about being tied to slavery. People think, why is there a king over me? Who is this king who doesn’t benefit me economically?”

Jamaica

“I don’t think you can say you have an equal society and have a monarchy. The two things are the antithesis of each other.”

England


“It would make people, especially the younger generation, feel as if it’s a more modern, progressive country.”

Scotland

Reasons to stay the same

Most participants thought the best arguments for retaining the monarchy were practical rather than principled: that *"if it ain't broke, don't fix it"*; that any change would prove complex and the result might well turn out to be worse, especially given their views about their own political elites; that they still retained some form of protection or reassurance from being under the Crown; that they did not feel their country was yet ready to govern itself without some oversight; or – especially – that there were more important priorities to be focusing on.

“ If we became a republic, would it affect anything that we've said are the priorities for Jamaica, like crime and jobs?”

 Jamaica

“ You'd have to reopen the constitution. Are we going to have a second chamber with senators? It would take decades to settle.”

 Canada

“ The royals know their role and their place in New Zealand. It doesn't matter if the next individual is a plonker or not, because they will slot into that role. An elected head of state runs the risk of populism taking over and all of a sudden we've got president Richie McCaw or someone.”

 New Zealand

“ Why bother? It's the least of our problems?”

 Canada


“ We've seen a lot of change recently. There's a bit of comfort and continuity.”

 New Zealand


“ Look at us compared to Guatemala and El Salvador. History-wise, we've proven to be stable compared to them. We don't know what direction things could take. We could be losing our only source that we can lean to. If the situation with Guatemala were stirred up, Britain wouldn't come help us. So what will happen then?”

 Belize


“ We'd have to change our whole legal system, so many things. What is the economic cost going to be for this change?”

 The Bahamas

“ If somebody said 'oh, we're getting rid of the monarchy,' I'd be like 'OK, great, but could you fix the NHS first please?’”

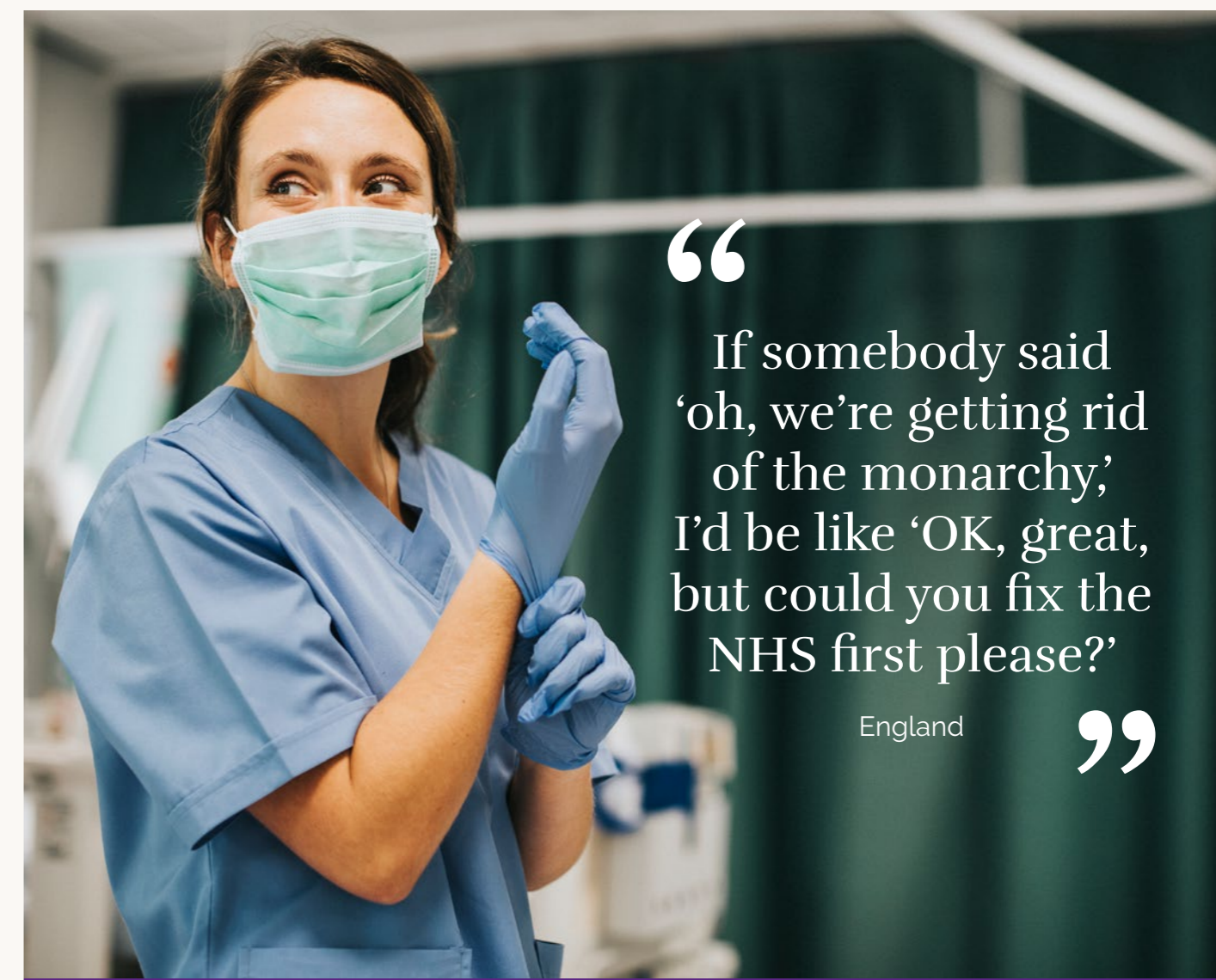
 England

“ We're still learning. The problem is the maturity of our political system and governance. They need to be properly maintained and structured before we can become a republic. This is still a young country. We need to be mature enough to look after ourselves before putting on our shoes.”

 Solomon Islands

“ We're not ready yet. Corruption is rising every day. There is no-one willing to lead us with honesty and integrity to the next level. A president would become a dictator and control everything. With the King there, there is some restriction, keeping us together still.”

 Papua New Guinea



“ If somebody said 'oh, we're getting rid of the monarchy,' I'd be like 'OK, great, but could you fix the NHS first please?’”

England

”

What can they do to increase support?

Asked what the King or the royal family could do to shore up support for the monarchy in their country, many said the answer was little or nothing: the question had more to do with their country and how it wanted to be governed than about the actions of individual royals. Even so, many said it might help to see a more visible presence, more of a two-way relationship between their country and Britain, and more evidence of tangible benefits from that relationship.

“ I think what matters is for them to be more present. Come see us.”



“ Make it more of a two-way relationship. Address us, acknowledge that our problems are their problems, let us know what they’re doing for us. How are they relevant to Australia?”



“ If the King says, ‘I decree that all Jamaicans can come to Britain visa-free’, the argument is done.”



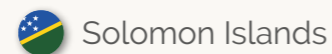
“ If they were more present, if they could say ‘look, we have a preferential market for sugar, for citrus, for bananas, British soldiers are coming back to train,’ all of a sudden you go ‘see, we need the UK.’”



“ You have to show up. And bring the bag.”



“ Visit us often. See how is the Solomons, how are we living? Infrastructure, education – what needs to be improved? And more investments from the UK and exports from the Solomons to the UK.”

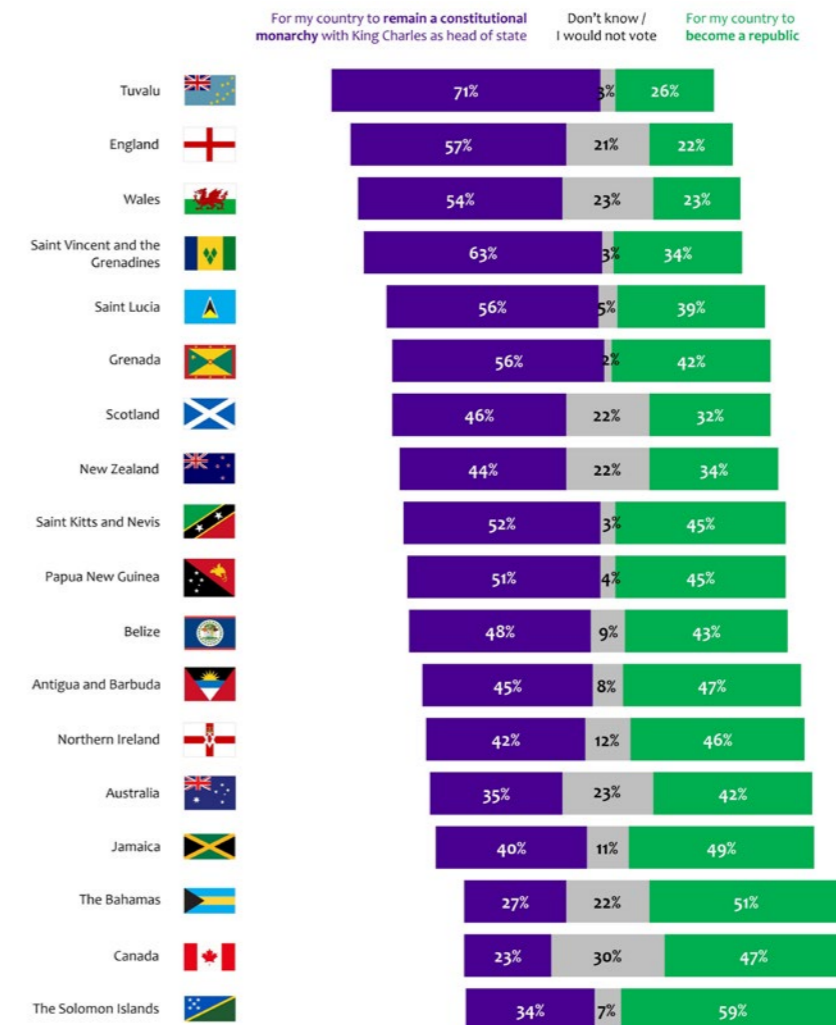


If there were a referendum...

In our poll we asked our respondents around the world how they would vote if there were a referendum tomorrow on whether to keep the monarchy or become a republic.

In six countries – Antigua & Barbuda, Australia, The Bahamas, Canada, Jamaica and the Solomon Islands – more said they would vote to become a republic than to remain a constitutional monarchy with the King as head of state. Within the UK, the same was true in Northern Ireland. However, in all but two of these places, the proportion saying they didn't know or wouldn't vote was bigger than the margin for a republic. Further details of the referendum question in each nation can be found in the Country by Country chapter of this report.

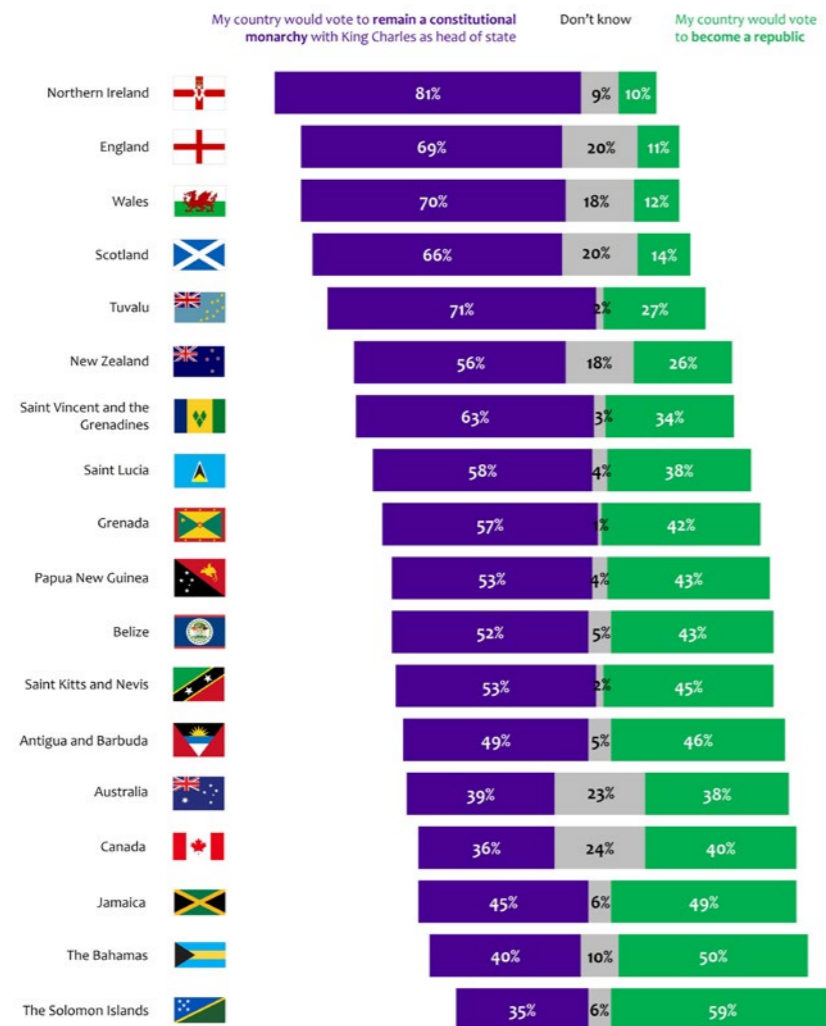
If there were a referendum tomorrow, how would you vote?



In most countries, the majority of those voting to retain the status quo agreed that the monarchy was a good thing for their country and they should keep it. In Australia, New Zealand and Canada, however, only a minority of pro-monarchy voters took this view; they were at least as likely to think either that *“the alternative would probably be worse”* or that *“the process of changing from the monarchy would probably be too disruptive and divisive.”*

On the other side of the argument, large majorities among those saying they would vote for a republic agreed that such a move would *“bring real, practical benefits”* for their country. However, most republic voters in the UK and the Solomon Islands, and substantial minorities of them in Australia, Canada and New Zealand, agreed that the monarchy was *“wrong in principle, so we should replace it whether there are practical benefits or not.”*

If such a referendum were to be held in your country tomorrow, what do you think the result would be?



“

Wrong in principle, so we should replace it whether there are practical benefits or not.

Republic voters in the UK, Solomon Islands, Australia, Canada and New Zealand”



Despite these results, when we asked people what they thought the outcome of such a referendum would be, voters in all but four places (The Bahamas, Canada, Jamaica and the Solomon Islands) thought their country or nation would in fact choose to remain a constitutional monarchy with the King as head of state. Those in Antigua and Barbuda, Australia and Northern Ireland (the three with the smallest margin of victory for a republic) thought a referendum tomorrow would result in retaining the status quo.

Asked what they thought would happen if a referendum were held in 10 years' time, people in Australia, New Zealand and Belize thought their countries were more likely than not to think their countries would be added to the list of republics.

Country by Country



Around the UK



Antigua and Barbuda



Australia



The Bahamas



Belize



Canada



Grenada



Jamaica



New Zealand



Papua New Guinea



Saint Kitts and Nevis



Saint Lucia



Sain Vincent and
The Grenedines



Solomon Islands



Tuvalu

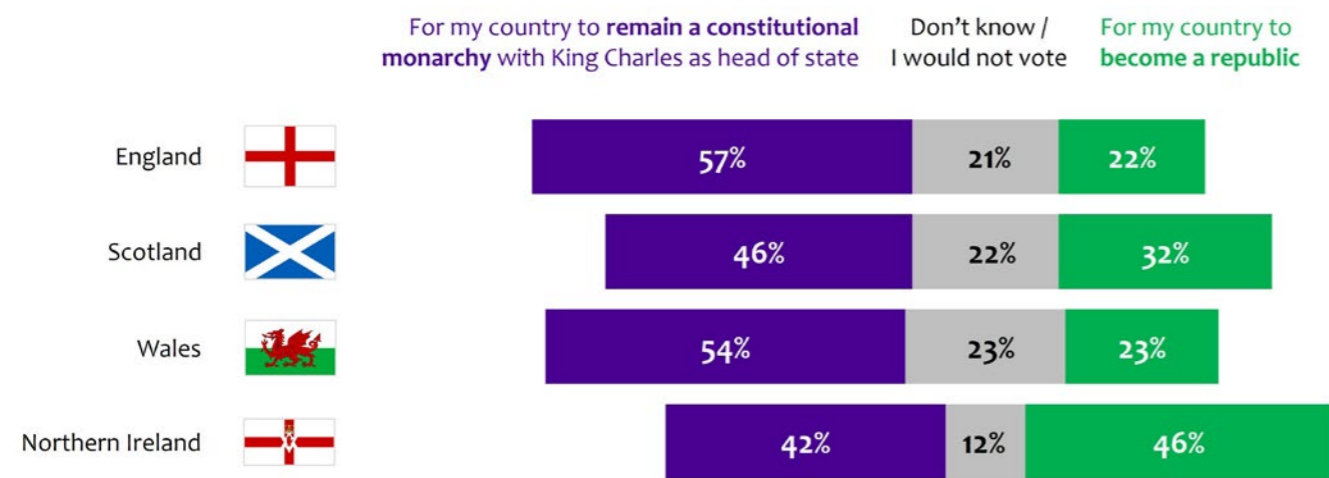


Around the UK

Our analysis of the polling data shows that 7% of people in Britain are Committed Royalists, 32% are Mainstream Monarchists, 24% are Neutral Pragmatists, 19% are Modern Republicans and 18% are Angry Abolitionists. (Full descriptions of these segments can be found in Chapter 1).

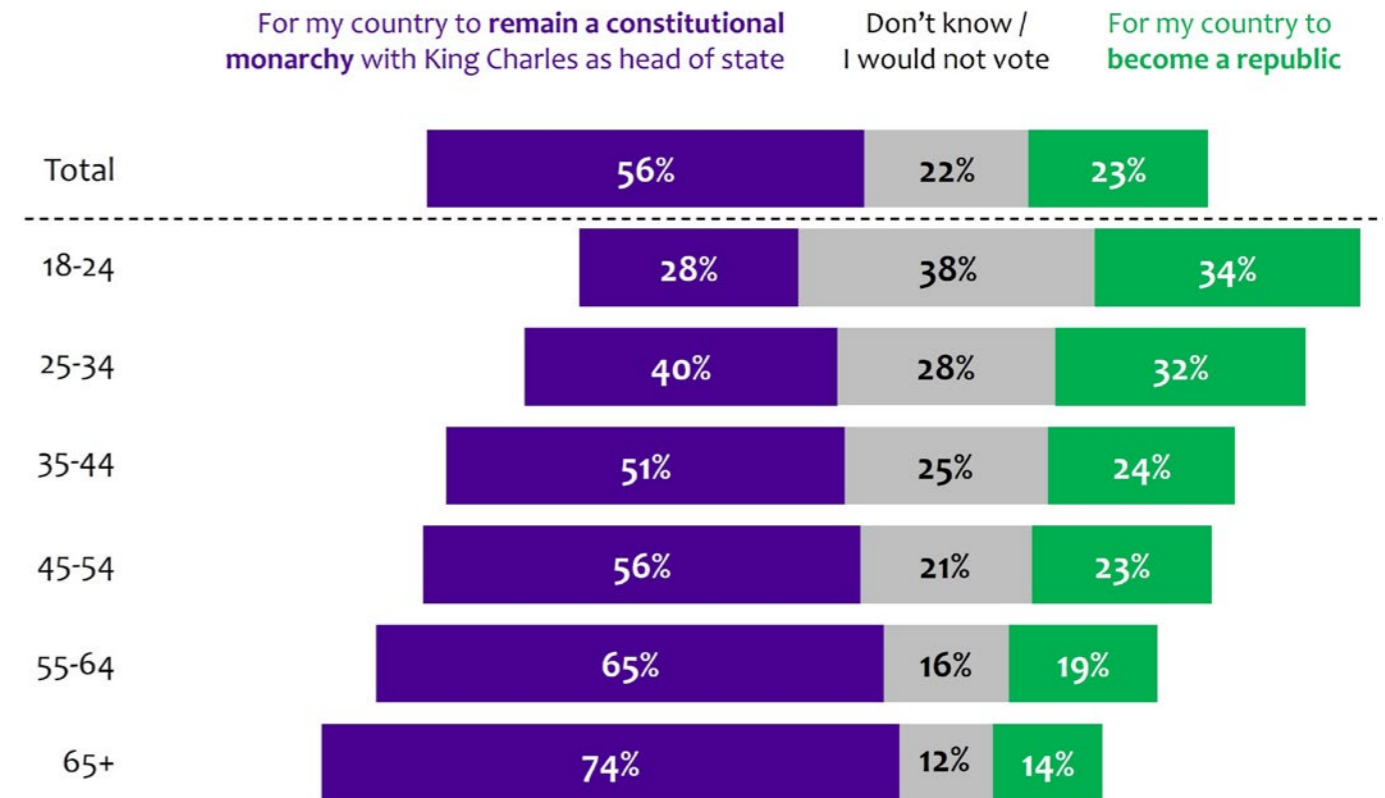
Asked how they would vote in a referendum tomorrow, clear majorities in England and Wales said they would choose to remain a constitutional monarchy with King Charles as head of state. A plurality (46%) in Scotland said the same. In each of the three, more than 1 in 5 said they didn't know or wouldn't vote. In Northern Ireland there was a 4-point margin for becoming a republic, though 12% said they didn't know or would not vote.

If there were a referendum tomorrow, how would you vote?



If there were a referendum tomorrow, how would you vote?

(Great Britain only, by age)



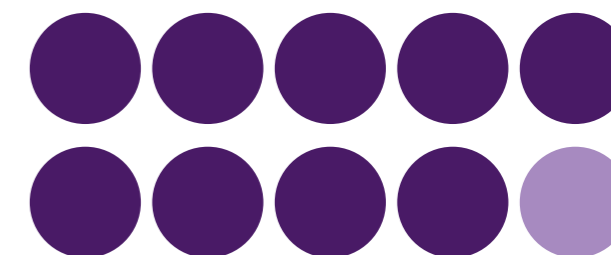
People's answers to this question were closely related to age. In Great Britain, nearly three quarters of those aged 65+ said they would vote to keep the monarchy, compared to 28% of 18-24 year-olds (among whom the proportion saying "don't know" or "would not vote" was higher than that voting either for the monarchy or a republic). Those who voted Conservative in 2019 said they would vote to keep the monarchy by 81% to 9%, Lib Dems by 65% to 22% and Labour voters by just 42% to 38%. 2019 SNP voters said they would back a republic by 51% to 27%. London was the only English region in which there was not an absolute majority for keeping the monarchy: Londoners said they would vote for the status quo by 45% to 34% (the East of England was the most supportive region, at 63%). While white voters said they would vote to keep the monarchy by a 40-point margin, Asian-background voters backed a republic by 2 points, and those from black African or Caribbean backgrounds chose a republic by 36% to 22%, with more than 4 in 10 saying they didn't know or wouldn't vote.

In Northern Ireland, the result among strongly unionist voters (91% for keeping the monarchy) was almost the mirror-image of that among strong nationalists (86% for a republic). Those who described themselves as neutral on the NI constitutional question preferred a republic by 59% to 20%.

A monarchy for everyone?

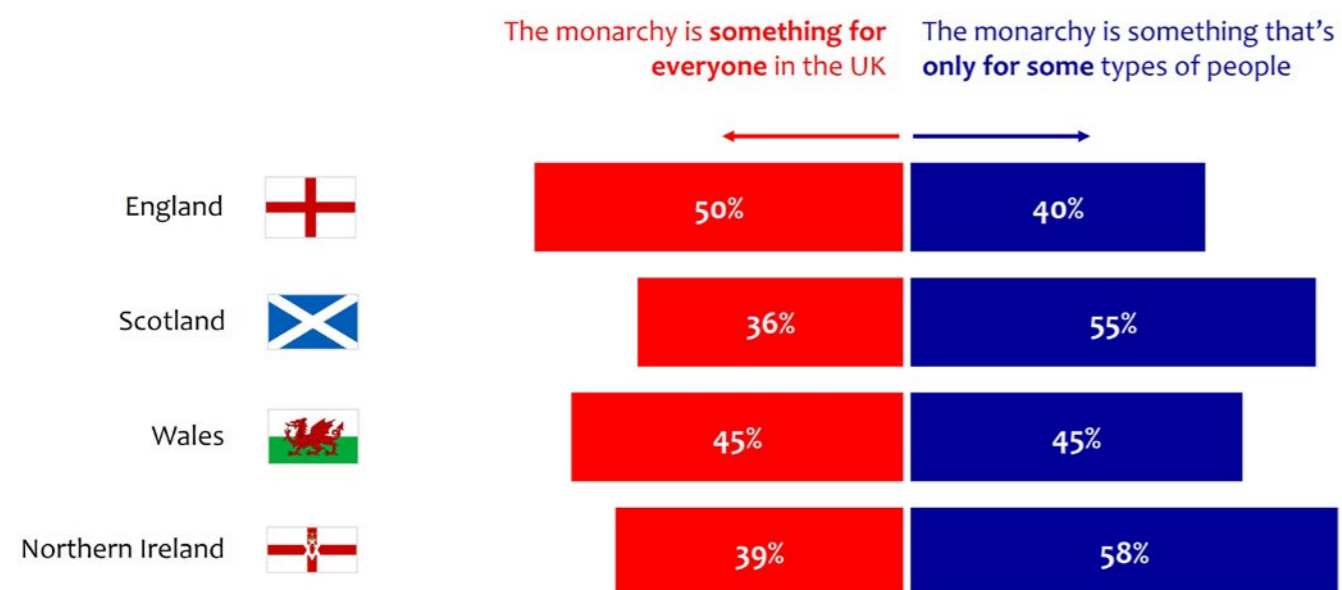
Despite their answers to the referendum question, voters in Scotland were more likely to feel that the monarchy was “only for some types of people” than that it was “something for everyone in the UK”, and people in Wales were evenly divided on the question. Those in Northern Ireland were the most likely to regard the monarchy as being only for some types of people. Only those in England were more likely than not to see the monarchy as being for everyone.

British voters aged 55 or over were more than twice as likely to say “for everyone” (61%) as those aged 18 to 34 (30%). More than 7 in 10 of those who voted Conservative in 2019 thought the institution was for everyone, compared to just over half of Lib Dems, one third of Labour voters and just under one fifth of those who voted SNP. In Northern Ireland, more than 9 in 10 nationalists said they monarchy was only for some types of people.



In Northern Ireland, more than 9 in 10 nationalists said they monarchy was only for some types of people

Which of the following statements comes closer to your own view?

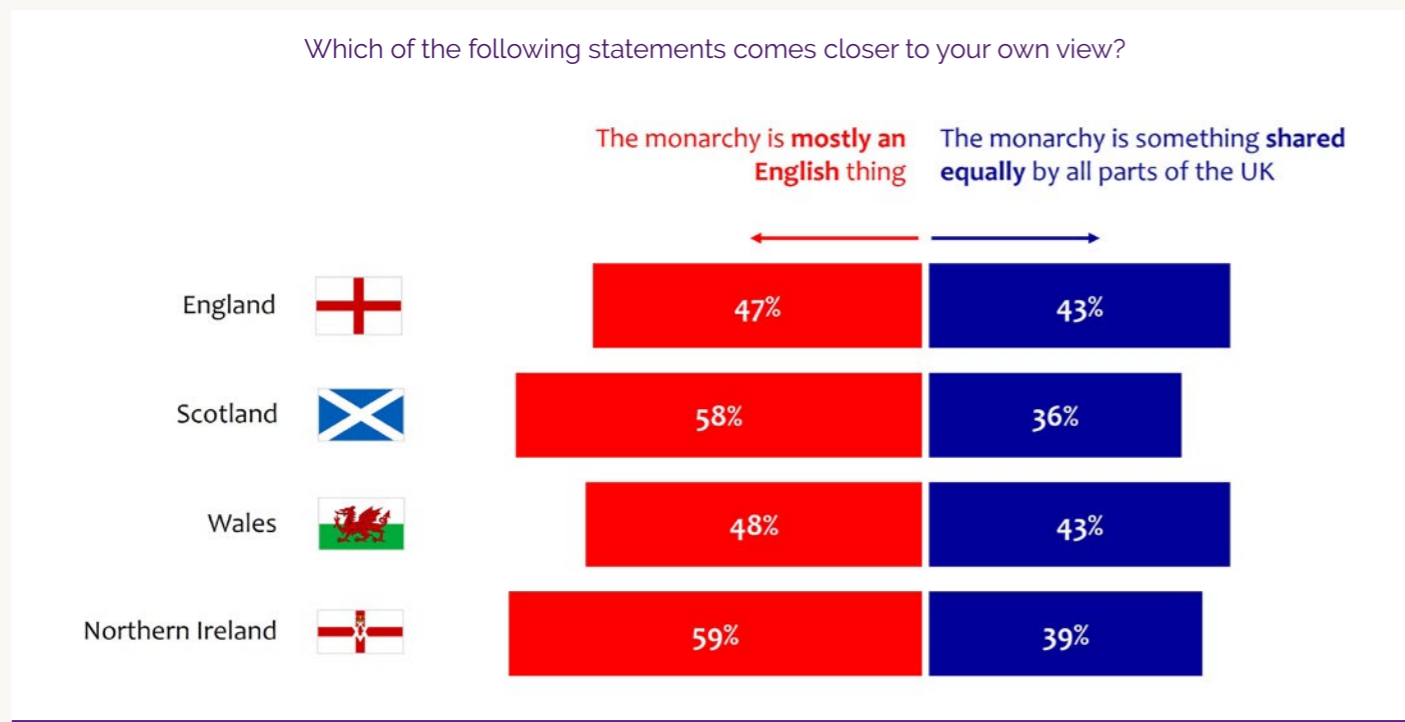


Just over half of Asian-background (52%) and nearly two thirds of black African and Caribbean-background voters (65%) said they thought the monarchy was only for some types of people. In our focus group discussions, some in these groups said they felt that the monarchy was not for them, and they felt no connection with it: “If you look at the funeral coverage on TV you can see who they are. They’re mostly white people, aren’t they? I know some non-white people who absolutely love the monarchy, and everyone’s entitled to their opinion, but there are some who feel they have mistreated us or our countries, which is why they would not be as pro”; “White English people, the history of the monarchy is their history. It’s not our history” (England).

However, some said there was a good deal of respect for the royal family within their communities, even if this was more prevalent among the older generation: “My mum definitely saw the Queen as her Queen. She was born in Guyana. Her appreciation of the monarchy is different to mine. It doesn’t relate to me in any way. I feel detached from them because they’re not bothered about me”; “I’m here because my granddad was a Gurkha, and he fought in World War Two and the Queen allowed him to come to Britain. So we’re thankful for that, we’ve been successful because we were given that opportunity. So I feel we owe them great respect”; “My mum can only understand a little bit of English, but at 3 o’clock on Christmas Day she wanted to watch the Queen’s Speech” (England).

Some also argued that members of the royal family went out of their way to try to engage with the community: “They’ve visited mosques, and when there was the fire in London they were there. So they do show their faces and I feel they are trying to connect”; “The amount of interfaith work they do, the Queen did, is a lot. We might not see it but it’s a lot.”

In our polls, even respondents in England were slightly more likely to see the institution as “mostly an English thing” than “something shared equally by all parts of the UK”. In Scotland and Northern Ireland, nearly 6 in 10 said they associated the monarchy more with England than with the UK as a whole. People in Wales chose this option by a smaller margin.



Some in our focus groups echoed the point that the monarchy felt like more of an English than a British institution. At the same time, some acknowledged that some individual royals had personal connections to Scotland in particular – especially Princess Anne and Queen Elizabeth: “I wouldn’t have seen the Queen as Scottish, but I did see her as someone who cared a great deal about Scotland. Now she’s gone it will be different. I’m not sure Charles will want to spend as much time here as she did”; “You always see Princess Anne at the rugby. She’s part of us, in a way”; “It feels as though they like the fun bits of Scotland, the highlands, the Highland Games, the rugby, that sort of thing. But I don’t feel there’s any particular connection;”

“It’s always the King or Queen of England, it’s never the King of Great Britain or the UK. Well, they’re German originally anyway.”

Wales

Defender of (the) faith

Several in our UK focus groups had heard about the King’s intention, outlined when Prince of Wales, to stand up for freedom of worship for all faiths alongside his role as Supreme Governor of the Church of England – to be “defender of faith” as well as “Defender of the Faith”. This was widely welcomed, particularly by our Muslim, Hindu and Sikh participants – though some said they would have to see how effectively he would fulfil that intention: “It’s not really out there. Hopefully if he said that, give him time, I think he will do it. You can only really comment on stuff like that ten years along the line” (England). Some said the interest he had already shown in other religions was a good sign in this regard:

“He’s trying to say he wants to include everyone. He’s been to Hindu temples and Gurdwaras around the country. He wouldn’t do that just for advertisement.”

England

It was also notable that rather than feeling excluded by the King’s role as head of the Church of England, a number of Muslims said they were reassured by it. They saw the King’s role in the established church as offering a degree of protection in an increasingly liberal and secular society.

“If we didn’t have it, things would become more secular. Because the royal family are Christian, for me as a Muslim living in the UK, I’d say that’s a good thing, because it does connect the government to the church to a certain extent. I have an issue with the liberalisation of society and how far you want to take it. Having the monarchy in place sets a certain restriction – we have a church, we have faiths, he’s a defender of faiths.”

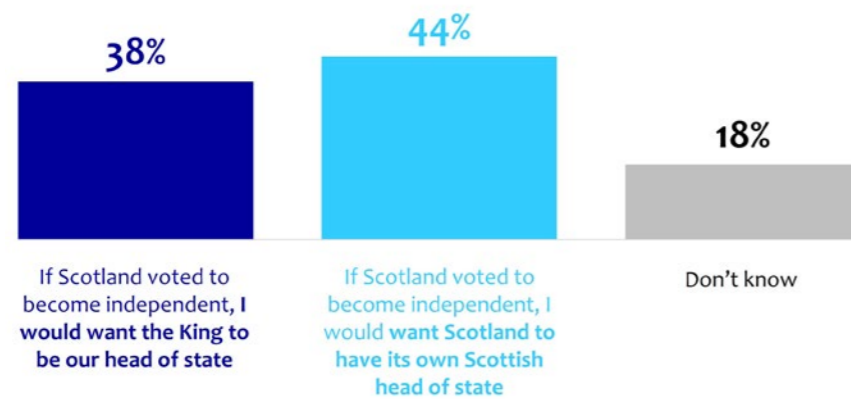
England

An independent Scotland?

Just under half (44%) of Scottish voters said they would want Scotland to have its own head of state if the nation voted to become independent, compared to 38% who said they would still want the King to be head of state in an independent Scotland. Nearly 6 in 10 (58%) of those aged 65 or over would want to keep the King in those circumstances, compared to 13% of 18 to 24s. Three quarters of 2019 Conservatives would still want the King as their head of state, as well as 62% of Lib Dems, 44% of Labour voters and 22% of those who voted SNP. Overall, 13% of Scots voters who said they would vote to keep the monarchy in a referendum thought Scotland should have its own head of state if it became independent.

If Scotland voted to become independent, would you want the King to remain as Scotland's head of state, or not?

[NB Scotland only]



Asked why campaigners in 2014 had promised to keep the monarchy in the event of a victory for independence, Scots tended to think that it was a tactic to maximise the Yes vote by assuring sceptical voters worried about too much change: *"It was to have that break but keep some continuity. It was to ease people in. It was targeted at reassuring older voters, to get loyalists on board to say yes to independence";* *"It was one easy thing to take off the table, a definite answer they could give. There were so many where they couldn't, like the currency, the military..."* However, many thought that an independent Scotland would be more likely than not to become a republic in the longer term.

“ I think eventually it would go if there were an independent Scotland, but straight away it would be too much change.”

 Scotland

The Principality

Some in our Welsh focus groups were slightly resentful that the heir to the throne should bear the title Prince of Wales without having what they regarded as any real connection to the nation: *"One thing I find difficult, as a big rugby fan, is the charade of Prince William pretending he's Welsh and a Welsh fan. It's just a big lie, things like that";* *"If you look at history, the English Prince of Wales was installed to stamp their authority on Wales and to colonise it. That's a long time ago, but I think that's how a lot of people still see it."*

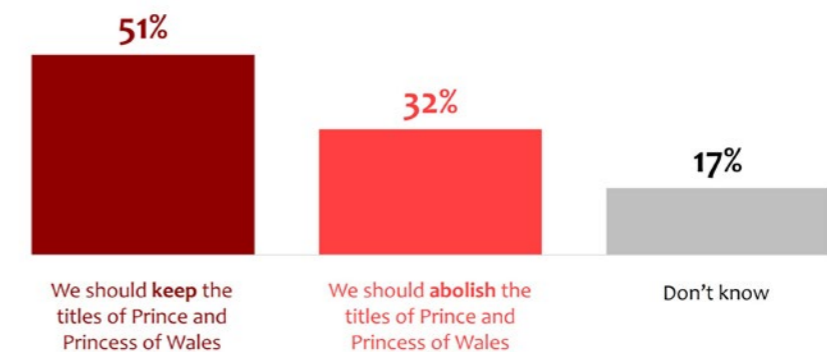
“ With Prince Charles, at least he came to Aberystwyth to try and learn to speak Welsh. I know Prince William went to Anglesey for a bit, but it would be nice if they were to move here for five years or so. Move the kids, go to a Welsh school. At least it shows their support for Wales then, isn't it.”

 Wales

In our poll, however, just over half of respondents in Wales favoured keeping the titles of the Prince and Princess of Wales, with just under one third saying they should be abolished. Nearly two thirds (64%) of those aged 55 or over supported keeping the titles, compared to 30% of those aged 18 to 34.

Some argue that the Prince and Princess of Wales have no real connection to Wales, and that the titles should be abolished. Others think it is a valuable tradition that should be maintained. Do you think:

[NB Wales only]

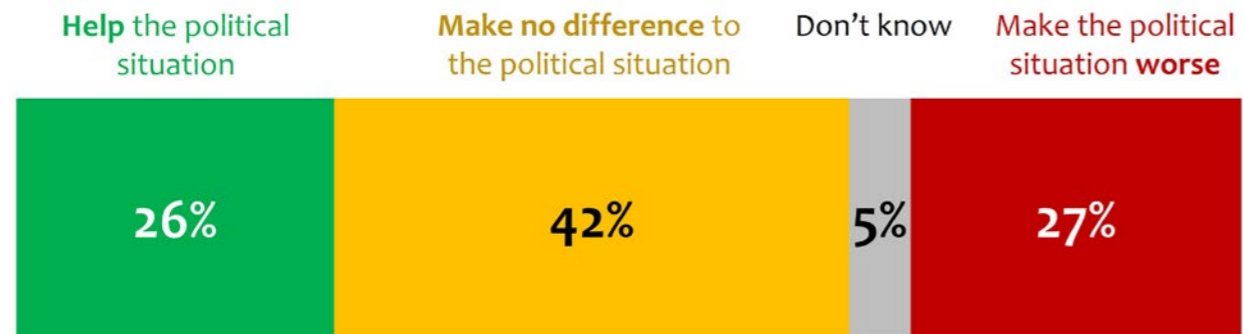


Northern Ireland

Just over a quarter (26%) of our poll participants in Northern Ireland said the royal family helped the political situation in the Province, while a similar proportion (27%) said they made it worse. More than 4 in 10 (42%) said they made no difference.

Do you think the monarchy and the royal family help the political situation in Northern Ireland, make it worse, or make no difference?

(NB Northern Ireland only)



In our Northern Ireland focus groups, participants said the question of the monarchy could still be a source of fierce debate in the province: *"Things like a jubilee spark people off and get them riled up. If you like the royal family, you're wrong. If you don't like them, you're wrong."* However, there was also a feeling that people across the board were less hostile to the royal family, or at least to royal visits, than would have been the case at the height of the Troubles: *"They play their part, and they get a good welcome. Princess Anne was over to see the Sea Cadets. They were even on the Falls Road, and not a word said."*

Many also said that the question was a long way down most people's list of day-to-day concerns, especially while Stormont was still suspended: *"At this point, people in Northern Ireland just want normality. An executive, laws being passed..."*

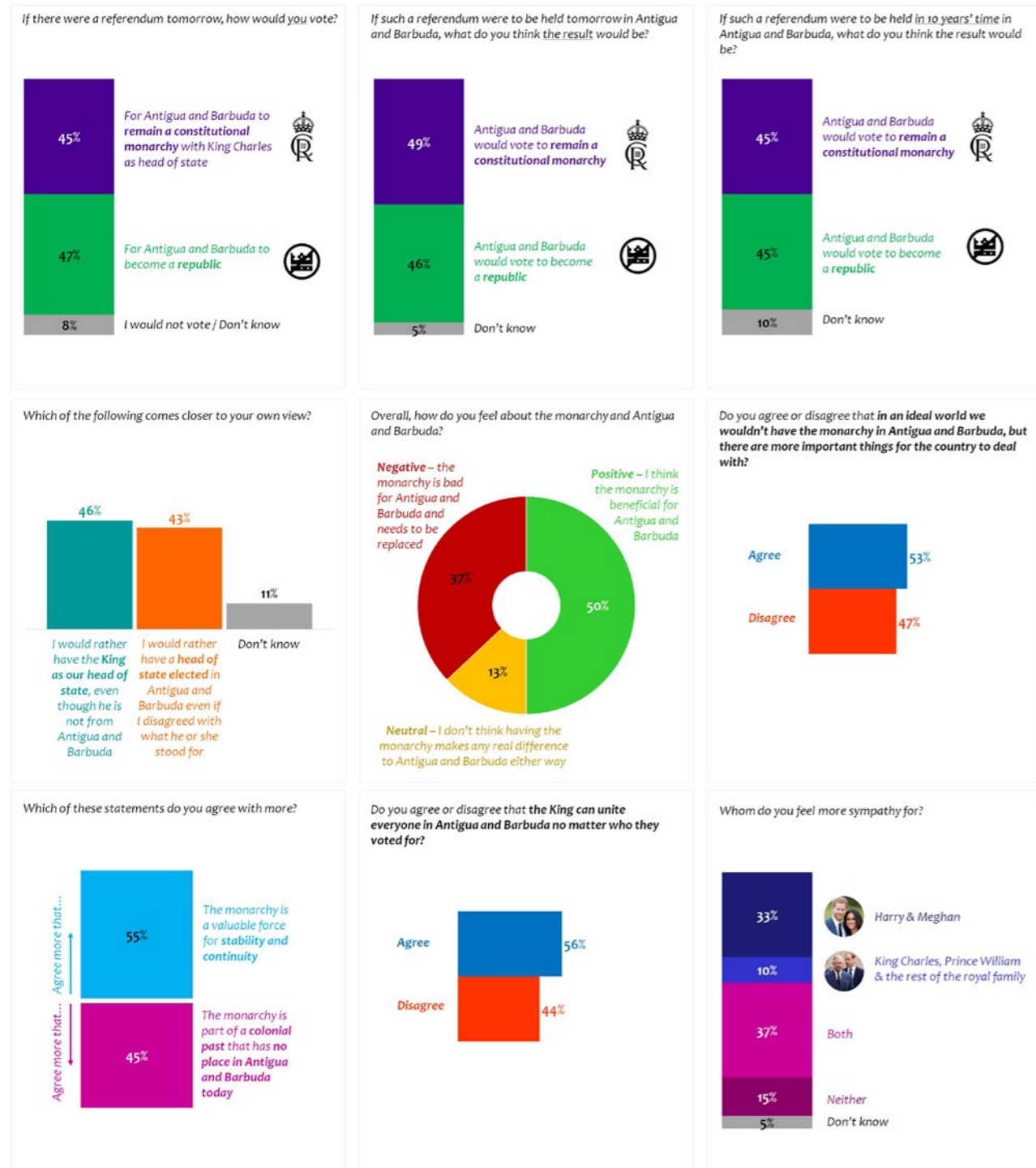
As the poll shows, people from the Nationalist tradition take a very negative view of the institution of the monarchy and would vote overwhelmingly to become a republic, while Unionists favour the status quo by similarly wide margins. It was also clear from our focus group discussions that many of them regard the monarchy as a *"safety net"* when it comes to their position in the UK, and look to members of the royal family to defend their interests despite what they see as the indifference of people and politicians in Great Britain.

“ England just brush us under the carpet. So to be honest I think we'd be worse off in Northern Ireland without them. It sort of holds it together as a British Commonwealth. You've got that comfort that as long as we still have some royals, we're still part of the UK.”





Antigua and Barbuda



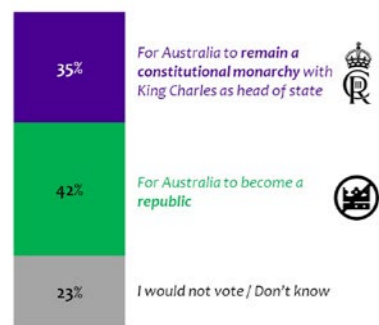
- Our analysis of the polling data shows that 29% in Antigua and Barbuda are Committed Royalists, 23% are Mainstream Monarchists, 4% are Neutral Pragmatists, 24% are Modern Republicans and 20% are Angry Abolitionists. (Full descriptions of these segments can be found in Chapter 1).
- 45% said that in a referendum tomorrow they would vote to keep the monarchy, while 47% would vote to become a republic. However, by 49% to 46%, people thought that such a referendum would in fact result in Antigua and Barbuda choosing the status quo.
- 53% agreed that in an ideal world they would not have the monarchy in Antigua and Barbuda, but there were more important things for the country to deal with.
- Of those voting for a republic, 75% said they thought this would bring practical benefits to the country, while one quarter said the monarchy was wrong in principle and should be replaced whether there are practical benefits or not. 72% of pro-republic voters said the monarchy should never have been part of the way the country was governed; 18% said it had been good for the country in the past but makes no sense today.
- More than three quarters (77%) said they would like Antigua and Barbuda to remain part of the Commonwealth even if the country voted to become a republic.
- People were closely divided as to whether they would prefer the King as head of state even though he is from another country (46%) or a head of state elected in Antigua and Barbuda even if they disagreed with what he or she stood for (43%).
- Respondents were slightly more likely to disagree (53%) than agree (47%) that the monarchy is a racist and colonialist institution and that Antigua and Barbuda should have nothing to do with it. Small majorities also agreed that the country has more stability than it would have without the monarchy (55%) and that the King can unite everyone in the country no matter who they voted for (56%).
- 59% said they would like to see members of the royal family speak out on controversial public issues. 88% of pro-monarchy voters said this, while 68% of pro-republic voters said the royals should keep their views to themselves. They were divided as to whether the royal family should be scaled down and its cost significantly reduced (48%) or not (47%).
- People were closely divided as to whether the royal family cared a lot about Antigua and Barbuda (51%) or not (49%). Just over half (57%) said the monarchy made them feel warmer towards the UK.
- Asked where their sympathies lay between Prince Harry and other royals, 33% said they had more sympathy for Prince Harry and Meghan, and 10% for the King and Prince William; 37% had sympathy for both, and 15% for neither.
- By 52% to 48%, people said that elected politicians in Antigua and Barbuda do a better job of connecting with ordinary people than the royal family.

Full survey results for Antigua and Barbuda can be found at LordAshcroftPolls.com

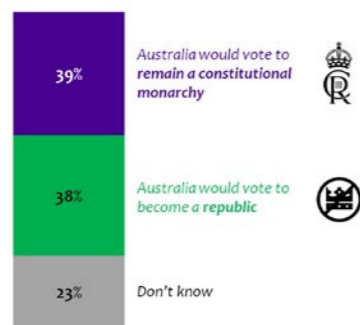


Australia

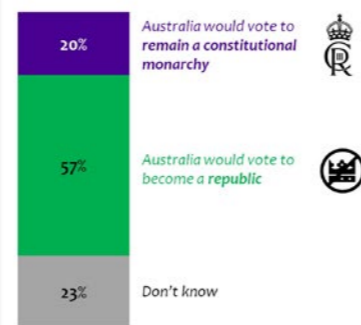
If there were a referendum tomorrow, how would you vote?



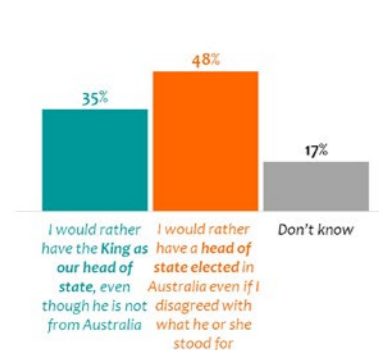
If such a referendum were to be held tomorrow in Australia, what do you think the result would be?



If such a referendum were to be held in 10 years' time in Australia, what do you think the result would be?



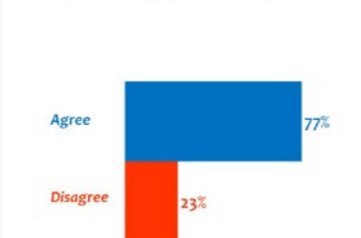
Which of the following comes closer to your own view?



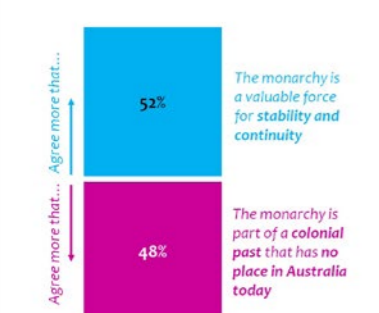
Overall, how do you feel about the monarchy and Australia?



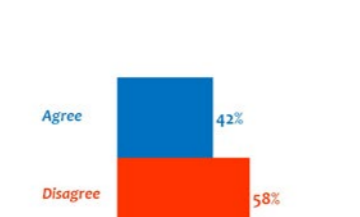
Do you agree or disagree that in an ideal world we wouldn't have the monarchy in Australia, but there are more important things for the country to deal with?



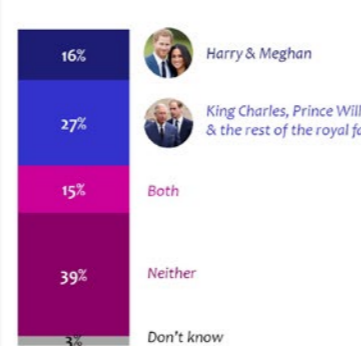
Which of these statements do you agree with more?



Do you agree or disagree that the King can unite everyone in Australia no matter who they voted for?



Whom do you feel more sympathy for?



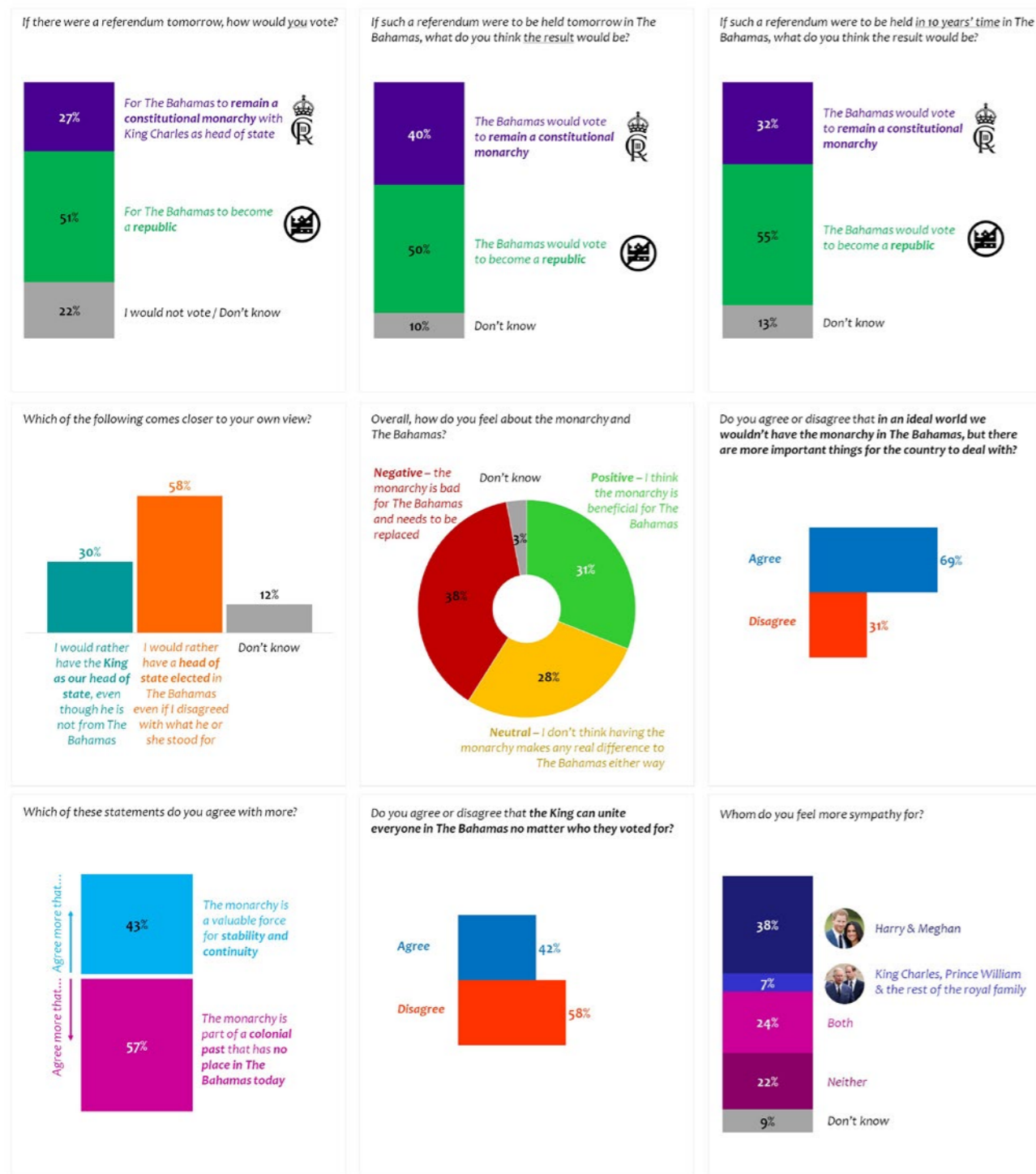
- Our analysis of the polling data shows that only 8% of Australians are Committed Royalists. 11% are Mainstream Monarchists, 35% are Neutral Pragmatists, 27% are Modern Republicans and 20% are Angry Abolitionists. (Full descriptions of these segments can be found in Chapter 1).
- 35% of Australians said they would vote to remain a constitutional monarchy in a referendum tomorrow, while 42% would vote to become a republic. More than 1 in 5 said they didn't know or wouldn't vote.
- 2022 Labor voters backed a republic by 51% to 29%, Greens by 53% to 22%, and UAP voters by 50% to 28%. Coalition voters chose the monarchy by 53% to 33%, and One Nation voters by 43% to 34%. Men chose a republic by a 12-point margin, and women by 1 point; women were nearly twice as likely to say they didn't know (21%) as men (12%). 18-24-year-olds backed a republic by 45% to 22%, while those aged 65+ chose the monarchy by 49% to 37%. People chose a republic over the monarchy in all age groups up to 55.
- Despite these results, Australians were slightly more likely to think an immediate referendum would produce a victory for the status quo (39%) than that the country would choose to become a republic (38%), nearly a quarter (23%) said they didn't know what the result would be. Nearly 1 in 5 pro-republic voters (19%) said they thought Australia would choose to keep the monarchy in a referendum tomorrow. However, a majority of Australians (57%) thought the country would choose to become a republic if a referendum were held in 10 years.
- Among those voting to keep the status quo, only 43% said the monarchy was "a good thing and we should keep it". Most thought either that "the alternative would probably be worse" (35%) or that "the process of changing from the monarchy would probably be too disruptive" (18%).
- Only just over half (51%) of pro-republic voters said the change would bring "real,

- practical benefits" to Australia; 38% said the monarchy was wrong in principle and should be replaced whether there are practical benefits or not. 61% of Australians said the monarchy was good for the country in the past but makes no sense today, while one third said it should never have been part of how the country was governed. 73% of pro-republic voters said "I was happy to continue with the monarchy under Queen Elizabeth, but now I think it's time for change."
- Asked to choose between the two, 35% said they would rather have the King as head of state even though he is not from Australia; 48% said they would rather have a head of state elected in Australia even if they disagreed with what he or she stood for.
- Australians were slightly more likely to disagree (58%) than agree (42%) that the King can unite everyone in the country whoever they voted for. They were slightly more likely to agree that the monarchy is "a valuable force for stability and continuity" (52%) than "part of a colonialist past that has no place in Australia today" (48%).
- Australians were more likely to think becoming a republic would make no difference to their relationship with the UK (41%) than that it would weaken ties (38%), and slightly more likely than not (52% to 48%) to think the King and the royal family care a lot about Australia. More than two thirds (68%) said they would want Australia to remain in the Commonwealth if the country became a republic.
- Asked where their sympathies lay between Prince Harry and other royals, 16% said they had more sympathy for Prince Harry and Meghan, and 27% for the King and Prince William; 15% had sympathy for both and 39% for neither.
- 77% of Australians, including 82% of pro-republic voters, agreed that "in an ideal world we wouldn't have the monarchy, but there are more important things for the country to deal with."

Quotes from focus groups held in Australia can be found throughout the report.
Full survey results for Australia can be found at LordAshcroftPolls.com



The Bahamas

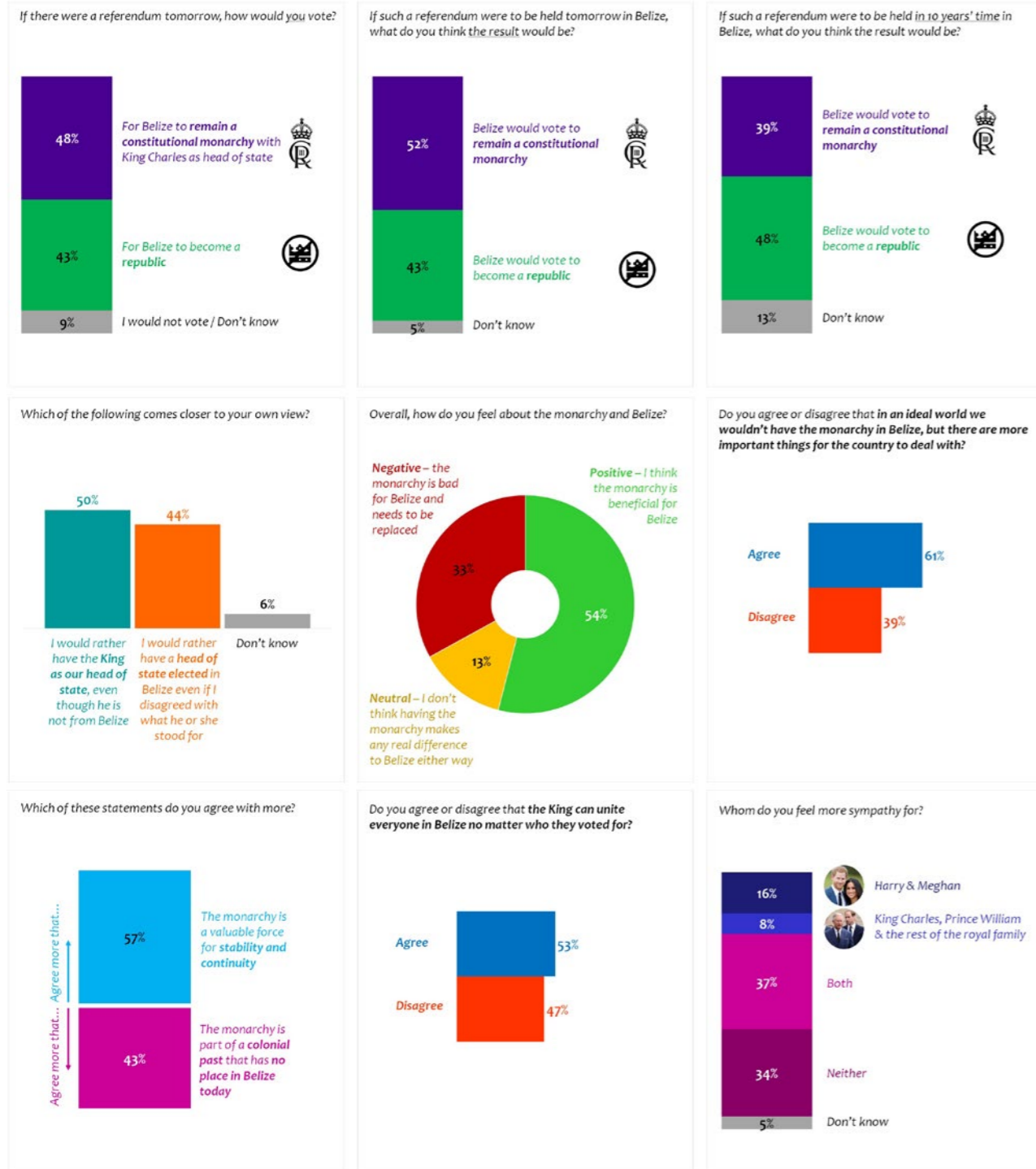


- Our analysis of the polling data shows that 13% of Bahamians are Committed Royalists, 6% are Mainstream Monarchists, 16% are Neutral Pragmatists, 46% are Modern Republicans and 19% are Angry Abolitionists. (Full descriptions of these segments can be found in Chapter 1).
- 51% of Bahamians said they would vote to become a republic in a referendum tomorrow, while 27% said they would vote to remain a constitutional monarchy. Just over 1 in 5 said they didn't know or would not vote. Support for a republic was higher among men (59%) than women (41%); women were more than three times as likely to say they didn't know (18%) as men (5%).
- By 50% to 40%, Bahamians thought that an immediate referendum would result in the country becoming a republic. They thought this by a wider margin (55% to 32%) if a referendum were held in 10 years' time.
- 77% of pro-republic voters said that becoming a republic would bring real, practical benefits to The Bahamas. Only 20% of them said the monarchy was wrong in principle and should be replaced whether there were practical benefits or not. 38% of pro-republic voters said the monarchy had been good for The Bahamas in the past but makes no sense today, but 58% said the monarchy should never have been part of how the country was governed. 82% of pro-republic voters said they were happy to continue the monarchy under Queen Elizabeth but now it was time for change.
- Among those voting for the status quo, 57% said the monarchy was a good thing for The Bahamas and should be kept; the remainder said either that "the alternative would probably be worse" (21%) or that "the process of changing would probably be too disruptive" (22%).
- Asked to choose between the two options, 58% said they would rather have a head of state elected in The Bahamas even if they disagreed with what he or she stood for, while 30% said they would rather have the King as head of state even though he was from another country.
- By 69% to 21%, Bahamians agreed that "in an ideal world we wouldn't have the monarchy, but there are more important things for the country to deal with". Two thirds (67%) of pro-republic voters agreed with this statement.
- Bahamians were more likely to disagree (58%) than agree (42%) that the King can unite everyone in the country no matter who they voted for.
- People were precisely divided as to whether the monarchy made them feel warmer or less warm towards the UK. Only 38% thought that the King and the royal family care a great deal about The Bahamas; 62% disagreed. However, a majority (59%) said they would want to remain part of the Commonwealth if The Bahamas became a republic.
- Bahamians were more likely to see the monarchy as part of a colonial past that has no place in the country (57%) than as a valuable force for continuity and stability (43%).
- Asked where their sympathies lay between Prince Harry and other royals, 38% said they had more sympathy with Prince Harry and Meghan, and 7% with the King and Prince William; 24% said they had sympathy for both, and 22% for neither.

Quotes from focus groups held in The Bahamas can be found throughout the report. Full survey results for The Bahamas can be found at LordAshcroftPolls.com



Belize



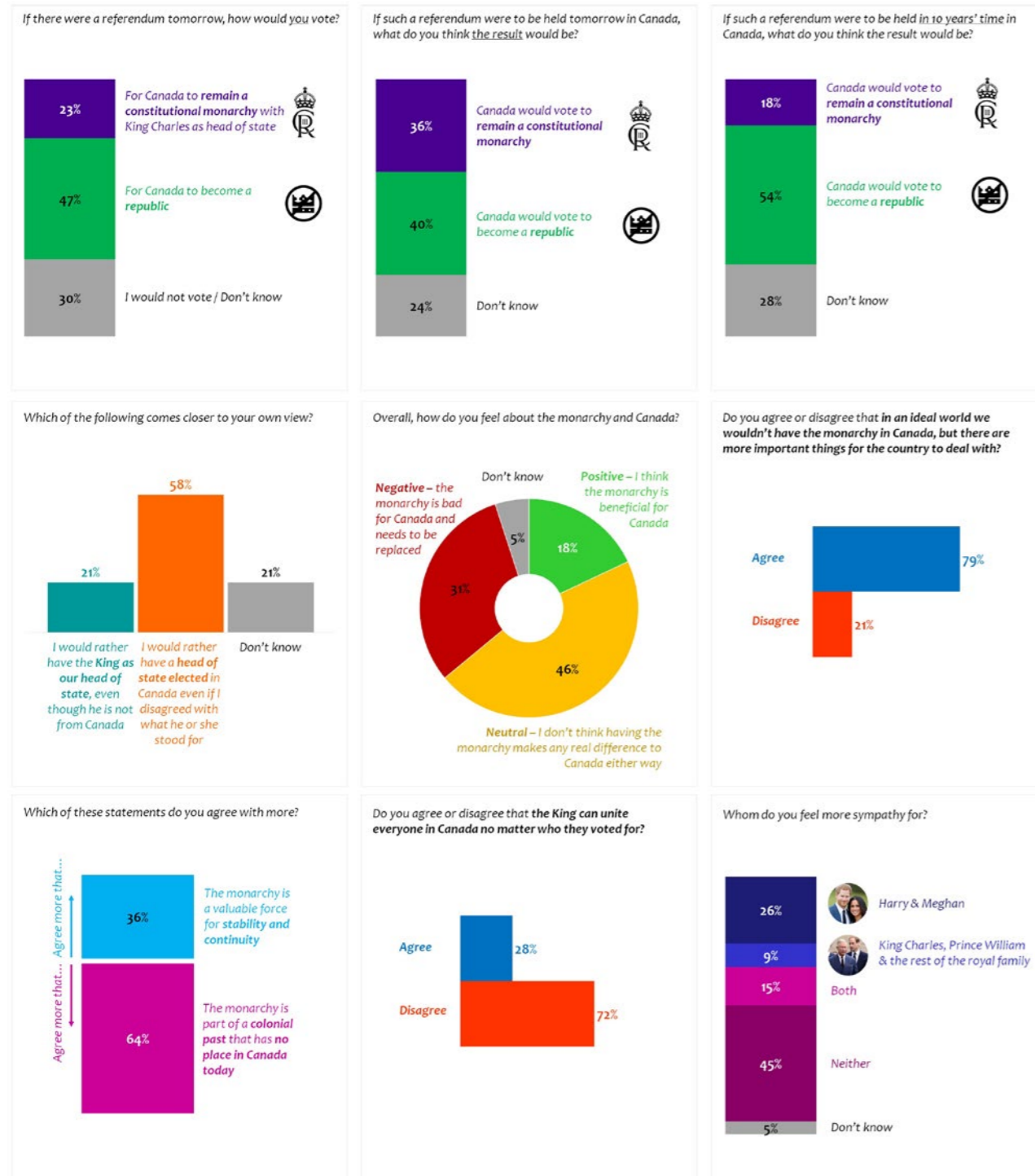
- Our analysis of the polling data shows that 28% of Belizeans are Committed Royalists, 11% are Mainstream Monarchists, 10% are Neutral Pragmatists, 25% are Modern Republicans and 25% are Angry Abolitionists. (Full descriptions of these segments can be found in Chapter 1).
- 48% of Belizeans said they would vote to remain a constitutional monarchy if there were a referendum tomorrow, while 43% would vote to become a republic and 9% said they didn't know or would not vote. Those aged 55 or over were slightly more pro-monarchy (54%) than 18 to 24s (47%) or 35-54s (46%).
- 52% thought such a referendum would result in Belize keeping the monarchy, while 43% thought the country would choose to become a republic. In a referendum in 10 years' time, however, more thought the result would be republic (48%) than the status quo (39%).
- 71% of those voting for the status quo thought the monarchy was good for the country. The remainder thought the alternative would probably be worse (14%) or that the process of changing would probably be too disruptive (15%). Those voting to leave the monarchy overwhelmingly thought becoming a republic would bring real, practical benefits to Belize (95%), rather than that it should be replaced on principle whether there were practical benefits or not. One quarter of pro-republic voters thought the monarchy had been good for Belize in the past but makes no sense today; 74% of them said the monarchy should never have been part of how Belize was governed.
- Belizeans were closely divided as to whether they would prefer the King as head of state even though he is from another country (50%), or a head of state

- elected in Belize even if they disagreed with what he or she stood for (44%). Of those voting for a republic, 13% said they prefer the King to a Belizean head of state they disagreed with.
- 61% of Belizeans agreed that in an ideal world they would not have the monarchy, but there were more important things for the country to deal with. 63% agreed the monarchy meant they had more stability in Belize than there would be without it, and just over half (53%) agreed that the King could unite everyone no matter who they voted for.
- Belizeans were more likely to see the monarchy as a valuable force for stability and continuity (57%) than as part of a colonial past that had no place in the country today (43%). However, 60% agreed that the royal family should be scaled down and its costs significantly reduced, and 57% that the royal family needs to modernise to survive.
- Only just over half (51%) thought the King and the royal family cared a lot about Belize. The same proportion said the royal family did a better job of connecting with ordinary people than most politicians.
- Just over half (52%) thought becoming a republic would weaken Belize's ties with the UK, including 42% who thought this would be a bad thing. 70% said they would want to remain part of the Commonwealth if Belize were to become a republic.
- Asked where their sympathies lay between Prince Harry and other royals, 16% said they sympathised more with Prince Harry and Meghan, and 8% with the King and Prince William; 37% said they sympathised with both, and 34% with neither.

Quotes from focus groups held in Belize can be found throughout the report. Full survey results for Belize can be found at LordAshcroftPolls.com



Canada

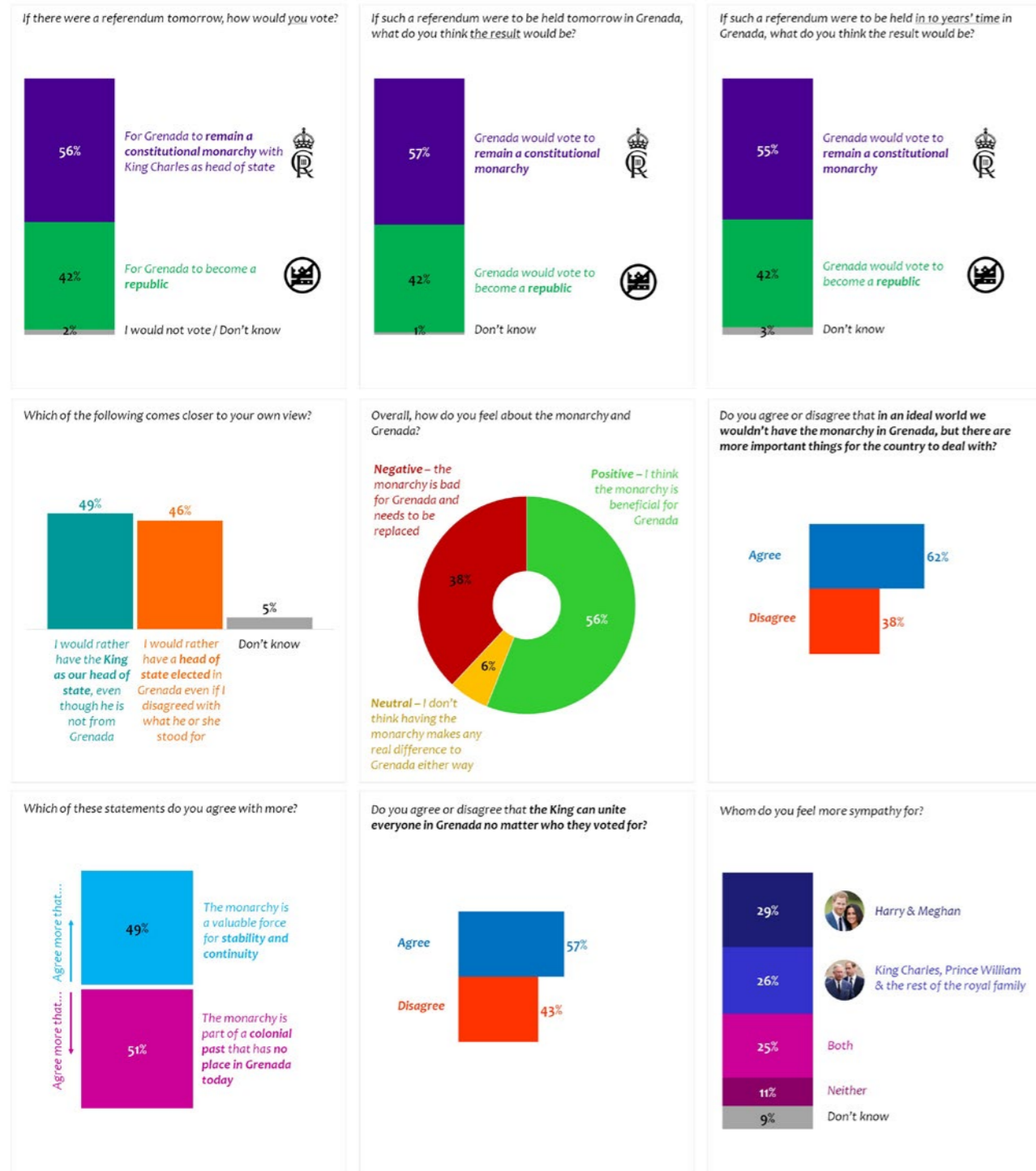


- Our analysis of the polling data shows that only 5% of Canadians are Committed Royalists, 9% are Mainstream Monarchists, 26% are Neutral Pragmatists, 32% are Modern Republicans, and 28% are Angry Abolitionists. (Full descriptions of these segments can be found in Chapter 1).
- 47% Canadians said they would vote to become a republic in a referendum tomorrow, while 23% would vote to remain a constitutional monarchy. 3 in 10 said they didn't know or would not vote. 2021 Liberal voters said they would vote for a republic by 41% to 35%, Conservatives by 51% to 28%, NDP voters by 57% to 17% and Bloc Quebecois voters by 77% to 6%. Men said they would vote for a republic by a 31-point margin and women by 18 points; women were more than twice as likely to say they didn't know (29%) as men (15%).
- However, 79% of Canadians – including 85% of those saying they would vote for a republic – agreed that “in an ideal world we wouldn't have the monarchy in Canada, but there are more important things for the country to deal with.”
- 40% thought Canadians as a whole would choose a republic in a referendum tomorrow, while 36% thought the country would opt for the status quo. A majority (54%) thought the country would choose to become a republic if a referendum were held in 10 years' time.
- Just under half (48%) of those voting for the status quo said the monarchy was a good thing for Canada and should be kept. Almost as many thought either that “the alternative we end up with would probably be worse (22%) or that “the process of changing from the monarchy would probably be too disruptive” (25%).
- Just over half (54%) of those voting for a republic said doing so would bring real, practical benefits to Canada. 38% said the monarchy was wrong in principle and should be replaced whether there were practical benefits or not. 54% of them said the monarchy was good for Canada in the past but makes no sense today; 41% thought the monarchy should never have been part of the way Canada was governed.
- Asked to choose between the two options, 58% said they would rather have a head of state elected in Canada even if they disagreed with what he or she stood for; 21% said they would rather have the King even though he is from another country.
- 61% of Canadians agreed that they were happy to continue with the monarchy under Queen Elizabeth, but now it was time for change. People rejected the idea that the King can unite everyone in Canada no matter who they voted for by 72% to 28%, and nearly two thirds (64%) did not feel that the King or the royal family cared about Canada.
- Canadians were more likely to see the monarchy as “part of a colonial past that has no place in Canada today” (64%) than “a valuable force for stability and continuity” (36%). 77% agreed that the royal family should be scaled down and its costs significantly reduced; the same proportion said it needs to modernise to have any chance of surviving.
- Just under one third (32%) thought becoming a republic would weaken Canada's ties with the UK (including 10% who thought that would be a good thing); 44% thought such a move would make no difference to Canada's relationship with the UK. If Canada were to become a republic, 48% said they would want to remain part of the Commonwealth, with 21% disagreeing.
- Asked where their sympathies lay between Prince Harry and other royals, 26% said they felt more sympathy for Prince Harry and Meghan, and 9% for the King and Prince William; 15% had sympathy for both, and 45% for neither.

Quotes from focus groups held in Canada can be found throughout the report.
Full survey results for Canada can be found at LordAshcroftPolls.com



Grenada

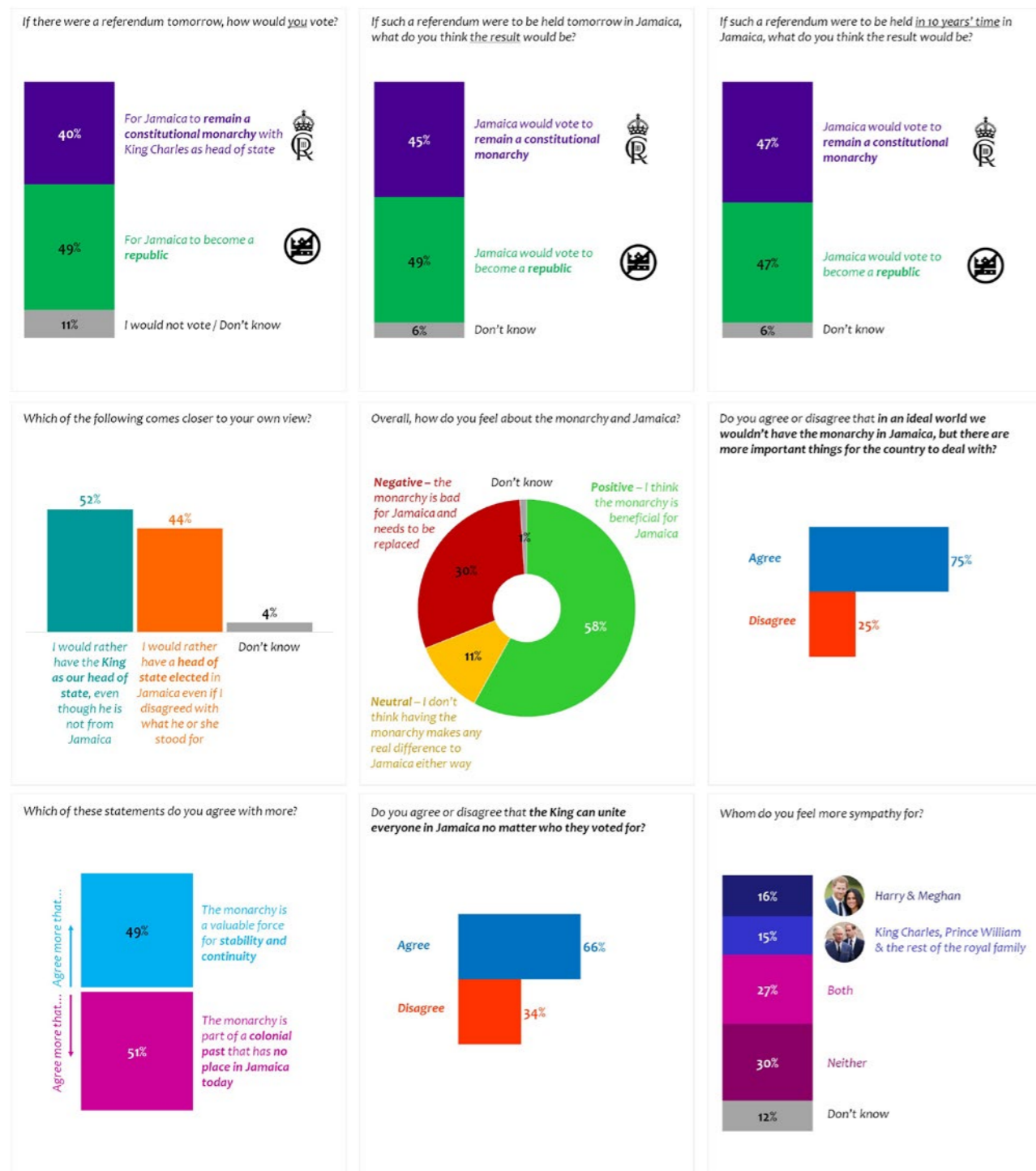


- Our analysis of the polling data shows that 26% of Grenadians are Committed Royalists, 10% are Mainstream Monarchists, 12% are Neutral Pragmatists, 15% are Modern Republicans and 37% are Angry Abolitionists. (Full descriptions of these segments can be found in Chapter 1).
- A majority of Grenadians (56%) said they would vote to remain a constitutional monarchy if a referendum were held tomorrow, while 42% would vote to become a republic. A similar proportion (57%) thought that if such a referendum were held in 10 years' time, the country would vote for the status quo, while 42% thought it would vote to change. By a similar margin (55% to 42%) they thought the same result would occur in a referendum held in 50 years.
- 81% of those voting to stay with the Crown thought the monarchy was a good thing for Grenada and should be kept, rather than that the alternative would probably be worse (8%) or that the process of changing would probably be too disruptive (11%).
- 80% of those voting to become a republic thought the move would bring real, practical benefits to Grenada, while 20% said the monarchy was wrong in principle and should be replaced whether it brings practical benefits or not. Just over one third of them (34%) said the monarchy had been good for Grenada in the past but makes no sense today; 65% said it should never have been part of how Grenada was governed.
- 62% of Grenadians, including 87% of those voting for a republic, agreed that "in an ideal world we wouldn't have the monarchy in Grenada, but there are more important things for the country to deal with". Just under half (47%) said they were happy to continue with the monarchy under Queen Elizabeth, but now it was time for change; 53% disagreed with this statement.
- Just over half (57%) agreed that the King can unite everyone in the country no matter who they voted for. Grenadians were almost equally divided as to whether the royal family (49%) or elected politicians (51%) do a better job of connecting with ordinary people.
- People were slightly more likely to disagree (51%) than agree (46%) that the royal family should be scaled down and its cost significantly reduced, but they were evenly divided (49% each) as to whether it needed to modernise in order to have a chance of surviving.
- Grenadians were closely divided as to whether the monarchy was part of a colonialist past that has no place in the country today (51%) or a valuable force for continuity and stability (49%). They were equally divided as to whether the monarchy makes them feel warmer (51%) or less warm (49%) towards the UK.
- 72% of Grenadians said becoming a republic would weaken their ties with the UK (though this included 39% who thought this would be a good thing). 85% said that they would want to remain part of the Commonwealth if Grenada became a republic.
- Asked where their sympathies lay between Prince Harry and other royals, 29% said they had more sympathy with Prince Harry and Meghan, and 26% with the King and Prince William; 25% had sympathy for both and 11% for neither.

Full survey results for Grenada can be found at LordAshcroftPolls.com



Jamaica



- Our analysis of the polling data shows that 22% of Jamaicans are Committed Royalists, 7% are Mainstream Monarchists, 10% are Neutral Pragmatists, 40% are Modern Republicans and 20% are Angry Abolitionists. (Full descriptions of these segments can be found in Chapter 1).
- 49% of Jamaicans said they would vote to become a republic if a referendum were held tomorrow, while 40% would vote to remain a constitutional monarchy. 18-24-year-olds said they would vote for a republic by 61% to 28%, 35-54-year-olds were evenly divided at 42% each, and those aged 55 or over would vote to keep the monarchy by 58% to 39%.
- Jamaicans were slightly more likely to think such a referendum would result in the country choosing a republic (49%) than keeping the status quo (45%).
- 75% of Jamaicans – including 84% of those voting for a republic – agreed that “in an ideal world we wouldn't have the monarchy in Jamaica, but there are more important things for the country to deal with.”
- 78% of those voting for a republic thought this would bring “real, practical benefits” to Jamaica, while 21% said the monarchy was wrong in principle and should be replaced whether there are practical benefits or not. Just over half of pro-republic voters said the monarchy had been good for Jamaica in the past but makes no sense today; 47% said it should never have been part of the way the country was governed.
- 61% of those voting to stay with the Crown said the monarchy was a good thing for Jamaica; 4 in 10 said either

that the alternative would probably be worse, or that the process of changing from the monarchy would probably be too disruptive.

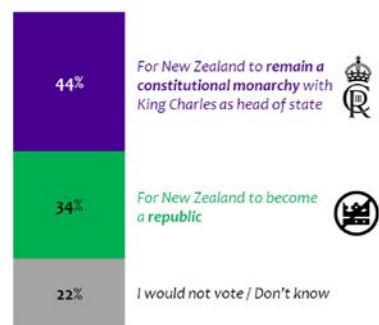
- Asked to choose between the two options, 44% said they would rather have a head of state elected in Jamaica even if they disagreed with what he or she stood for; a small majority (52%) said they would rather have the King as head of state even though he is from another country.
- By 66% to 34%, Jamaicans agreed that “the King can unite everyone in Jamaica no matter who they voted for”, and they were evenly divided as to whether the royal family or elected politicians do a better job of connecting with ordinary people.
- Slightly more Jamaicans said they saw the monarchy as part of a colonialist past that has no place in the country today (51%) than as a valuable force for stability and continuity (49%).
- Just over half (54%) of Jamaicans thought becoming a republic would weaken their ties with the UK (including 24% who thought this would be a good thing); while 30% said it would make no difference to their relationship with Britain. 60% said they would want to remain part of the Commonwealth if Jamaica became a republic.
- Asked where their sympathies lay between Prince Harry and other royals, 16% said they felt more sympathy with Prince Harry and Meghan, and 15% with the King and Prince William; 27% felt sympathy for both, and 30% for neither.

Quotes from focus groups held in Jamaica can be found throughout the report. Full survey results for Jamaica can be found at LordAshcroftPolls.com

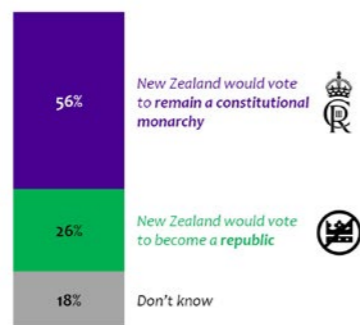


New Zealand

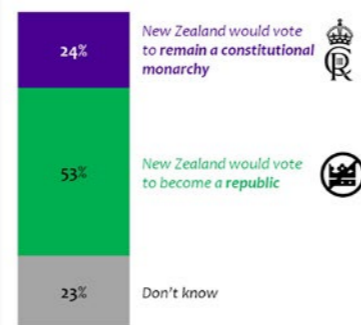
If there were a referendum tomorrow, how would you vote?



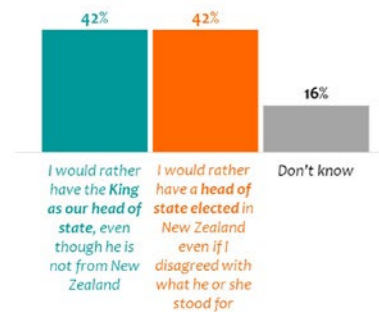
If such a referendum were to be held tomorrow in New Zealand, what do you think the result would be?



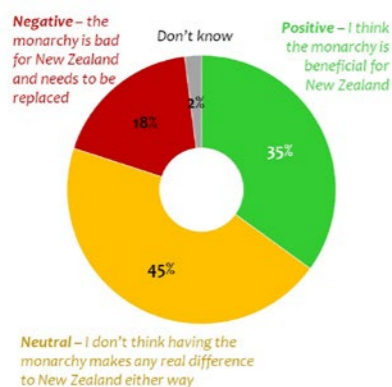
If such a referendum were to be held in 10 years' time in New Zealand, what do you think the result would be?



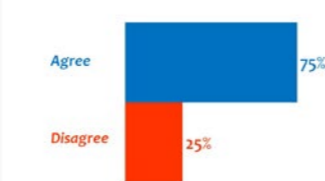
Which of the following comes closer to your own view?



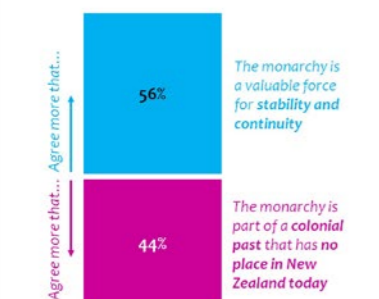
Overall, how do you feel about the monarchy and New Zealand?



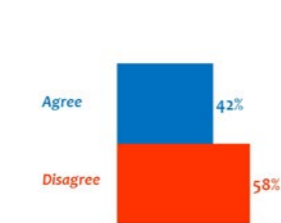
Do you agree or disagree that in an ideal world we wouldn't have the monarchy in New Zealand, but there are more important things for the country to deal with?



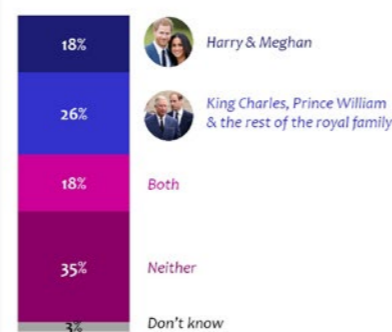
Which of these statements do you agree with more?



Do you agree or disagree that the King can unite everyone in New Zealand no matter who they voted for?



Whom do you feel more sympathy for?



- Our analysis of the polling data shows that 7% of New Zealanders are Committed Royalists, 14% are Mainstream Monarchists, 34% are Neutral Pragmatists, 30% are Modern Republicans and 14% are Angry Abolitionists. (Full descriptions of these segments can be found in Chapter 1).
- 44% of New Zealanders said that in a referendum tomorrow they would vote to remain a constitutional monarchy, while 34% said they would vote to become a republic. Just over 1 in 5 said they didn't know or would not vote. 2020 National, Labour, NZ First and ACT party voters were more likely to choose the monarchy, while Green and Māori Party voters were more likely to back a republic.
- Support for keeping the monarchy was more than twice as high among those aged 65 and over (63%) as among those aged 18 to 24 (31%). Men (45%) and women (44%) were almost equally likely to say they would vote to keep the monarchy, but women (22%) were twice as likely as men (11%) to say they didn't know.
- A majority of New Zealanders (56%) thought a referendum tomorrow would result in the status quo. More than one third (34%) of those voting for a republic thought the country as a whole would decide to stay with the monarchy in an immediate referendum. However, a majority of all New Zealanders (53%) thought that if a referendum were held in 10 years' time the country would choose to become a republic.
- Among those voting to keep the monarchy, 41% said this was because it was a good thing for New Zealand. Most said either that the alternative would probably be worse (31%) or that the process of changing would probably be too disruptive (25%).
- Among those voting for a republic, only just over half (51%) thought the move

would bring real, practical benefits to New Zealand; 41% of them said the monarchy was wrong in principle and should be replaced whether there are practical benefits or not. 65% of pro-republic voters said the monarchy had been good for New Zealand in the past but makes no sense today; 32% said it should never have been part of how the country was governed. 74% of those choosing a republic said they were happy to continue with the monarchy under Queen Elizabeth, but now it was time for change.

- Three quarters of New Zealanders, including 85% of those saying they would vote for a republic, agreed that "in an ideal world we wouldn't have a monarchy, but there are more important things for the country to deal with".
- Asked to choose between the two options, New Zealanders were exactly divided (42% each) as to whether they would rather have the King as head of state even though he was from another country, or a head of state elected in New Zealand even if they disagreed with what they stood for.
- New Zealanders were slightly more likely to see the monarchy as a valuable force for stability and continuity (56%) than as part of a colonial past that has no place in the country today (44%).
- 57% said they thought the King and the royal family care a lot about New Zealand, and 65% said the monarchy made them feel warmer towards the UK. 51% said becoming a republic would weaken their ties with the UK. Nearly three quarters (73%) said they would want to stay in the Commonwealth if New Zealand became a republic.
- Asked where their sympathies lay between Prince Harry and other royals, 18% said they felt more sympathy for Prince Harry and Meghan, and 26% for the King and Prince William; 18% said they had sympathy for both, and 35% for neither.

Quotes from focus groups held in New Zealand can be found throughout the report. Full survey results for New Zealand can be found at LordAshcroftPolls.com



Papua New Guinea



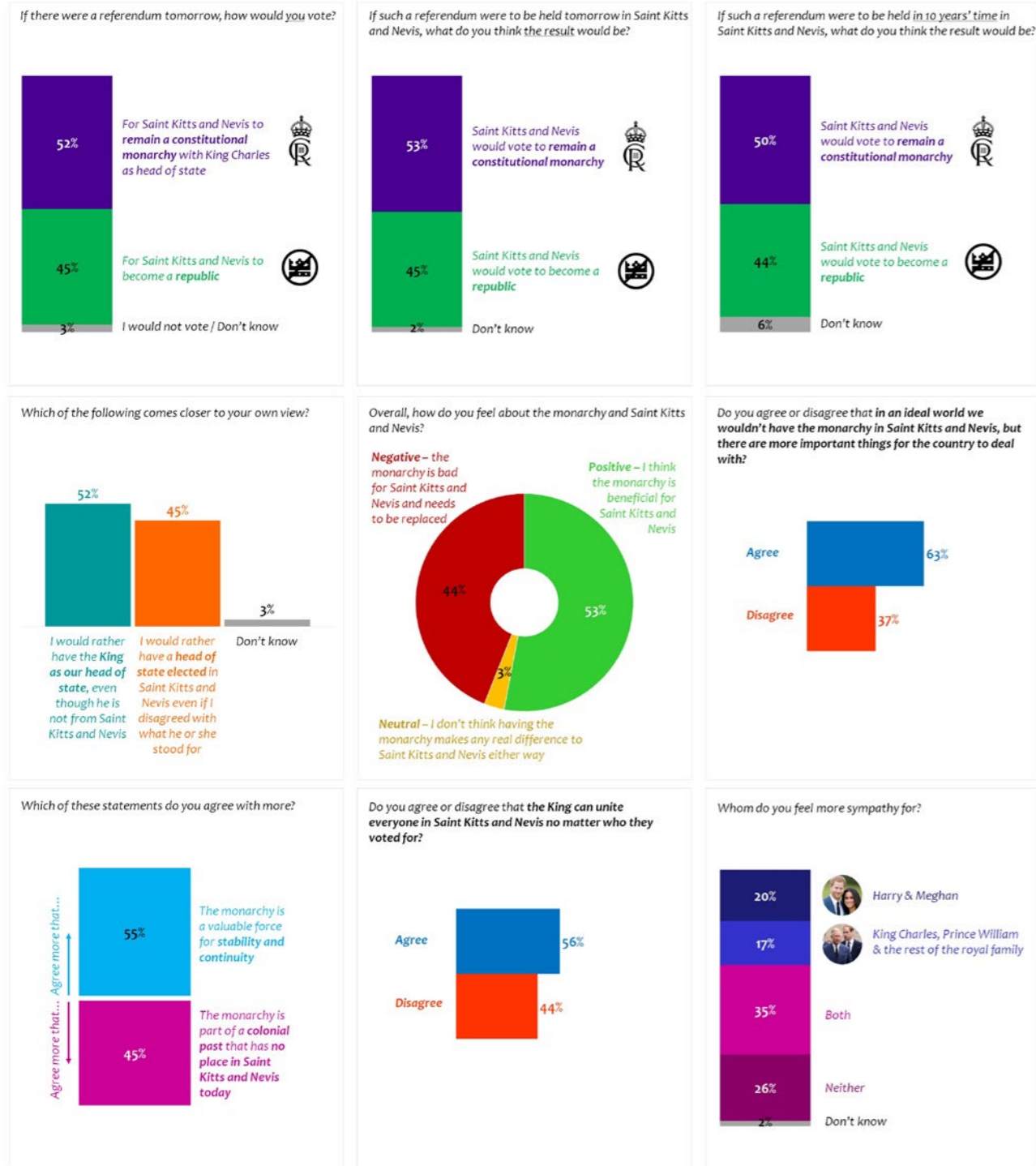
- Our analysis of the polling data shows that 30% of people in Papua New Guinea are Committed Royalists, 12% are Mainstream Monarchists, 11% are Neutral Pragmatists, 26% are Modern Republicans and 21% are Angry Abolitionists. (Full descriptions of these segments can be found in Chapter 1).
- Just over half (51%) of people in Papua New Guinea said they would vote to keep the monarchy if a referendum were held tomorrow, while 45% would vote to become a republic. Men were evenly divided, but women chose the monarchy by 54% to 43%.
- 53% thought that in a referendum tomorrow the country would choose to stay with the monarchy, while 43% thought it would choose a republic.
- They also thought, by a narrower margin, that the result would be the same in a referendum in 10 years' time.
- Two thirds, including 79% of those voting for a republic, agreed that "in an ideal world we wouldn't have the monarchy in Papua New Guinea, but there are more important things to deal with."
- 73% of those voting to keep the monarchy said this was because it was a good thing for the country. Around a quarter thought either that the alternative would probably be worse (14%) or that the process of changing would probably be too disruptive (12%).
- 86% of those voting for a republic thought the change would bring real, practical benefits to Papua New Guinea, while 14% thought the monarchy was wrong in principle and should be replaced whether there were practical

- benefits or not. 29% of pro-republic voters said the monarchy had been good for Papua New Guinea in the past but makes no sense today; 69% of them said it should never have been part of how the country was governed.
- Asked to choose between the two options, people were closely divided as to whether they would rather have the King as head of state even though he is from another country (46%), or a head of state elected in Papua New Guinea even if they disagreed with what he or she stood for.
- Just over half (56%) agreed that the King can unite everyone in Papua New Guinea no matter who they voted for, and 54% thought the royal family did a better job of connecting with ordinary people than elected politicians. However, 57% thought the royal family should be scaled down and its cost significantly reduced, and 56% that it needed to modernise in order to survive.
- 58% said they saw the monarchy as a valuable force for stability and continuity, while 42% considered it part of a colonialist past that had no place in Papua New Guinea today.
- 63% thought becoming a republic would weaken their ties with the UK (including 41% who thought this would be a bad thing). Nearly three quarters (73%) said they would want to remain part of the Commonwealth if Papua New Guinea became a republic.
- Asked where their sympathies lay between Prince Harry and other royals, 28% said they had more sympathy with Prince Harry and Meghan, and 11% with the King and Prince William; 37% said they had sympathy for both, and 18% for neither.

Quotes from focus groups held in Papua New Guinea can be found throughout the report. Full survey results for Papua New Guinea can be found at LordAshcroftPolls.com



Saint Kitts and Nevis

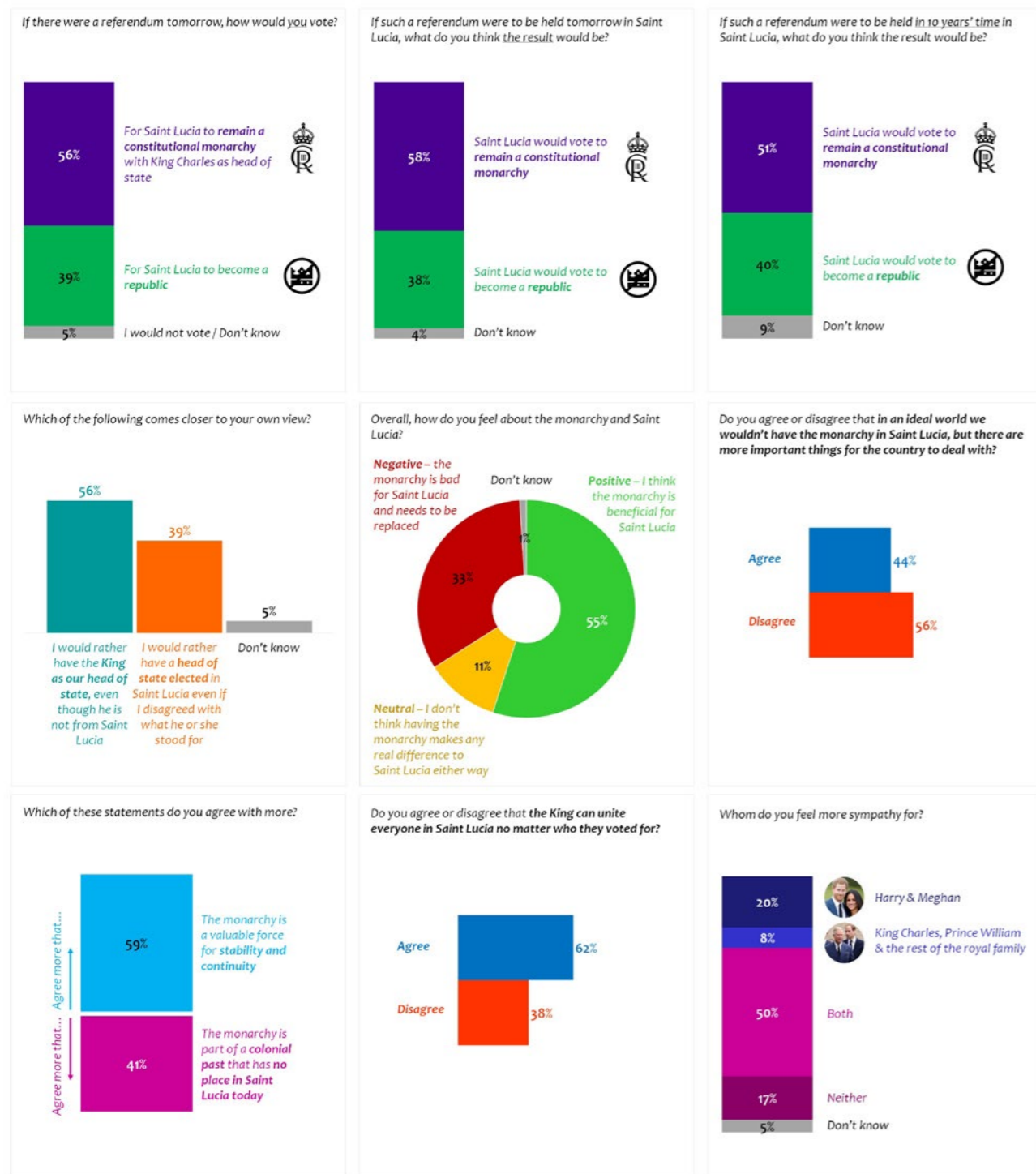


- Our analysis of the polling data shows that 34% of people in St Kitts and Nevis are Committed Royalists. 10% are Mainstream Monarchists, 10% are Neutral Pragmatists, 16% are Modern Republicans and 30% are Angry Abolitionists. (Full descriptions of these segments can be found in Chapter 1).
- 52% of people in St Kitts and Nevis said that they would vote to remain a constitutional monarchy if a referendum were held tomorrow, while 45% would vote to become a republic.
- Just over half (53%) thought such a referendum would result in St Kitts and Nevis staying with the monarchy, while 45% thought the country would choose to become a republic. By a narrower margin (50% to 44%) they thought a referendum held in 10 years' time would produce the same result.
- 63% agreed that "in an ideal world we wouldn't have the monarchy, but there are more important things for the country to deal with."
- Of those voting to stay with the Crown, 80% thought the monarchy was a good thing for the country; 20% thought either that the alternative would probably be worse, or that the process of changing would be too disruptive.
- 82% of those saying they would vote to become a republic thought the change would bring real, practical benefits to St Kitts and Nevis; 18% thought the monarchy was wrong in principle and should be replaced whether there are practical benefits or not. Just over half (54%) of pro-republic voters said the having the monarchy had been good for St Kitts and Nevis in the past but makes no sense today; 45% of them said it should never have been part of how the country was governed.
- 56% agreed that the King can unite everyone in St Kitts and Nevis no matter who they voted for, and 53% thought the royal family did a better job of connecting with ordinary people than elected politicians.
- 55% said the monarchy was a valuable force for stability and continuity, while 45% were more inclined to see it as part of a colonial past that has no place in the country today. However, 53% agreed that the royal family should be scaled down and its cost significantly reduced, and 57% that it needs to modernise to have a chance of surviving.
- 79% said St Kitts and Nevis becoming a republic would weaken its ties with the UK, though they were divided as to whether this would be a bad thing (41%) or a good thing (38%). 62% said they would want St Kitts and Nevis to remain part of the Commonwealth if the country became a republic.
- Asked where their sympathies lay between Prince Harry and other royals, 20% said they had more sympathy for Prince Harry and Meghan, 17% for the King and Prince William; 35% had sympathy for both, and 26% for neither.

Full survey results for St Kitts and Nevis can be found at LordAshcroftPolls.com



Saint Lucia

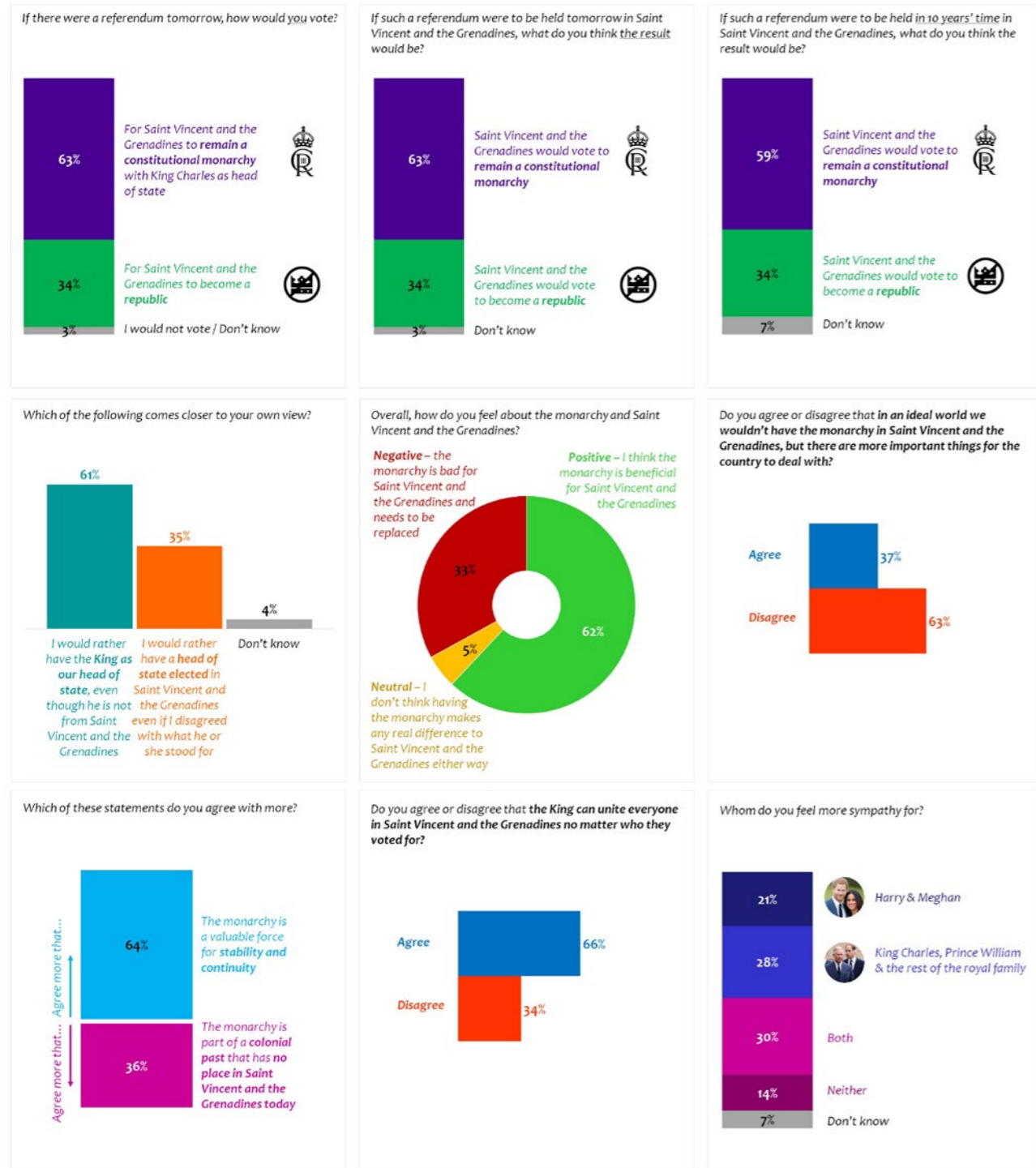


- Our analysis of the polling data shows that 20% of St Lucians are Committed Royalists, 35% are Mainstream Monarchists, 4% are Neutral Pragmatists, 17% are Modern Republicans, and 24% are Angry Abolitionists.
- 56% of people in St Lucia said that they would vote to keep the monarchy if a referendum were held tomorrow, while 39% would vote to become a republic.
- A clear majority (58% to 38%) thought that in such a referendum, the country would choose to stay with the monarchy. By a narrower margin (51% to 40%), St Lucians thought a referendum held in 10 years' time would produce the same result.
- 87% of those voting to keep the monarchy thought it was a good thing for St Lucia, rather than that the alternative would be worse or the process too disruptive.
- 80% of those voting for a republic thought the change would bring real, practical benefits to St Lucia, while 18% thought the monarchy was wrong in principle and should be replaced whether there are any practical benefits or not. A quarter of pro-republic voters thought the monarchy had been good for St Lucia in the past but makes no sense today; 73% of them thought it should never have been part of the way the country was governed. 73% of pro-republic voters also agreed that "in an ideal world we wouldn't have the monarchy in St Lucia, but there are more important things for the country to deal with".
- Asked to choose between the two options, 56% said they would rather have the King as the head of state even though he is from a different country; 39% said they would rather have a head of state elected in St Lucia even if they disagreed what he or she stood for.
- 62% agreed that the King can unite everyone in St Lucia no matter who they voted for. By 60% to 40%, St Lucians felt the royal family did a better job of connecting with ordinary people than elected politicians. Only a minority (42%) thought the royal family should be scaled down and its cost significantly reduced, but 69% thought it needed to modernise in order to survive.
- More than 8 in 10 St Lucians (81%) thought becoming a republic would weaken their ties with the UK, including 50% who thought this would be a bad thing. 63% said that they would want to remain part of the Commonwealth if St Lucia were to become a republic.
- Asked where their sympathies lay between Prince Harry and other royals, 20% said they had more sympathy with Prince Harry and Meghan, and 8% with the King and Prince William; 50% said they had sympathy for both, and 17% for neither.

Full survey results for St Lucia can be found at [LordAshcroftPolls.com](https://lordashcroftpolls.com)



Saint Vincent and The Grenadines

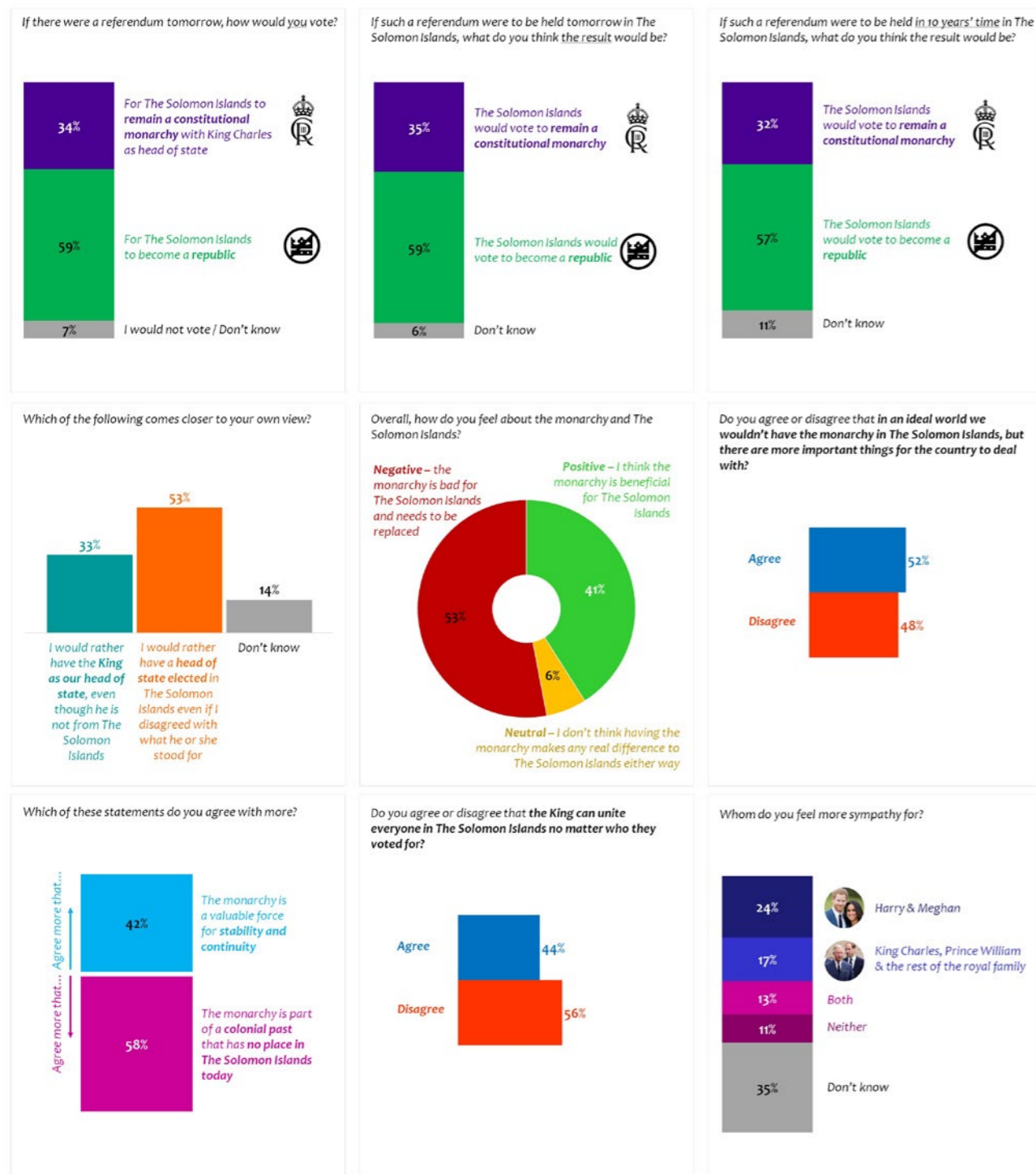


- Our analysis of the polling data shows that nearly half (48%) of people in St Vincent and the Grenadines are Committed Royalists. 11% are Mainstream Monarchists, 5% are Neutral Pragmatists, 7% are Modern Republicans and 29% are Angry Abolitionists. (Full descriptions of these segments can be found in Chapter 1).
- 63% of people in St Vincent and The Grenadines said they would vote to remain a constitutional monarchy if a referendum were held tomorrow, while 34% would vote to become a republic. By the same margin, people thought the country would choose to stay with the monarchy in such a referendum; by a smaller margin (59% to 34%) they thought a referendum in 10 years' time would produce the same outcome.
- More than three quarters of those voting to keep the monarchy said this was because it was a good thing for the country. Just over 1 in 6 thought either that the alternative would probably be worse (16%) or that the process of changing would be too disruptive (6%).
- Among those voting for a republic, 84% thought the move would bring real, practical benefits to the country, while 16% thought the monarchy was wrong in principle and should be replaced whether there were practical benefits or not. Just over half (56%) of pro-republic voters thought the monarchy should never have been part of how the country was governed; 44% of them thought that having the monarchy had been good for the country in the past but makes no sense today.
- Asked to choose between the two options, 61% said they would rather have the King as head of state even though he was from another country; 35% said they would rather have a head of state elected in St Vincent and The Grenadines even if they disagreed with what he or she stood for.
- Two thirds agreed that the King can unite everyone in the country no matter who they voted for, and 64% thought the royal family did a better job of connecting with ordinary people than elected politicians. 62% thought the King and the royal family cared a lot about St Vincent and The Grenadines, and 67% said the monarchy made them feel warmer towards the UK.
- 83% thought becoming a republic would weaken the country's ties with the UK, including 58% who thought this would be a bad thing. Nearly three quarters (74%) said they would want to remain part of the Commonwealth if St Vincent and The Grenadines were to become a republic.
- Asked where their sympathies lay between Prince Harry and other royals, 21% said they had more sympathy for Prince Harry and Meghan, and 28% with the King and Prince William; 30% had sympathy for both, and 14% for neither.

Full survey results for St Vincent and The Grenadines can be found at [LordAshcroftPolls.com](https://lordashcroftpolls.com)



Solomon Islands

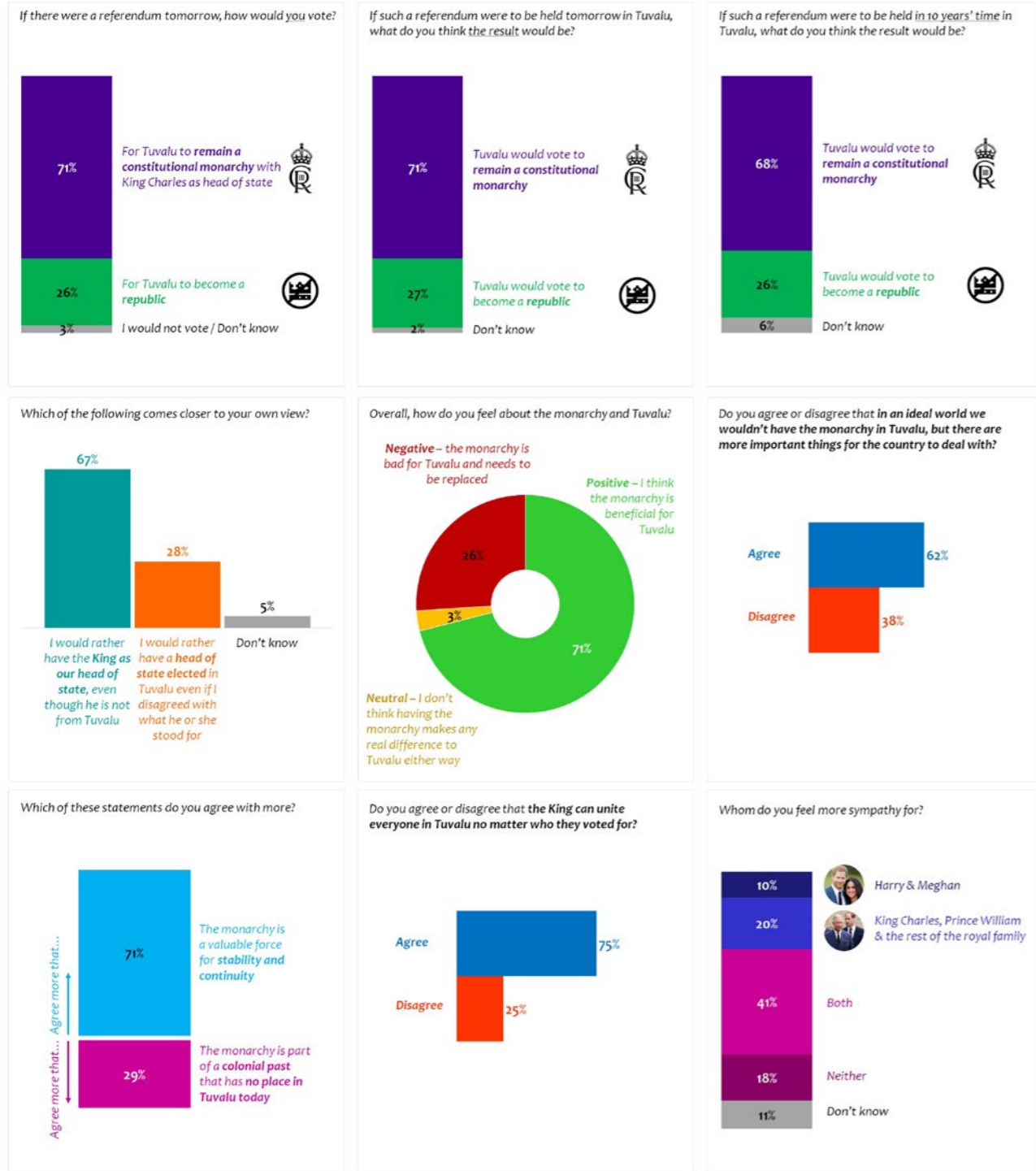


- Our analysis of the polling data shows that 28% of Solomon Islanders are Committed Royalists, 8% are Mainstream Monarchists, 1% are Neutral Pragmatists, 17% are Modern Republicans and 46% are Angry Abolitionists. (Full descriptions of these segments can be found in Chapter 1).
- 59% of Solomon Islanders said they would vote to become a republic if a referendum were held tomorrow, while 34% would vote to remain a constitutional monarchy. By a similar margin (59% to 35%), people thought such a referendum would result in the country choosing to become a republic.
- Just under half (47%) of those voting to become a republic said the move would bring real, practical benefits to the Solomon Islands; a slim majority (53%) said the monarchy was wrong in principle and should be replaced whether there were practical benefits or not. While 19% of pro-republic voters said the monarchy had been good for the country in the past but makes no sense today, 72% thought it should never have been part of the way the country was governed.
- Just over three quarters (77%) of those voting to keep the monarchy said this was because it was a good thing for the country; nearly a quarter said either that the alternative would probably be worse (13%) or that the process of changing would probably be too disruptive (10%).
- Just over half (52%, including 65% of pro-republic voters) agreed that "in an ideal world we wouldn't have the monarchy in the Solomon Islands, but there are more important things for the country to deal with".
- Asked to choose between the two options, 1 in 3 said they would rather have the King as head of state even though he is from another country; 53% said they would rather have a head of state elected in the Solomon Islands even if they disagreed with what he or she stood for.
- Solomon Islanders were more likely to see the monarchy as part of a colonial past that has no place in the country today (58%) than as a valuable force for stability and continuity (42%).
- A clear majority (62%) said they did not think the King or the royal family cared about the Solomon Islands, and 57% said the monarchy made them feel less warm towards the UK.
- Just under half (46%) said becoming a republic would weaken the country's ties with the UK, and nearly half of these said they thought this would be a good thing. 43% said it would make no difference to their relationship with the UK. 80% said they would want to remain part of the Commonwealth if the Solomon Islands became a republic.

Quotes from focus groups held in the Solomon Islands can be found throughout the report. Full survey results for the Solomon Islands can be found at LordAshcroftPolls.com



Tuvalu



- Our analysis of the polling data shows that 55% of Tuvaluans are Committed Royalists. 5% are Mainstream Monarchists, 9% are Neutral Pragmatists, 5% are Modern Republicans and 25% are Angry Abolitionists. (Full descriptions of these segments can be found in Chapter 1).
- 71% of people in Tuvalu said they would vote to remain a constitutional monarchy if a referendum were held tomorrow, while 26% would vote to become a republic. By a similar margin, people thought that in such a referendum the country would decide to stay with the monarchy.
- 61% of those voting to keep the monarchy said this was because it was good thing for the country. A significant minority thought either that the alternative would probably be worse (28%) or that the process of changing would probably be too disruptive (11%).
- 62% of Tuvaluans agreed that in an ideal world they wouldn't have the monarchy, but there were more important things for the country to deal with.
- 72% agreed that the monarchy means they have more stability in Tuvalu than they would have without it, and three quarters agreed that the King can unite everyone in the country no matter who they voted for.
- Tuvaluans were much more likely to see the monarchy as a valuable force for stability and continuity (71%) than part of a colonial past that has no place in the country today (29%).
- Large majorities thought that the King and the royal family care a lot about Tuvalu (72%) and that the royal family does a better job of connecting with ordinary people than elected politicians (71%).
- 63% said Tuvalu becoming a republic would weaken the country's ties with the UK, including 49% who said this would be a bad thing. 82% said they would want to remain part of the Commonwealth if Tuvalu ever became a republic.

Full survey results for Tuvalu can be found at LordAshcroftPolls.com

Methodological Note

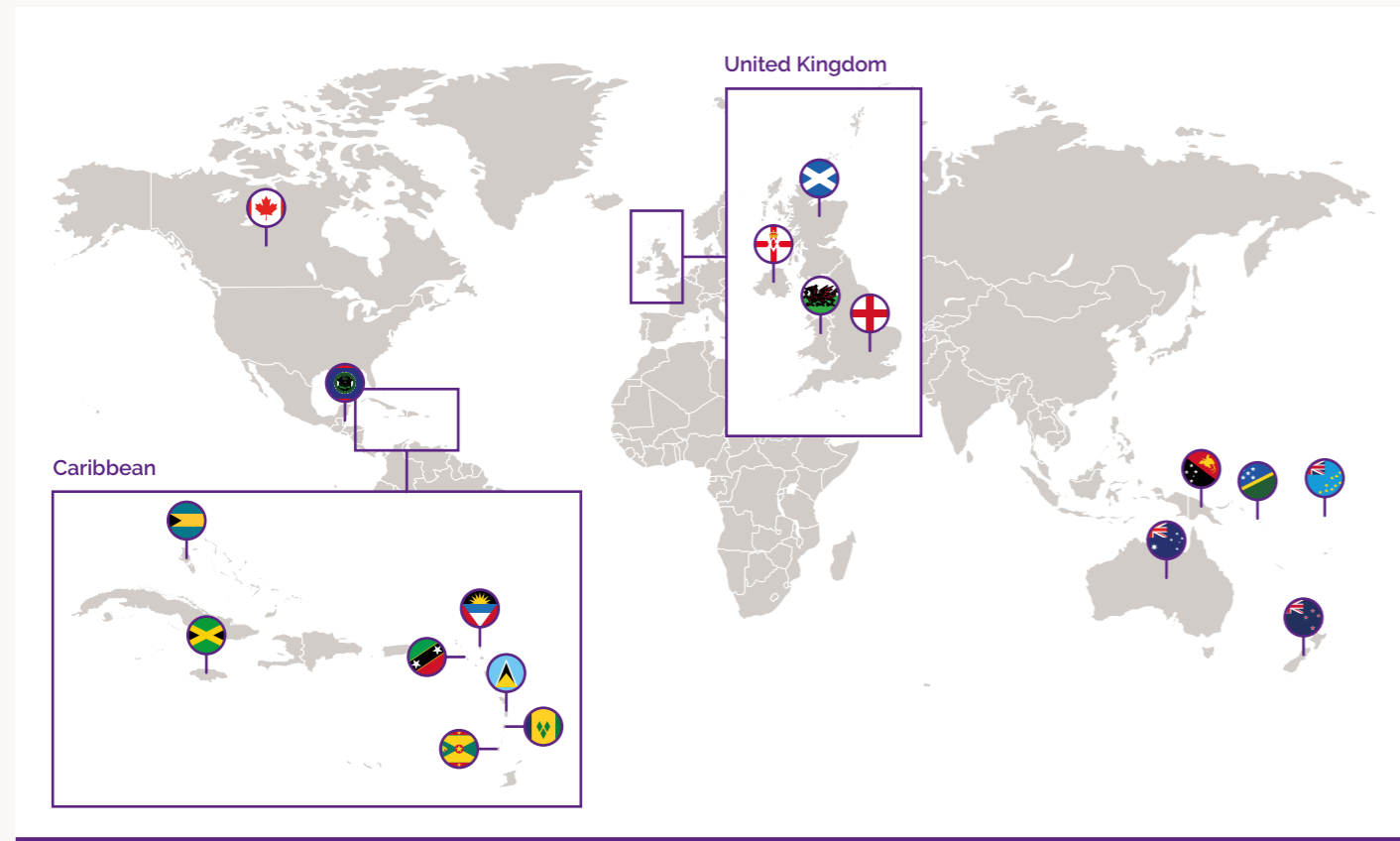
Surveys

A total of 22,701 adults were interviewed online in the following countries between 6 February and 23 March 2023. Full data tables for each country are available at [LordAshcroftPolls.com](https://www.lordashcroftpolls.com)

- Antigua and Barbuda (510)*
- Australia (2,012)**
- The Bahamas (507)*
- Belize (510)*
- Canada (2020)**
- Grenada (510)*
- Jamaica (510)*
- New Zealand (2012)**
- Papua New Guinea (510)*
- St Kitts and Nevis (510)*
- St Lucia (510)*
- St Vincent and The Grenadines (510)*
- Solomon Islands (310)*
- Tuvalu (310)*
- UK: England (8,204), Scotland (1,470), Wales (690),*** Northern Ireland (1,156)****

* Results weighted by age and gender ** Results weighted by age, gender, region and past vote *** Results weighted by age, gender, region, education, social grade, past vote **** Results weighted by age, gender, religion, social grade, constitutional position

While every effort was made to ensure representative samples, it should be noted that internet access is incomplete or inconsistent in some of the areas polled.



Focus Groups

44 focus groups with people from a range of backgrounds were held between 1 February and 31 March 2023 in the following locations:



Australia (4)
Online
Sydney
Brisbane



The Bahamas (2)
In person
Nassau



Belize (2)
In person
Belize City



Canada (4)
Online
Ontario
Quebec



Jamaica (2)
In person
Kingston



New Zealand (4)
Online
Auckland
Christchurch



Papua New Guinea (2)
Online



Solomon Islands (2)
Online

United Kingdom (22)



England
Online
London
Reading
Middlesbrough
Hartlepool
Durham
In person
Birmingham
Leeds



Scotland:
In person
Glasgow
Edinburgh
Aberdeen



Northern Ireland
In person
Carrickfergus
Lisburn



Wales
Online
Cardiff
Swansea
Aberystwyth
N. Wales

About Lord Ashcroft

Lord Ashcroft KCMG PC is an international businessman, philanthropist, author and pollster. He is a former treasurer and deputy chairman of the UK Conservative Party. He is also honorary chairman and a former treasurer of the International Democrat Union. He is founder and chairman of the board of trustees of Crimestoppers, vice-patron of the Intelligence Corps Museum, chairman of the trustees of Ashcroft Technology Academy, a senior fellow of the International Strategic Studies Association, former chancellor of Anglia Ruskin University and a former trustee of Imperial War Museums.

His political books include:

- Smell the Coffee: A Wake-Up Call for the Conservative Party
- Call Me Dave: The Unauthorised Biography of David Cameron
- Hopes and Fears: Trump, Clinton, the Voters and the Future
- Well, You Did Ask: Why the UK Voted to Leave the EU
- The Lost Majority: The 2017 Election, the Conservative Party, the Voters and the Future
- Jacob's Ladder: The Unauthorised Biography of Jacob Rees-Mogg
- Diagnosis of Defeat: Labour's Turn to Smell the Coffee
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His other books include:

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- Special Forces Heroes
- George Cross Heroes
- Special Ops Heroes
- Heroes of the Skies
- White Flag? An Examination of the UK's Defence Capability
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