Module : **Culture(s)/ Civilization(s)**

Academic year : 2021-2022

Lecture Four : The Queen of Britain( Elisabeth II)

1. **Introduction**

Queen Elizabeth II is one of the most famous and admired people on Earth. As the nominal leader of the United Kingdom since 1952—making her the country's longest-serving monarch—her influence is felt the world over. But despite that enormous influence, the Queen holds no real power in British government. Instead, as the monarchy evolved over hundreds of years, her role has become largely symbolic.



**A Brief Biography**

Elizabeth II (Elizabeth Alexandra Mary; born 21 April 1926)[b] is Queen of the United Kingdom and 15 other Commonwealth realms.[c]

Elizabeth was born in Mayfair, London, as the first child of the Duke and Duchess of York (later King George VI and Queen Elizabeth). Her father ascended the throne in 1936 upon the abdication of his brother, King Edward VIII, making Elizabeth the heir presumptive. She was educated privately at home and began to undertake public duties during the Second World War, serving in the Auxiliary Territorial Service. In November 1947, she married Philip Mountbatten, a former prince of Greece and Denmark, with whom she had four children: Charles, Prince of Wales; Anne, Princess Royal; Prince Andrew, Duke of York; and Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex.

When her father died in February 1952, Elizabeth—then 25 years old—became queen regnant of seven independent Commonwealth countries: the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan, and Ceylon, as well as Head of the Commonwealth. Elizabeth has reigned as a constitutional monarch

1. **The Queen’s main function in the government**

The Queen remains the head of British state, the highest representative of the United Kingdom on the national and international stage. The head of the British government, however, is the Prime Minister. One serves as a symbol of the country and the other serves as the chief executive of the government.

In her role as head of state, [Queen Elizabeth II](https://www.history.com/topics/british-history/queen-elizabeth) gives a regular speech at the opening of each new Parliament and makes official appearances and speeches on holidays and special occasions. The Queen keeps in close contact with the Prime Minister and is regularly briefed on all important national matters, but never publicly weighs in on political debates—nor are any final decisions up to her.