

## The British Monarchy, the Parliamentary Monarchy, a democratic political system

### The Queen Elisabeth II and the royal family

**Queen Elisabeth II** was born on 21 April 1926 at 17 Bruton Street, London. She came to the throne on February 6, 1952 upon the death of her father, King George VI.

She is a constitutional Monarch: it means that although she is officially the head of the state, the government, led by the prime Minister, runs the country. She is Queen of 16 former colonies including Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

She is also the head of the armed forces, the only person who can declare when the country is at war and when it is over (after the government advice). She is head of the Church of England. She married Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

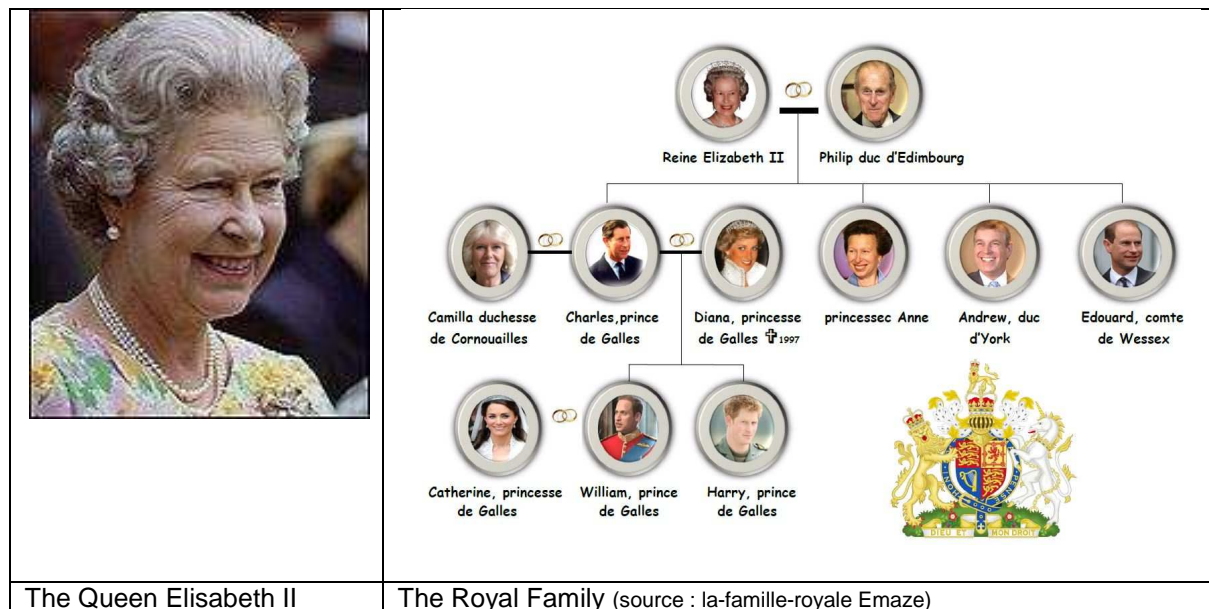
The surname of the **Royal Family is Windsor**.

The Queen and the Prince had 4 children, 3 sons and 1 daughter: Prince Charles (the eldest son, he has held the title of the Prince of Wales), Prince Andrew (title: the Duke of York), Prince Edward (title : the Earl of Wessex) and Princess Ann (the Princess Royal).

The Queen lives at Buckingham Palace in London but she has others places to live (Windsor Castle and Balmoral Castle in Scotland). Her husband is Prince Philip.

The Queen has 8 grandchildren. Two of them are well known, Prince William of Wales and Prince Harry of Wales. They are the sons of Prince Charles, the eldest son of the Queen and of Princess Diana, died in a car accident in 1997.

Prince William is married to Kate Middleton; they have two children: George, 5 years old and Charlotte, 3 years old. Kate is about to give birth to a third baby.



**The British government** runs the United Kingdom. The leader of the government is the Prime Minister. The leader of the political party with the most members of parliament in the House of Commons is asked by the Queen to become Prime Minister and to form a government that will run the country.

The actual Prime Minister is Theresa May, born in 1956. She lives at 10 Downing Street in London.

