

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION

Gender balance of House of Lords Select Committee membership - July 2021

1. In December 2018 the UK Gender Sensitive Parliament Audit¹ recommended that a Parliamentary body monitor the gender breakdown of MPs and peers and those in leadership positions. The House of Lords Commission subsequently asked the Committee of Selection to carry out annual monitoring of Lords committee membership and chairing.²
2. This is the second such report. Since the first was published in April 2020 there have been significant changes to the structure of House of Lords select committees, with the European Union Committee and its sub-committees replaced by six new sessional committees and one sub-committee. The changes required to establish this new committee structure took place between January and April 2021.
3. The numbers in the table below show the 2021 gender balance of House of Lords select committee membership. The committees included in the table are those whose members are proposed by the Committee of Selection before being appointed by way of motions on the floor of the House. As of 22 July 2021 33.9% of select committee members were female and 66.1% were male.³ The gender balance of the membership of the House of Lords as a whole at the beginning of July 2021 was 28.1% female and 71.9% male.⁴ When we published the equivalent figures last year 32.6% of select committee members were female and 67.4% were male, while the gender balance of the membership of the House of Lords as a whole was 27.7% female and 72.3% male.

Committee name	Female members	Male members
Built Environment	4	8
Commission	3	9
Common Frameworks	5	8
Communications and Digital	6	7
Conduct	6	3
Constitution	6	7
Covid-19	6	6
Delegated Powers and Regulatory Reform	3	7

¹ [https://intranet.parliament.uk/Documents/intranet/news-current-issues/UK%20Parliament %20Gender%20Sensitive%20Parliament%20Audit Report DIGITAL.pdf](https://intranet.parliament.uk/Documents/intranet/news-current-issues/UK%20Parliament%20Gender%20Sensitive%20Parliament%20Audit%20Report%20DIGITAL.pdf)

² [https://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-committees/house-of-lords-commission/2017-19/UK Parliament Gender Sensitive Report Response Combined.pdf](https://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-committees/house-of-lords-commission/2017-19/UK%20Parliament%20Gender%20Sensitive%20Report%20Response%20Combined.pdf)

³ If external / lay members are excluded then the percentage figures are 33.4% female and 66.6% male respectively.

⁴ These percentages refer to the gender balance of eligible members, and do not include disqualified members or those on leave of absence. The gender balance of the House as a whole including disqualified members and those on leave of absence is 27.88% female and 72.12% male. No members are recorded as having identified as non-binary.

Economic Affairs	3	10
Environment and Climate Change	5	8
European Affairs	2	11
Finance	1	9
Hybrid Instruments	1	6
Industry and Regulators	3	9
International Agreements	1	11
International Relations and Defence	5	7
Joint Committee on Consolidation etc. Bills	5	7
Joint Committee on the Draft Online Safety Bill	1	5
Joint Committee on Human Rights	2	4
Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy	5	5
Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments	4	3
Justice and Home Affairs	8	4
Liaison	3	8
National Plan for Sport and Recreation	5	7
Procedure and Privileges	6	13
Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland Sub-Committee	3	7
Public Services	5	7
Risk Assessment and Risk Planning	2	10
Science and Technology	7	8
Secondary Legislation Scrutiny	2	9
Services	3	7
Special Public Bill Committee (Charities Bill)	4	5
Standing Orders (Private Bills)	0	7
Youth Unemployment	4	9
TOTALS	129	251
Percentage	33.9%	66.1%

Select Committee Chairs

4. Five committees (the Commission, Hybrid Instruments, Liaison, Procedure and Privileges, Standing Orders (Private Bills)) are chaired by appointed office holders of the House.⁵ Three of the five joint committees are chaired by members of the House of Commons.⁶

⁵ The Commission is chaired by the Lord Speaker; the Hybrid Instruments, Liaison, Procedure and Privileges and Standing Orders (Private Bills) Committees are chaired by the Senior Deputy Speaker.

⁶ At the time of publication, no Chair had been formally appointed for the Joint Committee on the Draft Online Safety Bill.

5. Of the remaining 25 committees or sub-committees, eight are chaired by female members,⁷ and 17 by male members of the House.⁸ When we reported last year the equivalent figures were 6 female chairs and 18 male chairs.

Membership

6. Lay members and external members have been included in the membership totals in the table above for the Commission and the Conduct Committee. Co-opted members are included in the figures. House of Commons members have not been included in the totals for joint committees.

⁷ Built Environment Committee; Common Frameworks Scrutiny Committee; Constitution Committee; COVID-19 Committee; Environment and Climate Change Committee; International Relations and Defence Committee; Justice and Home Affairs Committee; Public Services Committee.

⁸ Communications and Digital Committee; Conduct Committee; Delegated Powers and Regulatory Reform Committee; Economic Affairs Committee; European Affairs Committee; Finance Committee; Industry and Regulators Committee; International Agreements Committee; Joint Committee on Consolidation Bills; National Plan for Sport and Recreation Committee; Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland Sub-Committee; Risk Assessment and Risk Planning Committee; Science and Technology Committee; Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee; Services Committee; Special Public Bill Committee (Charities Bill); Youth Unemployment Committee.