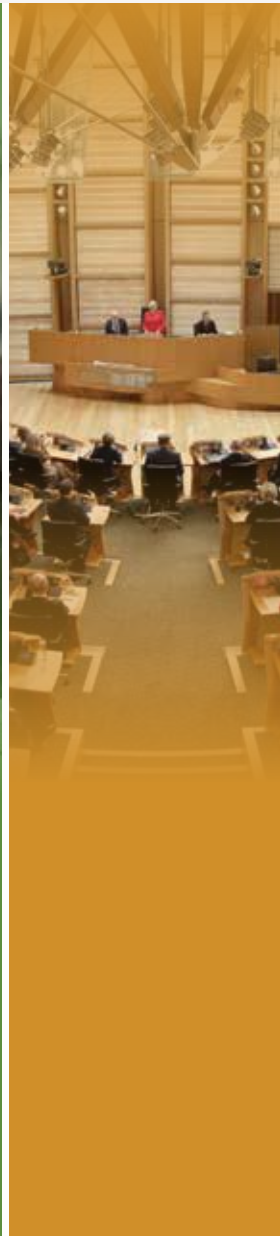
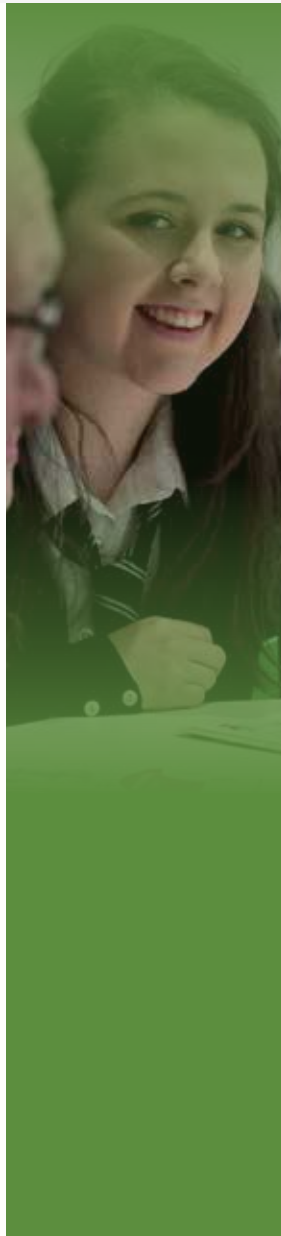
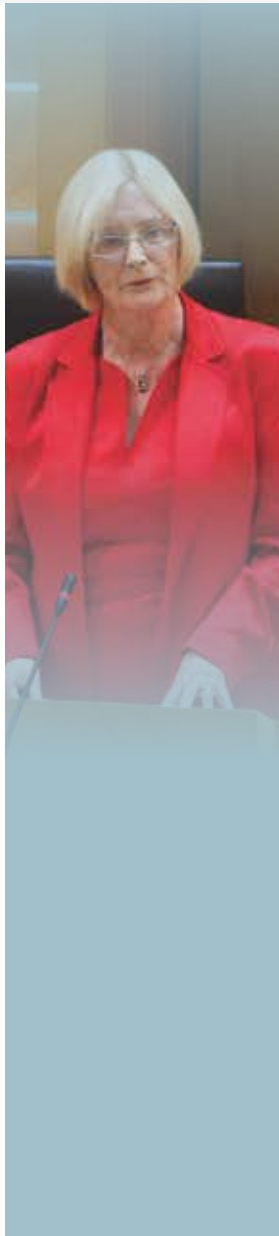
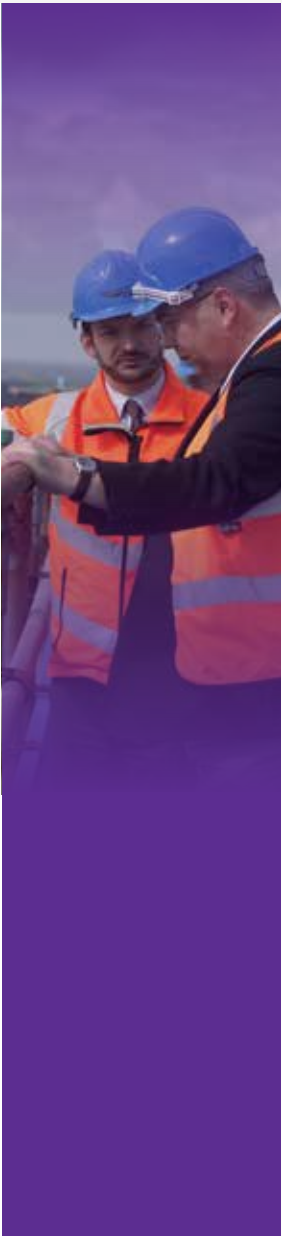




The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

# Scottish Parliament Annual Report 2014–2015



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Click on the links in the page headers to access more information about the areas covered in this report.

This report covers the parliamentary year 11 May 2014 to 10 May 2015.

Inside cover photographs (from top):

The Rt Hon Alex Salmond MSP, First Minister May 2007 to November 2014

Deputy Presiding Officer Elaine Smith MSP following a traditional welcome by girls from St Joseph's Parish, Mendulo, Malawi

Johann Lamont MSP, Scottish Labour leader December 2011 to October 2014

People enjoying themselves in the Garden Lobby – transformed into the Festival Café Bar – during the Festival of Politics

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# Foreword from the Presiding Officer

It's been a remarkable year in Scotland and I'm very pleased that the Scottish Parliament has been at the centre of much of what has been going on.

In June 2014 I was delighted when we hosted The Queen's Baton Relay for the Commonwealth Games.

It was wonderful to witness the baton pass through our building and, symbolically, through our Parliament's Chamber. The great feelings from that sunny day would carry through into the wonderful Games that followed and set the pace for our own hectic year ahead.

September, of course, brought the Independence Referendum. In those crucial weeks, many eyes turned to Scotland. With an intense global glare upon us, I was proud to see the media village we had created, with the Parliament building as its iconic backdrop, used by so many to debate the future direction of our country.



Following the outcome, the Parliament remained centre stage. By late November, having worked with this Parliament and across party boundaries, Lord Smith produced his Commission's report.

Within the report was recognition of the work that the Parliament has already taken forward on parliamentary reform. That work will continue throughout this final year of our first-ever five-year term.

As we look back in this document, we of course are already looking forward. New tax powers have already arrived and more powers are expected in the future.

Our achievements from last year, set out within this report, provide me with a confidence that the Scottish Parliament will remain ready and able to respond.

*Tricia Marwick*

**Rt Hon Tricia Marwick MSP**

The Presiding Officer, the Rt Hon Tricia Marwick MSP (right), and baton bearer Lynne McNicoll (left)



1	2
4	5

- 1. Ruth Davidson MSP
- 2. Patrick Harvie MSP
- 3. First Minister, the Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP
- 4. Willie Rennie MSP
- 5. Kezia Dugdale MSP



# Parliamentary business

Business in the Chamber is a central part of the Scottish Parliament's work, with important and topical debates on a wide range of political issues, policy proposals and legislation. Parliamentary business also includes the questioning of the First Minister and other Scottish Ministers, ministerial statements, scrutiny of legislation and members' business.

## The Chamber

This parliamentary year, the Parliament appointed a new First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon MSP, and a new Cabinet. This took place in November and the new First Minister made a statement to the Parliament on the Scottish Government's Programme for Government shortly afterwards.

The Parliament's sitting patterns were adjusted to take account of the referendum on whether or not Scotland should become an independent country. The Parliament is normally in recess in July and August. However, this year the summer recess in 2014 was split into two parts, with the Parliament reconvening for three weeks during August and moving back into recess until after the Referendum on 18 September.

## The Parliamentary Bureau

Agendas for meetings of the Parliament are proposed by the Parliamentary Bureau on a business motion which, once approved, forms a rolling programme of business for the coming fortnight. Membership of the Bureau currently comprises the Presiding Officer, who chairs the meetings, along with one representative from each party (or grouping of members) with five or more Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs).

During the reporting year, John Wilson MSP resigned his party membership, becoming an independent member, and subsequently joined with the two Scottish Green Party MSPs and the two existing independent MSPs to form a grouping and gain a place on the Parliamentary Bureau. The formation of a grouping meant



MSPs in the Chamber during First Minister's Questions

revised allocations for non-Government business in the Chamber and for cross-party support for members' bill proposals, members' business motions and also decisions for the Presiding Officer on questions and amendments and allocation of speaking time in debates in the Chamber.

## Debates

Debating time in the Chamber is allocated to political parties on the basis of the proportion of seats that they hold. In the past year, the Scottish National Party (SNP) Scottish Government led debates on a wide range of issues, including the following:

- celebrating the contribution of older people to Scottish society
- developing Scotland's young workforce
- health and social care integration
- the legacy of the 20th Commonwealth Games in Scotland – humanity, equality and destiny
- local government elections, delivering improvements in participation and administration

- lowering the drink-drive limit
- protecting public services
- Scotland and Malawi, a special relationship
- the Smith Commission
- tackling inequalities
- tackling violence against women
- working in partnership to end the practice of female genital mutilation

Sixteen half-days are allocated to debate non-Government business in the Chamber during each parliamentary year. This year, debates on a range of topics took place, including the following:

- addressing the attainment gap in Scottish schools
- an end to in-work poverty
- the living wage
- privacy and the state
- Scotland's economy and finances
- tackling sectarianism
- women offenders



## 12 committee debates were held.

### Committee debates

Committees can request debating time in the Chamber to bring issues to the attention of a wider audience. Committee debates this year have included:

- dairy industry inquiry (Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee)
- flexibility and autonomy in local government (Local Government and Regeneration Committee)
- health inequalities (Health and Sport Committee)
- Scotland's National Action Plan for Human Rights (Justice Committee)
- welfare reform and the Smith Commission (Welfare Reform Committee)

As part of the ongoing reform of the Parliament's procedures, committees have been encouraged to be more innovative in the business brought forward for debate. For example, the Health and Sport Committee debate on health inequalities involved the conveners of other committees in order to raise their awareness of the issue and its causes and encourage their committees to consider the health inequalities aspect of work they might undertake.

## There were 33 ministerial statements.

### Ministerial statements

Ministerial statements are an important component of the work of the Parliament and are made by the First Minister and her ministerial colleagues to inform the Parliament of urgent matters or to make announcements on policy. Ministerial statements have been made on a number of topics, including:

- child protection
- Ebola
- Ferguson Shipbuilders
- Jim Clark Rally incidents
- the new Common Agricultural Policy
- Scottish Government response to the Infant Cremation Commission
- unconventional oil and gas
- the Vale of Leven inquiry

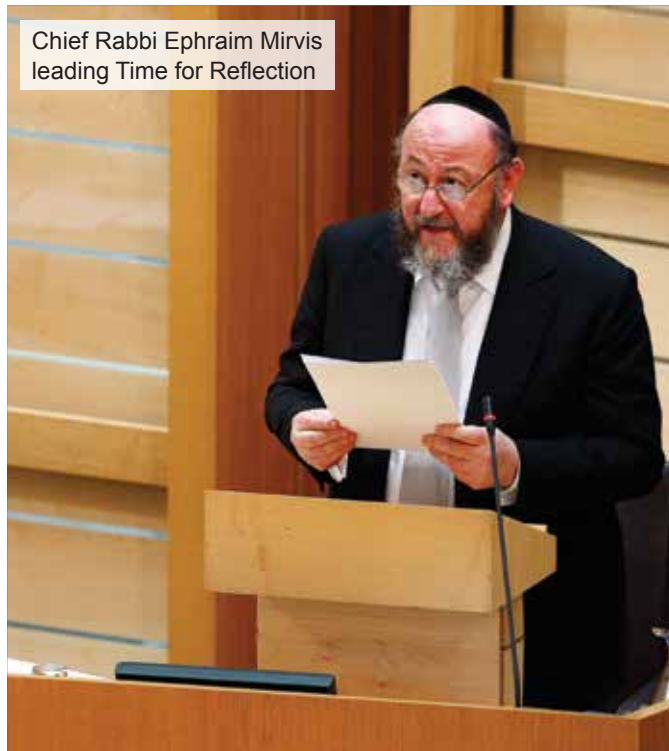
## 106 members' business debates were held.

### Members' business

Members of the Scottish Parliament can, through members' business debates, highlight issues of interest to them which might not otherwise be debated. These debates take place at each meeting of the Parliament and examples of such debates held during the past year include:

- making Scotland autism friendly
- animal rights and human responsibilities
- hepatitis C
- Earth Hour 2015
- recognition of the Palestinian state
- UK National Stalking Awareness Day
- skills partnerships

- tackling projected population decline in Argyll and Bute
- the wave energy sector in Scotland
- young voters and school debates
- child poverty



Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis leading Time for Reflection

## 36 Time for Reflection addresses were given.

### Time for Reflection

The first item of business in the Chamber each week is Time for Reflection, which gives people of different faiths and beliefs the chance to share their thoughts with the Parliament. Representatives from a range of religious groups and faiths, and individuals of no faith, who have taken part this year include:

- Samina Ansari, Co-ordinator at Amina, the Muslim Women's Resource Centre, Glasgow
- Right Reverend John Chalmers, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland

- Nandi Mandela, businesswoman, granddaughter of Nelson Mandela and speaker at the 2014 Edinburgh International Culture Summit
- Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis, Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth

### Parliamentary questions

Parliamentary questions, whether written or oral, are used by MSPs as a means of seeking factual and statistical information from the Scottish Government or the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB).

MSPs have weekly opportunities to ask oral questions of the First Minister and her ministerial colleagues.

**First Minister's Questions (FMQs)** normally take place on a Thursday and are selected by the Presiding Officer. Members also have an opportunity during FMQs to ask questions of a local or urgent nature. 318 FMQs were asked in the last year.

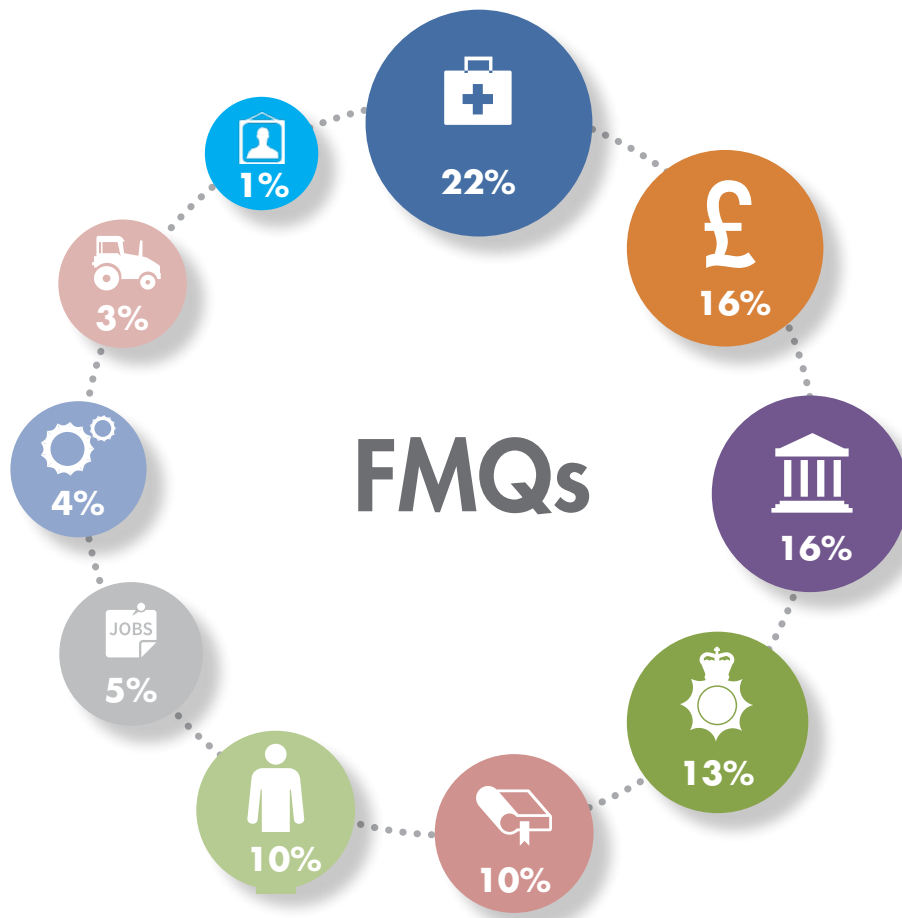
**Topical Questions** are normally the first item of parliamentary business each Tuesday after Time for Reflection and provide members with an opportunity to ask questions of ministers on current issues that are of concern to their constituents. Questions are selected by the Presiding Officer. 120 such questions were asked in the last year.

Ministers are also questioned by MSPs at **Portfolio Questions** on Wednesdays and **General Questions** on Thursdays. Members are randomly selected in a ballot for both. 1,006 such questions were asked in the last year.

3,654 **written questions** were submitted by members in the last year. Each question receives a written answer from the Scottish Government or SPCB and is published on the Parliament's website.



## Parliamentary questions by subject



### Key

- Constitution
- Culture and external affairs
- Economy
- Education
- Employment
- Health, wellbeing and sport
- Infrastructure
- Justice
- Rural and environment
- Social justice

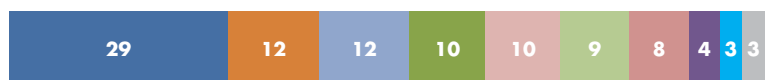
### Portfolio and General Questions (%)



### Topical Questions (%)



### Written Questions (%)



**3,196 motions and amendments** were lodged.

### Motions

MSPs use parliamentary motions for a number of purposes – to highlight an issue or event, to generate support for a cause, to acknowledge or congratulate an achievement or to stimulate debate on a subject. Other members are invited to formally support such motions.

While the vast majority of motions are not intended for debate, a number are, including motions for members' business debates, Government and other party debates, and in relation to legislation.

All motions, whether for debate or not, can be amended by any member.

Motions lodged during the year were on a broad range of subjects, including:

- better food for patients
- fighting mental health stigma
- national Challenge Poverty Week
- the Scottish Women's Rights Centre
- young voters and school debates

**15 Government bills** and **5 members' bills** were introduced.

### Legislation

Draft laws (known as bills while they are being considered by the Parliament) can take several months to complete their three-stage process through the Parliament. When a bill is passed, it takes around one month for it to receive royal assent and become an Act of the Scottish Parliament.

In this parliamentary year, the majority of bills were introduced by the Scottish Government. Five members' bills were also introduced during this period.

Information on the procedures for considering different types of bill can be found on the Parliament's **Bills** webpages.



The Debating Chamber

## Bills introduced

A total of 20 bills were introduced in the Parliament between 11 May 2014 and 10 May 2015. The bills are listed below in order of the date of their introduction, broken down by bill type. Four of these bills were passed during the parliamentary year, as well as a further nine bills which had been introduced in previous parliamentary years. The remainder are continuing their passage through the Parliament.

## Government bills

- **Air Weapons and Licensing (Scotland) Bill** – 14 May 2014
- **Legal Writings (Counterparts and Delivery) (Scotland) Bill** – 14 May 2014
- **Welfare Funds (Scotland) Bill** – 10 June 2014
- **Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill** – 11 June 2014
- **Mental Health (Scotland) Bill** – 19 June 2014
- **Prisoners (Control of Release) (Scotland) Bill** – 14 August 2014
- **Community Charge Debt (Scotland) Bill** – 3 December 2014
- **Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Bill** – 11 December 2014
- **Budget (Scotland) (No. 4) Bill** – 15 January 2015
- **Carers (Scotland) Bill** – 9 March 2015
- **Harbours (Scotland) Bill** – 18 March 2015
- **Inquiries into Fatal Accidents and Sudden Deaths etc (Scotland) Bill** – 19 March 2015
- **Education (Scotland) Bill** – 23 March 2015
- **Scottish Elections (Reduction of Voting Age) Bill** – 2 April 2015
- **Community Justice (Scotland) Bill** – 7 May 2015

## Members' bills

- **British Sign Language (Scotland) Bill** – 29 October 2014
- **Smoking Prohibition (Children in Motor Vehicles) (Scotland) Bill** – 15 December 2014
- **Apologies (Scotland) Bill** – 3 March 2015
- **Alcohol (Licensing, Public Health and Criminal Justice) (Scotland) Bill** – 1 April 2015
- **Pentland Hills Regional Park Boundary Bill** – 30 April 2015



MSPs in the Chamber

MSPs in the Chamber during First Minister's Questions



## Acts

The 13 bills which received royal assent to become Acts of the Scottish Parliament between 11 May 2014 and 10 May 2015 are listed below in the order in which they received royal assent.

- **Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014** [Government]
- **Buildings (Recovery of Expenses) (Scotland) Act 2014** [Member's]
- **City of Edinburgh Council (Portobello Park) Act 2014** [Private]
- **Housing (Scotland) Act 2014** [Government]
- **Disabled Persons' Parking Badges (Scotland) Act 2014** [Member's]
- **Revenue Scotland and Tax Powers Act 2014** [Government]
- **Courts Reform (Scotland) Act 2014** [Government]
- **Historic Environment Scotland Act 2014** [Government]
- **Food (Scotland) Act 2015** [Government]
- **Budget (Scotland) Act 2015** [Government]
- **Community Charge Debt (Scotland) Act 2015** [Government]
- **Legal Writings (Counterparts and Delivery) (Scotland) Act 2015** [Government]
- **Welfare Funds (Scotland) Act 2015** [Government]



MSPs contribute to parliamentary debate on a wide range of issues.



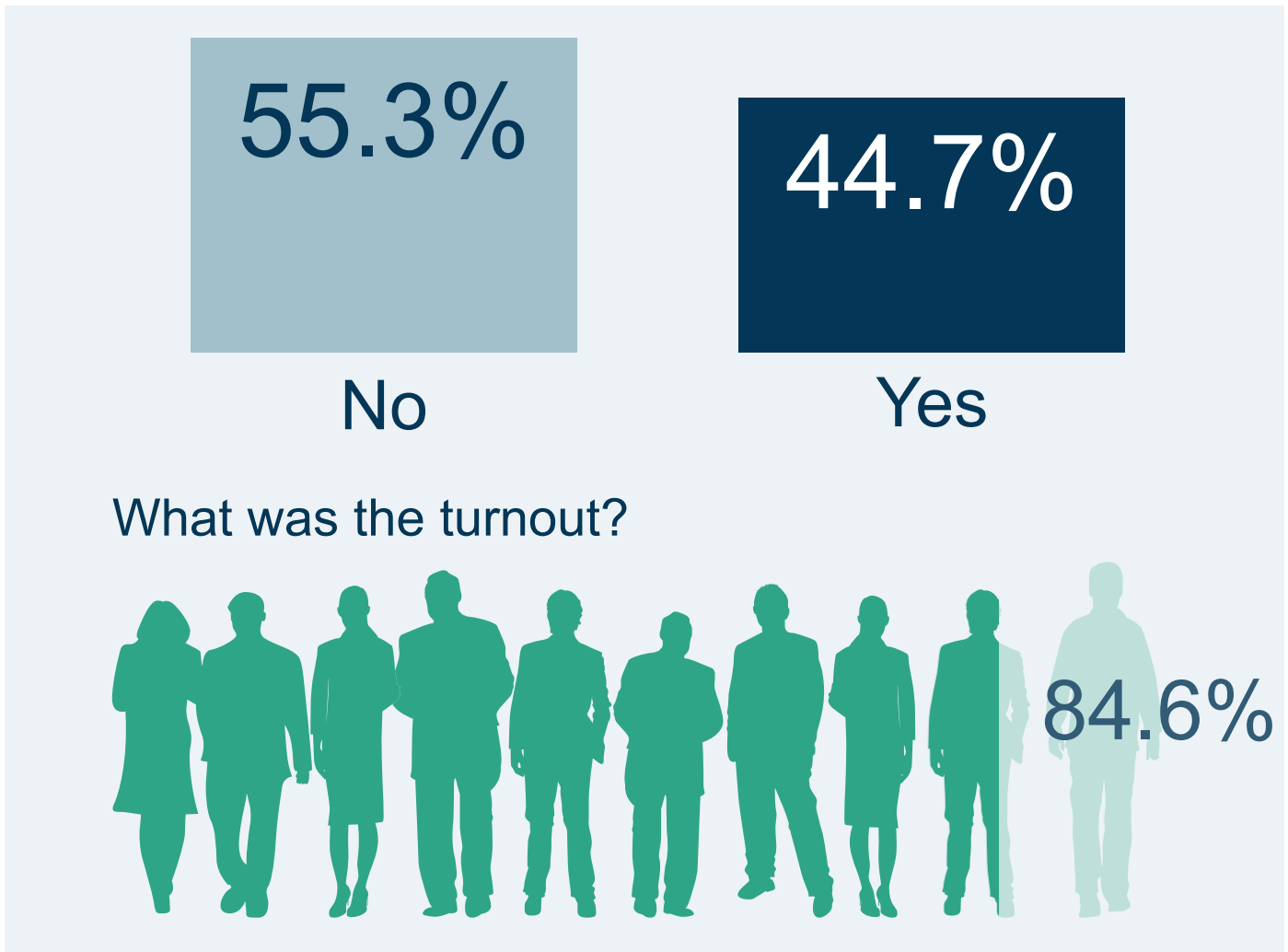
# Bringing the Referendum to the world

In the week leading up to the Referendum on 18 September 2014, we facilitated access to the Parliament building for journalists from all over the world. In order to provide broadcasters with adequate space and a good view of the Parliament building for the backdrop to their shots and TV programmes, double-height structural platforms, along with power and associated facilities, were built in the landscaped garden area for live presenting. The media village opened on Saturday 13 September and closed on Tuesday 23 September. During the peak three

days before and after the Referendum there were more than 800 accredited broadcasting staff in and around the village. A number of platform positions were also allocated to global video news organisations covering more than 30 countries worldwide. An information centre was established where the visiting media could pick up their passes and get information about the Parliament, together with a waiting area for guests who were being interviewed on TV programmes. All the main UK broadcasters anchored programmes on the Referendum from this village.

## Should Scotland be an independent country?

On 18 September 2014, people in Scotland were asked to vote on this question in the Independence Referendum. The results are shown below.





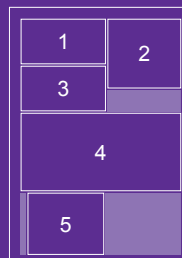
Images of scenes in and around the media village set up for the Referendum





**Photographs of committee sessions and visits:**

1. Infrastructure and Capital Investment Committee on a visit to the Forth Rail Bridge and the Forth Replacement Crossing
2. Members of the Scottish Mesh Survivors group at a meeting of the Public Petitions Committee
3. Justice Committee in Parliament Hall, Edinburgh, on a visit to the courts
4. Education and Culture Committee on a fact-finding visit to Falkirk High School
5. Health and Sport Committee on a fact-finding visit to Paisley





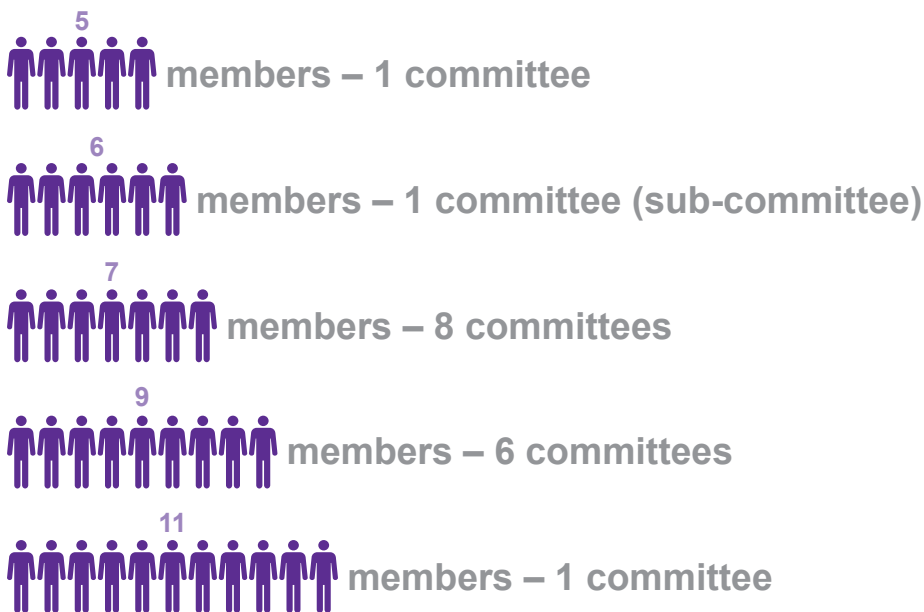
# Committees

Committees play a central part in the work of the Parliament – taking evidence from a range of witnesses, scrutinising legislation and conducting inquiries. The Parliament has different kinds of committee. There are mandatory and subject committees, and it can also establish committees or sub-committees to consider particular issues or pieces of legislation.

Two changes took place this year. First, the City of Edinburgh Council (Portobello Park) Bill Committee, which had been established to consider the private bill of the title, was dissolved when the bill was passed on 26 June 2014. Four months later, on 29 October 2014, the Referendum (Scotland) Bill Committee changed its name to the Devolution (Further Powers) Committee. Following the publication of the Smith Commission’s report in November 2014, the committee’s remit is to consider the work of the commission, its proposals for further devolution to the Scottish Parliament, other proposals for further devolution and any legislation to implement such proposals that may be introduced in the UK Parliament or Scottish Parliament. In addition, the number of members of the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee changed from seven to five on 11 December 2014.

For more information about a committee, click on its name in the list below. Each mandatory and subject committee publishes its own annual report and you will find links to these under the membership details for the committee.

## Committee membership levels at 10 May 2015:



## Number of committee meetings outside Edinburgh – 7

## City of Edinburgh Council (Portobello Park) Bill Committee



**Convener:**  
**Siobhan McMahon**

**Members:**

**James Dornan**

**Alison McInnes**

**Fiona McLeod**

## Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee



**Convener:**  
**Nigel Don**

**Members:**

**Richard Baker**  
*(until 11.12.14)*

**Mike MacKenzie**  
*(until 27.11.14)*

**John Mason**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**Margaret McCulloch**

**Stuart McMillan**  
*(until 11.12.14)*

**John Scott**

**Stewart Stevenson**

**Annual Report**

## Devolution (Further Powers) Committee



**Convener:**  
**Bruce Crawford**

**Members:**

**Annabelle Ewing**  
*(until 25.11.14)*

**Linda Fabiani**

**Rob Gibson**

**Annabel Goldie**  
*(until 02.12.14)*

**Patrick Harvie**  
*(until 27.11.14)*

**Alex Johnstone**  
*(from 03.12.14)*

**Alison Johnstone**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**Lewis Macdonald**

**Stewart Maxwell**

**Mark McDonald**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**Stuart McMillan**

**Duncan McNeil**  
*(from 08.01.15)*

**Tavish Scott**

**Drew Smith**  
*(until 08.01.15)*

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## Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee



**Convener:**  
**Murdo Fraser**

**Members:**

**Richard Baker**  
*(until 08.01.15)*

**Marco Biagi**  
*(until 25.11.14)*

**Chic Brodie**

**Patrick Harvie**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**Alison Johnstone**  
*(until 27.11.14)*

**Johann Lamont**  
*(from 08.01.15)*

**Richard Lyle**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**Gordon MacDonald**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**Lewis Macdonald**  
*(from 08.01.15)*

**Mike MacKenzie**  
*(until 27.11.14)*

**Joan McAlpine**

**Margaret McDougall**  
*(until 08.01.15)*

**Dennis Robertson**

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## Education and Culture Committee



**Convener:**  
Stewart Maxwell

**Members:**

**George Adam**

**Clare Adamson**  
*(until 27.11.14)*

**Jayne Baxter**  
*(until 08.01.15)*

**Colin Beattie**

**Neil Bibby**  
*(until 08.01.15)*

**Chic Brodie**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**Mark Griffin**  
*(from 08.01.15)*

**Gordon MacDonald**

**Liam McArthur**

**Siobhan McMahon**  
*(from 08.01.15)*

**Mary Scanlon**

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## Equal Opportunities Committee



**Convener:**  
Margaret McCulloch

**Members:**

**Christian Allard**

**Jayne Baxter**  
*(from 08.01.15)*

**Marco Biagi**  
*(until 25.11.14)*

**John Finnie**

**Annabel Goldie**  
*(from 11.03.15)*

**Alex Johnstone**  
*(until 11.03.15)*

**John Mason**

**Siobhan McMahon**  
*(until 08.01.15)*

**Sandra White**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**Annual Report**

## European and External Relations Committee



**Convener:**  
Christina McKelvie

**Members:**

**Clare Adamson**  
*(until 27.11.14)*

**Roderick Campbell**

**Willie Coffey**

**Adam Ingram**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**Hanzala Malik**

**Jamie McGrigor**

**Anne McTaggart**  
*(from 08.01.15)*

**Alex Rowley**  
*(until 08.01.15)*

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## Finance Committee



**Convener:**  
Kenneth Gibson

**Members:**

**Richard Baker**  
*(from 08.01.15)*

**Gavin Brown**

**Malcolm Chisholm**

**Jamie Hepburn**  
*(until 25.11.14)*

**John Mason**

**Mark McDonald**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**Michael McMahon**  
*(until 08.01.15)*

**Jean Urquhart**

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## Health and Sport Committee



**Convener:**  
**Duncan McNeil**

**Members:**

**Bob Doris**  
**Rhoda Grant**  
**Colin Keir**  
**Richard Lyle**  
**Mike MacKenzie**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**Aileen McLeod**  
*(until 25.11.14)*  
**Nanette Milne**  
**Gil Paterson**  
*(until 27.11.14)*  
**Dennis Robertson**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**Dr Richard Simpson**

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## Infrastructure and Capital Investment Committee



**Convener:**  
**Jim Eadie**  
*(from 03.12.14)*

**Members:**

**James Dornan**  
*(from 27.11.14)*  
**Mary Fee**  
**Mark Griffin**  
*(until 08.01.15)*  
**Adam Ingram**

**Alex Johnstone**  
**Gordon MacDonald**  
*(until 27.11.14)*  
**Mike MacKenzie**  
*(from 27.11.14)*  
**David Stewart**  
*(from 08.01.15)*

**Maureen Watt**  
*(member and  
convener until  
25.11.14)*

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## Justice Committee



**Convener:**  
**Christine Grahame**

**Members:**

**Christian Allard**  
**Jayne Baxter**  
*(from 08.01.15)*  
**Roderick Campbell**  
**John Finnie**

**Alison McInnes**  
**Margaret Mitchell**  
**Elaine Murray**  
**Gil Paterson**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**John Pentland**  
*(until 08.01.15)*  
**Sandra White**  
*(until 27.11.14)*

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### Justice Sub-Committee on Policing

**Members:**

**John Finnie**  
**Alison McInnes**  
**Margaret Mitchell**

**Elaine Murray**  
*(from 04.02.15)*  
**Graeme Pearson**  
*(until 04.02.15)*

**Kevin Stewart**

## Local Government and Regeneration Committee



**Convener:**  
Kevin Stewart

**Members:**

**Clare Adamson**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**Cameron Buchanan**

**Willie Coffey**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**Cara Hilton**  
*(from 08.01.15)*

**Mark McDonald**  
*(until 27.11.14)*

**Stuart McMillan**  
*(until 27.11.14)*

**Anne McTaggart**  
*(until 08.01.15)*

**Alex Rowley**

**John Wilson**

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## Public Audit Committee



**Convener:**  
**Paul Martin**  
*(member from 08.01.15 and convener from 14.01.15)*

**Members:**

**Colin Beattie**

**Bruce Crawford**  
*(until 26.11.14)*

**Willie Coffey**  
*(until 27.11.14)*

**Nigel Don**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**James Dornan**  
*(until 27.11.14)*

**Hugh Henry**  
*(member and convener until 08.01.15)*

**Colin Keir**

**Ken Macintosh**  
*(until 08.01.15)*

**Stuart McMillan**  
*(from 08.01.15)*

**Gil Paterson**  
*(27.11.14-08.01.15)*

**Mary Scanlon**

**Tavish Scott**

**Drew Smith**  
*(from 08.01.15)*

**David Torrance**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

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## Public Petitions Committee



**Convener:**  
**John Pentland**  
*(member from 08.01.15 and convener from 13.01.15)*

**Members:**

**Chic Brodie**  
*(until 27.11.14)*

**Jackson Carlaw**

**Kenny MacAskill**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**Angus MacDonald**

**Hanzala Malik**  
*(from 08.01.15)*

**Anne McTaggart**  
*(until 08.01.15)*

**David Stewart**  
*(member and convener until 08.01.15)*

**David Torrance**

**John Wilson**

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## Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee



**Convener:**  
**Rob Gibson**

**Members:**

**Claudia Beamish**

**Sarah Boyack**  
*(from 08.01.15)*

**Graeme Dey**

**Nigel Don**  
*(until 27.11.14)*

**Alex Fergusson**

**Cara Hilton**  
*(until 08.01.15)*

**Jim Hume**

**Angus MacDonald**

**Michael Russell**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**Dave Thompson**

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## Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee



**Convener:**  
**Stewart Stevenson**

**Members:**

**George Adam**

**Cameron Buchanan**

**Patricia Ferguson**  
*(from 08.01.15)*

**Cara Hilton**  
*(until 08.01.15)*

**Richard Lyle**  
*(until 27.11.14)*

**Margaret McDougall**

**Fiona McLeod**  
*(until 18.12.14)*

**Gil Paterson**  
*(from 08.01.15)*

**Dave Thompson**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**Annual Report**

## Welfare Reform Committee



**Convener:**  
**Michael McMahon**

**Members:**

**Clare Adamson**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**Annabelle Ewing**  
*(until 25.11.14)*

**Linda Fabiani**  
*(until 27.11.14)*

**Annabel Goldie**  
*(from 03.12.14)*

**Jamie Hepburn**  
*(until 25.11.14)*

**Alex Johnstone**  
*(until 02.12.14)*

**Ken Macintosh**  
*(until 08.01.15)*

**Joan McAlpine**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**Margaret McDougall**  
*(from 08.01.15)*

**Christina McKelvie**  
*(from 27.11.14)*

**Kevin Stewart**

**Annual Report**



**Photographs of committee sessions and visits:**

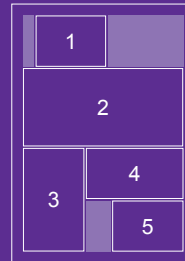
1. British Sign Language interpreting at the Education and Culture Committee

2. Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee taking evidence from Perth High School students

3. Lord Smith, chair of the Smith Commission, appearing before the Devolution (Further Powers) Committee

4. Local Government and Regeneration Committee on a fact-finding visit to a scrap metal yard in Edinburgh

5. Equal Opportunities Committee on a fact-finding visit in Glasgow



# International engagement

UK and International Relations Office facilitated more than 70 inward parliamentary delegation visits to the Scottish Parliament.

These allowed for an exchange of knowledge and experiences between parliamentarians and enhanced our profile and reputation internationally. Some highlights included:

- National Assembly of Malawi Speaker, the Rt Hon Richard Mswoya MP
- Northern Ireland Assembly Speaker, Mitchel McLaughlin MLA
- New Zealand High Commissioner, His Excellency Rt Hon Sir Lockwood Smith
- Norwegian Ambassador, Her Excellency Ms Mona Juul
- German Ambassador, His Excellency Dr Peter Ammon

We continued our engagement with Western Balkans legislatures through the Westminster Foundation for Democracy. The Presiding Officer and Clerk/Chief Executive visited Montenegro in June 2014, which was followed by a return visit later that month. In November 2014, a delegation from the Serbian Parliament led by the Speaker, Mrs Maja Gojkovic MP, visited for meetings to discuss the proposal to establish a budget office (based on our Financial Scrutiny Unit) in the Serbian Parliament.

The Presiding Officer attended the commemoration of the birth of Sir John A Macdonald, Canada's founding Prime Minister, in Kingston, Canada, where she also gave a speech at Queen's University on Scotland's constitutional journey.

The Presiding Officer led a delegation of MSPs in a series of engagements in New York and Chicago as part of Scotland Week 2015. This included delivering keynote speeches at New York University and the University of Chicago on Scotland's constitutional journey.

Deputy Presiding Officer Elaine Smith MSP led a delegation to the National Assembly of Malawi to mark 10 years of parliamentary co-operation. The delegation delivered workshops to Malawian MPs on budget and legislative scrutiny and committee inquiries.

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Scotland Branch commemorated Commonwealth Day 2015 by securing a members' business debate on 'A young Commonwealth'. The Scotland Branch Executive Committee met with Scottish university students for a discussion on 'Ending violence against women and girls: Scotland's response'.

Deputy Presiding Officer John Scott MSP led the delegation to the British Irish Parliamentary Assembly who attended plenary sessions in Ashford and Dublin (where a question and answer session with the Taoiseach, Enda Kenny TD, was held). This bi-annual plenary gives MSPs the opportunity to discuss issues with colleagues from the parliaments and assemblies of the British Isles. He also represented the Scottish Parliament at events in Flanders commemorating the 100th anniversary of the commencement of the First World War, including the laying of a wreath at the Menin Gate, Ypres.





1. The 2015 CPA Commonwealth Day reception
2. The Presiding Officer welcomes the Norwegian Ambassador, Her Excellency Ms Mona Juul.
3. James Dornan MSP, Deputy Presiding Officer Elaine Smith MSP and Liam McArthur MSP at Open Arms Infant Home, Blantyre, Malawi
4. The Presiding Officer with the Rt Hon Stephen Harper MP, Prime Minister of Canada, during her visit to Canada

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# Engagement with the public



More than  
**9.9 million**  
page views of the  
Scottish Parliament website

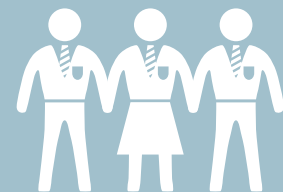
The Parliament has continued to engage with the people of Scotland this year through a range of activities at Holyrood and across Scotland, including high-profile events, committee work and popular exhibitions. Members of the public of all ages raised issues of importance with MSPs at events, conferences, briefings and receptions, while Parliament Days continued to take the work of the Parliament direct to people in their local communities.

With 16 and 17-year-olds voting for the first time in the Referendum, young people were a particular focus for the Parliament's activities this year, and opportunities to make their voices heard took various forms. For example, the Devolution (Further Powers) Committee met with first-time voters at Lochaber High School, Buckhaven High School and Kirkland High School during Parliament Days to learn about their experiences.

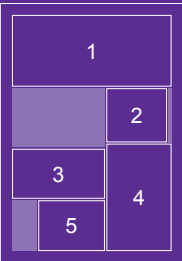
In this year of increased political engagement across Scotland, many more pupils participated

in the Parliament's schools programmes than in previous years, with Parliament staff travelling the length and breadth of Scotland to schools from Orkney, Shetland and the Western Isles to Dumfries and Galloway, Ayrshire, Bute, Arran and Cumbrae. Meanwhile, the Education Centre at Holyrood welcomed pupils and students into the Parliament, where activities included two sessions delivered to Higher English students examining the use of language in Parliament. These involved in-house experts from different offices providing an in-depth look at the importance of language, writing and speech-making in the daily work of the Parliament.

In her Time for Reflection address on 23 September 2014, the Presiding Officer announced a conference for young women of school age. This was held on 23 March 2015, when 128 young women gathered to explore the challenges they face in reaching their potential and how the Parliament can help them achieve their aims. With talks from high-profile women and a frank and open question and answer session with key female politicians, the day proved an exciting and inspiring event for all involved.



**Education Service**  
sessions delivered  
to more than  
**32,000**  
people



1. Winners of the Euroquiz 2014 – Crossford Primary School, Dunfermline
2. Delegates asking questions during a question and answer session of the Scottish Older People's Assembly
3. Promoting the Scottish Parliament's Gaelic language resources for Twitter
4. Presiding Officer, the Rt Hon Tricia Marwick MSP, baton bearer Lynne McNicoll and Gavin Hastings make their way to the Scottish Parliament Debating Chamber as The Queen's Baton Relay passes through the Parliament.
5. Pupils on an education visit to the Parliament



Almost

700

local people  
attended

Parliament Day events



### Parliament Days

In the same address, the Presiding Officer also outlined her plans to expand Parliament Days into Scotland's most deprived communities. Building on the success of previous years, four Parliament Days were delivered in towns and cities across the country. The days seek to inspire local people to take an interest in and engage directly with the work of their Parliament. They also provide an opportunity for them to meet those involved in all aspects of the Parliament.

#### *Parliament Day Fort William, 24 November 2014*

The Presiding Officer and Dave Thompson MSP, the constituency member for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch, met with local groups and organisations. Meanwhile, regional MSPs for the Highlands and Islands visited three local primary schools to find out what matters to young people in the area.

The Local Government and Regeneration Committee, as part of its inquiry on the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill, held informal meetings and presentations before a formal meeting at Lochaber High School in the early evening.

#### *Parliament Day Levenmouth, 8 December 2014*

Local people were invited to meet the Presiding Officer and their MSPs at Methilhill Primary School to discuss issues facing the local community and their hopes for the future of Scotland.

Members of the Devolution (Further Powers) Committee met with local 16 and 17-year-olds, and Primary 5, 6 and 7 classes at Methilhill Primary School designed posters to explain their lives to the Presiding Officer and local constituency MSP, David Torrance. The pupils later visited Holyrood to experience Parliament in action in March.

#### *Parliament Day Dumfries, 23 February 2015*

This Parliament Day included a conference at Easterbrook Hall. More than 100 representatives from local community groups, voluntary organisations, charities, social enterprises, civic groups and community activists took part in seven different workshops, each focusing on a specific theme, and practical ways of engaging successfully with MSPs and the Parliament were explored.

The Presiding Officer's programme during Parliament Day included a meeting with pupils from Maxwelltown High School. Having met both pupils of Mouswald Primary – Scotland's



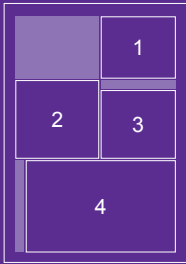
More than

5,700

enquiries

from members of the public

1. Presiding Officer, the Rt Hon Tricia Marwick MSP, and David Torrance MSP with 'My Methilhill' poster competition winner Kaitlin Brown
2. Members of the public watch a Festival of Politics debate.
3. Deputy Presiding Officer John Scott MSP at the BT National Schools Gaelic Debate Final
4. Presiding Officer, the Rt Hon Tricia Marwick MSP, hosts a question and answer session during Parliament Day Easterhouse.



smallest school roll – on their visit to Holyrood, the Presiding Officer was delighted to be able to meet them in their own school. She was joined in these visits by the constituency members for the area, Alex Fergusson MSP and Elaine Murray MSP.

The Public Petitions Committee meeting allowed the committee to follow up on workshops held in Dumfries and Stranraer in November 2014 for local people to learn about the petitions process and how to get involved. Meanwhile, regional MSPs for South Scotland visited four local primary schools to find out what matters to young people in the area.

#### *Parliament Day Easterhouse, 16 March 2015*

Parliament Day Easterhouse took place at The Bridge, Westerhouse Road. This lively community hub hosted the Equal Opportunities Committee's formal meeting in the afternoon to discuss its age and social isolation inquiry with local people and a range of organisations.

The Presiding Officer then hosted a public meeting with local MSPs, allowing people from the area to find out more about their Parliament and how it works.

## 47 new petitions

lodged and considered  
by the Public Petitions  
Committee



More than  
**400**  
member-sponsored  
events and exhibitions

### Events

Member-sponsored events, along with the major events and exhibitions programme, continue to play a vital role in the Parliament's engagement strategy.

More than 400 member-sponsored events and exhibitions provided local, voluntary, business and community organisations with an opportunity to engage directly with MSPs as individuals and with the Parliament as an organisation about issues of importance to them. In addition, major events this year have included:

- the final of Euroquiz 2014
- The Queen's Baton Relay
- the Scottish Older People's Assembly
- the annual Business in the Parliament Conference
- the annual St Andrew's Day Debate
- International Women's Day conference

More than **5,000** people



attended  
Festival of  
Politics  
events

#### *Edinburgh International Culture Summit*

The Edinburgh International Culture Summit was an exciting collaboration between the Scottish Parliament, the British Council, Edinburgh International Festival, the Scottish and UK Governments. This was the second Summit bringing together culture ministers, artists, thinkers and arts leaders from around the world to share ideas and discuss the power, position and profile of the arts, culture and the creative industries. The event provided government and cultural leaders with an opportunity to discuss how arts and culture are best sustained, promoted and protected, and provided new opportunities for cultural exchange and collaboration.

#### *Festival of Politics*

The 10th Festival of Politics placed the people of Scotland at the centre of politics in asking 'What next for Scotland?' With the Referendum making this a critical year for Scotland, the Festival brought together key academics and experts to discuss the issues in a thought-provoking and inspiring programme. More than 5,000 people attended Festival events that covered a wide range of topics including the economy, defence, poverty and life expectancy, political strategy, European Union membership, local democracy and currency.

The Festival Café Bar showcased the best of young Scottish musical talent, while the Members' Room was transformed into a cinema and the National Theatre of Scotland brought their production of *In Time o' Strife* to the Debating Chamber. This was an emotional re-imagining of Joe Corrie's classic drama about a Fife mining community during the General Strike of 1926. The performance was followed by a discussion with the Presiding Officer and Director Graham McLaren, who explored notions of identity and community.



More than

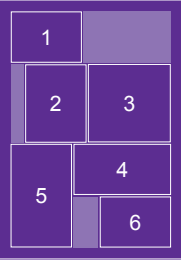
**23,400**

people

went on a tour



1. Participants take part in the Inspiring Young Women conference.
2. Members of the public tour the Scottish Parliament on Disabled Access Day.
3. The Scottish Parliament produced its first briefing in eBook format to coincide with the Commonwealth Games.
4. Events to mark the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War included the exhibition of 'Unknown' by Alison Kinnaird.
5. Students from Glasgow University participate in the St Andrew's Day Debate.
6. Hundreds of women gathered in the Debating Chamber for International Women's Day.





20,000 new followers  
on Twitter

and



1,400 followers

for @ParlAlba, our Gaelic  
Twitter feed

### Exhibitions and displays

More than 150,000 visitors had an opportunity to see exciting and educational exhibitions and displays on a range of subjects.

From 1 July to 13 September 2014, the **Great Tapestry of Scotland** exhibition returned to the Parliament, following its immense popularity the previous year. Members of the public, Edinburgh International Culture Summit delegates and the Speaker of the National Assembly of Malawi, the Rt Hon Richard Msowoya MP, all had the opportunity to participate in this community artwork by embroidering the new tapestry panel for the Parliament Art Collection.

To mark the annual Poppyscotland event and the anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War, Alison Kinnaird's **Unknown** and Simon Burns-Cox's **France 1914** were exhibited in the Main Hall.

From 1 to 30 April 2015, the Parliament hosted a travelling exhibition, **The Incredible Power of Light**, showcasing how the latest laser technologies benefit everyday life.

### Online communication

The Scottish Parliament shares information through a range of channels, providing members of the public with opportunities to engage in two-way communication and have an impact on its work.

We have successfully used **Facebook** this year for a number of high-profile committee inquiries. For example, a Facebook Group for the British Sign Language (Scotland) Bill was created to seek the views of and engage the Deaf community in discussion about the aims of the bill and the issues it seeks to address. The group has been very active, with more than 2,300 members and hundreds of self-created **British Sign Language (BSL) videos**. The views expressed and videos received have been a significant factor in the scrutiny of the bill.

Facebook was also used to promote an **Access to Railways survey**; the posts were seen by more than 125,000 people and nearly 5,000 survey responses were received. More recently, we asked for views on proposed legislation to ban smoking in cars with children. This post was seen by more than 93,000 people and there were more than 1,222 comments.



More than  
**5,200 likes**

of the Parliament's  
Facebook page

The Scottish Parliament **YouTube** channel hosts all Chamber and committee business and includes a wide range of video packages highlighting the work of committees and events which take place at Holyrood. More than 2,700 people were subscribers by May 2015, with an average increase of more than 100 each month.

This year we made extensive use of social media to encourage speakers and learners to engage with the Parliament in Gaelic. The **Gaelic @ParlAlba Twitter** feed, which provides the latest news now has almost 1,400 followers.

Gaelic Word of the Week on **Soundcloud** is a popular resource, helping members of the public to learn more about the language and about the Scottish Parliament at the same time. Each week, listeners can hear a word or phrase related to the work of the Parliament in Gaelic and English.

A survey of nearly 4,500 subscribers of the email bulletin, **This Week in the Scottish Parliament (TWISP)** confirmed its popularity as the public's go-to tool for finding out about business and events in the Parliament. With almost 500 responses to the TWISP reader survey, there was much positive feedback about its value. Comments included: *'This definitely brings parliament closer to me as a voter which is a good thing.'*

**Live Chat** is the most recent online public engagement success. This instant messaging service went live on the website in February 2015, opening another channel for members of the public to find out about their Parliament. By clicking on the live chat button that appears on various webpages, people from across Scotland and beyond are able to ask questions direct about everything from bills and motions to visiting and the role of MSPs, and get an immediate response.

Nearly **2,200**  
**new subscribers**



to our weekly  
online bulletin,  
**This Week in the  
Scottish Parliament**

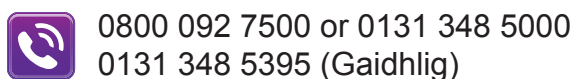
## Engagement for all

The Scottish Parliament continues to make its information and activities accessible to all. This year, Holyrood became Scotland's first public building to receive the Autism Access award, while accessibility for visitors who are deaf or have hearing loss was recognised with the award of Action on Hearing Loss's Louder than Words charter mark during Deaf Awareness Week in May 2015.



## How to contact us

Public information provides information about the business, membership and procedures of the Scottish Parliament.



We also welcome calls using the Text Relay service or in BSL through [contactSCOTLAND-BSL](https://www.scottish.parliament.uk/contact-scotland-bsl).

For information in languages other than English or in alternative formats (for example, in Braille, large print or audio), please send your enquiry to public information.



[scottish.parliament.uk](https://www.scottish.parliament.uk)