



HOUSE OF LORDS

The Work of the House of Lords

2009–10



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Key statistics 2009–10

Bills handled	43
Bills receiving royal assent	30
Amendments tabled	2,031
Amendments passed	565
Oral questions	248
Written questions	2,906
Statements	23
General debates	39
Short debates	18
Debates on committee reports	15
Sitting days	68
Average daily attendance	388
Average length of sittings	6:32hrs
Late sittings (after 10pm)	16



For more on the House of Lords > www.parliament.uk/lords

The work of the House of Lords

Members of the House of Lords come to Parliament from many walks of life, with backgrounds and successful careers in business, culture, science, sports, the academic world, politics and public service. Members work for and on behalf of the people of the UK, contributing their judgement and past experience to the work of the House of Lords.

As one of the essential components of the UK Parliament, the House of Lords complements the work of the House of Commons, sharing responsibility for new legislation, scrutinising the actions of government, and bringing the breadth of experience of its Members to bear on issues and policies affecting the UK public.

This booklet reviews the activities of Members of the House of Lords during the 2009–10 parliamentary session, 18 November 2009 to 8 April 2010. This was a short parliamentary session due to the general election on 6 May 2010.

Making effective laws for the people of the UK

The House of Lords plays an integral role in the legislative process, debating the principles and scrutinising the details of new laws, helping to ensure that legislation is well drafted and effective.

Creating law

The House of Lords shares responsibility for law-making with the House of Commons, and prior to becoming Acts of Parliament draft laws – or bills – are debated and scrutinised in both Houses.

The House of Lords has a reputation for taking an exhaustive line-by-line approach to the detail of a bill, working to highlight potential problems and make better, more effective law. Its amendments may not survive consideration in the House of Commons, but the House of Lords has a valuable ability to delay and ask the government and House of Commons to think again and, in some cases, offer alternative amendments in response.

Bills handled	43
Bills receiving royal assent	30
Amendments tabled	2,031
Amendments passed	565

The 2009–10 session

During the session, 23 bills were introduced into Parliament by the government and received royal assent to pass into law. In addition, seven private members’ bills received royal assent.

For more on legislation in the House of Lords > www.parliament.uk/business/bills-and-legislation/

Equality Bill

The Equality Bill aimed to bring consistency to current discrimination law and strengthen equality law in other ways. The House of Lords expressed concern that the wording which allowed religious organisations to discriminate on certain grounds when making key religious appointments might be ambiguous, and made a series of amendments to clarify this exemption. The House also introduced a new clause allowing civil partnership ceremonies to take place in the premises of religious organisations, which was previously prohibited, if the organisation wished to do so. Amendments on both points were accepted by the House of Commons.

Personal Care at Home Bill

This bill amended the Community Care (Delayed Discharges etc) Act 2003 so that personal care provided by local authorities for people at home, which could previously only be provided free of charge for six weeks or less, could be provided free of charge for longer periods. The House of Lords raised questions over the cost of implementing these changes, and whether these costs would be met by local or central government. The House also expressed concern that the bill had been introduced without consultation on the draft regulations to be made under the Act. As a result, the House of Lords made four amendments delaying the commencement of the Act, delaying any regulations under the Act, limiting the Act's duration, and requiring an independent review of the affordability of the Act. While the House of Commons overturned three of these amendments, it agreed

that the commencement of the Act would require affirmative resolution – explicit agreement or consent – in both Houses; as a result, the bill received royal assent but the provisions of the Act have not yet come into effect.

‘Wash-up’ and the Constitutional Reform and Governance Bill

The final few weeks of the shortened 2009–10 session were extremely busy in the House of Lords, with the usual ‘wash-up’ period – when bills are rushed through their remaining stages before the end of a Parliament – being particularly hectic. During wash-up, many bills are heavily amended; often this is the result of agreements between political groups ‘off the floor’ – that is, outside the formal legislative process – rather than of divisions, or votes, in the chamber.

The Constitutional Reform and Governance Bill provided an interesting case. This high-profile and controversial bill contained provisions on the conduct and management of the civil service, demonstrations around Parliament, government financial reporting to Parliament and membership of the House of Lords. The bill went through its committee, report and remaining stages in one day and, as a result of agreements reached between the parties, six whole parts were left out of the final bill, including provisions on referendums on voting systems, ending of by-elections for hereditary peers and the removal or retirement of Members from the Lords.

Public legislation in 2009–10

Bills introduced in the House of Lords	Amendments tabled	Amendments made	Government defeats
Government Bills (5)			
Bribery	72	8	1
Cluster Munitions (Prohibitions)	6	0	0
Digital Economy	682	196	1
Northern Ireland Assembly Members	13	2	0
Third Parties (Rights against Insurers)	0	0	0
Total	773	206	2
Private Members' Bills (14)			
<i>Building Regulations (Amendment)</i>	4	0	
<i>Children's Rights</i>	0	0	
<i>Constitutional Reform</i>	0	0	
<i>Consumer Emissions (Climate Change)</i>	0	0	
<i>Contaminated Blood (Support for Infected and Bereaved Persons)</i>	2	2	
<i>Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies and Credit Unions</i>	0	0	
<i>Damages (Asbestos-related Conditions)</i>	21	1	
<i>Health and Social Care (Independent Living)</i>	0	0	
<i>Live Music</i>	0	0	
<i>Marine Navigation Aids</i>	0	0	
<i>Marriage (Wales)</i>	0	0	
<i>Patient Transport</i>	0	0	
<i>Powers of Entry etc.</i>	4	1	
<i>Rehabilitation of Offenders (Amendment)</i>	2	2	
Total	33	6	

Bills brought from the House of Commons	Amendments tabled	Amendments made	Government defeats
Government Bills (18)			
Appropriation	0	0	0
Child Poverty	135	21	0
Children, Schools and Families	87	34	0
Consolidated Fund	0	0	0
Consolidated Fund (Appropriation)	0	0	0
Constitutional Reform and Governance	288	80	0
Corporation Tax	0	0	0
Crime and Security	19	0	0
Energy	9	9	0
Equality	385	118	3
Finance	0	0	0
Financial Services	101	59	1
Fiscal Responsibility	0	0	0
Flood and Water Management	124	25	0
Personal Care at Home	54	4	4
Taxation (International and Other Provisions)	0	0	0
Terrorist Asset-Freezing (Temporary Provisions)	18	0	0
Video Recordings	0	0	0
Total	1,220	350	8
Private Members' Bills (6)			
Anti-Slavery Day	0	0	
<i>Damages (Asbestos-Related Conditions) (No. 2)</i>	0	0	
Debt Relief (Developing Countries)	0	0	
Mortgage Repossessions (Protection of Tenants etc)	0	0	
Sunbeds (Regulation)	0	0	
Sustainable Communities Act 2007 (Amendment)	0	0	
Total	0	0	

These tables include proceedings in Grand Committee but exclude proceedings in consideration of Commons amendments.
Bills shown in italics did not receive royal assent.

Lords amendments 2009–10

	Amendments tabled	Amendments made	Government defeats
Committee of the Whole House (30 bills)			
Lords Bills (Government)	426	51	0
Lords Bills (Private Members' Bills)	31	4	0
Commons Bills (Government)	874	268	3
Commons Bills (Private Members' Bills)	0	0	0
Total	1,331	323	3
Grand Committee (5 bills)			
Lords Bills (Private Members' Bills)	0	0	0
Commons Bills (Government)	211	32	0
Commons Bills (Private Members' Bills)	0	0	0
Total	260	32	0
Special Public Bill Committee (1 bill)			
Lords Bills (Government)	0	0	0
Report			
Lords Bills (Government)	248	130	1
Lords Bills (Private Members' Bills)	0	0	0
Commons Bills (Government)	124	41	5
Commons Bills (Private Members' Bills)	0	0	0
Total	372	171	6
Third Reading			
Lords Bills (Government)	50	25	1
Lords Bills (Private Members' Bills)	2	2	0
Commons Bills (Government)	11	9	0
Commons Bills (Private Members' Bills)	0	0	0
Total	63	36	1
Consideration of Commons Amendments			
Lords Bills (Government)	2	0	0
Lords Bills (Private Members' Bills)	–	–	–
Commons Bills (Government)	3	3	0
Commons Bills (Private Members' Bills)	–	–	–
Total	5	3	0
Total	2,031	565	10

Keeping an eye on regulations and delegated powers

A particular strength of the House of Lords is its ability to review and raise concerns about delegated legislation. Delegated legislation – also known as secondary or subordinate legislation – fills in the gaps in Acts of Parliament, providing many of the specific details and practical measures that make a law complete and enforceable. These details are provided in regulations, orders or rules, known generally as statutory instruments (SIs).

Because the power to make delegated legislation is, as the name suggests, often delegated to ministers, SIs are subject to considerably less parliamentary control than bills. For this reason, it is particularly important that delegated legislation is kept under close scrutiny. The House of Lords has two committees dedicated to this, each focusing on a different stage in the legislative process.

Before an Act is made: checking delegated powers

The Delegated Powers and Regulatory Reform Committee examines the text of all bills before they receive detailed consideration in the House of Lords to ensure that the level of delegated power to make SIs is appropriate. If it is not, the committee reports to the House to recommend changes or seek clarifications of the government's intent.



This committee has earned a formidable reputation as a 'watchdog' over the granting of ministerial power and the government almost always accepts its recommendations.

After an Act is made: checking delegated legislation

The Merits of Statutory Instruments Committee considers the policy aspects of all SIs to assess whether they seem likely to achieve their stated policy objective. The committee reports particularly interesting, potentially defective or poorly explained SIs to the House, allowing Members to raise a question or request a debate on the matter.

For example, in December 2009 the committee reported to the House on the Rail Passengers' Rights and Obligations (Exemptions) Regulations 2009, to draw attention to the fact that this SI would delay the introduction of compensation for passengers of cancelled or delayed rail services, on the grounds that the Department for Transport had yet to work out the full implications of the EU legislation they had agreed to.

For more on delegated legislation in the House of Lords >
www.parliament.uk/business/bills-and-legislation/secondary-legislation/statutory-instruments

In March 2010, the committee reported on two SIs relating to local government reorganisation: the Draft Exeter and Devon (Structural Changes) and Draft Norwich and Norfolk (Structural Changes) Orders 2010.

The committee was critical about the lack of evidence provided by the Department for Communities and Local Government to support the proposed changes and, by collating correspondence for and against the proposals, was able to provide Members with a review of the relevant issues and problems so that the orders could be properly debated in the House.

SIs examined	660*
Committee reports to the House	17
SIs reported to the House	37†
<small>* 522 negative, 138 affirmative. Negative SIs become law provided there is no objection from Parliament; affirmative SIs require debate and approval in both Houses to become law.</small>	
<small>† 21 negative, 16 affirmative</small>	

Special report: ‘What happened next?’

As well as looking at individual SIs, the Merits Committee occasionally comments on how delegated legislation complies with over-arching government policies, for example on impact assessment or consultation.

In 2009, the committee investigated the extent to which SIs were being reviewed after becoming law to determine whether they were working as intended. This review phase is a part of the government’s ‘policy cycle’ model. Taking a sample of SIs from 2005, the committee reported that 46 per cent had not received any form of evaluation at all, and concluded that departments were missing opportunities to improve the quality of their policy development and implementation methods. In response, the government undertook to revise its guidance and review the issue after 12 months to check on improvements to the SI system. The report was published at the very end of the 2008–09 session and debated in the House of Lords in February 2010.



Questioning and debating the work of government

The House of Lords plays a vital role in scrutinising the work of government and holding it to account for its decisions and activities. With government ministers sitting in the House and many former ministers and senior politicians and officials among its membership, the House of Lords is well placed to question the government with rigour and insight.

The scrutiny of government is a regular part of the work of the House of Lords, taking up around 40 per cent of time spent in the chamber. On a daily basis, Members keep a close eye on government by asking oral and written questions, responding to government statements, or debating key issues. In all cases, the government's reply is a matter of public record, meaning that the House of Lords is able to make a significant contribution to transparency and to public understanding of the government's actions.

For more on questions and statements in the House of Lords > www.parliament.uk/about/how/business/

Questions

Oral questions on any aspect of the government’s activities are put to the government in the chamber, answered by a government minister, and followed up with supplementary questions from other Members. Unlike in the House of Commons, questions are normally addressed to the government as a whole, rather than a specific department. However in early 2010 the House introduced a new procedure on a trial basis to allow Members to address questions directly to the two secretaries of state sitting in the Lords. Most questions are published in advance, although the House has a separate procedure for tabling urgent ‘private notice’ questions.

Written questions are far more numerous, and are used increasingly by Members to extract information from the government.



Oral questions	248
Secretaries of state’s questions	18
Private notice questions	5
Written questions	2,906

Statements

The government often announces important policy initiatives, reports on national and international issues, or communicates the outcomes of international meetings by means of an oral or written statement to one or both Houses of Parliament. Following any oral statement to the House of Lords, Members are able to question the government minister, to raise concerns or seek clarification on any point of policy or fact.

Oral statements	23
Written statements	703

Debates

Debates on specific issues of public policy account for nearly one-third of business in the House of Lords chamber, with a typical week including two debates on general issues. Members are not limited to debating the legislative programme and can propose debates on any topic. At the end of every debate, a government minister responds to the questions, concerns and other matters which have been raised.

The professional expertise and specialist knowledge of speakers is valuable and helps to ensure that issues and questions that otherwise might not be highlighted are brought to the government’s attention. In this way, the debates in the House of Lords can play an important role in shaping future policy and laws.

General debates	39
Short debates	18
Debates on committee reports	15

Economy

The recent economic downturn was a central theme of several debates during the 2009–10 session, in which Members discussed ways to stimulate economic recovery and growth in the UK. Members taking part included business leaders, senior economists and former secretaries of state, each contributing the benefits of their first-hand experience.

Education

There were three debates relating to education in the 2009–10 session. The first highlighted the contribution of modern languages to the UK economy and raised the concern that, unless the decline in modern language learning is reversed, Anglophone Britain risks becoming one of the most monolingual societies in the world, with severe economic consequences in the future. Other debates concerned teaching excellence and cuts to funding for higher and further education. Speakers included former secretaries of state, former teachers, and chancellors and principals of various universities throughout the UK.



For more on debates in the House of Lords > www.parliament.uk/about/how/business/debates/

Climate change

The international climate change summit held in Copenhagen in December 2009 recognised the case for limiting temperature rises to no more than 2°C, but did not lead to commitments to reduce emissions to achieve that goal. Members of the House of Lords held a debate to discuss this outcome and put forward potential solutions to cut emissions globally and in the UK. The debate attracted many speakers with wide-ranging expertise relating to climate change, economics, science and the environment, including Lord Stern of Brentford, who conducted the influential Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change in 2006, and Lord Giddens, who published a book on the politics of climate change in 2009.

Childhood obesity

Childhood obesity is a growing concern in the UK, with almost one-third of children between the ages of two and 15 being overweight, including 16 per cent who are considered obese. Members used a debate to highlight the health problems caused by childhood obesity, such as a rise in type 2 diabetes, a condition which is normally associated with adults. Other related issues raised during the debate included social inequality and the cost to the NHS of childhood obesity. Members discussed current and potential government initiatives designed to keep children fit and healthy, such as programmes to teach cooking skills and an increase in physical activities.



Agriculture

British agriculture and its contribution to global food security was the topic of a debate which looked at sustainable methods to intensify production of yields without having an adverse environmental impact. Speakers contributing their expertise and experience included current and former farmers, a former chief of the Environment Agency, a lecturer in farm management, a former chair of the Countryside Agency, and a former president of the Royal Agricultural Society.

General debates 2009–10

November 2009

- Queen's Speech
- Queen's Speech: Foreign and European Affairs, International Development and Defence
- Queen's Speech: Home, Legal and Constitutional Affairs
- Queen's Speech: Environment, Energy, Agriculture, Local Government and Transport
- Queen's Speech: Business and Economic Affairs, Consumer Affairs and Culture
- Queen's Speech: Equality, Social Affairs, Health, and Education
- House of Lords: Code of Conduct

December 2009

- **EU Trade Policy**
- Economy: Modern Languages
- Future of the BBC
- **Pandemic Influenza**
- **Money Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism**
- Climate Change Committee: Carbon Budgets
- Commonwealth: Democracy and Development
- Agriculture: Royal Society Report
- House of Lords: Financial Support for Members
- Pre-Budget Report 2009

January 2010

- Olympic and Paralympic Games 2012
- Sudan
- Health: Obesity
- **Asylum**
- Climate Change: Copenhagen Conference
- United Kingdom: Tolerance, Democracy and Openness
- Nuclear Disarmament
- Probation Service
- Taxation
- Constitutional Reform
- **European Union: Codecision and National Parliamentary Scrutiny**

February 2010

- Economy: Enterprise and Innovation
- National Security Strategy
- European Union: United Kingdom Convergence Programme
- **EU: Directive on the Protection of Animals Used for Scientific Purposes**
- Energy: National Policy Statements
- **Merits of Statutory Instruments Report: What Happened Next?**
- Legislation and Public Policy
- Higher and Further Education: Funding

March 2010

- Education: Teaching Excellence
- International Women's Day
- Draft National Policy Statement for Ports
- Draft National Policy Statement for Nuclear Power Generation
- **Barnett Formula**
- National Minimum Wage
- Draft National Policy Statement for Fossil Fuel Electricity Generating Infrastructure
- British Humanist Association: Reports
- Culture as a Front-Line Service
- Economy
- Older people

April 2010

- **British Film and Television Industries**

Short debates 2009–10

December 2009

- Pupils and the Media

January 2010

- Electoral System: Party Lists
- National Health Service: Staff Qualifications
- Climate Change and Renewable Energy

February 2010

- Congo
- Mental Health: Age Discrimination
- Assisted Dying
- Blind people: Street Design
- Media: Local and Regional Newspapers
- Prisons
- Iran: Human Rights
- Public Services: Co-location

March 2010

- Gulf War: Veterans
- Crown Dependencies and British Overseas Territories
- Armenia
- Mental Capacity Act 2005

April 2010

- Israel
- Agriculture: British pig industry



Investigating and influencing public policy

House of Lords committees conduct wide-ranging investigations into policy issues and other governmental actions and decisions, and publish their recommendations to Parliament in well-respected and influential reports.

Committees in the House of Lords perform a very different function to their Commons counterparts, with each committee adopting a broad perspective based on a subject area rather than the activities of a particular government department. Their wide remits allow Lords committees to investigate important issues thoroughly and with valuable flexibility.

Lords committees also benefit from the high level of specialist knowledge and wide range of experience available in the House, and their membership is often made up of experts in their fields. This varied, experienced membership lends authority and credibility to the work of Lords committees and their independent approach to the scrutiny of public policy.

While their membership changes, the majority of Lords committees are longstanding. They are able to look at both long-term and current or urgent issues, and may revisit issues raised in previous committee inquiries to assess the impact of their recommendations.

Committees in 2009–10	Reports
Communications	2
Constitution	10
Economic Affairs	1
European Union	10
Science and Technology	3
Does not include published government responses and reports on correspondence or meetings with ministers	

For more on House of Lords committees > www.parliament.uk/business/committees

Communications Committee

The Communications Committee looks at issues regarding the media and creative industries.

British film and television

The committee expressed concern that the British film and television industries lacked a major global distributor based in the UK to promote their high-quality content abroad. To tackle this, the report recommended that BBC Worldwide, the commercial arm of the BBC, be partly privatised to allow it to promote and distribute television and film content produced by other UK media companies as well as the BBC. The committee also called for enhanced tax breaks for low budget films made in the UK, and for new tax incentives to encourage video games producers to stay in the UK.



Constitution Committee

The Constitution Committee scrutinises public bills raising significant constitutional issues, considers broader government policy affecting the constitution, and keeps the operation of the UK constitution under review. As the UK has no written constitution, the committee performs an important role in alerting Parliament to the potential impact of proposed legislation, raising constitutional issues that might otherwise be missed. Its membership – including senior lawyers, former ministers and academic experts on the constitution – means it is well placed to perform this vital function.

‘The Cabinet Office and the Centre of Government’

The committee argued that power in government had become increasingly centred around the Prime Minister, and that structures and processes of accountability and parliamentary scrutiny should be reformed to reflect this shift. The committee also considered the approach taken to changes in the ‘machinery of government’ and criticised the government for failing to consult more widely, particularly with the judiciary, when it reformed the role of the Lord Chancellor.

“The committees are made up of noted experts and their deliberations are often worth reading.”

Leading article, The Times, 11 February 2009

Economic Affairs Committee

The Economic Affairs Committee has a membership with expertise on economic issues – over recent years, it has included former Chancellors of the Exchequer, senior Treasury officials, academics and high-profile business leaders. As well as inquiries into specific economic issues, the committee also normally scrutinises aspects of the Finance Bill.

Private finance projects and transparency in public debt

The committee criticised the way private finance projects (PFPs) can be used to move public spending ‘off-balance sheet’ and consequently mask the actual levels of public sector debt. The report recommended that the government should publish figures for total PFP liabilities alongside figures for public sector net debt. It also raised concerns that the long-term commitment to infrastructure spending that PFPs demand, with contracts of up to 30 years, could crowd out other areas of government investment at a time when there is likely to be pressure to reduce public sector spending substantially.

“Ministers must reveal costs of public-sector projects, warn peers.”

Independent, 17 March 2010



European Union Committee

The European Union Committee is the oldest and largest of the House of Lords committees, with seven sub-committees involving more than 80 members in all. The sub-committees focus on a range of policy areas, conducting inquiries into and scrutinising in detail European Commission proposals for new policies and regulations. The committee's membership includes former ministers, EU commissioners, MEPs and ambassadors.

Alternative investment fund managers and regulation of derivatives markets

Following the financial crisis the committee considered EU proposals for new regulation of the financial services industry. It produced two reports in this area that called on the EU to exercise caution to avoid introducing a "one size fits all" regulatory system that would cover a variety of different financial institutions, not all of which had contributed to the crisis. These reports supported the government's concern that EU regulation which was out of step with wider global initiatives could make the European financial services industry, and the City of London in particular, uncompetitive. The reports were praised by Members of the European Parliament and were well received by the financial press in the UK.

“Lords warn on EU clampdown on hedge funds.”

Daily Telegraph, 10 February 2010

Cyber-attacks

The committee considered the role the EU can play in helping the UK and other member states to detect and prevent cyber-attacks using online or other electronic communications technology. Its report concluded that, despite the global nature of the internet, there was a role to be played by the EU in bringing member states with insufficient defences up to the level of those (like the UK) which are best protected, in particular by the development of computer emergency response teams. The committee called for more and better cooperation between the EU and NATO on this issue.

“House of Lords report slates EU, NATO and UK Government cyber security planning.”

Infosecurity magazine, 22 March 2010



Science and Technology Committee

The Science and Technology Committee covers a wide range of science policy matters, many of which have a significant impact on UK national policy decisions. The committee draws heavily on the experience and expertise of a number of distinguished scientists who are Members of the House of Lords.

“Some of the finest minds in the UK are Members of the Lords and its committees.”

‘Nanofood for thought’, editorial, Nature 5, 89 (2010)



Nanotechnologies and food

The committee looked at the potential role nanotechnologies could play in food production and packaging over the coming decades. Nanotechnologies are a rapidly developing area of research that may have the potential to provide widespread benefits, such as full-flavoured low-fat and low-salt foods, promoting healthy eating, and packaging that can indicate levels of food deterioration, prolonging shelf-life and reducing waste.

While recognising the potential of this “exciting” technology, the committee warned that excessive secrecy by the food industry about its development and use risked creating a public backlash. The committee also called for more research into the effects of nanomaterials on the human body.

The report sparked significant debate in the national media about an area of food technology that had previously been poorly understood.

“Peers criticise food industry for secrecy over nanotechnology.”

Guardian, 8 January 2010

Policy committee reports 2009–10

Communications

January 2010

- The British film and television industries – decline or opportunity?

March 2010

- Digital switchover of television and radio in the United Kingdom

Constitution

December 2009

- Clause 12 of the Bribery Bill
- Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies and Credit Unions Bill

January 2010

- Video Recordings Bill
- Clause 17 of the Digital Economy Bill
- The Cabinet Office and the Centre of Government

February 2010

- Clause 12 of the Bribery Bill: Further Report

March 2010

- Annual Report 2008–09
- Constitutional Reform and Governance Bill
- Crime and Security Bill

April 2010

- Referendums in the United Kingdom

Economic Affairs

March 2010

- Private Finance Projects and off-balance sheet debt

European Union

December 2009

- Asylum directives: scrutiny of the opt-in decisions

February 2010

- Directive on Alternative Investment Fund Managers

March 2010

- Impact Assessments in the EU: room for improvement?
- Protecting Europe against

large-scale cyber-attacks

- Stars and Dragons: The EU and China
- The EU's Regulation on Succession
- Making it work: the European Social Fund
- Adapting to climate change: EU agriculture and forestry
- The future regulation of derivatives markets: is the EU on the right track?
- Combating Somali Piracy: the EU's Naval Operation Atalanta

Science and Technology

January 2010

- Nanotechnologies and Food

March 2010

- Radioactive Waste Management: a further update

April 2010

- Setting priorities for publicly funded research

Does not include published government responses and reports on correspondence or meetings with ministers

Reaching out to connect people with the House of Lords

The House of Lords is an important public institution, and it is vital that the UK public hear about, understand and feel engaged with the work of the House and their parliamentary system.

Through a range of formal and informal outreach activities, Members of the House of Lords connect with new audiences and groups, open up new channels of communication, and widely promote the work of the House.

Members of the Lords work for and on behalf of the people of the UK. Outreach initiatives and programmes enable Members of the Lords to meet and interact with individuals and groups from every part of the UK community, by going out to attend visits and meetings, or by welcoming members of the public into the House of Lords for tours and events.

Outreach activities help to build strong, positive relationships between Parliament and the UK public, and form a valuable part of a Member's role in parliamentary life.

For more on the House of Lords outreach programme > www.parliament.uk/lordspeaker

Outreach programme

As well as chairing daily business in the House of Lords chamber, the Lord Speaker is an ambassador for the House and has developed an active outreach programme designed to engage the public, especially young people, with the work of the House of Lords.

A range of formal outreach activities is managed under the outreach programme, encouraging Members to reach out to diverse audiences, from school children to press and media to cyberspace.

“ Lord X’s talk was ‘on the button’ ... and illustrated the vital work the House does in our democracy. ... Not only politics students but managers, beauty therapists, lecturers from other disciplines, secretaries and caretakers joined us. ”

Perthshire college, March 2010

House of Lords chamber events

By opening up the chamber for special debating events, the House of Lords is able to invite members of the public, particularly young people, into the heart of Parliament. Earlier in 2009, the House of Lords hosted the flagship ‘Shine’ debate, involving 250 young people, youth workers and other guests from the youth sector in a series of debates in the Lords chamber on celebrating talent, overcoming youth stereotypes and bridging the perceived gap between Parliament and the concerns of young people. This event marked only the third time the Lords chamber has been used for debate by non-Members, on each occasion by young people.



School activities

In 2009–10, the Peers in Schools programme saw 60 Members make a total of 125 visits to schools in their local area, to speak to GCSE and sixth-form students. This programme, which reached around 6,500 students in 2009–10, allows the House of Lords to demonstrate its experience and expertise, with participating Members including academics, former teachers, scientists, lawyers, former cabinet ministers and civil servants. The Peers in Schools programme continues to gain strength and popularity, with more than 500 requests for Member visits received during the latest session.



In 2009, the three winners of the Lord Speaker's schools competition visited the House of Lords to discuss their creative print and multimedia studies on the portrayal of young people in the media with the Lord Speaker and members of the Communications Committee. This annual competition brings young people into direct contact with the issues, work and processes of the House of Lords.

Speaking events allow Members to demonstrate and pass on their professional experience and expertise on topical issues to public audiences. Lectures held in the Robing Room in the House of Lords are open to invited members of the public, media, staff and Members.

In March 2010, former Director-General of MI5, Baroness Manningham-Buller, delivered a lecture on intelligence and the security services. In February 2010, Baroness Stern led a River Room seminar, targeted at an audience of journalists and other members of the media, on Parliament, policy and punishment.

“Baroness X’s visit was fantastic! ... She made a huge impression on my students and completely changed some rather inaccurate views of the House of Lords. She truly was inspirational and an amazing ambassador for the Lords.”

Cambridgeshire college, January 2010

Online engagement

Managed by the Hansard Society and supported by the House of Lords, the Lords of the Blog website – lordsoftheblog.net – provides an independent forum for Members to discuss all aspects of the House and its work with a broad online audience. The House of Lords is the only second chamber in the world with a collaborative blog to facilitate direct dialogue with the public.

Lords of the Blog heads a stable of multimedia and online resources that complement parliament.uk, including podcasts, Facebook and Twitter social networking activities, and House of Lords content available via Flickr and YouTube.

“[The Lords’] ability to respond to criticism shows there is something behind what they are saying. ... They have clearly thought about what they are posting on and can defend it.”

Lords of the Blog user research, March 2010



Representing the UK on the international stage

As an integral part of the UK Parliament, the House of Lords has an important role to play in fostering and maintaining international relationships with other countries and their parliaments and leaders.

Members of the Lords act as ambassadors for the House, for the UK Parliament and for the nation as a whole. Moreover, by participating in parliamentary visits and various multilateral parliamentary organisations, Members are able to engage with their counterparts internationally, share and apply their expertise in a wider context, and broaden understanding, both within and about the House.

Parliamentary visits

The House of Lords hosts visitors from parliaments around the world, and also sends delegations of Members and staff to a variety of international assemblies and meetings. These events provide valuable opportunities to exchange knowledge and experience on topical issues affecting the UK and the international community, on the business of running an effective parliament, and on discovering new ways of working together.

International engagement activities allow Members to work on building democracy and strengthening parliaments in other countries, particularly in the developing world, and to focus energies on substantial real-world issues, such as climate change, human rights and conflict prevention. As an agent of parliamentary diplomacy, the House of Lords is respected internationally for the expertise among its Members and its vital contribution to the UK's vibrant, stable democratic system.



The Lord Speaker Baroness Hayman attends the Commonwealth Speakers' Conference, Delhi, January 2010

Highlights from the 2009–10 session

- In January 2010, the Lord Speaker Baroness Hayman attended the biennial Commonwealth Speakers' Conference, in Delhi, as one of 50 speakers and presiding officers from 42 parliaments, and also met Smt. Meira Kumar, India's first woman speaker.
- In December 2009, Lord Roper represented the Lord Speaker at an extra-ordinary meeting of Speakers of Parliaments of the European Union in Stockholm.
- Also in December 2009, Baroness Northover represented the House at the Great Lakes Region Conference on 'Consolidating Political Will for Child Well-being' in Kampala, Uganda, a two-day issue-driven meeting organised by AWEPA, the Association of European Parliamentarians for Africa.
- In February 2010, a delegation of Canadian senators and officials made a three-day working visit to the House to exchange views on a variety of practical and administrative parliamentary issues, including security, facilities and process.
- In April, a delegation from the Senate of Thailand's Committee on Corruption Investigation and Good Governance Promotion visited the House and met with a number of Members.

International parliamentary organisations

Members of the House of Lords serve on UK delegations to various international bodies, usually alongside MPs from the House of Commons. As well as fulfilling an essential parliamentary role – to represent the UK abroad – these delegations provide an opportunity for Members to contribute to and influence debates and decisions on an international level that affect the UK and its citizens.

**Total number of Members involved
in international delegations**

37



The CPA UK branch hosts the Westminster Seminar on Parliamentary Practice and Procedures, March 2010

British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly (BIPA)

Ten Members of the Lords serve as members or associate members of BIPA, including Lord Dubs who sits as vice chairman and committee chair. Members take part in conference and committee meetings including, in February 2010, the 20th annual plenary session of BIPA held in Cavan, Ireland.

Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) and Western European Union Parliamentary Assembly/European Security and Defence Assembly (WEU/ESDA)

Seven Members of the Lords are part of the UK delegations to these European organisations. Each year they participate in four plenary sessions of PACE, held in Strasbourg, and two part-sessions of WEU/ESDA, held in Paris. In addition they are active participants in the work of committees set up by both assemblies to examine a range of subjects.

NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA)

Three Members of the Lords serve as members of NATO PA, participating in bi-annual plenary sessions in addition to meetings of NATO PA's five committees and eight sub-committees. In November 2009, on the cusp of the new parliamentary session, the UK delegation hosted the 55th Annual Session of the NATO PA in Edinburgh, Scotland. Lords Members and staff made a significant contribution to the successful organisation and delivery of the session.

Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

The House of Lords provides three UK delegates to OSCE, an organisation comprising 56 member states from North America and Central Asia as well as Europe. Each year, delegates participate in two plenary sessions of OSCE, including one during the 2009–10 parliamentary session.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)

The UK branch of CPA participates in around a dozen outward delegations each year, appointing Members of the Lords as delegates on a case-by-case basis. In February 2010, Baroness Scott of Needham Market joined the CPA visit to Bangladesh to share parliamentary experiences, discuss poverty reduction initiatives and gain first-hand insight into the effects of climate change.

The 59th Westminster Seminar on Parliamentary Practice and Procedures was organised by the CPA UK branch in March. This annual event for overseas parliamentarians and staff covers a broad range of parliamentary activities. As in previous years, it was supported by a number of House of Lords Members and staff.

Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)

During the 2009–10 session, four Members of the Lords took part in IPU delegations to Brazil, in February 2010, and to the IPU Assembly in Thailand, in April. In addition, 25 Members participated in receiving visiting IPU delegations, including groups from Vietnam, Mongolia, Afghanistan and Albania, and delegates to an International Seminar on Human Trafficking hosted by the UK branch of IPU in February 2010.

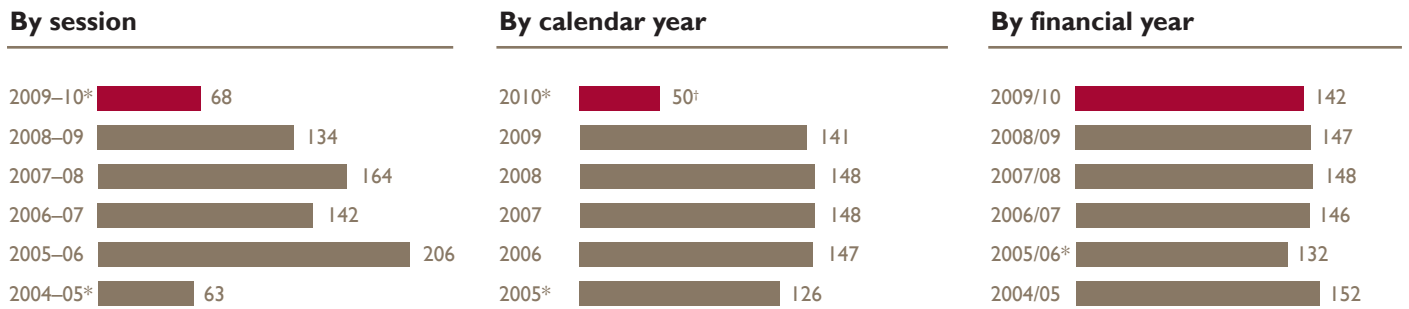


Baroness Butler-Sloss leads a discussion at the International Seminar on Human Trafficking, February 2010

Facts and figures

Sitting days

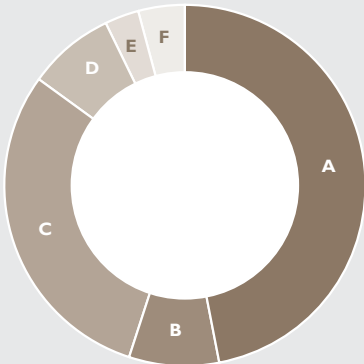
The unit which defines Parliament’s work is a session. It varies in length but, whether calculated by session, calendar or financial year, the working year averages around 150 sitting days for both houses.



* Short session due to general election
† 2010 calendar year to end-of-session at 8 April

How time is spent

Legislation	55%
A Bills	47%
B Statutory Instruments	8%
Scrutiny	41%
C Debates	30%
D Questions	8%
E Statements	3%
F Other*	4%



*Includes Member introductions, daily prayers, adjournments and other formal business

Working patterns

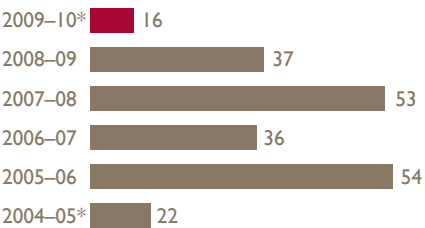
Average daily attendance



Average length of sittings (hours)



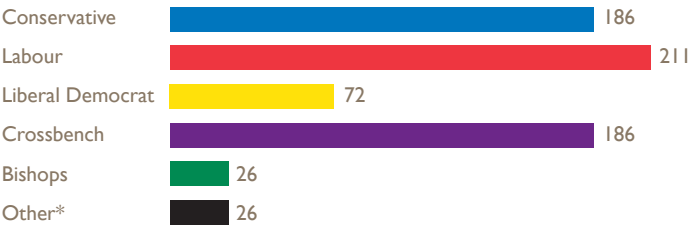
Late sittings (after 10pm)



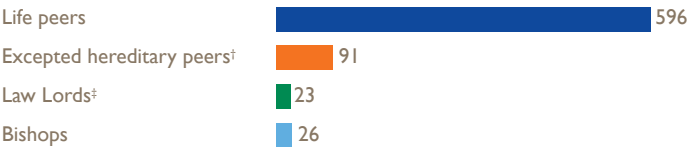
* Short session due to general election

Members (at 6 April 2010)

Party strengths



By type



* Excludes 12 Members on leave of absence, 16 disqualified as senior members of the judiciary and 1 disqualified as an MEP
† One hereditary peer appointment vacant at date of compilation
‡ Includes former Law Lords

Further information

www.parliament.uk/lords

News and business in the House of Lords

www.parliamentlive.tv

Live and archived video and audio coverage of work in the House of Lords

House of Lords Enquiry Service

Information about Members and the work of the House of Lords

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