

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR WALES

GENERAL DATA

General data of the region

- Country (*area and population*): Wales (United Kingdom)
- Region (*area and population*): Wales
- Regional government: National Assembly for Wales (legislature) and Welsh Government (executive)
- Competences of the region:
 1. Agriculture, forestry, animals, plants and rural development
 2. Ancient monuments and historic buildings
 3. Culture
 4. Economic development
 5. Education and training
 6. Environment
 7. Fire and rescue services and fire safety
 8. Food
 9. Health and health services
 10. Highways and transport
 11. Housing
 12. Local government
 13. National Assembly for Wales
 14. Public Administration
 15. Social welfare
 16. Sport and recreation
 17. Tourism
 18. Town and country planning
 19. Water and flood defence
 20. Welsh language



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General data of the Parliament

- Headquarters: Cardiff Bay
- Language: Welsh and English
- Date of foundation: May 1999
- Web site:
(English) <http://www.assemblywales.org/>
(Welsh) <http://www.assemblywales.org/cy/index.htm>

Logo



Coat of Arms

FUNCTIONS OF THE PARLIAMENT

The Assembly performs three functions: representing Wales and its people; making laws for Wales; and holding the Welsh Government to account.



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COMPOSITION

Total composition

60

Gender distribution and average age

In terms of gender representation, the Assembly following the election in May 2011 now has 25 female and 35 male Assembly Members.

No information is available in relation to the average age of Assembly Members.

Electoral system

In an Assembly election each registered voter has two votes. The first vote is for a local constituency Member. A Member is elected for each of the 40 constituencies in Wales by the 'first past the post' system, the system by which MPs are elected to the House of Commons – i.e. the candidate with the greatest number of votes wins the seat.

The second vote is to elect a regional Member. Regional Members are elected by a form of proportional representation known as the 'Additional Member System', where voters vote for a political party. This system goes some way towards ensuring that the overall number of seats held by each political party reflects the share of the vote that the party receives.

Term of office

Usually 4 years but currently 5 years (the Assembly's term of office is currently subject to a UK Government consultation).



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Composition of the Parliament as a result of the last parliamentary elections

Political parties and number of seats

Labour: 30
 Conservatives: 14
 Plaid Cymru: 11
 Liberal Democrats: 5

Parliamentary political groups

Requirements to form a parliamentary political group

Political group

- *Labour*
- *Leader, Carwyn Jones*
- *Number of members: 30*

Political group

- *Welsh Conservatives*
- *Leader, Andrew R.T. Davies*
- *Number of members: 14*

Political group

- *Plaid Cymru*
- *Leader, Leanne Wood*
- *Number of members: 11*



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Political group

- *Welsh Liberal Democrats*
- *Leader, Kirsty Williams*
- *Number of members: 5*



Welsh Liberal Democrats
Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru

THE GOVERNING BODIES OF THE PARLIAMENT

The Speaker/President

The current Presiding Officer is Rosemary Butler AM.



The functions of the Presiding Officer are outlined in the Assembly's Standing Orders. These include:

- chairing Plenary meetings;
- determining questions as to the interpretation or application of Standing Orders;
- representing the Assembly in exchanges with any other bodies, whether within or outside the United Kingdom, in relation to matters affecting the Assembly; and
- any other functions conferred by any enactment, by the Assembly or by the Assembly's Standing Orders.

The current Deputy Presiding Officer is David Melding AM.



Other bodies (Bureau/Spokesmen's Conference/....)

The Assembly Commission is the corporate body responsible for ensuring that property, staff and services are provided for the Assembly. The Commission consists of the Presiding Officer and four other Members nominated by the main political parties. At present the Commissioners are:

- Angela Burns AM (Conservative): Budget, governance, including Audit Committee membership. Links with the Remuneration Board. The improvement of services to Members. The Commission as the employer of Assembly staff.
- Peter Black AM (Liberal Democrats): ICT, broadcasting and e-democracy. The Assembly Estate and Sustainability.
- Sandy Mewies AM (Labour): Education services, front of house, the Assembly shop, catering and security. Assembly facilities. The Commission's statutory equality functions.
- Rhodri Glyn Thomas (Plaid Cymru): The Commission's Welsh language functions and policy. Legal Services and Freedom of Information (FOI).

The staff of the Commission are employees of the Commission and are headed by the Chief Executive and Clerk of the Assembly.

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PARLIAMENTARY OPERATING ORGANS

Plenary session

Plenary meetings are attended by all Assembly Members and provide one of the key mechanisms for Members to hold the Welsh Government and Assembly Commission to account, make laws for Wales and represent their constituents. Plenary meetings currently take place in public on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons from 1:30pm onwards.

Committees...

The titles, remit and sizes of committees for the fourth Assembly were agreed by the Business Committee on [21 June 2011](#). The current Assembly committee structure is as follows:

Committee Titles	Membership	Chairs
Public Accounts	8	Conservative
Finance	8	Plaid Cymru
Constitutional and Legislative Affairs	4 + Chair	Deputy Presiding Officer
Petitions	4	Liberal Democrat
Standards of Conduct	4	Labour
Children and Young People	10	Labour
Environment and Sustainability	10	Plaid Cymru



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Health and Social Care	10	Labour
Communities, Equality, and Local Government	10	Labour
Enterprise and Business	10	Conservative
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PARLIAMENTARY ADMINISTRATION

Bodies/Departments/Services

Assembly Members are supported in their role by officials employed by the Assembly Commission. The Commission is made up of the following three directorates and two service areas, all of which are accountable to the Chief Executive and Clerk of the Assembly:

- **Assembly Business:** Provides specialist parliamentary support to Members to ensure the efficient and effective conduct of business. It is made up of Committee Service, the Legislation and Chamber Service, the Research Service and the Translation and Reporting Service;
- **Legal Services:** Provides advice on Bills, legislative competence, corporate advice and information relating to the scrutiny of subordinate legislation;
- **Operations:** Responsible for human resources, finance, information and



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communications technology, estates and facilities management, security and corporate planning;

- **Commission and Member Support Service:** Provides secretariat and support to the Presiding Officers, the Assembly Commission, the Chief Executive and Directors, the Commissioner for Standards, the Remuneration Board, Members' Business Support, liaison and co-ordination of professional development opportunities for Members and their staff; and
- **Communications:** Responsible for leading on the Assembly's external and internal communications.

Contact details for CALRE

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BUILDING OF THE PARLIAMENT

History

The Senedd, which was opened in 2006, is situated in a prime position on the waterfront in Cardiff Bay. It houses the National Assembly for Wales' Siambwr (debating chamber) and Committee Rooms.

The Senedd is situated on the waterfront in Cardiff Bay, adjacent to the Grade 1 listed Pierhead Building and Wales Millennium Centre. The building faces south west and looks out over a spectacular panorama of sky and water.

The building has three floors. Transparent at the public level, the debates take place below within the slate plinth. The Senedd was designed to be as open and accessible as possible.

