



**BRIEFING PAPER**

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# UK delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

By Arabella Lang

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## Summary

How democratic is the UK's 'democratic conscience'?

On Monday 16 November 2015 the House of Commons will debate a motion calling for a new method of selection of the UK Parliament's delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE). The proposed list has been criticised for not including three 'independently minded' Conservative former members of the delegation, and described as 'undemocratic'. The Government insists that the usual procedures have been followed.

If the motion is passed, the UK will have only 11 days at the very most to agree a new process and a new delegation before PACE's next meeting on 27 November 2015 (and in fact the new delegation's credentials should be presented at least a week before that meeting). If it does not, the UK would be unrepresented at that meeting and for at least two months afterwards. The UK's last delegation's credentials expired at midnight on 7 November 2015.

The UK delegation to PACE comprises 36 Members of the House of Commons and House of Lords (18 full members of PACE and 18 substitutes). The UK Parliament – like many others – has no formal procedure for selecting who joins its delegation. It appears to be a matter for the party Whips, although the Labour Party holds internal elections. PACE rules allow delegates to be appointed or elected, as long as they are members of the national or federal parliaments and the delegations are a 'fair representation of the political parties or groups in their parliaments'.

A previous controversy in 1992 led to calls for the UK system to be reviewed. PACE would prefer its delegates to be elected by the national or federal parliaments, but as long as its rules allow appointment it cannot object to a system that enjoys the broad support of the parliament concerned.

PACE is an inter-parliamentary human rights and democracy body that holds governments to account, provides a forum for debate on Europe's political and social issues and elects to various positions including judges of the European Court of Human Rights. It meets four times a year in Strasbourg and also works through various committees. PACE describes itself as '[the democratic conscience of Greater Europe](#)'.

# 1. UK delegation to PACE

## 1.1 2015 controversy

On Monday 16 November 2015 the House of Commons will debate a motion on the membership of the UK delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE). The motion reads:

That this House adopts with immediate effect the same system for nomination of its membership of the UK Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe as it has for nomination, following party elections, of membership of departmental select committees, and accordingly directs the Speaker not to send the names of its membership of the UK delegation to the President of the Parliamentary Assembly until the nomination of that membership has taken place according to that system.

This debate was scheduled by the Backbench Business Committee following a bid from a Conservative Member, Owen Paterson, on 10 November. It was in response to the [Prime Minister's announcement](#) of the latest proposed UK delegation to PACE on 3 November 2015:<sup>1</sup>

Sir Roger Gale MP (Leader)

<b>Full Members</b>	<b>Substitute Members</b>
Tasmina Ahmed-Sheikh MP	Lord Balfe
Lord Anderson	Lord Blencathra
Guto Bebb MP	Liam Byrne MP
David Crausby MP	David T C Davies MP
Geraint Davies MP	Baroness Eaton
Jeffrey Donaldson MP	Suella Fernandes MP
Earl of Dundee	Lord Foulkes
Baroness Eccles of Moulton	Khalid Mahmood MP
Nigel Evans MP	Baroness Massey of Darwen
John Howell MP	Huw Merriman MP
Ian Liddell-Grainger MP	Baroness O'Loan
Sir Alan Meale MP	Mary Robinson MP
Kate Osamor MP	Paul Scully MP

<sup>1</sup> [HCWS287](#), 3 November 2015

## 5 UK delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Lord Prescott	Virendra Sharma MP
Mark Pritchard MP	Paula Sheriff MP
Christina Rees MP	Kelly Tolhurst MP
Alex Salmond MP	Phil Wilson MP
	Mike Wood MP

Christopher Chope, a long-standing Conservative member of the UK's delegation to PACE, questioned the rationale for selecting the new delegation:

Why will [the Deputy Leader of the House] not confirm that the real reason why three independently minded former Ministers are being purged is because we voted in favour of a free and fair EU referendum with a strict 28-day purdah period, as recommended by the Council of Europe's Venice Commission and our Electoral Commission? Does she accept that that decision is being interpreted in Strasbourg as direct interference by Government in the work of the Parliamentary Assembly?<sup>2</sup>

Another Conservative Member, Peter Bone, went as far as to describe the current situation as 'utterly undemocratic and utterly wrong. I am afraid to say that the Prime Minister should be ashamed of himself'.<sup>3</sup>

'Utterly undemocratic and utterly wrong' – or just 'changing with the new set of MPs coming into the House'?

The Deputy Leader of the House of Commons, Dr Thérèse Coffey, responded that the normal procedures had been followed:

...the convention on appointments that has been followed on multiple occasions has been followed in this case. There is nothing to suggest that there is anything disorderly about it... There are 27 Members of Parliament on the list, 10 of whom come from the 2015 intake. This is just about changing with the new set of MPs coming into the House.<sup>4</sup>

The Speaker of the House of Commons, who transmits the credentials of the proposed delegation to PACE, has not yet done so for this proposed delegation. He said it was his responsibility 'to be assured of the propriety of the process involved' but 'not ... to assess the merits or demerits of the individual prospective candidates for membership of the delegation'.<sup>5</sup>

If the motion is passed, the UK will have only 11 days at the very most to agree a new process and a new delegation, before PACE's Standing Committee next meets on 27 November 2015. In fact the new delegation's credentials should if possible be presented a week before that meeting. If there is no new delegation by 27 November, the UK will be unrepresented in PACE for that meeting and until at least the beginning of the new session of PACE on 25 January 2016. The last UK

<sup>2</sup> [HC Deb 3 November 2015 c887](#)

<sup>3</sup> [HC Deb 3 November 2015 c889](#)

<sup>4</sup> [HC Deb 3 November 2015 c891](#)

<sup>5</sup> [HC Deb 4 November 2015 c994](#)

delegation's credentials – extended for six months after the general election – expired at midnight on 7 November 2015.

The motion says that the Commons should use the system of 'nomination, following party elections, of membership of departmental select committees'. It does not clarify what is meant by that or how to do it (nor, of course, does it say anything about nominating members of the House of Lords). As summarised below (section 1.3), the procedure for nominating members of Commons select committees includes stages in the Committee of Selection and floor of the House, as well as elections. If these extra stages are deemed applicable, they would hold up the process and make it very unlikely that a new UK delegation could be appointed before the end of January 2016.

## 1.2 How is the delegation selected?

The UK's delegation to PACE comprises 36 Members of the House of Commons and House of Lords (18 full members of the delegation and 18 substitutes).

The UK Parliament (like many others – see Appendix) has no formal procedure for selecting who joins this delegation. It appears to be a matter for the party Whips – 'Normally, decisions are taken through the usual channels and approved by the leaders of the parties represented on the delegation'<sup>6</sup> – although the Labour Party holds internal elections.<sup>7</sup>

The only formal reference to the procedure for selecting PACE delegations is in twin motions passed by the House of Commons<sup>8</sup> and the House of Lords<sup>9</sup> in 1992, saying 'That this House confirms the existing procedures for the nomination of the United Kingdom delegations to the parliamentary assemblies of the Council of Europe and the Western European Union'. Neither motion explained what those existing procedures were.

When the UK first joined the Council of Europe in 1949, the PACE delegation appears to have been drawn only from the Government and the Official Opposition, and 'the usual channels' were mentioned:

COUNCIL OF EUROPE (BRITISH REPRESENTATION)

*HC Deb 05 May 1949 vol 464 cc1219-20* [1219](#)

[§ Mr. Eden](#)

I should like to ask the Lord President a further Question. It may be for the convenience of the House to know whether copies of the Statute of the Council of Europe will be made available to Members, and whether the right hon. Gentleman has any statement to make about the composition of the British representation to the Consultative Assembly?

[§ Mr. H. Morrison](#)

<sup>6</sup> Dr Thérèse Coffey (Deputy Leader of the House of Commons), [HC Deb 3 November 2015 c887](#)

<sup>7</sup> See [HC Deb 3 November 2015 c888](#)

<sup>8</sup> [HC Deb 22 May 1992 vol 208 c682](#)

<sup>9</sup> [HL Deb 18 June 1992 vol 538 cc288-90](#)

## 7 UK delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

The Statute of the Council of Europe will be signed this afternoon and arrangements are being made for copies of the Statute to be available in the Library tomorrow. Thereafter a White Paper will be issued. The British representation to the Consultative Assembly will include Members of His Majesty's Opposition. Most of the representatives will be Members of this House, but Members of another place may also be included. Only persons who are Members of one or other House of Parliament will be nominated. We do not propose to include in the Delegation representatives associated with organisations which are anti-democratic or opposed to the objects of Western Union.

[§ Mr. Eden](#)

Just one point of elucidation, which concerns exclusively His Majesty's Opposition. Do I understand that the representation of His Majesty's Opposition to which the right hon. Gentleman refers will be left to the choice of His Majesty's Opposition.

[§ Mr. Morrison](#)

Yes, Sir.

[§ Mr. Lipson](#)

Will the Leader of the House clarify the expression "His Majesty's Opposition" in this connection? Will independent Members be included?

[§ Mr. Morrison](#)

Naturally my instinctively tolerant and catholic taste would be to include everybody, but I am [1220](#) afraid I must say that "His Majesty's Opposition" is the official Opposition with which I am faced this afternoon.

[§ Mr. Gallacher](#)

In view of the fact that the delegation to the Consultative Assembly will consist of His Majesty's Government and official Opposition, who will be in general agreement regarding the Council of Europe and the general work that is to be carried on, is the right hon. Gentleman making any arrangements for opposition to be associated with the deputation?

[§ Mr. Morrison](#)

I have said that His Majesty's Opposition will be associated with the delegation, but obviously I am in no position to answer for the views of the Opposition which are of course their business and for them to determine.

[§ Mr. Emrys Roberts](#)

As the European Assembly is to represent the whole rich and varied life of Europe, will the Government ensure that in the British delegation there are included representatives of the life of Wales and of Scotland?

[§ Mr. Morrison](#)

We shall keep that point in mind. I will only say to the House that if there are any points of detail about the composition of the delegation probably it would be best to discuss them through the usual channels.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1949/may/05/council-of-europe-british-representation>

In 1971 William Whitelaw, then Leader of the House of Commons, more or less confirmed the role of the Whips in the appointment of PACE delegations:

[§ 40. Mr. Arthur Lewis](#)

asked the Lord President of the Council whether he will move to initiate a system for election of delegates to the Council of Europe and other international organisations and conferences which delegates representing the British House of Commons, have to attend on similar lines to the Ballot for Private Members Bills and Motions.

[§ Mr. Whitelaw](#)

No, Sir.

[§ Mr. Lewis](#)

That is an amazing reply. One would not have expected the Lord President of the Council to give such a [523](#) reply. Is he aware that he has a reputation, as have most other hon. Members, for believing in extending democracy? Surely in the Council of Europe and everything connected with the E.E.C. we should show how democratic we are. A good way to start is by having a democratic system of electing those who are to go, instead of having the same old faces appointed by the Whips.

[§ Mr. Whitelaw](#)

The present procedures in this matter have been followed by successive Administrations of both parties, and I believe that they have provided widespread satisfaction. [HON. MEMBERS: "No."] If I am told that they have not, of course we can reconsider them, but I believe that they are the best way to proceed. No one has a closed mind on the matter, however, and if some better procedures can be proposed, by all means let them be considered.<sup>11</sup>

This does not appear to be the whole story, however, as Lord Rodgers of Quarry Bank pointed out in a debate in the Lords on the CoE in May 1999. Recalling his time as leader of the UK delegation to the CoE in the late 1960s, he said:

Apart from that, what I remember of that time was that I kept Robert Maxwell off the delegation. I refused to have him despite the representations of the Chief Whip.<sup>12</sup>

### 1.3 How are Commons select committees appointed?

The Backbench Business motion above calls for nominations to the UK's PACE delegation to use the system that the Commons has adopted for departmental select committees, of nominating members following party elections. What is that system?

Briefly, the House elects the chairs of a number of select committees. After a general election, it first agrees from which party each chair shall

<sup>11</sup> [HC Deb 10 February 1971 vol 811 cc522-3](#)

<sup>12</sup> [HL Deb 5 May 1999 c683](#)



come. Then it invites nominations, resulting from which chairs may be elected unopposed, or following ballots.

After the chairs have been elected, the remaining members can be nominated. On 4 March 2010, the House endorsed 'the principle that parties should elect members of select committees in a secret ballot by whichever transparent and democratic method they choose'.<sup>13</sup> Once individual parties have determined which members to nominate, the names are presented to the Committee of Selection. The Chair of the Committee of Selection then tables motions listing the names of Members nominated by parties and the motions are considered by the House. Standing Orders require that notice of the motion must be given at least two sitting days before it is considered on the floor of the House.<sup>14</sup>

Commons Library Briefing Paper [Appointing members to select committees](#)<sup>15</sup> gives more information.

## 1.4 1992 controversy

The 1992 parliamentary motions on selecting PACE delegations were apparently intended to 'rectify what was thought to be the deficiency in our procedures'.<sup>16</sup> They followed a challenge by a Labour member of the UK delegation to the credentials of a delegation:

The basis of the challenge was that those members who represent the British Parliament are not each of them necessarily elected by the individual constituent bodies of that Parliament. Within the Labour Party those who are delegates stand for election but that is apparently not necessarily the case in the other parties concerned. Additionally, at the time of the plenary session in Strasbourg not every member of the then British delegation was a member of either House.<sup>17</sup>

The PACE Committee on Rules of Procedure considered the challenge. Its [report](#)<sup>18</sup> noted that the UK Parliament had no formal procedure for appointments to the UK delegation to PACE:

5. The Committee on Rules of Procedure notes that the appointments to the United Kingdom delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly are made by the Executive Government, apparently without the United Kingdom Parliament having at any time specifically fixed (by Resolution or other formal means) a procedure to that end.

6. This practice, although it might be regarded by some as being at variance with a strict interpretation of Article 25 of the Statute, has not previously given rise to a formal challenge to the credentials of the United Kingdom delegation, either by United Kingdom members or other members of the Assembly; and the longstanding co-operation of all United Kingdom parties in these arrangements may be deemed to imply a widespread (if perhaps

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<sup>13</sup> [HC Deb 4 March 2010 c1095](#)

<sup>14</sup> House of Commons, Standing Orders of the House of Commons – Public Business, 2015, May 2015, HC 1154 2014-15, [Standing Order No 121](#) (2)

<sup>15</sup> CBP 7176, last updated 22 June 2015

<sup>16</sup> Lord Wakeham (then Lord Privy Seal), [HL Deb 18 June 1992 c288](#)

<sup>17</sup> Lord Kirkhill, [HL Deb 18 June 1992 c288](#)

<sup>18</sup> Document 6610

not unanimous) degree of consent to them, in a Parliament whose tradition over many centuries has been to act by convention and unwritten procedures in respect of a wide variety of decisions which in other parliaments would, as a matter of course, be embodied in formally adopted rules.

The report welcomed Labour's move to elect its members of the delegation, but said that elections were not required as long as the method of nominating the delegation enjoyed the 'de facto consent' of Parliament:

7. The Committee notes that in recent times at least one party in the United Kingdom Parliament has made internal arrangements for the election of its own component of the United Kingdom delegation to the Assembly. This is a welcome development, which accords more closely with the spirit of Article 25 of the Statute and with the frequently-expressed wish of the Assembly that national delegations should, as a matter of course, be elected by the national parliaments in such a manner as to reflect their political composition. It does not in itself, however, provide grounds for invalidating the credentials of the delegation as a whole - or of that part of it which is not so elected - unless it can be demonstrated that the practice adopted by the United Kingdom in nominating its delegation does not enjoy and has not enjoyed at least the de facto consent of the national Parliament.

8. The Committee has no evidence to suggest that the latter situation is the case. And so long as Article 25 of the Statute continues to permit the appointment (as distinct from the election) of a national delegation under procedures decided by the national Parliament, the Committee does not believe that either the Committee or the Assembly have sufficient grounds to reject outright the credentials of a delegation from the United Kingdom constructed in this well-established, and so far unchallenged, manner.

It recommended that the UK Government and Parliament should 'be invited to review the procedures for the appointment of their delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly in order to bring them more closely in line with the spirit of the Statute of the Council of Europe and the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly'. It also called for the CoE rules on appointing PACE delegations to be revised.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> CoE [Committee on Rules of Procedure](#), Document 6610, 5 May 1992, para 17c

## 2. What is PACE?

### 2.1 Role

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), established in 1949, is 'the oldest international parliamentary Assembly with a pluralistic composition of democratically elected members of parliament established on the basis of an intergovernmental treaty'.

Although its texts are not binding, PACE holds governments to account over human rights and democratic standards, and the 47 Council of Europe (CoE) governments must give a collective reply. It provides a forum for debate on Europe's political and social issues, and describes itself as '[the democratic conscience of Greater Europe](#)'.

The 'democratic conscience of Greater Europe'

PACE also has wide powers of election. As well as its own President and Vice-Presidents (who chair and represent it), it elects:

- the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, and its own Secretary General, by secret ballot, for a period of five years each;
- the judges of the European Court of Human Rights, by secret ballot, following scrutiny from the new Committee on Election of Judges; and
- the CoE [Commissioner for Human Rights](#), who has a non-judicial responsibility to further human rights in the CoE Member States through country monitoring, thematic work and supporting human rights defenders.

It also observes parliamentary elections, and can veto new countries' accession to the CoE as well as recommend suspension of member states from the CoE.

The CoE has [summarised](#) the roles of the Parliamentary Assembly as follows:

#### **A right of scrutiny**

It holds governments to account over their human rights records, and presses states to achieve and maintain democratic standards, both in Europe and – increasingly – in neighbouring regions.

#### **A hotbed of ideas**

It is a factory of radical ideas for improving Europe's laws and practices, a "motor" for the Council of Europe and a guardian of the European Convention on Human Rights, which originated in the Assembly.

#### **A forum for debate**

It is a forum for sometimes heated debate on key political and social issues facing the continent, helping to head off conflict and encourage reconciliation.

Though its texts are not binding, the Assembly speaks on behalf of 800 million Europeans and the 47 Council of Europe governments must give a collective reply. It is the democratic conscience of Greater Europe.

#### **Powers**

PACE uncovers human rights violations, "monitors" whether states keep their promises, and demands answers from Presidents and Prime Ministers. It can also recommend sanctions.

#### **Achievements**

Whether ending executions in Europe, helping ex-Communist countries towards democracy, or creating the European flag, PACE has been a "motor" of positive change for more than 60 years.

For general information about PACE and the Council of Europe, see:

- [Council of Europe: Who we are](#)
- Council of Europe, [800 million Europeans](#).

## 2.2 Members

PACE is composed of 324 national parliamentarians from the 47 CoE Member States (and 324 alternates). The number of representatives per country, and consequently of votes, is determined by the size of the country. The biggest number is eighteen, the smallest two.

The [Statute of the Council of Europe](#) requires the members of PACE to be either elected or appointed by each Member State's national or federal parliament from among its members, 'in such manner as it shall decide'. It also allows each Member Government to 'make any additional appointments necessary when the Parliament is not in session and has not laid down the procedure to be followed in that case'.<sup>20</sup>

PACE's rules of procedure require that the balance of political parties within each national delegation ensures a 'fair representation of the political parties or groups in their parliaments'.<sup>21</sup>

Fair representation

They also require a new parliament to appoint its delegation within six months of an election:

Following parliamentary elections, the national parliament concerned or other competent authority shall make appointments to the Assembly within six months of the election. If the national parliament cannot make all such appointments in time for the opening of a new ordinary session of the Assembly, it may decide, for a period of not more than six months after the election, to be represented in the Assembly by members of the existing delegation. The credentials of the existing delegation shall expire at the opening of the first sitting of the Assembly or meeting of the Standing Committee following the appointment of the new delegation by the national parliament or competent authority or following the expiry of the six months' period after the election date.<sup>22</sup>

The next session of PACE is due to open on [25 January 2016](#), but the next meeting of the Standing Committee (which acts on behalf of PACE when the latter is not in session) is on [27 November 2015](#).

Each Member State's 'competent authority' (usually the Speaker or President of the national parliament)<sup>23</sup> writes to the President of PACE presenting the credentials of the members of the delegation – if possible at least a week before the opening of a session of PACE.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> [1949 Statute of the Council of Europe, Article 25](#)

<sup>21</sup> [PACE Rules of Procedure rule 6.2](#) (June 2015)

<sup>22</sup> [PACE Rules of Procedure rule 11.3](#)

<sup>23</sup> The UK changed its 'competent authority' from the Foreign Secretary to the Speaker of the House of Commons in 2010, to be in line with the majority of CoE Member States – see letter from the then Foreign Secretary, William Hague, to Thorbjørn Jagland, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, dated 27 October 2010.

<sup>24</sup> Rule 6.1 of PACE's [Rules of Procedure](#)

### 3. How do European countries select their delegations?

A [June 2014 ECPRD survey](#), answered by parliamentary research services across Europe, sets out each country's procedure for selecting delegations for inter-parliamentary assemblies including PACE.<sup>25</sup>

Countries	Procedure for Selection to an Inter-Parliamentary Assembly
<b>Austria</b>	Members of Austrian delegations to inter-parliamentary Assemblies are nominated and selected by their parliamentary groups.
<b>Belgium HR</b>	<p>The number of deputies representing the BHR in the parliamentary assemblies varies according to the criteria foreseen in the Rules of Procedure of these inter-parliamentary assemblies. The deputies representing the BHR in these parliamentary assemblies are nominated according to the internal regulations of political party groups. According to the articles 158 and 159 of our Rules of Procedure, the distribution of the mandates among the political party groups takes place in proportion to their strength.</p> <p>The nominees of the political party groups are then appointed by the Plenary (in the case of PAUFM, OSCEPA, PACE and the Benelux Parliament) or through a specific procedure (in the case of NATOPA and IPU, in which the BHR and the Belgian Senate are represented through a joint association).</p>
<b>Senate</b>	<p>The number of seats to which the Belgian Federal Parliament is entitled is determined by the rules of procedure of each assembly.</p> <p>In the case of PACE, the distribution of seats between the two chambers of the Belgian Federal Parliament (House of Representatives and Senate) is determined by law (since 1961). In the case of PAUFM, OSCEPA and Benelux, it is determined by common agreement between the governing bodies of the two chambers (the Bureau in the case of the Senate).</p> <p>In these four cases, both chambers designate their delegation separately. Seats are distributed among political party groups in proportion to their strength (D'Hondt system – article 77 of the Rules of Procedure of the Senate). Political party groups nominate their candidate(s) according to their own internal procedures. The nominees of the political party groups are then appointed by the Plenary.</p> <p>In the case of NATOPA and IPU, in which the two chambers of the Belgian Federal Parliament have a joint representation, delegates are selected according to a specific procedure in accordance with the internal rules of these delegations, which is also based on the proportional distribution of seats among political party groups.</p>
<b>Croatia</b>	The composition of a delegation is based upon agreement between political groups in the Parliament, taking into account current political (and gender) distribution of seats. The nomination of candidates is then formally exercised through the Elections, Appointments and Administration Committee (based on Articles 105 and 273 of the Rules of Procedures) and finally confirmed by the Plenary.

<sup>25</sup> [European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation](#), Request no 2566 (Turkey) – the surveys are on the password-protected part of the site, to which House of Commons Library staff have access.

Countries	Procedure for Selection to an Inter-Parliamentary Assembly
<b>Cyprus</b>	The decision about the participation of MPs in the activities of international parliamentary organizations, in which Cyprus is a member, is twofold. Firstly, the seats that Cyprus holds in the various organizations are allocated to the parties at the "President's and parliamentary party leaders' meeting" which is an informal arrangement of the House. Following that, the seats are allocated to the parties, the MPs who are to represent the House in international organizations are appointed by their parties.
<b>Czech Rep.</b>	It depends on their interests and language abilities. The membership in permanent delegation reflects the political situation in the Chamber.
<b>Denmark</b>	In cases in which the Danish Parliament appoints Members to sit on committees and commissions or gives Members assignments, it is done according to the system of proportional representation
<b>Estonia</b>	<p>The Riigikogu forms delegations of its members for the term of office of one composition of the parliament. A delegation is formed by a Resolution of the Riigikogu, in which the members and alternate members of the delegation are appointed. In accordance with the established practice, the relevant draft resolution is submitted to the parliament by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Riigikogu. The proposals about which members should be appointed to a delegation are made to the Foreign Affairs Committee by the factions of the Riigikogu on the basis of the readiness of the member of the faction to perform the obligations of the member of a delegation, their professional training and language skills, and also, for securing continuity, the fact whether the member of the faction has earlier been a member of the same delegation. When preparing the draft resolution, the Foreign Affairs Committee discusses the proposals on appointing the members of delegations and takes into account the requirements prescribed in the statutes of the relevant parliamentary assembly concerning the number of members in the delegation as well as representation of political forces and men and women.</p> <p>However, all members of the Riigikogu are members of the Estonian delegation to the IPU (Estonian Inter-parliamentary Union Group) and elect the leadership of the delegation (president and three vice-presidents).</p> <p>Members taking part in the work of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly are appointed by the Foreign Affairs Committee.</p>
<b>France</b>	As a general rule, the MPs selected are chosen by the political groups they belong to and in proportion to the representative power of their political group.

Countries	Procedure for Selection to an Inter-Parliamentary Assembly
<b>Georgia</b>	The Parliament is authorized to conclude agreements on cooperation with parliaments of other states, international and inter-parliamentary organizations. The rules for composing permanent parliamentary delegations are described in the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Georgia, namely, the Chapter XLV on Foreign Relations of the Parliament deals with these issues. According to the above mentioned Rules of Procedures political party groups are represented in foreign delegations in proportion of their powers. The Bureau of the Parliament approves the quotas of proportional representation in Parliamentary delegations upon the proposal of the Committee on Procedural Rules and Issues. Generally, the rules for composition of committees and factions also apply to official parliamentary delegations which permit quota swaps among political groups or concessions. The Bureau shall be notified on quota swaps or concessions. A chair of the delegation is selected by the members of the delegation and approved by the Parliament. A chair of the permanent parliamentary delegation submits a report on the activities of a relevant delegation to the Bureau annually which can be discussed at the plenary sitting upon a request of no less than 6 MPs, a committee or faction. The Parliament can pass a decision on any issues concerning a report and alter a composition of the delegation. These rules for selection and appointment also apply to substitute members of the delegations.
<b>Germany Bundestag</b>	At the beginning of an electoral term, once it is clear how many seats are to be allocated to the individual parliamentary groups, the Bundestag President asks the whips to nominate Members from within their ranks to take up these seats in the inter-parliamentary assemblies in which the Bundestag is represented. The seats are divided up using the Sainte-Laguë/Schepers method of calculation. Parliamentary groups have a free reign in deciding which of their members to nominate for the delegations. The President of the Bundestag does, however, point out that foreign-language skills are useful in making an effective contribution to the work of the inter-parliamentary assemblies.
<b>Bundesrat</b>	Members of the Bundesrat are the sixteen German Laender. They decide among themselves, whom they nominate as part of a delegation to an inter-parliamentary assembly.
<b>Greece</b>	They are appointed by the parties and the Speaker of the Parliament verifies the appointment.
<b>Hungary</b>	The composition of a delegation depends on the level, on each inter-parliamentary forum is organised. If a meeting is to be held on Speaker's level, the leader of the parliamentary delegation is naturally the Speaker of the National Assembly. Other inter-parliamentary meetings may be organised at committee level. In this case the chairperson or other members of the committee form the delegation. Most delegations to inter-parliamentary assemblies have permanent members, that is, members of parliament are selected for each parliamentary term (for 4 years) to be a full/substitute member of an interparliamentary assembly. The proportion, along which political parties distribute available seats among themselves is subject to inter-party negotiations.
<b>Israel</b>	MK's can be recommended by the Speaker of the Knesset or suggest themselves as members of delegation. Usually an appeal for interested members will be send.

Countries	Procedure for Selection to an Inter-Parliamentary Assembly
<b>Italy</b> <b>HR</b>	<p>Delegations to Parliamentary Assemblies are formed following three different procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- election: members of the delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (18 full members and 18 alternate members) are elected by the Plenary of the Chamber of Deputies and of the Senate. This election takes place by an absolute majority (art. 3 of Law N° 433 of 1949, ratifying the Statute of the Council of Europe) and by secret ballot (Rule 56, paragraph 3, of the Chamber of Deputies' Rules of Procedure). The election is held on the basis of a blocked list of Members drafted by the Presidents of both Houses, taking into account the designations made by the Leaders of parliamentary groups following the same kind of calculations made for the distribution of seats on bicameral Inquiry and Oversight Committees.</li> <li>- appointment: members of the delegations to the Parliamentary Assemblies of NATO, OSCE and CEI are appointed by the Presidents of the Chamber of Deputies and of the Senate taking into account the designations made by the Leaders of parliamentary groups following the same kind of calculations made for the distribution of seats on bicameral Inquiry and Oversight Committees.</li> <li>- direct appointment: delegation members can be directly appointed by the Presidents of the Chamber of Deputies and of the Senate.</li> </ul>
<b>Senate</b>	<p>Members of parliamentary delegations are appointed by the President of the Senate upon recommendation by parliamentary groups. Seats allocation is proportional to the size of parliamentary groups. For the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe only, delegation members are elected by the Senate in a plenary sitting; Senators vote members from a list prepared by the President upon recommendation by parliamentary groups. All other delegations are appointed by the President of the Senate based on recommendations by parliamentary groups. Italian parliamentary delegations are bicameral, and each delegation is composed by equal numbers of Deputies and Senators. The number of members for each delegation is established by the rules of procedure of the assembly concerned.</p>
<b>Latvia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedures of the development of delegations are determined by the documentation of the parliamentary organizations:</li> <li>• representation of all political groups, represented in the parliament,</li> <li>• inclusion of MPs from position and opposition in each delegation,</li> <li>• interest of delegate in the specifics of organization and desire to work in delegation.</li> </ul> <p>Number of members in four delegations is sufficient for representation of all political groups - BA (15), EPPA (3 + 3 substitutes), NATO PA (3 + 3 substitutes), SPS ( 5 – one from each faction).</p> <p>Unfortunately participation in the EDSO PA (3) un VS PA (2) is limited by the statute. It is desirable that factions nominate one delegate to both delegations and indicate priority organization. If desires of candidates do not correspond to division 3+2 then customary Saeima is taking decision on each delegation apart.</p> <p>Nominating candidates following principles have to be taken apart:</p> <p>Interest of delegate in the specifics of organization and desire to work in the delegation during business trips (readiness to discuss topics).</p> <p>Knowledge of foreign languages.</p>



Countries	Procedure for Selection to an Inter-Parliamentary Assembly
<b>Lithuania</b>	<p>The procedure for setting up of parliamentary delegations is laid down in the Statute of the Seimas (paragraph 1. of the Article 81 and the Article 71.). Under the Constitution the Statute has the power of a law.</p> <p>At first the Seimas determines the number of members of a delegation and sets the rates of proportional representation of the Seimas political groups. Then the Seimas also establishes the term, during which candidates for membership must be proposed. Each candidate must agree. The Seimas votes on the list of candidates thus obtained. Should it fail to be approved, the procedure is repeated.</p> <p>When the list of candidates is in due time insufficient, the political groups each verbally suggest an additional candidate during a plenary sitting. After them each MP may do likewise, until the required number of candidates is attained. When candidates are proposed during a Seimas sitting and not according to designated norms and even if at least two Members of the Seimas express doubt regarding any of the candidates, he is voted on individually (Article 71).</p>
<b>Luxembourg</b>	<p>The members of the parliamentary delegation at an inter-parliamentary assembly are suggested by the political factions.</p> <p>The suggested members are definitively designated by the Chamber of Deputies at the beginning of a new plenary session.</p>
<b>Montenegro</b>	<p>The Collegium of the President of the Parliament decides about the representation of the Parliament of Montenegro in the inter-parliamentary assemblies, according to the Article 26 point 7, Article 209 and 210 of the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Montenegro. The head and members of the delegation of the Parliament, goals and tasks of visits to foreign countries, parliamentary Assemblies and other international structures and platform for debates shall be established by the Collegium of the President of the Parliament. The Collegium of the President of the Parliament has the standing principle to include in the delegation, when it's possible, less represented gender, and that each delegation reflects fair political representation of the Parliament.</p>
<b>Netherlands</b>	<p>Each House nominates the members in the delegations to inter-parliamentary assemblies. Regularly seats in delegations are being divided on a 1/3-2/3 basis between Senate and House of Representatives. Within each House the number of seats to which political groups are entitled are based on the number of seats of the political party to which the group does belong. The overall assignment of seats is being done on the basis of the D'Hondt system.</p>
<b>Norway</b>	<p>The parliamentary party groups appoint members – according to the strength of the party in parliament. The final decision on appointment is taken by the Parliament in a plenary session, based on a report from the Election Committee.</p>
<b>Poland Sejm</b>	<p>The number of MPs representing the Sejm in the parliamentary assemblies varies according to the criteria foreseen in the rules of procedure of each assembly. On the decision of the Presidium of the Sejm, MPs representing the Sejm in the parliamentary assemblies are nominated by political party groups proportionally to a number of their seats in the Sejm.</p> <p>The delegations are constituted at the first sitting of nominees. This sitting is chaired by the member of the Presidium of the Sejm</p>

Countries	Procedure for Selection to an Inter-Parliamentary Assembly
<b>Senate</b>	Members (and substitutes) of the inter-parliamentary delegation are selected at the beginning of the new parliamentary term. The strength of the party is taken into account. The breakdown of the seats to political groups is proposed by the Chancellery of the Senate in consideration of the number of the seats of each group. Then it should be approved by the Bureau (presidium), which hands it to the political party groups. Finally, all the groups appoint their delegation members in compliance with the decision on the breakdown of the seats. Members of the delegation are appointed for the whole term.
<b>Portugal</b>	The members of delegation are chosen by the parties and voted in the plenary.
<b>Romania</b>	In conformity with art.1 of the Decision of the Standing Bureau of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, and with the art. 13-1-c of the Regulations of the Chamber of Deputies, at the beginning of each parliamentary legislature, the Standing Bureau of the Chamber of Deputies and of the Senate submits to the plenary session of the two Chambers the nominal composition of the permanent delegations to the parliamentary organizations, following the consultation with the parliamentary political groups taking into consideration the political configuration of each Chamber of the Romanian Parliament.
<b>Russia CF</b>	Structures of delegations of the Council of Federation, Heads, Deputy heads of these delegations are approved by the Council of the Chamber annually.
<b>Serbia</b>	<p>The National Assembly shall decide on the compositions of standing parliamentary delegations that shall participate in the work of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and other multi-lateral parliamentary institutions and organisations.</p> <p>The proposal of the decision on the composition of the standing delegations shall be submitted by the Speaker of the National Assembly, in consultations with the heads of parliamentary groups, taking into consideration proportional participation of political parties and genders.</p> <p>Also, MPs may, in their capacity as members of delegations of the National Assembly, and in connection with certain foreign-policy missions of broader importance, take part in regular and special sessions of the United Nations and its specialised organisations, in international conferences and other sessions of international organisations and institutions.</p> <p>The need for participation and the compositions of delegations shall be determined by the competent committee.</p>
<b>Slovakia</b>	They are selected on the proposals of political parties which are in parliament, according proportion of mandates by coalition and opposition.
<b>Slovenia</b>	The composition of delegations is determined according to the relevant representation of deputy groups in the National Assembly and the rules of the international parliamentary organisation.
<b>Spain</b>	Each political group decides the parliamentarians appointed to each assembly.
<b>Sweden</b>	Seats of all parliamentary assemblies are divided according to the mandate each party received in the last election. Then it is up to each party group to nominate the names. Sometimes some like-minded parties form an alliance and decide among themselves to "give" a seat to a smaller party in the alliance, but that is a political negotiation.
<b>Switzerland</b>	It is up to the political groups to propose candidates from their ranks for the number of seats each group has been allocated in standing delegations. Seats on the delegations are allocated in proportion to the size of the political groups.

19 UK delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Countries	Procedure for Selection to an Inter-Parliamentary Assembly
<b>FYR Macedonia</b>	<p>The heads and the members of the permanent delegations are elected from the parliamentary parties in the Assembly. The election is made on the base of the proposal from the Committee on Election and Appointments Issues. Previously, the parliamentary parties sends list with the proposed members to this Committee. The equal partisan and gender participation is considered while composing the delegations.</p>
<b>Turkey</b>	<p>The number of deputies representing the GNAT in the parliamentary assemblies varies according to the criteria foreseen in the Rules of Procedure. The deputies representing the GNAT in these parliamentary assemblies are nominated according to Law No. 3620 (Law on the Regulation of Foreign Relations of the GNAT) and the internal regulations of political party groups. Political party groups, in proportion to their powers, shall be represented in delegations to the parliamentary assemblies.</p> <p>The nominees of the political party groups are considered as elected when the Plenary is informed of their names by the Office of the Speaker.</p> <p>The deputies attending international meetings are required to have a good command of English or French, or one of the official languages used at the meetings.</p>
<b>UK</b>	<p>Members of the PACE and the OSCE delegations are formally appointed by the Prime Minister. Members of the delegation to the NATO PA are formally appointed by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs. Appointments to delegations are announced in written statements. In appointing such members, account is taken of the balance of the political parties in the House of Commons at that time and the nominations received from the different political parties. It is for each party to determine its method of nominating members of the delegations, and the balance between Members of the House of Commons and members of the House of Lords.</p> <p>Attendance at the annual Assemblies or Conferences of the Inter-Parliamentary Union or the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association is decided by the British Group IPU or the CPA UK Branch.</p>

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