



Library Note

Regional Representation in the House of Lords

This House of Lords Library briefing presents data on the regional background of the House of Lords within the context of continued interest in the composition of the House of Lords, and updates the previous edition of this Library briefing with data from January 2016. It provides statistics relating to the regions with which current Members have connections. It does this by presenting information about the regions of Members' registered addresses, as recorded in the expenses system, and also by looking at regions represented by former MPs and MEPs, members of the devolved legislatures and local councillors. It provides a comparison with data for 2011 and 2013 to give an indication of trends in regional representation.

Of those Members who elected to have the broad location of their registered addresses (county or equivalent) included in the expenses claims data published on Parliament's website:

- 45.5 percent were in London or the South East of England
- 9.6 percent were in Scotland
- 3.1 percent were in Wales
- 3.0 percent were in Northern Ireland
- Of the remaining English regions percentages were as follows:
 - East of England, 9.3 percent
 - South West, 8.6 percent
 - Yorkshire and the Humber, 5.5 percent
 - North West, 5.1 percent
 - West Midlands, 4.5 percent
 - North East, 2.8 percent
 - East Midlands, 2.3 percent
- 0.7 percent were overseas

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I. Introduction

On 27 June 2012 the Coalition Government introduced the [House of Lords Reform Bill](#) (Bill 52 of session 2012–13) in the House of Commons. Principally, this sought to introduce elections to the House of Lords based on regional seats. The Bill received its second reading by a large margin—462 votes to 124¹—but it made no further progress and was withdrawn. In September 2012, Nick Clegg, the then Deputy Prime Minister, announced to MPs that the Government had decided “not to proceed with the House of Lords Reform Bill during this Parliament”. This was in response to suggestions that the Government would be unable to secure enough support at that time for its programme motion, which would set out the timetable for the Bill’s progress through the House of Commons.²

The introduction of an elected upper chamber featured as a commitment in several political party manifestos at the 2015 general election. These presented varying proposals for an elected upper house based around regions. The Labour Party’s 2015 general election manifesto stated that it was committed to introducing elections to the second chamber by replacing the House of Lords with “an elected Senate of the Nations and Regions, to represent every part of the United Kingdom, and to improve the democratic legitimacy of the second chamber”.³ The Liberal Democrat’s manifesto stated that the Party would seek to “reform the House of Lords with a proper democratic mandate, starting from the proposals in the 2012 Bill”.⁴ Similarly, the Scottish National Party (SNP) wrote that it believed that the “House of Lords should be scrapped and replaced with a fully elected second chamber”.⁵ The Conservative Party’s manifesto stated that whilst it saw a case for an elected element in the House of Lords it did not see this as a priority in the 2015–20 parliament.⁶

Since 2012 there have been a number of attempts at smaller scale reform of the House. Some were successful in reaching royal assent. For example, the House of Lords Reform Act 2014 introduced a statutory provision to enable Members to retire.⁷ Further details of the House of Lords reform proposals, and enacted changes, for the period 2010–15 can be found in the House of Lords Library briefing [House of Lords Reform 2010–15](#) (25 March 2015).

Unlike the House of Commons where MPs represent a distinct constituency, membership of the House of Lords brings with it no official links to any particular regions of the UK. However, there are sources of data available which provide an indicative picture of where Members might view themselves as having a connection with. This briefing explains these sources but focuses primarily on data drawn from House of Lords expenses. Data is also presented on the regions represented by those Members of the House who have been MPs, MEPs or local councillors.

Nevertheless, it should be stressed that Members of the House are not appointed on the basis of representing regions or countries, although they may take it upon themselves to do so or they may have a particular interest in a country or region of the UK for a variety of reasons.

Meg Russell and Meghan Benton have also stressed a further consideration when interpreting information about residency. They wrote that “many Members have a London home, but this

¹ [HC Hansard, 10 July 2012, col 274.](#)

² [HC Hansard, 3 September 2012, cols 35–7.](#)

³ Labour Party, [Britain Can be Better—The Labour Party Manifesto 2015](#), p 64.

⁴ Liberal Democrat Party, [Manifesto 2015](#), p 132.

⁵ Scottish National Party, [Stronger for Scotland—Manifesto 2015](#), p 22.

⁶ Conservative Party, [Manifesto 2015](#), p 49.

⁷ For further details please see: House of Lords Library, [Retirement from the House of Lords](#), 13 February 2015.

does not in itself indicate that the House is ‘London centric’”. They argued that it was “of course sensible for most Members who are active to maintain a base in the capital, particularly if they can afford to maintain more than one home”.⁸

2. Available Data

2.1 Members Expenses, January 2016

Members of the House of Lords may choose to have the broad location of their registered addresses (county or equivalent) included in the claims data published on Parliament’s website.⁹ This data is provided by Members for the purposes of claiming allowances and expenses. In January 2016, of those eligible to sit, approximately three quarters elected to include a location for their registered address. The expenses data provides the main source of information in this Library briefing and in its previous editions.¹⁰

Tables 1 and 2 set out the number of Members of the House of Lords recording a location of their registered address in each nation and region of the UK. The data is collated from the [details of main residences](#) (as at January 2016) provided for the purpose of claiming allowances. Charts 1 and 2 then present this information in the form of pie charts. Chart 3 draws on data from both Tables 1 and 2 to present information by region and party/group.

The data presented does not include Members who have chosen not to publicly disclose their main residence (and some do not claim expenses but may provide a residency location) so when reading these tables it is important to note it does not represent the total membership of the House of Lords. The data is based on expenses claims from January 2016 and includes any Member eligible to sit for any point during that month who was included in the published data.¹¹ As such, the data should be seen as indicative. Of the 820 Members included in the January 2016 claims data, 604 elected to include a region for their main residence, 216 did not.

The data includes Bishops because whilst they normally live in their respective diocese, and are ex-officio Members of the House, they have a specific regional link to their diocese. Although it should be noted that of the 26 Bishops that sit in the House of Lords today, five (the Archbishops of Canterbury and York and the Bishops of London, Durham and Winchester) are automatically granted a seat. Following the Lords Spiritual (Women) Act 2015 a vacancy amongst the remaining 21 non-reserved seats of the Lords Spiritual would be filled by a woman English diocesan bishop, ahead of male English diocesan bishops. In the absence of a woman English diocesan bishop the longest serving male bishop would fill the place as normal. This provision lasts for ten years.¹²

⁸ Meg Russell and Meghan Benton, [Analysis of Existing Data on the Breadth of Expertise and Experience in the House of Lords: Report to the House of Lords Appointments Commission](#), March 2010, p 49.

⁹ House of Lords, [‘House of Lords Expenses—Claims from April 2015’](#), accessed 16 June 2016.

¹⁰ House of Lords Library, [Regional Representation in the House of Lords](#), 10 February 2014; and [Regional Representation in the House of Lords](#), 6 March 2012.

¹¹ House of Lords, [‘House of Lords Expenses—Claims from April 2015’](#), accessed 16 June 2016.

¹² House of Lords Spiritual (Women) Act 2016, s 1(a).

Table 1: Number of Members by Affiliation and UK Nation of Main Residence, January 2016

.	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland	Overseas
Conservative	144	15	2	3	2
Crossbench	100	15	1	7	0
Labour	143	18	8	0	1
Liberal Democrat	69	9	6	1	0
Other Affiliations/Parties					
Democratic Unionist Party	0	0	0	3	0
Green Party	1	0	0	0	0
Independent Labour	2	0	0	0	0
Independent Social Democrat	1	0	0	0	0
Independent Ulster Unionist	0	0	0	1	0
Plaid Cymru	0	0	2	0	0
UK Independence Party	2	1	0	0	0
Ulster Unionist Party	0	0	0	2	0
Bishops	24	0	0	0	0
Non-affiliated*	19	0	0	1	1
Total	505	58	19	18	4

*Includes Lords Office Holders such as the Lord Speaker and also those Members unaffiliated to a party/party whip

(Source: House of Lords, '[Expenses: January 2016](#)' [Excel File])

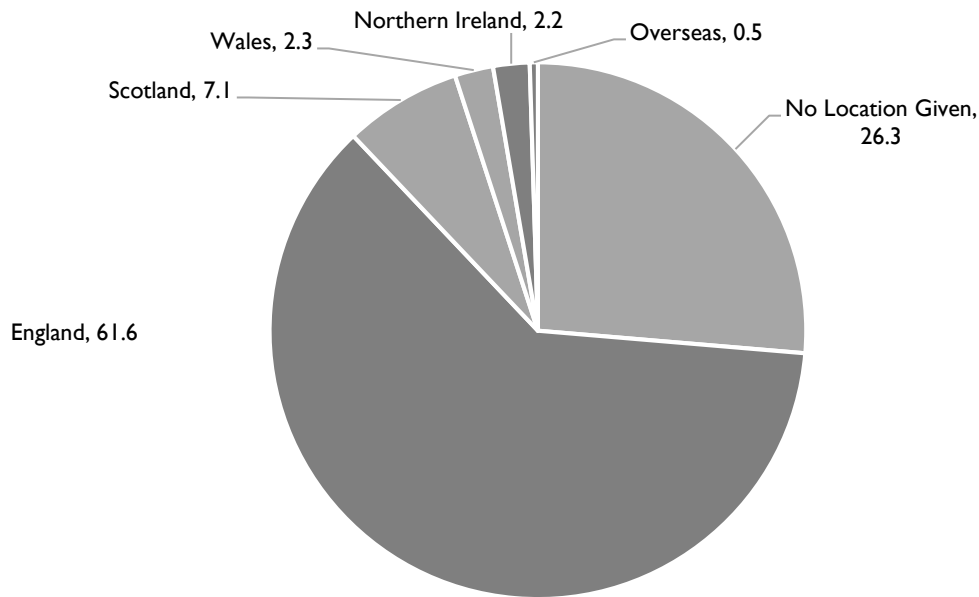
Table 2: Number of Members by Affiliation and English Region of Main Residence

	East of England	East Midlands	London	North East	North West	South East	South West	West Midlands	Yorkshire & the Humber
Conservative	16	7	35	3	7	43	20	5	8
Crossbench	13	1	38	3	1	26	5	6	7
Labour	11	5	46	5	15	34	9	12	6
Liberal Democrat	8	0	17	4	6	12	13	1	8
Other Party Groups									
Green Party	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Independent Labour	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Independent Social Democrat	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
UK Independence Party	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Bishops	4	1	3	1	2	4	3	3	3
Non-affiliated*	4	0	9	1	0	4	0	0	1
Total	56	14	151	17	31	124	52	27	33

* Includes Lords Office Holders such as the Lord Speaker and also those Members unaffiliated to a party/party whip.

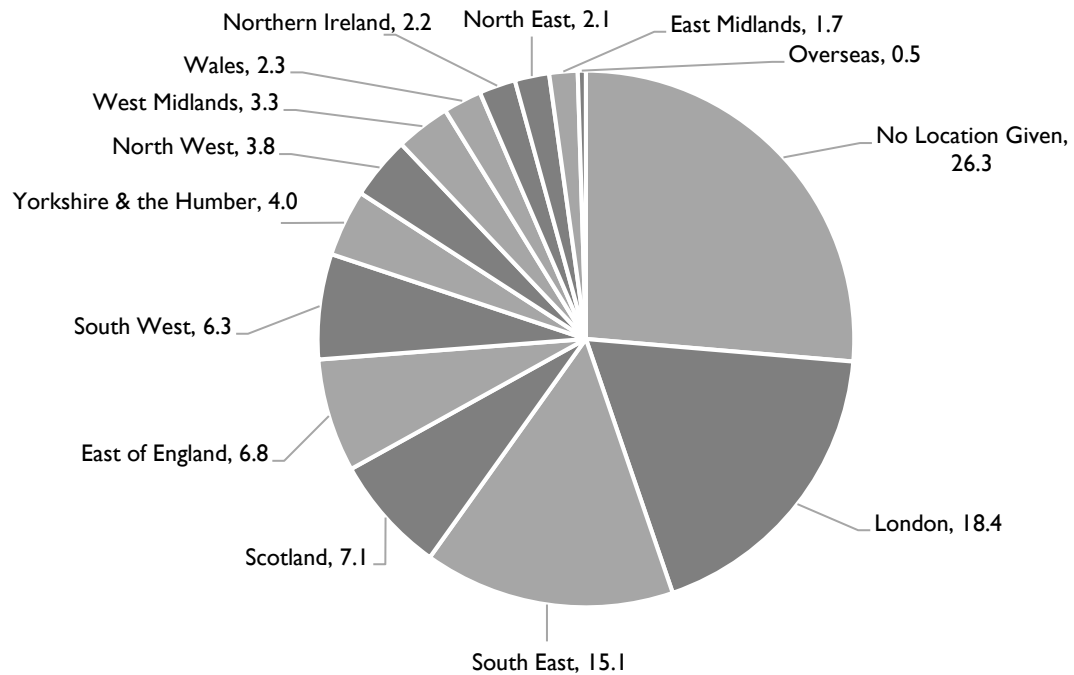
(Source: House of Lords, '[Expenses: January 2016](#)' [Excel File])

Chart 1: UK Region of Members' Registered Addresses, January 2016 (Percentage of Total)



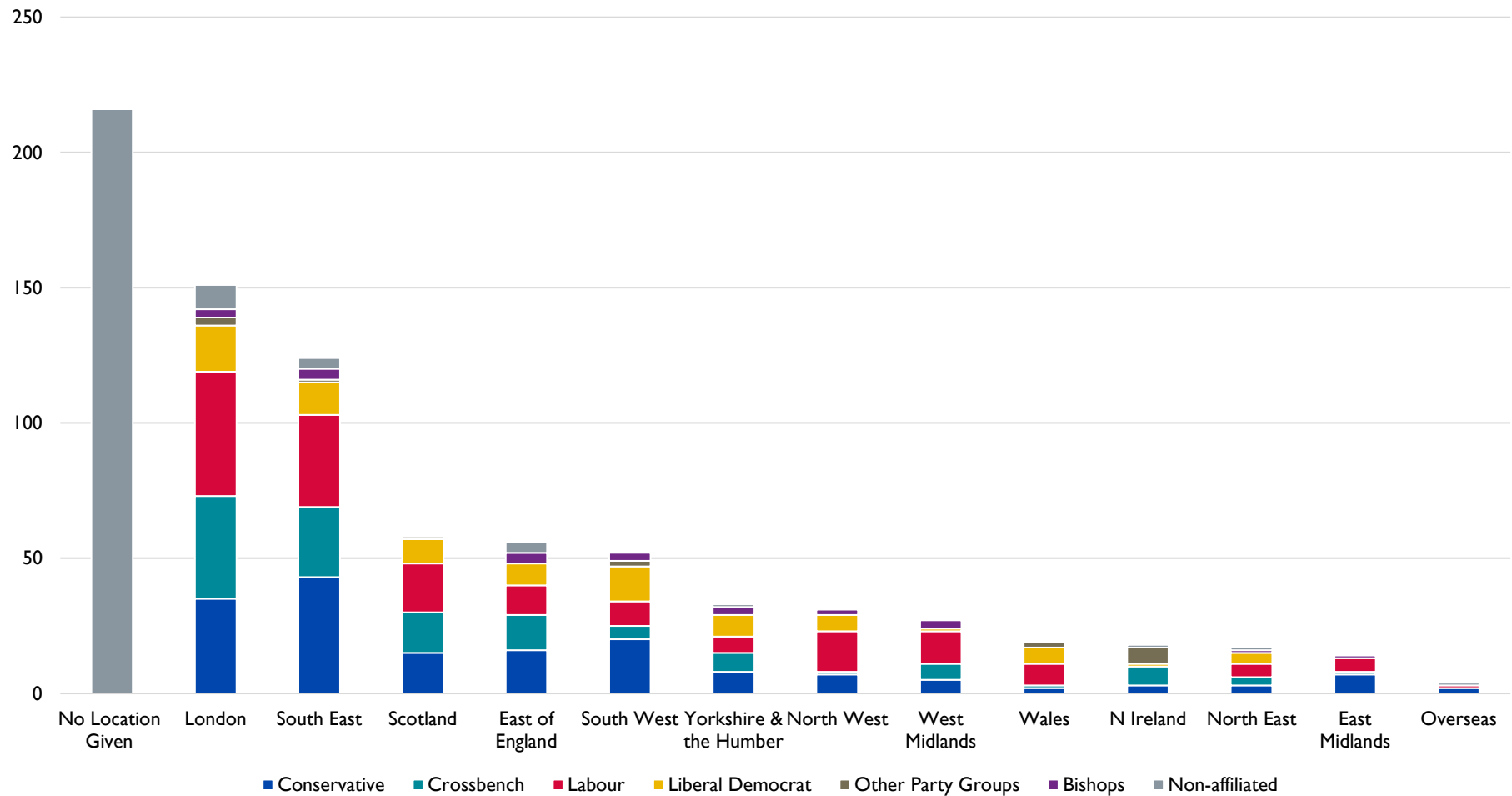
(Source: House of Lords, '[Expenses: January 2016](#)' [Excel File])

Chart 2: UK and English Regions of Members' Registered Addresses, January 2016 (Percentage of Total)



(Source: House of Lords, '[Expenses: January 2016](#)' [Excel File])

Chart 3: UK and English Regions of Members' Registered Addresses, January 2016 (Number of Members by Party/Group)

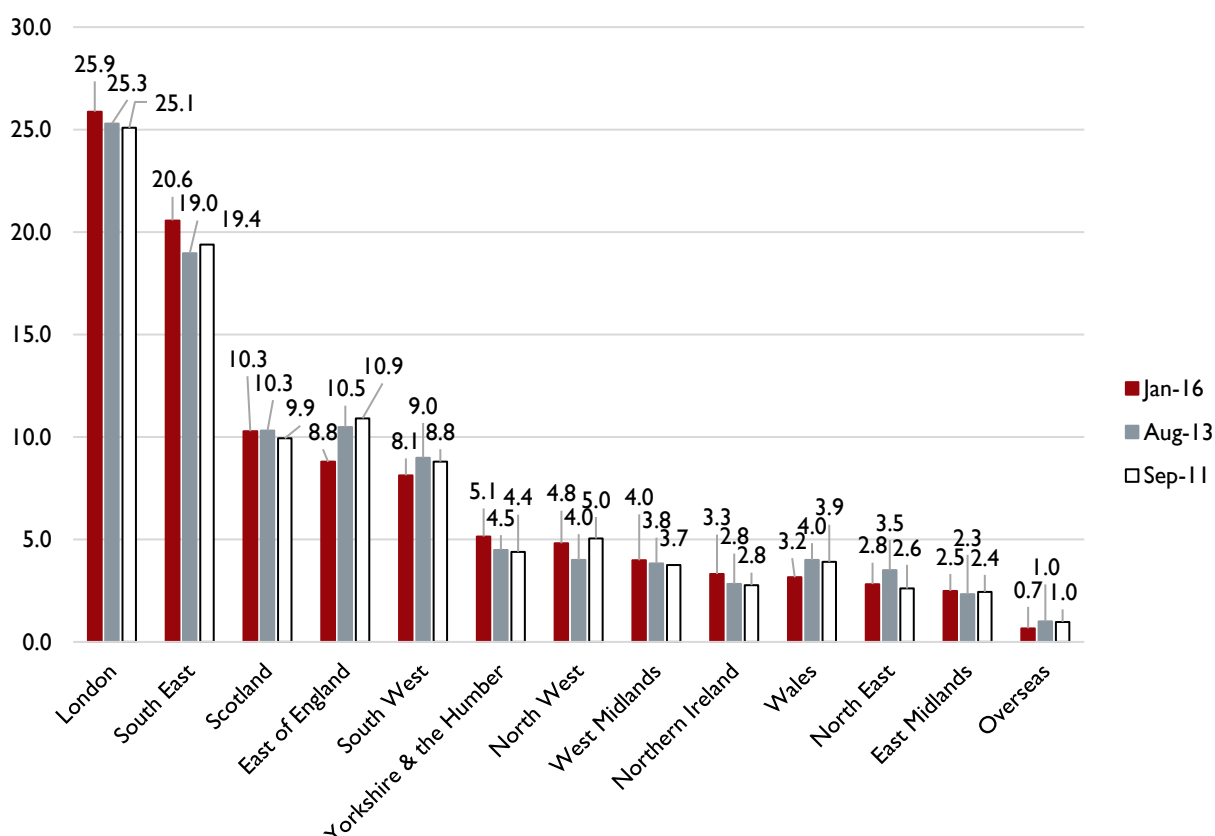


(Source: House of Lords, [‘Expenses: January 2016’](#) [Excel File])

2.2 Historical Data Compared: 2012, 2013 and 2016

This section presents data drawn from the previous editions of this briefing and presents these alongside the most recent data from January 2016. Unlike the data used in the previous section, these data exclude Bishops but includes Members on leave of absence, disqualified from sitting and Members currently suspended from the service of the House. The percentages are also of those Members who gave a location, therefore the percentages are not directly comparable with those from Charts 1 and 2.

Chart 4: UK and English Regions of Members' Registered Addresses, 2011, 2013 and 2016 (Percentage of Total Who Gave a Registered Address)



(Source: House of Lords, '[Expenses: January 2016](#)' [Excel File]; House of Lords Library, [Regional Representation in the House of Lords](#), 10 February 2014 and [Regional Representation in the House of Lords](#), 6 March 2012)

2.3 Written Question, 'Peers: Writs of Summons', 11 May 2016

On 11 May 2016, Lord Faulks, Minister of State for Justice, answered a written question asking which regions writs of summons were sent out to at the dissolution of Parliament on 30 March 2015.¹³ These data relate to writs "sent to life and hereditary peers across the regions of England and the counties of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland".¹⁴

¹³ [House of Lords, 'Written Question: Peers: Writs of Summons', 11 May 2016, HL8080.](#)

¹⁴ *ibid.*

Table 3. Regions of the UK and England to Which Writs of Summons Were Sent, March 2015

Region or Nation	Number	Percentage
London (Central and Greater)	385	47.6
South East	108	13.4
East of England	61	7.5
Scotland	61	7.5
South West	49	6.1
Yorkshire & the Humber	27	3.3
North West	26	3.2
Northern Ireland	20	2.5
North East	19	2.4
West Midlands	19	2.4
Wales	18	2.2
East Midlands	15	1.9
Total	808	100

Notes: Percentage data calculated by House of Lords Library

(Source: House of Lords, [Written Question: Peers: Writs of Summons](#), 11 May 2016, HL8080)

Unlike the claims data, which records details of Members' main residence, no information is available on the reasons why Members may have given a particular address for their writ to be sent to.

2.4 Constitution Unit, University College London (2010)

In 2010, Meg Russell and Meghan Benton produced a paper commissioned by the House of Lords Appointments Commission.¹⁵ The authors invited Members to indicate in a questionnaire the region of their primary (and secondary, if applicable) residence, in order to give a fuller idea of where Members lived. The picture produced by this sample of 455 Members, the authors thought, was that:

Excluding London (which is clearly a special case), the only regions which appear somewhat overrepresented are the Eastern region, South East and South West. This may also be explained to some extent by commuting distances, as there are clearly a large number of Members who do not have a home base in London [...] The regions which are most evidently underrepresented are the North West, Yorkshire and the Humber, the East Midlands and the North East. In comparison representation of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland seems relatively good.¹⁶

¹⁵ Meg Russell and Meghan Benton, [Analysis of Existing Data on the Breadth of Expertise and Experience in the House of Lords: Report to the House of Lords Appointments Commission](#), March 2010, pp 49–53.

¹⁶ *ibid*, p 49.

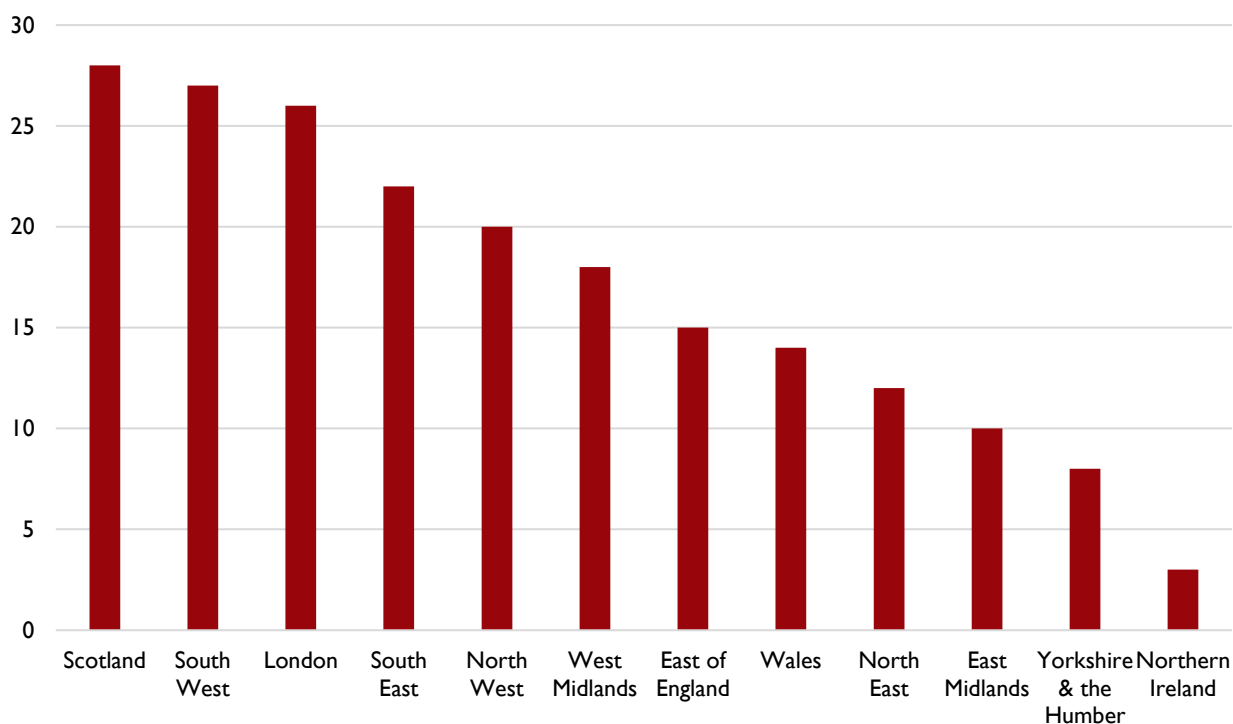
3. Regions Represented by Members as Holders of Selected Public Office

The information in this section of the briefing has been collected from a variety of sources, such as *Dods Parliamentary Companion* and the House of Lords Library briefing [House of Lords: Public Offices and Positions Held by Members](#) (29 March 2016).

3.1 Former Members of Parliament (MPs)

Chart 5 shows the nations and regions previously represented by the 186 former MPs who now sit in the House of Lords.¹⁷ The total count exceeds the number of former MPs, as some Members represented more than one seat in their Commons career. Those which were in different regions have been counted separately.

Chart 5: Regions Represented by Current Members as MPs (Number of Members), as at 23 March 2016

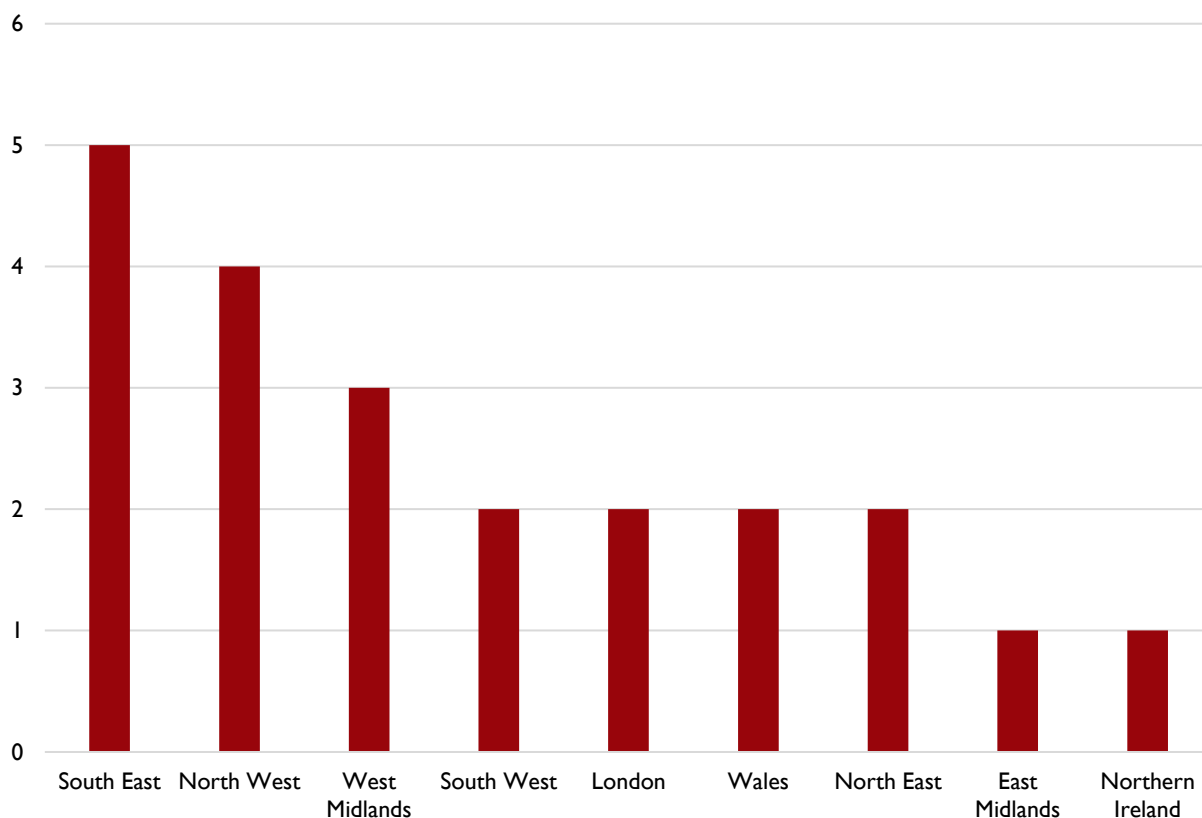


¹⁷ House of Lords Library, [House of Lords: Public Offices and Positions Held by Members](#), 29 March 2016, pp 13–22.

3.2 Former Members of the European Parliament (MEPs)

Chart 6 shows the nations and regions represented by those Members who have been Members of the European Parliament.¹⁸ The numbers exclude those Members who were Members of the European Parliament before direct elections were introduced in 1979. It includes those Members on leave of absence or disqualified from sitting.

Chart 6: Regions Represented by Members as MEPs (Number of Members)

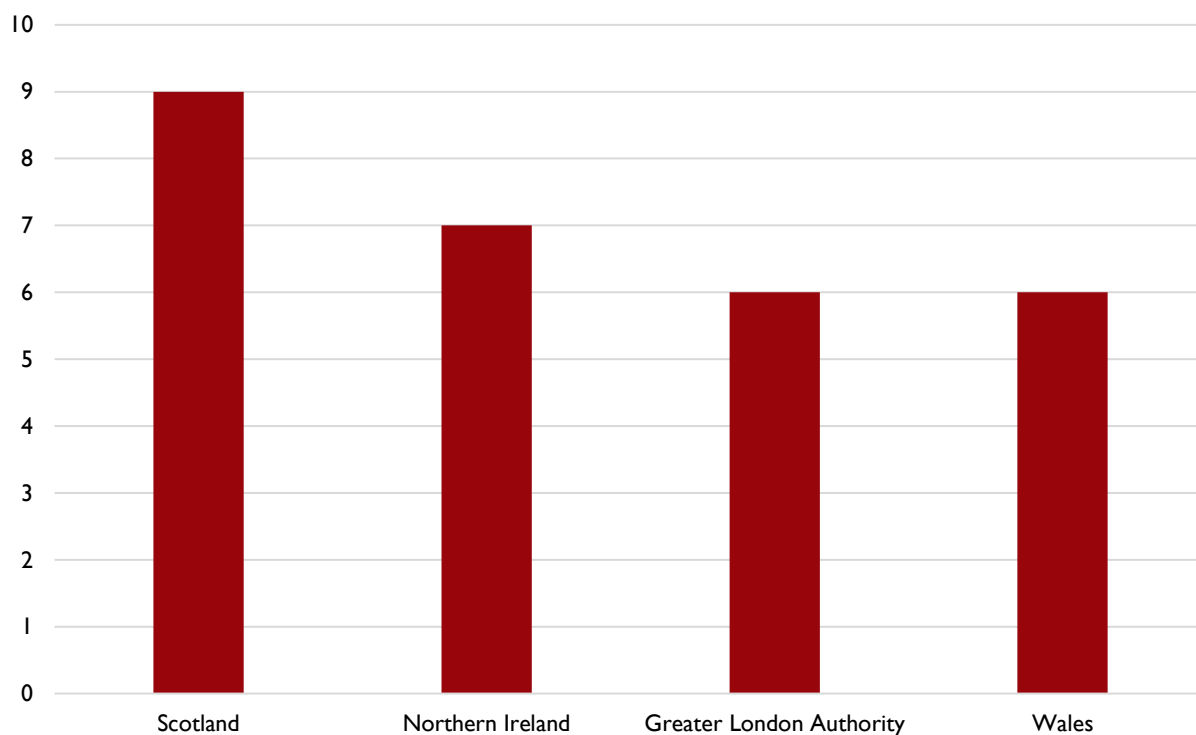


¹⁸ House of Lords Library, [House of Lords: Public Offices and Positions Held by Members](#), 29 March 2016, pp 22–3.

3.3 Devolved Legislatures and the Greater London Authority

There have been devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales since 1999, in Northern Ireland since 1998 and in London (the Greater London Authority (GLA)) since 2000. Chart 7 shows the number of Members who have held seats in these bodies.¹⁹ It includes those Members on leave of absence or disqualified from sitting.

Chart 7: Regions Represented by Members as Members of the Devolved Legislatures and the GLA (Number of Members)

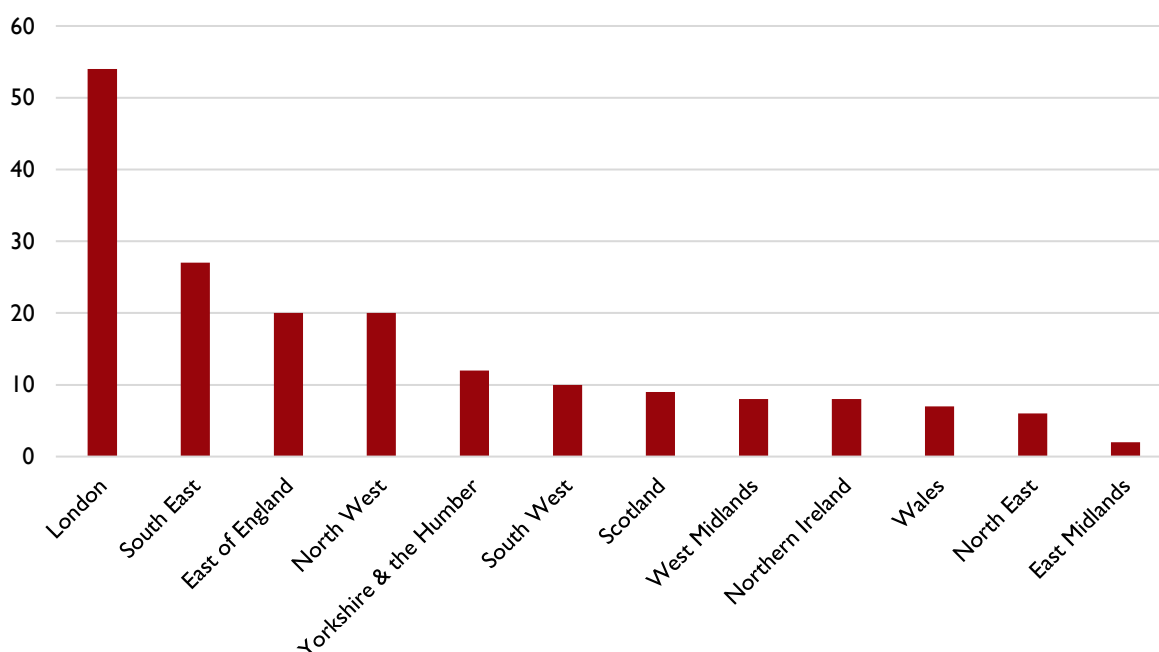


¹⁹ House of Lords Library, [House of Lords: Public Offices and Positions Held by Members](#), 29 March 2016, pp 23–4.

3.4 Local Government: Councillors

Chart 8 presents the nations and regions represented by the 178 Members who are former/current local councillors.²⁰ Some Members may have been a councillor in more than one region so the figures represent the count of nations and regions represented, rather than the number of Members who have been councillors. It includes those Members on leave of absence or disqualified from sitting.

Chart 8: Regions Represented by Members as Local Government Councillors (Number of Members)



²⁰ As at 20 June 2016, data drawn from *Dods Parliamentary Companion* online.

4. Other Elements of Representation

This briefing only looks at regional representation in the House of Lords. However, there are other elements to representation. The Libraries of both Houses have published the following briefings which may be of interest to readers in this context.

- House of Lords Library, [House of Lords: Public Offices and Positions Held by Members](#), 29 March 2016
- House of Lords Library, [House of Lords: Statistical Profile of Membership](#), 29 March 2016
- House of Commons Library, [Ethnic Minorities in Politics and Government](#), 4 March 2016
- House of Lords Library, [Women in the House of Lords](#), 30 June 2015
- House of Lords Library, [House of Lords: Party and Group Strengths and Voting](#), 23 June 2015
- House of Lords Library, [Membership of the House of Lords: Ethnicity, Religion and Disability](#), 12 June 2014
- House of Lords Library, [House of Lords: Religious Representation](#), 25 November 2011

Appendix: January 2016 Expenses Data, Regional Breakdown by Party/Group

This Appendix displays data, through additional charts, on those Members who elected to include a location for their address (in the data published on Parliament's website) for the purposes of claiming expenses. It includes Bishops and excludes those Members on leave of absence, disqualified from sitting and Members currently suspended from the service of the House. It includes all Members included in the January 2016 data release who were able to sit for any point during January 2016, including those who may have subsequently left the service of the House.

The data presented does not include Members who have chosen not to publicly disclose their main residence (and some do not claim expenses but may provide a residency location) so when reading these charts it is important to note it does not represent the total membership of the House of Lords. Of the 820 Members included in the January 2016 claims data, 604 elected to include a region for their main residence, 216 did not.

United Kingdom

Chart 9: UK and English Region of Members' Registered Address (Percentage of Total)

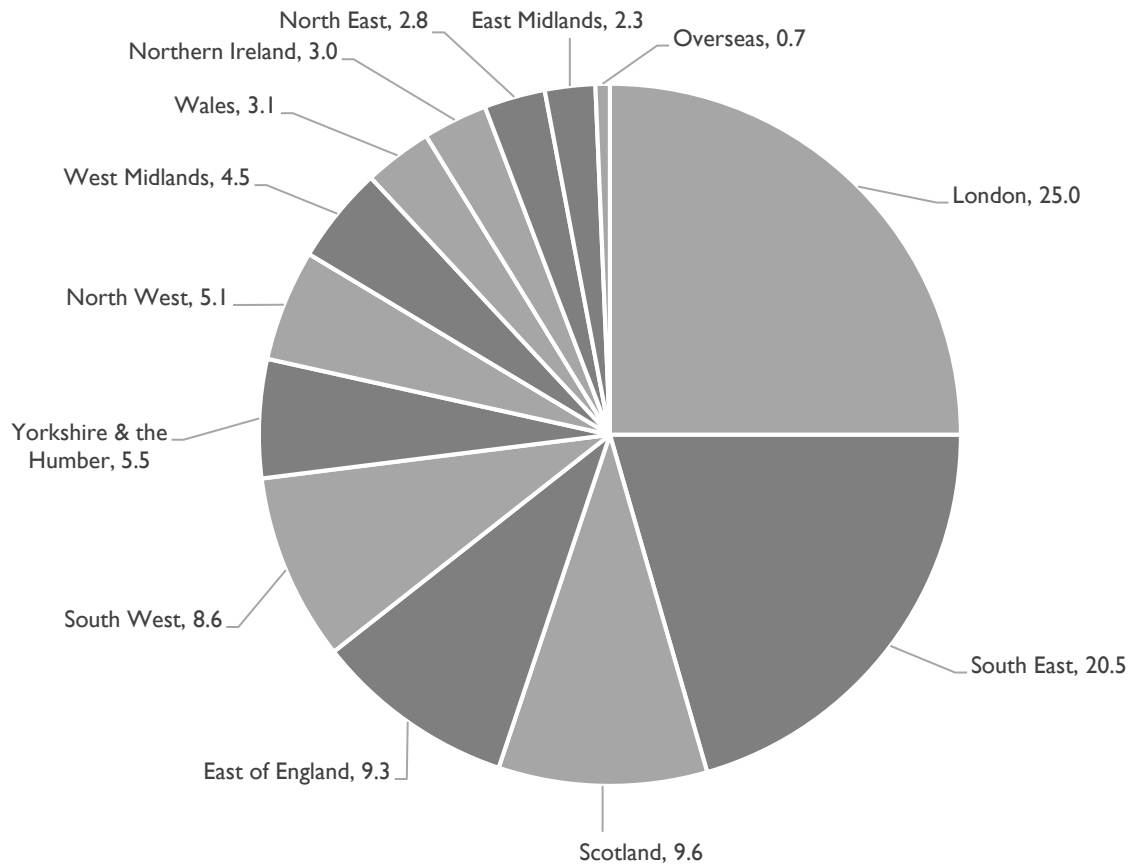
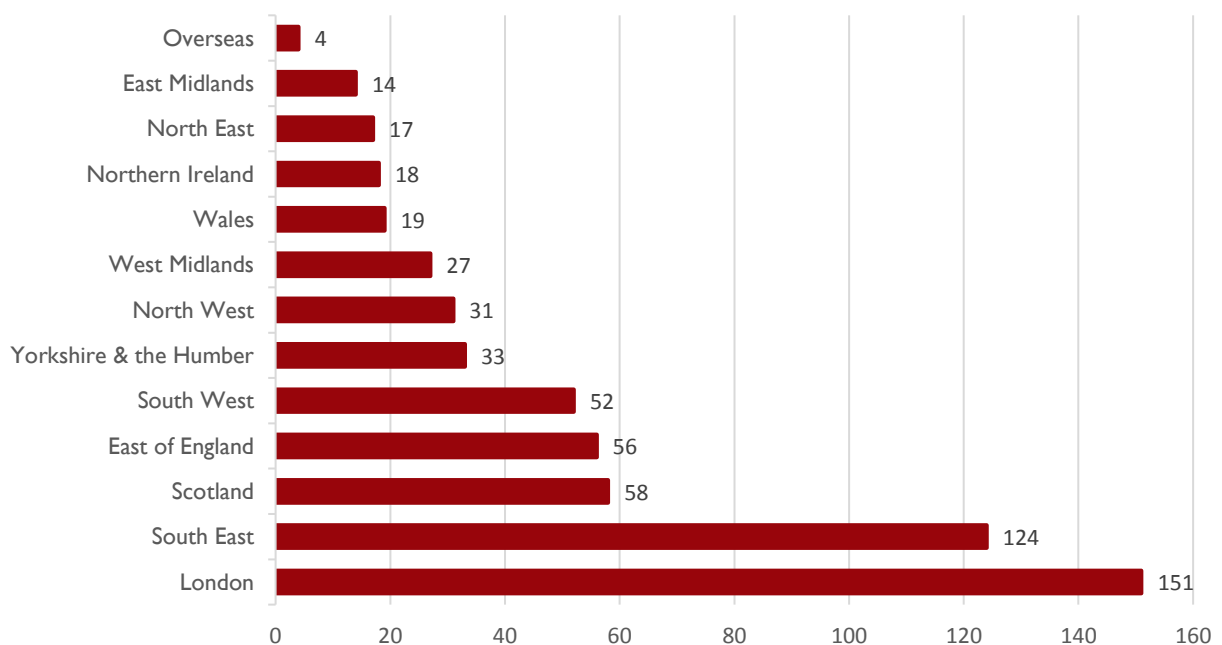


Chart 10: UK Region of Members' Registered Address (Number of Members)



England

Chart 11: Members by Party/Groups Registering Address (within England, Percentage of Total)

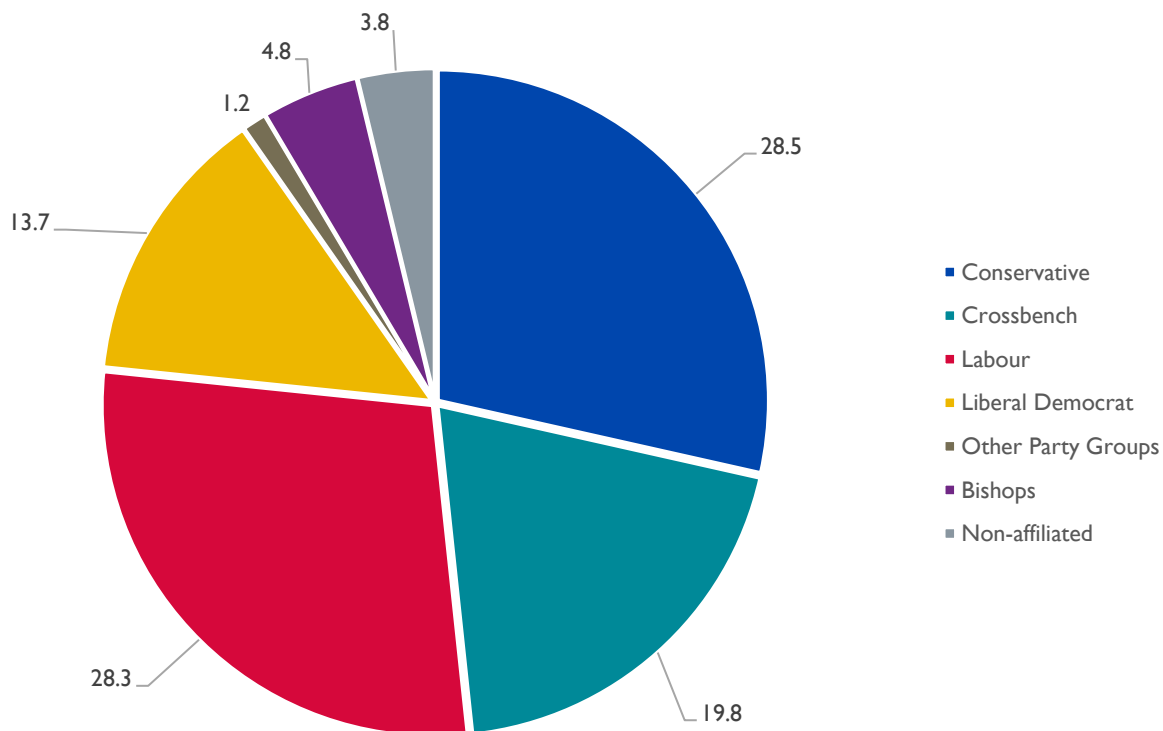
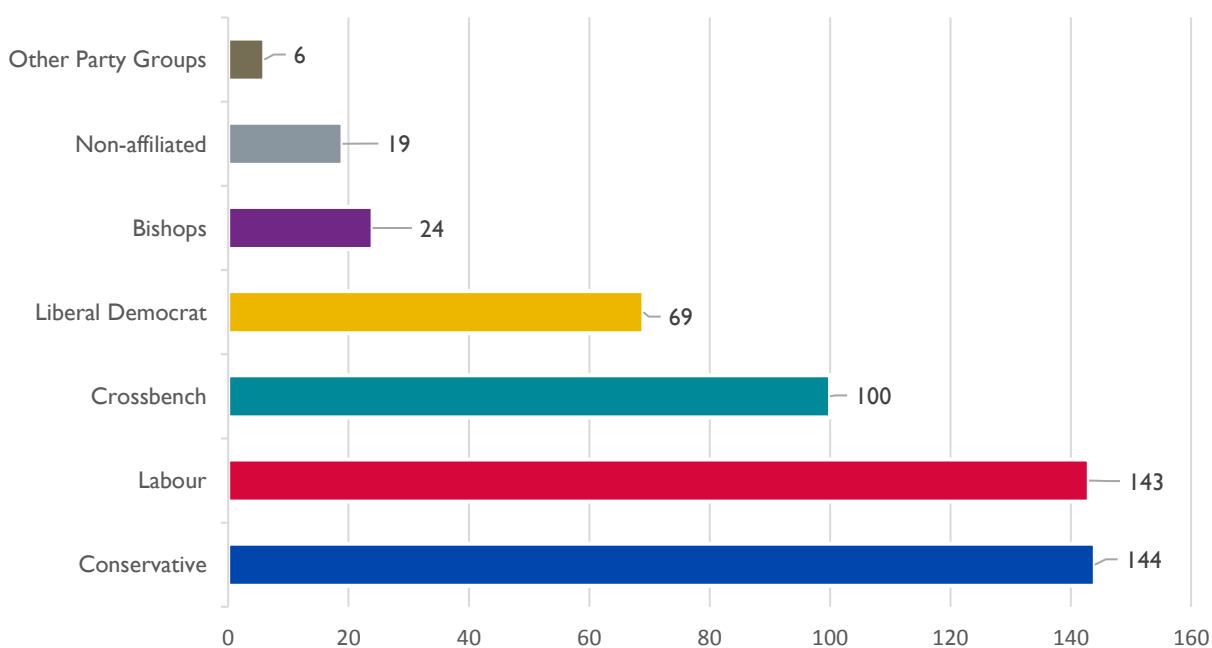


Chart 12: Members By Party/Groups Registering Address (Within England, Number of Members)



English Regions

Chart I3: Members By Party/Groups Registering Address (within Regions of England, Percentage of Total)

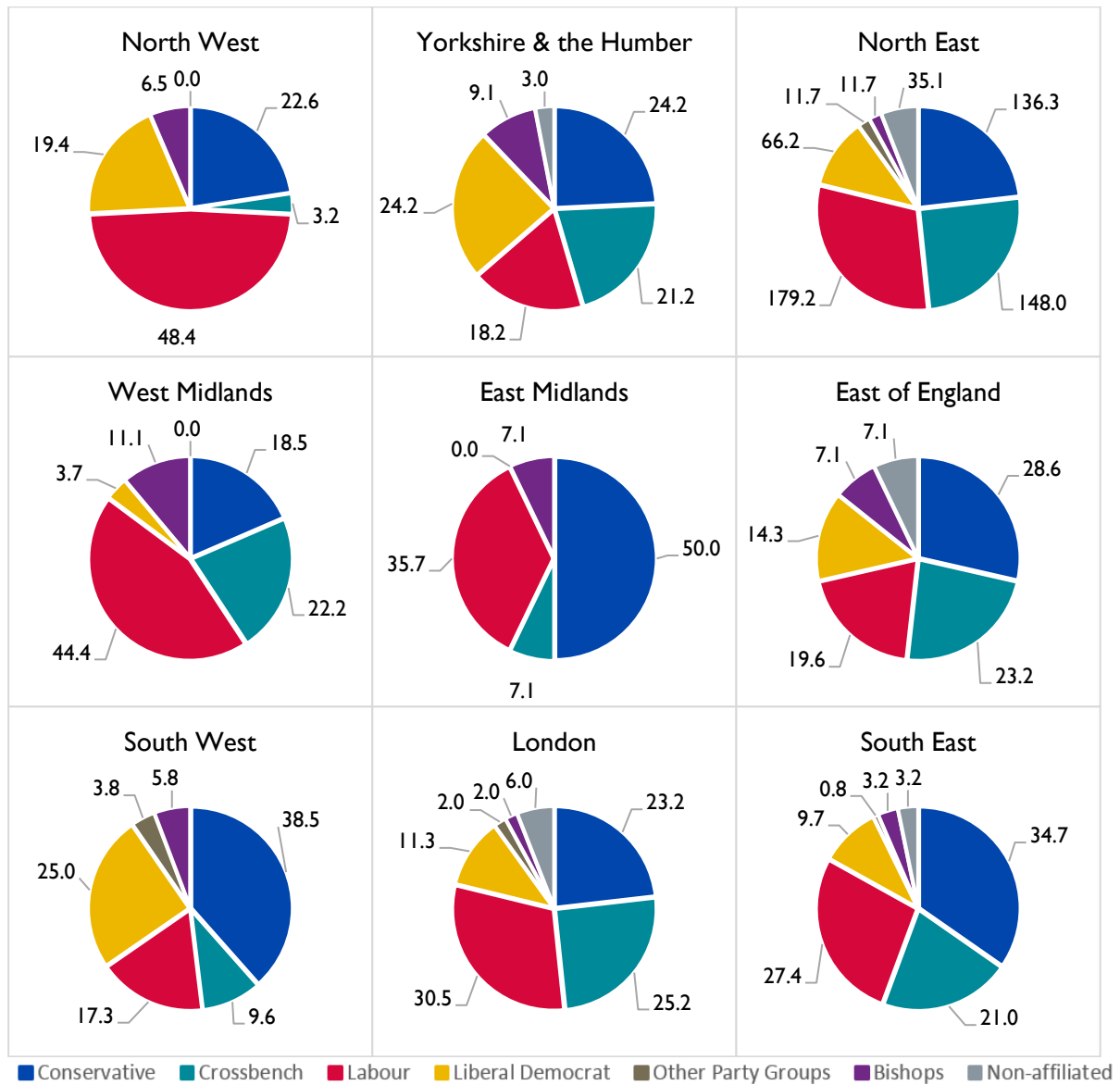
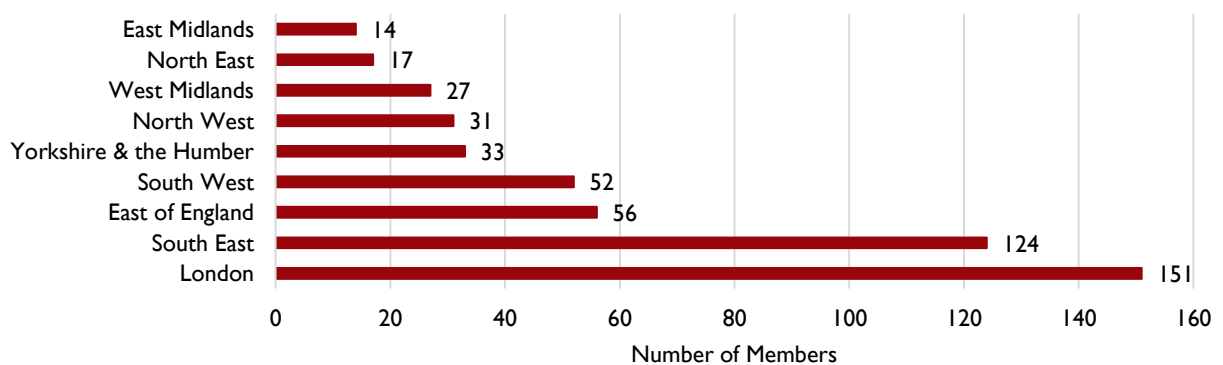


Chart I4: Members By Party/Groups Registering Address (within Regions of England, Number of Members)



Scotland

Chart 15: Members By Party/Groups Registering Address (within Scotland, Percentage of Total)

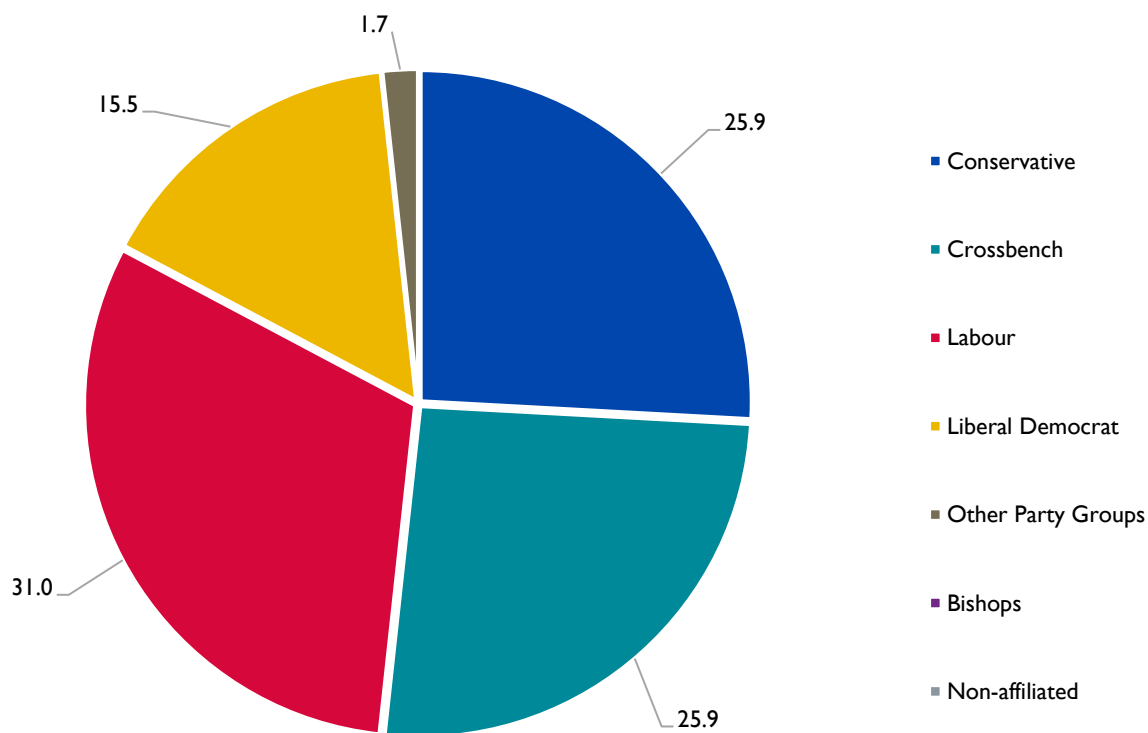
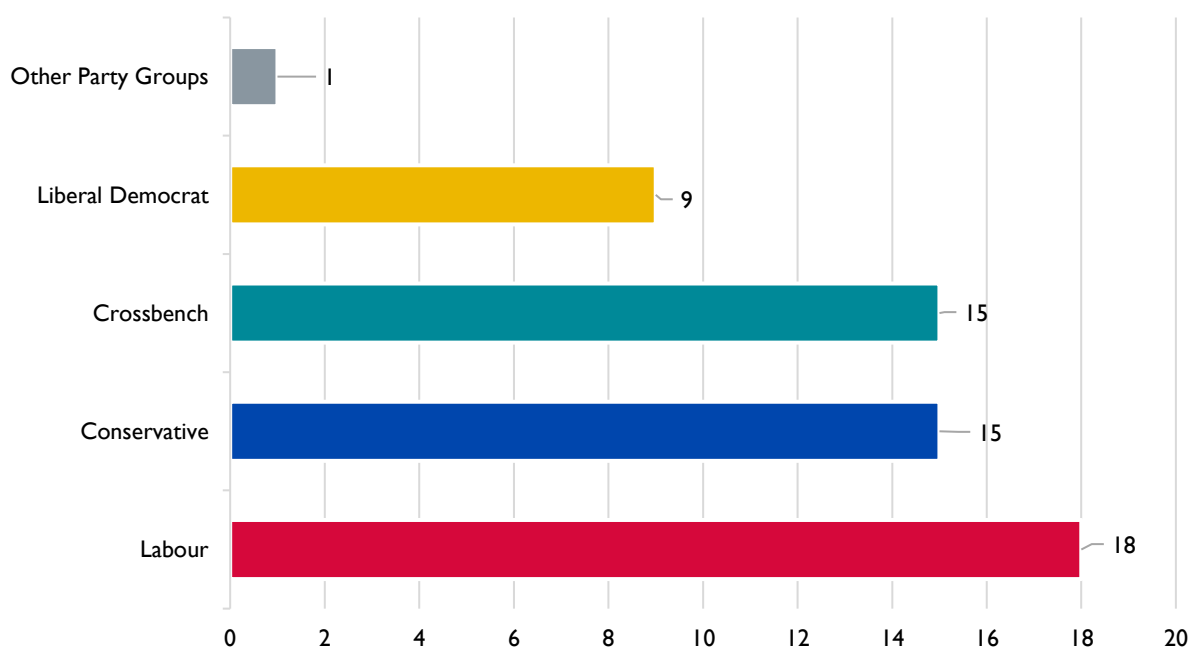


Chart 16: Members by Party/Groups Registering Main Residence (within Scotland, Number of Members)



Wales

Chart 17: Members By Party/Groups Registering Address (within Wales, Percentage of Total)

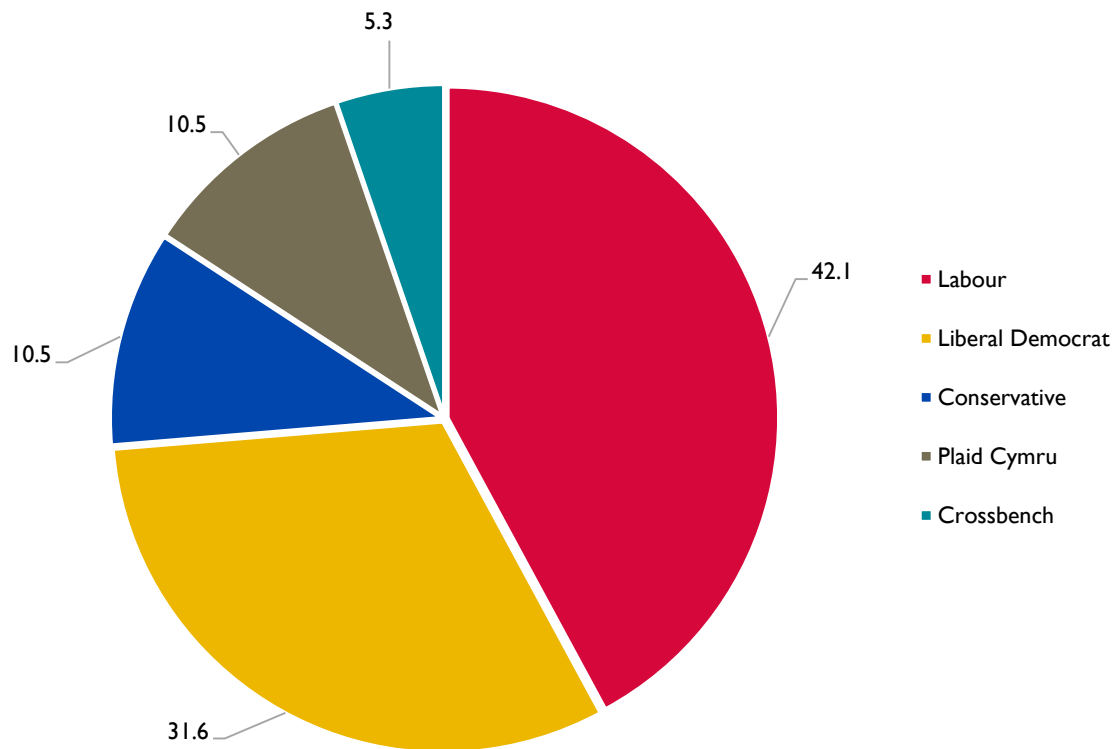
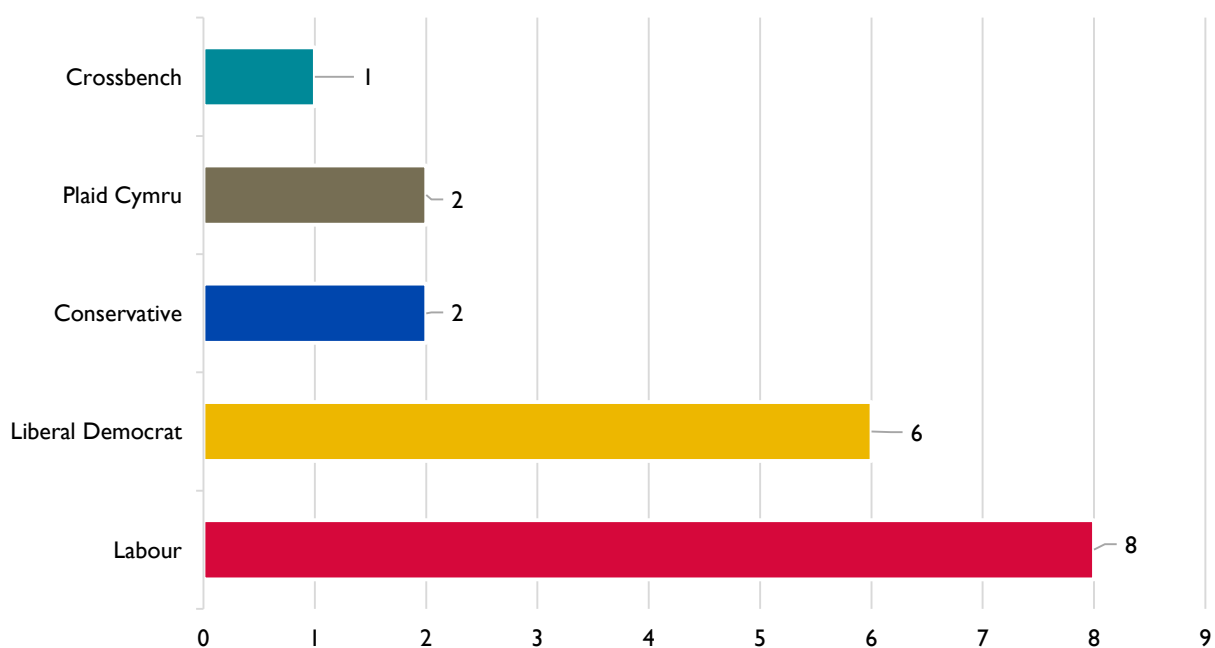


Chart 18: Members By Party/Groups Registering Address (within Wales, Number of Members)



Northern Ireland

Chart 19: Members By Party/Groups Registering Address (Within Northern Ireland, Percentage of Total)

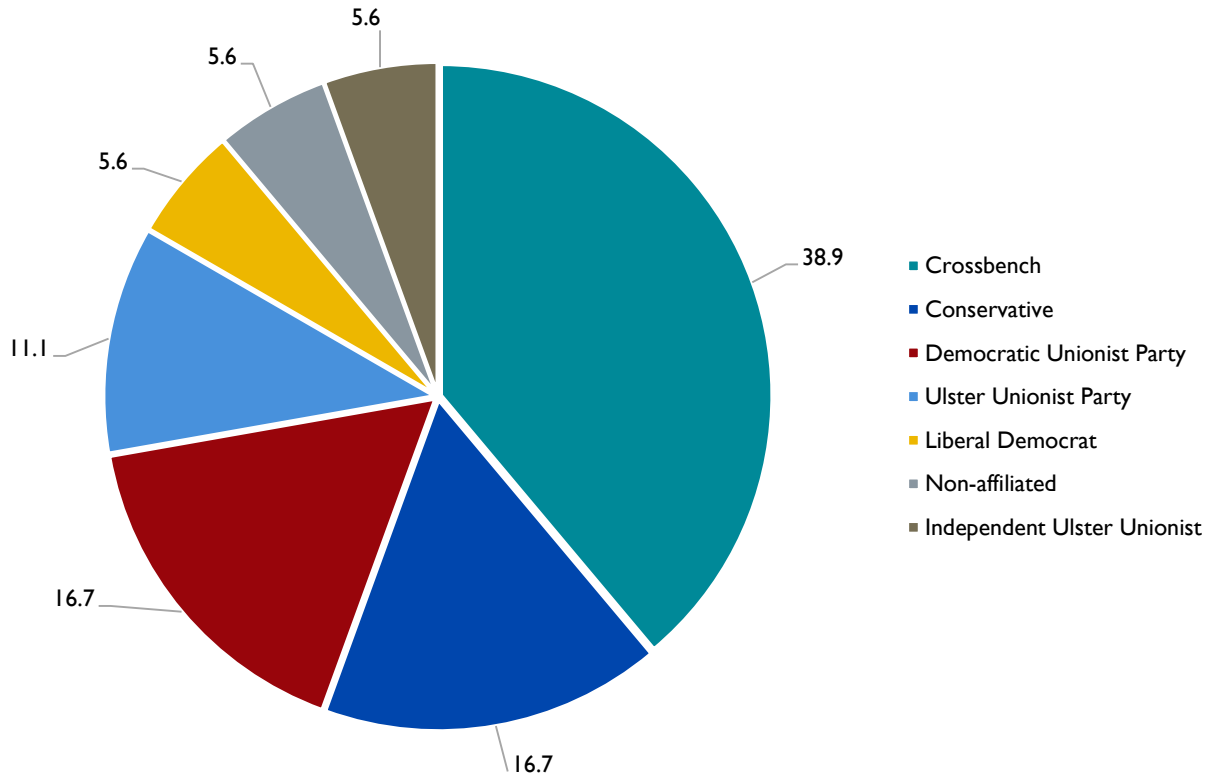
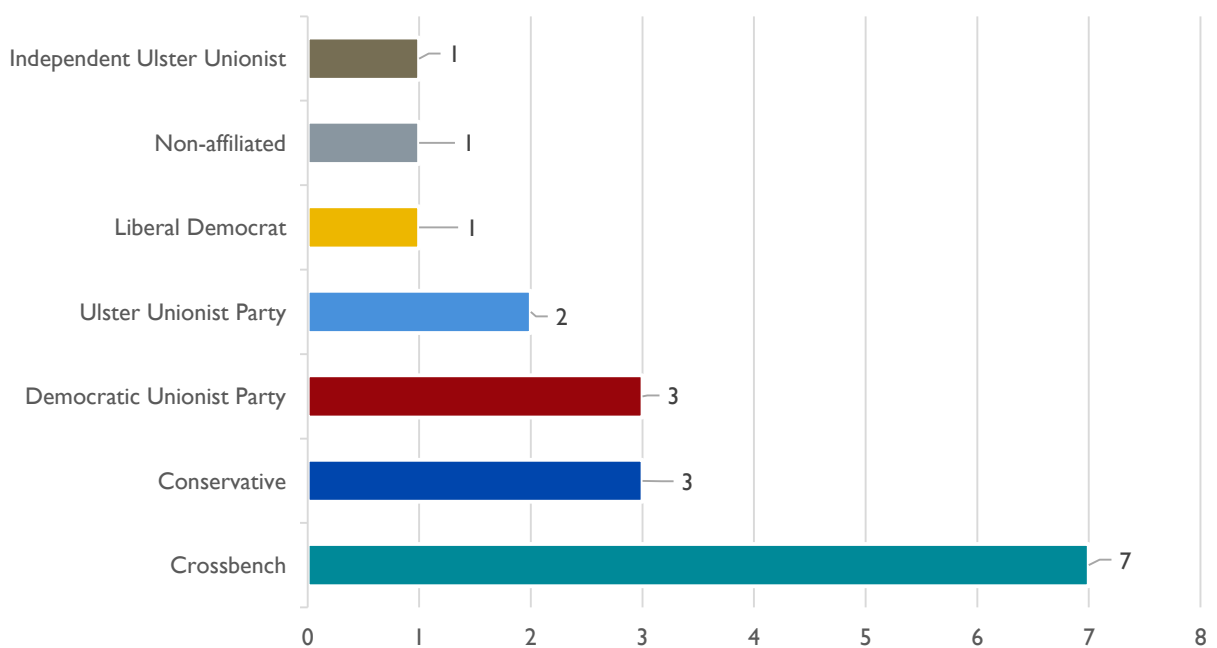


Chart 20: Members by Party/Groups Registering Address (Within Northern Ireland, Number of Members)



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