

Women in the House of Lords

176 (22.8%) out of 771 eligible¹ members of the House of Lords are women. This means that it is in line with the House of Commons, where 22.6% of MPs are women.

The gender balance of peers breaks down by political party (and none) as follows:

Party	Total Peers	No. Women Peers	% Women Peers
Conservative	217	39	18.0%
Labour	219	64	29.2%
Liberal Democrat	95	29	30.5%
Crossbenchers*	183	38	20.8%
Non-affiliated	21	4	19.0%
Other**	14	2	14.3%
Bishops	22	0	0%
Totals	771	176	22.8%

*Crossbenchers are peers who do not take a Party whip and are effectively independent

**Others are peers who, for one reason or another (Speaker, judges, leave of absence, suspended, etc) do not appear in any other lists.

Not included above are 52 ineligible peers who do not take part in the work of the House of Lords. This may be because they are members of the judiciary, or because they have been given leave of absence because they have been appointed to specific posts (e.g., Baroness Amos with the UN) or because of age or infirmity.

10 (19.2%) of ineligible peers are women, including 2 of the 8 ineligible judicial peers.

There are as yet no women bishops in the House of Lords, and only 2 female hereditary peers². To date, the government has declined to legislate to allow women to inherit titles equally with men, and most titles cannot be inherited by women. This is despite the fact that the Royal Succession Act 2013 enables women to inherit the crown equally with men.

If hereditary peers and bishops were to be excluded from the current house, there would be 660 lords, of whom 174 (26.4%) would be women.

CFWD
October 2013

¹ Eligible members are those peers who can take part in the work of the House of Lords. There are also 52 ineligible members.

² They are the Countess of Marr and Lady Saltoun.