

## Minority Ethnic Matters Overview

*MEMO+ is an occasional series of briefing papers on topics of interest to minority ethnic communities in Scotland. It is produced by the **Scottish Council of Jewish Communities** in partnership with **BEMIS - empowering Scotland's ethnic and cultural minority communities**, and is supported by the **Scottish Government**.*

# The New Scottish Parliament and Government

## The Scottish Parliament

### Election Results

For the first time, the elections to the Scottish Parliament in May 2011 resulted in an overall majority. The SNP have more seats than all of the other parties together, and the Labour party remain the second largest party, though with fewer seats than in the last parliament. The Conservative party has only one seat fewer than in the last parliament, and there are the same number of Green and Independent MSPs, but there has been a large reduction in the number of Liberal Democrat MSPs,

### Number of MSPs elected in each political party

(figure in brackets shows the number of MSPs at the end of the last Parliament)

	<b>Constituency MSPs</b>	<b>Regional MSPs</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>SNP</b>	<b>52*</b> (21)	<b>16</b> (26)	<b>68</b> (47*)
<b>Labour</b>	<b>15</b> (37)	<b>22</b> (9)	<b>37</b> (46)
<b>Conservative</b>	<b>3</b> (3**)	<b>12</b> (13)	<b>15</b> (16**)
<b>Liberal Democrat</b>	<b>2</b> (11)	<b>3</b> (5)	<b>5</b> (16)
<b>Green</b>	– (–)	<b>2</b> (2)	<b>2</b> (2)
<b>Independent</b>	– (–)	<b>1</b> (1)	<b>1</b> (1)

\* These figures exclude the Presiding Officer, Tricia Marwick, who was elected as SNP constituency MSP for Mid Fife and Glenrothes, but gave up her party allegiance on election as Presiding Officer.

\*\* These figures exclude her predecessor, Alex Fergusson, who has now returned as the Conservative constituency MSP for Galloway and West Dumfries.

## How does the Parliament work?

### **The Presiding Officer: [Tricia Marwick](#)**

The Presiding Officer, who is elected from among their own number by the MSPs themselves, chairs proceedings in the Chamber of the Scottish Parliament, and is also Convener of the [Parliamentary Bureau](#) and the [Corporate Body](#). (The Parliamentary Bureau is responsible for timetabling parliamentary business and establishing parliamentary committees, and the Corporate Body manages the administration of the Parliament.)

The Presiding Officer sets aside any party political allegiance and remains politically impartial, taking the interests of all Members equally into account and acting on their behalf, so, although Tricia Marwick was elected as an SNP MSP she will play no further role in party politics either within or outwith the Parliament.



*Tricia Marwick represents Mid Fife and Glenrothes as a constituency MSP, but, since her election as Presiding Officer, does not have any party political affiliation.*

*She was born in 1953 in Cowdenbeath and brought up in Fife, working as a public affairs officer for Shelter Scotland from 1992 until her election to the Scottish Parliament in 1999. She has been Shadow Minister for Local Government, Shadow Minister for Housing, Convener of the Scottish Parliament's Standards Committee and was appointed to the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body in 2007.*

*She is married with two children.*

MSPs also elected two **Deputy Presiding Officers**. They only set aside their party allegiance whilst they are actually deputising for the Presiding Officer, and are able to speak and act in accordance with their party political views at all other times.

### **Deputy Presiding Officer: [Elaine Smith](#)**



*Elaine Smith represents Coatbridge and Chryston as a constituency MSP.*

*She was born in 1963 in Coatbridge, and studied Social Science (Economics and Politics) at Glasgow College, before working in local government, the voluntary sector and as a teacher. She has been a Labour MSP since 1999, and introduced the Breastfeeding (Scotland) Act 2005 as a private members Bill.*

*She is married with one child.*

### **Deputy Presiding Officer: [John Scott](#)**



*John Scott represents Ayr as a constituency MSP.*

*He was born in 1951 in Ayrshire, and studied Civil Engineering at Edinburgh University before becoming a farmer. He has been a MSP since 2000, and has been Conservative spokesman on Rural Affairs and the Environment.*

*He is a widower with two children, and lists his hobbies as curling, geology, and rugby.*

## Meetings of the full Parliament

The Parliament meets in the Debating Chamber on Wednesday and Thursday each week to debate new legislation and issues raised by MSPs, and to question Ministers. All meetings are open to the public; contact [Scottish Parliament Visitor Services](#) to request tickets to watch proceedings from the public gallery, and to watch online see <http://www.holyrood.tv/>

## Parliamentary Committees

Committees are central to the work of the Parliament. They scrutinise proposed legislation, taking written and oral evidence from interested parties, conduct inquiries and consider petitions submitted by members of the public. Their meetings, which generally take place on either Tuesdays or Wednesdays, are usually open to the public; to attend a meeting contact [Scottish Parliament Visitor Services](#) and to watch online see <http://www.holyrood.tv/>

**Mandatory Committees** have to be established at the beginning of every parliamentary session, and their remits are determined by parliamentary rules. These are:

Audit	Equal Opportunities
Finance	European and External Relations
Procedures	Public Petitions
Subordinate Legislation	Standards and Public Appointments

The Parliament can also choose to establish **Subject Committees** to consider legislation relating to issues such as Health and Education. Since the election Parliamentary time has been occupied with procedural matters, such as the election of the Presiding Officer and First Minister, and the legislative programme has not yet been announced. There is, as yet, no information about the subject committees, but details will be published on the [committee pages](#) of the Scottish Parliament website when it becomes available.

## Public Petitions

Members of the public can bring issues to the attention of MSPs by submitting a petition for consideration by the Public Petitions Committee. This can raise awareness about local issues that might not otherwise be discussed in the Parliament, and has, in a small number of cases, resulted in legislation.

Before being formally presented to the Committee, petitioners can choose to have their petition hosted on the Scottish Parliament [e-petition pages](#) to publicise their cause and gather wider support. More information about petitioning the Scottish Parliament is available on the Committee's [blog page](#).

[Click here](#) for information about how to contact your local constituency and regional MSPs

## **The Scottish Government**

The Scottish Government consists of Ministers who make policy decisions and are supported by the civil service. The new majority SNP administration has reorganised departmental responsibilities, and has more ministers than the previous minority administration. It now consists of the First Minister, eight Cabinet Secretaries, ten junior Ministers, and two Law Officers.

### **First Minister: Alex Salmond**

Head of the Scottish Government: responsible for development, implementation and presentation of Government policy, constitutional affairs, and for promoting and representing Scotland.



*Alex Salmond represents the constituency of Aberdeenshire East. He was born in December 1954 in Linlithgow and studied Economics and History at St Andrews University. He worked in the civil service, banking, and industry, before becoming MP for Banff and Buchan in 1987, a position he retained until April 2010.*

*Alex Salmond was previously leader of the SNP from 1990 to 2000, an MSP from 1999 to 2001, and leader of the Opposition in the Scottish Parliament from 1999 to 2000. He was elected SNP leader for the second time in 2004, and has been First Minister since 2007.*

*He is married, and lists his hobbies as horseracing, football, golf, and reading.*

### **Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Health, Wellbeing, and Cities Strategy: Nicola Sturgeon**

Responsible for the NHS, health service reform, allied healthcare services, acute and primary services, performance, quality and improvement framework, health promotion, sport, Commonwealth Games, public health, health improvement, pharmaceutical services, food safety and dentistry, community care, older people, mental health, learning disability, carers, Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland, substance misuse, social inclusion, equalities, anti-poverty measures, veterans, and cities strategy.



*Nicola Sturgeon represents the constituency of Glasgow Govan. She was born in 1970 in Irvine, studied Law at Glasgow University, and practiced as a solicitor before becoming an MSP in 1999. She was Deputy Leader of the party and Leader of the Opposition in the Scottish Parliament, from 2003 to 2007, and Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing from 2007 to 2011.*

*She is newly married.*

### Minister for Commonwealth Games and Sport: [Shona Robison](#)



*Shona Robison represents the constituency of Dundee East.*

*She was born in 1966 in Redcar, studied Social Sciences at Glasgow University, and worked in Glasgow City Council Social Work Department before becoming an MSP in 1999. She held the posts of Minister for Public Health and later Minister for Public Health and Sport from 2007 to 2011.*

*She is married with one daughter.*

### Minister for Public Health: [Michael Matheson](#)



*Michael Matheson represents the constituency of Falkirk West.*

*He was born in 1970 in Glasgow, studied Occupational Therapy at Queen Margaret College and Applied Social Sciences at the Open University, and worked as an occupational therapist before becoming an MSP in 1999.*

*He is married with three sons, enjoys mountaineering and mountain biking, and is a member of the Ochils Mountain Rescue Team*

## Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth: [John Swinney](#)

Responsible for the economy, the Scottish Budget, employment, public service reform, deregulation, local government, public service delivery, and community planning, Registers of Scotland, Scottish Public Pensions Agency, relocation, e-government, budgetary monitoring, business and industry including Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise' trade and inward investment, corporate social responsibility, voluntary sector and the social economy, community business and co-operative development, energy, renewables, tourism, building standards, land use planning system.



*John Swinney represents the constituency of Perthshire North.*

*He was born in 1964 in Edinburgh, and studied Politics at Edinburgh University. He worked in business before becoming an MP from 1997 to 2001, and an MSP in 1999. He was leader of the SNP, and leader of the Opposition, in the Scottish Parliament from 2000 to 2004, and Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth from 2007 to 2011.*

*He is married with three children, and lists his hobbies as hill walking, cycling, and cooking.*

### **Minister for Energy, Enterprise and Tourism: [Fergus Ewing](#)**



*Fergus Ewing represents the constituency of Inverness and Nairn.*

*He was born in 1957 in Glasgow, and is the son of Winnie Ewing, the former SNP President, MP, MEP and MSP. He studied Law at Glasgow University and practiced as a solicitor before becoming an MSP in 1999. He was Minister for Community Safety from 2007 to 2011.*

*He is married with one daughter. He lists his hobbies as playing the piano, listening to jazz, and marathon running, and is a former member of the Lomond Mountain Rescue Team.*

### **Minister for Local Government and Planning: [Aileen Campbell](#)**



*Aileen Campbell represents the constituency of Clydesdale.*

*She was born in 1980 in Perth, studied Politics with Economic and Social History at Glasgow University, and worked in publishing, and as a parliamentary assistant before becoming an MSP in 2007.*

*She is married, and lists her hobbies as going to the cinema and gigs, and watching St Johnstone football team.*

### **Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning: [Mike Russell](#)**

Responsible for further and higher education, science and lifelong learning, school education, early years, training and skills, new education agency, the Scottish Qualifications Authority, nurseries and childcare, children's services, children's hearings, social work, Gaelic and Scots.



*Mike Russell represents the constituency of Argyll and Bute.*

*He was born in 1953 in Bromley, and studied Theology, and Scottish History and Literature at Edinburgh University. He worked for the Church of Scotland and in the media, and was SNP Chief Executive from 1994 to 1999. He became an MSP for the first time in 1999 but lost his seat in the 2003 election. He was re-elected in 2007, and was Minister for the Environment from 2007 to 2009, Minister for Culture, External Affairs, and the Constitution from February to December 2009, and Education Secretary from December 2009 to 2011.*

*He is married with a son, and is the author of seven books, including one novel.*

**Minister for Children and Young People: [Angela Constance](#)**



*Angela Constance represents the constituency of Almond Valley.*

*She was born in 1970 in West Lothian, studied at Glasgow University, worked as a social worker and mental health officer, and was a local councillor before becoming an MSP in 2007. She was Minister for Skills and Lifelong Learning from 2010 to 2011.*

*She is married with one child, and lists her hobbies as jogging and running marathons.*

**Minister for Learning and Skills (with responsibility for Gaelic and Scots): [Alasdair Allan](#)**



*Alasdair Allan represents the constituency of Na h-Eileanan an Iar.*

*He was born in 1971 in Edinburgh, studied Scots Language at Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities, and worked in media relations for the Church of Scotland, before becoming an MSP in 2007.*

*He is single. He was named Gaelic journalist of the year in 2006, and sings with the Back District Gaelic Choir.*

**Cabinet Secretary for Parliament and Government Strategy:**

**[Bruce Crawford](#)**

Responsible for Parliamentary affairs and the management of Government business in the Parliament, and for developing Government strategy and co-ordinating policy delivery across portfolios.



*Bruce Crawford represents the constituency of Stirling.*

*He was born in 1955 in Perth, and worked as a civil servant and local councillor before becoming an MSP in 2007. He was Minister for Parliamentary Business from 2007 to 2011.*

*He is married with three children, and lists his hobbies as football, golf, swimming, and reading.*

**Minister for Parliamentary Business, and Chief Whip: [Brian Adam](#)**



*Brian Adam represents the constituency of Aberdeen Donside.*

*He was born in 1948, studied Biochemistry and Clinical Pharmacology at Aberdeen University, and worked as a biochemist, and local Councillor before becoming an MSP in 1999. He was Chief Whip from 2007 to 2011.*

*He is married with five children and two grandchildren, and lists his hobby as football.*

## **Cabinet Secretary for Justice: [Kenny MacAskill](#)**

Responsible for Criminal law and procedure, youth justice, criminal justice social work, police, prisons and sentencing policy, legal aid, legal profession, courts and law reform, anti-social behaviour, sectarianism, human rights, fire and rescue services, community safety, civil contingencies, drugs policy and related matters, liquor licensing, vulnerable witnesses, victim support and civil law, charity law, religious and faith organisations.



*Kenny MacAskill represents the constituency of Edinburgh Eastern.*

*He was born in 1958 in Edinburgh, studied Law at Edinburgh University, and practiced as a solicitor before becoming an MSP in 1999. He was Cabinet Secretary for Justice from 2007 to 2011.*

*He is married with two sons. He has written several books, two in collaboration with the former First Minister Henry McLeish.*

## **Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs (with responsibility for tackling sectarianism): [Roseanna Cunningham](#)**



*Roseanna Cunningham represents the constituency of Perthshire South and Kinross-shire.*

*She was born in 1951 in Glasgow, studied politics at Western Australia University, and Law at Edinburgh University, and worked as a solicitor before becoming an MP from 1995 to 2001. She was Deputy Leader of the SNP from 2000 to 2004, became an MSP in 1999, and was Minister for the Environment from 2009 to 2011.*

*She lists her hobbies as traditional music, reading, and hill walking.*

## **Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment:**

**[Richard Lochhead](#)**

Responsible for Agriculture, fisheries and rural development including aquaculture and forestry, environment and natural heritage, land reform, water quality regulation, sustainable development, and climate change.



*Richard Lochhead represents the constituency of Moray.*

*He was born in 1969 in Paisley, studied Politics at Stirling University, and worked for Dundee City Council and as Office manager for Alex Salmond before becoming an MSP in 1999. He was Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment from 2007 to 2011.*

*He is married with two sons, and lists his hobbies as reading, cinema, football and cycling.*



### **Minister for Environment and Climate Change: [Stewart Stevenson](#)**



*Stewart Stevenson represents the constituency of Banffshire and Buchan Coast.*

*He was born in October 1946, studied Mathematics at Aberdeen University, and worked as Director of Technology Innovation at the Bank of Scotland and a lecturer at Heriot-Watt University before becoming an MSP in 2001. He was Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change from 2007 to 2010.*

*He is married, holds a pilot's licence, and lists his hobbies as photography, reading, and writing.*

### **Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs: [Fiona Hyslop](#)**

Responsible for Europe, external affairs, culture and the arts, broadcasting, architecture, built heritage, Historic Scotland and lottery funding, National Records of Scotland, and major events strategy.



*Fiona Hyslop represents the constituency of Linlithgow.*

*She was born in 1964 in Ayrshire, studied Economic History and Sociology at Glasgow University, and worked in the insurance industry before becoming an MSP in 1999. She was Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning from 2007 to 2009, and Minister of Culture and External Affairs from 2009 to 2011.*

*She is married with three children, and lists her hobbies as gardening and swimming.*

### **Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure and Capital Investment:**

**[Alex Neil](#)**

Responsible for Scottish Water, procurement, European Structural Funds, Scottish Futures Trust, transport policy and delivery, public transport, road, rail services, air and ferry services, housing, communities and regeneration.



*Alex Neil represents the constituency of Airdrie and Shotts.*

*He was born in 1951 in Irvine, and studied Economics at Dundee University, later establishing his own consultancy business. He worked for the Labour Party in Scotland, and was a founder member of the Scottish Labour Party, before leaving to join the SNP and becoming an MSP in 1999. He was Minister for Housing and Communities from 2009 to 2011.*

*He is married with a son.*

## Minister for Housing and Transport: **Keith Brown**



*Keith Brown represents the constituency of Clackmannanshire and Dunblane.*

*He was born in 1961 in Edinburgh, studied Politics at Dundee University, and worked in local government, as a Local Councillor, and served as a Marine before becoming an MSP in 2007. He was Minister for Skills and Lifelong Learning from 2009 to 2010, and Minister for Transport and Infrastructure from 2010 to 2011.*

*He has three children.*

## **Law Officers**

The Law Officers are not members of the Cabinet, but the Lord Advocate attends when his expert advice is required.

### **Lord Advocate: **Frank Mulholland QC****

Responsible for the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, prosecution of crime, investigation of sudden deaths, complaints against the police, support for victims and witnesses of crime, international cooperation (including mutual legal assistance and extradition), confiscation of proceeds of crime.



*Frank Mulholland studied Law at Aberdeen and Edinburgh Universities, and Trial Skills at Harvard University. He worked in the Procurator Fiscal Service and was the first Advocate-Depute to be appointed from within the Procurator Fiscal service. He was Solicitor General from 2007 to 2011.*

*He is married with one child.*

### **Solicitor General: **Lesley Thomson QC****

Responsible for legal advice to Scottish Ministers, civil litigation, constitutional issues and appointment of Counsel.



*Lesley Thomson has 25 years experience as a prosecutor, most recently as Area Procurator Fiscal for Glasgow and Strathkelvin. She is a specialist in the prosecution of serious crime, including organised crime and financial crime, and has written the leading textbook on criminal confiscation.*

## Opposition Spokespeople

(Please note that some opposition spokespeople have still to be announced)

Contact details for all MSPs are on the Scottish Parliament website at  
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/msp/membersPages/index.htm>

	<b>Labour</b> (pending leadership elections)	<b>Conservative</b> (pending leadership elections)	<b>Liberal Democrat</b>
<b>Party Leader</b>	Iain Gray <b>Leader of the Opposition</b>	Annabel Goldie	Willie Rennie
<b>Deputy Leader</b>	Johann Lamont	Murdo Fraser	
<b>Constitutional Affairs</b>		David McLetchie	
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>	Jackie Baillie	Murdo Fraser and Mary Scanlon	Alison McInnes
<b>Cities Strategy</b>	Jackie Baillie		
<b>Public Health and Sport</b>		Nanette Milne	
<b>Economy</b>	Richard Baker	Gavin Brown	Tavish Scott
<b>Energy</b>			Liam McArthur
<b>Local Government</b>	Michael McMahon		
<b>Education and Lifelong Learning</b>	Malcolm Chisholm	Elizabeth Smith	Liam McArthur
<b>Parliamentary Business</b>	Paul Martin	David McLetchie	
<b>Chief Whip</b>	John Park	David McLetchie	
<b>Justice</b>	Johann Lamont	John Lamont	Alison McInnes
<b>Rural Affairs</b>	Sarah Boyack	Alex Fergusson	Jim Hume
<b>Environment</b>	Sarah Boyack	Alex Fergusson & Jamie McGrigor	Jim Hume
<b>Culture</b>	Ken Macintosh	Ruth Davidson	
<b>External Affairs</b>	Ken Macintosh		
<b>Infrastructure</b>	Lewis Macdonald	Jackson Carlaw	
<b>Capital Investment</b>	Lewis Macdonald		
<b>Housing</b>		Alex Johnstone	Jim Hume
<b>Communities</b>		Alex Johnstone	
<b>Transport</b>		Jackson Carlaw	Jim Hume
<b>Climate change</b>		Jackson Carlaw	

## Useful Links

- **The Scottish Parliament**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/home.htm>

- **Information about individual MSPs**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/msp/membersPages/index.htm>

- **Parliamentary Committees**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/committees/index.htm>

Links to the webpage of each Parliamentary Committee, including membership details, current and proposed future work, and contact details.

- **Scottish Parliament Visitor Services**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/vli/visitingHolyrood/chamberTickets.htm>

Tickets for the public gallery of the Debating Chamber and for Committees should be booked in advance either by e-mail

[sp.bookings@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:sp.bookings@scottish.parliament.uk) or by telephone 0131 348 5000

- **Holyrood TV**

<http://www.holyrood.tv/>

Live broadcasts and archived video of proceedings in the Debating Chamber and Committees

- **The Scottish Government**

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Home>



The **Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC)** is the representative body of all the Jewish communities in Scotland. It advances public understanding about the Jewish religion, culture and community, and also works in partnership with other organisations to promote good relations and understanding among community groups and to promote equality. (Scottish Charity SC029438) <http://www.scojec.org/>



**BEMIS** is the Scottish national Ethnic Minorities led umbrella body, supporting, empowering, and building the capacity of minority third sector community organisations. As a strategic partner with Government, it is proactive in influencing the development of race equality policy in Scotland, and helps develop and progress multicultural Scotland, active citizenship, democracy, and Human Rights Education at the Scottish, UK, and European levels. <http://www.bemis.org.uk/index.html>



The **Scottish Government** is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and social justice for all those who live in Scotland. **One Scotland** is the Scottish Government campaign designed to tackle racism. It aims to raise awareness of racist attitudes, highlight its negative impact and recognise the valuable contributions that other cultures have made to our society – and make Scotland no place for racism. <http://www.scotlandagainstracism.com/>