

## **International Comparison of Reviews of Electoral Arrangements**

### **Background**

1. The Scottish Government's recent consultation on electoral reform considered the question of the role of Ministers and the Scottish Parliament in relation to the final determination of Scottish Parliament constituencies and local government electoral arrangements. The Commission's response to the consultation emphasised the importance of an independent, non-partisan approach and the Commission asked the Secretariat to undertake some online research to try and establish what happens in other countries.

### **Discussion**

2. This paper discusses the ways in which reviews of electoral arrangements are carried out in a selection other democracies at national, provincial / state and local level. It discusses the role of independent commissions similar to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland, and the role of elected officials in implementing the decisions of such commissions: i.e. whether they can accept, amend or reject those decisions.
3. The main points are summarised in Appendix A, with examples of the role of boundary commissions in particular countries and regions. A spreadsheet giving further details on electoral reviews in particular jurisdictions is in Appendix B.
4. Where possible, the information has been sourced from the websites of the commissions and the other bodies discussed. For Western Europe, the lack of information available from official sources in English means that much of the information has been sourced from Wikipedia and other non-official websites.

### **Conclusion**

5. The Commission is invited to consider the manner by which electoral arrangements are determined in other democracies.



## International Comparison of Reviews of Electoral Arrangements

### Background

1. This Appendix summarises the ways in which reviews of electoral arrangements are carried out in a selection of other democracies at national, provincial / state and local level. It discusses the role of independent commissions and the role of elected representatives in implementing the decisions of such commissions: i.e. whether they can accept, amend or reject those decisions.
2. A spreadsheet giving further details on electoral reviews in particular jurisdictions is in Appendix B.

### Summary

#### Composition of Commissions

3. The composition of the commissions is typically specified in statute. There is usually a requirement that commissioners not be current or former members of the bodies they are reviewing the electoral boundaries of. Commissions are often chaired by a senior judge or retired senior judge, and many of their members are senior public officials appointed by virtue of their office. The Electoral District Commission of New South Wales, for example, consists of a Supreme Court Judge (current or retired), the Electoral Commissioner and the Surveyor General.
4. For some commissions, commissioners are appointed by political office holders. Some of these appointments require the agreement of, or consultation with leaders of the government and opposition; or, for example, in the case of the Alberta Electoral Boundaries Commission, balancing appointments between both.
5. In Australia, many reviews of electoral arrangements begin with a small commission making initial proposals, with an augmented commission then considering responses to a public consultation on those proposals.

#### Criteria

6. The criteria the boundary commissions work within is broadly similar. The primary factor is ensuring that the population or electorate represented by each elected member is approximately equal, with consideration also given to a wide range of factors relating to geography and community.
7. In some cases there are absolute statutory requirements in terms of population / electorate numbers or electoral parity. In other cases, other factors allow or require commissions to depart from their normal statutory requirements for electoral parity. This is particularly common in Canada, (where commissions consider effective representation in the context of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms) and Australia where the areas in question are often very large and have huge disparities in population density.

8. In the Republic of Ireland, for example, the constitution specifies that parliamentary constituencies have no more than 30,000 people, and the Election Act specifies the maximum number of constituencies and elected members per constituency. In Manitoba, in contrast, the Electoral Divisions Boundaries Commission must restrict variance from electoral parity to no more than  $\pm 10\%$ , apart from for electoral areas which lie wholly or partly north of the 53<sup>rd</sup> parallel, in which case the variance must be no more than  $\pm 25\%$ .
9. Some commissions are also required to consider additional local factors, such as: separate electoral areas for Maori voters in New Zealand; or a specified number of seats for a particular part of the wider area, such as four seats for the sparsely populated Labrador area in Newfoundland and Labrador.

## Consultations

10. The boundary commissions almost all carry out public consultations to assist them in making their proposals or determinations. In most cases there is a statutory requirement to carry out public consultation. The extent to which the form, manner, frequency and timing of public consultation is prescribed in statute varies between commissions.
11. In some jurisdictions, such as Australian Capital Territory, interested parties are given an opportunity to make suggestions before the commission creates initial proposals. More commonly, the commission first creates initial proposals which it then presents for public consultation.

## Final Say in Determining Electoral Arrangements

12. There is a wide variety in the extent to which commissions have the final say in determining electoral arrangements, or, effectively, have an advisory role to ministers or legislatures. In the Republic of Ireland, for example, the national parliament must approve the proposals of the boundary commission for national electoral arrangements; for local electoral arrangements, ministers appoint boundary committees to advise them, and provide these committees with directions. In Australia, in contrast, there is no role for ministers or legislatures in appointing commissions and commissions have the final say in determining electoral boundaries.

## Examples of Reviews of Electoral Arrangements

### Other UK Boundaries Commissions

#### *National*

13. The boundaries of UK Parliament's single-member constituencies are based on the recommendations of boundary commissions for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The UK Parliament sets the criteria for the commissions and decides whether to implement their recommendations.

14. The electoral boundaries of the Northern Ireland Assembly's multi-member constituencies are based upon the 18 UK Parliament constituencies for Northern Ireland. The Northern Ireland Assembly voted to reduce its membership from 108 to 90 in 2016 (one fewer member per constituency). The constituencies would change if and when the number and boundaries of Northern Ireland's UK Parliament constituencies change.
15. The electoral boundaries of the 40 single-member constituencies in the National Assembly for Wales are based on existing UK Parliament constituencies. There are also 20 additional seats from five regions to make seats won by parties more proportional to votes cast. The constituencies of the Welsh Parliament are, however, no longer linked to UK Parliament constituencies, and will not change if and when the number and boundaries of Wales's UK Parliament boundaries change. Responsibility for any future reviews of National Assembly electoral arrangements lies with the Government / Welsh Office.

### *Local*

16. Boundary commissions regularly review electoral boundaries in England and in Wales.
17. In England, the Local Government Boundary Commission is responsible for reviews of local government electoral arrangements, which includes the total number of councillors elected, the boundaries of wards or divisions, and the number of councillors elected per ward or division.
18. The Commission conducts a review of electoral arrangement at the request of a council, or where a ward has an electorate of +/- 30% from the average for the council area, or 30% of wards have an electorate of +/- 10% from the average of the council area.
19. The Commission's recommendations are subject to the scrutiny of the UK Parliament, which can accept or reject them.
20. In Wales, the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales is obliged to carry out reviews of electoral arrangements at least once every ten years. This includes the number of councillors elected, the boundaries of wards and the number of councillors elected per ward. The manner in which the Commission carries out reviews is defined in legislation, and the Commission may be guided by directions issued by Welsh Ministers.
21. The Commission submits recommendations to the Welsh Government, which make the final decision on whether to adopt them.

## **Republic of Ireland**

### *National*

22. In the Republic of Ireland the lower house national parliament is elected by multi-member constituencies, the size of which are constrained by a constitutional limit of 30,000 people per member of parliament, and an

upper limit on the numbers of members of parliament. A Constituency Commission proposes constituency boundaries, as well as the number of seats per constituency (and the number of “additional members” to achieve proportionality). The national parliament has the final say on whether the commission’s final proposals are implemented.

*Local*

23. Local councils are elected by multi-member electoral districts. The Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government has considerable power over determining the boundaries of these districts. The Minister appoints Local Area Boundary Committees to review these boundaries, which are obliged to have regard to such considerations as specified by the Minister, and make recommendations. The Minister in turn is obliged to have regard to these recommendations, but does not appear obliged to implement them.

**Canada**

*National*

24. In Canada, the lower house of the national parliament (House of Commons) is elected by single member constituencies, which are allocated between the country’s ten provinces proportionally to their population. The country’s three territories each elect a single member of parliament. The number of seats allocated to each province is recalculated after each ten-yearly census.
25. The boundaries of these constituencies are determined by independent boundary commissions in each province, appointed in accordance with each province’s legislation. The commissions each present a report to the House of Commons, which Members of the House of Commons may make objections to. The commissions consider these objections, but make the final determination of the electoral boundaries.

*Province / State*

26. Each province and territory of Canada has a unicameral parliament, a legislative assembly, which is elected by single member constituencies. The role of boundary commissions in determining the number and boundaries of these constituencies varies between provinces. In some provinces, boundary commissions make recommendations, which must be approved by the legislative assemblies, and can be amended; in others the commissions have the final say in determining boundaries. The electoral boundaries for Ontario are specified in legislation, with an ad hoc role for boundary commissions.
27. The timing of boundary reviews also varies between provinces. In most provinces, reviews occur after a specified period of time related to the census or general election dates.

**Australia**

*National*

28. Australia’s national parliament is elected by single member constituencies which are apportioned between states and territories according to a formula

which assesses their population in proportion to the national population. Revisions of constituency boundaries are done on a state-by-state basis, and are not simultaneous. Rather, they are automatically triggered by: changes to the number of constituencies each state or territory is entitled to as its population changes; population changes within each state which cause excessive disparities in the electoral parity of existing constituencies within the state; or failing these, after a specified period of time since the most recent review.

29. For each revision, the Australian Electoral Commission appoints a Redistribution Committee made up of ex-officio members from the state in question to draw up proposals. Objections to those proposals are considered by an Augmented Redistribution Committee, which consists of the Redistribution Committee plus members of the Australian Electoral Commission. The Committee and Commission work primarily on the basis of electoral parity, but also consider geographical and community factors. The final determinations of the Augmented Redistribution Committee are implemented without requiring ministerial or parliamentary approval.

### *Province / State*

30. Australia has six states and ten territories. The territories referred to in this paper are Australian Capital Territory and Northern Territory: the remaining territories are mainly small islands with very low populations.
31. Australia's states and territories have a mixture of unicameral and bicameral parliaments. In each state or territory the lower house (Legislative Assembly) is elected from single-member electoral areas, apart from Capital Territory, where the unicameral parliament is elected from multi-member electoral areas. Where there is an upper house (Legislative Council), it is elected from multi-member electoral areas. The exception is Tasmania, where the lower house uses the multi-member electoral districts of the national parliament, and the upper house is made up of single-member electoral areas.
32. All the states and territories have independent boundary commissions which determine their electoral arrangements for both houses, without a role of ministers or legislatures in approving or amending their decisions.
33. The timing of these reviews of electoral arrangements are specified in statute. In some of the states and territories reviews are triggered automatically in a similar manner to those reviews of the national parliament electoral arrangements: after population changes cause criteria for electoral parity of the existing electoral areas within the state to be breached, or after a specified period of time or after a specified number of elections.
34. In some of the states / territories, electoral reviews follow a similar pattern to those for the national parliament: with a commission of ex-officio members drawing up proposals, and an augmented commission considering objections to those proposals and making a final decision.

## **New Zealand**

### *National*

35. New Zealand's national parliament is unicameral, and is elected from multi-member constituencies. These are general constituencies, and a parallel set of constituencies known as Māori Electorates, which ensure Māori representation. The boundaries of these constituencies are determined by the Representation Commission, which consists of 4 Ex-Officio senior public officials and 2 political appointees, representing the Government and the Opposition. When considering the boundaries of Māori Electorates, the Commission includes additional Māori ex-officio and political appointees.
36. The Representation Commission considers electorate quotas, but also considers geography, existing boundaries and community factors.
37. There is no role for ministers or parliament in approving the Representation Commission's decisions.

#### *Local*

38. New Zealand's local authorities are primarily responsible for reviewing their own electoral arrangements. They receive guidelines and technical assistance from the Local Government Commission. If the local authorities' proposals are objected to, or do not meet electoral parity criteria, the proposals are forwarded to the Local Government Commission which decides.
39. There is no role for ministers or legislatures in approving the Local Government Commission's decisions.

#### **Western Europe**

40. The information in this section is limited by the availability of sources in English.
41. The electoral systems of national parliaments and regional / local assemblies in many parts of Western Europe, such as the Nordic countries, the Benelux countries, Switzerland, Spain and Portugal, are based around electoral areas which correspond to local authority boundaries. These areas elect multiple members, and are not divided into smaller units which elect individual members. Because the basic unit of electoral area matches local authority boundaries, independent boundary commissions are not required.
42. There are some Western European countries in which there is or has been a role for independent boundary commissions, such as:
  - a. Germany, where the Electoral Districts Commission reviews constituencies between elections to prevent them from diverging too far from the electoral quota. The National Parliament has the final say in deciding whether any of the Commission's proposals are implemented, apart from when existing constituencies vary from the electoral quota by more than 25%, in which case it must approve a new set of constituencies;
  - b. France, a special committee was appointed in 2008 to redistribute constituencies between and within departments to reduce disparities

in representation which had arisen or grown since the previous reorganisation in 1986.

## Comparison of International Boundaries Commissions

### Notes

\* "Electoral System" refers to whether electoral areas elect single or multiple members, and does not refer to additional members to increase proportionality, or to the voting system.

\* Where parliaments are bicameral the body referred to is always the Lower House, unless otherwise stated.

Name of Electoral Area	Level	Electoral System	Name of Commission or Equivalent Body	Membership	Criteria	Commission has final say on electoral arrangements?	Notes / Summary
Republic of Ireland <sup>1</sup>	National parliament	multi-member constituencies	Constituency Committee	Senior public officials and chaired by a high court judge	Statutory criteria includes maximum and minimum no. of seats and population of constituency	No	The Commission's role is advisory - the final determination of constituencies is determined by Parliament
Republic of Ireland <sup>2</sup>	Local authority	multi-member electoral areas	Local Electoral Area Boundary Committee	Appointed by Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government. Similar membership to LGBCS.	As set by Minister.	No	The Minister must publish and "have regard to" commission's recommendations.
Canada <sup>3</sup>	National parliament	single-member constituencies	There is an electoral boundary commission for each of Canada's 10 provinces. The 3 territories each provide a single seat.	Each province has a three-member electoral boundaries commission, usually chaired by a judge chosen by the chief justice of the province. The other two members are appointed by the Speaker of the House of Commons (national parliament)	The 338 seats are redistributed between provinces every 10 years based on census data. Each province's commission adjusts its seat boundaries based on population, but also considers other factors such as size and local identity	Yes	Each state's commission reports to the national parliament. (House of Commons). Members of the national parliament may file objections to the reports, which the commissions will consider. The commissions may make changes as a consequence of these objections, but the commission - not parliament - make the final decisions about the boundaries.
British Columbia (Canada) <sup>4</sup>	Provincial Assembly	single-member electoral areas	British Columbia Electoral Boundaries Commission	Current or retired senior judge; Chief Electoral Officer and a member appointed by Speaker of the Legislative Assembly	After every second provincial general election, the Commission proposes changes to electoral areas. It can propose 85-87 areas and considers population, as well as other factors such as geography and demographics	No	The British Columbia Electoral Boundaries Commission's recommendations must approved, or approved with amendments, by the Legislative Assembly
Alberta (Canada) <sup>5</sup>	Provincial Assembly	single-member electoral areas	Alberta Electoral Boundaries Commission	The Commission consists of a chair who is one of the following: the Ethics Commissioner, the Auditor General, the president of a post-secondary educational institution in Alberta, a judge or a retired judge, a person with similar stature and qualifications to the aforementioned; and 2 nominees of the Premier of Alberta and 2 nominees of the Leader of the Opposition.	Proposes changes to electoral areas based on population, (+/- 25%, with exceptions) but also considers other factors such as geography, municipal boundaries and community	No	The Alberta Electoral Boundaries Commission's recommendations must approved, or approved with amendments, by the Legislative Assembly
Saskatchewan (Canada) <sup>6</sup>	Provincial Assembly	single-member electoral areas	Provincial Constituency Boundaries Commission	The Chair is appointed by the Lieutenant Governor (Premier of Saskatchewan) having been nominated by the Chief Justice. The other 2 members are nominated by the Lieutenant Governor after consultation with the Leader of the Opposition.	A Commission is appointed every 10 years to revise the boundaries of Legislative Assembly constituencies following the census. The Commission proposes constituencies based on population size, but may depart from this by taking into account special geographic considerations, special communities or diversities of interest or physical features	No	The Provincial Constituency Boundaries Commissions's recommendations must approved, or approved with amendments, by the Legislative Assembly
Manitoba (Canada) <sup>7</sup>	Provincial Assembly	single-member electoral areas	The Electoral Divisions Boundaries Commission	the Chief Justice of Manitoba; (b) the President of each of the following institutions: the University of Manitoba, Brandon University and the University College of the North; and the Chief Electoral Officer.	Every 10 years the Commission proposes changes to Manitoba's 57 electoral districts based on electoral parity. It must restrict variance from electoral parity to no more than +/- 10%, apart from for electoral areas which lie wholly or partly north of the 53rd parallel, in which case the variance must be no more than +/- 25%. It must also consider factors such as geography and community	Yes	The Electoral Divisions Boundaries Commissions's final recommendations are not subject to Ministerial or Parliamentary approval.
Ontario (Canada) <sup>8</sup>	Provincial Assembly	single-member electoral areas	The boundaries of 111 of the 124 Legislative Assembly electoral areas match those used for elections to the national parliament. In Northern Ontario 11 electoral areas are defined in statute, and 4 were determined by a "Far North Electoral Boundaries Commission" which was established in 2016	The Far North Electoral Boundaries Commission comprises: A current or former judge of a court in Ontario (chair), Ontario's Chief Electoral Officer, a member of the faculty of a university in Ontario and two community representatives who identify as Indigenous persons	The Far North Electoral Boundaries Commission follows locally specific statutory criteria	Yes (partial)	The Legislative Assembly electoral boundaries of Southern Ontario (111 out of 124 in total), follow boundaries which were themselves determined by an independent commission. For 11 electoral areas in Northern Ontario, the Legislative Assembly has set the boundaries. The Far North Electoral Boundary Commission's decisions on electoral boundaries for 4 areas are final.
Quebec (Canada) <sup>9</sup>	Provincial Assembly	single-member electoral areas	Electoral Representation Commission of Quebec	Chief Electoral Officer, and two other commissioners appointed by the National Assembly	The Commission is responsible for proposing new electoral boundaries within a year of the second election following the last delimitation of electoral boundaries. The Commission considers electoral parity, and has requirement to represent natural communities	Yes	The National Assembly (of Quebec) debates the Commission's report. The Commission establishes the final boundaries within ten days of the debate.

Name of Electoral Area	Level	Electoral System	Name of Commission or Equivalent Body	Membership	Criteria	Commission has final say on electoral arrangements?	Notes / Summary
New Brunswick (Canada) <sup>10</sup>	Provincial Assembly	single-member electoral areas	Electoral Boundaries and Representation Commission	6 members, with 2 co-chairs appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council on recommendation of an all-party commission of the Legislative Assembly. The Commission disbands after completing its mandate.	A commission is established to review boundaries before every second schedule general election. It deviates from electoral quota by no more than 5%, 25% in "extrordinary circumstances", based on geographic and community factors	Yes	The Lieutenant Governor makes a regulation after receiving the commission's final report. The only power that the Legislative Assembly had was to amend the name or correct an error in the description of the boundary of an electoral district
Prince Edward's Island (Canada) <sup>11</sup>	Provincial Assembly	single-member electoral areas	Prince Edward's Island Electoral Boundaries Commission	A commission is formed to review electoral boundaries after every third election. It comprises: a chair who is a judge or retired judge and two non-politician members appointed by the Premier and two by the Leader of the Opposition	The Commission considers electoral parity (+/- 25%), as well as geographic and community factors	No	The Commission reports its recommendations to the Legislative Assembly which is required to approve it.
Newfoundland and Labrador (Canada) <sup>12</sup>	Provincial Assembly	single-member electoral areas	Newfoundland and Labrador Electoral Districts Boundaries Commission	The Chair is a judge appointed by the Chief Justice of the state; the other 4 members are appointed by the speaker of the House of Assembly	The Commission reviews electoral boundaries every 10 years. It is obliged to consider electoral parity, (+/-10%) with some exceptions permitted for special geographic considerations, and the sparsely populated Labrador.	No	The Commission submits its report to the Minister of Justice and Public Safety, who is obliged to submit it to the Governor, and lay it before the legislature. The Legislature was required to amend the House of Assembly Act to implement the commissions recommendations in 2015.
Nova Scotia (Canada) <sup>13</sup>	Provincial Assembly	single-member electoral areas	Electoral Boundaries Commission	Composition of Commission is determined by a Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly.	A Commission is formed to review electoral boundaries every 10 years. The criteria the commission works within are set by the Select Committee. The current commission considers electoral parity and a variety of geographic and community considerations.	No	The Commission makes recommendations to the House of Assembly on boundary changes.
Yukon Territory (Canada) <sup>14</sup>	Provincial Assembly	single-member electoral areas	Electoral Boundaries Commission	Judge or retired judge; chief electoral officer, and a representative of each political party represented in the legislative assembly	The commission considered population, as well as various geographic and community factors	No	The government introduces legislation to establish the electoral districts following receipt of the final report. This must be passed by the Legislative Assembly before it is implemented
Nunavut (Canada) <sup>15</sup>	Provincial Assembly	single-member electoral areas	Boundaries Commission	Judge or retired judge, plus two members appointed on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly	The commission considers population and a variety of geographic and community factors	No	The government introduces legislation to establish the electoral districts following receipt of the final report. This must be passed by the Legislative Assembly before it is implemented
Northwest Territories (Canada) <sup>16</sup>	Provincial Assembly	single-member electoral areas	Electoral Boundaries Commission	Senior judge or retired judge, plus 2 members appointed by the Legislative Assembly.	Electoral boundaries are reviewed within 2 years after every second general election. The Commission considers guidelines from the Legislative Assembly, which include population, as well as geographic and community factors. The most recent commission was requested to propose different numbers of electoral districts	No	The Commission prepares option for the Legislative Assembly to consider
New Zealand <sup>17</sup>	National parliament	mixed member proportional representation	Representation Commission	The Commission comprises 4 ex-officio senior public officials and 2 political appointees, representing the Government and the Opposition. When determining Maori electoral districts, it also includes the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Maori Development and 2 political appointees of Maori descent, representing the Government and the Opposition	Senior judge or retired judge, plus 2 members appointed by the Legislative Assembly. The Commission considers population quotas. It must also take into account existing boundaries, community of interest, communications and topographical features, and, in the case of the Māori electorates, tribal affiliations. Māori electorates are electoral areas which exist in parallel with general electoral areas, to ensure Māori representation	Yes	New Zealand has an independent boundary commission which is responsible for setting national parliamentary boundaries, using criteria set out in statute. There is no role for politicians in approving or amending the decisions of the commission.
New Zealand <sup>18</sup>	Local / Regional authority	predominantly multi-member electoral areas	The Local Government Commission.	3 members appointed by the Minister for Local Government, one of whom must be familiar with Māori custom and practice and is appointed after consultation with the Minister of Māori Affairs.	Local Authorities have initial responsibility for reviewing their electoral arrangements, which they must do every 6 years. This may involve changes to the number of members and seats and ward / constituency boundaries. If their proposals are objected to or have wards which differ from parity by more than +/- 10%, the proposal is referred to the Commission.	Yes (when required)	The Commission decides upon proposals referred to it by local authorities. There is no involvement of politicians in approving or amending the Commission's decisions.
Australia <sup>19</sup>	National parliament	single-member electoral areas	Australian Electoral Commission / State Redistribution Committees / Augmented Electoral Commission	The Australian Electoral Commission appoints a Redistribution Committee for state or territory, which consists of ex-officio members, which draws up proposals. Objections / comments on the proposals are considered by an augmented Electoral Commission that comprises the original Redistribution Committee, plus the Chairperson of the Australian Electoral Commission and one other member of the Australian Electoral Commission.	Electoral reviews are held at state level, and are triggered by statutory criteria relating to the population of the state (changes to the number of MPs it is entitled to) electoral parity within the state, and the time since the previous review. The Commissions / Committees consider parity primarily, but also geographic and community factors	Yes	For national-level elections, Australia has a system by which electoral arrangements are reviewed by a combination of national and state level independent commissions. The timing and conduct of reviews are as stipulated in statute, and politicians have no role in the determination of electoral arrangements.

Name of Electoral Area	Level	Electoral System	Name of Commission or Equivalent Body	Membership	Criteria	Commission has final say on electoral arrangements?	Notes / Summary
South Australia (Australia) <sup>20</sup>	State Parliament	single-member electoral areas	Electoral Districts Boundary Commission	Supreme Court Judge, the Electoral Commissioner and the Surveyor General	The Commission begins redrawing electoral boundaries within 2 years of the previous state election. It considers electoral parity, as well as geographic and community criteria. There is an unusual "fairness criteria" designed to ensure that if a particular group attracts more than 50% of the vote, they will be elected in sufficient numbers to form a government	Yes	There is no involvement of politicians in the approving boundaries determined by the Electoral Districts Boundary Commission though there is an unusual political criterion in the boundary-making process.
Tasmania (Australia) <sup>21</sup>	State Parliament (Lower House)	multi-member electoral areas	N/a - as National Electoral areas	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a
Tasmania (Australia) <sup>22</sup>	State Parliament (Upper House)	single-member electoral area	Redistribution Committee / Redistribution Tribunal	Redistribution Tribunal consists of: Electoral Commissioner, the Surveyor-General and a representative of the Australian Statistician. The Redistribution Tribunal consists of the members of the Committee, plus the Chairman and third member of the Tasmanian Electoral Commission	Reviews take place every nine years and consider electoral parity and community / geographic considerations. The Commission makes initial proposals which are consulted upon. The Tribunal considers initial proposals and responses to them. It makes further proposals which may be open to Review and comment. It then makes a final determination.	Yes	The Final Determination is tabled in Parliament, but the Tribunal has the final say.
New South Wales (Australia) <sup>23</sup>	State Parliament	single-member electoral areas	Electoral District Commission	Supreme Court Judge (current or retired), the Electoral Commissioner and the Surveyor General	Electoral Parity (+/- 10%). Must also consider community interest and geographic factors	Yes	The Commission reports to the Governor, who publishes the new electoral districts. There is no role for politicians in setting the electoral boundaries
Queensland (Australia) <sup>24</sup>	State Parliament	single-member electoral areas	Queensland Redistribution Commission	A judge or former judge, the Electoral Commissioner and a further senior public official	The Commission considers electoral parity, as well as geographic and community criteria	Yes	There is no involvement of politicians in the approving the boundaries determined by the Queensland Redistribution Commission.
Western Australia (Australia) <sup>25</sup>	State Parliament (Lower House)	single-member electoral areas	Office of the Electoral Distribution Commissioners, also known as "Electoral Boundaries WA"	Supreme Court judge (chair), the Electoral Commissioner and the Government Statistician	It considers electoral parity (+/-10%) with an additional allowance for very large districts. Geographic and community factors are also considered. All electoral districts must be wholly within regions, which are reviewed at the same time	Yes	The new boundaries take effect at the next State General Election after publication. There is no political involvement in the process.
Western Australia (Australia) <sup>26</sup>	State Parliament (Upper House)	multi-member electoral areas	As Lower House	As Lower House	Reviewed at the same time as Lower House using similar criteria	Yes	As Lower House
Capital Territory (Australia) <sup>27</sup>	State Parliament	multi-member electoral areas	Redistribution Committee & Augmented Electoral Commission	Redistribution Committee consists of the ACT Electoral Commissioner, the ACT Planning and Land Authority, the Surveyor-General of the ACT and an appointed fourth member. The Augmented Electoral Commission consists of the members of the Redistribution Committee plus the Chairperson of the ACT Electoral Commission and another member of the Commission.	Redistribution Committee considers electoral parity (+/-10% immediately after election, aims for +/- 5% with forecast). Also considers geographic and community factors. The Augmented Electoral Commission considers responses to the Redistribution Committees proposals, and may make further proposals for consultation	Yes	The Augmented Electoral Commission makes the final decisions
Victoria (Australia) <sup>28</sup>	State Parliament (Lower House)	single-member electoral areas	Electoral Boundaries Commission	Chief Judge of the County Court (Chair), the Electoral Commissioner and the Surveyor General	It considers electoral parity, as well as geographic and community criteria	Yes	There is no involvement of politicians in the approving the boundaries determined by the Electoral Boundaries Commission.
Victoria (Australia) <sup>29</sup>	State Parliament (Upper House)	multi-member electoral areas	As Lower House	As Lower House	Reviewed at the same time as Lower House using similar criteria.	Yes	There is no involvement of politicians in the approving the boundaries determined by the Electoral Boundaries Commission.
Northern Territory (Australia) <sup>30</sup>	State Parliament	single-member electoral areas	Redistribution Committee / Augmented Redistribution Committee	Redistribution Committee: The Electoral Commissioner of Northern Territory, the Surveyor-General, the Auditor General. Augmented Redistribution Committee comprises the Redistribution Committee plus an appointed member who acts as chair.	The Redistribution Committee draws up proposals, and the Augmented Redistribution Committee considers objections and makes the final decision. They consider electoral parity (+/- 20% variance) as well as geographic and community criteria.	Yes	There is no involvement of politicians in the approving the boundaries determined by the committees
Netherlands <sup>31</sup>	National Parliament	multi-member electoral area	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	The Netherlands do not have electoral districts or constituencies. For parliamentary elections the country is one, single constituency. There is therefore no commission to review electoral boundaries.
Netherlands <sup>32</sup>	Provincial Assembly	multi-member electoral area	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	There are 12 provinces in the Netherlands. Each has a provincial parliament which is elected every 4 years in direct elections. As each province forms a single electoral area there are no constituencies / wards with electoral boundaries to be reviewed.
Netherlands <sup>33</sup>	Municipality	multi-member electoral area	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	There are 380 municipalities and 3 special municipalities within the Netherlands. As each municipality forms a single electoral area there are no constituencies / wards with electoral boundaries to be reviewed.

Name of Electoral Area	Level	Electoral System	Name of Commission or Equivalent Body	Membership	Criteria	Commission has final say on electoral arrangements?	Notes / Summary
Germany <sup>34</sup>	National Parliament	single-member electoral areas	Electoral Districts Commission	The Commission consists of the President of the Federal Statistic Office, a judge and five additional members, who are usually senior state officials	The Commission works to statutory criteria which primarily relate to the number of constituencies in each German Lander being proportional to its population, and electoral parity, with additional geographic considerations	No (with caveat)	The Electoral Districts Commission may propose multiple plans to Parliament. Parliament is not obliged to accept any of these unless the existing constituencies differ from the electoral quota by more than 25%
France <sup>35</sup>	National Parliament	single-member electoral areas	ad-hoc committee	The committee appointed in 2008 included three judges and members appointed by the French President, the President of the National Assembly. All of the members also had to be approved by Parliamentary committees	The Commission was a "one-off", created to reorganise constituencies between and within departments to reduce disparities in representation which had arisen or worsened since the previous reorganisation in 1986.	No	The Constitution Court had the final say as to whether the Committee's proposals were implemented
Spain <sup>36</sup>	National parliament	multi-member electoral areas	N/a	N/a	No requirement for a boundary commission, as electoral areas are based on historic provinces, and 2 autonomous cities.	N/a	N/a
Belgium <sup>37</sup>	National parliament	multi-member electoral areas	N/a	N/a	Members are directly elected from 11 electoral areas, which are based on the country's 10 provinces, plus the capital region. There is therefore no requirement for a boundary commission	N/a	N/a
Luxembourg <sup>38</sup>	National parliament	multi-member electoral areas	N/a	N/a	The country is divided into 4 electoral areas which elect 60 members. The areas each comprise a group of local authority areas. There is therefore no role for a boundary commission in setting electoral boundaries.	N/a	N/a
Portugal <sup>39</sup>	National parliament	multi-member electoral area	N/a	N/a	The Portuguese Parliament has 230 members, 226 of which are elected from 20 constituencies, which are comprised of the country's 18 Administrative Districts and 2 territories. 4 members represent electors abroad. As electoral areas correspond to boundary	N/a	N/a
Switzerland <sup>40</sup>	National parliament (Lower House)	multi-member electoral areas	N/a	N/a	The 200 members of the National Council are directly elected from local authority areas (Cantons). There is no requirement for a boundary commission	N/a	N/a
Switzerland <sup>41</sup>	National parliament (Upper House)	multi-member electoral areas	N/a	N/a	The 46 members of the Council of States are directly elected from the local authority areas (Cantons). There is no requirement for a boundary commission	N/a	N/a
Norway <sup>42</sup>	National parliament	multi-member electoral areas	N/a	N/a	169 members are elected from 19 electoral areas which correspond the local authority areas. No requirement for a boundary commission	N/a	N/a
Norway <sup>43</sup>	Local / regional authority	multi-member electoral areas	N/a	N/a	Each local authority or municipality forms a single electoral area from which members are directly elected. There is therefore no requirement for a boundary commission.	N/a	N/a
Finland <sup>44</sup>	National parliament	multi-member electoral areas	N/a	N/a	199 members are directly elected from electoral areas which correspond to the country's historical provinces (plus 1 from the Aland Islands). There is therefore no requirement for a boundary commission.	N/a	N/a
Sweden <sup>45</sup>	National parliament	multi-member electoral areas	N/a	N/a	310 members are elected to Parliament from 29 multi-member electoral areas with a further 39 added to make the overall result more proportional. These constituencies are usually co-terminous with counties (though some larger urban counties are divided). There is little requirement for a boundary commission	N/a	N/a

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