

**Bills Committee on
Legislative Council (Amendment) Bill 2012**

Electoral System in Japan

In response to a Member's request at the Bills Committee meeting held on 23 March 2012, this note provides some supplementary information in relation to the electoral system for the Diet of Japan.

Composition of the Legislature

2. The Diet of Japan is a bicameral legislature, comprising the Lower House (the House of Representatives) and the Upper House (the House of Councillors).

3. The Lower House consists of 480 members. Amongst them, 300 are elected from 300 single-member constituency under the first-past-the-post method, while 180 are elected from 11 electoral blocks under proportional representation system. The population for each single-member constituency ranges from around 200 000 to around 500 000, while the population for each electoral block range from around 3 980 000 to around 20 910 000.

4. The Upper House consists of 242 members. Amongst them, 146 are elected from 47 prefectural constituencies by single non-transferable vote. The population for each prefectural constituency ranges from around 590 000 to around 13 160 000. The remaining 96 are elected nationwide under proportional representation system.

Resignation of Members and Arrangements for Filling Vacancies

5. A member of the Lower House or a member of the Upper House can resign from office. Upon resignation, a member loses all rights as a member of the Diet.

6. If there is a vacancy in one of the 300 single-member constituencies of the Lower House, a by-election will be held. If a by-election is held as a result of the resignation of a member elected from one of the single-member constituencies, the resigning member will be restricted from standing in that by-election. He may, however, stand in any other by-elections, such as by-election after the ensuing by-election of the constituency, or by-elections of other constituencies.

7. If there is a vacancy in one of the multi-member electoral blocks of the Lower House, the vacancy will be filled by another member from the same political party of the vacating member. No by-election will be held to fill the vacancy.

Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau
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