

FACT SHEET

Nationality Requirement of Legislators in Selected Countries

1.1 The Panel on Constitutional Affairs, at its meeting on 20 March 2006, requested the Research and Library Services Division (RLSD) to provide a summary of nationality requirement of legislators in selected countries based upon the research papers previously issued by RLSD.¹ This fact sheet provides updated information on the nationality requirement of legislators in Singapore, New Zealand, Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan, France and the United States. Please see the following Table for details.

Table — Nationality requirement of legislators in selected countries

Country	Name of House	Nationality requirement of legislators
Singapore	Parliament of Singapore.	Yes, Singapore citizens.
New Zealand	House of Representatives.	Yes, New Zealand citizens.
Germany	Bundesrat (Federal Council).	Yes, German citizens.
	Bundestag (Federal Parliament).	Yes, German citizens.
The United Kingdom	House of Lords.	Yes, British, Commonwealth ⁽¹⁾ or Irish Republic citizens.
	House of Commons.	Yes, British, Commonwealth ⁽¹⁾ or Irish Republic citizens.
Japan	House of Councillors.	Yes, Japanese citizens.
	House of Representatives.	Yes, Japanese citizens.
France	Senate.	Yes, French citizens.
	National Assembly.	Yes, French citizens.
The United States	Senate.	Yes, the United States citizens for at least nine years.
	House of Representatives.	Yes, the United States citizens for at least seven years.

Note: (1) Under Schedule 7 of the British Nationality Act 1981, a "Commonwealth citizen" means (a) a British citizen; (b) a British Overseas Territories citizen (i.e. a person who has a connection with a former British colony who did not become a citizen of that country when it became independent and did not become British citizen); (c) a British subject (this generally applies to a person who was born before 1 January 1949 and who had a connection with either British India or the Republic of Ireland); or (d) a citizen of an independent Commonwealth country. In effect, there is no requirement for members of both Houses of Parliament to adopt British nationality. Currently, Lord Black of Crossharbour, a Canadian citizen, is a member of the House of Lords.

¹ The relevant research papers are listed as follows:

- (a) Systems of Government in Some Foreign Countries: Singapore (RP03/99-00);
- (b) Systems of Government in Some Foreign Countries: New Zealand (RP04/99-00);
- (c) Systems of Government in Some Foreign Countries: Germany (RP05/99-00);
- (d) Systems of Government in Some Foreign Countries: The United Kingdom (RP06/99-00);
- (e) Systems of Government in Some Foreign Countries: Japan (RP07/99-00);
- (f) Systems of Government in Some Foreign Countries: France (RP08/99-00);
- (g) Systems of Government in Some Foreign Countries: The United States (RP09/99-00);
- (h) Systems of Government in Some Foreign Countries: The Overall Comparison Table (RP10/99-00); and
- (i) The Selection of Head of State and Head of Government in Selected Places (IN11/03-04).

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17 May 2006
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