

Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee 2023 (Session 6)

Analysis of Congratulatory Motions in the Scottish Parliament

This paper summarises the results of an analysis on the number of motions with a congratulatory theme, “congratulatory motions”, from the beginning of Session 1 to Session 6 (until 31 March 2023).

Summary and Key Trends

- The percentage of congratulatory motions lodged appears to increase each Session from Session 1 to Session 5.
- From the available search data, Session 5 marks a peak in the percentage of congratulatory motions being lodged.
- Compared to Session 5, there appears to be a slightly smaller percentage of congratulatory motions being lodged in Session 6.
- Within each Session, the percentage of congratulatory motions tends to increase each Parliamentary year before stabilising or decreasing in the final Parliamentary year (noting that Session 5 does not wholly follow this trend).
- When comparing each Session with Session 6, the rate of change in Parliamentary motions being lodged appears to be slowing.

Notes on Screening Criteria and Motions Search

In undertaking this analysis, SPICe applied a conservative screening criterion for congratulatory motions. The criterion was that the motion began with or included the term “*That the Parliament congratulates*”. There is a possibility that with this screening criteria, local motions or other congratulatory motions (made using different terms) are not included in this spot check analysis. Fallen motions are also included in the outcomes of the search as the database of Parliamentary motions does not permit the exclusion of such motions from search returns.

Parliamentary years were selected using the dates recorded in the [SPICe Factsheet](#).

The Parliament does not hold data on motions in a format that permits the detailed exploration and examination of the contents of Parliamentary motions at scale. Therefore, SPICe is not able to provide detailed insights on the topic and intent (e.g., whether the motion referred to a local cause) of congratulatory motions.

Analyses

For each Session and each Parliamentary year from Session 1 to Session 6 (until 31 March 2023), the following data is reported:

- Total Motions
- Total Congratulatory Motions (CMs) (as per screening criterion)
- Percentage of Congratulatory Motions.

SPICe advises that percentages, rather than the numerical totals of motions, should be read for any comparisons. This is because the total number of motions in each Session and Parliamentary year varies, and the length of each Session and Parliamentary year also varies.

Percentage of congratulatory motions in each Parliamentary Session

Figure 1: Bar chart showing the percentage of congratulatory motions lodged in the Scottish Parliament for Session 1 to Session 6.

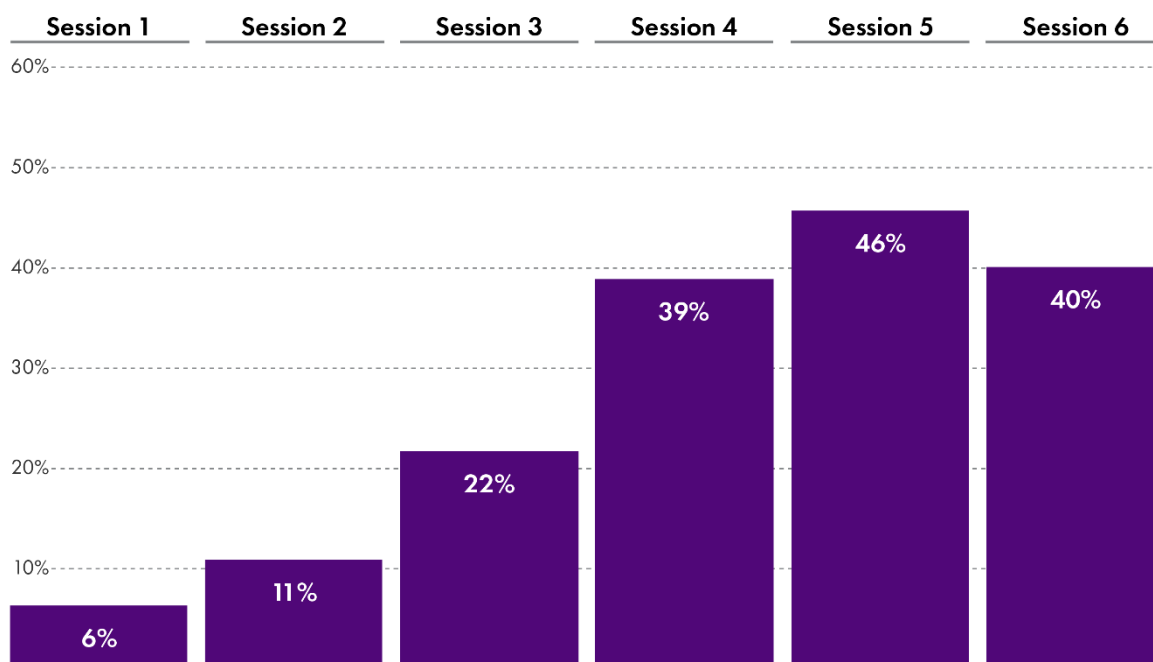


Table 1: Table showing the percentage of congratulatory motions, the number of congratulatory motions, and the total number of motions lodged in the Scottish Parliament from Session 1 to Session 6.

	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6
Percentage (%)	6.3%	10.9%	21.7%	38.9%	45.7%	40.1%
CMs	305	726	1991	6037	10,916	3305
Total Motions	4804	6661	9162	15,526	23,882	8244

Percentage increase in congratulatory motions between Sessions

Table 2: Table showing the percentage change in congratulatory motions between each Session of the Scottish Parliament (positive numbers indicate a percentage increase and negative numbers indicate a percentage decrease).

	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6
Session 1						
Session 2	73.0%					
Session 3	244.4%	99.1%				
Session 4	517.5%	256.9%	79.3%			
Session 5	625.4%	319.3%	110.6%	17.5%		
Session 6	536.5%	267.9%	84.8%	3.1%	-12.3%	

Percentage of congratulatory motions in each Parliamentary year and Session

Figure 2: Bar chart showing the percentage of congratulatory motions lodged in each Parliamentary year from Session 1 to Session 6.

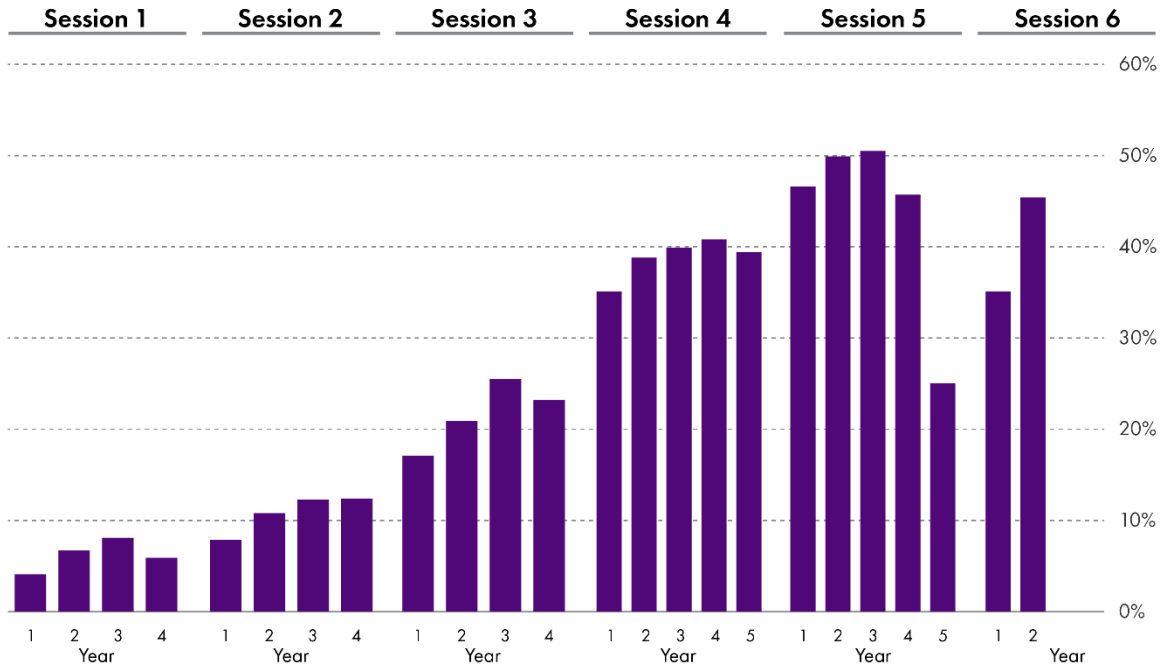


Table 3: Table showing the percentage of congratulatory motions, the number of congratulatory motions, and the total number of motions lodged in the Scottish Parliament for each Parliamentary year from Session 1 to Session 6.

		Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6
Year 1	%	4.1%	7.9%	17.1%	35.1%	46.6%	35.1%
	CMs	42	123	366	953	2524	1496
	Total Motions	1031	1564	2135	2716	5421	4258
Year 2	%	6.7%	10.8%	20.9%	38.8%	49.9%	45.4%
	CMs	86	187	532	1382	3233	1809
	Total Motions	1275	1726	2545	3563	6480	3986
Year 3	%	8.1%	12.3%	25.5%	39.9%	50.5%	-
	CMs	108	219	606	1341	2486	-
	Total Motions	1335	1781	2380	3359	4918	-
Year 4	%	5.9%	12.4%	23.2%	40.8%	45.7%	-
	CMs	69	197	487	1227	2001	-
	Total Motions	1163	1590	2102	3007	4378	-
Year 5	%	-	-	-	39.4%	25.0%	-
	CMs	-	-	-	1134	672	-
	Total Motions	-	-	-	2881	2685	-

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Note: Committee briefing papers are provided by SPICe for the use of Scottish Parliament committees and clerking staff. They provide focused information or respond to specific questions or areas of interest to committees and are not intended to offer comprehensive coverage of a subject area.

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