



Northern Ireland
Assembly

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Ray McCaffrey

Allocation of Ministers in the Northern Ireland Executive and Committee Chairpersons and deputy Chairpersons in the Northern Ireland Assembly 1998-2016

1 Introduction

This briefing note contains information on the selection of Ministerial posts by political parties since the first Executive formed under the terms of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. It also provides tables outlining the allocation of Chairs and Deputy Chairs in each mandate since the first Assembly and places these alongside the relevant Minister.

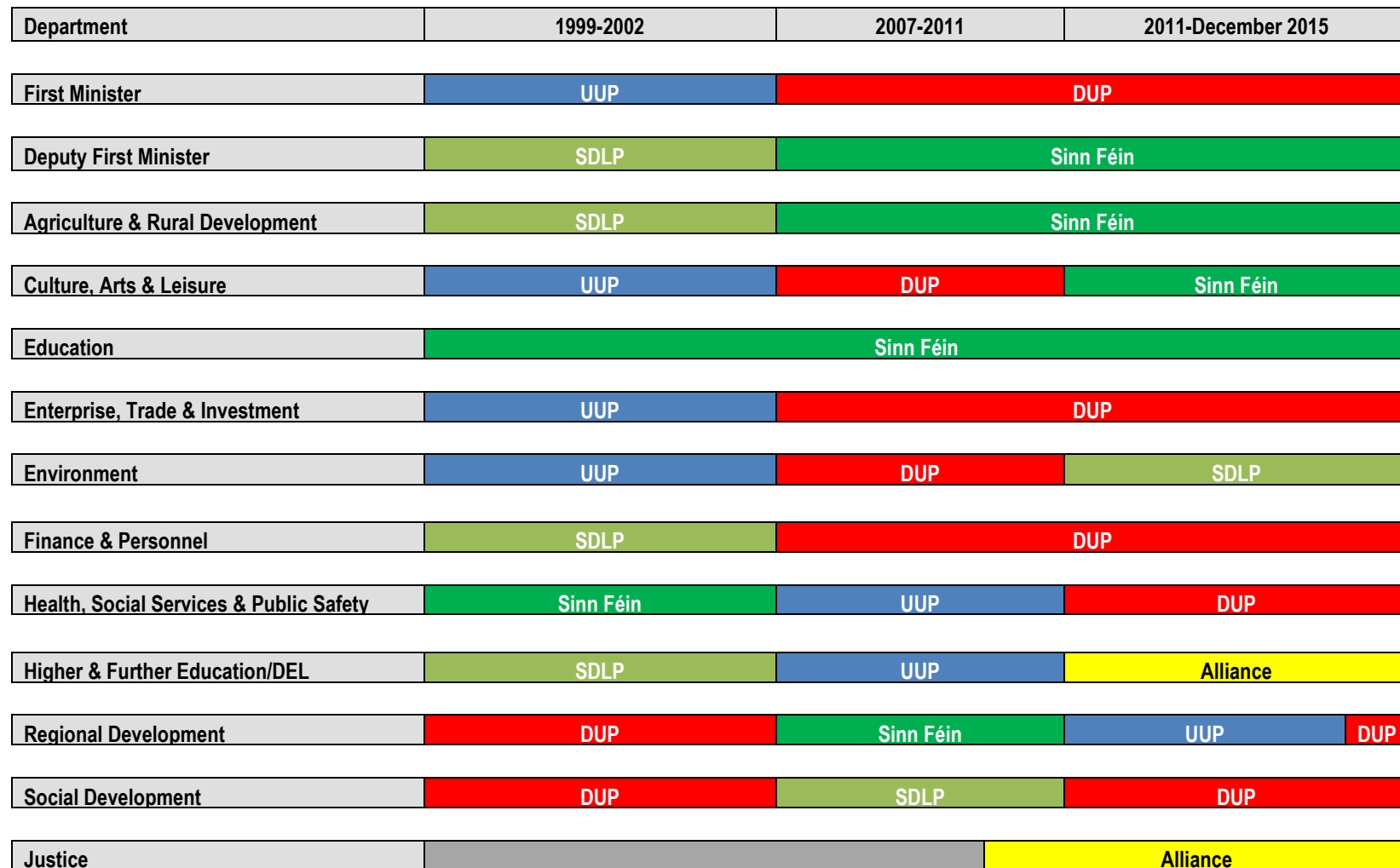
2 Ministerial allocation

Figure 1 (overleaf) shows, since Ministers were first nominated to the Executive, the party to which each Minister with responsibility for a Northern Ireland Executive department has belonged.

It should be noted that there was a period of suspension from October 2002 to May 2007, and, in September 2015, the Ulster Unionist Party resigned from the Executive (it had held the post of Regional Development). The DUP, as the next party in line under the D'Hondt process, filled this post. The timeline is accurate up to 17 February 2016.

Only one post, Minister for Education, has been held continuously by the same party, Sinn Féin, since 1999.

Figure 1: Ministerial posts since 1999



3 Selection of Ministerial posts by preference

The following tables present the Ministerial posts selected by each party in order of preference, beginning with the choices made following the 2011 Assembly election. Allocation of Ministerial posts is determined using the D'Hondt formula¹ in accordance with party strength.

The political institutions were suspended between 2002 and 2007.

Table 1: Selection of Ministerial posts in order of preference - 2011

2011		
1.	Finance & Personnel	DUP
2.	Education	Sinn Féin
3.	Enterprise, Trade & Investment	DUP
4.	Regional Development	UUP
5.	Agriculture & Rural Development	Sinn Féin
6.	Environment	SDLP
7.	Social Development	DUP
8.	Culture, Arts & Leisure	Sinn Féin
9.	Health, Social Services and Public Safety	DUP
10.	Employment & Learning	Alliance
N/A	Justice (appointed separately)	Alliance

Table 2: Selection of Ministerial posts in order of preference - 2007

2007		
1.	Finance & Personnel	DUP
2.	Education	Sinn Féin
3.	Enterprise, Trade & Investment	DUP
4.	Health, Social Services & Public Safety	UUP
5.	Social Development	SDLP
6.	Regional Development	Sinn Féin
7.	Environment	DUP
8.	Agriculture & Rural Development	Sinn Féin
9.	Culture, Arts & Leisure	DUP
10.	Employment & Learning	UUP
N/A	Justice (from April 2010 – appointed separately)	Alliance

¹ See section 18 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/47/section/18>

Table 3: Selection of Ministerial posts in order of preference – 1999

1999		
1.	Enterprise, Trade & Investment	UUP
2.	Finance & Personnel	SDLP
3.	Regional Development	DUP
4.	Education	Sinn Féin
5.	Environment	UUP
6.	Higher and Further Education, Training and Employment	SDLP
7.	Social Development	DUP
8.	Culture, Arts & Leisure	UUP
9.	Health, Social Service and Public Safety	Sinn Féin
10.	Agriculture and Rural Development	SDLP

4 Chairs and deputy Chairs of Assembly committees and corresponding Ministers

The following tables show, since the Assembly was established in 1998, the party from which the Chair, Deputy Chair and corresponding Minister for each statutory committee were drawn.

Under section 29 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, where possible, Committee Chairs should not come from the same party as the corresponding Minister.

In addition, the Chairs and Deputy Chairs of standing committees and ad hoc committees are listed.

2011-2015

Statutory Committees

Committee	Chair	Deputy Chair	Minister
Agriculture & Rural Development	DUP	SDLP	Sinn Féin
Culture, Arts & Leisure	DUP	DUP	Sinn Féin
Education	DUP	UUP	Sinn Féin
Employment & Learning	UUP	DUP	Alliance
Enterprise, Trade & Investment	SDLP	Sinn Féin	DUP
Environment	Alliance	DUP	SDLP
Finance & Personnel	Sinn Féin	SDLP	DUP
Health, Social Services & Public Safety	Sinn Féin	DUP	DUP
Justice	DUP	Sinn Féin	Alliance
Regional Development	DUP	Sinn Féin	UUP ²
Social Development	Sinn Féin	Sinn Féin	DUP
First Minister & deputy First Minister	UUP	Alliance	DUP/Sinn Féin

Standing Committees: 2011 - 2015

Committee	Chair	Deputy Chair
Assembly & Executive Review	DUP	Sinn Féin
Procedures	Sinn Féin	DUP
Public Accounts	Sinn Féin	SDLP
Standards & Privileges	DUP	Alliance
Audit	UUP	DUP
Business	The Speaker	N/A

² DUP took this position after resignation of UUP Minister from the Executive.

Ad hoc Committees: 2011-2015

Committee	Chair	Deputy Chair
Mental Capacity Bill ³	DUP	SDLP
Public Services Ombudsman Bill	DUP	Sinn Féin
Conformity with Equality Requirements, Welfare Reform Bill	Alliance	UUP
To consider a statutory rule laid by the Attorney General	Alliance	DUP

2007 - 2011

Statutory Committees

Committee	Chair	Deputy Chair	Minister
Agriculture & Rural Development	DUP	UUP	Sinn Féin
Culture, Arts & Leisure	Sinn Féin	SDLP	DUP
Education	DUP	DUP	Sinn Féin
Employment & Learning	SDLP	DUP	UUP
Enterprise, Trade & Investment	SDLP	Sinn Féin	DUP
Environment	Sinn Féin	SDLP	DUP
Finance & Personnel	Sinn Féin	UUP	DUP
Health, Social Services & Public Safety	DUP	Sinn Féin	UUP
Justice ⁴	DUP	Sinn Féin	Alliance
Regional Development	UUP	DUP	Sinn Féin
Social Development	DUP	Sinn Féin	SDLP
First Minister & deputy First Minister	UUP	Alliance	DUP/Sinn Féin

Standing Committees

Committee	Chair	Deputy Chair
Assembly & Executive Review	DUP	Sinn Féin
Procedures	DUP	DUP
Public Accounts	Sinn Féin	UUP
Standards & Privileges	SDLP	Sinn Féin
Audit	DUP	UUP
Business	The Speaker	N/A

³ This is an ad hoc joint committee.

⁴ The Committee for Justice was established in April 2010.

Ad hoc Committees

Committee	Chair	Deputy Chair
Private Security Industry (NI) Order 2009	DUP	Sinn Féin
Draft Criminal Damage (Compensation) (Amendment) (NI) Order 2008	DUP	SDLP
Local Postal Services	DUP	Sinn Féin
Draft Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2007	Alliance	DUP
Draft Criminal Justice Order 2007	SDLP	Sinn Féin

1998 - 2002

Statutory Committees

Committee	Chair	Deputy Chair	Minister
Agriculture & Rural Development	DUP	UUP	SDLP
Culture, Arts & Leisure	SDLP	Sinn Féin	UUP
Education	UUP	DUP	Sinn Féin
Employment & Learning ⁵	UUP	DUP	SDLP
Enterprise, Trade & Investment	Sinn Féin	Alliance	UUP
Environment	DUP	SDLP	UUP
Finance & Personnel	Sinn Féin	UUP	SDLP
Health, Social Services & Public Safety	SDLP	SDLP	Sinn Féin
Regional Development	SDLP	UUP	DUP
Social Development	UUP	Sinn Féin	DUP
Agriculture & Rural Development	DUP	UUP	SDLP
Culture, Arts & Leisure	SDLP	Sinn Féin	UUP

Standing Committees

Committee	Chair	Deputy Chair
Procedures	Sinn Féin	UUP
Committee of the Centre	DUP	DUP
Public Accounts	UUP	Sinn Féin
Standards & Privileges	SDLP	UUP
Audit	SDLP	PUP
Business	The Speaker	N/A

⁵ An Act to change the name of the Department of Higher and Further Education, Training and Employment to Department for Employment and Learning was given Royal Assent on 20 July 2001.

Ad hoc Committees

Committee	Chair	Deputy Chair
Flags (NI) Order 2000	UUAP	Alliance
Financial Investigations (NI) Order	SDLP	UUP
Life Sentences (NI) Order 2000	UUP	Alliance
Proceeds of Crime Bill	SDLP	UUP
Criminal Injuries Compensation	DUP	Alliance
Criminal Justice Reform	UUP	Alliance
Disqualification Legislation	UUP	Sinn Féin
Proposed Draft Access to Justice (NI) Order 2002	DUP	SDLP
Proposed Draft Firearms (NI) Order 2002	UUAP	SDLP

Key

DUP – Democratic Unionist Party

PUP – Progressive Unionist Party

SDLP – Social Democratic & Labour Party

UUP – Ulster Unionist Party

UUAP – United Unionist Assembly Party