

Parliamentary Bureau – Parliamentary Calendar

Recess dates – February 2026

Introduction

1. At its meeting on 16 September, the Bureau discussed whether to propose a recess in February 2026. The Bureau recognised the challenges of scheduling parliamentary business for the remainder of the session, given the current legislative programme. The Bureau agreed to revisit the matter at a future meeting.
2. Scottish parliamentary elections will be held in May 2026 and, subject to the agreement of the [Scottish Parliament \(Elections etc.\) \(Miscellaneous Amendments\) Order 2025](#), it is anticipated that the Parliament will go into a pre-election recess (during which no parliamentary business will take place) on 26 March 2026.
3. This would mean that the parliamentary year 2025-2026 would be around ten months. This equates to roughly four fewer parliamentary business weeks. As with previous election years (2003, 2007, 2011, 2016), there would be no Easter recess in 2026, as this would fall within the dissolution period¹.
4. Set out below is what has happened in previous sessions in relation to February recess—
 - In 2003 and 2007, the Bureau agreed not to have a February recess, due to the amount of business to be completed before dissolution;
 - In 2011, February recess took place from 14 February 2011 to 20 February 2011;
 - In 2016 February recess took place from 13 to 21 February 2016; and
 - In February 2021 the Bureau agreed not to have a recess as, due to Covid, instead of Parliament dissolving in March a recess period of 25 March to 4 May 2021 was agreed.
5. The Bureau will wish to consider which approach it would prefer to recommend that the Parliament follows for February recess in 2026.
6. Should the Bureau agree to recommend to the Parliament that a February recess takes place in 2026; the proposed dates below take account of sitting patterns in previous non-election years, and school holidays for 2026—
 - **February recess:** 14-22 February 2026 (inclusive). The majority of school mid-term breaks are planned to take place during the week beginning Monday 16 February. Members may wish to note that a number of schools, although not a majority, have holidays falling in week beginning Monday 9 February 2026.

¹ The Easter weekend falls on Friday 3 and Monday 6 April 2026.

Recommendation

7. The Bureau is invited to consider whether to recommend to the Parliament that February recess takes place in 2026.

Parliamentary Business Team
September 2025