

electoral administration bulletin

The
Electoral
Commission



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[Electoral Commission study of the accuracy and completeness of the December 2018 electoral registers](#)

The Electoral Commission has today [published the findings of its latest study](#) of the electoral registers in Great Britain.

The study examined the accuracy and completeness of the registers in Great Britain on 1 December 2018. While the proportion of people registered to vote remains stable, young people and private renters are still less likely to be correctly registered.

Our main findings

The results for Great Britain in December 2018 show that:

- Parliamentary registers were 85% complete and 89% accurate
- Local government registers were 83% complete and 89% accurate.

The findings lead to two main estimates: that between 8.3 and 9.4 million people in Great Britain who were eligible to be on the local government registers were not correctly registered; and that there were between 4.7 and 5.6 million inaccurate entries on the local government registers.

Private renters remain the least likely to have up to date register entries (58%) compared to people who own their houses outright (91%).

Registration levels are also low among young people aged 18-34, with only 71% correctly registered, compared to 93% of people aged 55 and over.

We have published detailed national estimates for the electoral registers in England, Scotland and Wales, as well as estimates for each English region.

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Electoral Commission study of the accuracy and completeness of the December 2018 electoral registers

Information on and a link to the Commission's report on the accuracy and completeness of the electoral registers in Great Britain, which was published today (Thursday 26 September).

Electoral Commission report on the ordering of candidates on ballot papers at Scottish Council elections

Information on and a link to the Commission's report on the ordering of candidates on ballot papers at Scottish Council elections, which was published on 24 September.

EA Bulletins are issued on a regular basis. They are one of our key channels for communicating with Returning Officers, Electoral Registration Officers and their staff. Past issues of Bulletins for England, Scotland and Wales are available [here](#). You can also [subscribe to the EA Bulletins](#).

Please [keep us informed](#) of any staff changes within your team. This will help us to keep our mailing lists up-to-date.

We are sending you this newsletter as it contains important information about the Electoral Commission's work which is relevant to you. The

The Electoral Commission has also assessed the [electoral register in Northern Ireland](#). Our research found the accuracy and completeness of the register in Northern Ireland on 1 December 2018 has fallen back to the levels recorded in 2012. The study also showed that young people and private renters continue to be less likely to be correctly registered.

Our recommendations

The Commission has renewed calls for modernisation of the electoral registration system in Great Britain to provide the best possible opportunity for ensuring that as many people as possible are correctly registered.

In July the Commission published [Feasibility studies](#) which explored different ways that public data could improve the electoral registration system and how reforms to the registration process could work in practice. The options explored in the studies could help address some of the specific challenges highlighted in the accuracy and completeness research.

For example:

- Regular access to reliable data from a wider range of public services about people who have recently updated their address details would allow EROs to make contact directly with them at their new address to encourage them to register to vote.
- Integrating electoral registration applications into other public service transactions could make it easier for individuals to keep their registration details up to date and accurate.
- Reforms such as using Department for Work and Pensions data to register young people automatically when they are allocated their National Insurance number, for example, could have a real positive impact on registration levels.

Electoral Commission report on the ordering of candidates on ballot papers at Scottish Council elections

The Electoral Commission has published [a report](#) on the ordering of candidates on ballot papers at Scottish council elections.

The Scottish Government asked the Electoral Commission to assess the impact on voters of changes to the ordering of candidates.

We carried out research with the public and talked to organisations which represent disabled people to understand the potential implications of the proposed changes for voters. We also talked to electoral administrators and political parties to understand how any changes may impact them.

We found that:

- In the testing we undertook, the order of the candidates had no impact on voters' ability to find and vote for their preferred

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candidates on the ballot paper

- Organisations representing disabled people were concerned that any changes would impact on a disabled person's ability to familiarise themselves with the order and layout of the ballot paper before they come to vote. This might impact on the accessibility of the poll for these voters
- While electoral administrators were confident that they could manage any processes resulting from differently ordered ballot papers, they wanted clearly prescribed rules for administering any change to the ballot paper to ensure transparency around the process
- Electoral administrators also raised concerns about the potential for voter confusion and increased costs resulting from any changes
- There was no clear consensus amongst political parties about the ordering of names on ballot papers

We have reported our findings to the Scottish Government to help inform their decision making.

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