

electoral administration bulletin

The
Electoral
Commission

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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).

May 2020 polls: publication of guidance

Information on the publication of updated guidance for the May 2020 polls.

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 newsletter forms part of the Electoral Commission's public task which has its basis in the Political Parties, Elections and



Issue 258 (England) – 26 September 2019

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.

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.

May 2020 polls: publication of guidance

We have now updated and published Parts A and B of our core guidance for [Returning Officers](#) ahead of the scheduled local government and Police and Crime Commissioner elections in May 2020. This includes guidance for both standalone Police and Crime Commissioner elections and for combined Police and Crime Commissioner and local government elections.

In addition, we have also re-published planning guidance for [Police Area Returning Officers](#) to support their preparations for the May 2020 polls.

We've also been working with the GLA to update our guidance for the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections in May 2020, and Parts A and B of this guidance for [Returning Officers](#) have also now been published.

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In all cases, the guidance hasn't changed significantly from previous years, with the updates principally being focussed around reflecting GDPR and the legislative changes removing the requirement for candidates to have their home addresses published on the ballot paper. The change log at the front of each guidance Part has been updated to reflect the amendments that have been made.

We will be publishing Parts C – F of our guidance for Returning Officers, as well as further guidance for PAROs and the GLRO, over the next month and we will update you in future Bulletins when these are available.

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