

electoral administration bulletin



Issue 308 (Scotland) – 25 May 2022

Report on electoral registration in Great Britain in 2021

We have today (Wednesday 25 May) published [a report on electoral registration in Great Britain in 2021](#). The report looks at how the 2021 canvass was run and considers the ongoing impact on the electoral registers of the changes to the annual canvass process introduced in 2020.

While we cannot yet draw conclusions on the impact of the new process on the accuracy and completeness of the registers, our analysis of available data suggests potential issues with the effectiveness of the reformed canvass in keeping pace with population movement:

- The data matching process and/or the lag between matching and canvassing means some households are being allocated to the 'wrong' route – nearly a fifth of responses from households allocated to Route 1 (where no change in household composition was expected) reported significant changes to electors' details.
- Necessary changes to electors' details may not be reflected on the registers – 2.4 million households, one third of those allocated to Route 2 (where a change in household composition was expected), did not respond to the canvass.
- The reduction in the frequency of communication with Route 1 households may be contributing to the under-registration of attainers – the decline in the number of registered attainers, which began following the introduction of IER in 2014, continued in 2021. The number of registered attainers dropped by 28.7% relative to 2020.

While we know that new registration applications are most readily driven by large scale electoral events, it is nevertheless important that the canvass and other year-round registration activity supports accurate and complete registers. This can help to reduce the large volumes of registration applications received immediately in advance of major polls, when Electoral Registration Officers' (EROs) staff capacity is already stretched.

The
Electoral
Commission

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Information on and a link to the Commission's report, which was published today (Wednesday 25 May).

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Reminder of how you can submit your feedback relating to the May 2022 elections.

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 Referendums Act 2000. We will manage your personal information and contact details in line with the General Data Protection Regulation and UK data protection legislation as outlined in our privacy notice (<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/privacy-notice>)

Our research studies into the accuracy and completeness of the registers are the definitive assessments of their overall quality. The next study, planned for the December 2022 registers, will allow us to fully assess the overall impact of the new canvass processes.

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, you may [unsubscribe](#) at any time.

Over the next year we will continue to support and challenge EROs, and work with you to ensure we all make full use of the data that is available. This should help to provide a better understanding of the impact of particular practices within the current framework and support us with identifying and sharing good practice.

We also continue to recommend that the electoral registration system in Great Britain should be further modernised, to provide the best possible opportunity for ensuring that as many people as possible are correctly registered. This should include better use of public data, for example from other government services, to make registration easier for voters, and a more joined-up electoral registration system to reduce duplicate registrations and encourage registration all year round.

May 2022 elections: electoral administration feedback

As set out in [recent Bulletins](#), we'd like to hear your views and experiences of administering the May 2022 elections. Your feedback is really important to us, and will inform our reporting on the polls and help us to improve how we support you in the future.

Thank you to all those who have already shared their thoughts with us. If you would still like to give us your feedback, you can do so by completing our [survey](#). The deadline for responses is Thursday 2 June.

If you have any questions about the survey, please contact researchsurvey@electoralcommission.org.uk.

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