

electoral administration bulletin



Issue 331 (Scotland) – 18 September 2023

Electoral Commission study of the accuracy and completeness of the December 2022 electoral registers

We have today (Monday 18 September) published the results of our latest accuracy and completeness research which measures the quality of the electoral registers. Thank you to those EROs who provided copies of their electoral registers to be used in the research.

The results of this study on the December 2022 registers finds that, in Great Britain, both accuracy and completeness are largely stable.

		2022	Change from 2018
Completeness	Great Britain	86%	+3
	England	86%	+3
	Scotland	81%	-2
	Wales	87%	+6
Accuracy	Great Britain	88%	-1
	England	88%	-1
	Scotland	88%	+2
	Wales	89%	0

However, across Scotland, as many as one million people are either not correctly registered at their current address or not registered at all. This means that the electoral registration system is reliant on people registering before an election, which increases both the burden on Electoral Registration Officers as well as the risk that people will remain unregistered and unable to vote.

The research found that young people, private renters and those who have recently moved house continue to be less likely to be correctly registered to vote.

The annual canvass process was reformed in 2019 by the Scottish, UK and Welsh governments. While there is no evidence of any significant negative impact on the quality of the registers, there has also been no significant improvement.

Contents

Electoral Commission study of the accuracy and completeness of the December 2022 electoral registers

Information on and a link to the Commission’s report on the accuracy and completeness of the electoral registers, which was published today (18 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 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>)

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

Our findings show that the current electoral registration system does not work well for voters or those who run elections, and that urgent reforms are needed so that public data can be used to facilitate voter registration, particularly for those less likely to be correctly registered.

Our report sets out recommendations for the Scottish and UK governments to enable the introduction of a more automated form of voter registration, built on better use of existing public data. It also sets out a range of options for how specific data sources could be used to improve the accuracy and completeness of the electoral registers.

The full report and recommendations can be found on our [website](#).

.....
The Electoral Commission
City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh,
EH1 1YJ
Tel: 0333 103 1928

infoscotland@electoralcommission.org.uk

www.electoralcommission.org.uk

© The Electoral Commission 2023