

Agenda – Llywydd's Committee

Meeting Venue:	For further information contact:
Hybrid – Committee room 3 Senedd and video conference via Zoom	Meriel Singleton Committee Clerk
Meeting date: 7 November 2023	0300 200 6565
Meeting time: 09.00	SeneddLIC@senedd.wales

- 1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest**
- 2 Scrutiny of the Electoral Commission financial estimates 2024/25**
(9.00 – 10.30) (Pages 1 – 79)
Dame Elan Closs Stephens CBE – Electoral Commissioner, Wales

Shaun McNally CBE – Chief Executive, Electoral Commission

David Moran – Director, Finance and Corporate Services, Electoral
Commission

Rhydian Thomas – Head of Electoral Commission, Wales, Electoral
Commission
- 3 Motion under Standing Order 17.42(vi) to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting**
- 4 Scrutiny of the Electoral Commission financial estimates 2024/25:
Consideration of evidence**
(10.30 – 11.00)



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David Rees MS
Chair, Llywydd's Committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

28 September 2023

Dear Chair,

I am pleased to enclose the Electoral Commission's Annual Estimate for the 2024/25 financial year in relation to our devolved Welsh activities. Our estimate is underpinned by our five year Corporate Plan for the period 2022/23 to 2026/27 [[English](#) and [Welsh](#)]. This year's estimate is £1.658m.

As you would expect, the estimate and accompanying information sets out how we plan to manage our work effectively in Wales during 2024/25. The Corporate Plan sets out five strategic objectives for the period, which seek to maintain the high standards and public trust in the electoral system, as well as to address pressures and areas for development to further enhance the strength of democracy in Wales and the wider UK. Though the forthcoming year does not feature devolved elections, the importance of our work across our stakeholder groups continues, as the following information will illustrate.

The increase on the 2023/24 estimate is primarily driven by necessary investments to improve technology, including enhancements to cyber security, and to address issues of capacity and capability across a number of key services in the Commission. Further detail on key investment drives is provided below.

Our proposed programme of work in 2024-25

Enabling voter confidence and engagement

We will continue to work across a number of areas to promote public confidence in Wales democracy. We are continually developing and extending our provision of accurate information to voters through our website and other channels, to ensure that it provides accessible information to support them to participate in the democratic process. Between elections we work to develop new advertising based on the latest insights to drive up rates of electoral registration.

Our programme of democratic education and engagement work continues to expand the range of resources available to young people and educators across Wales. This work forms an increasingly important part of our ongoing work to increase youth engagement in democracy, raising understanding of the democratic process with the aim of effecting a steady, profound change to engagement levels.

In the next year we will build on this work, establishing a long-term youth voice programme with our new partner, Children in Wales. They will be gathering insights from a diverse group of young people from across Wales to ensure our resources meet the needs of young people in Wales. We will also continue to work with the Democracy Box to co-create content with young people. We will further develop our offer for teachers, providing training and guidance on how to effectively deliver democratic education. We will also continue to work in partnership with civil society organisations in Wales to support other under-registered groups to engage in democracy.

Informing the development of reforms

We are currently supporting the Welsh Government's electoral reform agenda, providing expert advice and constructive challenge to ensure that proposals can deliver successfully for voters, administrators and campaigners. This will continue as the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Bill, the Elections and Elected Bodies Bill and legislation to introduce gender quotas progress through the Senedd legislative process and new electoral legislation arises.

We will provide expert opinion on the three bills, taking into account the views of the electoral community across Wales and ensuring that any proposed changes are evidence-based, workable and deliver for voters, campaigners and electoral administrators. In addition, we will provide advice on the draft Conduct Order for the 2026 Senedd election and prepare new Codes of Practice for non-party campaigners, parties and candidates. We will also develop new guidance resources for electoral administrators and campaigners to support them to comply with any new requirements arising from the legislation.

Our work in this area is supported by the significant evidence base we develop through our programme of work on electoral modernisation, including the research we continue to conduct with the public and electoral administrators. Our ongoing research programme ensures our advice is based on an up-to-date understanding of public attitudes, to underpin the development of policy proposals for further modernisation.

Supporting the delivery of well-run elections

We continue to support Returning Officers and Electoral Registration Officers to deliver high-quality services to voters. This includes the provision of advice and guidance, regular engagement meetings with ROs and EROs and by monitoring their performance against our published standards. We will assist and support the introduction of a statutory Electoral Management Board in Wales and use this new forum to help Returning Officers and Electoral Registration Officers to deliver a consistent, high-quality service for voters and those standing for election.

We will continue to use our other established networks, including the Senedd Parties Panel, to understand how we can best support political parties and candidates to help them deal with the challenges they face. We will also work closely with electoral administrators through the Wales Electoral Practitioners Working Group and Association of Electoral Administrators, Wales to ensure their views and needs are fully reflected in

our work. This includes managing the increasing complexities of the divergence between the rules for reserved and devolved elections.

We will also look at the suggestion of working with relevant Members to establish a Cross-Party Group on Democracy within the Senedd, providing a forum for Members and stakeholders to discuss issues relating to Welsh democracy.

Engaging regulatory and wider stakeholders

We will continue to build on our work in supporting the regulated community in Wales including developing bespoke advice and guidance and resources so that parties and campaigners can easily understand the political finance laws, regardless of their size or experience. We have expanded the range of support available and continue to provide transparency for the public on political finance in Wales by publishing the details of donations, loans and annual party accounts. We monitor compliance with political finance law and will take proportionate enforcement action where necessary.

Finally, we will continue to work with other statutory bodies and our established networks to understand how we can best support our wider stakeholders and the challenges they face. We will also continue to inform MSs about our work, including the provision of drop-in sessions in the Senedd, briefings on areas of work which MSs have expressed an interest in and tailored seminars.

Value for money

The Commission is committed to ensuring efficient and effective use of funding. To achieve this, we focus on several key areas of work, including procurement, contract management, performance management, and effective prioritisation.

Proposed budgets for the Commission as previously set out in the Corporate Plan have been updated to reflect inflationary pressures affecting the UK. The Commission's ability to demonstrate value for money hinges on its ability to optimise procurement practices, manage contracts efficiently, manage risks, monitor and improve performance, and make informed decisions about resource allocation through effective prioritisation.

The Commission will seek to ensure that we are not only fulfilling our objectives but also doing so in a cost-effective and efficient manner, ultimately driving gains in public value.

With regard to the proposed bid for funding, the same funding formula has been applied as that in the previous year, to support the equitable division of costs between the three parliaments. The Commission's core costs for shared activity – such as the ongoing support to voters, administrators and the regulated community, as well as the corporate costs necessary for the operation of the Commission – are allocated on a formula based on population estimates. The allocation to Wales is typically 8%. Where there is an additional demand on Commission functions to meet needs specific to Welsh stakeholders, or where the activity is solely attributable to Welsh devolved functions, these are allocated between 5% and 100%.

Despite high inflation for the past 18 months, including a level of 6.8% CPI (Consumer Price Index) in July 2023, we will continue to seek to mitigate inflation wherever possible in our non-pay commercial costs.

Key investment drivers

We can confirm that the Senedd Cymru's proposed contribution will be an increase of £244,000 compared with the funding for period 2023/24. This is largely made up from investment in the following areas:

Cyber security

The discovery of a sophisticated cyber-attack on the Commission has underlined the need to keep pace with the latest cyber security technology. The UK's democratic process and its institutions remain a target for hostile actors online. Cyber security enhancements continue into 2024/25, and form a significant part of the increased investment we are seeking. The proportion of these costs in relation to the Wales budget are £73,000.

Delivering value for money and building a skilled and diverse workforce

To deliver value for money we will be investing in procurement staffing to drive improved standards in commercial transactions and develop our internal financial budgeting and monitoring functions. This includes expanding our internal audit services and absorbing increased fees from our external auditors, the National Audit Office, following increased testing during the 2022/23 closure of accounts.

We will also be investing in our human resources functions to improve data collection and monitoring on equality, diversity and inclusion to inform our recruitment and staff retention processes. We will also strengthen the learning and development opportunities for our workforce.

The costs related to these investments, as attributable to Wales, are £65,000.

Delivering electoral reform

Given the introduction of the electoral reform bills in Wales, we are investing in increased capacity across our Wales, policy, legal, research and regulation functions. This will ensure we can provide expert advice to Government, Parliament, and the regulated community to manage the impact of increasing divergence between the rules for Wales devolved elections and reserved elections. The total costs attributable to Wales for this investment are £51,000.

Pay award

Assumptions for the pay award in 2024/25 and inflation reflected in contracts are at £74,000, based on the assumption of a 5% increase being agreed.

The above is offset in part by changes in total value of assets charged to the 2024/25 year of a reduction of £19,000.

As in the previous year, the Welsh Government can request advice and assistance from the Commission on specific electoral related matters. This would be in addition to the funding provided by the Senedd.

Measuring performance

We identified improvements to benefit the public, parties and campaigners, electoral administrators and parliaments throughout our Corporate Plan, and we aim to measure how well we realise these improvements using a range of indicators/measures. We will use a mix of quantitative and qualitative measures, to drive continuous improvements in our procedures and skills. By default, performance and system data will be collected at the level of the four parts of the UK: Wales, England, Scotland and Northern Ireland – in support of the accountability for our work.

Our corporate performance indicators sit alongside a group which show the health of the electoral systems as a whole. These enable a 'health check' to help guide actions by ourselves and others. Working with these others – including elected members, government, campaigners, and parties, through to electoral administrators and the police, we make key contributions that enable a sound democratic system.

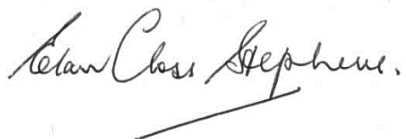
Please refer to Annex A for details of indicators that were proposed in 2022/23 (the latest end of year figures available), and the values achieved at the end of the year. These values show we met the majority of the targets set at the beginning of the year, with details of reasons for the four corporate performance indicators that missed their targets. Annex B shows our proposal for ways to measure our performance in 2024/25.

I hope you agree that our programme of work for 2024-25 is appropriate to address the size and nature of the challenges at hand and will ultimately result in greater public confidence in our electoral system. We will measure the impact of our planned activities throughout 2024-25 to ensure they address the challenges outlined above.

A new UK Parliamentary Corporate Plan is expected to be in place following the general election that will take place before January 2025, and this plan will be considered as is appropriate as we work towards the development of the Welsh Corporate Plan which will be brought to the Llywydd's Committee for consideration after the 2026 Senedd elections.

We commend the enclosed estimate for the financial year 2024/25 to the Committee and look forward to discussing it with you when appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Dame Elan Closs Stephens in black ink.

Dame Elan Closs Stephens CBE
Electoral Commissioner - Wales

Handwritten signature of Shaun McNally in black ink.

Shaun McNally CBE
Chief Executive and Accounting Officer,
Electoral Commission

Annex A: Measuring our 2022/23 performance

Our corporate performance indicators

Number	Definition	Corporate performance target	End of 2022/23 values
Strategic objective 1: Accessible registration and voting			
1	Public awareness campaign influence on voter registration: Additions to electoral registers during our voter registration campaigns meet or exceed our targets (May 2022 polls)	Wales: 36,716 (379,810 - UK)	Wales: 22,678 ¹ (280,498 – UK)
2	Engagement with local authorities and partners who disseminate voter information to specific target groups, including those newly enfranchised groups	To be developed in 2022/23 (year 1)	18 roll-call editions to our local authority communications stakeholders
3	Engagement with partners and young people to develop democratic education resources for young people in-line with our Learning Strategy	To be developed in 2022/23	Engagement made and resources developed
Strategic objective 2: Transparent political campaigning and compliant political finance			
4	Timely publication of donation and loan reports received by statutory deadline	100%	100%
5	Timely publication of statements of accounts	100%	5.02% ²
6	Timely progression and conclusion of investigations	90%	91.18%

¹ There are a number of factors that could have negatively impacted this PI, some of which were external and some relate to the campaign including target setting itself. Notably, there was a reduction in campaign spend ahead of these elections and in the early awareness-raising phase. Since the polls, we have reviewed all data to ensure ongoing efficacy of our advertising, and our target-setting processes, to take these insights into account in planning future campaigns.

² There are different deadlines by which parties with income and expenditure under and over £250,000 need to submit their annual statement of accounts to the Commission. Owing to internal resource constraints, a decision was taken in 2022 to combine publication of the two tranches. This meant postponing the publication of a large number of statements until after the reporting deadline for the larger parties. 100% of statements were published on the agreed publication date.

Number	Definition	Corporate performance target	End of 2022/23 values
7	Timely notification / issuance of decisions on sanctions (final notices) following representations period	90%	100%
8	Timely notification of outcome of party and non-party campaigner registration applications (for new and change of details)	90%	81.91%
9	Timely responses to requests for regulatory advice on financial reporting	90%	99.17%
10	Effective regulatory guidance products / resources delivered to support compliance with the law	Already collecting data, to be baselined in 2021/22	59
11	Guidance product related queries that help identify existing and/or new areas of the guidance that provide additional clarity with the law	Already collecting data, to be baselined in 2021/22	100%
Strategic objective 3: Resilient local electoral services			
12	Accurate and timely advice to Returning Officers, Electoral Registration Officers and candidates & agents (Great Britain)	100%	99.35%
13	Publication of accurate and timely guidance products for electoral administrators	100%	100%
Strategic objective 4: Fair and effective electoral law			
14	Timely publication of election / referendum reports	100%	100%
15	Timely publication of pilots evaluation report	100%	100% (1 publication - The analysis of the Welsh early voting pilots)
16	Timely responses to policy proposals and legislative consultations	100%	100%
17	Timely responses to elected stakeholder (MS and local government) correspondence	100%	97.83%
Strategic objective 5: A modern and sustainable electoral system			
18	Engagement with our website by the public, campaigners and parties, electoral administrators and the media	To be developed in 2022/23 (year 1)	N/A (website still being developed)

Number	Definition	Corporate performance target	End of 2022/23 values
19	Frequency of engagement with other regulatory bodies	To be developed in 2022/23 (year 1)	N/A (Measurement method still being developed)
20	Meeting requirements of existing and emerging or new environmental legislation	To be developed in 2022/23 (year 1)	N/A (To be developed when the Welsh Government's target is published)
Strategic objective 6: We demonstrate independence and integrity			
21	Timely responses to both English and Welsh language social media enquiries	100% within one working day	100%
22	Timely responses to both English and Welsh language public enquiries via calls, letters and emails	100%	99.69%
23	Timely responses to both English and Welsh language valid Subject Access Requests	100%	100%
24	Timely responses to both English and Welsh language valid Freedom of Information requests	90%	97.7%
Strategic objective 7: We are a skilled organisation where diversity is valued			
25	Maintained staff wellbeing score in staff survey	77%	77%
26	Maintained staff engagement score in staff survey	67%	66%
27	Maintained completeness of workforce diversity information	85%	90.86%
28	Maintained compliance with the Welsh Language Standards set by the Welsh Language Commissioner	100%	100%
Strategic objective 8: We are a learning organisation where improvement is continuous and resources are used effectively			
29	Public value framework: Cost of delivering our services per tax payer per year stays within an agreed baseline	80 pence	39pence

Number	Definition	Corporate performance target	End of 2022/23 values
30	Timely implementation of internal audit recommendations agreed by the Risk and Audit Committee	90%	76.67% ³
31	Qualification of our financial statements in the Annual Report and Accounts	Unqualified audit opinion	No
32	Quality management: percentage of processes documented and reviewed for continuous improvement	To be developed in 2022/23 (year 1)	N/A (Development discontinued)
33	Timely implementation of external audit recommendations agreed by the Executive Team	100%	75% ⁴
34	Prompt payment of undisputed and valid invoices	100%	100%
35	Reduced environmental impact of energy consumption	To be developed in 2022/23 (year 1)	N/A (To be developed when the Welsh Government's target is published)

Indicators for the health of the electoral systems

Ref	Definition	System target	End of 2022/23 values
1	Confidence in voting	95%	91%
2	Confidence in registering to vote	95%	89%
3	Votes rejected and not included in the count for elections	As close to 0% as possible	1.27%
4	Satisfaction with the process of voting	85%	79%
5	Satisfaction with the system of registering to vote	85%	79%

³Seven out of 30 internal audit recommendations were not implemented on time mainly due to staff capacity and availability.

⁴ One out of four external audit recommendations were not implemented on time. The outstanding audit recommendation relates to considering the scope for sharing experiences and learning from counterparts in other countries. A Four Countries conference is currently being planned. We will take any insights from this to apply to our work where relevant. Given this an annual PI, it will not change until updated data is available from March 2024.

Ref	Definition	System target	End of 2022/23 values
6	Perception that process of voting is easy	95%	82%
7	Reduced barriers to voting by groups that are traditionally under-registered including newly enfranchised groups	To be developed in 2022/23 (year 1)	N/A (Development discontinued)
8	Reduced barriers to registration by groups that are traditionally under-registered including newly enfranchised groups	To be developed in 2022/23 (year 1)	N/A (Development discontinued)
9	Perception that appropriate action will be taken by the authorities if a political party or a campaigner is caught breaking the law on campaign funding	75%	30%
10	Agreement or perception that the spending and funding of political parties, candidates and other campaigning organisations is open and transparent	75%	13%
11	Number of cases of alleged electoral fraud relating to political finance offences, reported to UK police forces each calendar year (including number of cases that result in conviction or caution)	To be developed in 2022/23 (years 1)	N/A (Development discontinued)
12	Level of compliance by individuals and entities we regulate with deadlines set by legislation	100%	98.29%
13	Confidence in the trustworthiness of campaigning	To be developed in 2022/23 (year 1)	N/A (Development discontinued)
14	Confidence that elections are well run	80%	73%
15	Perception that voting in general is safe from fraud and abuse	90%	81%
16	Levels of accuracy of the electoral registers	95%	86%
17	Levels of completeness of the electoral registers	95%	83%
18	Number of formal Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer performance assessments determining standards have not been met	0	0
19	Number of pieces of electoral legislation not in place six months before required to be implemented	0	5

Ref	Definition	System target	End of 2022/23 values
20	Prompt responses by relevant governments to our election, referendum and other policy recommendation reports, including pilot evaluations.	100%	0

Annex B: Measuring our 2024/25 performance

Our corporate performance indicators

Number	Definition	Corporate performance target
Strategic objective 1: Accessible registration and voting		
1	Public awareness campaign influence on voter registration: Additions to electoral registers during our voter registration campaigns meet or exceed our targets	Target will be set by end of January 2024
2	Engagement with local authorities and partners who disseminate voter information to specific target groups, including those newly enfranchised groups	N/A (number of engagements will be reported annually)
3	Engagement with partners and young people to deliver democratic education resources for young people in-line with our Learning Strategy	To be developed in 2023/24
Strategic objective 2: Transparent political campaigning and compliant political finance		
4	Timely publication of donation and loan reports received by statutory deadline	100%
5	Timely publication of statements of accounts	100%
6	Timely final decisions on cases being investigated, and notification of outcome.	90%
7	Timely notification / issuance of decisions on sanctions (final notices) following representations period	90%
8	Timely notification of outcome of party and non-party campaigner registration applications (for new and change of details)	90%
9	Timely responses to requests for regulatory advice on financial reporting	90%
10	Effective regulatory guidance products / resources delivered to support compliance with the law	Depends on guidance required for elections in 2024/25

Number	Definition	Corporate performance target
11	Guidance product related queries that help identify existing and/or new areas of the guidance that provide additional clarity with the law	100%
Strategic objective 3: Resilient local electoral services		
12	Accurate and timely advice to Returning Officers, Electoral Registration Officers and candidates & agents (Great Britain)	100%
13	Publication of accurate and timely guidance products for electoral administrators	100%
Strategic objective 4: Fair and effective electoral law		
14	Timely publication of election / referendum reports	100%
15	Timely publication of pilots evaluation report	100%
16	Timely responses to policy proposals and legislative consultations	100%
Strategic objective 5: A modern and sustainable electoral system		
17	Meeting requirements of existing and emerging or new environmental legislation	To be developed when Government's targets are published
Strategic objective 6: We demonstrate independence and integrity		
18	Timely responses to elected stakeholder (MS and local government) correspondence	100%
19	Timely responses to both English and Welsh language social media enquiries	100% within one working day
20	Timely responses to both English and Welsh language public enquiries via calls, letters and emails	100%
21	Timely responses to both English and Welsh language valid Subject Access Requests	100%
22	Timely responses to both English and Welsh language valid Freedom of Information requests	90%
Strategic objective 7: We are a skilled organisation where diversity is valued		
23	Maintained staff wellbeing score in staff survey	77%
24	Maintained staff engagement score in staff survey	67%

25	Maintained completeness of workforce diversity information	85%
26	Maintained compliance with the Welsh Language Standards set by the Welsh Language Commissioner	100%
Strategic objective 8: We are a learning organisation where improvement is continuous, and resources are used effectively		
27	Public value framework: Cost of delivering our services per taxpayer per year stays within an agreed baseline	80 pence
28	Timely implementation of internal audit recommendations agreed by the Risk and Audit Committee	90%
29	Qualification of our financial statements in the Annual Report and Accounts	No (Unqualified audit opinion)
30	Timely implementation of external audit recommendations agreed by the Executive Team	100%
31	Prompt payment of undisputed and valid invoices	100%
32	Reduced environmental impact of energy consumption	To be developed when Government's targets are published

Indicators for the health of the electoral systems

Number	Definition	System target
1	Confidence in voting	95%
2	Confidence in registering to vote	95%
3	Votes rejected and not included in the count for elections	As close to 0% as possible
4	Satisfaction with the process of voting	85%
5	Satisfaction with the system of registering to vote	85%
6	Perception that process of voting is easy	95%
7	Perception that appropriate action will be taken by the authorities if a political party or a campaigner is caught breaking the law on campaign funding	75%
8	Agreement or perception that the spending and funding of political parties, candidates and other campaigning organisations is open and transparent	75%

Number	Definition	System target
9	Number of cases of alleged electoral fraud relating to political finance offences, reported to UK police forces each calendar year (including number of cases that result in conviction or caution)	N/A (number of cases will be reported annually)
10	Level of compliance by individuals and entities we regulate with deadlines set by legislation	100%
11	Confidence in the trustworthiness of campaigning	N/A
12	Confidence that elections are well run	80%
13	Perception that voting in general is safe from fraud and abuse	90%
14	Levels of accuracy of the electoral registers	95%
15	Levels of completeness of the electoral registers	95%
16	Number of formal Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer performance assessments determining standards have not been met	0
17	Number of pieces of electoral legislation not in place six months before required to be implemented	0
18	Prompt responses by relevant governments to our election, referendum and other policy recommendation reports, including pilot evaluations.	100%

Senedd Costs	2023-24 £000s	2024-25 £000s	Variance £000s	Variance %	Commentary
Direct Costs (pay and non-pay)					
<p style="text-align: center;">Legislation (Electoral reform programme)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">EAG</p>	0	44	44	-100%	<p>This represents the resources that will be needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to manage the coordination of new legislation being reviewed and feed back to ensure workable legislation for electoral administrators, voters and political parties and campaigners - to develop, coordinate, and manage detailed implementation and delivery plans that the EC will have to do as a result of electoral reform in Wales. - to work with Welsh Government and key stakeholders to identify and monitor project delivery risks and issues.
<p style="text-align: center;">Wales</p>	366	365	-1	0%	<p>This represents the Committee's share of the costs of supporting the development of forthcoming legislation, both primary and secondary, in relation to electoral and Senedd reform including providing expert opinion on the three bills, taking into account the views of the electoral community across Wales. We will also support the development of online guidance and resources for candidates and agents, Returning Officers/Electoral Registration Officers and electoral administrators; respond to queries for advice and guidance received by phone and email; use our performance standards in our engagement with EROs in Wales to support and challenge them on their delivery of registration activity including the annual canvass in 2024 and local by-elections elections; work closely with the electoral community in Wales through the various stakeholder groups we manage or sit on, for example the Senedd Parties Panel and the Wales Electoral Coordination Board; work closely with the Welsh Government to provide advice and expert opinion on the draft Conduct Order for the Senedd elections in 2026 and any further electoral modernisation reforms that are developed; support the regulated community in Wales to meet their statutory requirements; prepare a Code of Practice for non-party campaigners; prepare new Codes of Practice on election spending for parties and candidates ahead of the Senedd elections in 2026.</p> <p>We will also continue to fulfil our statutory responsibility by meeting the Welsh Language Standards set by the Welsh Language Commissioner and will lead and support the wider Commission to ensure that our commitments to the Welsh Language are upheld. As part of this we will manage the translation process of all relevant material into Welsh.</p> <p>We will also support the development and delivery of public awareness information, working with partner organisations supporting under-registered groups in Wales to promote voter registration; we will continue to develop our democratic education resources for teachers and learners in Wales, working with schools, youth organisations and other key partners to promote them; and we will gather input from young people via our youth voice network to ensure our education resources effectively meet their needs. We will also lead on the accountability arrangements to the Senedd and Llywydd's Committee ensuring all information is provided and statutory deadlines are met, keeping key partners in the Senedd and Welsh Government involved at each step.</p>

	Support and Improvement	18	18	0	-2%	This represents the Committee's share of the costs associated with supporting the monitoring and support of EROs and ROs in the delivery of their statutory electoral services. It also includes keeping the Performance standards for EROs and ROs under review to ensure that relevant legislative changes are reflected in the performance standards frameworks.
	Guidance	45	45	0	-1%	This represents the Committee's share of the costs associated with providing advice in response to queries from Returning Officers/Electoral Registration Officers and electoral administrators throughout the year. It also includes the cost of supporting the programme of electoral reform in Wales and updating our suite of core guidance and resources for electoral administrators and candidates and agents as needed in light of feedback and/or legislative changes.
		429	428	-1	0%	
Legal						This represents the Committee's share of the total cost of providing legal support to the Commission's advice, guidance and regulation functions. It also includes supporting the development of any policy recommendations, as well as providing general and on-going legal advice on Welsh legislation and support of the Commission's functions as they relate to Wales (including registration, regulation, policy, electoral administration, governance and compliance with Welsh Language Standards). This work includes advising on proposals for electoral reform in Wales and ensuring that the Commission fulfils its accountability obligations to the Senedd.
	Legal	80	102	22	27%	
Regulation						
	Registration & reporting	72	77	5	7%	This represents the Committee's share of the costs for the work relating to the statutory financial reporting required by registered political parties in Wales. The reports include quarterly donation and loans reports, and annual Statement of Accounts submission. It also represents that share of the costs relating to the annual renewal of registered party details and any changes to registration details made throughout the year.
	Monitoring & enforcement	65	73	8	12%	This represents the Committee's share of the costs that are associated with compliance and enforcement work arising from parties and campaigners in Wales. This includes monitoring the campaign activity of parties and campaigners in Wales. Our monitoring work helps us to identify campaigners who may need our support to come into compliance. It also supports out intervention and enforcement work, if it is required. We also work closely with the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) within each Police Force area to provide advice and guidance during the election period.
	Regulatory support	50	56	6	12%	This represents the Committee's share of the costs associated with developing and maintaining spending, donations and post-poll reporting guidance. We also provide a proactive and reactive advice and support service which is tailored to individual stakeholder needs. We do this to ensure understanding of the laws and high levels of compliance. We deliver our support service in a range of ways including publishing written guidance, responding to queries by telephone and email, providing bespoke training and running webinars.
		187	206	19	10%	
Communications, Policy & Research						
	Campaigns & Corp Identity	41	46	5	13%	This represents the Committee's share of business as usual campaign and public awareness activities. This includes developing messages for campaigns which will be run in Wales over the coming years.

					<p>This represents the Committee's share of the costs of the Commission's Digital Communications and Voter Engagement team based on our estimate of how their time will be spent. We will continue to run a Youth Voice network for Wales, and our youth voice partner will continue to undertake consultancy work with young people across Wales, getting their feedback and input on our resources to ensure they are effective and fit for purpose. We will also continue to build on our existing political literacy work by creating resources that encourage under registered groups to register to vote and engage in democracy.</p> <p>This also covers our digital communications work. Our Digital Communications team develops and maintains our bilingual website and social media channels, supporting Commission-wide publication of information in English and Welsh for our diverse stakeholders, including voters, electoral administrators and campaigners.</p>
Digital communication & Voters	78	78	0	0%	
External communications	68	65	-3	-4%	<p>This represents the Committee's share of the Commission's external communications costs. It covers public relations and public affairs support for the team in Wales. A priority will be to provide support to the team as they respond to new electoral reform legislation going through the Senedd, as well as communication with stakeholders and audiences in Wales on the publication of all Commission reports and research.</p>
Research	47	31	-16	-35%	This represents the Committee's share of business as usual research activities.
Policy	53	53	0	1%	This represents the Committee's share of business as usual policy activities, including work to support the Welsh Government and Senedd to consider new policy proposals and legislation arising from the Government's electoral reform programme.
	287	273	-14	-5%	
Total direct Costs	983	1052	69	7%	
Indirect Costs					
Resource	304	454	150	49%	5% of back office costs. Facilities costs include rent, rates, service charges, cleaning and utilities for the office in Cardiff. ICT costs cover Software licenses for solutions such as Office365, Windows Desktop, Webex, Finance and HR solutions. Costs also include hosting costs to hold data in the Azure cloud. This also includes ongoing finance, HR and management costs
Depreciation	127	92	-35	-28%	5% of the depreciation for capital expenditure, including upgrading of the Political finance and other systems such as the Video conferencing equipment and laptops.
Pay Award 2024-25		61	61	-100%	8% of the Total Pay Bill for the year.
Total indirect Costs	431	606	175	41%	
Total Contribution	1,414	1,658	244	17%	

David Rees, MS
Chair, Llywydd's Committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

28 September 2023

Dear Chair

Re: Supplementary Estimate 2023/24

I am writing to advise you of several financial pressures that have arisen in 2023/24, and therefore to request an additional **£53,900** from the Senedd for this year via the supplementary estimate process to meet the following two pressures.

Firstly, as you will be aware, the Electoral Commission was targeted by hostile actors via a sophisticated cyber attack. This was identified in October 2022 and announced publicly in August 2023. Some additional costs associated with managing the systems to improve security transferring systems to the cloud were identified in the budget bids for 2023/24 at £312,000, which was requested via the main bid from the Speaker's Committee of the UK Parliament. This however was not the only cost directly attributable to the increases in our cyber-security and in 2023/24, we will also incur running costs of a further £308,000. Of this sum, we are seeking 5% contribution being **£15,400** from the Senedd, with the remainder being 8% from the Scottish Parliament and 87% from the UK Parliament.

By way of context the Commission was not the only national infrastructure organisation targeted, as we are aware of targets as diverse as The Royal Mail, the criminal records office ACRO, and the Metropolitan Police, thus highlighting the vulnerability of public sector bodies to motivated attackers and the extreme sensitivity of the data they hold. We must therefore accept future steps in reducing the risks of ransomware, third-party attacks and social engineering being successfully used to breach critical systems.

Secondly, the pay awards for 2023/24 have been higher than the level expected when we submitted our original estimate. The Commission has aligned its pay settlement to that of the wider Civil Service that permitted average pay awards up to 4.5% with further flexibility to make awards up to an additional 0.5%, targeted at lower pay bands. In addition to this, for 2023/24, we also aligned ourselves to the Pay Remit Guidance in making a fixed non-consolidated payment of £1,500 per full-time employee for those in delegated grades, subject to eligibility. The Commission originally had budgeted for 4% pay settlement (£553,000), but the combined effect of the above is an additional overall cost of

£1,014,000. The effect on the supplementary budget bid for the Senedd is circa 8.3% of this sum being **£38,500**.

Please note the budget set for 2023/24 did not factor further contingency sums that could be used to reduce the pressure of the cyber attacked driven changes or the pay award, and other initiatives to reduce costs are being used to offset other pressures including changes to enhance capability.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to thank you and the Committee for your on-going support for the Commission's activities in Wales.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shaun McNally', written in a cursive style.

Shaun McNally CBE

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer, Electoral Commission



Our ref: CG/PO/361/2023

David Rees MS,
Chair
Llywydd's Committee
Senedd Cymru

seneddLLC@Senedd.Wales

24 October 2023

Dear David,

Thank you for your letters of 3 October to myself and the Minister for Finance and Local Government, regarding the Electoral Commission's supplementary financial estimate for 2023-24 and funding proposals for 2024-25 relating to its work on devolved Welsh elections. I am replying as the Minister responsible for elections, but I am copying this letter to the Minister for Finance and Local Government given her interest in expenditure out of the Welsh Consolidated Fund and in the administration of elections by local authorities.

The Electoral Commission is a valued partner for outreach and engagement work. We have been particularly encouraged by the Electoral Commission's commitment to producing education resources that work specifically to support the Curriculum for Wales. We look forward to working with them further as they roll these out to schools and will support them with their efforts. We know stakeholders in electoral services teams across Wales greatly value the communication resources produced by the Electoral Commission and we are pleased to see these resources will continue to be developed in the coming year. As with our Democratic Engagement Grant, we support the Electoral Commission continuing its awareness-raising and registration work in years without a devolved election.

With regards to the 2022-23 performance measures, we note the shortfall in meeting Strategic objective 1.1 (public awareness campaign influence on voter registration) and the action to use insights from this to inform future campaign planning. With regards to 1.2 (engagement with local authorities) it would be interesting to understand the level of engagement as a result of the 18 roll-call editions and to understand if all 22 local authorities are using the resources. Similarly with 1.3 there isn't enough detail to assess whether this has been successful.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Gohebiaeth.Mick.Antoniw@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Mick.Antoniw@gov.Wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Regarding strategic objectives 1.2 and 1.3, it may be helpful for the Electoral Commission to consider adding more detail to the targets and whether these should be quantitative or qualitative. A numerical value may not be sufficient to assess whether success has been achieved and qualitative reporting through a short engagement report, including available numerical measures, case studies, and explanatory resources may be more insightful against this objective.

I can confirm the activities described by the Electoral Commission in the supplementary estimate for 2023-24 are in line with the Welsh Government's expectations and is affordable within the funds transferred from HMT. However, I would highlight previous assurances made by the Commission that realistic pay assumptions were already included in the substantive estimate for 23-24. I expect this is a point you already plan to raise in your scrutiny of the in-year supplementary budget request at your 7 November meeting.

Similarly, I note the estimate presented for 2024-25 represents a further increase of £244,000 on the current year's funding, or an almost 33% increase compared with the previous five year plan. Given a negative consequential at the 2021 Spending Review in relation to Electoral Commission funding, the figure requested by the Commission for 2024-25 is in excess of the funding transferred by UK Government for Commission expenditure.

As a point of context for the consideration of both the 2023-24 and 2024-25 budgets, the First Minister and Minister for Finance and Local Government wrote in August to the Llywydd and the Chair of the Finance Committee setting out the significant economic and fiscal challenges already identified in the current financial year and that Wales's current financial settlement falls far short of what is needed to meet these challenges from existing budgets that have been eroded by a range of inflationary pressures.

Current statements from the UK Government clearly indicate that pay awards must be managed within existing settlements for Whitehall Departments and there will be no consequential funding being made available for Wales. As a result, Welsh Government is having to make difficult budgetary choices to absorb pay awards from within its existing budget, the in-year consequences of which were set out by the Minister for Finance and Local Government on 18 October. Other bodies funded from the Welsh Consolidated Fund are having to make every effort to absorb pay award costs wherever possible. The Committee may also wish to consider that agreeing an increase in 2024-25 would mean a reduction in the funding available for other bodies funded by the Welsh Consolidated Fund, in particular the Senedd Commission and the Welsh Government.

The Committee may wish to seek assurances that robust consideration has been given to all possible efficiencies in order to mitigate budgetary cost pressures. In particular, of the four areas of additional need in 2024-25, the 'delivering electoral reform' heading refers to managing the impact of increasing divergence for Wales's devolved and reserved elections. The Committee may wish to explore whether that increase has solely fallen on the Senedd in respect of the Commission's devolved responsibilities, or the UK Parliament also in respect of the changes made for reserved elections.

Subject to the Committee's formal report following scrutiny and the Senedd's agreement of the inclusion of the 2023-24 in year supplementary request of £53,900 in a supplementary budget motion, my officials will work with the Electoral Commission to agree a payment plan for both the supplementary amount and in respect of the funding agreed by the Committee for 2024-25. If the Committee is unable to lay its report of scrutiny of this request prior to a supplementary budget motion it would be helpful if you could write again to myself and the Minister for Finance and Local Government giving an indication of whether the Committee is minded to agree the additional estimate.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mick Antoniw". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Mick Antoniw AS/MS

Gwnsler Cyffredinol a Gweinidog y Cyfansoddiad
Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution

David Rees AS
Dirprwy Llywydd
Cadeirydd, Pwyllgor y Llywydd
Senedd Cymru
Bae Caerdydd
Caerdydd
CF99 1SN

8 Awst 2023

Annwyl Cadeirydd,

Ysgrifennaf atoch i roi gwybod i chi bod y Comisiwn Etholiadol wedi bod yn destun ymosodiad seiber cymhleth.

Cafodd y digwyddiad ei nodi gyntaf ym mis Hydref 2022 ar ôl i weithgarwch amheus gael ei ganfod ar ein systemau. Daeth yn glir bod gweithredwyr gelyniaethus wedi cael mynediad i'r system ym mis Awst 2021. Ers hynny mae'r Comisiwn wedi gweithio gyda arbenigwyr diogelwch allanol a'r Ganolfan Seiberddiogelwch Genedlaethol er mwyn ymchwilio a diogelu ei systemau.

Yn ystod yr ymosodiad seiber, roedd gweithredwyr gelyniaethus yn ein systemau ac roedd ganddynt fynediad i weinyddion y Comisiwn a oedd yn dal ein e-byst, ein systemau rheoli, a chopïau o gofrestrau etholiadol. Credwn y cyrchwyd ein system e-bost a'r cofrestrau etholiadol, ond nid ydym yn gwybod os cafodd unrhyw ddata ei gopïo neu ei lawrlwytho.

Roedd y cofrestrau a ddaliwyd yn ystod yr ymosodiad seiber yn cynnwys enw a chyfeiriad unrhyw un yn y DU a gofrestrodd i bleidleisio rhwng 2014 a 2022, yn ogystal ag enwau y rheiny a gofrestrodd fel pleidleiswyr tramor. Nid oedd y cofrestrau'n cynnwys manylion etholwyr dienw. Er bod y data a gynhwysir yn y cofrestrau etholiadol yn gyfyngedig, ac mae llawer ohono eisoes yn gyhoeddus, rydym yn deall y pryder y gallai hyn ei achosi. Mae'n ddrwg gennym nad oeddem yn gallu atal yr ymosodiad seiber hwn. Ers ei nodi rydym wedi cymryd camau, gyda chymorth arbenigwyr, i wella diogelwch, gwydnwch, a dibynadwyedd ein systemau TG.

Yn unol â gofynion y gyfraith, hysbysodd y Comisiwn Swyddfa'r Comisiynydd Gwybodaeth o fewn 72 awr o nodi y gallai data ar ei systemau fod wedi cael ei gyrchu, ac heddiw mae wedi [cyhoeddi hysbysiad ffurfiol](#).

Mae proses ddemocrataidd y DU wedi'i gwasgaru'n sylweddol ac mae agweddau allweddol ohoni yn parhau i fod yn seiliedig ar ddogfennaeth bapur a chyfrif. Mae hyn yn

golygu y byddai'n anodd iawn i ddefnyddio ymosodiad seiber er mwyn dylanwadu ar y broses. Serch hynny, mae'r ymosodiad hwn yn amlygu bod y broses ddemocrataidd a'i sefydliadau yn parhau i fod yn darged i weithredwyr gelyniaethus ar-lein. Byddwn yn parhau i fod yn wylidwrus o'r risgiau a'r broses o amgylch ein hetholiadau a byddwn yn parhau i weithio gyda llywodraethau'r DU a'r gymuned etholiadol ehangach i ddiogelu diogelwch y system.

Os oes angen rhagor o wybodaeth arnoch, cysylltwch ag Ella Downing, Uwch Swyddog Cyfathrebu at edowning@electoralcommission.org.uk.

Yn gywir,



Shaun McNally
Prif Weithredwr y Comisiwn Etholiadol

David Rees MS
Deputy Llywydd
Chair, Llywydd's Committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

8 August 2023

Dear Chair,

I am writing to inform you that the Electoral Commission has been the subject of a complex cyber-attack.

The incident was first identified in October 2022 after suspicious activity was detected on our systems. It became clear that hostile actors had first accessed the systems in August 2021. The Commission has since worked with external security experts and the National Cyber Security Centre to investigate and secure its systems.

During the cyber-attack, hostile actors were active in our systems and had access to the Commission's servers which held our email, our control systems, and copies of the electoral registers. We believe our email system and the electoral registers were accessed, but we do not know if any data was copied or downloaded.

The registers held at the time of the cyber-attack include the name and address of anyone in the UK who registered to vote between 2014 and 2022, as well as the names of those registered as overseas voters. The registers did not include the details of anonymous voters. While the data contained in the electoral registers is limited, and much of it is already in the public domain, we understand the concern this may cause. We regret we could not prevent this cyber-attack. Since identifying it we have taken steps, with the support of specialists, to improve the security, resilience, and reliability of our IT systems.

In line with requirements under the law, the Commission notified the Information Commissioner's Office within 72 hours of identifying that data on its systems may have been accessed and has today [published a formal notification](#).

The UK's democratic process is significantly dispersed and key aspects of it remain based on paper documentation and counting. This means it would be very hard to use a cyber-attack to influence the process. Nevertheless, this attack highlights that the democratic process and its institutions remain a target for hostile actors online. We will remain vigilant to the risks and process around our elections and will continue to work with the UK's governments and the wider electoral community to safeguard the safety of the system.

If you require further information, please contact Ella Downing, Senior Communications Adviser at edowning@electoralcommission.org.uk in the first instance.

Your sincerely,



Shaun McNally

Chief Executive of the Electoral Commission

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David Rees AS
Dirprwy Llywydd
Cadeirydd, Pwyllgor y Llywydd
Senedd Cymru
Bae Caerdydd
Caerdydd
CF99 1SN

13 Medi 2023

Annwyl Cadeirydd,

Adroddiadau etholiad Mai 2023 y Comisiwn Etholiadol

Mae'n bleser rhannu adroddiadau'r Comisiwn ar etholiadau lleol Mai 2023 yn [Lloegr](#) a [Gogledd Iwerddon](#), sydd wedi'u cyhoeddi heddiw.

Ar y cyfan, canfuom fod yr etholiadau'n cael eu cynnal yn dda a bod gan bleidleiswyr hyder yn y system. Fodd bynnag, mae'r adroddiad hefyd yn nodi sawl her i bleidleiswyr, gweinyddwyr ac ymgyrchwyr. Mae angen gweithredu ar frys mewn rhai meysydd cyn etholiad cyffredinol nesaf Llywodraeth y DU lle byddai disgwyl nifer uwch o bleidleiswyr, gan gynnwys y rhai nad ydynt yn dueddol o bleidleisio mewn etholiadau lleol ac sydd felly'n debygol o fod yn llai cyfarwydd â newidiadau diweddar.

Roedd y gofyniad ID pleidleiswyr yn rhwystr i rai pleidleiswyr ac mae'n debygol o gael mwy o effaith ar etholiadau lle mae nifer uwch o bobl yn pleidleisio. Felly, rydym yn cyflwyno nifer o argymhellion penodol i Lywodraeth y DU eu hystyried, a fyddai'n ehangu hygyrchedd a chymorth i bleidleiswyr. Mae'r rhain yn cynnwys:

- adolygu'r rhestr o ddogfennau adnabod a dderbynnir i nodi a ellid ychwanegu dogfennau ychwanegol
- archwilio a ellir gwthio'r dyddiad cau ar gyfer gwneud cais am yr ID am ddim yn nes at y diwrnod pleidleisio
- darparu opsiynau ar y diwrnod pleidleisio i bleidleiswyr heb ID derbyniol, megis pleidleisiwr cofrestredig arall yn gallu 'tystio' pwy ydynt.

Mae gallu a gwytnwch timau etholiadau yn parhau i fod yn bryder sylweddol ar gyfer y broses barhaus o gynnal etholiadau effeithiol. Bydd newidiadau sy'n dod i rym o ganlyniad i'r Ddeddf Etholiadau yn ychwanegu gweinyddiaeth a chymhlethdod pellach i system sydd eisoes dan bwysau. Rydym yn argymhell bod Llywodraeth y DU yn sicrhau bod dibyniaethau a risgiau cyflawni yn cael eu rheoli'n ofalus ar gyfer newidiadau yn y dyfodol.

Os hoffech drafod canfyddiadau'r adroddiad yn fanylach, byddem yn hapus i gysylltu â'ch swyddogion i drefnu cyfarfod.

Yr eiddoch yn gywir,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'RT' or similar initials, written in a cursive style.

Rhydian Thomas,
Pennaeth y Comisiwn Etholiadol, Cymru

David Rees MS
Deputy Llywydd
Chair, Llywydd's Committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

13 September 2023

Dear Chair,

Electoral Commission May 2023 election reports

I am pleased to share the Commission's reports on the May 2023 local elections in [England](#) and [Northern Ireland](#), which have been published today.

Overall, we found the elections were well run and voters have confidence in the system. However, the report also identifies several challenges for voters, administrators and campaigners. Urgent action is needed in some areas ahead of the next UK Government general election where a higher number of voters would be expected, including those who do not tend to vote at local elections and so are likely to be less familiar with recent changes.

The voter ID requirement posed a barrier to some voters and is likely to have a larger impact at higher turnout polls. As such, we are putting forward a number of specific recommendations for the UK Government to consider, which would expand accessibility and support for voters. These include:

- reviewing the list of accepted ID to identify if additional documents could be added
- exploring whether the deadline for applying for the free ID can be pushed closer to polling day
- providing options on polling day for voters without accepted ID, such as another registered voter being able to 'vouch' for their identity.

The capacity and resilience of elections teams remains a significant concern for the ongoing delivery of well-run elections. Incoming changes from the Elections Act will add further complexity and administration to a system already under strain. We are recommending that the UK Government ensures that dependencies and delivery risks are carefully managed for future changes.

If you would like to discuss the report's findings in more detail, we would be happy to liaise with your officials to arrange a meeting.

Yours sincerely,



Rhydian Thomas,
Head of the Electoral Commission

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David Rees AS
Cadeirydd, Pwyllgor y Llywydd
Senedd Cymru
Bae Caerdydd
Caerdydd
CF99 1SN

15 Medi 2023

Annwyl Gadeirydd,

Adrodd ar gywirdeb a chyflawnrwydd y cofrestrau etholiadol

Rwy'n falch i allu rhoi copi ymlaen llaw i chi o adroddiad y Comisiwn Etholiadol ar gywirdeb a chyflawn

wydd y cofrestrau etholiadol, cyn iddo gael ei gyhoeddi dydd Llun.

Dengys ein dadansoddiad bod bron i 400,000 o bobl ledled Cymru naill ai ar goll neu wedi'u cofrestru i bleidleisio yn anghywir, sy'n golygu nad oes ganddynt lais mewn etholiadau. Mae rhai grwpiau penodol o bobl yn sylweddol yn llai tebygol o fod wedi'u cofrestru i bleidleisio yn gywir, yn enwedig pobl ifanc, pobl sy'n rhentu'n breifat a'r rhai sydd wedi symud tŷ yn ddiweddar.

Gwnaeth yr astudiaeth o gofrestrau 2022 ganfod y canlynol yng Nghymru:

- Roedd y gofrestr llywodraeth leol yn 87% yn gyflawn ac yn 89% yn gywir.
- Roedd y gofrestr seneddol yn 88% yn gyflawn ac yn 90% yn gywir.

Mae tystiolaeth o'n hymchwil, a gynhaliwyd dros fwy na degawd, yn dangos bod hon yn broblem hirsefydlog. Mae'n annhebygol felly y bydd lefelau cywirdeb a chyflawnrwydd - ac felly nifer y bobl gymwys sy'n gallu dweud eu dweud mewn etholiadau - yn gwella'n sylweddol heb newidiadau mawr i'r system cofrestru etholiadol.

Mae'r Comisiwn yn parhau i argymhell bod llywodraethau Cymru a'r DU yn pasio deddfwriaeth i greu pyrth cyfreithiol clir i adrannau'r llywodraeth a chyrrff cyhoeddus rannu data ar bleidleiswyr a allai fod yn gymwys gyda gweinyddwyr etholiadol. Byddai dull cyson rhwng llywodraethau'n sicrhau bod newidiadau'n cael eu datblygu a'u cyflawni mewn ffordd sy'n ei gwneud mor syml â phosibl i Swyddogion Cofrestru Etholiadol a sefydliadau ffynhonnell ddata, ac yn sicrhau bod pleidleiswyr yn cael eu cynnwys yn gywir yn y cofrestrau ar gyfer pob math o etholiadau y maent yn gymwys i bleidleisio ynddynt.

Gwyddwn fod moderneiddio a diwygio etholiadol yn flaenoriaeth i Lywodraeth Cymru ac rydym yn croesawu cynigion i beilota cofrestru pleidleiswyr yn awtomatig ar gyfer etholiadau datganoledig. Gwnaethom amlygu'r prif ystyriaethau ar gyfer y gwaith hwn yn gynharach eleni yn ein [hymateb](#) i'r papur gwyn ar Ddiwygio a Gweinyddiaeth Etholiadol. Rydym yn edrych ymlaen at weithio gyda'r Llywodraeth a'r gymuned etholiadol ehangach i gefnogi datblygiad pellach y maes gwaith hwn.

Yr eiddoch yn gywir,



Rhydian Thomas,
Pennaeth y Comisiwn Etholiadol, Cymru

David Rees MS
Chair, Llywydd's Committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

15 September 2023

Dear Chair,

Report on the accuracy and completeness of the electoral registers

I am pleased to provide you with an advance copy of the Electoral Commission's report on the accuracy and completeness of the electoral registers, ahead of publication on Monday.

Our analysis shows that almost 400,000 people across Wales are either missing or incorrectly registered to vote, meaning they don't have a voice in elections. Some specific groups of people are significantly less likely to be correctly registered, particularly young people, private renters, and those who have recently moved home.

The study of the 2022 registers found that in Wales:

- The local government register was 87% complete, and 89% accurate
- The parliamentary register was 88% complete, and 90% accurate

Evidence from our research, carried out over more than a decade, shows that this is a longstanding problem. It is therefore unlikely that levels of accuracy and completeness – and therefore the number of eligible people able to have their say at elections – will significantly improve without major changes to the electoral registration system.

The Commission continues to recommend that both the Welsh and UK governments pass legislation to create clear legal gateways for government departments and public bodies to share data on potentially eligible voters with electoral administrators. A consistent approach between governments would ensure that changes are developed and delivered in a way which makes it as straightforward as possible for EROs and data source organisations, and ensures that voters are accurately included in the registers for all types of elections they are eligible to vote in.

We know that electoral modernisation and reform is a priority for the Welsh Government and welcome proposals to pilot automatic voter registration for devolved elections. We highlighted key considerations for this work earlier this year in our [response](#) to the Electoral Reform and Administration white paper. We stand ready to work with the Government and the wider electoral community to support further development of this important area of work.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'RT', written in a cursive style.

Rhydian Thomas,
Head of the Electoral Commission, Wales

Accuracy and completeness of the electoral registers

We run accuracy and completeness studies to measure the quality of the electoral registers, and assess how this changes in response to legislative developments and administrative and population changes.

The results of this study on the December 2022 registers finds that levels of completeness are broadly stable across the UK with the notable exceptions of Northern Ireland which has seen a significant increase in registration levels since 2018 and, to a lesser extent, Wales where we also see a positive change. The accuracy of the registers is also stable, again with the exception of Northern Ireland where there has been an improvement.

The changes in Northern Ireland bring levels of accuracy and completeness broadly into line with England, Scotland and Wales; both are at the highest levels we have recorded through these research studies. These improvements are the direct result of the recent 2021 canvass in Northern Ireland, something we also saw following the previous canvass in 2013. However, in our earlier studies we have seen declines between canvasses when the continuous registration system is operating.

In Great Britain, both accuracy and completeness are largely stable. The annual canvass process was reformed in 2019 by the UK, Scottish and Welsh governments with the aim of reducing the burden on Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) while maintaining levels of accuracy and completeness. There is no evidence of any significant negative impact on either measure as a result of canvass reform but there has also been no significant improvement.

Across the UK, potentially as many as 8 million people are not correctly registered at their current address (the research estimated a range of around 7-8 million people not correctly registered on the local government registers in December 2022). This matters because, while people can register ahead of each set of elections, it increases the chances that people will think they are registered when they are not and therefore be unable to vote come election day. Also, the more updates that are required to the registers in the short period before a poll, the more pressure is placed on the delivery of the service for voters.

The Commission plays an important part in addressing under-registration through our continuing public awareness campaigning work, which we update regularly to ensure we are in-line with the latest insights about both voter attitudes and the demographic patterns of under-registered groups.

However, there is little evidence to suggest that levels of accuracy and completeness are likely to significantly improve without major changes to the current electoral registration system. We have highlighted since 2019 how the UK's governments could support EROs to improve the accuracy and completeness of electoral registers – and improve efficiency to alleviate resource burdens, by introducing modern registration approaches to supplement the current annual canvass and year-round online registration.

These would involve utilising data from the many millions of transactions that voters already have with major public sector organisations. Depending on the quality and coverage of the data sets, and the specific data fields that are available, changes could support different levels and forms of modernisation, ranging from automatic registration to forms of integrated or assisted registration where voters would need to provide some information directly themselves.

We have set out a range of options for how specific data sources could be used to improve the accuracy and completeness of electoral registers, and in particular how registration rates of attainers and other young people, private renters and other recent home-movers could be improved. Further exploratory work would be needed to confirm the detailed feasibility and delivery implications of these options.

The electoral community needs a clear plan to ensure that electoral registration processes are modernised so that people are registered and able to exercise their right to vote. As part of this plan we recommend that the UK's governments should pass legislation to create clear legal gateways for government departments and public sector bodies to share data on potentially eligible individuals with EROs. They should also require relevant departments and other public bodies to work with EROs to facilitate electoral registration using their data. We also recommend that the UK Government should develop the existing Individual Electoral Registration digital service so that it can support secure and efficient data sharing between data source organisations and EROs, to enable modern registration processes to be delivered.

Summary findings

The results of our most recent study across the UK show that for the local government registers¹:

2022

Change from 2018

¹ The franchise for local elections in Scotland and Wales includes those aged 16 and 17 and, in those nations, residents aged 14 or 15 at the time of fieldwork (who turn 16 during the lifetime of the registers) are counted as attainers on the local government registers. However, legally, registration data on 14 and 15 year olds cannot be shared by Electoral Registration Officers so this group was excluded from the research and any measure of accuracy and completeness. All findings should be read with this in mind.

Completeness	Great Britain	86%	+3
	England	86%	+3
	Scotland	81%	-2
	Wales	87%	+6
	Northern Ireland	83%	+10
Accuracy	Great Britain	88%	-1
	England	88%	-1
	Scotland	88%	+2
	Wales	89%	0
	Northern Ireland	86%	+6

The table above shows the percentage point change in accuracy and completeness compared to our last study in 2018. However, as these are survey results and subject to margins of error, not all of these changes are likely to be statistically significant.

Overall across Great Britain, the completeness of the local government registers has increased slightly, while accuracy has stayed the same. The increase in completeness in Wales is likely to be a real improvement since 2018 while the apparent decline in Scotland is within the margin of error and should be treated as no change. In Northern Ireland, there has been a notable improvement in both the accuracy and completeness of the registers.

Figures for the parliamentary registers are not shown but closely mirror the findings for the local government registers.

Underneath these headline figures, the accuracy and completeness of the registers is expected to vary considerably across local authority areas due to the demographics of the local population as well as registration practices.

Detailed results by part of the UK are available in factsheets:

- England
- Scotland
- Wales
- Northern Ireland

The completeness of the registers varies for different socio-demographic groups. These patterns are largely consistent with the findings of our previous studies. Across the UK, age and duration at address were the variables most strongly associated with differences in completeness. Older people and those who have lived at their address longer are more likely to be correctly registered.

Variations in accuracy are more difficult to analyse because characteristics can only be collected for current residents. However, as in previous studies, we see that households where the existing residents have lived there for less time are more likely to have inaccurate register entries linked to them.

You can also explore the data by headline demographics using [our interactive tool](#).

Quantifying accuracy and completeness

Using the percentage figures produced from this research, it is possible to estimate the number of people in the population who are not correctly registered, or who have inaccuracies in their register entries.

	Not correctly registered	Inaccurate register entries
United Kingdom	7,000,000 - 8,000,000	
Great Britain	6,700,000 - 7,800,000	5,100,000 - 6,000,000
England	5,600,000 - 6,600,000	
Scotland	650,000 - 1,000,000	390,000 - 640,000
Wales	275,000 - 400,000	200,000 - 300,000
Northern Ireland	230,000 - 280,000	170,000 - 210,000

These can only be estimates for the following reasons:

- Both the accuracy and completeness estimates are subject to **confidence intervals** (for example, +/- 1.1% for completeness in Great Britain and 1.9% in Northern Ireland; +/- 1% for accuracy in Great Britain and 1.5% for Northern Ireland). These margins will also apply to any quantification of the estimates.
- The overall population figures on which these are based, sourced from the Office for National Statistics, are mid-year estimates derived from the 2021 census. While these provide a reasonably accurate estimate of the UK population, they do not include nationality figures. As eligibility to vote differs by election and is determined by age and nationality, this means that it is not possible to definitively determine the size of the population which is eligible to vote.

Trends in the quality of the registers

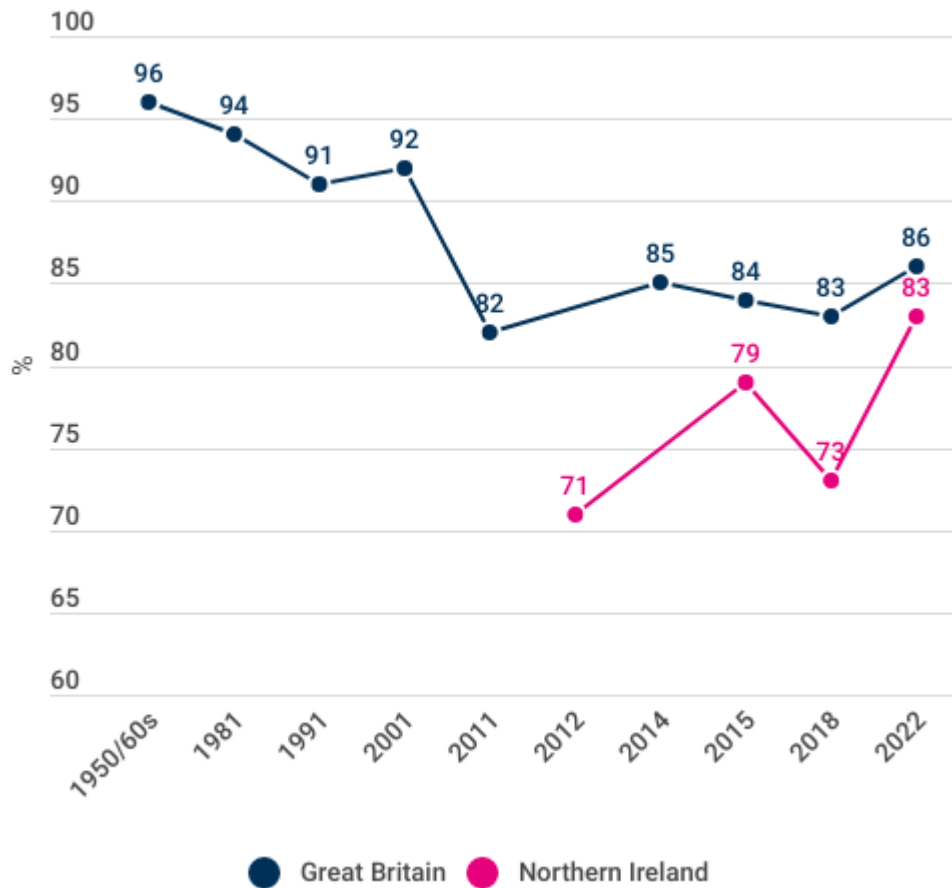
The Commission has measured the accuracy and completeness of the registers in England and Wales since 2001, and before that studies were carried out by other organisations following each census.

In Great Britain, the completeness of the registers was at its highest (around 95%) in the 1950s and 1960s and started declining in the 1980s. It decreased up to 2011 (82%) but has stabilised since, with successive studies findings levels between 83-86%.

In Northern Ireland, the completeness is now at its highest level since the Commission began measuring it in 2012.

Completeness of local government electoral registers, Great Britain and Northern Ireland,

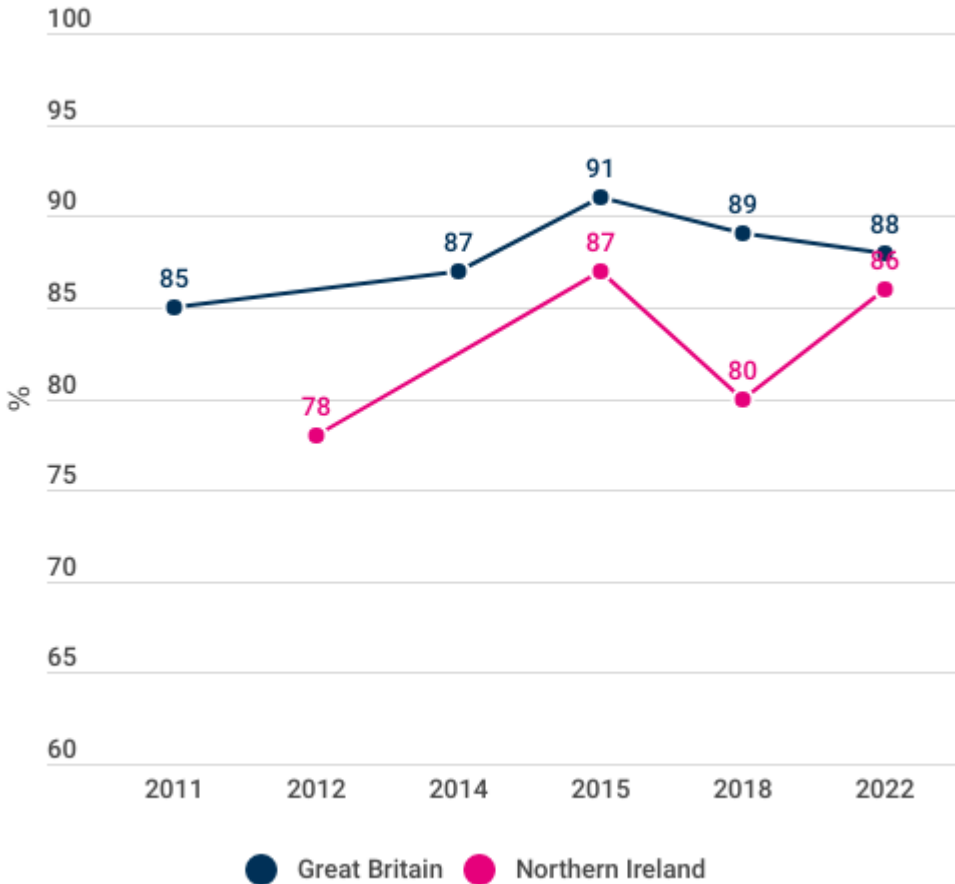
2011 - 2022



Accuracy has not been consistently measured over as long a period as completeness. In Great Britain levels have remained relatively stable over the last decade. In Northern Ireland the picture is more volatile, reflecting similar changes in completeness.

Accuracy of local government electoral registers, Great Britain and Northern Ireland, 2011 –

2022



EMBAK

Completeness

	2011	2012	2014	2015	2018	2022	Change from 2018
Great Britain	82%	-	85%	84%	83%	86%	+3
England	-	-	-	84%	83%	86%	+3
Scotland	-	-	-	85%	83%	81%	-2
Wales	-	-	-	84%	81%	87%	+6
Northern Ireland	-	71%	-	79%	73%	83%	+10

The completeness of the registers varies for different socio-demographic groups. These patterns are largely consistent with the findings of our previous studies. Where reliable data is available for each part of the UK it is shown. In some cases the size of samples means it is not possible to show a demographic breakdown for each of England, Scotland Wales and Northern Ireland. In that case the most detailed breakdown available is included.

Additional analysis was carried out, for Great Britain as a whole and separately for Northern Ireland, to identify the demographic characteristics which are associated with higher or lower levels of accuracy and completeness (once other factors are controlled for), as well as the strength and statistical significance of these relationships.

In Great Britain, age and duration at address were the variables most strongly associated with differences in completeness. Tenure, ethnic group, social grade and the number of adults in the household were also significant factors, and there were also significant differences between urban and rural areas and between the regions of England which remain even after controlling for demographic factors.

In Northern Ireland, age and duration at address were also the main drivers of completeness. Although levels of completeness have similar socio-demographic patterns compared to Great Britain, when other factors are controlled for, no other demographics, beyond age and length of residence, were found to have a significant relationship with completeness.

Population mobility

Length of residence

Previous research into the registers, which are property-based databases, has found a connection between home movement and completeness: greater mobility is associated with lower levels of completeness, while the longer an individual has been resident at their property, the more likely they are to appear on the electoral registers.

This pattern continues in this latest research, with completeness lowest among those who have lived at their address for less than a year and increasing by length of residence.

Since 2018 in Northern Ireland, completeness has increased most significantly for those who have lived at their address for less than five years. This is likely to be a direct result of the 2021 canvass.

Completeness of local government registers by length of residence, 2018 vs 2022

Great Britain	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland
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	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022
Up to one year	36%	39%	36%	40%	32%	33%			11%	20%
More than one, up to two years	71%	72%	70%	73%	65%	63%	45%	53%	29%	44%
More than two, up to five years	84%	82%	83%	82%	84%	81%	83%	83%	61%	76%
More than five, up to 10 years	90%	91%	90%	92%	91%	83%	83%	86%	78%	82%
More than 10, up to 16 years	88%	92%	88%	92%	95%	89%	88%	91%	80%	92%
Over 16 years	92%	95%	92%	95%	94%	92%	91%	95%	90%	92%

Bases (unweighted): Great Britain 2018 8,699, Great Britain 2022 9,495, Northern Ireland 2018 1,713, Northern Ireland 2022 1,948

Demographic characteristics

Age

Levels of completeness continue to increase with age.

As in 2018, completeness is highest for those aged 65+. It also remains lowest for attainers aged 16-17. In Great Britain completeness for this group has dropped further from 45% in 2015, to 25% in 2018, to 16% in 2022. In Northern Ireland the level for attainer registration has increased, albeit from virtually zero in 2018 and to a lower level than in Great Britain.

Otherwise the pattern of completeness by age group has not changed dramatically since 2018.

Completeness of local government registers by age group, 2018 v s 2022

	Great Britain		England		Scotland		Wales		Northern Ireland	
	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022
16-17	25%	16%	-	-	-	-	-	-	0%	12%
18-19	66%	60%							31%	45%
20-24	68%	67%	72%	70%	68%	68%	66%	79%	61%	76%
25-34	74%	74%							50%	69%
35-44	82%	84%	83%	84%	78%	76%	78%	82%	70%	83%
45-54	90%	91%	90%	91%	91%	88%	85%	90%	81%	87%
55-64	90%	94%	90%	94%	95%	93%	92%	91%	85%	90%
65+	94%	96%	95%	97%	95%	92%	92%	97%	94%	95%

Bases (unweighted): Great Britain 2018 8,152, Great Britain 2022 9,434, Northern Ireland 2018 1,445, Northern Ireland 2022 1,946

Gender

In 2018, for Great Britain and Northern Ireland there was little or no difference in the likelihood that men and women would be correctly registered. In 2022, however, women were marginally more likely to be correctly registered than men. The differences in Scotland and Wales are not statistically significant.

	Great Britain		England		Scotland		Wales		Northern Ireland	
	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022
Male	83%	85%	82%	85%	85%	82%	80%	86%	72%	81%
Female	83%	87%	83%	87%	82%	81%	82%	87%	73%	84%

Base (unweighted): Great Britain 2022 9,490, Northern Ireland 2022 1,947, Great Britain 2018 8,215, Northern Ireland 2018 1,447

Nationality

Findings corroborate previous research which show that registration rates are lower among eligible non-UK nationals than among UK or Irish nationals.

UK and Irish citizens continue to be the most likely to have complete electoral register entries. However, in Great Britain, EU citizens have seen an increase in their registration levels and are slightly more likely to be registered than Commonwealth citizens. Small base sizes do not allow for separate analyses of EU and Commonwealth citizens in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.

Completeness of local government registers by nationality, 2015 vs 2018

	Great Britain		England		Scotland		Wales		Northern Ireland	
	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022
United Kingdom/Irish	86%	87%	85%	88%	85%	84%	82%	88%	74%	84%
Non-UK/ROI	55%	68%	55%	68%	58%	44%	58%	70%	45%	41%
European Union	54%	70%	54%	71%	-	-	-	-	42%	-
Commonwealth	62%	66%	62%	67%	-	-	-	-	80%	-

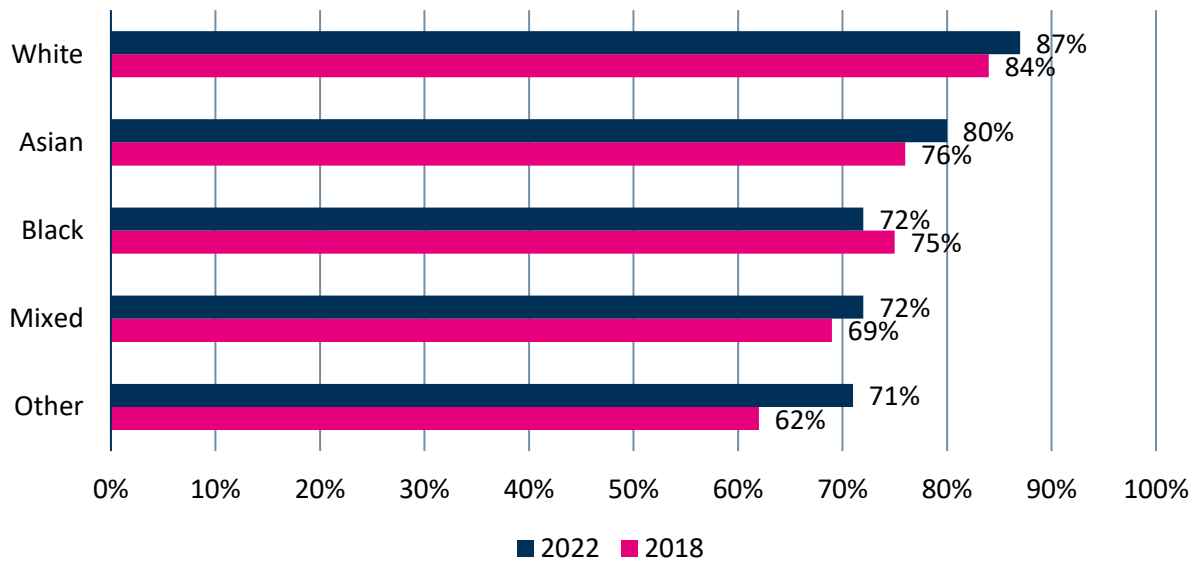
Bases (unweighted): Great Britain 2018 8,186, Great Britain 2022 10,045, Northern Ireland 2018 1,437, Northern Ireland 2022 2,018

Ethnicity

As in previous studies, completeness in Great Britain is highest among those from a white ethnic background. Small base sizes mean we cannot analyse variation in levels of completeness for different ethnic groups in Northern Ireland.

Since 2018, completeness rates have increased for every group except those from Black ethnic backgrounds where it has fallen from 75% to 72%.

Completeness of local government electoral registers in Great Britain by ethnicity, 2018 vs 2022



Base (unweighted): 2022 9,404, 2018 8,157

Disability status

As in previous years, completeness is higher among those with a disability than among those without. Of those with a disability, completeness was highest among those with a physical condition and lowest among those with a mental disability.

Completeness of local government registers by disability status, 2018 vs 2022

	Great Britain		Northern Ireland	
	2018	2022	2018	2022
Mental disability	83%	84%	71%	79%
Physical disability	92%	92%	83%	88%
Other type of disability	93%	89%	-	84%
No disability	82%	85%	72%	82%

Bases (unweighted): Great Britain 2018 8,091, Great Britain 2022 9,447, Northern Ireland 2018 1,444, Northern Ireland 2022 1,935

Social and economic conditions

Socio-economic group

Levels of completeness are also affected by socio-economic status. With the exception of Scotland, completeness is highest among those in AB households, followed by those in C1 and C2 households. Completeness is lowest among those in DE households. The unusually high level of completeness in Scotland for C2 households is an outlier and may be a distortion caused by a relatively small base size.

Completeness of local government registers by socio-economic group, 2018 vs 2022

	Great Britain		England		Scotland		Wales		Northern Ireland	
	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022
AB	86%	89%	86%	89%	88%	86%	87%	87%	80%	88%
C1	85%	86%	84%	87%	85%	76%	82%	86%	72%	82%
C2	80%	86%	80%	85%	80%	88%	82%	89%	76%	83%
DE	80%	81%	79%	81%	78%	78%	76%	85%	63%	78%

Base (unweighted): Great Britain 2022 9,472, Great Britain 2018 8,782, Northern Ireland 2022 1,942, Northern Ireland 2018 1,718

Tenure

In previous years, tenure has been strongly associated with levels of completeness and this relationship continues in 2022. Outright homeowners are more likely to be registered than people in other types of tenure.

Private renters again had the lowest level of completeness.

Completeness of local government registers by tenure, 2018 vs 2022

	Great Britain		England		Scotland		Wales		Northern Ireland	
	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022
Owner occupier	91%	95%	91%	95%	95%	91%	91%	94%	88%	91%
Buying on mortgage/ shared ownership	86%	88%	86%	88%	87%	84%	78%	84%	72%	82%
Private renter	58%	65%	59%	66%	49%	45%	60%	73%	38%	46%
Local Authority renter	83%	79%	83%	79%	87%	84%	86%	73%	64%	78%
Housing Association renter	82%	79%	84%	80%	73%	72%	76%	82%		

Bases (unweighted): Great Britain 2018 8,790, Great Britain 2022 9,259, Northern Ireland 2018 1,718, Northern Ireland 2022 1,930

Number of adults in the household

Levels of completeness are lower for larger households. In Great Britain overall levels of completeness for one or two person households are notably higher than three to five person households. The pattern is flatter in Northern Ireland with limited differences although the base size for households with six or more residents is very small.

Completeness of local government electoral registers by number of adults in household, 2018 vs 2022

	Great Britain	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland
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	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022
One	86%	88%	86%	86%	79%	79%	82%	90%	72%	80%
Two	84%	88%	84%	89%	84%	83%	83%	87%	73%	83%
Three to five	81%	82%	81%	82%					72%	83%
Six or more	78%	79%	79%	80%	85%	80%	77%	85%	96%	81%

Base (unweighted): Great Britain 2022 9,495, Great Britain 2018 8,791, Northern Ireland 2022 1,948, Northern Ireland 2018 1,718

Geographic variables

English regions

There continues to be some variation in levels of completeness among the regions in England. However, the confidence intervals on the results mean that most differences are not statistically significant. The East Midlands does record significantly higher completeness levels compared to London.

Completeness of local government electoral registers by English region 2018 vs 2022

Region	2018	2022
Eastern	79%	86%
East Midlands	83%	91%
London	81%	82%
North East	83%	88%
North West	85%	84%
South East	84%	88%
South West	84%	86%
West Midlands	86%	87%
Yorkshire and Humber	87%	86%

Urban/rural classification

In both Great Britain as a whole and in Northern Ireland, completeness remains slightly higher in rural areas as compared with urban areas. There is little or no difference between the categories in Scotland and Wales.

Completeness of local government electoral registers by urban/rural classification, 2018 vs 2022

	Great Britain		England		Scotland		Wales		Northern Ireland	
	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022
Urban	83%	85%	83%	86%	84%	88%	81%	87%	70%	81%
Rural	85%	89%	84%	90%	91%	88%	81%	86%	76%	85%

Bases (unweighted): Great Britain 9,474, Northern Ireland 1,943

Local authority type

In England, among different types of local authority area, the most notable change in completeness has been among London boroughs with an increase from 76% in 2018 to 82% in 2022.

Completeness of local government registers by local authority type, 2018 vs 2022

	2018	2022
District	84%	89%
London borough	76%	82%
Metropolitan borough	86%	85%
Unitary authorities	83%	84%
Scottish unitary	83%	81%
Welsh unitary	81%	87%
Northern Ireland	73%	83%

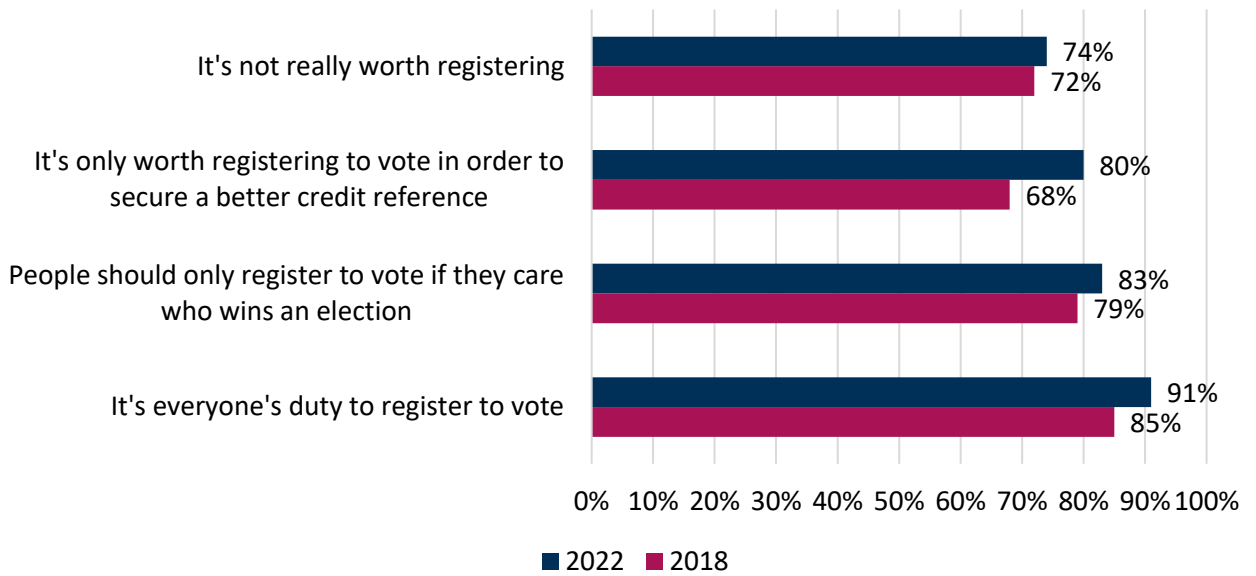
Bases (unweighted): Great Britain, 9,495, Northern Ireland 1,943

Attitudinal and behavioural characteristics

Attitudes towards registration and voting

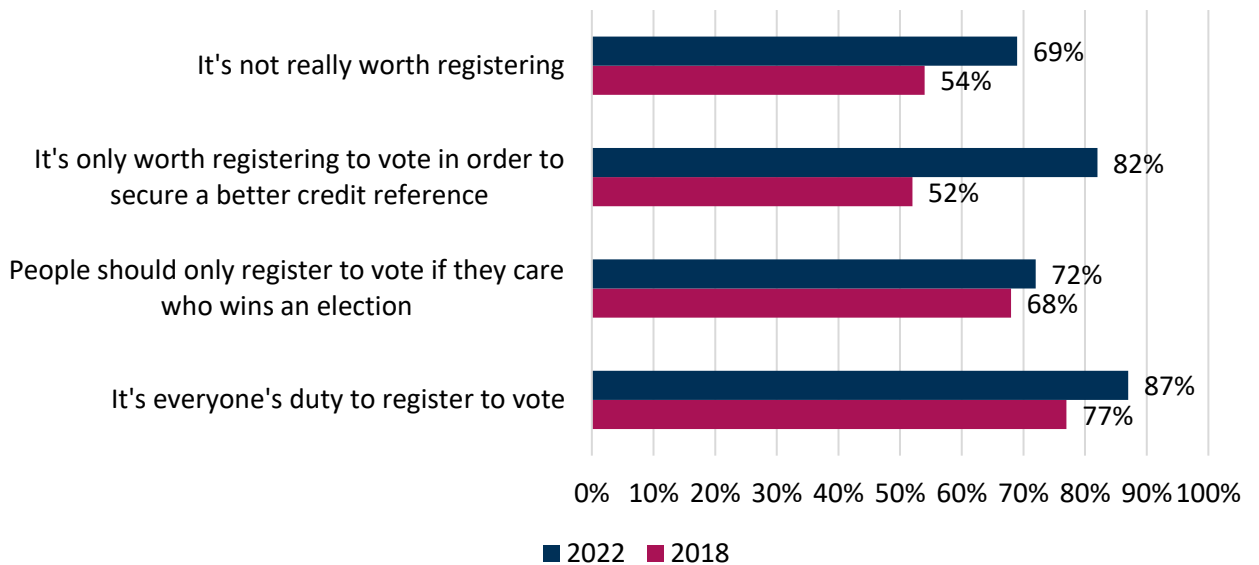
Completeness is lowest among people who believe that 'it is not really worth registering' and is highest among those who think it is 'everyone's duty to register to vote'.

Local government register completeness in Great Britain by attitude towards registration, 2018 vs 2022



Base (unweighted): 2022, 4,692, 2018 4,679

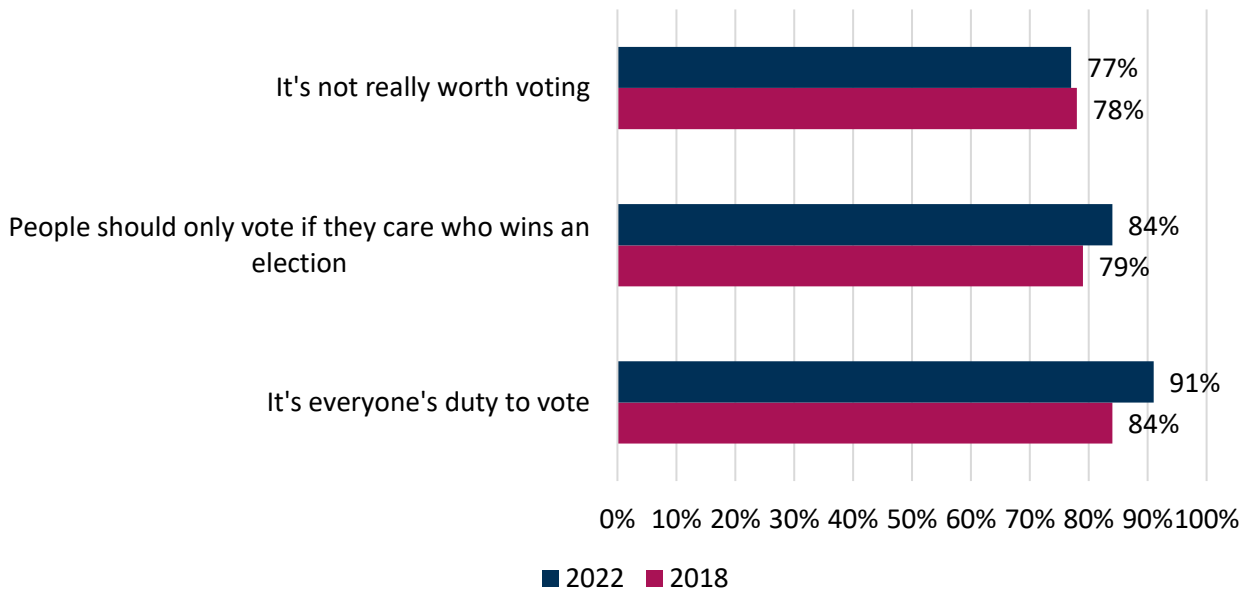
Local government register completeness in Northern Ireland by attitude towards registration, 2018 and 2022



Base (unweighted): 2022 935, 2018 945

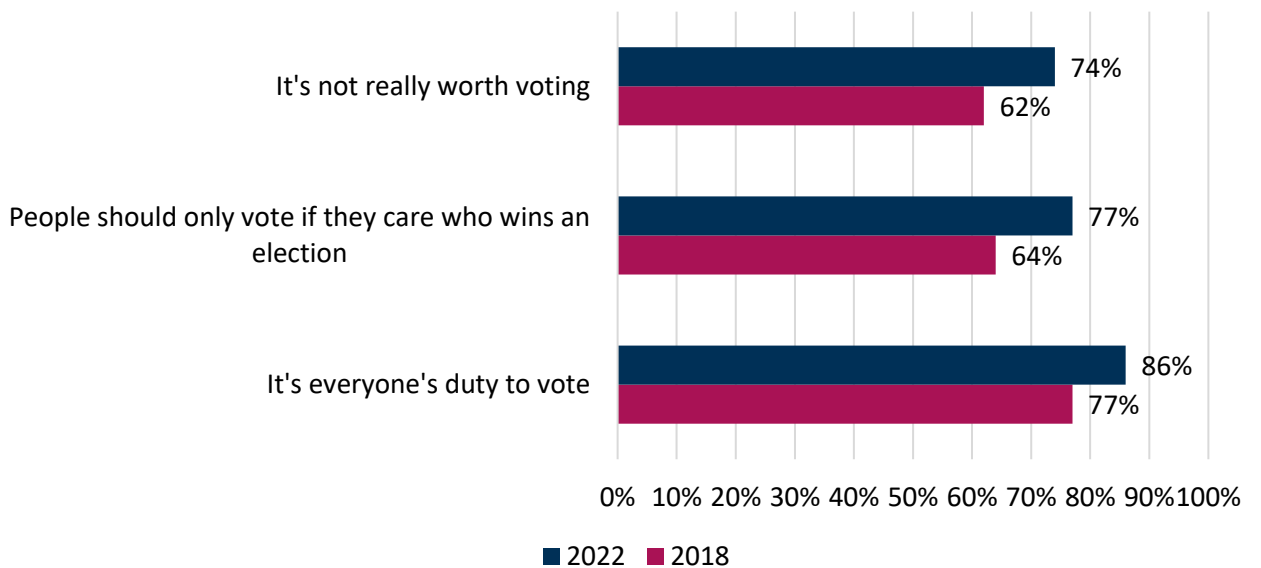
Attitudes towards voting show a similar pattern, with completeness lowest among those who believe it is not really worth voting and highest among people who believe it is everyone's duty to vote (91%).

Local government register completeness in Great Britain by attitude towards voting, 2018 vs 2022



Base (unweighted): 2022 4,664, 2018 4,679

Local government register completeness in Northern Ireland by attitude towards voting, 2018 vs 2022

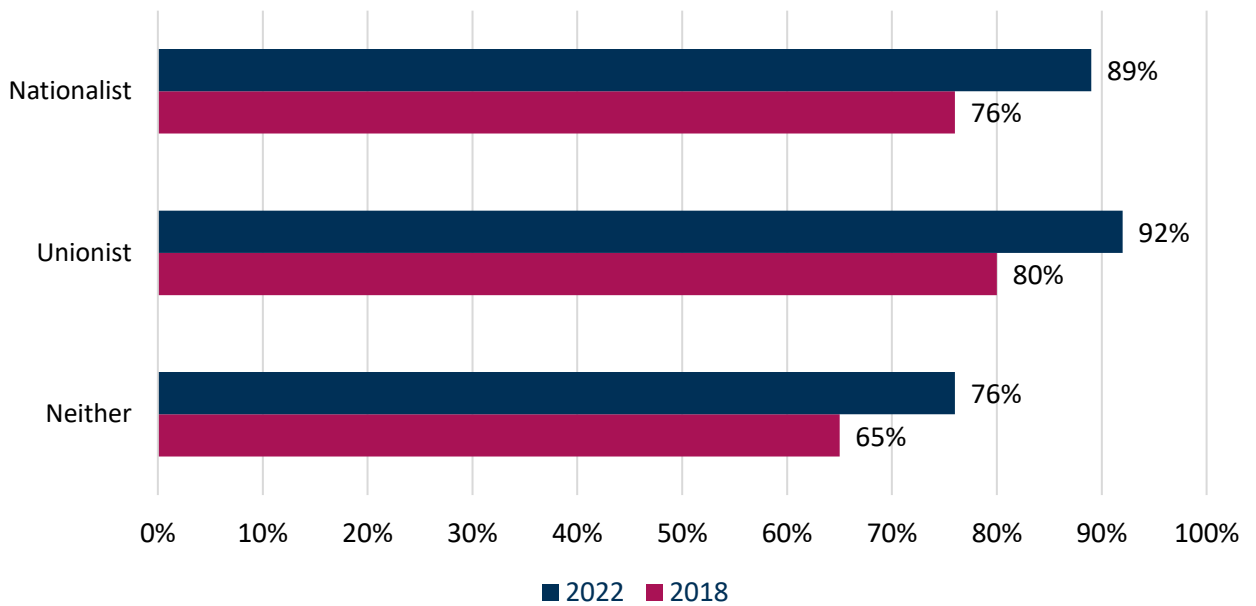


Base (unweighted): 2022 919, 2018 945

Northern Ireland – political affiliation

Additional questions were asked in Northern Ireland to explore how completeness here might vary according to citizens' political affiliation. Completeness is higher among than those who identify as Nationalist or Unionist than it is among those who do not hold any of the listed political identities (Unionist, Loyalist, Republican, Nationalist).

Local government register completeness in Northern Ireland by political affiliation, 2018 vs 2022



Base (unweighted): 2022 899, 2018 945

Accuracy

	2011	2012	2014	2015	2018	2022	Change from 2018
Great Britain	85%	-	87%	91%	89%	88%	-1
England	-	-	-	90%	89%	88%	-1
Scotland	-	-	-	91%	86%	88%	+2
Wales	-	-	-	93%	89%	89%	0
Northern Ireland	-	78%	-	87%	80%	86%	+6

Accuracy has remained stable since 2018 in England, Scotland and Wales but has seen a notable increase in Northern Ireland, bringing it into line with the figures for Great Britain. Households where the current residents have lived at the address for less time, and those renting from a private landlord, continue to be more likely to have inaccurate register entries linked to them.

Type of errors

In analysing the accuracy of the electoral registers, a number of different types of error can be identified. These errors are then categorised as either a 'major' or 'minor' error:

A minor error would not prevent someone from casting their vote (e.g. a misspelt name). A major error is any of the following:

- entries which refer to individuals who no longer live at the given address

- entries which may prevent an individual casting their vote at a polling station (e.g. an incorrect name)
- errors that would enable an ineligible person to vote (e.g. an incorrect date of birth for someone under the age of 18)

A breakdown of the types of errors used to calculate the accuracy of the registers can be found in the table below.

EMBARGOED

Types of error on the December 2018 and December 2022 local government registers for Great Britain and Northern Ireland

	Great Britain		England		Scotland		Wales		Northern Ireland	
	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022
Major errors total	11.2%	11.7%	8.7%	11.7%	10.9%	12.1%	8.8%	10.8%	20.1%	14.1%
Major errors – (a)										
No corresponding name taken at address	10.4%	9.8%	7.7%	9.8%	10.0%	9.7%	8.2%	9.3%	18.7%	13.0%
Major errors – (b)	0.7%	1.1%	0.6%	1.2%	0.5%	0.8%	0.2%	0.6%	0.7%	0.7%
First name and/or surname wrong on register	0.4%	0.7%	0.3%	0.7%	0.2%	0.5%	0.2%	0.3%	0.5%	0.5%
First name and/or surname missing on register	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
UK/Irish/ Commonwealth marker present	0.3%	0.5%	0.3%	0.5%	0.3%	0.4%	0.0%	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%
Major errors – (c)	0.5%	0.7%	0.4%	0.7%	0.4%	1.6%	0.4%	0.9%	0.6%	0.2%
Name on register corresponds to ineligible name on survey	0.2%	0.3%	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.5%	0.2%
Attainers - DOB missing or wrong	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	1.6%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%
EU citizens marker missing	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%
Accurate with minor errors	9.1%	8.8%	7.9%	8.9%	9.6%	14.3%	7.9%	9.0%	5.6%	7.6%
First name /surname on register misspelled	1.2%	0.7%	1.0%	0.7%	0.7%	0.4%	0.6%	0.9%	0.9%	0.7%

First name /surname on register incomplete	0.5%	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	0.2%	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Middle name missing from register	6.4%	6.6%	4.6%	6.1%	7.1%	12.2%	6.1%	6.6%	2.8%	6.0%
Middle name or initials misspelled or incomplete on register	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
Middle name or initial wrong on register	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.2%	0.5%	0.1%
Person does not have a middle name but middle name on registers (respondents only)	1.3%	1.1%	1.3%	1.2%	1.3%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.0%	0.6%
Surname is/ assumed to be previous surname	0.5%	0.3%	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	0.5%	0.5%	0.1%
First/middle/surname in different order on register	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
DoB earlier on register for attainer	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Bases (unweighted): Great Britain 2018 9,155, Great Britain 2022 9,478, Northern Ireland 2018 1,783, Northern Ireland 2022 1,975

Demographic characteristics

Examining demographic variation of inaccuracies on the electoral registers is challenging. This is because we cannot record demographic details for an individual who is registered but no longer lives at the address. The analysis below takes into account household data where a resident was interviewed. However, this data still only presents a limited picture and so must be treated with caution.

Tenure

Accuracy by tenure follows a similar pattern to completeness. In Great Britain owner-occupier households are the most likely to have accurate register entries (96%). In Northern Ireland, 89% of those who own their home outright have accurate register entries, as do 90% of those who have a mortgage or shared ownership.

Accuracy of local government electoral registers by tenure

	Great Britain		England		Scotland		Wales		Northern Ireland	
	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022
Owner occupier	95%	96%	96%	96%	90%	94%	94%	95%	86%	89%
Buying on mortgage/ shared ownership	95%	91%	95%	91%	94%	89%	93%	92%	86%	90%
Private renter	81%	77%	81%	78%	79%	58%	82%	78%	61%	75%
Local Authority renter	92%	88%	92%	87%	91%	94%	91%	88%		
Housing Association renter	91%	90%	91%	90%	86%	91%	91%	85%	82%	83%

Bases (unweighted): Great Britain 8,816, Northern Ireland 1,881

Socio-economic group

Social grade is also calculated at the household level, based on the occupation of the chief income earner. Whereas in 2018, there was a slight negative correlation between social grade and accuracy, in 2022 accuracy was almost entirely flat across the social grades in both Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Accuracy of local government registers by socio-economic group

	Great Britain		England		Scotland		Wales		Northern Ireland	
	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022
AB	94%	97%	95%	91%	89%	91%	93%	92%	86%	99%
C1	93%	98%	93%	91%	93%	87%	96%	93%	85%	98%

C2	93%	98%	94%	93%	90%	90%	95%	93%	82%	98%
DE	89%	98%	89%	89%	88%	92%	86%	88%	78%	98%

Bases (unweighted): Great Britain 8,449, Northern Ireland 1,708

Length of time at address

Accuracy in both Great Britain and Northern Ireland follows the same pattern as completeness when looking at how long households have occupied their accommodation, with higher levels of inaccuracy at households with a more recent change in residency.

Accuracy of local government registers by duration at address

	Great Britain		England		Scotland		Wales		Northern Ireland	
	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022
Up to one year	56%	54%	57%	54%					22%	38%
More than one, up to two years	93%	84%	93%	84%	71%	67%	73%	69%	58%	85%
More than two, up to five years	94%	91%	94%	91%	97%	88%	92%	93%	84%	87%
More than five, up to 10 years	96%	94%	96%	94%	98%	91%	93%	91%	90%	91%
More than 10, up to 16 years	95%	94%	95%	94%	92%	94%	96%	92%	90%	93%
Over 16 years	95%	95%	96%	95%	91%	93%	95%	96%	87%	89%

Bases (unweighted): Great Britain 8,342, Northern Ireland 1,685

Looking ahead: addressing the challenges of accuracy and completeness

The evidence from this research shows that although there have been improvements in some areas since our previous analysis of the 2018 electoral registers, as many as 8 million people across the UK are still not correctly registered to vote.

This means they may not be able to vote when elections take place, and they are not counted at all when constituency boundaries are set. It also means that at the most critical time ahead of major elections, Electoral Registration Officers are required to use their limited resources and capacity to respond to applications that are needed so that registers can catch up with population movement and eligible voters are able to participate.

This evidence continues to highlight the need to develop new approaches to electoral registration that will bring sustained long-term improvements. This will require governments to bring forward legislation. We set out below the case for change, and explain our own proposals for how EROs can benefit from access to information from other public service organisations.

The current system of electoral registration is not working well for voters or Electoral Registration Officers

We and many others – including [Parliamentary committees](#), [professional associations](#) and [academics](#) – have repeatedly highlighted evidence that illustrates the impact of the current failing systems of electoral registration in the UK:

- [Evidence from our programme of electoral registration research](#) over more than a decade continues to show that up to 8 million people across the UK are either missing from the registers or incorrectly registered, meaning they are unable to have their say. We have consistently found that some specific groups of people are significantly less likely to be correctly registered, particularly young people, people who live in private rented accommodation, and those who have recently changed address. The number of people it is estimated are not correctly registered is more than the combined adult population of Scotland and Wales, and would be equivalent to more than 100 UK Parliament constituencies.
- Although changes to the annual canvass in Great Britain have helped to reduce the resource and capacity taken up through unnecessarily chasing households with no change, there is [evidence from the most recent annual canvass in 2022](#) to suggest that it is a significantly less effective mechanism for identifying 16- and 17-year-olds who are newly eligible to register, compared with older people. There is no evidence from our most recent research on the 2022 registers that canvass reform has led to any significant improvement in the accuracy or completeness of the registers for Great Britain.
- Our [analysis of the most recent canvass in Northern Ireland](#) in 2021 highlighted that, in its current format, the canvass is not an efficient tool for helping to maintain an accurate and complete electoral register, both for the Chief Electoral Officer and for voters. Although the improvements in the accuracy and completeness of the 2022 registers highlighted in this research are the result of the 2021 canvass, we have previously seen subsequent declines between canvasses when the continuous registration system is operating. The registration system continues to struggle to capture population movement in the period between each canvass, and the canvass process itself requires the Electoral Office to contact and receive a response from all eligible electors, even if they were registered before the canvass and their details had not changed.

- Our [recent research on attitudes to registration](#) has highlighted that people continue to face both practical and knowledge barriers to registering to vote under the current system. These include misunderstanding about the registration process and incorrect assumptions about whether people are already registered, and low levels of urgency or priority to register to vote. Some people don't realise that they need to actively apply to register to vote, don't know how to apply, and don't view registration as a priority when they change address.
- An accessible online registration process means it is easy for people to apply to register, update or confirm their registration throughout the year, and to do so close to the deadline for an election. But, as we highlighted in our [report on the 2019 UK Parliamentary general election](#), this means that large volumes of electoral registration activity are focused in the weeks leading up to major electoral events, which significantly increases risks to well-run elections.

Levels of accuracy and completeness are unlikely to improve without significant changes to the registration system

[Evidence from our programme of electoral registration research](#) over more than a decade shows that a large number of people remain incorrectly registered. There is little evidence to suggest that levels of accuracy and completeness are likely to significantly improve without major changes to the current electoral registration system.

The introduction of online registration since 2014 (and since 2018 in Northern Ireland) has improved access and made it easier for people to register to vote ahead of specific electoral events, but there is no evidence that it has had a lasting significant positive impact on overall levels of accuracy or completeness. The most recent data from the 2022 registers shows no significant improvement in Great Britain in the proportion of people who are correctly registered, even if the decline in rates of accuracy and completeness identified in previous studies appears to have at least paused.

We have highlighted since 2019 [feasibility studies](#) which showed how the UK's governments could support EROs to improve accuracy and completeness of electoral registers – and improve efficiency to alleviate resource burdens – by giving them access to high-quality data from other public service organisations. This would allow EROs to take advantage of the many millions of transactions that voters already have with major public sector organisations, and could sit alongside and enhance existing annual canvass and year-round online registration activities.

The [Welsh Government](#) has already highlighted its intention to work with local authorities to design and pilot automatic voter registration for devolved elections, and we will continue to work with EROs and the Welsh Government to support further development of this important area of work.

The electoral community needs a clear plan to modernise electoral registration processes

Changes to the way elections and electoral registers are run should be considered in consultation with the whole electoral community. The experiences of voters, electoral administrators, and political parties and campaigners are important considerations in building a registration system that works well for everyone, and to ensure all eligible voters can have their say at elections.

Developing specific detailed proposals to move towards more automatic or automated systems of electoral registration would need to involve a broad range of partners:

- Data source organisations (for example, the DVLA/DVA, HMRC or HMPO) would bring their detailed understanding of the data and transactions that they currently manage, and would

need reassurance that data sharing is operationally straightforward, secure and legally compliant.

- Technical partners, including electoral management software suppliers and the IER digital service which is managed by officials at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) supported by the Government Digital Service, would need to work together with the data source organisations to ensure the secure and efficient management of data and transfer to individual EROs.
- EROs themselves would need to consider any changes to their teams and processes, so that they are able to integrate automatic or automated registration alongside the existing annual canvass and year-round online registration.
- Governments would need to legislate to create the necessary legal gateways for data sharing by data source organisations, and to specify the powers and duties of EROs to determine registration applications created using automatic or automated processes.
- The Information Commissioner's Office would need to provide advice and guidance on how to manage information risks relating to data sharing.

Making electoral registration more joined-up with other public services and citizen transactions raises particularly important questions relating to data protection and cyber security. In its February 2023 [written evidence](#) to the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (LUHC) Committee inquiry on electoral registration, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities highlighted measures already put in place to improve the robustness and security of the IER digital service alongside further recommendations for improvements – for example, in relation to cyber incident reporting in the local government sector. Similar or equivalent protections would also be needed for any systems established to manage the provision and use of data for automatic or automated electoral registration processes.

Recommendations: Delivering modern registration processes

The electoral community needs a clear plan to ensure that electoral registration processes are modernised so that people are registered and able to exercise their right to vote.

As part of this plan the UK, Scottish and Welsh governments should pass legislation that creates clear legal gateways for government departments and public sector bodies to share data on potentially eligible individuals with Electoral Registration Officers. This is needed to enable EROs to register them to vote directly, or to send them targeted invitations to register.

All three governments should require relevant departments and other public bodies to work with EROs to facilitate electoral registration using their data. A consistent approach between governments would ensure that changes are developed and delivered in a way which makes it as straightforward as possible for EROs and data source organisations, and ensures that voters are accurately included in the registers for all types of elections they are eligible to vote in.

The UK Government should develop [the existing Individual Electoral Registration \(IER\) digital service](#) so that it can support secure and efficient data sharing between data source organisations and EROs and their electoral management software systems, to enable modern registration processes to be delivered.

Case studies show how registration could be modernised

We have spoken to several UK Government departments, public bodies, universities and tenancy deposit schemes about the data they hold. We discussed whether and how data could be used to improve the accuracy and completeness of electoral registers. We particularly focused on how new approaches could improve registration rates for those groups of people who our research has

consistently shown are less likely to be registered correctly: attainers and other young people; people who live in private rented accommodation; and recent home-movers.

Depending on the quality and coverage of the data sets, and the specific data fields that are available, we have identified changes that could support different levels and forms of modernisation, ranging from automatic registration to forms of integrated or assisted registration where voters would still need to provide some information directly themselves.

The information that is currently required to register to vote includes the individual's name, address, date of birth, nationality and National Insurance number. An application must also state whether the voter wants to be included in [the open register](#) which is available to anyone who wants to buy a copy. Nationality information is required given the different franchises for different types of election, and in some cases – for example for Commonwealth citizens – applicants must also confirm that they have leave to enter or remain in the UK or that they don't require that leave. The National Insurance number is currently used as a way of verifying an individual's identity using Department for Work and Pensions records.

We have outlined below a range of options for new registration processes, which have been informed by our discussions with the above-mentioned departments and organisations. These case studies were not proposed by or formally agreed with the organisations involved.

One of the case studies – integrating electoral registration into the university student enrolment process – describes the current model operated by Cardiff University and Cardiff City Council to boost student registration levels. A further case study – the use of tenancy deposit scheme data to improve registration among private renters through signposting – is based on our discussions with representatives of the schemes, who have indicated their willingness to explore ways of taking this idea forward together with us. The other case studies, namely HM Passport Office, the Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency/Driver & Vehicle Agency and HM Revenue & Customs, are more speculative and reflect our views as to what might work in practice.

Further exploratory work would be needed to confirm the feasibility and delivery implications of these options.

Automatic registration

Automatic registration means that a data source organisation would provide EROs with the names and addresses of people who meet the eligibility criteria for registration. Because of the specific information required to register to vote, it is likely that very few data sources would be able to support fully automatic registration. The case study below highlights how the information required to be provided by British citizens as part of the passport application process could meet these requirements.

The ERO would contact these people at their home address to inform them that they will be added to the register, giving them the opportunity to request to be registered as an anonymous elector if their safety would be at risk from being registered as an ordinary elector. There would also be an opportunity for anyone else living at the address to provide evidence that the person is not in fact eligible to be registered there.

Subject to any further evidence that the person was not eligible to register, the ERO would add them directly to the register.

The data source organisation could limit the information it provided to EROs to include only new or recently updated records. This would give EROs reassurance that the data was current and should reduce the risk of duplicating registration activity with people who have already applied to register.

A centralised data processing service, similar to the current IER digital service, could be used to simplify the process of transferring data between data source organisations and EROs. This could also be used to screen potential new electors against current electoral registers, to minimise duplicate registrations.

Automatic registration of voters is common around the world. The Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust published a report in 2020 called [Is it time for Automatic Voter Registration in the UK?](#). According to the report, 40 countries considered to be liberal democracies have automatic registration. More [recent international comparative research](#) has shown that automatic registration not only increases the completeness of electoral registers, but also has a positive impact on accuracy.

According to the [International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance](#) (IDEA), in Argentina, Austria, Chile, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Japan, Italy, Spain, and South Korea (among others), the national electoral register is extracted from the population/civil registry.

The Australian Electoral Commission operates the [Federal Direct Enrolment and Update](#) program. It uses trusted data from other government agencies to add some individuals to the electoral roll or to update their electoral registration. It writes to individuals to inform them of the addition or update.

In five American states, according to the [National Conference of State Legislatures](#), when an individual applies for a driving licence and/or engages with another state agency, the data from the transaction is used to register them to vote. The voter receives a notification informing them that they will be registered unless they respond to it and decline the registration.

[In Canada](#) the National Register of Electors is updated using data from provincial and territorial drivers' licence, statistics and electoral agencies. [Elections Nova Scotia](#) updates the voters' list data from a variety of sources including the Registry of Motor Vehicles, the Nova Scotia Civic Address File and Elections Canada.

Automatic registration case study: using HM Passport Office data to improve registration among young people and recent home-movers

HM Passport Office (HMPO) is an agency of the Home Office which issues passports to British citizens. HMPO carries out identity checks to verify an applicant's identity, including with the Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency. Passport data is already shared with around 80 government departments and public sector bodies to carry out around 25 million identity checks each year.

HMPO forecasts that it will receive around 7.4 million passport applications in the next year. These applications will cover the full range of age groups, including applications from young people aged 16 and over applying for adult passports, and people who have recently moved home.

When someone applies for a passport, they must provide their name, date of birth, evidence of British citizenship, and home address for delivery of the passport. Although HMPO does not collect National Insurance numbers from applicants, it does undertake rigorous checks to verify applicants' identities, which could provide a sufficient level of assurance for an electoral registration application (equivalent to the assurance currently provided by checking National Insurance numbers).

Once HMPO has verified the identity of an applicant, this data could be transferred to EROs to automatically register them to vote. To do this, the ERO would write to the individual, informing them that they are going to be placed on the register, giving them the opportunity to correct any mistakes and to request to be registered anonymously if their safety would be at risk from being registered as an ordinary elector.

There would also be an opportunity for anyone else living at the address to provide evidence that the person is not eligible to be registered there.

Sharing HMPO data for electoral registration would require identifying an appropriate legal

gateway. Legislative changes are likely to be required to create a gateway.

Integrated registration applications

An integrated registration model means that registering to vote would be integrated within another public service transaction. At the end of those transactions, people would be asked whether they also want to register to vote.

If the individual confirms that they do, relevant data would be transferred to an electoral registration application. The individual would be provided with information about eligibility to vote and asked to confirm their eligibility in the same way they are currently required to when applying using the online electoral registration service. They would also provide any missing data, such as National Insurance number and nationality.

Once complete, this data would be transferred to the relevant ERO via the IER digital service. The ERO would process the application, add them to the register and write to confirm their addition.

As the individual would have recently updated their details as part of that public service transaction and provided the remaining data required for registration, EROs could be sure that their data, in particular their address, was up to date.

A number of countries and territories integrate electoral registration into other public service transactions.

[In Canada](#) citizens can agree to share their data with Elections Canada on their federal income tax return. New citizens can agree to share their data with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada on their citizenship applications.

According to the [National Conference of State Legislatures](#), in 17 American states and Washington DC, people are asked if they want to register when applying for a driving licence from the state's Department of Motor Vehicles and/or when interacting with another government agency. If they agree, their details are added to the state voter registration database.

Integrated registration case study: using university student enrolment to improve registration among young people

Cardiff University has integrated an electoral registration module into its online process for enrolling students. Enrolment tasks open in September and students have until the third week of October to complete them, including the electoral registration task.

The university holds name, address, date of birth and nationality data about students. It has developed a coding system for rooms in its halls of residence to assist the Electoral Services Team at Cardiff City Council to match the addresses with the council's systems.

Students are asked if they want to register to vote. If they do, the university asks them to provide the additional data needed to complete the registration application. This includes their National Insurance number and whether they want to be on the open/full register.

Once the university has the data needed for registration applications, it sends it to the Electoral Services Team at Cardiff City Council, which registers the students. Over 8,000 students' details are sent to Cardiff City Council annually and around 90% of these students are registered each year. Once the information is sent to the Council, Cardiff University deletes from its student record system any data relating to this process that it does not use internally.

Integrated registration case study: using the driving licence application or renewal process to improve registration among recent movers and young people

The Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) is the executive agency responsible for issuing driving licences in Great Britain. The Driver & Vehicle Agency (DVA) is the Northern Ireland Executive agency responsible for issuing driving licences in Northern Ireland.

Individuals interact with the agencies when they apply for a provisional driving licence, renew or reapply for their photocard driving licence at the end of the 10-year validity period, and when they move address. Both agencies hold name, address and date of birth data but not nationality data or National Insurance numbers.

DVLA receives around 1 million applications for provisional driving licences and around 4 million address change notifications each year. DVA processed just over 29,000 applications for provisional driving licences and around 26,000 name and address change notifications from April 2022 to March 2023.

An electoral registration prompt asking drivers if they want to register to vote could be integrated into these transactions. The data that DVLA or DVA already hold could be used to prepopulate an electoral registration application, with the driver filling in any missing data. The completed applications would then be sent to the relevant Electoral Registration Officer via the IER digital service, who would determine the application and register them. DVLA is currently developing an online account for new licences. A prompt could be integrated into users' accounts asking if they want to register to vote.

Assisted registration

Assisted registration means that a data source organisation would provide EROs with the names and addresses of people who may be eligible to vote, taking into account relevant information about the qualification criteria. The ERO would then write to those individuals inviting them to register. The invitation would ask them to provide any missing information needed to complete their registration (such as their nationality or their national insurance number), and give them the opportunity to request to be registered as an anonymous elector.

As with automatic registration, transferring only recent transactional data to the specific EROs would ensure that the data is current. A centralised data processing service, similar to the current IER digital service, could be used to simplify the process of transferring data and to reduce the potential for large numbers of records being shared with EROs.

It is common around the world for public bodies to share data to assist with voter registration, as shown in the examples in the automatic registration section above.

Elections New Brunswick (ENB) in Canada receives information on a regular basis about name and address changes from drivers' licence information. ENB carries out automated and manual checks to attempt to match that data with information on the Register of Electors. If a match is not found, ENB sends the individual a certification form and return envelope. The individual must complete the certification to confirm they meet the eligibility requirements to register and return it to ENB. They are then added to the register.

Assisted registration case study: using National Insurance data to improve registration of attainers

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) holds data about children whose parents or carers have claimed child benefit and/or tax-free childcare/thirty free hours of childcare. This includes the child's name and date of birth. When a child reaches the age of 15 years and 9 months, HMRC issues a National Insurance number (NINO) to them which is sent in the post to their parent or carer's address. It issues around 1.5 million NINOs each year.

HMRC does not keep a record of children's nationalities, and NINOs are issued regardless of nationality. HMRC does not have a record for every child in the UK as not every parent or carer makes a claim for child benefit or tax-free childcare/thirty free hours. HMRC is also dependent on claimants to keep their address details up-to-date.

Nonetheless, the name, address and date of birth of those young people issued with NINOs could be shared with EROs, who could then send an Invitation to Register to those young people, prepopulated with this data. They would be invited to provide their nationality information, sign the declaration and post the completed application to the ERO.

A further option would be to develop an online process for providing the missing information, with the individual scanning a QR code included in the Invitation to Register letter. This could provide immediate online access to a pre-populated application on the [register to vote digital service](#), which could then be completed by the individual and processed electronically through the existing IER infrastructure.

Sharing a child's name, date of birth and NINO for electoral registration purposes would require the identification of an appropriate legal gateway and need to adhere to data protection legislation. It would require consideration and agreement by HMRC and the Department for Work and Pensions. It may also require legislative change to create a legal gateway for data sharing for this specific purpose.

Signposting registration

Signposting registration means that an individual would be provided with information about registering to vote during a transaction with, or in a communication from, an organisation or public body.

This could include a prompt at the end of a transaction or in a communication directing the individual to the UK Government's [Register to Vote website](#). The individual would then complete the usual steps in that process to apply to register and their data would be sent to the Electoral Registration Officer for their area via the IER Digital Service. This process of signposting could work in a number of scenarios – for example, at the end of a transaction when applying for a driving licence or a new passport, or when an individual is updating their details or in communication with a government department or agency.

Such an approach does not require legal change. It should therefore be explored now, even if the other innovations discussed above follow in the future.

Signposting registration case study: using tenancy deposit scheme data to improve registration among private renters

Landlords in the private rented sector are required to protect tenants' deposits with a government approved tenancy deposit scheme. There are three authorised tenancy deposit schemes which operate in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, protecting around 4.5 million deposits and representing around 6 million tenants. Around half of all deposits are protected through custodial schemes which hold the deposit for the duration of the tenancy. The balance of protected deposits are held and managed by the landlord or letting agent via insured-backed schemes and where schemes have far less interaction with the tenant.

The schemes communicate with tenants via email at the start of the tenancy to confirm that their deposit is protected, and then at various points throughout the tenancy, but mainly when the tenant is seeking to gain return of their deposit from the scheme (custodial scheme), or the scheme has unprotected the deposit (insured scheme). Prompts with information about

registering and a link to the Register to Vote website could be embedded into these communications, and on scheme websites or mobile apps.

All schemes have indicated that they are open to exploring ways in which they could work with the Commission to improve registration rates among private renters.

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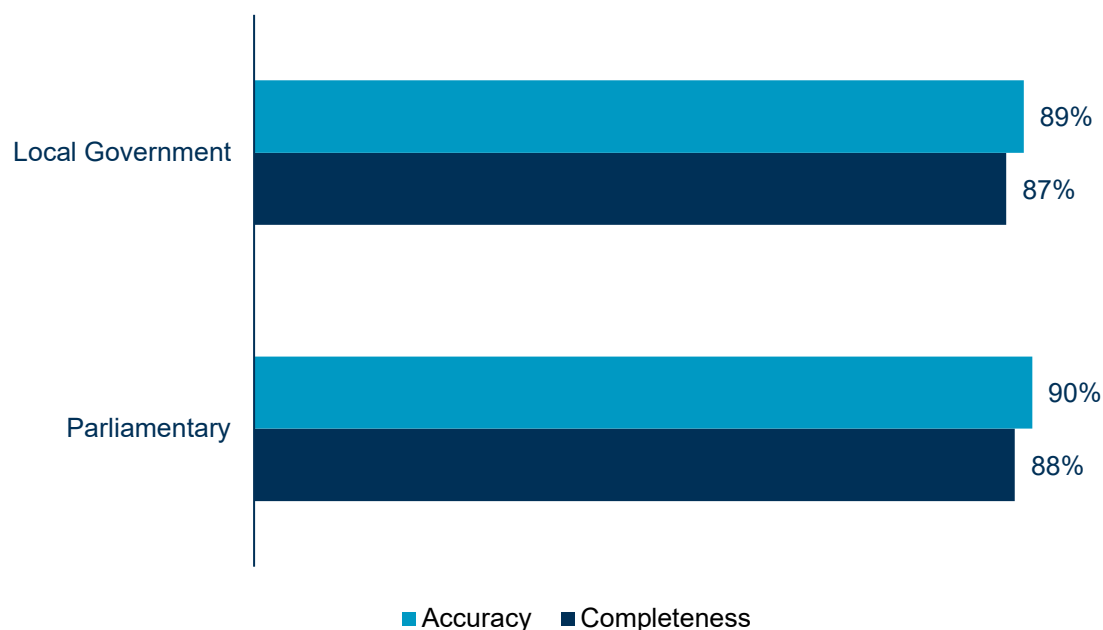
The December 2022 electoral registers in Wales

This factsheet should be read in conjunction with the main report: The Electoral Commission Accuracy and Completeness report 2022 Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The results from this wave show that in Wales in December 2022:

- Local government registers were 87% complete and 89% accurate
- Parliamentary registers were 88% complete and 90% accurate

Figure 1.1: Completeness and accuracy of local government and parliamentary registers in Wales



Base (unweighted): Parliamentary: Completeness 1,410; Accuracy 1,429, Local Government: Completeness 1,485; Accuracy 1,461

Completeness

The local government and parliamentary register in Wales have both seen improvements in completeness since 2018, each increasing by six percentage points. The local government register is now 87% complete (compared with 81% in 2018) and the parliamentary register is now 88% complete (compared with 82%).

Type of completeness errors

Completeness means that every person who is entitled to have an entry on the electoral register is registered. It refers to the percentage of eligible people who are registered at their current address.

A variety of errors can be identified when analysing the completeness of the electoral register. These are categorised as either 'major' or 'minor' errors.

Major errors can be split into three different categories:

- A. The proportion of eligible residents who are currently not included on the register at their current address (i.e., the surveyed address).
- B. Errors relating to someone's name may prevent an individual from casting their vote at a polling station which mean they are not truly registered (e.g., the first name or surname).
- C. Errors which would prevent an eligible elector from casting their vote by suggesting they are ineligible (e.g., an incorrect nationality marker on the parliamentary register or a recorded date of birth which is later than an attainer's birthday).

Minor errors are those which would not prevent someone from casting their vote (for example, an entry with a spelling error). Completeness errors in Wales are broadly similar to Great Britain as a whole. The highest proportion of major errors remain due to eligible residents not being registered at their current address, similarly to 2018. Minor errors are found for 8.8% of eligible residents in Wales.

Table 1: Types of completeness errors on the local government registers in Wales

	Wales		Great Britain	
	2018	2022	2018	2022
Major errors total	18.5%	13.2%	16.9%	14.1%
Major errors – (a)				
Living at address but not named on register	18.2%	12.4%	16.5%	13.4%
Major errors – (b)	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%	0.7%
First name and/or surname wrong on register	0.3%	0.3%	0.5%	0.7%
First name and/or surname missing on register	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Middle name wrong on register (where necessary)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Major errors – (c)	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.1%

Incorrect nationality marker that excludes from a register	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
DoB on register later than actual DoB	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.1%
Minor errors total	11.5%	8.8%	8.2%	8.6%
First name/surname on register misspelled	0.9%	0.8%	1.3%	0.6%
First name/surname on register incomplete	0.6%	0.3%	0.5%	0.3%
Middle name missing from register	9.1%	6.4%	7.2%	6.5%
Middle name or initials misspelled or incomplete on register	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.2%
Middle name or initial wrong on register	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%
Person does not have a middle name but middle name on registers (respondents only)	0.6%	0.6%	1.3%	1.1%
Surname is/assumed to be previous surname	0.3%	0.5%	0.5%	0.3%

Base (unweighted): December 2018: Wales – 1,368; GB – 9,679

Base (unweighted): December 2022: Wales – 1,485; GB – 9,495

Patterns have remained the same since 2018 among key demographic groups, with lower levels of registration among younger people, both private and local authority renters and those who have recently moved to their address. As shown in Table 2, the most substantial increases have been among younger people, private renters and those belonging to the DE social group.

Table 2: Local government register completeness by key characteristics in Wales

		Wales		Great Britain	
		2018	2022	2018	2022
Urban/rural	Urban	81%	87%	83%	85%
	Rural	81%	86%	85%	89%
Gender	Male	80%	86%	83%	85%

	Female	82%	87%	83%	87%
Age	18 - 34	66%	79%	68%	71%
	35 - 44	78%	82%	82%	84%
	45 - 54	85%	90%	90%	91%
	55 - 64	92%	91%	90%	94%
	65+	92%	97%	94%	96%
Tenure	Owner occupied	91%	94%	91%	95%
	Buying on mortgage/shared ownership	78%	84%	86%	88%
	Private renters	60%	73%	58%	65%
	Local authority renters	86%	73%	84%	79%
	Housing Association renter	76%	82%	82%	79%
Socio-economic group	AB	87%	87%	86%	89%
	C1	82%	86%	85%	86%
	C2	82%	89%	80%	86%
	DE	76%	85%	80%	81%
Adults in household	1	82%	90%	86%	86%
	2	83%	87%	84%	88%
	3 - 5	77%	85%	81%	82%
	6+	77%	85%	78%	79%
Duration at address	Up to 1 year	45%	53%	36%	39%
	1 - 2 years	45%	53%	71%	72%
	2 - 5 years	83%	83%	84%	82%
	5 - 10 years	83%	86%	90%	91%
	10 - 16 years	88%	91%	88%	92%
	16 years +	91%	95%	92%	95%
Nationality	UK and RoI	82%	88%	86%	87%

EU			54%	70%
	58%*	70%*		
Commonwealth			62%	66%

Base (unweighted): December 2018: Wales – 1,368; GB – 9,679

Base (unweighted): December 2022: Wales – 1,485; GB – 9,495 * Warning – small bases sizes.

Accuracy

The table below shows the types of error found on the December 2022 local government registers. As for Great Britain overall, the highest proportion of major accuracy errors (those which would prevent someone from voting, or incorrectly allow someone to vote) relate to entries where the individual on the register no longer lives at the address (9.3%). In Wales, 9.0% of entries contain minor errors which would not prevent someone from voting.

Table 3: Type of errors in accuracy on local government registers in Wales

	Wales		Great Britain	
	2018	2022	2018	2022
Major errors total	8.8%	10.8%	11.2%	11.7%
Major errors – (a)				
No corresponding name taken at address	8.2%	9.3%	10.4%	9.8%
Major errors – (b)	0.2%	0.6%	0.7%	1.1%
First name and/or surname wrong on register	0.2%	0.3%	0.4%	0.7%
First name and/or surname missing on register	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
UK/Irish/Commonwealth marked as qualifying foreign national present	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%	0.5%
Major errors – (c)	0.4%	0.9%	0.5%	0.7%
Name on register corresponds to ineligible name on survey	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%	0.3%
Attainers – DOB missing or wrong	0.0%	0.8%	0.1%	0.2%
Qualifying foreign national with marker missing	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%
Minor errors total	7.9%	9.0%	9.1%	8.8%

First name/surname on register misspelled	0.6%	0.9%	1.2%	0.7%
First name/surname on register incomplete	0.4%	0.3%	0.5%	0.3%
Middle name missing from register	6.1%	6.6%	6.4%	6.6%
Middle name or initials misspelled or incomplete on register	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.2%
Middle name or initial wrong on register	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%
Person does not have a middle name but middle name on registers (respondents only)	0.6%	0.6%	1.3%	1.1%
Surname is/assumed to be previous surname	0.2%	0.5%	0.5%	0.3%
First/middle/surname in different order on register	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%
DoB earlier on register for attainer	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Bases (unweighted): Great Britain: Dec 2022 (9,479); Dec 2018 (9,155)

Bases (unweighted): Wales: Dec 2022 (1,461); Dec 2018 (1,283)

Patterns in Wales among key demographics are similar to Great Britain as a whole. Private renters and those where residents have been living at their address for a shorter duration are less likely to have an accurate entry on the register.

Table 4: Accuracy of local government register by key demographics in Wales

		Wales		Great Britain	
		2018	2022	2018	2022
Urban/Rural	Urban	88%	89%	88%	88%
	Rural	91%	89%	91%	91%
Tenure	Owner occupied	94%	95%	95%	96%
	Buying on mortgage/shared ownership	93%	92%	95%	91%
	Private renters	82%	78%	81%	77%
	Local authority renters	91%	88%*	92%	88%

	Housing Association renter	91%	85%	91%	90%
Socio-economic group	AB	93%	92%	94%	91%
	C1	96%	93%	93%	91%
	C2	95%	93%	93%	93%
	DE	86%	88%	89%	89%
Duration at address	Up to 1 year			56%	53%
		73%	69%		
	1 - 2 years			93%	84%
	2 - 5 years	92%	93%	94%	91%
	5 - 10 years	93%	91%	96%	94%
	10 - 16 years	96%	92%	95%	94%
	16 years +	95%	96%	95%	95%

Bases (unweighted): Great Britain: Dec 2022 (9,479); Dec 2018 (9,155)

Bases (unweighted): Wales: Dec 2022 (1,461); Dec 2018 (1,283)

Quantifying accuracy and completeness

Using the percentage figures produced from this research, it is possible to estimate the number of people in the population of Wales who are not correctly registered, or who have inaccuracies in their register entries. These estimates are provided in Table 5.

However, it is important to be aware that these can only be estimates for several reasons – these are detailed in the main report, which should be read in conjunction with this factsheet to ensure the limitations of these estimates are understood.

Table 5: Quantifying accuracy and completeness in Wales

		December 2018	December 2022
Completeness	Local government register	406,000 - 557,000	276,000 - 404,000
	Parliamentary registers	376,000 - 522,000	232,000 - 349,000
Accuracy	Local government register	197,000 - 333,000	205,000 - 304,000
	Parliamentary registers	194,000 - 332,000	179,000 - 271,000

It should also be noted that the range presented above does not mean that there should be an additional 276,000 - 404,000 entries on the register. Those within this 'not correctly registered' total will include those who are included on the register but at a previous address (an inaccurate entry).

David Rees AS
Dirprwy Llywydd
Cadeirydd, Pwyllgor y Llywydd
Senedd Cymru
Bae Caerdydd
Caerdydd
CF99 1SN

18 Hydref 2023

Annwyl Cadeirydd,

Prif Weithredwr y Comisiwn Etholiadol

Rwyf yn ysgrifennu atoch i'ch hysbysu y bydd Shaun McNally yn camu i lawr o'i rôl fel Prif Weithredwr y Comisiwn Etholiadol ar 30 Tachwedd 2023. Bydd Rob Vincent, aelod presennol o Fwrdd y Comisiwn, yn ymgymryd â rôl Prif Weithredwr Interim, hyd nes y gwneir penodiad parhaol. Bydd recriwtio yn dechrau cyn gynted â phosibl. Bydd David Moran, Cyfarwyddwr Ariannol Interim y Comisiwn, yn ymgymryd dros do â rôl y swyddog cyfrifo.

Mae Shaun wedi cyflawni llawer yn ei 18 mis yn y Comisiwn, yn mynd i'r afael â'r materion pwysicaf yn gyflym ac yn fedrus. Yn benodol, mae wedi arwain y Comisiwn wrth i'r sefydliad draddodi'r Ddeddf Etholiadau Llywodraeth y DU, gan fwrw ymlaen â'r gweithredu'n gyflym a chan roi ystyriaeth ofalus i bleidleiswyr, ymgyrchwyr a gweinyddwyr. Mae hefyd wedi ceisio buddsoddi yn nyfodol y Comisiwn, gan nodi blaenoriaethau a hyrwyddo buddsoddiad yn seilwaith TG y Comisiwn, seiber-ddiogelwch, a datblygu a chefnogi staff dawnus ac ymroddedig y Comisiwn. Rydw i'n ddiolchgar i Shaun am bopeth y mae wedi ei gyflawni yn ystod ei gyfnod gyda'r Comisiwn

Mae Rob Vincent, a fydd yn ymgymryd y rôl interim ym mis Rhagfyr, wedi gwasanaethu fel aelod o Fwrdd y Comisiwn Etholiadol ers Ionawr 2016, sydd â dealltwriaeth drylwyr o waith y Comisiwn. Roedd Rob yn Gyfarwyddwr anweithredol Yr Adran Gymunedau a Llywodraeth Leol rhwng 2008-2010, yn Brif Weithredwr Cyngor Kirklees rhwng 2004 a 2010 ac arweiniodd yr ymyriad i Gyngor Doncaster, ar gais yr Ysgrifennydd Gwladol rhwng 2010 a 2011.

Gwn fod Rob yn rhannu fy ymrwymiad ac ymrwymiad y Bwrdd, i baratoi y Comisiwn at y sialensiau o'm blaenau, a chefnogi etholwyr, gweinyddwyr, pleidiau ac ymgyrchwyr wrth i ni baratoi tuag at etholiadau mis Mai a thu hwnt.

Roeddwn am roi gwybod ichi am y newidiadau hyn cyn inni ysgrifennu at randdeiliaid y Comisiwn yn ehangach gyda'r newyddion ddydd Gwener. Os oes gennych unrhyw gwestiynau, mae croeso i chi gysylltu â Ella Downing, Uwch Gynghorydd Cyfathrebu ar edowning@electoralcommission.org.uk.

Yr eiddoch yn gywir,



John Pullinger
Cadeirydd

David Rees MS
Deputy Llywydd
Chair, Llywydd's Committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

18 October 2023

Dear Chair,

Electoral Commission Chief Executive

I am writing to inform you that Shaun McNally will be stepping down from his role as Chief Executive of the Electoral Commission on 30 November 2023. Rob Vincent, currently a member of the Commission Board, will take on the role of Interim Chief Executive until a permanent replacement is appointed. Recruitment will begin as soon as possible. David Moran, the Commission's Interim Finance Director, will temporarily take on the role of accounting officer.

Shaun has achieved a great deal in his 18 months at the Commission, addressing the most pressing issues quickly and skilfully. In particular, he has guided the Commission through its delivery of the UK Government's Elections Act, taking forward implementation at pace and with careful consideration for voters, campaigners and administrators. He has also sought to invest in the Commission's future, identifying priorities and championing investment in the Commission's IT infrastructure, cyber security, and the development and support of the Commission's talented and committed staff. I am grateful to Shaun for all he has achieved in his time at the Commission.

Rob Vincent, who takes up the interim role from December, has served as a member of the Electoral Commission Board since January 2016, and has a thorough understanding of the Commission's work. Rob was a non-executive Director of DCLG from 2008-2010, Chief Executive of Kirklees Council from 2004 until 2010 and led the intervention into Doncaster Council, at the request of the Secretary of State between 2010 and 2011.

I know Rob shares my commitment and that of the Board, to readying the Commission for the challenges ahead, and supporting voters, administrators, parties and campaigners as we prepare for the May elections and beyond.

I wanted to inform you of these changes before we write to Commission stakeholders more widely with the news on Friday. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with Ella Downing, Senior Communications Adviser at edowning@electoralcommission.org.uk.

Yours sincerely,



John Pullinger
Chair