

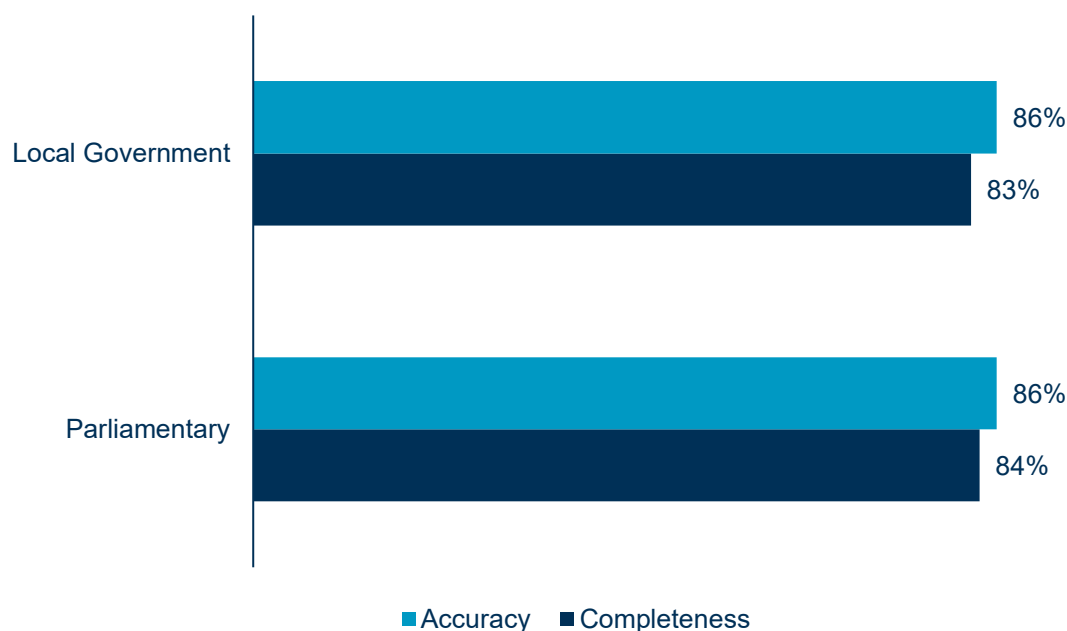
## The December 2022 electoral registers in Northern Ireland

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 Northern Ireland in December 2022:

- Local government registers were 83% complete and 86% accurate
- Parliamentary registers were 84% complete and 86% accurate

**Figure 1.1: Completeness and Accuracy of local government and parliamentary registers in Northern Ireland**



*Base (unweighted): Parliamentary: Completeness 1,889; Accuracy 1,940, Local Government: Completeness 1,948; Accuracy 1,975*

### Completeness

The level of completeness of Northern Ireland registers has increased substantially since 2018. Both the local government and parliamentary registers have improved by 10 percentage points, standing at 83% complete and 84% complete respectively. These improvements are likely a result of the 2021 canvass in Northern Ireland. While not part of

the canvass, the Northern Irish Covid-19 recovery scheme might have also incentivised the public to register.<sup>1</sup>

## 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).

The highest proportion of major errors in Northern Ireland remains due to eligible residents not being registered at their current address (16.9%), a significant decrease from 2018 (26.7%). Minor errors are found in 7.1% of entries.

**Table 1: Types of completeness errors on the local government registers in Northern Ireland**

	Northern Ireland		Great Britain	
	2018	2022	2018	2022
<b>Major errors total</b>	<b>27.2%</b>	<b>17.4%</b>	<b>16.9%</b>	<b>14.1%</b>

<sup>1</sup> In the 2021 canvass, The Electoral Office of Northern Ireland ran a large registration campaign, which sent information leaflets to all homes and pre-populated registration forms to Northern Ireland Housing Executive tenants and electors aged over 75 to encourage paper registration; setting up digital kiosks and registration clinics in local council areas; and a multimedia campaign targeting those who are less likely to be registered or face additional barriers to registering. As part of a Covid-19 recovery scheme, people in Northern Ireland were also offered a 'Spend Local' £100 voucher. Although the scheme was not associated with the canvass, some Executive Ministers linked eligibility for the scheme to being registered to vote and the register was one of the data sets used to check applications for the vouchers. More details are available here: <https://www.eoni.org.uk/>

<b>Major errors – (a)</b>				
Living at address but not named on register	26.7%	16.9%	16.5%	13.4%
<b>Major errors – (b)</b>				
First name and/or surname wrong on register	0.7%	0.5%	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)	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Major errors – (c)</b>				
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%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
<b>Minor errors total</b>				
First name/surname on register misspelled	1.2%	0.7%	1.3%	0.6%
First name/surname on register incomplete	0.3%	0.0%	0.5%	0.3%
Middle name missing from register	3.8%	5.5%	7.2%	6.5%
Middle name or initials misspelled or incomplete on register	0.5%	0.4%	0.0%	0.2%
Middle name or initial wrong on register	0.4%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
Person does not have a middle name but middle name on registers (respondents only)	0.4%	0.6%	1.3%	1.1%
Surname is/assumed to be previous surname	0.8%	0.1%	0.5%	0.3%

Bases (Unweighted): Great Britain: Dec 2022 (9,495); Dec 2018 (9, 679)

Bases (Unweighted): Northern Ireland: Dec 2022 (1,948); Dec 2018 (1,946)

Patterns among key demographics have remained the same since 2018, with lower levels of registration among young people, private renters and those living at their address for a shorter duration. Reflecting the substantial increase in completeness at the national level, most demographics groups have also experienced an uplift, especially when people living in rural areas, younger people, renters and social economic group DE.

**Table 2: Local government register completeness by key characteristics in Northern Ireland**

		Northern Ireland		Great Britain	
		2018	2022	2018	2022
<b>Urban/rural</b>	Urban	70%	<b>81%</b>	83%	<b>85%</b>
	Rural	76%	<b>85%</b>	85%	<b>89%</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	72%	<b>81%</b>	83%	<b>85%</b>
	Female	73%	<b>84%</b>	83%	<b>87%</b>
<b>Age</b>	18 - 34	51%	<b>68%</b>	68%	<b>71%</b>
	35 - 44	70%	<b>83%</b>	82%	<b>84%</b>
	45 - 54	81%	<b>87%</b>	90%	<b>91%</b>
	55 - 64	85%	<b>90%</b>	90%	<b>94%</b>
	65+	94%	<b>95%</b>	94%	<b>96%</b>
<b>Tenure</b>	Own outright	88%	<b>91%</b>	91%	<b>95%</b>
	Mortgage/Shared ownership	72%	<b>82%</b>	86%	<b>88%</b>
	Private renters	38%	<b>46%</b>	58%	<b>65%</b>
	Local authority renters			84%	<b>79%</b>
	Housing Association renter	64%	<b>78%</b>	82%	<b>79%</b>
<b>Socio-economic group</b>	AB	80%	<b>88%</b>	86%	<b>89%</b>
	C1	72%	<b>82%</b>	85%	<b>86%</b>
	C2	76%	<b>83%</b>	80%	<b>86%</b>
	DE	63%	<b>78%</b>	80%	<b>81%</b>
<b>Adults in household</b>	1	72%	<b>80%</b>	86%	<b>86%</b>
	2	73%	<b>83%</b>	84%	<b>88%</b>

	3 - 5			81%	<b>82%</b>
	6+	73%	<b>83%</b>	78%	<b>79%</b>
<b>Duration at address</b>	Up to 1 year			36%	<b>39%</b>
	1 - 2 years	19%	<b>34%</b>	71%	<b>72%</b>
	2 - 5 years	61%	<b>76%</b>	84%	<b>82%</b>
	5 - 10 years	78%	<b>82%</b>	90%	<b>91%</b>
	10 - 16 years	80%	<b>92%</b>	88%	<b>92%</b>
	16 years +	90%	<b>92%</b>	92%	<b>95%</b>
<b>Nationality</b>	UK and RoI	74%	<b>84%</b>	86%	<b>87%</b>
	EU			54%	<b>70%</b>
	Commonwealth	45%	<b>41%</b>	62%	<b>66%</b>

Bases (Unweighted): Great Britain: Dec 2022 (9,495); Dec 2018 (9, 679)

Bases (Unweighted): Northern Ireland: Dec 2022 (1,948); Dec 2018 (1,946)

## 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 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 (12.9%). In Northern Ireland, 7.6% of entries contain minor errors which would not prevent someone from voting.

**Table 3: Type of errors in accuracy on local government registers in Northern Ireland**

	<b>Northern Ireland</b>		<b>Great Britain</b>	
	<b>2018</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Major errors total</b>	<b>20.1%</b>	<b>14.1%</b>	<b>11.2%</b>	<b>11.7%</b>
<b>Major errors – (a)</b>				
No corresponding name taken at address	<b>18.7%</b>	<b>13.0%</b>	<b>10.4%</b>	<b>9.8%</b>
<b>Major errors – (b)</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>
First name and/or surname wrong on register	0.5%	0.5%	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	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.5%
<b>Major errors – (c)</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>
Name on register corresponds to ineligible name on survey	0.5%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%
Attainers – DOB missing or wrong	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%
Qualifying foreign national with marker missing	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%	0.2%
<b>Minor errors total</b>	<b>5.6%</b>	<b>7.6%</b>	<b>9.1%</b>	<b>8.8%</b>
First name/surname on register misspelled	0.9%	0.7%	1.2%	0.7%
First name/surname on register incomplete	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.3%
Middle name missing from register	2.8%	6.0%	6.4%	6.6%
Middle name or initials misspelled or incomplete on register	0.5%	0.5%	0.0%	0.2%
Middle name or initial wrong on register	0.5%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
Person does not have a middle name but middle name on registers (respondents only)	0.0%	0.6%	1.3%	1.1%
Surname is/assumed to be previous surname	0.5%	0.1%	0.5%	0.3%
First/middle/surname in different order on register	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%
DoB earlier on register for attainer	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Bases (unweighted): Great Britain: Dec 2022 (9,478); Dec 2018 (9,155)

Bases (unweighted): Northern Ireland: Dec 2022 (1,975); Dec 2018 (1,783)

As in Great Britain, 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. As with completeness, most demographic groups have experienced an uplift in accuracy, reflecting the improvements at the national level. There has been particularly noteworthy increases in accuracy in urban areas, among private renters and among those who have lived at their address for less than two years.

**Table 4: Accuracy of local government register by key demographics in Northern Ireland**

		Northern Ireland		Great Britain	
		2018	2022	2018	2022
<b>Urban/Rural</b>	Urban	78%	<b>86%</b>	88%	<b>88%</b>
	Rural	82%	<b>87%</b>	91%	<b>91%</b>
<b>Tenure</b>	Owner occupied	86%	<b>89%</b>	95%	<b>96%</b>
	Buying on mortgage/shared ownership	86%	<b>90%</b>	95%	<b>91%</b>
	Private renters	61%	<b>75%</b>	81%	<b>77%</b>
	Local authority renters			92%	<b>88%</b>
	Housing Association renter	82%	<b>83%</b>	91%	<b>90%</b>
<b>Socio-economic group</b>	AB	86%	<b>91%</b>	94%	<b>91%</b>
	C1	85%	<b>88%</b>	93%	<b>91%</b>
	C2	82%	<b>89%</b>	93%	<b>93%</b>
	DE	78%	<b>83%</b>	89%	<b>89%</b>
<b>Duration at address</b>	Up to 1 year			56%	<b>53%</b>
	1 - 2 years	38%	<b>64%</b>	93%	<b>84%</b>
	2 - 5 years	84%	<b>87%</b>	94%	<b>91%</b>
	5 - 10 years	90%	<b>91%</b>	96%	<b>94%</b>
	10 - 16 years	90%	<b>93%</b>	95%	<b>94%</b>
	16 years +	87%	<b>89%</b>	95%	<b>95%</b>

Bases (unweighted): Great Britain: Dec 2022 (9,478); Dec 2018 (9,155)

Bases (unweighted): Northern Ireland: Dec 2022 (1,975); Dec 2018 (1,783)

## 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 Northern Ireland who are not correctly registered, or who have inaccuracies in their register entries. These estimates are provided in Table 6.

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 6: Quantifying accuracy and completeness in Northern Ireland**

		December 2018	December 2022
<b>Completeness</b>	Local government register	356,000 - 431,000	<b>228,000 - 284,000</b>
	Parliamentary registers	346,000 - 421,000	<b>205,000 - 254,000</b>
<b>Accuracy</b>	Local government register	229,000 - 286,000	<b>172,000 - 213,000</b>
	Parliamentary registers	221,000 - 278,000	<b>163,000 - 203,000</b>

It should also be noted that the range presented above does not mean that there should be an additional 228,000 - 284,000 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).