

## The December 2022 electoral registers in Scotland

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 Scotland in December 2022:

- Local government registers were 81% complete and 88% accurate
- Parliamentary registers were 83% complete and 90% accurate

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



*Base (unweighted): Parliamentary: Completeness 1,401; Accuracy 1,334, Local Government: Completeness 1,491; Accuracy 1,397*

### Completeness

Completeness of the registers for Scotland has remained stable since 2018, with the parliamentary register now at 83% complete (compared to 84% in 2018) and the local government register at 81% complete (compared to 83%).

## 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 Scotland remain due to eligible residents not being registered at their current address (17.1%). Minor errors are found among 13.4% of eligible residents in Scotland.

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

	Scotland		Great Britain	
	2018	2022	2018	2022
<b>Major errors total</b>	<b>16.5%</b>	<b>18.5%</b>	<b>16.9%</b>	<b>14.1%</b>
<b>Major errors – (a)</b>				
Living at address but not named on register	16.2%	17.1%	16.5%	13.4%
<b>Major errors – (b)</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>
First name and/or surname wrong on register	0.3%	0.4%	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%
<b>Major errors – (c)</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.1%</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%	1.0%	0.0%	0.1%
<b>Minor errors total</b>	<b>13.8%</b>	<b>13.4%</b>	<b>8.2%</b>	<b>8.6%</b>
First name/surname on register misspelled	1.0%	0.4%	1.3%	0.6%
First name/surname on register incomplete	0.3%	0.3%	0.5%	0.3%
Middle name missing from register	10.7%	11.4%	7.2%	6.5%
Middle name or initials misspelled or incomplete on register	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%
Middle name or initial wrong on register	0.0%	0.3%	0.1%	0.2%
Person does not have a middle name but middle name on registers (respondents only)	1.3%	0.6%	1.3%	1.1%
Surname is/assumed to be previous surname	0.5%	0.3%	0.5%	0.3%

Base (unweighted): December 2018: Scotland – 1,427; GB – 9,679

Base (unweighted): December 2022: Scotland – 1,491; GB – 9,495

Patterns among key demographics are similar to those from 2018 with lower levels of registration among younger people, private renters and those living at their address for a shorter duration. These patterns reflect levels of completeness in Great Britain – however private renters in Scotland are significantly less likely to have a complete entry on the local government register than in Great Britain as a whole.

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

		Scotland		Great Britain	
		2018	2022	2018	2022
<b>Urban/rural</b>	Urban	81%	81%	83%	85%
	Rural	88%	84%	85%	89%

<b>Gender</b>	Male	85%	82%	83%	85%
	Female	82%	81%	83%	87%
<b>Age</b>	18 - 34	68%	68%	68%	71%
	35 - 44	78%	76%	82%	84%
	45 - 54	91%	88%	90%	91%
	55 - 64	95%	93%	90%	94%
	65+	95%	92%	94%	96%
<b>Tenure</b>	Own outright	95%	91%	91%	95%
	Mortgage/Shared ownership	87%	84%	86%	88%
	Private renters	49%	45%	58%	65%
	Local authority renters	87%	84%	84%	79%
	Housing Association renter	73%	72%	82%	79%
<b>Socio-economic group</b>	AB	88%	86%	86%	89%
	C1	85%	76%	85%	86%
	C2	80%	88%	80%	86%
	DE	78%	78%	80%	81%
<b>Adults in household</b>	1	79%	79%	86%	86%
	2	84%	83%	84%	88%
	3 - 5	85%	80%	81%	82%
	6+			78%	79%
<b>Duration at address</b>	Up to 1 year	32%	33%	36%	39%
	1 - 2 years	65%	63%	71%	72%
	2 - 5 years	84%	81%	84%	82%
	5 - 10 years	91%	83%	90%	91%
	10 - 16 years	95%	89%	88%	92%
	16 years +	94%	92%	92%	95%
<b>Nationality</b>	UK and RoI	85%	84%	86%	87%

EU			54%	70%
	58%	44%		
Commonwealth			62%	66%

Base (unweighted): December 2018: Scotland – 1,423; GB – 9,679

Base (unweighted): December 2022: Scotland – 1,491; GB – 9,495

## 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 (9.7%).

In Scotland 14.3% of entries contain minor errors which would not prevent someone from voting.

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

	Scotland		Great Britain	
	2018	2022	2018	2022
<b>Major errors total</b>	<b>10.9%</b>	<b>12.1%</b>	<b>11.2%</b>	<b>11.7%</b>
<b>Major errors – (a)</b>				
No corresponding name taken at address	10.0%	9.7%	10.4%	9.8%
<b>Major errors – (b)</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>
First name and/or surname wrong on register	0.2%	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	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	0.5%
<b>Major errors – (c)</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>
Name on register corresponds to ineligible name on survey	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%	0.3%
Attainers – DOB missing or wrong	0.2%	1.6%	0.1%	0.2%
Qualifying foreign national with marker missing	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%

<b>Minor errors total</b>	<b>9.6%</b>	<b>14.3%</b>	<b>9.1%</b>	<b>8.8%</b>
First name/surname on register misspelled	0.7%	0.4%	1.2%	0.7%
First name/surname on register incomplete	0.2%	0.4%	0.5%	0.3%
Middle name missing from register	7.1%	12.2%	6.4%	6.6%
Middle name or initials misspelled or incomplete on register	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%
Middle name or initial wrong on register	0.0%	0.3%	0.1%	0.2%
Person does not have a middle name but middle name on registers (respondents only)	1.3%	0.6%	1.3%	1.1%
Surname is/assumed to be previous surname	0.3%	0.3%	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%

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

Base (unweighted) Scotland: Dec 2018 (1,387), Dec 2022 (1,397)

As in Great Britain as a whole, private renters and those where residents were 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 Scotland**

		<b>Scotland</b>		<b>Great Britain</b>	
		<b>2018</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Urban/Rural</b>	Urban	84%	<b>88%</b>	88%	<b>88%</b>
	Rural	91%	<b>88%</b>	91%	<b>91%</b>
<b>Tenure</b>	Owner occupied	90%	<b>94%</b>	95%	<b>96%</b>
	Buying on mortgage/shared ownership	94%	<b>89%</b>	95%	<b>91%</b>
	Private renters	79%	<b>58%</b>	81%	<b>77%</b>

	Local authority renters	91%	<b>94%</b>	92%	<b>88%</b>
	Housing Association renter	86%	<b>91%</b>	91%	<b>90%</b>
<b>Socio-economic group</b>	AB	89%	<b>91%</b>	94%	<b>91%</b>
	C1	93%	<b>87%</b>	93%	<b>91%</b>
	C2	90%	<b>90%</b>	93%	<b>93%</b>
	DE	88%	<b>92%</b>	89%	<b>89%</b>
<b>Duration at address</b>	Up to 1 year			56%	<b>53%</b>
	1 - 2 years	71%	<b>67%</b>	93%	<b>84%</b>
	2 - 5 years	97%	<b>88%</b>	94%	<b>91%</b>
	5 - 10 years	98%	<b>91%</b>	96%	<b>94%</b>
	10 - 16 years	92%	<b>94%</b>	95%	<b>94%</b>
	16 years +	91%	<b>93%</b>	95%	<b>95%</b>

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

Bases (unweighted): Scotland: Dec 2022 (1,397); Dec 2018 (1,387)

## 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 Scotland 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 Scotland**

		December 2018	December 2022
<b>Completeness</b>	Local government register	626,000 - 890,000	<b>658,000 - 1,033,000</b>
	Parliamentary registers	583,000 - 837,000	<b>547,000 - 904,000</b>
<b>Accuracy</b>	Local government register	402,000 - 747,000	<b>392,000 - 638,000</b>

Parliamentary  
registers

385,000 - 675,000

**290,000 - 522,000**

---

It should also be noted that the range presented above does not mean that there should be an additional 658,000 - 1,033,000 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).