

ELECTORAL REGISTRATION – NORTHERN IRISH LIVING OUTSIDE UK

Am I eligible?

If you used to live in Northern Ireland and now live anywhere else outside the UK you are eligible to register to vote in Northern Ireland if you –

- were registered in Northern Ireland during the last 15 years or you were under 17 when you left Northern Ireland and either of your parents or guardians were registered there
- are now aged 17 years or over
- were born in the UK before 1 January 1983 or you hold British citizenship(in addition to any other nationality you may hold) or you hold a British passport (in addition to any other passport you may hold) in which you are described as a British citizen.

Does registering affect my nationality?

No – although legally only people who are British citizens can register to vote in Northern Ireland doing so in no way diminishes any other nationality you hold. Rather it should be looked on as an additional right that you can exercise.

Why should I bother?

You have just as much right as anyone else to have your say in who is elected to the Westminster Parliament. But even if you are not really interested in that you will have a chance to win up to £500 in a free prize draw that takes place every three months. Being registered as an elector in Northern Ireland may make it easier for you to open a bank account there or to obtain credit. Registering costs you only the price of a stamp so why not go ahead – you might win £500!

How do I register?

It is very easy. All you have to do is complete the attached form, have it signed by a witness and send it to us.

What happens next?

We will process your application as quickly as possible and write to you telling you the outcome. Normally that should be within two weeks.

How will I vote?

Once you are registered you will be able to vote in Northern Ireland at elections to the Westminster Parliament.

If you happen to be in Northern Ireland on election day you can go and vote in person like anyone else but most people will appoint someone living in Northern Ireland, known as a proxy, to vote on their behalf.

Who can I appoint to vote for me?

You can appoint anyone who is over 18 and is a British, Irish or qualifying Commonwealth citizen. The same person cannot vote on behalf of more than two individuals who are not family members.

How long do I stay registered?

Your registration has to be renewed every year. We will write to you when it is due with a form for you to sign and return.

Your birth certificate

If you were under 17 when you left Northern Ireland you must send the original of your birth certificate with your application. Once we have checked it we will post it back to you.

Where can I get further information?

If you have any questions about what is required please email us at info@eoni.org.uk, write to the Chief Electoral Officer, St. Anne's House, 15 Church Street, Belfast, BT1 1ER or phone our Helpline on 0044 28 9044 6688.