

# THE ELECTORAL OFFICE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

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## YOUNGER VOTERS BOOST ELECTORAL REGISTRATION NUMBERS

The latest edition of the Electoral Register published today (Monday 1st December 2008) shows an increase of 16,568 since the same time last year and brings the total number of people registered to 1,142,547.

The increase significantly exceeds the Electoral Office target of 11,500 and there has been an unprecedented, 3000% increase, in the number of 17 year olds registering.

During the last year the Electoral Office has delivered initiatives and held events across Northern Ireland aimed at encouraging everyone to 'Get on the List'.

Douglas Bain, Chief Electoral Officer said: **"I am particularly pleased to see the huge increase in the number of younger people now registered.**

**"The numbers have risen from 244 last year to 7,738. This is largely due to our schools initiative and I applaud the help we have received from the principals and staff of almost all the 143 schools we visited between the end of August and mid November. Without their assistance these results could not have been achieved."**

Seamus Magee, Head of the Electoral Commission's office in Northern Ireland said: **"Our research shows that young people are among those least likely to register to vote. The recent change in the law, requiring schools to get involved in the electoral registration process, appears to be proving very effective. We welcome the work that the Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland and his staff are doing to promote registration."**

The electorate increased in all 18 constituencies by an average of 920 electors. The largest shift was in Foyle with an increase of 1,793 and the smallest was 159 in Belfast West. The new register reflects over 93,000 changes and over 31,000 people who were not on the register last year have now been included.

Registering is straightforward and anyone who wants advice or who needs an application form can call the Electoral Office helpline on 0800 4320 712 or text phone 0800 3284 502

More information about voter registration can be found at [www.eoni.org.uk](http://www.eoni.org.uk)

### Notes to Editors

The law requires the Chief Electoral Officer, as the registration officer for all constituencies in Northern Ireland to publish a revised register of electors each December.

Anyone who will be 18 before 1 December 2010 is now eligible to register although they will not be able to vote until they attain 18 years of age.

The electorate increased in all 18 constituencies. The largest increase was in Foyle (1,793) and the smallest in Belfast West (159). On average there was an increase of 920 electors.

The figures by constituency were as follows:

<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Total Electorate December 2007</b>	<b>Total Electorate December 2008</b>	<b>Change +</b>
<b>BELFAST EAST</b>	<b>50,081</b>	<b>50,440</b>	<b>+359</b>
<b>BELFAST NORTH</b>	<b>50,179</b>	<b>50,989</b>	<b>+810</b>
<b>BELFAST SOUTH</b>	<b>49,622</b>	<b>50,421</b>	<b>+799</b>
<b>BELFAST WEST</b>	<b>51,461</b>	<b>51,620</b>	<b>+159</b>
<b>EAST ANTRIM</b>	<b>57,345</b>	<b>58,405</b>	<b>+1,060</b>
<b>EAST LONDONDERRY</b>	<b>56,993</b>	<b>57,945</b>	<b>+952</b>
<b>FERMANAGH AND SOUTH TYRONE</b>	<b>66,563</b>	<b>67,250</b>	<b>+687</b>
<b>FOYLE</b>	<b>66,434</b>	<b>68,227</b>	<b>+1,793</b>
<b>LAGAN VALLEY</b>	<b>71,107</b>	<b>72,328</b>	<b>+1,221</b>
<b>MID ULSTER</b>	<b>62,401</b>	<b>62,845</b>	<b>+444</b>
<b>NEWRY AND ARMAGH</b>	<b>72,191</b>	<b>73,703</b>	<b>+1,512</b>
<b>NORTH ANTRIM</b>	<b>74,186</b>	<b>74,640</b>	<b>+454</b>
<b>NORTH DOWN</b>	<b>58,432</b>	<b>59,585</b>	<b>+1,153</b>
<b>SOUTH ANTRIM</b>	<b>66,605</b>	<b>67,598</b>	<b>+993</b>
<b>SOUTH DOWN</b>	<b>73,555</b>	<b>74,696</b>	<b>+1,141</b>
<b>STRANGFORD</b>	<b>67,346</b>	<b>68,249</b>	<b>+903</b>
<b>UPPER BANN</b>	<b>72,381</b>	<b>73,697</b>	<b>+1,316</b>
<b>WEST TYRONE</b>	<b>59,097</b>	<b>59,909</b>	<b>+812</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,125,979</b>	<b>1,142,547</b>	<b>+16,568</b>

During the year as a result of the Electoral Office schools initiative the number of “attainers” (i.e. those registered but not able to vote until their eighteenth birthday) increased from 244 in 2007 to 7,738 in December 2008. The Electoral Office visited 143 secondary schools between the end of August until mid November 2008. All but a handful of schools have co-operated fully with this new initiative.

During the year -

- around 37,000 electors changed their address
- almost 1,500 electors were removed from the register when checks revealed they had provided an incorrect national insurance number
- 10,798 electors were removed from the register as a result of death
- 271 electors who were incorrectly registered at two addresses were removed from the register at one address
- 55 sentenced prisoners were removed from the register
- almost 13,000 other changes were made to the register.

The oldest person on the register lives in Belfast South and is aged 106 years.

Electoral registration forms are available on [www.eoni.org.uk](http://www.eoni.org.uk) or by phoning the Electoral Office Helpline 0800 4320 712 (text phone 0800 3284 502).