

THE ELECTORAL OFFICE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND



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17 YEAR OLD WINS £500 TOP PRIZE IN ELECTORAL OFFICE FREE PRIZE DRAW

In the third Electoral Office Free Prize Draw the first prize of £500 has been won by a seventeen year old girl from the North Down Area. The second prize of £300 has gone to a winner in South Antrim and Two Runner up prizes of £100 have gone to winners in Belfast South and East Londonderry.

Since September 2008 more than 13,000 young people have been added to the Electoral Registers, many of whom will be able to vote for the first time at the European Parliamentary elections on 4 June. This is as a result of the work undertaken by the Electoral Office and secondary schools across Northern Ireland.

The figures were announced by Jocelyn McCarley, the Assistant Chief Electoral Officer, before the Mayor of Newry and Mourne District Council Councillor Colman Burns picked the winner in the quarterly Electoral Office Free Prize Draw. The Draw was made at the Council Offices in Newry.

Jocelyn McCarley said: **"I am very pleased that nearly half of those eligible to take part in this Draw were young people many of whom will be eligible to vote for the first time at the European Parliamentary Elections on 4 June.**

I would urge anyone who is not already on the Electoral Register, or who has moved house since they last registered to secure their right to vote in these important elections by sending in a completed registration form without delay."

Notes for Editors

1. The last date for registering in the normal way to vote at the election on 4 June is 7 April. After that date registration will be possible but only if very strict statutory conditions are met.
2. Electoral registration forms are available by phoning the Electoral Office Helpline on 0800 4320712 or they can be downloaded from www.eoni.org.uk.



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3. The number of young people under 18 on the Register has increased from 244 in December 2007 to well over 13,000 by January this year. This has been very largely as a result of the Electoral Office "Schools Initiative" in the course of which over 85% of the secondary schools across Northern Ireland have already been visited by staff.
4. It was apparent during these visits that the Free Prize Draw and the opportunity to obtain a free Electoral Identity Card were major incentives for registration.
5. Over the 3 months covered by this Draw (September to December 2008) 32,531 individuals either registered for the first time or notified the Electoral Office of a change of address. That represented an increase of 65% on the previous quarter.

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