

# THE ELECTORAL OFFICE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND



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## ALMOST TEN FOLD INCREASE IN FIRST QUARTER ELECTORAL REGISTRATION APPLICATIONS

Since the launch of the Electoral Office Free Prize Draw at the end of March the Office has received over 34,000 Electoral Registration forms compared with 3,500 during the same period in 2007.

The figures were announced by Douglas Bain, Chief Electoral Officer, ahead of the first draw of the 12 month pilot scheme under which anyone who informs the Electoral Office of a change of name or address, or who registers for the first time has the opportunity to win a cash prize.

The Right Honourable, The Lord Mayor of Belfast, Councillor Tom Hartley, supporting the scheme, will make the draw and over the next few days four people in Northern Ireland will be receiving a letter from the Electoral Office telling them that they have won a prize of £500, £300 or one of two runner up prizes of £100.

Douglas Bain said: **"I am delighted with the huge increase in the number of registration forms received which will help to ensure that our electoral register remains the most accurate and comprehensive anywhere in these islands.**

**"I am very grateful to The Lord Mayor of Belfast for his support and for agreeing to make the first draw. I look forward to visiting other parts of Northern Ireland for draws later in the year."**

The significant increase in the number of registration forms received has been helped by a number of proactive initiatives all aimed at reminding people that they must inform the Office if they change their name or address and to encourage people not registered to "Get on the List".

The facility to use information from the Central Services Agency has also helped and over 80,000 individuals who appeared to have moved house have been reminded of the need to submit a registration form to update their details. Earlier this year the Chief Electoral Officer also warned that those who wilfully failed to provide him with information risked prosecution.



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Anyone who is not sure whether they are on the register or wants an application form or advice about registering should phone the Electoral Office Helpline on 0800 4320 712, Textphone 0800 3284 502 or visit [www.eoni.org.uk](http://www.eoni.org.uk)

### **Notes for Editors**

The annual canvass has been replaced in Northern Ireland by a process of continuous registration. People no longer have to fill in a registration form every year. They now have to fill in a form only if they change their name or address or if they are registering for the first time.

The information given on application forms is checked before any change is made to the register. This ensures the accuracy of the register and protects against attempted identity theft.

Registration forms received by the Electoral Office:

March to July 2008 totalled	34,297
March to July 2007 totalled	3,511



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