

# THE ELECTORAL OFFICE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND



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## YOUNG PEOPLE BOOST REGISTRATION FIGURES

The annual electoral register published today shows an increase of over 27,500 bringing the total number of people registered to vote to 1,170,336. One of the most significant increases is in the number of young people under the age of 18 on the register which has grown by 5,441 over the last twelve months and by 12,691 since December 2007.

The increase was largely achieved due to the continued success of the Electoral Office's Schools Initiative now in its second year.

Douglas Bain, the Chief Electoral Officer, commented:

**“The overall increase in those registered to vote is good news for all those who support the democratic process and I am particularly pleased that we have been once again able to increase the number of young people on the register. I am most grateful to the principals and staff of the 180 schools who supported my office in this important work.**

**“But it is profoundly disappointing that, despite the fact that we are approaching a general election, there were seven schools that either refused a visit by my staff or could not offer a date for such a visit during the normal school day”.**

The latest register lists electors in the constituencies that will be used at the general election taking account of the boundary changes that will take effect as soon as the election is called.



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## Notes for Editors

1. The number of registered electors on 1 December 2009 was 1,170,336 compared with 1,142,547 in December 2008. More than 90,000 changes were made to the register during the last year.
2. The highest number of electors is in the Upper Bann constituency (75,850) and the lowest is in the Belfast East constituency (58,617). The average electorate per constituency is just over 65,000. Full details are available on [www.eoni.org.uk](http://www.eoni.org.uk)

The new boundaries were approved by Parliament last year following a report by the Boundaries Commission for Northern Ireland.

3. Although people have to be 18 to vote they can register before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. As a result of the Electoral Office's Schools Initiative, started in 2008, the number of under 18s on the register has been increased from only 244 in autumn 2007 to the current figure of 12,935.
4. During the Schools Initiative Electoral Office staff visit post primary schools to assist eligible pupils to complete registration applications. All but seven schools across Northern Ireland have assisted the Electoral Office by facilitating a visit during the normal school day when pupils are available.
5. The only schools which it has not been possible to visit, or to set a date for a visit, during normal school hours are:

Aquinas Diocesan Grammar School, Belfast  
Corpus Christie College, Belfast  
Rathmore Grammar School, Belfast  
St. Joseph's College, Belfast  
Royal Belfast Academical Institution, Belfast  
Our Lady and St. Patrick's College, Belfast  
St. Patrick's Academy, Dungannon

