

## Votes for Life Bill

### **The purpose of the Bill is to:**

- Scrap the current 15 year time limit on the voting rights of British citizens living overseas for UK parliamentary and European parliamentary elections, including provisions relating to the registration of overseas electors.

### **The main benefits of the Bill would be to:**

- End the disenfranchisement after an arbitrary 15 years of British citizens living abroad, enabling them to continue voting in UK Parliamentary and European Parliamentary elections.
- Make it easier for overseas electors to cast their votes in time to be counted.
- Encourage larger numbers of British citizens living abroad to register to vote in UK elections.

### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

#### Franchise

- The Bill would enable British citizens who are resident overseas to continue to vote in UK elections after 15 years since they were last resident and registered in the UK.

#### Electoral Registration

- The Bill would provide for the secure and accessible registration of overseas electors.

#### Electoral Administration

- The Bill would contain provisions to make it easier for overseas electors to vote in time to be counted.

### **Related documents:**

Cross-Party Group on Overseas Voters Report: Making Votes Count – Enhancing engagement in the electoral process by British expatriates, March 2014: <http://www.hansardsociety.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Overseas-VotersReport.pdf>

### **Existing legislation in this area is:**

- Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013
- Representation of the People Regulations 2001
- Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000
- Representation of the People Act 1989
- Representation of the People Act 1985
- Representation of the People Act 1983

### **Devolution:**

The franchise and electoral registration for UK Parliamentary and European Parliamentary elections are a reserved matter (UK wide).