

2015 UK PARLIAMENTARY GENERAL ELECTION

OVERSEAS VOTER REGISTRATION

TEMPLATE RESOURCES



The
Electoral
Commission

YOUR VOTE MATTERS

MAKE SURE YOU'RE IN



Overseas Voter Registration – Template resources from the Electoral Commission

This pack gives you some easy things you can do to help promote voter registration amongst British nationals who are living overseas.

Lots of British nationals who live overseas don't know that they may be able to take part in certain UK elections.

To register as an overseas elector you must have been registered to vote in the UK in the last 15 years. You will also need to know your National Insurance number and date of birth. If you don't have a National Insurance number you can still register, but you may have to supply more information to show who you are.

We need your help to pass on this important message.

In addition, for the first time ever, people are able to register online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote, which makes it much easier for those living overseas to get involved, wherever they are.

Please feel free to use any (or all!) of the ideas below. Everyone's vote matters – it's important that they are registered so they can make it count!

1. Put up a poster

It's simple to use our readymade posters. Why not pop one up in your local venues, shops or communal office areas, such as the staff kitchen?

[Link to poster \(English\)](#)

[Link to poster \(Bilingual\)](#)

2. Add an email signature

Download the [email signature](#) from the Electoral Commission website.

3. Drop a mention into your e-bulletin or newsletter

If your organisation has an internal newsletter or e-bulletin you could let your teams know all about registering from overseas, including information about what they can do to help you spread the message.

4. Add a post to your Facebook page

Here is some suggested copy you could use:

UK expats! Did you know you may still be able to take part in the 2015 UK General Election if you live overseas? You can now also go online to register. Go to: www.gov.uk/register-to-vote. Make sure you don't miss out on having your say. **#YourVoteMatters #passthemessageon #expat**

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5. Send a tweet

It only takes a minute or two to send a tweet and it would be great if you can do this a few times over the coming months. We've got some examples below for you to use, but do of course feel free to come up with the best approach for your audience.

- You can register online to vote in the UK General Election from overseas too! **#expats #passthemessageon #yourvotematters** bit.ly/1pAMZZ5
- Far from the UK – but close to being able to register to vote at the General Election **#expats #passthemessageon** bit.ly/1pAMZZ5
- Don't miss out – wherever you are in the world, British nationals register online to vote at the UK General Election now! **#expats** bit.ly/1pAMZZ5
- You're not too far away to register to vote at the UK General Election **#expats #yourvotematters** bit.ly/1pAMZZ5
- Know someone from the UK living overseas? They can now register online to vote in UK elections. **#passthemessageon** bit.ly/1pAMZZ5

6. Set up a partnership web page

If you can, how about setting up a section about how people can register on your website, directing people straight to the information that is most relevant to them. Here is readymade copy that you could use for that page. If you would like to use different copy but still use our logo, please do get in touch and we can help you develop something:

Working in partnership

The
Electoral
Commission

[Insert name of your organisation] is proud to be working with the Electoral Commission to help promote voter registration amongst British nationals.

Registering from overseas

If you are a British national living overseas, then you may be able to take part in the UK general elections. In order to do this you must register as an overseas voter. If you aren't registered to vote, you won't have the chance to have a say at the election.

The good news is that you can now register online. This should make it much easier for people to take the first step in taking part.

How do I register?

You can now go online to register. Go to www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

To register as an overseas elector you must have been registered to vote in the UK in the last 15 years.

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7. Blog about it!

If your organisation loves to blog why not spread the word about this important issue. Alternatively, you could add a guest blog from us... Here is an example you could use. **(Please note: This appears with the permission of the writer and must only appear under their name.)**

UK citizens living overseas – Don't miss out, you may be able to vote at the 2015 General Election

Did you know that British nationals living overseas can take part in the UK General Election next year? If you didn't – you wouldn't be alone.

Lots of people don't know that this is possible, which is perhaps one reason why out of an estimated 5.5 million UK nationals who live overseas fewer than 20,000 people are currently registered as overseas electors.

This is an important message, especially with the General Election fast approaching, so the Electoral Commission is working hard to reach expat audiences to let them know that they may be able to take part.

The really good news is that you can now register online.

In order to register you must have been previously registered in a UK constituency within the last 15 years.

If you were too young when you left the UK to have been registered, then you can register as an overseas voter if your parents (or guardians) were registered in the UK in the last 15 years.

Now with online registration, filling in the application form takes approximately five minutes, and can be done from wherever you have an internet connection. All you need is your National Insurance number and your date of birth. If you don't have your National Insurance number you can still register, but you may be asked for some extra information by your Electoral Registration Officer.

When it comes to actually voting, it's really important that overseas voters choose the best way of voting to suit their circumstances. You can choose to vote via one of three methods. You can vote either by post; by proxy (you designate someone you trust to vote on your behalf in the UK); or in person at a polling station in your constituency, but of course if you live overseas you're unlikely to be able to do this. If you want to vote by post, please check that you will have sufficient time to receive and return your postal ballot pack. Postal votes will usually be dispatched a few weeks before polling day. For your postal vote to count, it needs to be received back by the Returning Officer by 10pm on 7 May 2015. If you live a very long way away it may be that a proxy vote would provide a good alternative.

Whichever method you choose to vote, you won't be able to take part unless you've registered. That's why the Electoral Commission is committed to

spreading the message to overseas voters. We want to ensure that everyone who is eligible to take part in the General Election has the opportunity to do so.

Even if you now live outside the UK, you're not too far away to take part and have your say at the UK General Election, so make sure you register well ahead of the registration deadline on Monday 20 April 2015.

Go online now to register at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote and don't forget to let others know too and pass the message on.

By Alex Robertson, Director of Communications, Electoral Commission

10 things you need to know about registering as an overseas voter

1. British nationals who have been registered to vote in the UK within the last 15 years can register as an overseas elector
2. You can register online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote. This means that it is easier than before to register from wherever you are.
3. If you're not registered you can't vote at the General Election in May 2015.
4. Approximately 5.5 million British nationals live overseas. But there are currently fewer than 20,000 people registered as overseas electors.
5. The registration deadline for the 2015 UK Parliamentary General Election is Monday 20 April 2015. But remember to register as far in advance of this as you can.
6. You can choose how you wish to vote. You can vote by post, by proxy or even in person at your polling station.
7. If you don't want to register online, you can still download paper forms. But remember to return your completed form as far in advance of the deadline as possible.
8. Overseas Voter Registration Day is on Thursday 5 February 2015 – take five minutes to visit the online registration site and let others know too!
9. Lots of people who live overseas might not even know that they may be able to take part. Pass the message on!
10. Your vote matters! **#passthemessageon #expat #yourvotematters**