

Explanatory Memorandum to The Elections and Elected Bodies (Wales) Act 2024 (Commencement No. 3) Order 2026

This Explanatory Memorandum has been prepared by the Elections Division for laying before Senedd Cymru alongside the Elections and Elected Bodies (Wales) Act 2024 (Commencement No. 3) Order 2026. This is in accordance with section 37F of the Legislation (Wales) Act 2019 and Standing Order 27.1.

Cabinet Secretary's Declaration

In my view, this Explanatory Memorandum gives a fair and reasonable view of the expected impact of the Elections and Elected Bodies (Wales) Act 2024 (Commencement No. 3) Order 2026.

Jayne Bryant MS
Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government
12 March 2026

1. Purpose and overview

1.1. This commencement order brings into force the following provisions of the *Elections and Elected Bodies (Wales) Act 2024* (“the Act”) on 2 October 2026:

- a. Section 3 - Duty to register local government electors,
- b. Section 4 - Provision connected to the duty to register eligible local government electors.

1.2. This is the third commencement order made to commence provisions within the Act, and the Act will now be commenced in full. Please refer to the ‘Notes to earlier commencement orders table’ found within this commencement order for further information.

2. Matters of special interest to the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee

2.1. None.

3. Legislative background

3.1. This commencement order is made under section 72(4) of the Act. Although this commencement order does not follow a Senedd procedure, it is still required to be laid before Senedd Cymru under section 37F of the *Legislation (Wales) Act 2019*.

3.2. Section 72(5) of the Act provides conditions on the commencement of automatic registration provisions, which may not come into force unless the following conditions have been satisfied:

- a) pilot provision has been made in regulations under section 5(1) of the Act,
- b) an evaluation report on the operation of the pilots has been sent to Welsh Ministers under section 17(5)(a),
- c) Welsh Ministers have laid the report before Senedd Cymru, and
- d) That regulations have been made that apply to registers of local government electors for areas in Wales which do not require registration officers to prepare edited registers of local government electors or supply them.

3.3. The first three of those conditions have been satisfied with automatic voter registration pilots having taken place in four Welsh local authorities under the [Representation of the People \(Electoral Registration without Applications\) \(Pilot Scheme\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2025](#). The Electoral Commission reported to Welsh Ministers on those pilots in [December 2025](#) and the Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government made a [written statement](#) to Senedd members informing them of the outcomes.

3.4. The Representation of the People (Removal of the Edited Register) (Wales) Regulations 2026 removed the requirement for registration officers to prepare edited registers of local government electors or supply them and were laid before the Senedd on 10 February 2026 and made on 11 March 2026. This Commencement Order will come into force on 2 October 2026.

3.5. Further Regulations will be brought forward at a later date to set out the detailed operational requirements for local authorities in relation to automatic voter registration.

4. Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA)

4.1. An RIA has not been completed for this commencement order. This is in line with the exemption in section 3.2 of the Welsh Ministers' code of practice for carrying out regulatory impact assessments for subordinate legislation.