

# STATES OF JERSEY



## **‘LIFE IN JERSEY’ TEST AND ELIGIBILITY FOR ELECTION (P.2/2021): COMMENTS**

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**Presented to the States on 3rd February 2021  
by the Privileges and Procedures Committee**

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**STATES GREFFE**

## COMMENTS

The Privileges and Procedures Committee has several workstreams currently in train which aim to encourage greater levels of public involvement in all political activities, from voting to standing for election. At present one of its Sub-Committees is engaged with drafting amendments to the various pieces of legislation which underpin the election process, in order to put in place a system which offers greater equality and equity. The first tranche of this work will be lodged very soon.

Another of its Sub-Committees, the Diversity Forum, has, as one of its objectives, the promotion of increased participation in elections in Jersey, particularly by groups which are currently under-represented in the States. The Forum wishes to draw Members' attention to the 2018 Comres [survey](#) on political participation in the Island. The most important factor people identified as likely to encourage them to vote in 2022 was "candidates who better represent my values and the things which are important to me" (84% of respondents). Also significant were the responses to the question on how interested people are in politics in Jersey. 64% of people born in Jersey who were surveyed said that they were very or fairly interested in politics in the Island, compared to 75% for people born elsewhere in the British Isles, 67% for people born in Poland, 58% for people born in Portugal or Madeira and 60% for people born elsewhere in Europe. However, whereas there is a consistent level of interest in Jersey politics irrespective of where people come from, there is an enormous disparity in terms of who actually votes. The survey reported the following figures for the proportion of people who recalled voting in the 2018 election:

Place of birth	Voted in 2018 election (%)
Jersey	57
Rest of British Isles	63
Poland	58
Portugal / Madeira	37
Rest of Europe	17

Therefore, there is clear evidence that potential voters from a non-British background (particularly from a Portuguese background) are interested in local politics but do not vote; and it would be fair to surmise from the evidence that they do not vote because they do not see candidates standing for election who share their values or represent things important to them.

Deputy Gardiner's proposition proposes one possible solution to this problem, as some potential candidates may be deterred from standing because they do not hold British citizenship. It asks Members to consider their position on the matter in the light of the evidence that many people in our community are deterred from voting because candidates reflecting their values and priorities are not standing for election.