



# Representation of the People Act 1985

## 1985 CHAPTER 50

### *Combination and timing of polls*

#### **15 Combination of polls at parliamentary,<sup>F1</sup>... and local elections.**

- (1) Where the polls at—
  - <sup>F2</sup>(a) .....
  - (b) an ordinary local government election and a parliamentary general election;<sup>F3</sup>  
.....
  - <sup>F4</sup>(c) .....are to be taken on the same date, they shall be taken together.
- (2) Where the polls at elections for related areas are to be taken on the same date but are not required by subsection (1) above or section 36 [<sup>F5</sup>or section 36B] of the principal Act to be taken together, they may nevertheless be so taken if the returning officer for each election thinks fit.
- (3) In subsection (2) above the reference to elections <sup>F6</sup>... does not include elections under the local government Act which are not local government elections; and for the purposes of that subsection two areas are related if one is coterminous with or situated wholly or partly within the other.
- [<sup>F7</sup>(3A) Where the polls at an election of the Northern Ireland Assembly are to be taken on the same date as the polls at one or more elections of the kind mentioned in subsection (1), the Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland may direct that the polls at the election of the Assembly are to be taken together with the polls at the other election or elections.]
- (4) Where the polls at any elections are combined under this section the cost of taking the combined polls (excluding any cost solely attributable to one election) and any cost attributable to their combination shall be apportioned equally among the elections.
- (5) The Secretary of State may by regulations make such provision as he thinks fit in connection with the combining of polls at any elections under this section including

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provision modifying the Representation of the People Acts in relation to such elections.

<sup>F8</sup>(5A) .....

[<sup>F9</sup>(5B) The power under subsection (5) above to make provision in connection with the combining of polls under subsection (3A) includes power to modify—

- (a) Part 2 or 3 of the Schedule to the Elections Act 2001 (in addition to the power conferred by paragraph 32 of that Schedule);
- (b) any provision made under section 34(4) or 84(1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 or section 38(1)(a) of the Northern Ireland Constitution Act 1973 (see section 95(1) of the 1998 Act);
- (c) any provision made by or under Northern Ireland legislation relating to local elections.]

[<sup>F10</sup>(5C) Before making provision under subsection (5) in connection with the combination of polls where one of the elections is a local government election in Scotland, the Secretary of State must consult the Scottish Ministers.]

[<sup>F11</sup>(5D) Before making provision under subsection (5) in connection with the combination of polls where one of the elections is a local government election in Wales, the Secretary of State must consult the Welsh Ministers.]

[<sup>F12</sup>(6) In its application to Northern Ireland, subsection (1) above shall have effect as if the references to an ordinary local government election were to a local election.]

#### Textual Amendments

- F1** Words in s. 15 heading repealed (31.12.2020) by [The European Parliamentary Elections Etc. \(Repeal, Revocation, Amendment and Saving Provisions\) \(United Kingdom and Gibraltar\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2018 \(S.I. 2018/1310\)](#), reg. 1, **Sch. 1 Pt. 1** (as amended by [S.I. 2019/1389](#), regs. 1, 2(2))
- F2** S. 15(1)(a) repealed (31.12.2020) by [The European Parliamentary Elections Etc. \(Repeal, Revocation, Amendment and Saving Provisions\) \(United Kingdom and Gibraltar\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2018 \(S.I. 2018/1310\)](#), reg. 1, **Sch. 1 Pt. 1** (as amended by [S.I. 2019/1389](#), regs. 1, 2(2))
- F3** Word in s. 15(1) repealed (31.12.2020) by [The European Parliamentary Elections Etc. \(Repeal, Revocation, Amendment and Saving Provisions\) \(United Kingdom and Gibraltar\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2018 \(S.I. 2018/1310\)](#), reg. 1, **Sch. 1 Pt. 1** (as amended by [S.I. 2019/1389](#), regs. 1, 2(2))
- F4** S. 15(1)(c) repealed (31.12.2020) by [The European Parliamentary Elections Etc. \(Repeal, Revocation, Amendment and Saving Provisions\) \(United Kingdom and Gibraltar\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2018 \(S.I. 2018/1310\)](#), reg. 1, **Sch. 1 Pt. 1** (as amended by [S.I. 2019/1389](#), regs. 1, 2(2))
- F5** Words in s. 15(2) inserted (20.3.2021) by [Local Government and Elections \(Wales\) Act 2021 \(asc 1\)](#), s. 175(3)(f), **Sch. 2 para. 3**
- F6** Words in s. 15(3) repealed (31.12.2020) by [The European Parliamentary Elections Etc. \(Repeal, Revocation, Amendment and Saving Provisions\) \(United Kingdom and Gibraltar\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2018 \(S.I. 2018/1310\)](#), reg. 1, **Sch. 1 Pt. 1** (as amended by [S.I. 2019/1389](#), regs. 1, 2(2))
- F7** S. 15(3A) inserted (15.9.2011) by [Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011 \(c. 14\)](#), s. 7(2), **Sch. para. 15(2)** (with s. 6)
- F8** S. 15(5A) repealed (31.12.2020) by [The European Parliamentary Elections Etc. \(Repeal, Revocation, Amendment and Saving Provisions\) \(United Kingdom and Gibraltar\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2018 \(S.I. 2018/1310\)](#), reg. 1, **Sch. 1 Pt. 1** (as amended by [S.I. 2019/1389](#), regs. 1, 2(2))
- F9** S. 15(5B) inserted (15.9.2011) by [Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011 \(c. 14\)](#), s. 7(2), **Sch. para. 15(3)** (with s. 6)
- F10** S. 15(5C) inserted (18.5.2017) by [Scotland Act 2016 \(c. 11\)](#), **ss. 4(2)**, 72(4)(a); [S.I. 2017/608](#), reg. 2(1) (b)

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- F11** S. 15(5D) inserted (1.4.2018) by Wales Act 2017 (c. 4), **ss. 5(2)**, 71(4) (with Sch. 7 paras. 1, 6); S.I. 2017/1179, reg. 3(b)
- F12** S. 15(6) inserted (10.4.2001) by 2001 c. 7, **s. 3(2)**

**Modifications etc. (not altering text)**

- C1** S. 15 applied (with modifications) (2.4.2001) by S.I. 2001/1298, reg. 16(6), Sch. 5 Pt. 1 Table (as amended (E.) (13.3.2004) by S.I. 2004/226, reg. 2(7), **Sch.**)  
S. 15 extended (N.I.) (10.4.2001) by 2001 c. 7, **s. 3(1)**
- C2** S. 15 applied (with modifications) (28.7.2007) by The Local Authorities (Conduct of Referendums) (England) Regulations 2007 (S.I. 2007/2089), regs. 1(2), 8, 11, 12, 13, **Sch. 4** Table 2
- C3** S. 15 applied (with modifications) (9.2.2012) by The Local Authorities (Conduct of Referendums) (England) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 2012/323), reg. 1, **Sch. 4 para. 1** Table 2 (as amended (31.12.2020) by S.I. 2018/1310, reg. 1, **Sch. 2 para. 10** (as amended by S.I. 2019/1389, regs. 1, **2(2)**))
- C4** S. 15 applied (with modifications) (18.2.2012) by The Local Authorities (Conduct of Referendums) (Council Tax Increases) (England) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 2012/444), reg. 1, **Sch. 4 para. 1** Table 2 (with reg. 27) (as amended (31.12.2020) by S.I. 2018/1310, reg. 1, **Sch. 2 para. 11** (as amended by S.I. 2019/1389, regs. 1, **2(2)**))
- C5** S. 15 applied (with modifications) (25.7.2012) by The Police and Crime Commissioner Elections Order 2012 (S.I. 2012/1917), art. 1(2), **Sch. 4 para. 1** (as amended: (31.1.2017) by S.I. 2017/67, reg. 1, **Sch. 4 para. 8(3)**; (1.11.2022) by S.I. 2022/885, **reg. 4**; and (7.2.2024) by S.I. 2024/131, regs. 1(3), **22(3)**)
- C6** S. 15 applied (with modifications) (3.8.2012) by The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 2012/2031), regs. 1, 8, 12, 13, **Sch. 4 Pt. 1** Table 2 (as amended (31.12.2020) by S.I. 2018/1310, reg. 1, **Sch. 2 para. 13** (as amended by S.I. 2019/1389, regs. 1, **2(2)**))
- C7** S. 15(4) excluded (10.4.2001) by S.I. 2001 c. 7, **s. 5(2)**
- C8** S. 15(5) extended (10.4.2001) by 2001 c. 7, s. 4, **Sch. para. 32**
- C9** S. 15(5) extended (Gibraltar) (18.9.2003) by Local Government Act 2003 (c. 26), ss. 127(1), 128, **Sch. 7 para. 7(2)**

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**Changes and effects yet to be applied to :**

- s. 15(1) word omitted by [2012 c. 11 s. 2\(2\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 15(3) words inserted by [2012 c. 11 s. 2\(3\)](#)
- s. 15(5C) inserted by [2012 c. 11 s. 2\(5\)](#)

**Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:**

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 15(1)(d)(e) inserted by [2012 c. 11 s. 2\(2\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 15(3ZA) inserted by [2012 c. 11 s. 2\(4\)](#)