

A chara,

While the idea of a rolling register is a good one, I think there still needs to be a publicly-accessible hard copy available for inspection, which could be the version on a fixed date. Not everyone is going to be in a position to use checktheregister.ie to check that their details are still correct or will make the effort if they believe that they are already on the register. It also allows people to easily check for errors or spelling variations not only of names but of addresses which is certainly not the case with the current website.

I know from personal experience that mistakes can be made - a number of years back the entry for my mother (at that time in her early 80s) was removed from the register without her knowledge and the mistake was only noticed by a relative who was inspecting the hard copy of the draft register. When the relative inquired as to why my mother's name had been removed, she received the reply that the person concerned was dead; my mother had been confused with another woman with almost the same name in the same townland who had died some years previously (and who had in fact been long removed from the register). My mother was successfully re-registered, but without that relative having made the manual check, we would only have discovered the error when she went to vote and would have been unable to.

The combination of replacing household registration with individual registration and a door-to-door canvass with expecting people to explicitly register themselves has had the effect (supposedly unintended) both in Northern Ireland and in Britain of reducing the completeness of the register; all the awareness campaigns in the world may not be as effective as a responsible individual taking the burden of registration for the household upon themselves - this would not prevent the use of PPS numbers or some other identifier as a means of preventing duplication on the register.

Is mise le meas,

Patrick Matthews,