

ELIZABETH II



House of Commons (Redistribution of Seats) Act 1979

1979 CHAPTER 15

An Act to increase the number of constituencies in Northern Ireland required by rule 1 in Schedule 2 to the House of Commons (Redistribution of Seats) Act 1949. [22nd March 1979]

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1.—(1) In rule 1 of the rules for the redistribution of seats set out in Schedule 2 to the House of Commons (Redistribution of Seats) Act 1949 (referred to below in this section as “the principal Act”) for the figure “12” (the required number of constituencies for Northern Ireland) there shall be substituted the words “Not greater than 18 or less than 16”.

Increase of number of constituencies in Northern Ireland. 1949 c. 66.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1) above, in discharging their functions under section 2 of the principal Act, the Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland shall read rule 1 as if it required the number of constituencies in Northern Ireland to be 17, unless it appears to the Commission that Northern Ireland should for the time being be divided into 16 or (as the case may be) into 18 constituencies.

(3) In framing their first report after the passing of this Act under section 2(1) of the principal Act, the Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland shall read rule 5 of those rules (under which

the electorate of a constituency is to be brought as near the electoral quota as is practicable having regard to the other rules) in accordance with the definitions given in subsection (4) below instead of in accordance with rule 7 of those rules.

(4) In rule 5 as it applies by virtue of subsection (3) above—

(a) “electoral quota” shall mean a number obtained by dividing the aggregate electorate (as defined in paragraph (b) below) of all the constituencies in Northern Ireland by 17; and

(b) “electorate” shall mean, in relation to any constituency, the number of persons whose names appear on the register of parliamentary electors in force for the constituency at the passing of this Act under the Representation of the People Acts.

1973 c. 36.

(5) For subsections (5) and (6) of section 28 of the Northern Ireland Constitution Act 1973 (effect of Orders in Council under the principal Act on elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly) there shall be substituted the following subsections—

“ (5) An Order in Council under the said Act of 1949 for giving effect, with or without modifications, to the recommendations contained in a report or supplementary report of the Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland may make amendments consequential on giving effect to those recommendations in section 1(1) of and in the Schedule to the said Act of 1973.

(6) The coming into force of any such Order in Council shall not affect any election to the Assembly before the next general election to the Assembly or affect the constitution of the Assembly then in being.”

(6) In framing their first supplementary report after the passing of this Act under section 28 (supplementary reports with respect to the number of members to be returned to the Northern Ireland Assembly by each constituency in Northern Ireland), the Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland shall read subsection (3) of that section (which requires the ratio of the electorate of each constituency to the number of members to be returned by that constituency to be as far as practicable the same in every constituency) as if the electorate were defined by reference to the passing of this Act instead of by reference to the enumeration date.

Citation.

2. This Act may be cited as the House of Commons (Redistribution of Seats) Act 1979, and shall be included among the Acts which may be cited as the Representation of the People Acts, and this Act and the House of Commons (Redistribution of Seats) Acts 1949 and 1958 may be cited together as the House of Commons (Redistribution of Seats) Acts 1949 to 1979.