



Northern Ireland Act 1998

1998 CHAPTER 47

PART IV

THE NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

Elections etc

31 Dates of elections and dissolutions

- (1) Subject to subsection (2), the date of the poll for the election of each Assembly shall be the first Thursday in May in the fourth calendar year following that in which its predecessor was elected; and the predecessor shall be dissolved at the beginning of the minimum period which ends with that date.
- (2) The date of the poll for the election of the Assembly next following the Assembly elected under section 2 of the Northern Ireland (Elections) Act 1998 shall be 1st May 2003; and the Assembly elected under that section shall be dissolved at the beginning of the minimum period which ends with that date.
- (3) The Secretary of State may at any time by order direct that the date of the poll for the election of the next Assembly shall, instead of being that specified in subsection (1) or (2), be a date specified in the order being a date falling not more than two months before or after the date specified in that subsection.
- (4) An Assembly elected under this section or section 32 shall meet within the period of eight days beginning with the day of the poll at which it is elected.
- (5) For the purposes of subsection (4), a Saturday, a Sunday, Christmas Day, Good Friday and any day which is a bank holiday in Northern Ireland shall be disregarded.
- (6) In this section “minimum period” means a period determined in accordance with an order of the Secretary of State.