

GAD 2004-based National Population Projections

Key points

- **GAD 2004-based 'full' projections released on 20 October 2005**
- **National projections will act as a constraint in the ONS 2004-based sub-national projections, due in Summer 2006**
- **UK population set to rise 8.2% to 64.727 million in 2021**
- **Larger increase in England and Wales – 8.9% - to stand at 57.770 million in 2021**

Background

The Principal population projections released by GAD on 20 October 2005 are the latest 'full' set of projections, as they are based on a review of the underlying fertility, mortality and net migration assumptions.

In the last two years, there has been an increase in total fertility rates for all countries of the UK. This has resulted in the short-term fertility assumptions being higher than for the 2002-based (and therefore interim 2003-based) projections. However, as it is too early to tell whether these recent increases in fertility will continue. The long-term assumptions have been unchanged from those of the previous projections.

In previous projections, it has been assumed that the improvement to mortality would diminish in the long-term. However, expectations of life at birth have been continuing to rise relatively constantly over the last two decades, which has suggested that previous long-term assumptions were too pessimistic. Therefore, in the 2004-based projections, the assumption is lower mortality rates, leading to small increases in expectation of life at birth – greater for men than for women.

Both long and short-term net migration assumptions have changed since the 2002-based (and interim 2003-based) projections. For the UK, the long-term assumption for net migration has increased by 15,000 since the previous projections to +145,000. This follows historically high levels of net migration between 2002 and 2004. The table below shows the short and long-term migration assumptions for the 2004-based projections. For comparison, the assumptions in the 2003-based interim projections can be seen in *Demography Update 2004/04*.

Table 1: Short-term net migration assumptions, 2004-based population projections (thousands)

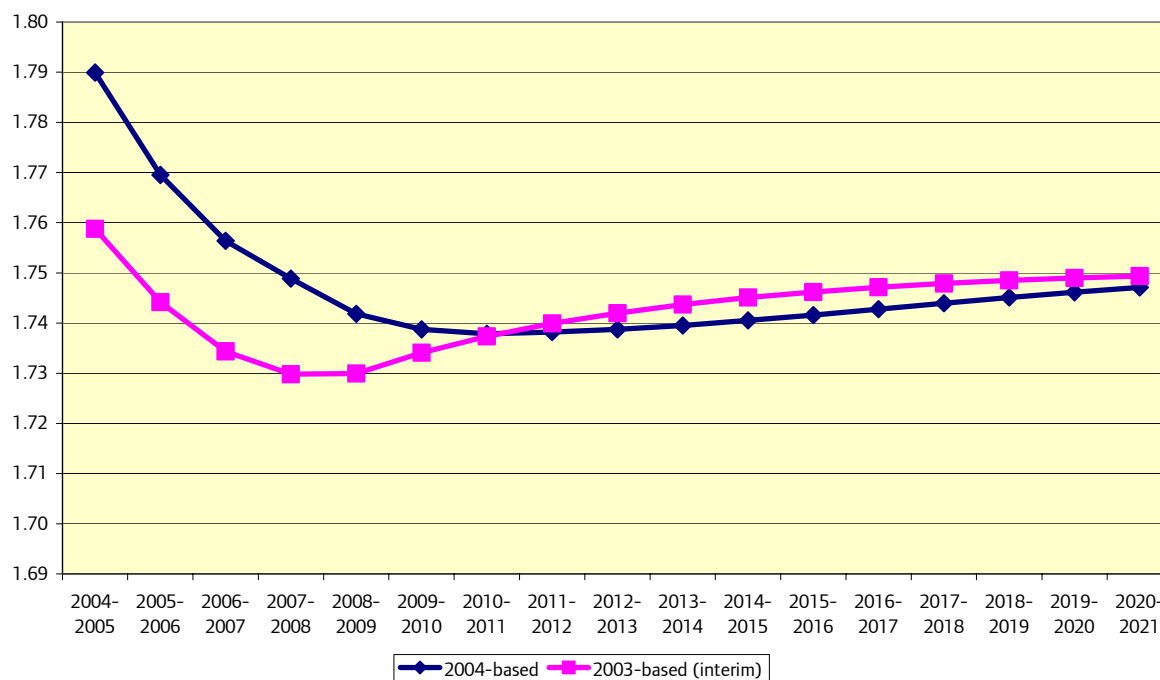
	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	United Kingdom
Short-term assumptions					
2004-2005	218.0	12.0	21.0	4.0	255.0
2005-2006	165.0	13.5	13.5	3.0	195.0
2006-2007	148.0	12.5	8.5	1.0	170.0
Long-term assumptions					
2007-2008 onwards	130.0	11.5	4.0	-0.5	145.0

Source: GAD national projections

Results

For both the UK and England and Wales, the 2004-based projections are greater than the 2003-based interim projections. The difference is greatest in the later projection periods; under 0.1% higher in 2004, rising to well over 1% by 2021, for both. The main reason for the difference is the short-term fertility assumptions. Although the long-term assumptions are broadly similar, the short-term assumptions in the 2004-based projections show far greater birth rates; with a total fertility rate (TFR) in 2004-05 of 1.79 compared with 1.76 for the 2003-based projections. The chart below illustrates this.

Chart 1: Comparison of TFRs in England and Wales



All countries of the UK are projected to experience increases between 2004 and 2021, the greatest relative change taking place in England – 9.0%. Given its size, England also makes up the majority of the increase in the UK, 92.2%, with England and Wales making up 96.6% of the increase – although this is less than the 99.6% seen in the 2003-based projections. Large relative increases are also expected in Wales and Northern Ireland, around 7%, while Scotland is expected to grow by 1%. In the 2003-based projections, Scotland was the only country to show a fall.

The growth in population, for both the UK and England and Wales, is almost entirely driven by the older ages, with the population aged 60 and over increasing by over 30%. The population of those aged under 45 projected to be virtually unchanged, with a small fall of around 1%, although a small rise is expected for 15-29 year olds.

The full tables of population projections, along with components of population change and fertility, mortality and net migration, are available for all countries of the UK on the GAD website (<http://www.gad.gov.uk/Population/index.asp>). GAD is also in the process of producing a historical database of projections back to the 1970-based set, using electronic and microfiche sources. This data will become available via the usual projections web page (above) once it is completed. Currently, details are only available back to the 1998-based projections

Comments or further information:

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