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ONS Mid-year Population Estimates: 2001 to 2006

Background

On 22 August 2007 the Office for National Statistics (ONS) issued mid-2006 population estimates for all local authorities in England and Wales. These are based on the mid-2001 estimates and utilise the new methods for distributing international migration flows that were outlined by ONS on 24 April. As part of the current release, revised estimates for intervening years have also been made available. This report focuses on the total populations for all years and the sizes of the changes that have been introduced for years 2002 to 2005. Further details of the new estimates are due to be published on 13 September, including full components of change for each year.

The revised mid-2004 estimates will form the base of revised ONS sub-national population projections that will be released on 27 September. These projections are to be used by CLG in the allocation process for local authority Revenue Support Grant for financial years 2008-09 to 2010-11.

The ONS mid-year estimates are consistently prepared for all local authorities in England and Wales using the same data sources and, with minor exceptions, the same methodology. Some of the inputs are administrative data (births, deaths, NHS data on internal migration) and some are based on surveys. International migration is the main survey-based input and therefore any estimate has a confidence interval attached. ONS has stated that its estimates are the best that can be prepared using available data but in areas of high migration will be subject to error. Several local authorities in the South East and other regions have expressed strong reservations about the accuracy of the estimates in their areas.

Population Totals

At mid-2006 the population of the South East was estimated to have been 8,237,800 which is a growth of 214,300 since mid-2001, equivalent to 2.67%. The region has accounted for 14.54% of the UK's population growth since mid-2001 and now accounts for 13.60% of the United Kingdom's population and 16.23% of England's.

Appendix Table 1 shows the population for the region, its counties and unitary authorities. Appendix Table 3 shows the annual changes. The fastest growing parts of the region over the previous five years have been Milton Keynes (12,100 or 5.67%), Portsmouth, Isle of Wight and Southampton together with the counties of Oxfordshire (24,700 or 4.07%) and Kent. Only Reading and Slough, of the UAs and counties, have lost population over the five years, although both have had annual estimated increases since 2004.

At the district level significant growth since 2001 has been recorded in Oxford (over 10%), Canterbury and Ashford (both nearly 8%), together with Hart, Tonbridge & Malling, Eastbourne and Elmbridge (all over 5%). Only five districts have been estimated to have lost population since 2001, with Rushmoor (-2,100) being the only one to lose more than a thousand residents. The other districts are: Crawley, Havant, South Oxfordshire and Wycombe.

Differences in Estimates

Appendix Table 2 concentrates on the changes in the population for the region, its counties and unitary authorities at mid-2002 to mid-2005 as a result of the new methods of distributing international migration flows.

The revised estimates broadly confirm the indicative changes published by ONS in April. The region as a whole gained 20,400 (or 2.5 persons per 1,000) at mid-2005. The gross increase is 60% of the England increase of 34,000 and is mainly a result of increases in the estimated inflow to the region. The South East has the fourth highest gain of English regions after Yorkshire & the Humber (43,600), East (21,400) and East Midlands (21,200). The South West was the only other region to gain, the remainder lost population under the new methodology, including a 61,700 loss for London.

By mid-2005 the following authorities have had significant gains as a result of the new methodology:

- Portsmouth: 5,400 or 28.3 per 1,000 residents
- Southampton: 4,800 or 21.8 per 1,000
- Hastings: 1,800 or 21.8 per 1,000
- Cherwell: 2,500 or 18.9 per 1,000
- Wealden: 2,400 or 17.3 per 1,000

For Portsmouth and Southampton the change is mainly due to increased inflows while the other areas listed above all had reductions in the estimated outflows.

The following authorities have had significant population losses as a result of the new methodology:

- Winchester: -3,000 or -27.0 per 1,000 residents
- Reading: -3,100 or -21.7 per 1,000
- Brighton & Hove: -5,400 or -21.0 per 1,000
- Elmbridge: -2,700 or -20.7 per 1,000
- Tunbridge Wells: -1,800 or 17.3 per 1,000

Winchester had a reduction in its estimated inflow while the other listed areas had increases in their estimated outflows.

At mid-2004, the base for the revised sub-national population projections, the region's population has been increased by 14,900 (1.8/1000), equivalent to 85% of the change for England. Portsmouth (19.0/1000) and Winchester (-22.1/1000), respectively, are again the districts with the greatest proportional gain and loss.

Change Analysis

Table 1: Main Regional Components of Change: 2001-06 (thousands)

	Births	Deaths	Natural Change	Net Migration	
				UK	International
2001-02	87.2	79.6	7.6	8.2	3.5
2002-03	89.9	79.5	10.4	9.6	19.5
2003-04	93.3	79.2	14.1	12.3	16.5

Table 2: Regional Migration Flows: 2001-06 (thousands)

	UK		International	
	In	Out	In	Out
2001-02	225.7	217.5	67.3	64.0
2002-03	225.6	216.0	70.7	51.3
2003-04	226.0	213.6	73.7	56.2
2004-05	216.4	202.5	77.3	45.2
2005-06	219.6	200.2	70.4	54.7

The South East reflects national trends in the recent increase in births coupled with the long-term decline in deaths. Table 1 shows that natural change has therefore nearly tripled since 2001-02 to 20,000 in 2005-06. Net migration from the rest of the UK has also steadily increased. Net international migration has been less consistent in the changes over time and fell back in 2005-06, consistent with the national trend. Overall annual growth in the region, including other changes such as armed forces, has risen from 23,500 in 2001-02 to 59,400 in 2004-05 with a slight retreat to 53,200 in 2005-06.

The major migration flows are with the rest of the UK. The increase in the net flow has principally been due to the reduction in the outflow, as seen in Table 2. The net flow with London is critical to the region's growth, there was a gain of 48,000 in 2003-04, but this has fallen to 38,900 in 2005-06, with a decline in the gross inflow from London and an increase in the flow to London. International inflows grew annually to 2004-05, but have fallen back in 2005-06. The international outflow, unfortunately still the least reliable of the estimated flows, has been more unpredictable, but has generally declined across the last five years. The increase to 54,700 in 2005-06 reflects a loss of 385,000 persons leaving the UK for overseas. This is the largest annual outflow from the UK since figures were assembled by the current methods in 1991.

Age Structure

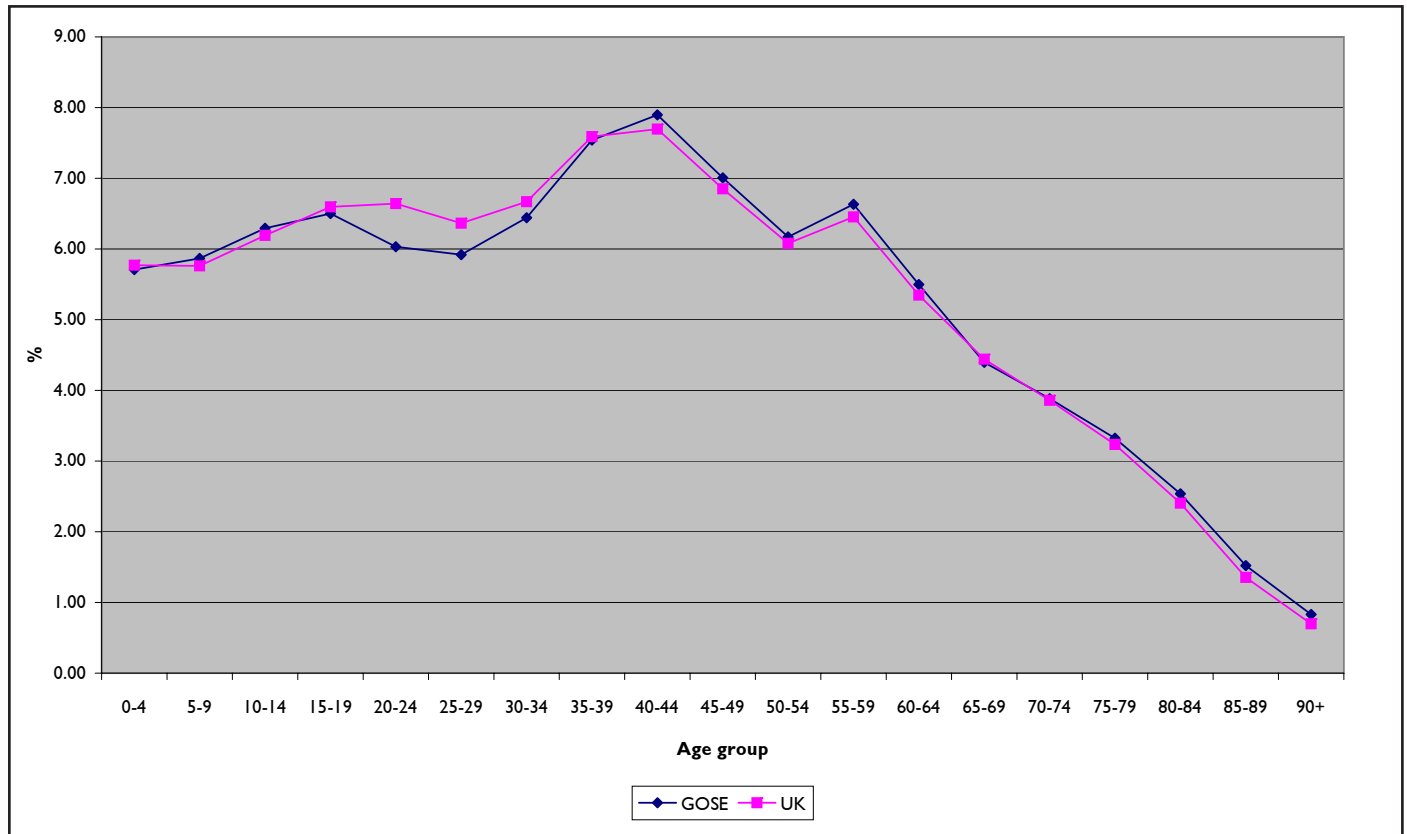


Chart I: Age structure of South East and UK. Mid-2006

Chart I shows how the population age structure of the South East differs from that of the United Kingdom in two main ways. The proportions of children under 20 in the two populations are very similar, but the South East has significantly fewer young adults aged 20-34. On the other hand the population of the South East shows proportionately more people at most age groups above 40, particularly 40-64 and over 80. The high migration interaction between the South East and London partly explains these age structure differences. The South East has a high net loss to London of young adults, but also receives a large flow from London of mature families and people at, or above, retirement ages.

Appendix Table 1: ONS Mid-year estimates: 2001, 2002 to 2005 (revised) and 2006. Counties and Unitary Authorities (thousands)

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
United Kingdom	59113.5	59323.5	59557.3	59845.8	60238.4	60587.3
England	49449.7	49652.3	49866.2	50110.7	50465.6	50762.9
South East	8023.4	8046.9	8087.0	8125.2	8184.6	8237.8
Buckinghamshire	479.1	478.2	479.8	481.4	484.8	487.4
East Sussex	493.1	496.0	499.5	502.7	505.3	506.2
Hampshire	1241.4	1245.1	1250.2	1252.7	1259.6	1265.9
Kent	1331.2	1338.8	1348.9	1361.3	1373.2	1382.9
Oxfordshire	607.3	611.1	617.4	622.2	629.1	632.0
Surrey	1060.2	1060.4	1064.7	1067.8	1075.3	1085.2
West Sussex	755.0	757.0	759.7	764.1	766.6	770.8
Medway	249.7	250.9	251.7	251.7	251.7	251.7
Bracknell Forest	109.7	109.8	110.2	110.4	111.4	112.2
West Berkshire	144.5	143.9	144.5	145.5	147.1	148.8
Reading	144.7	143.3	142.2	141.2	141.9	142.8
Slough	120.6	120.4	119.7	118.7	118.9	119.5
Windsor & Maidenhead	133.5	133.9	134.7	135.6	137.0	138.8
Wokingham	150.3	149.9	150.0	150.8	152.0	153.8
Milton Keynes	212.7	214.9	216.9	218.7	221.4	224.8
Brighton & Hove	249.9	249.2	248.6	247.7	249.7	251.4
Portsmouth	188.0	188.9	190.4	192.1	195.0	196.4
Southampton	219.5	221.2	222.9	224.0	226.8	228.6
Isle of Wight	132.9	134.1	135.1	136.5	137.9	138.5

The county figures exclude unitaries

Appendix Table 2: ONS Mid-year estimates: 2002 to 2005. Differences between original and revised. Counties and Unitary Authorities (thousands)

	2002	2003	2004	2005
United Kingdom	1.8	3.6	11.5	28.9
England	5.4	10.4	17.6	34.0
South East	3.0	6.7	14.9	20.4
Buckinghamshire	0.3	1.8	2.8	3.3
East Sussex	1.5	3.4	6.1	7.4
Hampshire	0.4	-0.8	-0.7	0.1
Kent	-0.9	0.1	2.0	3.2
Oxfordshire	1.3	2.2	2.4	2.2
Surrey	-0.9	0.2	0.6	-0.3
West Sussex	0.9	1.1	2.2	2.2
Medway	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6
Bracknell Forest	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
West Berkshire	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.7
Reading	-0.9	-2.0	-2.8	-3.1
Slough	0.5	0.9	1.1	1.4
Windsor & Maidenhead	-0.1	-0.6	-1.1	-1.5
Wokingham	-0.6	-1.2	-1.5	-1.6
Milton Keynes	0.8	1.2	2.0	2.9
Brighton & Hove	-1.1	-2.9	-4.2	-5.4
Portsmouth	0.5	1.7	3.6	5.4
Southampton	0.8	1.8	2.8	4.8
Isle of Wight	-0.5	-1.2	-1.9	-2.2

The county figures exclude unitaries

**Appendix Table 3: ONS Mid-year estimates: Annual Changes 2001 to 2006.
Counties and Unitary Authorities (thousands)**

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2001-06
United Kingdom	210.0	233.8	288.5	392.5	349.0	1473.9
England	202.5	213.9	244.5	354.9	297.3	1313.2
South East	23.5	40.1	38.2	59.4	53.2	214.3
Buckinghamshire	-0.9	1.6	1.7	3.4	2.5	8.2
East Sussex	2.9	3.5	3.3	2.6	0.9	13.1
Hampshire	3.7	5.1	2.5	6.9	6.3	24.5
Kent	7.6	10.1	12.4	11.9	9.8	51.7
Oxfordshire	3.8	6.4	4.7	7.0	2.9	24.7
Surrey	0.3	4.3	3.1	7.5	10.0	25.1
West Sussex	2.0	2.7	4.4	2.5	4.2	15.8
Medway	1.2	0.8	-0.1	0.0	0.0	2.0
Bracknell Forest	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.9	0.8	2.6
West Berkshire	-0.5	0.5	1.0	1.6	1.7	4.3
Reading	-1.4	-1.1	-0.9	0.7	0.8	-1.9
Slough	-0.2	-0.7	-1.0	0.2	0.6	-1.1
Windsor & Maidenhead	0.3	0.8	0.9	1.4	1.8	5.3
Wokingham	-0.5	0.1	0.8	1.2	1.8	3.5
Milton Keynes	2.2	1.9	1.9	2.7	3.4	12.1
Brighton & Hove	-0.8	-0.6	-0.9	2.0	1.8	1.5
Portsmouth	0.8	1.5	1.7	2.9	1.4	8.3
Southampton	1.7	1.7	1.1	2.8	1.8	9.1
Isle of Wight	1.1	1.0	1.5	1.3	0.7	5.6

The county figures
exclude unitaries

This report has been commissioned by the South East England Regional Assembly from the Greater London Authority.

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