



2006-based National Population Projections

Background

On 23 October 2007 the Office for National Statistics released the 2006-based population projections for the UK and composite countries.

- <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/pdfdir/pproj1007.pdf>

These were produced using the long-term assumptions for UK population projections that were published on 27 September this year.

- <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/pdfdir/ppro0907.pdf>
- http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/PT129_Long_term_assumptions.pdf

Assumptions for projections

The key long-term assumptions for the projections for the UK are as follows:

- An average family size of 1.84 children per woman, an increase of 0.10 compared with the 2004-based projections.
- An expectation of life at birth in 2031 of 82.7 years for males and 86.2 years for females, compared with 81.4 years and 85.0 years respectively in the 2004-based projections.
- A long-term assumption for net migration to the UK of +190,000 each year compared with +145,000 a year in the previous projections.

As stated in the ONS press release:

“The assumptions underlying national population projections are demographic trend based. They are not forecasts. They do not attempt to predict the impact that future government policies, changing economic circumstances or other factors (whether in the UK or overseas) might have on demographic behaviour. They simply provide the population levels that would result if the assumptions about fertility, mortality and migration levels were to be realised in practice.”

Results

The projections use the 2006 mid-year population estimate as their base.

Table 1: 2006-based population projections, by country

| | Persons, thousands | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------------------------|
| | 2006 | 2011 | 2016 | 2021 | 2026 | 2031 | Change 2006 to 2026 |
| United Kingdom | 60,587 | 62,761 | 64,975 | 67,191 | 69,260 | 71,100 | 14% |
| Great Britain | 58,846 | 60,950 | 63,107 | 65,269 | 67,294 | 69,101 | 14% |
| England and Wales | 53,729 | 55,744 | 57,837 | 59,943 | 61,931 | 63,727 | 15% |
| England | 50,763 | 52,706 | 54,724 | 56,757 | 58,682 | 60,432 | 16% |
| Wales | 2,966 | 3,038 | 3,113 | 3,186 | 3,248 | 3,296 | 10% |
| Scotland | 5,117 | 5,206 | 5,270 | 5,326 | 5,363 | 5,374 | 5% |
| Northern Ireland | 1,742 | 1,812 | 1,868 | 1,922 | 1,966 | 1,999 | 13% |

In the twenty years from 2006 to 2026 the United Kingdom is projected to have a 14% increase from 60.6 million to 69.2 million people. England, and England & Wales are projected to have a greater increase of 16% (7.9 million people) and 15% (8.2 million people) respectively. Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are all projected to grow from 2006 to 2026 but at a slower rate.

Differences in the growth rates of each constituent country are because of differing assumption in the fertility, mortality and migration patterns in each case.

Figure I: Fertility assumption, Total Fertility Rate (TFR) by country

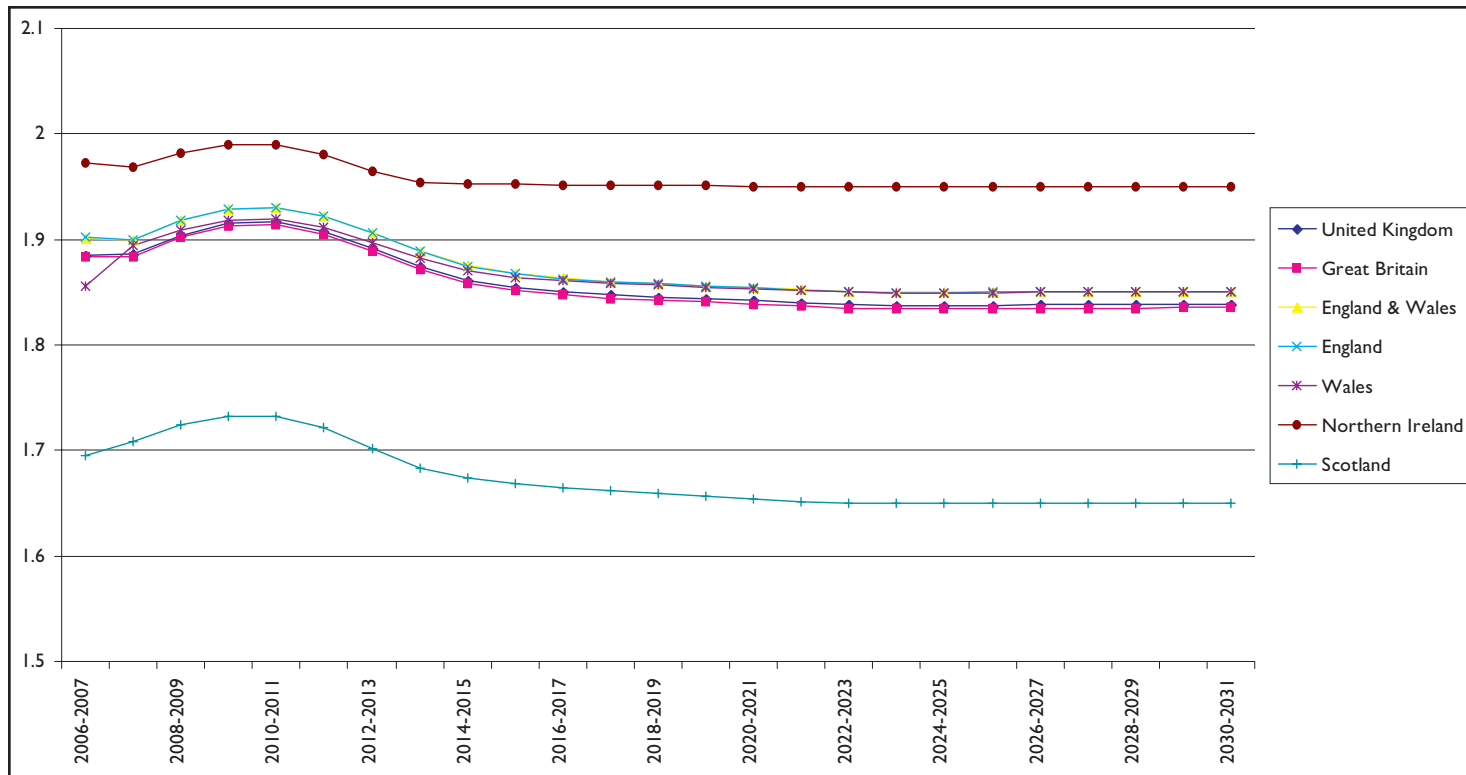


Figure I clearly shows that Scotland has much lower TFR compared with other countries and Northern Ireland is much higher.

The increase in life expectancy and higher net migration for all countries combined with the continued high fertility rates combine to lead to continued increase in population.

Data Availability

Key results for the projections are available from the ONS website

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=8519>

Full results are on the GAD website

http://www.gad.gov.uk/Demography_Data/Population/

2006-based ONS sub-national population projections (SNPP) will be produced during 2008. It is planned to have consultation on migration issues in March and to publish in May.

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

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