

Compendium

An executive summary, 2014-based national population projections reference volume

Contact:
Andrew Nash
pop.info@ons.gsi.gov.uk

Release date:
30 March 2016

Next release:
To be announced

Table of contents

1. [Introduction](#)
2. [Projected UK population change](#)
3. [Underlying assumptions](#)
4. [Background notes](#)

1 . Introduction

This publication presents the results of the 2014-based population projections produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) for the UK and its constituent countries. These results were previously published in statistical releases [2014-based Statistical Bulletin](#) on 29 October 2015 and [2014-based extra variants report](#) on 26 November 2015. This volume is the latest in a regular series, which started in 1970, and brings together a summary of the results and details of the methodology into one compendium.

This volume includes some alternative summary charts and tables to those published previously. It also provides further detail of the projections methodology, some discussion around the trends which informed the assumptions and a range of related references for further background reading.

The following chapters are included:

- [Chapter 1 - Background and methodology](#)
- [Chapter 2 - Summary results](#)
- [Chapter 3 - Fertility assumptions](#)
- [Chapter 4 - Mortality assumptions](#)
- [Chapter 5 - Migration assumptions](#)
- [Chapter 6 - Variants](#)

Main points

At mid-2014 the estimated population of the UK was about 86,000 higher than that projected for mid-2014 in the 2012-based projections. This was predominantly due to higher levels of net migration observed in 2013 to 2014 than assumed in the 2012-based projections. More information comparing the 2014-based and 2012-based projections is available in the [Summary Results chapter of the 2014-based national population projections release](#).

The main points of the 2014-based population projections are:

- the UK population is projected to increase by 9.7 million over the next 25 years, from an estimated 64.6 million in mid-2014 to 74.3 million in mid-2039
- the UK population is projected to reach 70 million by mid-2027
- over the 10 year period to mid-2024, the UK population is projected to increase by 4.4 million to 69.0 million - this is 249,000 higher than the previous (2012-based) projection for that year
- assumed net migration accounts for 51% of the projected increase over the next 25 years, with natural increase (more births than deaths) accounting for the remaining 49% of growth

2 . Projected UK population change

The projection has the following features:

- the population is projected to continue ageing, with the average (median) age rising from 40.0 years in mid-2014 to 40.9 years in mid-2024 and 42.9 by mid-2039
- by mid-2039, more than 1 in 12 of the population is projected to be aged 80 or over.
- the number of children (those aged 0 to 15) is projected to grow by 8.8% between mid-2014 and mid-2039
- the number of people of working age (those aged between 16 and State Pension Age) is projected to rise by 11.4%, from 40.0 million in mid-2014 to 44.6 million by mid-2039
- the number of people of pensionable age for every thousand people of working age is projected to fall from 310 in mid-2014 to 284 in mid-2020 as a result of changes in the State Pension Age, but then rise to 370 in mid-2039 - this rise means that the projections show more people of pensionable age relative to the number of people of working age in mid-2039 than in mid-2014

The change in the age distribution between mid-2014 and mid-2039 is shown in Figure 0.1.

Figure 0.1: Estimated and projected age structure of UK population, mid-2014 and mid-2039

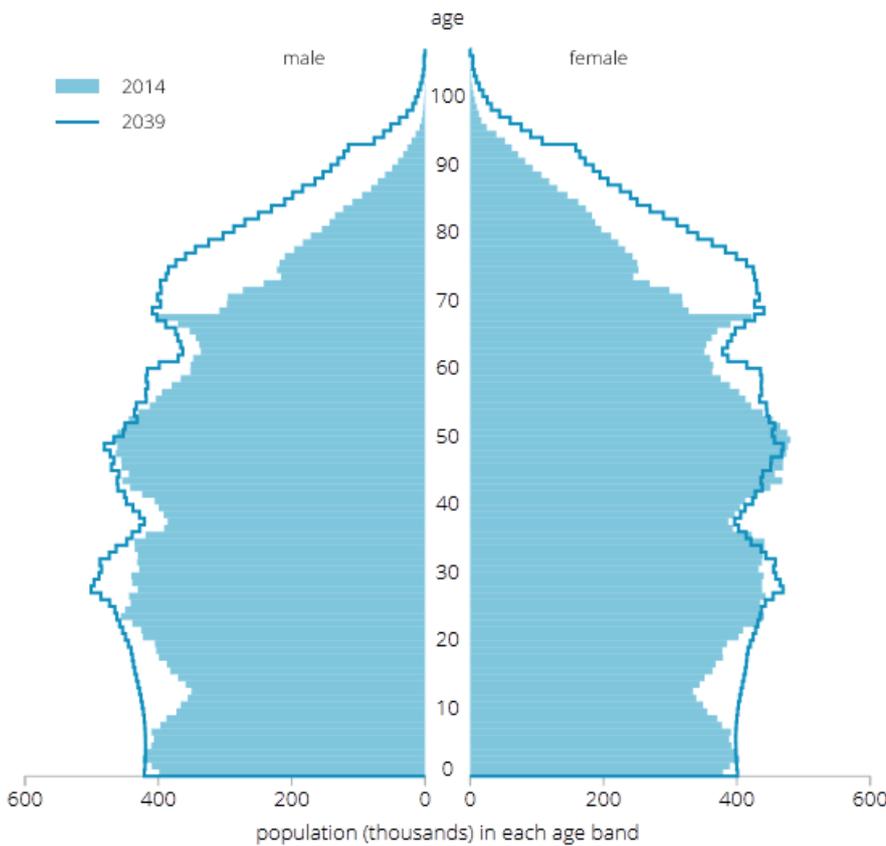


Table 0.1: Estimated and projected population by age, UK, mid-1981 to mid-2089

Year	thousands				
	All ages	Under 16	16-64	65 & over	(80 & over)
Estimates					
1981	56,357	12,543	35,339	8,476	1,572
1991	57,439	11,685	36,695	9,059	2,126
2001	59,113	11,863	37,877	9,373	2,459
2011	63,285	11,883	40,944	10,458	2,915
2014	64,597	12,153	41,037	11,407	3,071
Projections					
2019	66,928	12,741	41,718	12,468	3,433
2024	69,036	13,105	42,206	13,725	3,962
2034	72,721	13,188	42,558	16,974	5,614
2039	74,284	13,219	43,013	18,053	6,259
Longer-term projections					
2044	75,766	13,380	43,842	18,544	7,137
2054	78,510	13,942	44,644	19,924	8,458
2064	80,992	14,198	45,606	21,188	8,908
2074	83,670	14,428	47,142	22,101	10,060
2084	86,546	14,836	47,990	23,720	10,690
2089	87,984	15,010	48,438	24,536	11,189

Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Figures may not sum due to rounding

Due to differences in past and present demographic patterns, and those assumed for the future, projected trends differ for the 4 countries of the UK (see Table 0.2).

The population of England is projected to increase by 16.5%, Wales by 6.1%, Scotland by 6.6% and Northern Ireland by 9.8% over the 25 year period to mid-2039.

Table 0.2: Estimated and projected population of the UK by constituent country, mid-1981 to mid-2064

Year					thousands
	UK	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
Estimates					
1981	56,357	46,821	2,813	5,180	1,543
1991	57,439	47,875	2,873	5,083	1,607
2001	59,113	49,450	2,910	5,064	1,689
2011	63,285	53,107	3,064	5,300	1,814
2014	64,597	54,317	3,092	5,348	1,840
Projections					
2019	66,928	56,466	3,139	5,428	1,894
2024	69,036	58,396	3,187	5,514	1,939
2034	72,721	61,800	3,262	5,659	2,000
2039	74,284	63,282	3,280	5,701	2,021
Longer-term projections					
2044	75,766	64,702	3,294	5,732	2,039
2054	78,510	67,373	3,314	5,767	2,057
2064	80,992	69,801	3,338	5,798	2,055

Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Figures may not sum due to rounding

3 . Underlying assumptions

The national population projections are based on the latest available mid-year population estimates and a set of demographic assumptions about future fertility, mortality and migration based on analysis of trends and expert advice. The main assumptions for the UK as a whole are set out below.

Average completed family size, which has been falling from a peak of nearly 2.5 children per woman for women born in the mid-1930s, is assumed to level off at 1.89 children for women born after 2010. This is the same assumption as the 2012-based projection. It is projected that this assumption will hold true for women born after 2015.

Expectation of life at birth, based on mortality rates for the year in question, is projected to increase from 78.9 years in mid-2015 to 84.1 years in mid-2039 for males, and from 82.5 years in mid-2015 to 86.9 years in mid-2039 for females. In mid-2039, period expectation of life at birth for the UK is around 0.2 years lower for males and 0.6 years lower for females compared with the previous projections. These projected life expectancies are lower as a result of recent mortality rates. After 2039, the life expectancies continue to diverge from those in the 2012-based projections to approximately 0.6 years lower for males and 1.0 years lower for females by the end of the 100 year projection period.

The long-term assumption for net migration to the UK is +185,000 each year, compared with +165,000 per year in the 2012-based projections. This change reflects the most recent trends in international migration available at the time the projections were produced. A new method for setting and applying the cross-border (intra-UK) migration assumptions as rates rather than fixed numbers of migrants was introduced and applied for the 2014-based projections (see [Chapter 5](#)).

4. Background notes

1. The 2014-based Population Projections for the United Kingdom and constituent countries were published 29 October 2015. Available at: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/compendium/nationalpopulationprojections/2015-10-29> (main release) and 26 November 2015, available at <http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/articles/nationalpopulationprojections/2014basedextravariantsreport> (extra variants).
2. These [National Statistics](#) are produced to high professional standards and released according to the arrangements approved by the [UK Statistics Authority](#).