

## **IMPACT OF THE 2001 CENSUS ON NATIONAL POPULATION PROJECTIONS**

### **1. Interim 2001-based national population projections**

Following consultation with the Registrars General of England & Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, it has been agreed that the Government Actuary should carry out an 'interim' 2001-based set of national population projections for the UK and its constituent countries. This follows the publication on 30 September 2002 of the first results of the 2001 Census. The Government Actuary's Department (GAD) announced on 7 October 2002 that it was expected that these interim projections would be published on the GAD website on Thursday 21 November 2002. This publication date has been revised and the interim 2001-based national population projections will now be published on Friday 1 November 2002. This note summarises the long-term assumptions about fertility, mortality and net migration that will underlie these interim projections.

### **2. Background**

GAD produce the official national population projections for the UK and its constituent countries, usually every second year, at the request of, and after consultation with, the Registrars General of England & Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The latest 'full' set of projections, based on the estimated population of the UK in mid-2000, was published by GAD on 15 November 2001. The next scheduled full projections, based on the population at mid-2002, are planned for issue in November 2003.

### **3. Consequences of 2001 Census results for national population projections**

The two main consequences of the 2001 Census results for the national population projections are:

- (a) the mid-2000 population estimates, on which the latest 'full' GAD projections were based, overestimated the population of the United Kingdom by about 1.0 million; and
- (b) the assumption in GAD's latest principal projection of future long-term net inward migration to the UK of 135,000 persons a year was based on estimates of recent net inward international migration which are now known to have been significantly overestimated.

There are also implications for the assumed age/sex distribution of future international migrants.



#### 4. Taking account of 2001 Census data in national population projections

To take *full* account of 2001 Census data, considerably more information would be required than the official mid-2001 population estimates based on the 2001 Census, which were published on 30 September 2002 (Scotland/Northern Ireland) and on 10 October 2002 (England and Wales). In particular, the following would be needed:

- (a) revised population estimates for the period 1991 to 2000 consistent with 2001 Census data;
- (b) revised estimates of international migration for the years 1991 to 2000; and
- (c) revised estimates of international migration by age and sex for recent years.

These data will become available in 2003. They will be taken into account in preparing the scheduled 2002-based projections. GAD expects to publish these projections to the normal timetable in November 2003.

It is, therefore, not possible to take full account of the implications of the 2001 Census for the *interim* 2001-based projections, but these interim projections will:

- (i) be based on the estimated population at mid-2001 derived from the 2001 Census and will therefore 'correct' for the overestimation of the base population in the 2000-based projections; and
- (ii) incorporate revised assumptions of net international migration to the United Kingdom agreed with the Registrars General (see 5. below). This is necessarily a very provisional revision. A full reassessment of trends in international migration will be made for the 2002-based projections in 2003, when the full range of Census related data has become available.

For the interim 2001-based projections, the long-term fertility and mortality assumptions will be unchanged from the 2000-based projections. Again, GAD will make a full assessment of the effect of 2001 Census results on fertility and mortality trends once revised population estimates for the period 1991 to 2000 become available in February 2003.

## 5. Assumptions

The interim projections will be based on the long-term assumptions shown in the table below, which also gives the corresponding assumptions used for the last two sets of official national population projections (based on the estimated population in mid-1998 and mid-2000).

**Long term assumptions for the interim 2001-based national population projections**

	United Kingdom	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
Fertility – Long-term average number of children per woman					
2000-based and interim 2001-based	1.74	1.75	1.75	1.60	1.80
1998-based	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.75	1.85
Mortality – Expectation of life at birth in 2025*					
Males 2000-based and interim 2001-based	78.9	79.2	78.7	76.6	78.4
1998-based	78.9	79.1	78.6	77.0	78.4
Females 2000-based and interim 2001-based	83.2	83.4	83.0	81.6	82.9
1998-based	83.1	83.2	82.9	81.6	82.8
Net migration – Long-term annual net migration†					
Interim 2001-based	+100,000	+97,000	+5,500	-1,000	-1,500
2000-based	+135,000	+128,000	+7,500	0	-500
1998-based	+95,000	+91,000	+5,500	-1,000	-500

\* Specimen year. Mortality rates are assumed to continue improving beyond 2025.

† Includes international migration and cross-border migration between the countries of the UK.

Further details about the assumptions used for the 2000-based population projections are given in 'National population projections: 2000-based' published by The Stationery Office in August 2002 (ONS Series PP2 No. 23) and also available on GAD's website at [www.gad.gov.uk](http://www.gad.gov.uk).

## 6. Release of projections

The interim 2001-based population projections will be published on Friday 1 November 2002. A joint GAD/Office for National Statistics 'First Release' will summarise the results of the projections, and full results will be made available on the GAD website ([www.gad.gov.uk](http://www.gad.gov.uk)), in the form of downloadable Excel files.