

UK population projected to hit 70m by 2027

The UK population could reach 70 million by 2027, according to figures published today by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The figures are projections based on the UK population in 2010.

The population is projected to increase by 4.9 million to 67.2 million over the 10 year period to 2020. This increase is equivalent to an annual growth rate of 0.8 per cent each year between mid-2010 and mid-2020. The population is projected to increase from an estimated 62.3 million in 2010 to 73.2 million in 2035.

Population projections are not forecasts, and do not attempt to predict the impact of government policy or changing economic circumstances, for example. They are based on the most recently available mid-year population estimates and a set of underlying demographic assumptions regarding fertility, mortality and migration.

Of the 4.9 million projected increase in the UK population over the next 10 years, some 2.8 million (56 per cent) is a result of projected natural increase – in other words, more births than deaths. The remaining 2.1 million (44 per cent) is the assumed net number of migrants (Table 2). Similarly, of the 10.9 million projected increase in the population by 2035, 5.8 million (53 per cent) is due to projected natural increase and 5.1 million (47 per cent) is due to projected net migration.

ONS also produces several variant projections based on alternative assumptions of fertility, mortality and migration. These provide an indication of the impact that changes in demographic behaviour might have on the size and age structure of the future population.

The population is projected to become older gradually, with the average (median) age rising from 39.7 years in 2010 to 39.9 years in 2020 and 42.2 years by 2035.

As the population ages, the numbers in the oldest age groups will increase the fastest. In 2010, there were 1.4 million people in the UK aged 85 and over; this number is projected to increase to 1.9 million by 2020 and to 3.5 million by 2035, more than doubling over 25 years.

The number of people aged 90 and above is projected to more than triple by 2035, the number of people age 95 and over is projected to more than quadruple, and the number of centenarians is projected to rise from 13,000 in 2010 to 110,000 in 2035, a more than eightfold increase.

At the other end of the age range, Over the 25 year period to 2035, the number of children aged under 16 is projected to increase from 11.6 million in 2010 to 13.3 million in 2026 before decreasing slightly to 13.0 million in 2035.

2010-based national population projections for the UK and constituent countries are available at: www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/npp/national-population-projections/2010-based-projections/index.html

Background notes

1. Follow us on www.twitter.com/statisticsONS and on the ONS Youtube channel at www.youtube.com/user/onsstats
2. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available from the media relations office.
3. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference. © Crown copyright 2011. Media contact: Tel Media Relations Office 0845 6041858 Emergency on-call 07867 906553 E-mail richard.miles@ons.gsi.gov.uk
4. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available by visiting www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html or from the Media Relations Office email: media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk

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