

# Mid-Year Population Estimates Scotland, Mid-2017



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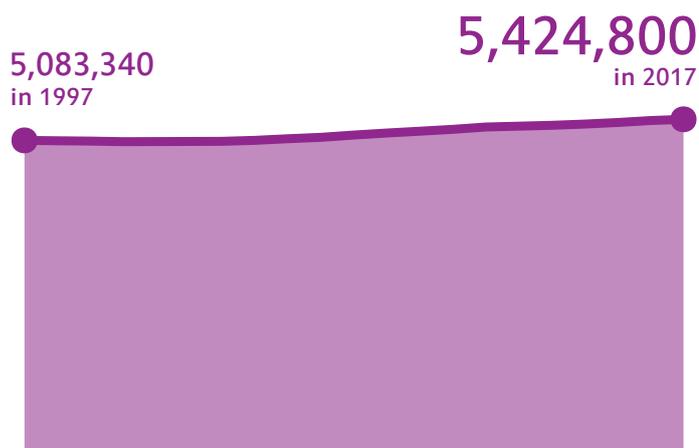
This statistical report provides population estimates for Scotland, its council areas and NHS boards, by sex and age.

## Scotland's population has increased in recent years

The latest estimate of Scotland's population (on 30 June 2017) is 5,424,800 – the highest ever and an increase of 20,100 people (0.4%) over the last year.

Since 1997, Scotland's population has increased by 6%.

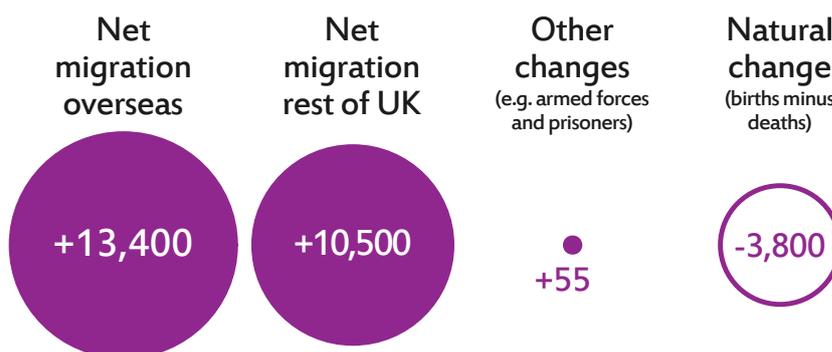
Number of people



## The increase in Scotland's population has been driven by migration

In the year to 30 June 2017 there was a net gain of 13,400 from overseas and 10,500 people from the rest of the UK.

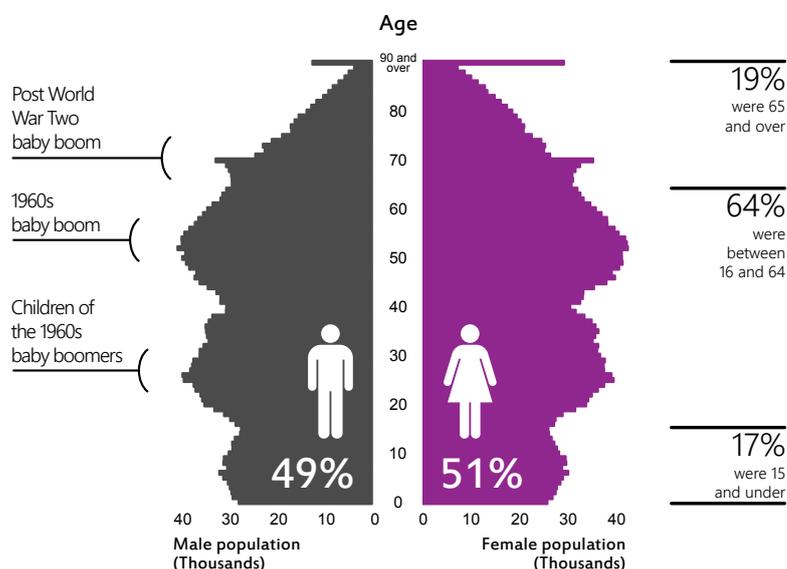
There were 3,800 more deaths than births and other changes (such as in the number of armed forces and prisoners) resulted in an increase of 55 people.



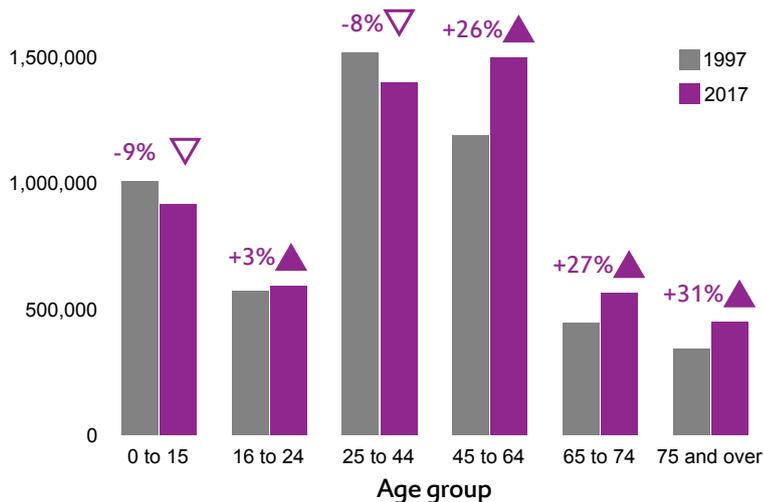
## In 2017, just under one in five people (19%) in Scotland were aged 65 and over

People aged under 16 made up 17% of the population and 64% of people were aged 16 to 64.

There were more females than males - especially amongst people aged 75 and over due to the longer life expectancy of females.



Number of people

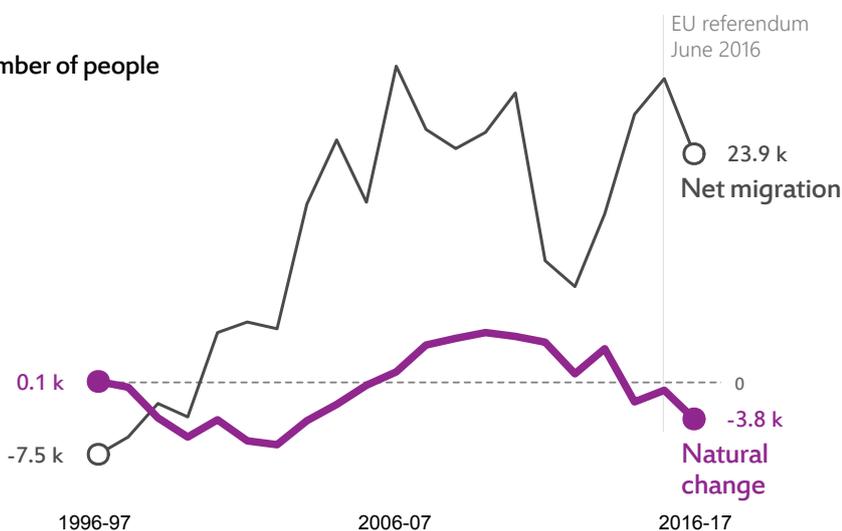


## Scotland's population is ageing

The increase in the population of older age groups has been much higher than younger age groups over the last 20 years.

The largest increase has been in the 75 and over age group (+31%) whereas the population of children aged 0 to 15 has decreased the most (-9%).

Number of people

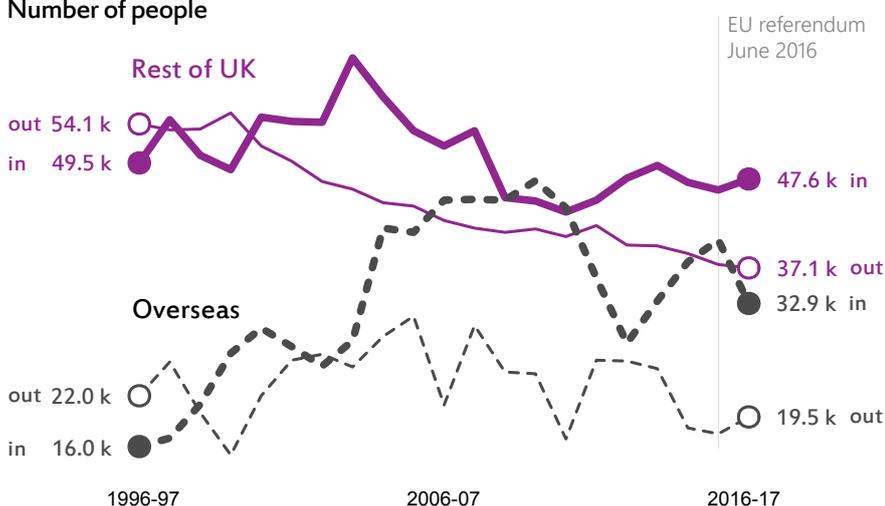


## Since 2000 Scotland's population increase has mostly been due to positive net migration

In the year to 30 June 2017:

- 23,900 more people came to Scotland than left (net migration)
- There were 3,800 more deaths than births (natural change)

Number of people



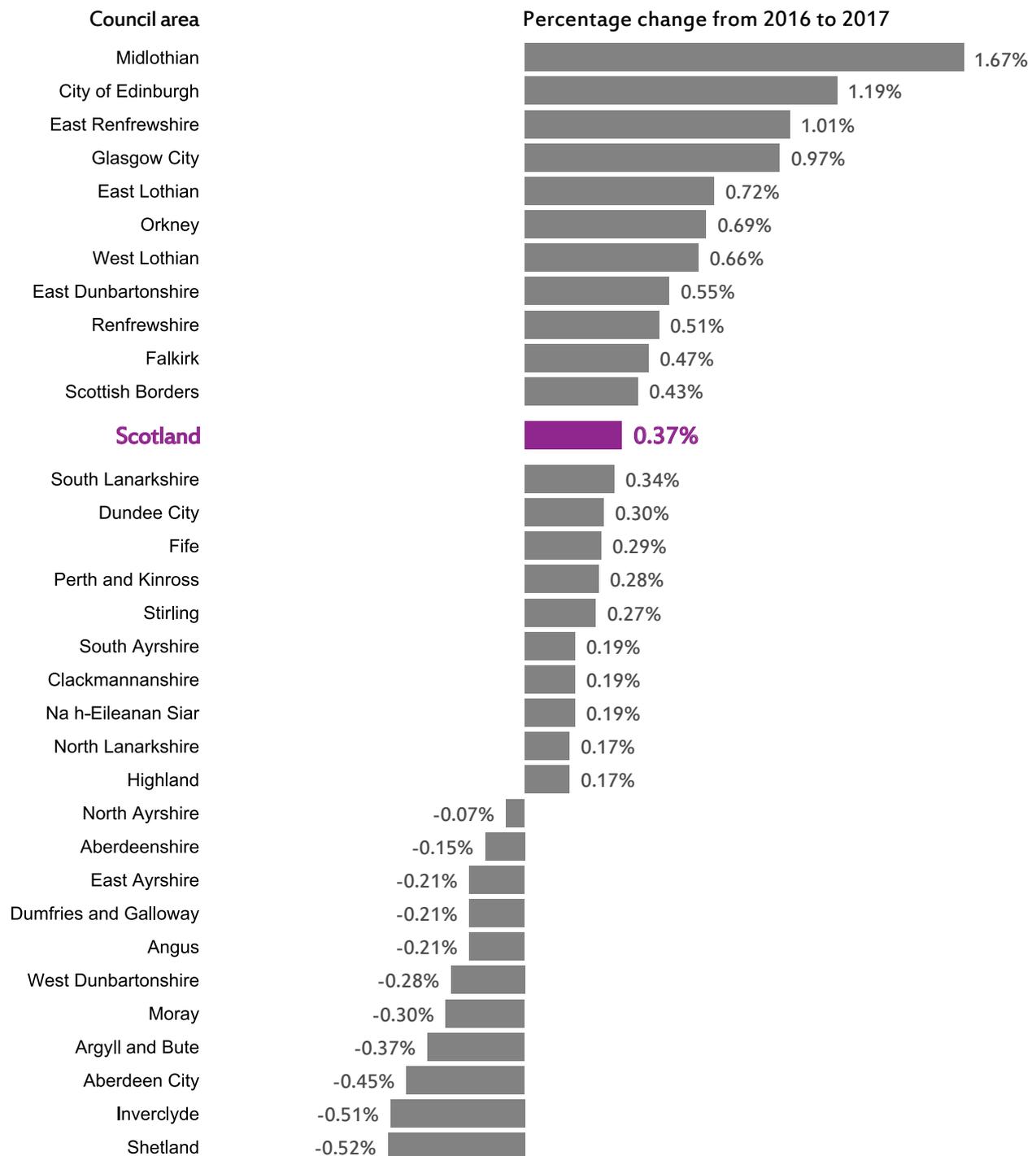
## Over the last year, the number of people moving to Scotland from the rest of UK has increased whereas the number coming from overseas has decreased

In the year to 30 June 2017:

- 47,600 more people came to Scotland from the rest of the UK (up from 46,300 the previous year)
- 32,900 arrived from overseas (down from 40,400 the previous year)

## The level of population change varies across Scotland's council areas

Over the last year, two thirds of Scotland's council areas (21 councils) increased in population while one third (11 councils) experienced a population decrease.



There is more information on Scotland's council areas in the interactive data visualisation accompanying the mid-2017 population estimates which is available from the NRS website (<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/stats-at-a-glance/infographics-and-visualisations#data>)

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Further tables to accompany this publication are available to download on the Mid-year population estimates section of the [National Records of Scotland \(NRS\) website](#).

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## Key Findings

- On 30 June 2017, the population of Scotland was 5,424,800, the largest population ever in Scotland for the eighth year running.
- Scotland's population increased by 20,100 people (0.4%) in the year to mid-2017. This is a smaller increase than that seen in the year to mid-2016 (0.6%) but within the range of population change we have seen over the past ten years (where annual growth rates varied between 0.3% to 0.7%).
- Natural change, births minus deaths, has not contributed to Scotland's recent population growth. Across Scotland, there were 3,800 more deaths than births in the year to mid-2017, compared to 800 more deaths than births in the previous year. This was due to a decrease in the number of births and an increase in the number of deaths between mid-2016 and mid-2017.
- The population of Scotland is ageing. In mid-2017, 19% of the population were aged 65 and over compared with 16% in mid-2007.
- Over the year to mid-2017, Scotland had positive net migration with 23,900 more people coming to Scotland than leaving, from both overseas and the rest of the UK. However there has been a reduction of 25% over the last year – previously in the year to mid-2016, overall net migration was 31,700 people.
- We can look separately at trends in net migration from the rest of the UK and from overseas to understand what's driving the reduction in overall net migration. Over the year to mid-2017, this shows:
  - Net migration from the rest of the UK was positive with 10,500 more people coming to Scotland than leaving. This is an increase compared with the previous year where it was 8,800 people.
  - Net migration from countries outwith the UK was also positive with 13,400 more people coming from overseas to Scotland than leaving. However this is a decrease compared with the previous year where overseas net migration was 22,900 people.
- The population has increased in 21 council areas across Scotland while 11 council areas have experienced a population decrease in the year to mid-2017.
- The greatest increase in population was in Midlothian which grew by 1.7% while the greatest population decreases were in Aberdeen City, Inverclyde and Shetland Islands which decreased by 0.5% over the year to mid-2017.

## 1. Introduction

This publication provides headline estimates of the population of Scotland, its council areas and NHS boards as at 30 June 2017 (commonly referred to as mid-2017).

These estimates are based on the Census and are updated annually to account for population change in the period from 1 July to 30 June. Therefore, the period covered by the latest mid-2017 statistics (1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017) is just after the referendum on European Union membership (which took place on 23 June 2016).

The two main contributors to population change are natural change (births minus deaths) and net migration (the difference between long-term moves into and out of Scotland or local areas). More information about the methodology and quality, including strengths and weaknesses, of the estimates published in this release is available in the notes and definitions section of this document and more detailed information in the [Mid-year Estimates for Scotland Methodology Guide](#).

Population estimates are used for a variety of purposes including resource allocation and planning of services such as education and health. They are also used for calculating rates and performance measures, informing local and national policy, weighting surveys and in modelling the economy.

The Scottish Government has set a target to match average European Union (EU15) population growth over the period from 2007 to 2017. The population estimates in this publication are used to measure progress towards this target. More details can be found on the [Scotland Performs](#) section of the Scottish Government website.

The UK Statistics Authority (UKSA) has designated this publication as National Statistics, in line with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The UKSA reassessed our population estimates and projections in 2016 and published an [assessment report](#), available on their website. Further information can be found in the [UK Statistics Authority-Assessments](#) section on the NRS website.

## 2. The population of Scotland

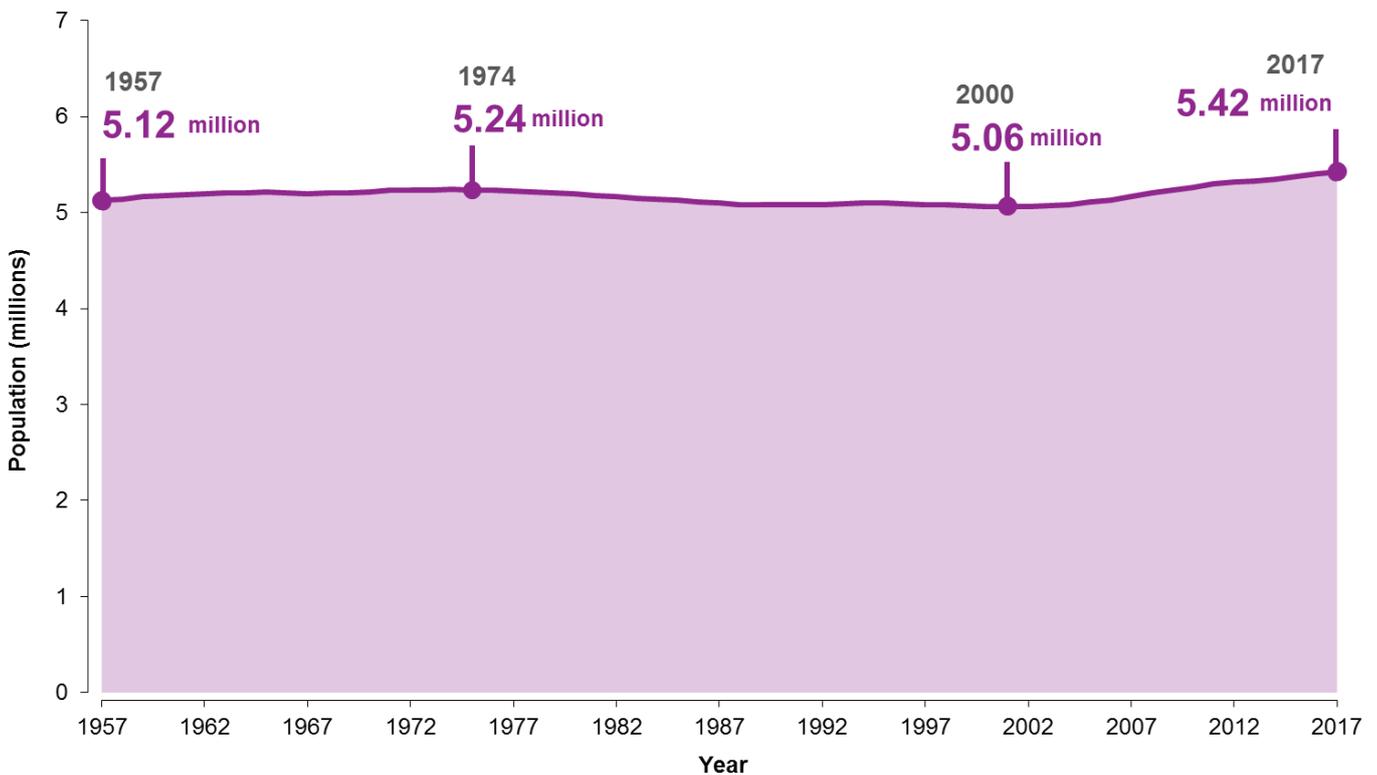
### Scotland's population is increasing

In the year to mid-2017 Scotland's population increased by 20,100 people (0.4%).

Over the last 60 years, the population of Scotland increased from 5.12 million in 1957 to 5.24 million in 1974 before declining to a recent low of 5.06 million in 2000, as seen in [Figure 1](#). Since then, Scotland's population has increased every year for the past 17 years from 5.06 million in 2000 to a record high of 5.42 million in 2017.

Between 2007 and 2017, Scotland's population has increased by a total of 254,800 people with an average increase of 0.5% each year.

**Figure 1: Estimated population of Scotland, 1957 to 2017**



### **Why is the population increasing?**

Populations can change for two main reasons, natural change and net migration. Natural change is the difference between the number of births and deaths in a population and net migration is the difference between the number of people entering and leaving the country.

The latest figures show that Scotland had positive net migration, with 23,900 more people arriving than leaving in the year to mid-2017. In contrast, Scotland had negative natural change with 3,800 more deaths than births over the same period.

Other changes over the year to mid-2017 resulted in an increase of 55 people. This included changes in the prison population, changes in the number of armed forces stationed in Scotland and small rounding adjustments.

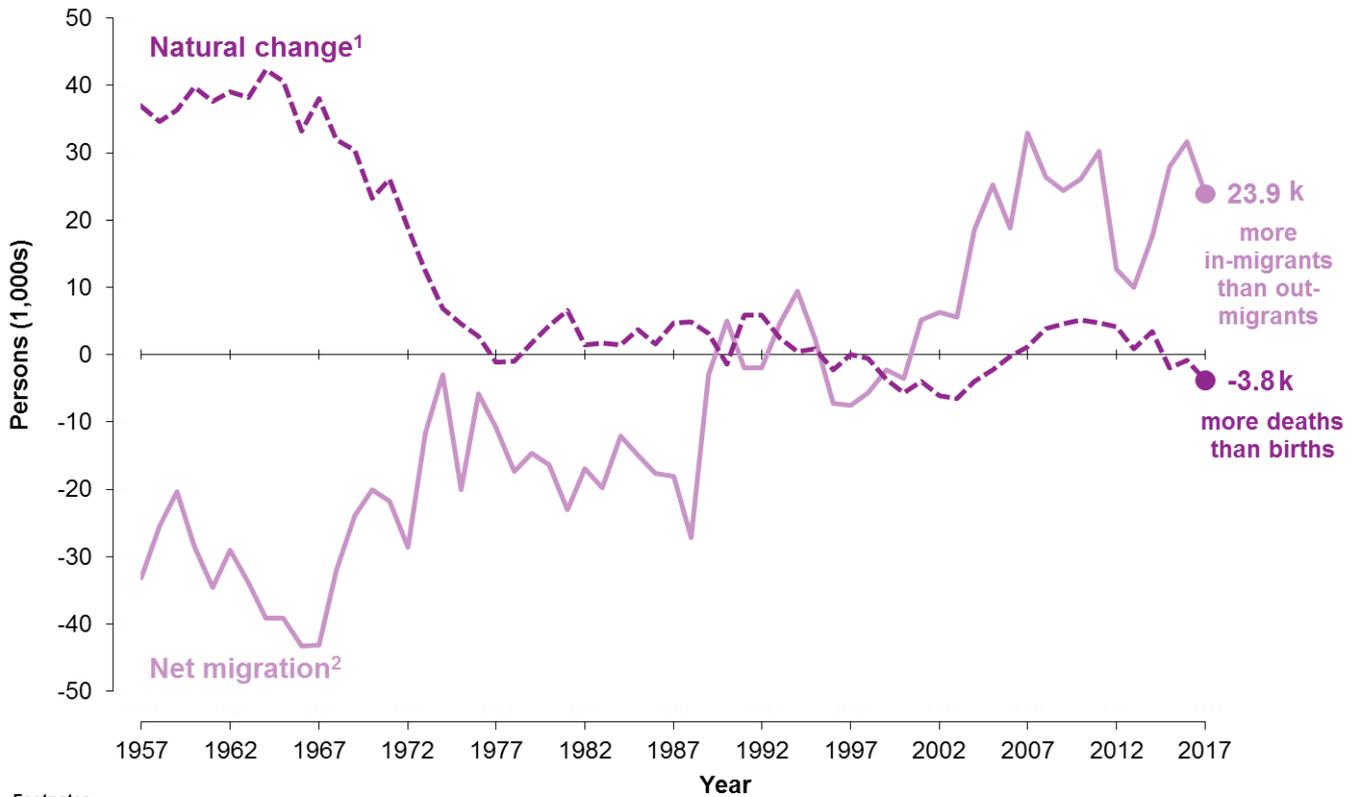
### **How do the latest figures compare with past trends?**

Figure 2 shows trends in natural change and net migration in Scotland since 1957. Historically, Scotland had highly positive natural change with many more people being born than people dying each year. However in the 1970s, natural change fell dramatically. Since 1975 it has dipped above and below zero and never been greater than 6,600 or lower than -6,500.

Over the past three years, there have been more deaths than births resulting in negative natural change. The most recent figures from mid-2017 show that there were 3,800 more deaths than births. The difference between deaths and births was greater than in the year to mid-2016 when there were 800 more deaths than births. This is caused partly by a lower birth rate but also by an increased number of deaths in the year to mid-2017 compared with the year to mid-2016.

Prior to the 1990s, there were more people migrating out of Scotland than into Scotland. This was at an all-time low in 1966 when 43,200 more people left than arrived, however the highly positive natural change at the time meant that this had only a small impact on the overall population. Since 2001, net migration has been positive with more people entering than leaving the country.

**Figure 2: Natural change and net migration, 1956-57 to 2016-17**



**Footnotes**  
 1 Births minus deaths.  
 2 Inward minus outward migration.

### Where are migrants coming from and going to?

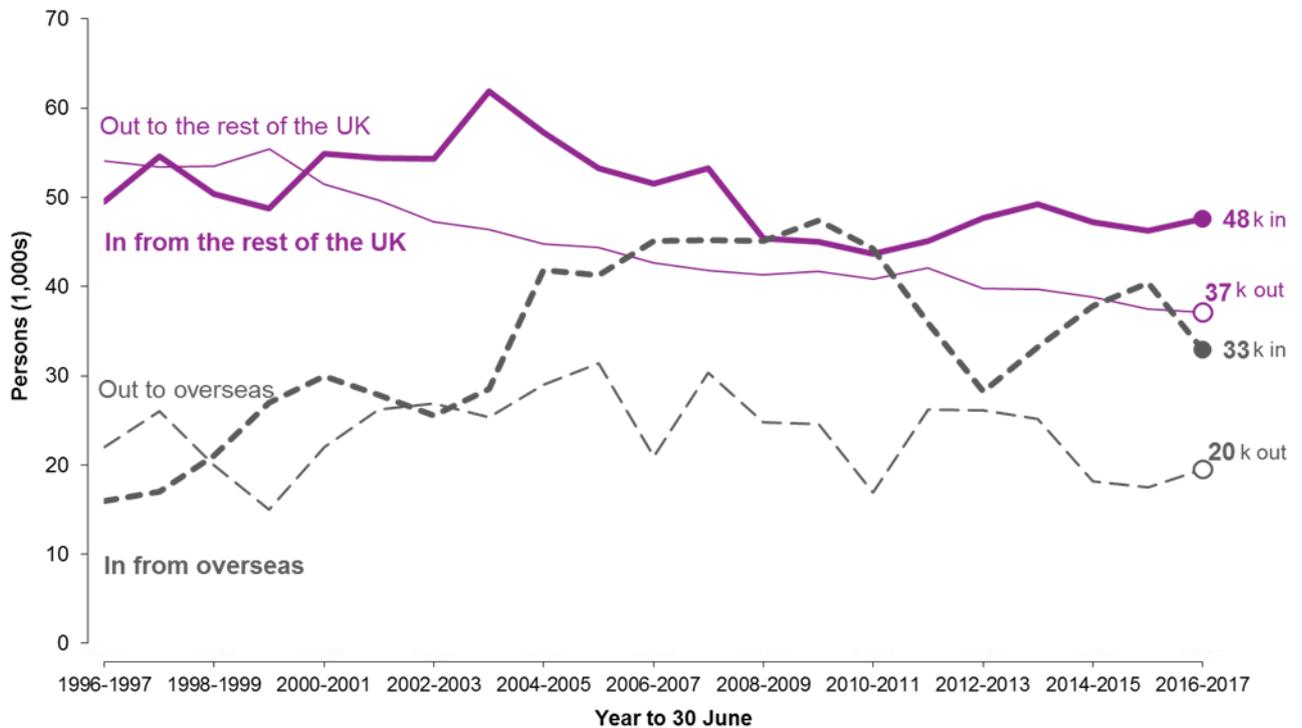
In the year to mid-2017, Scotland experienced positive net migration with 23,900 more people coming to Scotland than leaving. Compared with the previous year, net migration was 24.7% lower in mid-2017.

Breaking these figures down further, in the year to mid-2017, 47,600 migrants came to Scotland from the rest of the UK (1,300 more than in 2016) and 37,100 left Scotland for the rest of the UK (400 fewer than in 2016), resulting in positive net migration of 10,500. This is higher than the comparable figure in 2016, when 8,800 more people arrived from the rest of the UK than left. In the year to mid-2017, 32,900 people migrated to Scotland from overseas and 19,500 people left Scotland and moved overseas, resulting in positive net migration of +13,400. While this is still positive net migration, it is lower than in mid-2016 (+22,900). This was due to a decrease of 7,500 in-migrants from overseas and an increase of 2,000 out-migrants compared to the previous year. These changes suggest that the results of the 2016 EU referendum may be a factor in people's decision to move to or from the UK – but decisions to migrate are complex and other factors are also going to be influencing the figures.

Figure 3 illustrates the trend in flows of people to and from the rest of the UK and overseas since 1996-1997. A peak of 61,900 in-migrants to Scotland from the rest of the UK was estimated in the year to mid-2004. The small reduction in out-migration to the rest of the UK in the latest year is in line with the longer term trend which has seen a steady decrease of outward migration from a peak of 55,400 in the year to mid-2000.

For each of the three years prior to 2017, there were increases in people moving to Scotland from overseas; this is the first year since 2013 that has seen a decrease. In the latest year out-migration to overseas increased to 19,500 people compared to 17,500 people the year before.

**Figure 3: Movements to/from the rest of the UK and overseas, 1996-97 to 2016-17**



**How old are migrants coming to and leaving Scotland?**

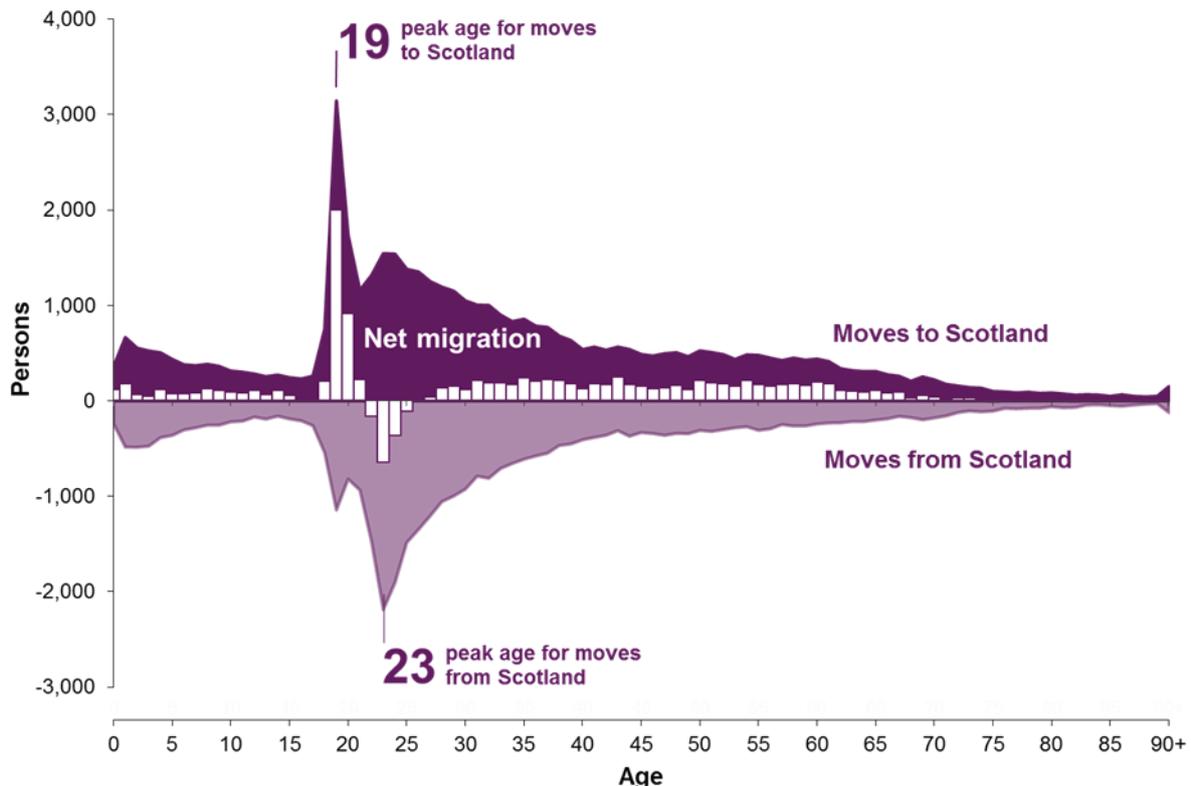
On average, migrants entering Scotland tend to be younger than the general population. In the year to mid-2017, 56% of all in migrants to Scotland were aged 16-34 years, compared with 25% of the population as a whole. Of in-migrants from the rest of the UK, 48% were aged 16-34 and of in-migrants from overseas, 67% were in this age category. In comparison, 7% of in-migrants from the rest of

the UK and 1% of in-migrants from overseas were aged 65 and over in contrast to 19% of the resident population.

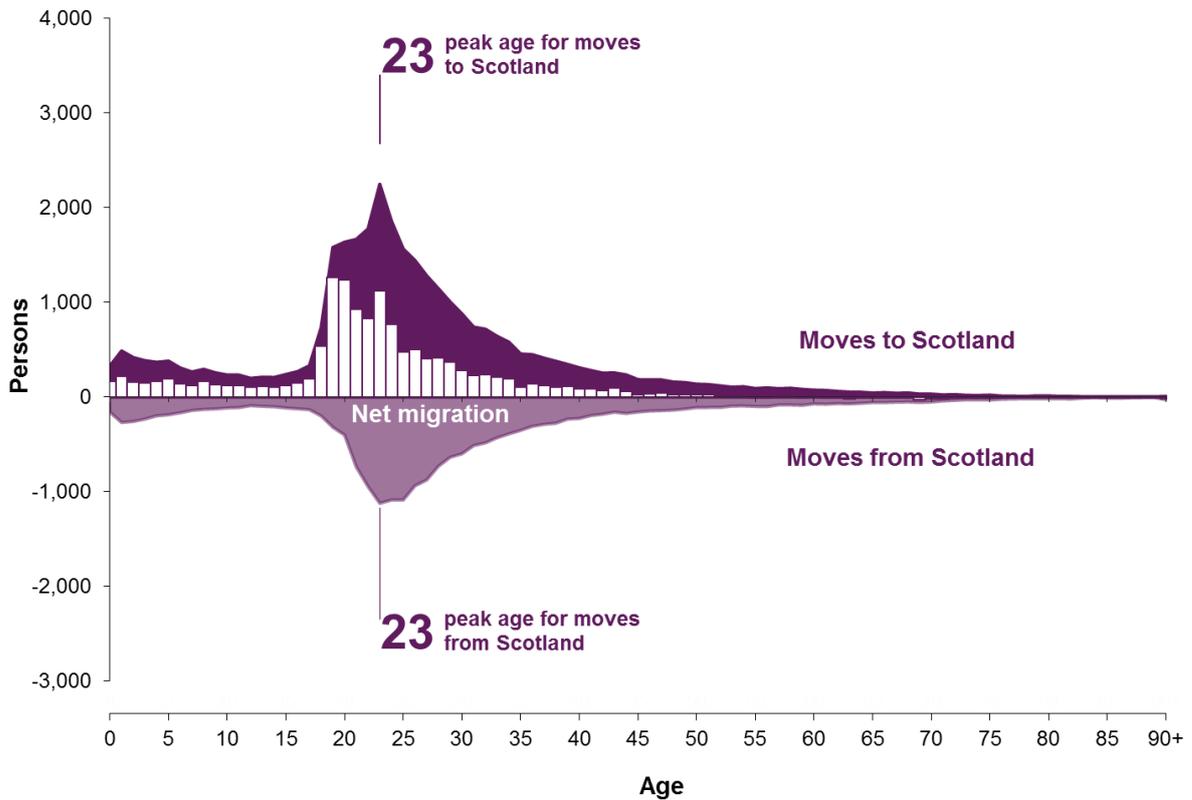
Figure 4 shows movements between Scotland and the rest of UK between mid-2016 and mid-2017 by age. The peak age for migration into Scotland is 19 and there is a pronounced net migration gain at this age, while the peak age for migration out of Scotland is 23. These large in and out flows are the result of an influx of students from outside Scotland starting higher education in Scotland, followed by moves out of Scotland after graduation.

Figure 5 shows the age of migrants moving between Scotland and overseas. The peak age for migration into Scotland from overseas is 23. There are also high numbers of in-migrants (500 or more) for each age from 18 to 34. The peak age for migration out of Scotland to overseas is also 23 and there are high numbers of out-migrants (500 or more) from age 21 to 31. However, there are more in-migrants than out-migrants for all ages across this range, resulting in net in-migration for all ages through to age 54.

**Figure 4: Movements between Scotland and the rest of the UK, by age, 2016-2017**



**Figure 5: Movements between Scotland and overseas, by age, 2016-2017**



### 3. The age and sex structure of the population

#### The population of Scotland is ageing

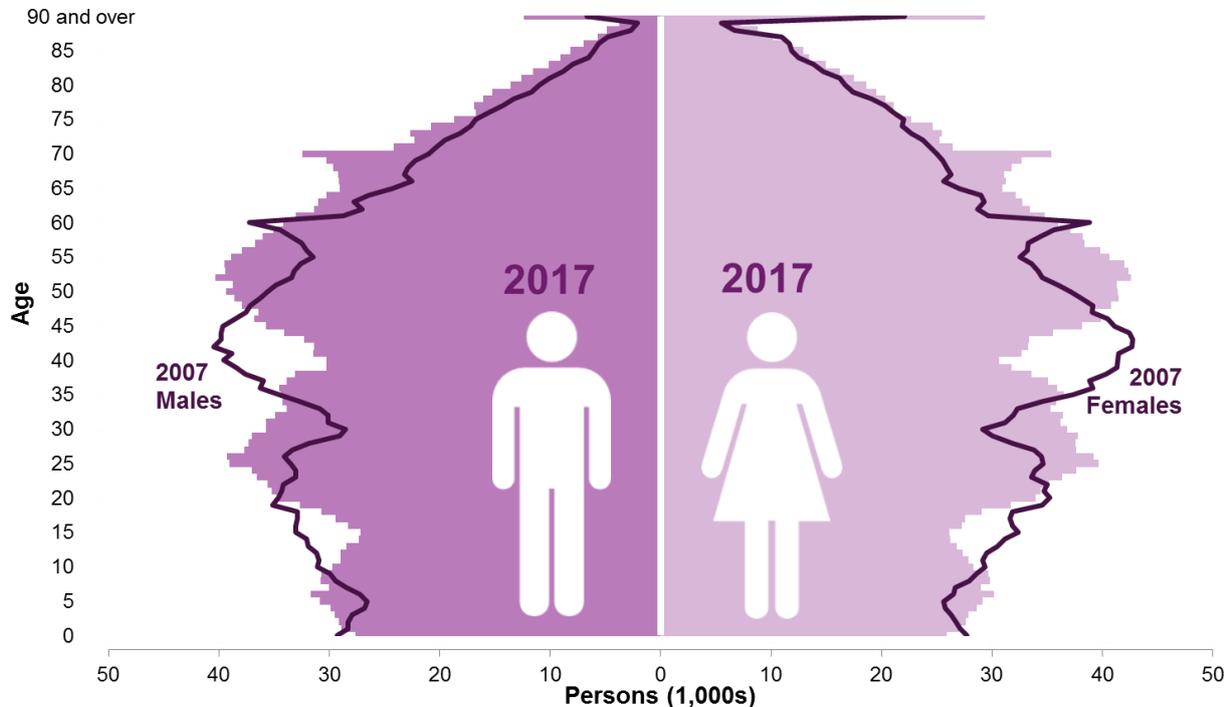
Scotland's estimated population in mid-2017 is shown by age and sex in [Figure 6](#). The age and sex composition is one of the most important aspects of the population, since changes in different age groups will have different social and economic impacts. For example, increases in the elderly population are likely to place a greater demand on health and social services.

The population of Scotland is ageing as seen in [Figure 6](#), with an increasing number of people in the older age groups in mid-2017 compared to mid-2007. This is partly due to the fact that people are living longer and partly due to the age structure of Scotland's population.

Scotland has a relatively even split between sexes with 51% females and 49% males, although this varies amongst age groups. The youngest age groups have a higher male to female ratio as more male babies are born than female, whilst the oldest age groups have a lower male to female ratio as females have longer life expectancy in Scotland. The two baby booms of 1947 and the 1960s can be seen with a sharp peak at age 70 and another peak around 50. These baby

boomers, along with relatively low fertility rates since the 1960s, are the main reasons why Scotland's population is likely to age in the future.

**Figure 6: Estimated population by age and sex, mid-2007 and mid-2017**

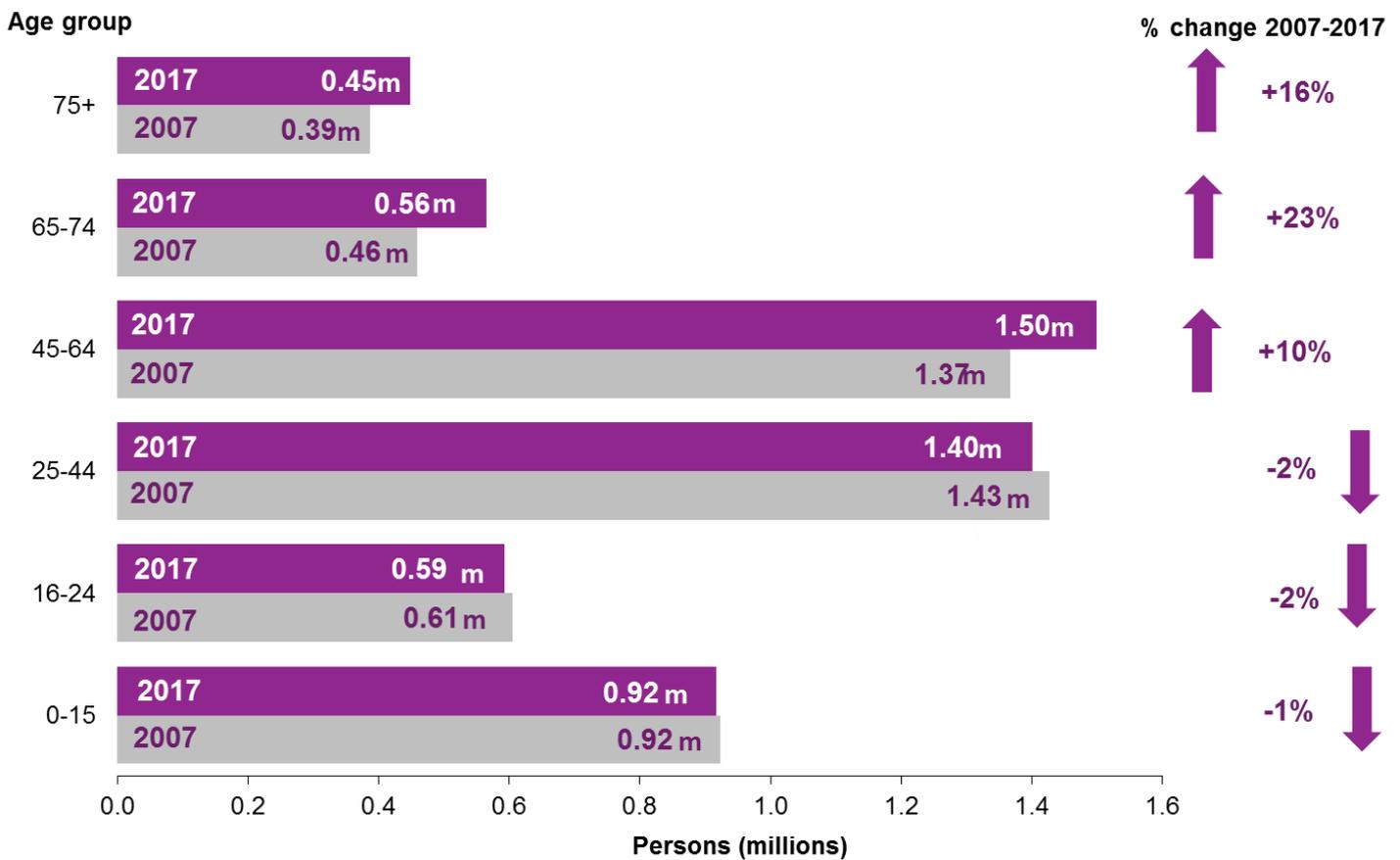


Between 2007 and 2017, there was a high level of migration into Scotland and this is also visible in [Figure 6](#). For most ages the peaks and troughs present in mid-2007 are visible in the mid-2017 data but shifted by 10 years, demonstrating the ageing of cohorts in the population. The mid-2017 data, however, shows some difference in this pattern: the profile of age group 10-50, and especially for ages 20 to 29 is wider than in mid-2007. There were 16% more 20 to 29 year olds in 2017 than there were 10 to 19 year olds in 2007. Such a change can only be generated by new population being added through immigration.

### How is the age structure of the population changing?

[Figure 7](#) shows further details of the changing age structure of the population between mid-2007 and mid 2017. The most significant change was in the 65-74 year old age group which increased by 23% over the past decade. There were also large increases in the 75+ and 45-64 age groups (up 16% and 10% respectively). In contrast, there were small decreases in all of the younger age groups. This reflects the ageing population and falling birth rate of the last ten years.

**Figure 7: The changing age structure of Scotland's population, mid-2007 to mid-2017**



#### 4. Population estimates for areas within Scotland

##### How has the population changed across areas in Scotland?

Overall the population in Scotland has increased, and it has been doing so since mid-2000. However, it did not increase in every location across Scotland. In the year to mid-2017, 21 out of Scotland's 32 council areas increased in population, whereas 11 councils decreased in population as shown in [Table A](#).

The council areas with the largest increases in population were Midlothian (+1.7%), City of Edinburgh (1.2%) and East Renfrewshire (1.0%). In contrast, 11 council areas experienced population decreases over the year to mid-2017. Of these, the greatest decreases were in Shetland Islands, Inverclyde and Aberdeen City (all -0.5%).

**Table A: Components of population change for council areas: mid-2016 to mid-2017 (ordered by percentage population change)**

|                       | Estimated population<br>30 June 2017 | Natural change | Net civilian migration<br>and other changes | Percentage<br>population<br>change |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|---|------------------------------------|
| <b>Scotland</b>       | <b>5,424,800</b>                     | <b>-0.07</b>   | <b>0.44</b>                                 | <b>0.37</b>                        |
| <b>Council areas</b>  |                                      |                |   |                                    |
| Shetland Islands      | 23,080                               | 0.06           | -0.58                                       | -0.52                              |
| Inverclyde            | 78,760                               | -0.48          | -0.02                                       | -0.51                              |
| Aberdeen City         | 228,800                              | 0.15           | -0.61                                       | -0.45                              |
| Argyll and Bute       | 86,810                               | -0.48          | 0.11  | -0.37                              |
| Moray                 | 95,780                               | -0.15          | -0.16                                       | -0.30                              |
| West Dunbartonshire   | 89,610                               | -0.16          | -0.11                                       | -0.28                              |
| Angus                 | 116,280                              | -0.31          | 0.10  | -0.21                              |
| Dumfries and Galloway | 149,200                              | -0.43          | 0.22  | -0.21                              |
| East Ayrshire         | 121,940                              | -0.22          | 0.00  | -0.21                              |
| Aberdeenshire         | 261,800                              | 0.10           | -0.25                                       | -0.15                              |
| North Ayrshire        | 135,790                              | -0.34          | 0.26  | -0.07                              |
| Highland              | 235,180                              | -0.18          | 0.35  | 0.17                               |
| North Lanarkshire     | 339,960                              | -0.04          | 0.21  | 0.17                               |
| Na h-Eileanan Siar    | 26,950                               | -0.41          | 0.60  | 0.19                               |
| Clackmannanshire      | 51,450                               | -0.01          | 0.21  | 0.19                               |
| South Ayrshire        | 112,680                              | -0.43          | 0.62  | 0.19                               |
| Stirling              | 94,000                               | -0.03          | 0.30  | 0.27                               |
| Perth and Kinross     | 151,100                              | -0.29          | 0.57  | 0.28                               |
| Fife                  | 371,410                              | -0.15          | 0.44  | 0.29                               |
| Dundee City           | 148,710                              | -0.11          | 0.41  | 0.30                               |
| South Lanarkshire     | 318,170                              | -0.07          | 0.41  | 0.34                               |
| Scottish Borders      | 115,020                              | -0.29          | 0.71  | 0.43                               |
| Falkirk               | 160,130                              | -0.12          | 0.59  | 0.47                               |
| Renfrewshire          | 176,830                              | -0.15          | 0.66  | 0.51                               |
| East Dunbartonshire   | 108,130                              | -0.09          | 0.64  | 0.55                               |
| West Lothian          | 181,310                              | 0.20           | 0.45  | 0.66                               |
| Orkney Islands        | 22,000                               | -0.25          | 0.93  | 0.69                               |
| East Lothian          | 104,840                              | -0.06          | 0.78  | 0.72                               |
| Glasgow City          | 621,020                              | 0.08           | 0.89  | 0.97                               |
| East Renfrewshire     | 94,760                               | -0.01          | 1.02  | 1.01                               |
| City of Edinburgh     | 513,210                              | 0.17           | 1.02  | 1.19                               |
| Midlothian            | 90,090                               | 0.24           | 1.43  | 1.67                               |

Table B shows how the population of Scotland's NHS boards have changed over the year to mid-2017. Ten out of fourteen health boards experienced an increase in population. The greatest increase in population was in Lothian which increased by 1.1%. Four health boards saw a decrease in population over the same period with the greatest decrease in Shetland (-0.5%).

More detail on the components of population change (births, deaths, net migration and other changes) for the year to mid-2017, are available from the [NRS website](#) in Table 4.

**Table B: Components of population change for NHS boards: mid-2016 to mid-2017 (ordered by percentage population change)**

|                           | Estimated population<br>30 June 2017 | Natural change | Net civilian migration<br>and other changes | Percentage<br>population<br>change |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|---|------------------------------------|
| <b>Scotland</b>           | <b>5,424,800</b>                     | <b>-0.07</b>   | <b>0.44</b>                                 | <b>0.37</b>                        |
| <b>NHS boards</b>         |                                      |                |   |                                    |
| Shetland                  | 23,080                               | 0.06           | -0.58                                       | -0.52                              |
| Grampian                  | 586,380                              | 0.08           | -0.37                                       | -0.29                              |
| Dumfries and Galloway     | 149,200                              | -0.43          | 0.22  | -0.21                              |
| Ayrshire and Arran        | 370,410                              | -0.32          | 0.28  | -0.04                              |
| Highland                  | 321,990                              | -0.26          | 0.29  | 0.03                               |
| Tayside                   | 416,090                              | -0.23          | 0.38  | 0.15                               |
| Western Isles             | 26,950                               | -0.41          | 0.60  | 0.19                               |
| Lanarkshire               | 658,130                              | -0.06          | 0.31  | 0.25                               |
| Fife                      | 371,410                              | -0.15          | 0.44  | 0.29                               |
| Forth Valley              | 305,580                              | -0.07          | 0.43  | 0.36                               |
| Borders                   | 115,020                              | -0.29          | 0.71  | 0.43                               |
| Greater Glasgow and Clyde | 1,169,110                            | -0.04          | 0.70  | 0.67                               |
| Orkney                    | 22,000                               | -0.25          | 0.93  | 0.69                               |
| Lothian                   | 889,450                              | 0.16           | 0.91  | 1.07                               |

### Why has the population increased or decreased?

For most areas, most of the change in population over the year to mid-2017 was due to migration. This includes migration from other areas within Scotland, the rest of the UK and overseas.

The majority of council areas experienced positive net migration with more in-migrants than out-migrants as can be seen in Figure 8. Exceptions are Aberdeen City, Shetland Islands, Aberdeenshire and West Dunbartonshire, all of which have more out-migrants than in-migrants.

Council areas with the largest percentage of in-migrants in their population, such as City of Edinburgh (5.9%), Stirling (5.4%) and Glasgow City (5.3%), also tend to have a high percentage of out-migrants.

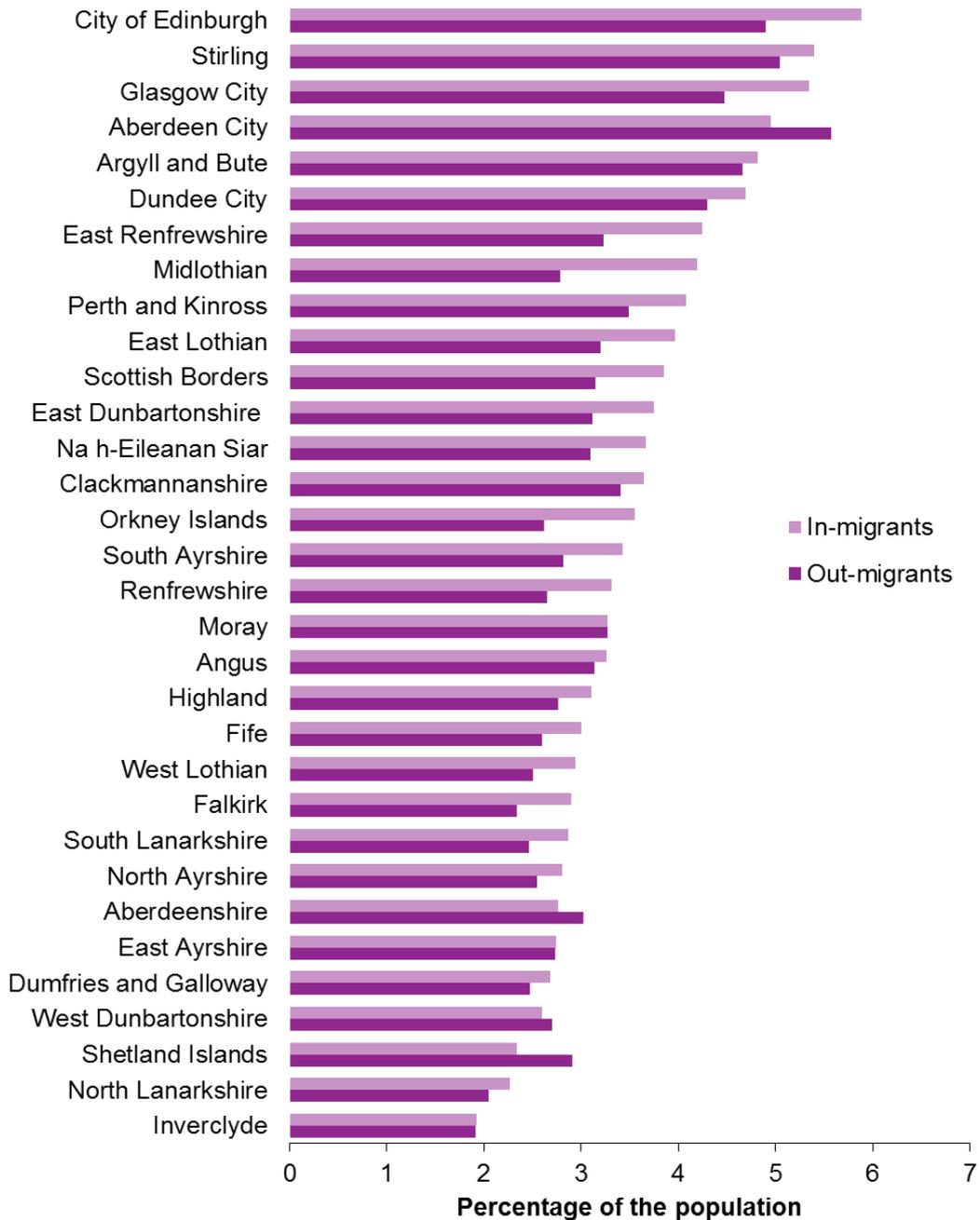
Table A shows that in the year to mid-2017, the councils that experienced the biggest population increase due to net migration were Midlothian (+1.4%), City of Edinburgh and East Renfrewshire (both +1.0%). Aberdeen City used to be one of the councils with the highest positive net migration figure, but is now an area of out-migration. Aberdeen City (-0.6%) and Shetland Islands (-0.6%) saw the largest population decreases from net migration.

Besides migration the other main component of population change is natural change (births minus deaths). Overall, 25 council areas experienced negative natural change (more deaths than births) over the year ([Table A](#)). Inverclyde and Argyll and Bute experienced the lowest natural change at -0.5% each. In contrast Midlothian, City of Edinburgh and West Lothian experienced the highest population increase due to natural change (+0.2%).

Seven councils have a positive natural population change but of these, Shetlands Islands, Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City experienced more out-migration than in-migration, which means their population change was negative.

Several other areas have also experienced depopulation. East Ayrshire, Inverclyde and Moray saw small population increases due to net migration, but this was offset by negative natural change. The other area to experience population decrease was West Dunbartonshire, which had negative natural change and higher out-migration than in-migration. More details about the number of births and deaths by council is available from the [NRS website](#) in Table 4.

**Figure 8: In and out migration from mid-2016 to mid-2017 as a percentage of population by council area**



**Footnote**

\* This chart shows the proportion of the total population of each council area who have moved into or out of that area since mid-2016 (including those who moved within Scotland, to and from the rest of the UK, and to and from overseas).

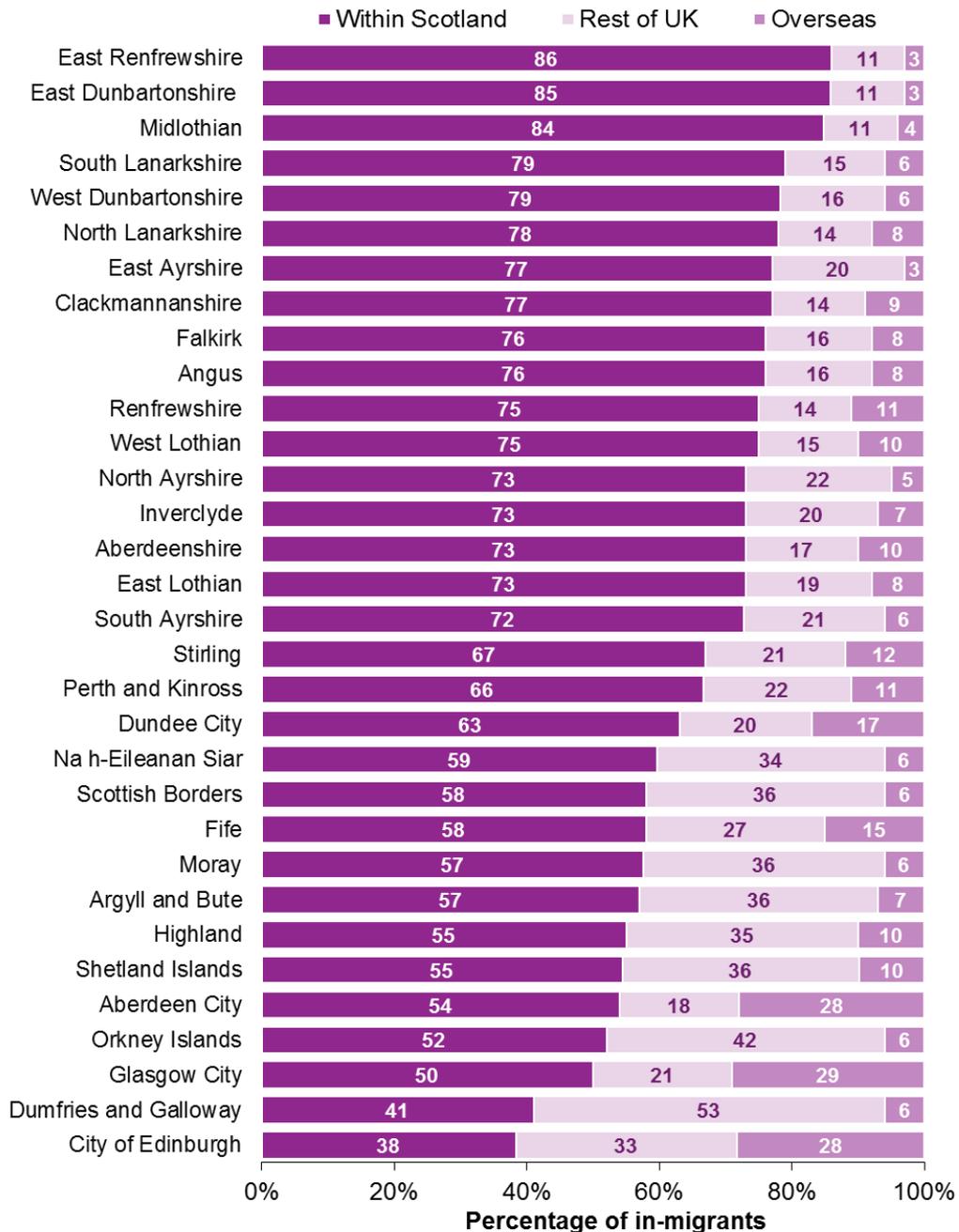
**Where do an area’s migrants come from and go to?**

As [Figure 9a](#) shows, different council areas attract migrants from different areas. In all but two council areas (namely the City of Edinburgh and Dumfries and Galloway), most of the migrants came from other council areas within Scotland.

East Renfrewshire, East Dunbartonshire and Midlothian had the highest percentage of in-migrants from within Scotland, accounting for more than four in every five migrants moving to these areas.

The number of in-migrants from overseas exceeded the number of in-migrants from the rest of the UK in Glasgow City and Aberdeen City.

**Figure 9a: Origin of in-migrants by council areas, mid-2016 to mid-2017**



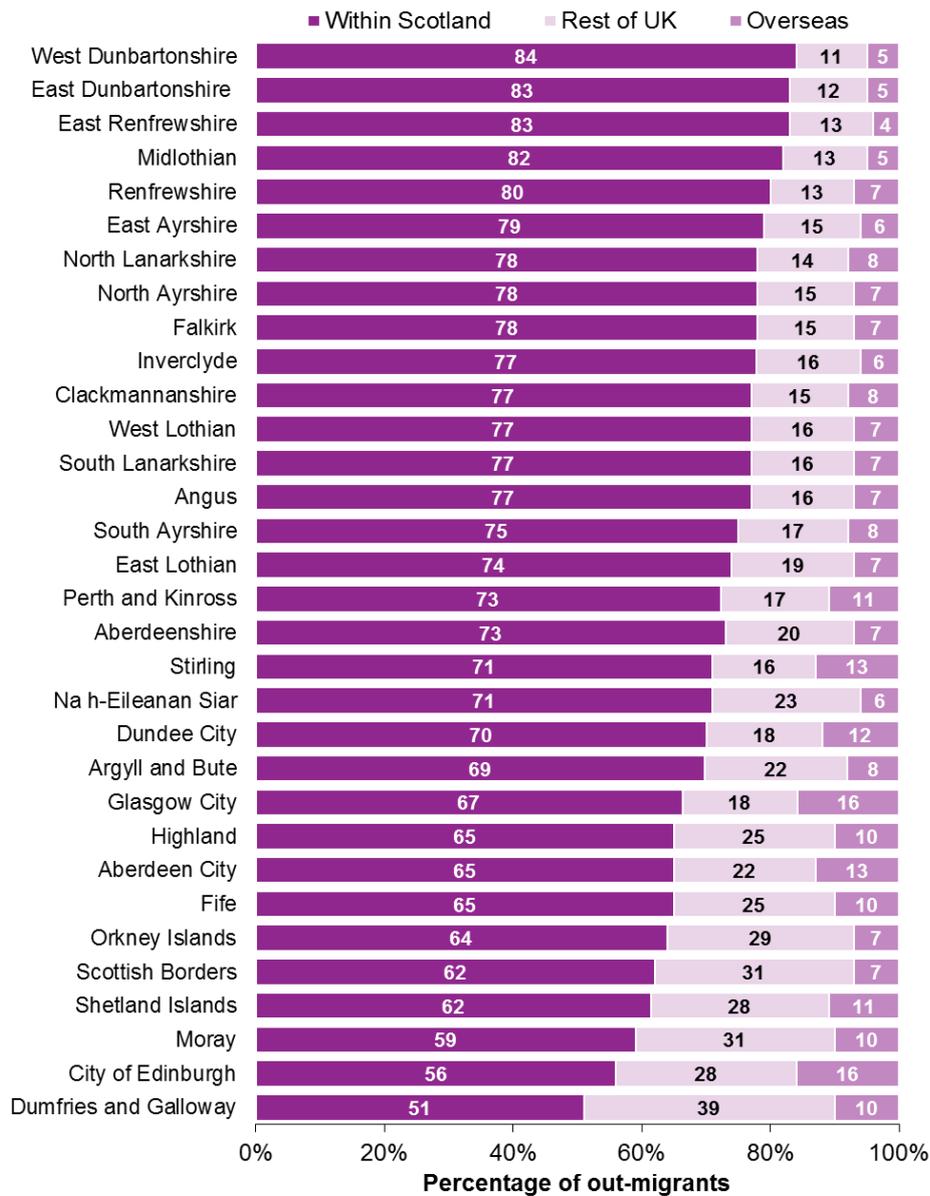
**Footnotes**  
 Figures for the rest of the UK exclude armed forces moves  
 Figures for overseas include asylum seekers & refugees

Rounded figures are used and may not add up to 100%.

[Figure 9b](#) shows there are also differences in the destinations of people migrating out of council areas. Often the region to which most out-migrants moved was the same region from which most in-migrants had arrived. For example most of the migrants leaving East Renfrewshire moved elsewhere in Scotland and, as already described, most of the migrants arriving there came from elsewhere in Scotland.

More detail on components of migration is available from the [NRS website](#) in Table 5.

**Figure 9b: Destination of out-migrants by council area, mid-2016 to mid-2017**



**Footnotes**

Figures for the rest of the UK exclude armed forces moves  
 Figures for overseas include asylum seekers and refugees

Rounded figures are used and may not add up to 100%.

### **What is the age and sex structure of the population in Scotland's areas?**

There were more women than men in Scotland in mid-2017. Like in mid-2016, this was the case for all council areas other than Shetland Islands (103 males per 100 females) and for all NHS Board areas other than Shetland.

The main reason for there being more women than men in Scotland is due to the longer life expectancy of women. Other reasons for differences in the proportions of men and women in areas of Scotland may relate to migration and employment, for example in areas with armed forces bases or oil industry work.

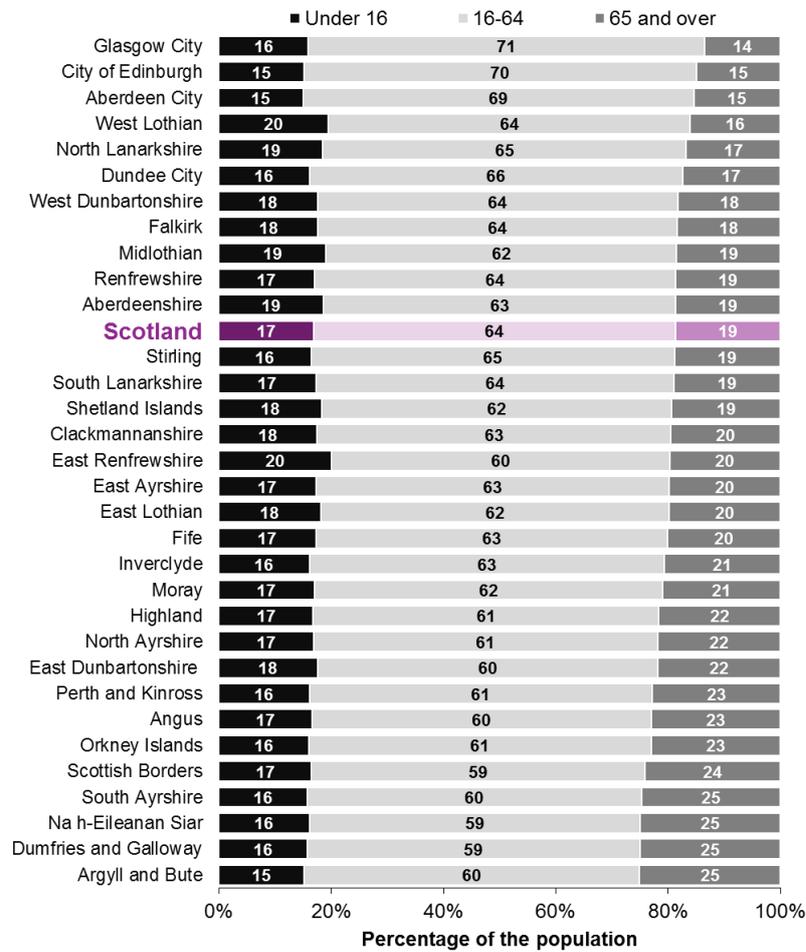
More information regarding the ratio of males to females by council is available from the [NRS website](#) in Table 7.

Although the pattern of age distribution is complex, some general themes can be observed. [Figure 10](#) shows the proportion of the population aged under 16, 16-64, and 65 and over for council areas. The highest proportion of population aged 16-64 is found in the Glasgow City (71%), City of Edinburgh (70%) and Aberdeen City (69%). These areas also have the lowest proportion of population aged 65 and over (14%, 15% and 15% respectively). More rural council areas tend to have an older age profile. Na h-Eileanan Siar, Dumfries and Galloway and Scottish Borders all have the lowest proportion of population aged 16-64 at 59%. These also represent some of the areas with the highest proportion of people aged 65 and over.

[Figure 11](#) shows the age profiles of all of Scotland's health boards. For both council areas and health boards, those which are more urban tend to have a younger age profile than those which represent more rural areas. This reflects the larger numbers of students and employment opportunities in Scotland's cities.

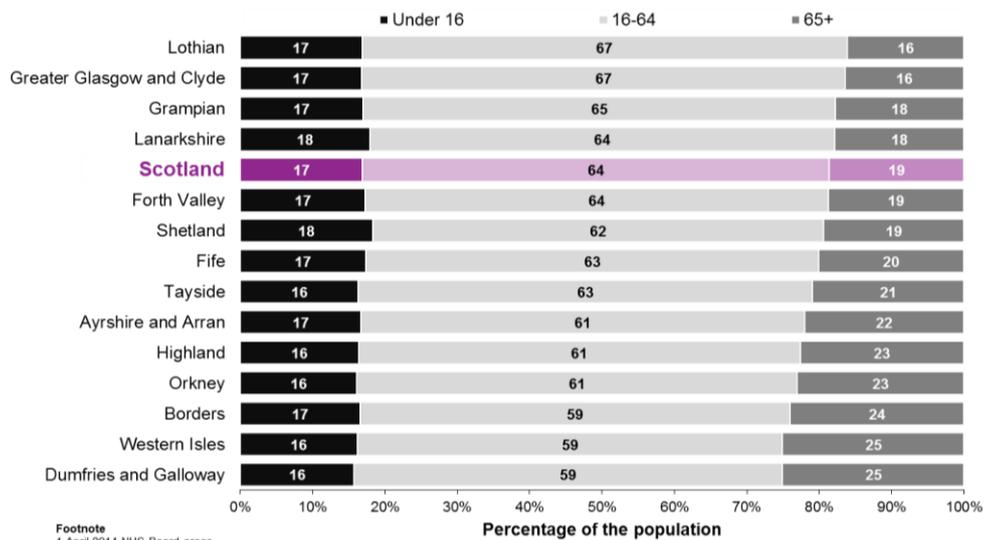
More detail on the age and sex structure of areas is available from the [NRS website](#) in Table 7.

**Figure 10: Age structure of council areas, mid-2017 (ranked by percentage aged 65+)**



Note  
Rounded figures are used and so may not add up to 100%.

**Figure 11: Age structure of NHS Board areas<sup>1</sup>, mid-2017 (ranked by percentage aged 65+)**



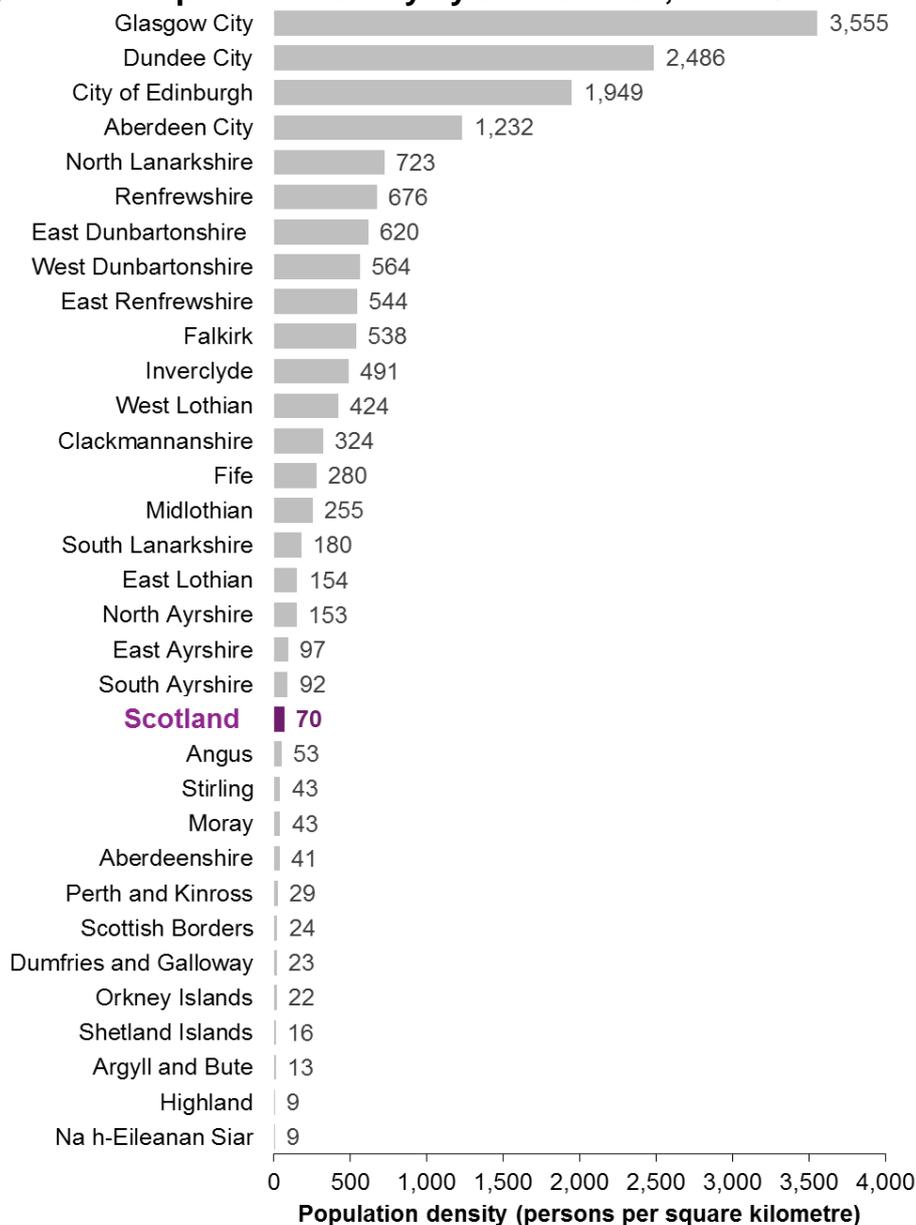
Footnote  
1 April 2014 NHS Board areas.  
Rounded figures are used and may not add up to 100%.

## Where is the population located within Scotland?

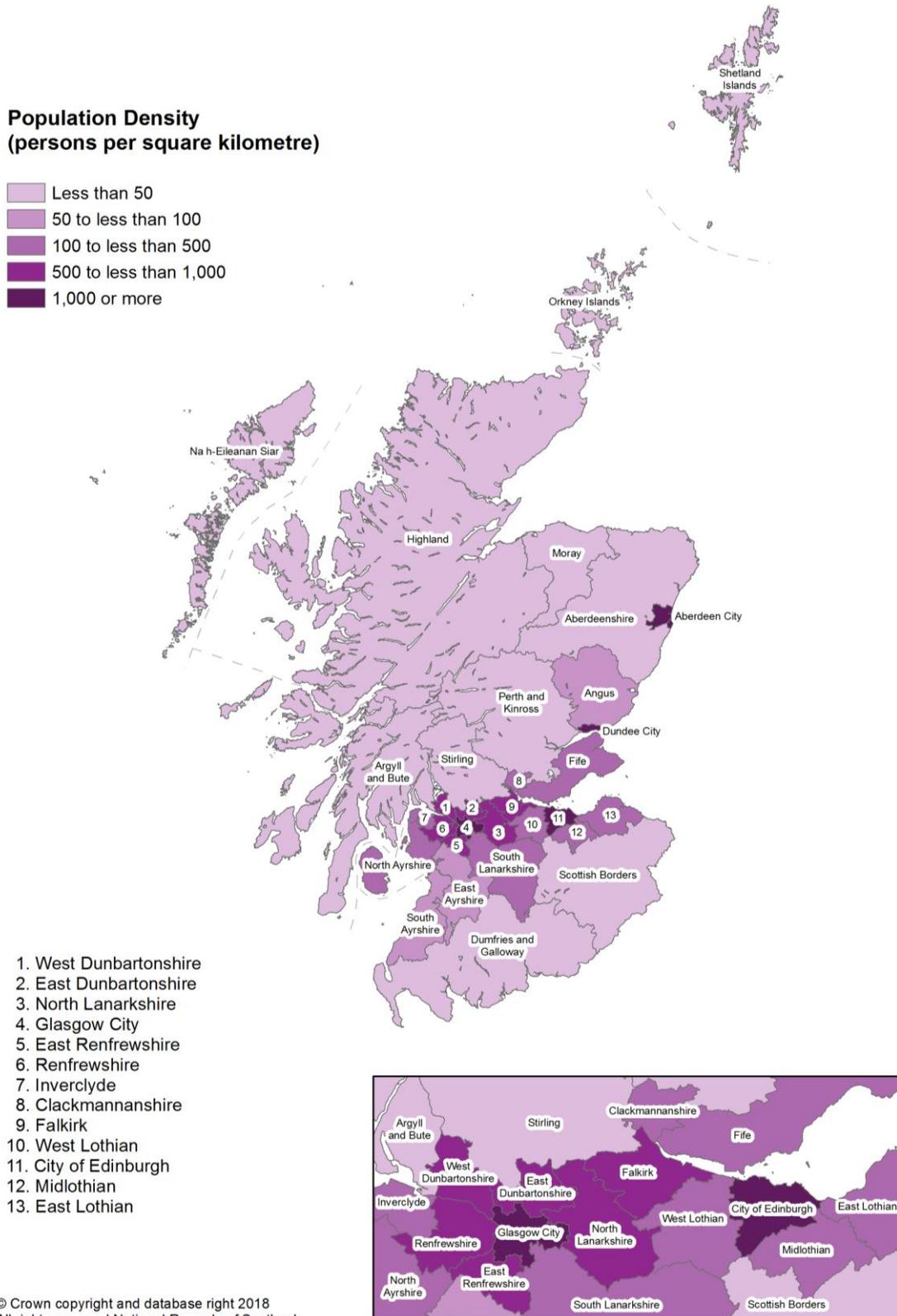
In the year to mid-2017 the population density for Scotland was 70 people per square kilometre, although this varies hugely across areas within Scotland. The most densely populated council area was Glasgow City with 3,555 people per square kilometre. In comparison, in Na h-Eileanan Siar and Highland council areas, there were only 9 people per square kilometre (Figure 12a). In Figure 12b you can see that most of the high density council areas are clustered in Scotland's central belt with the only exceptions being Aberdeen City and Dundee City.

More detail on land areas and population densities for the year to mid-2017 are shown in Table 9, available from the [NRS website](#).

**Figure 12a: Population density by council area, mid-2017**



**Figure 12b: Population density by council area, mid-2017**



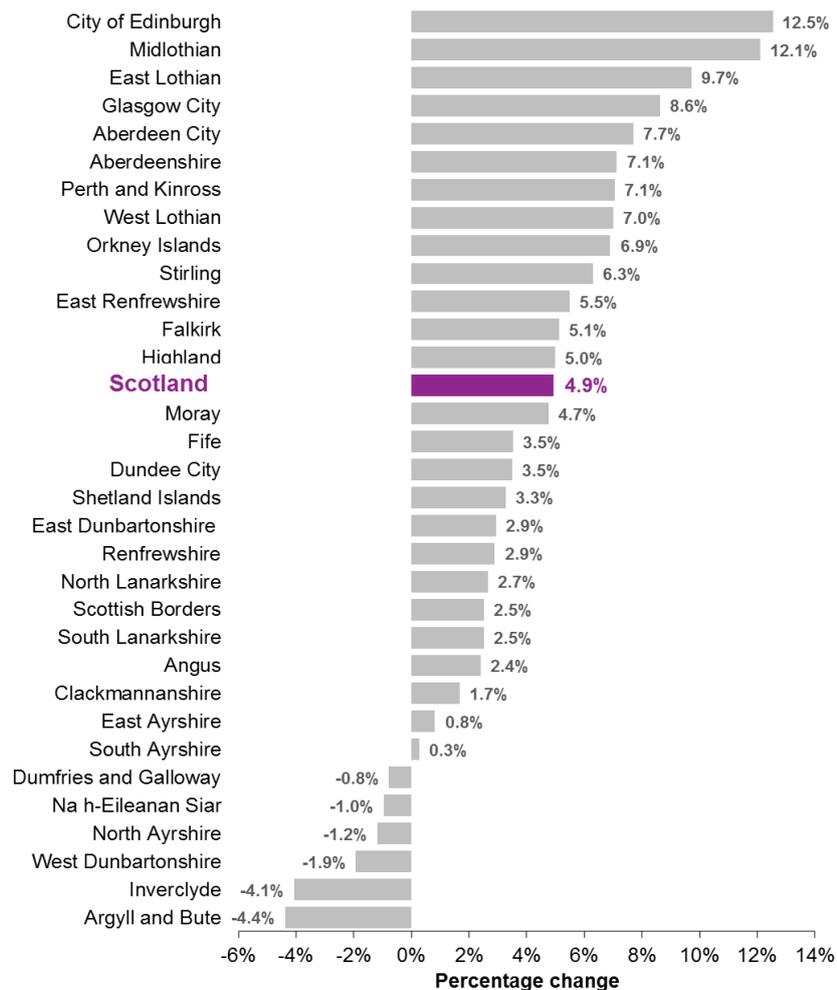
## How has the population changed over the last decade?

Since mid-2007, the population of Scotland as a whole has increased by 4.9%. In 26 of Scotland's 32 council areas, the population has also increased as shown by the chart in [Figure 13a](#) and map in [Figure 13b](#).

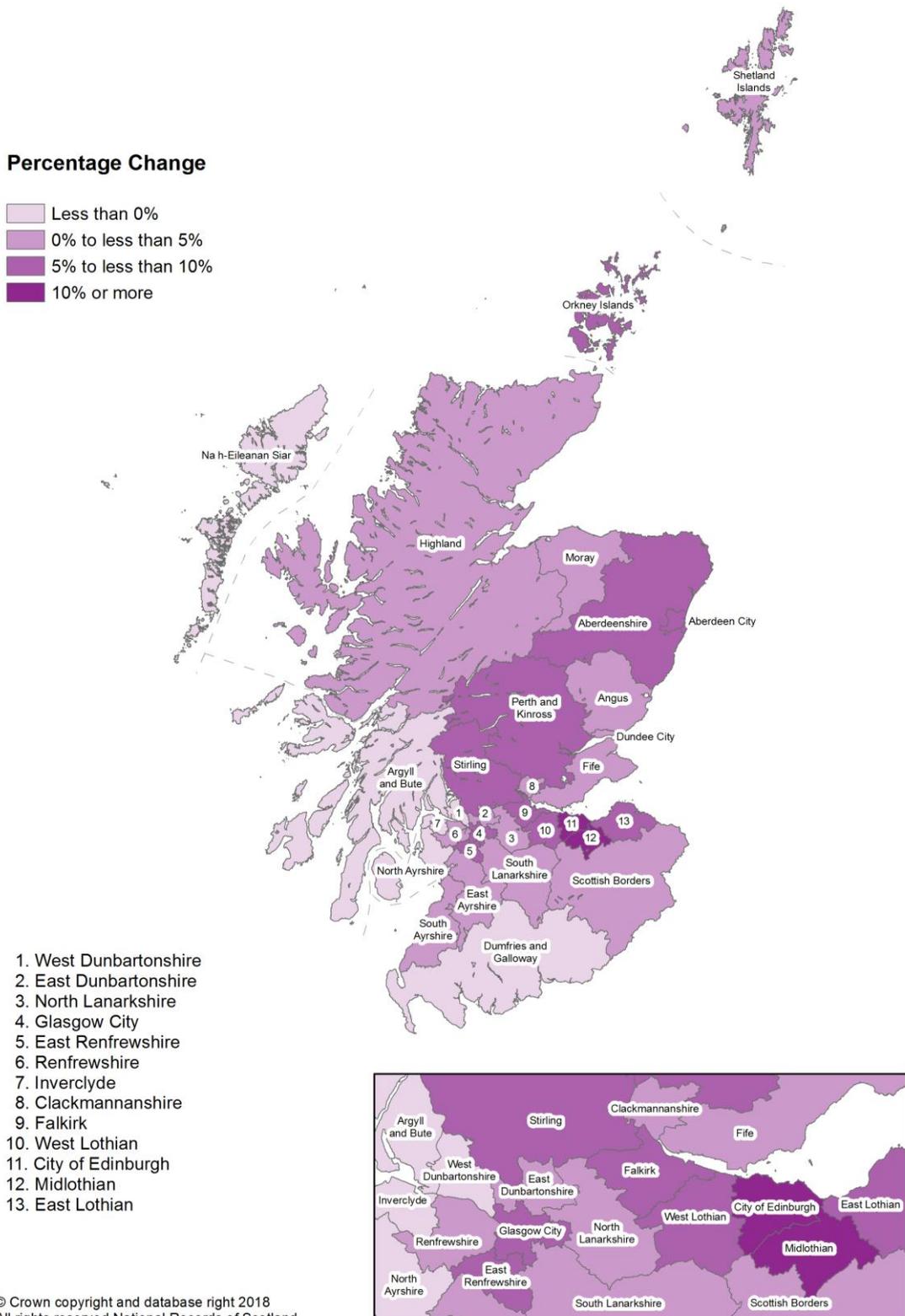
Over the past decade, City of Edinburgh and Midlothian have seen the largest increases in population at 12.5% and 12.1% respectively. This is a lot higher than the next highest percentage increase of 9.7% in East Lothian. In contrast, six council areas have experienced a decrease in population over the past ten years with the largest decreases in Argyll and Bute (-4.4%) and Inverclyde (-4.1%). As can be seen in [Figure 13b](#), except for Na h-Eileanan Siar and Dumfries & Galloway, most of the areas which have experienced depopulation are located close to each other.

Amongst NHS Board areas, Lothian (+11.0%) increased the most in population as shown in Figure 14. Western Isles (-1%), Dumfries and Galloway (-0.8%) and Ayrshire and Arran (-0.1%) all decreased in population over the last decade.

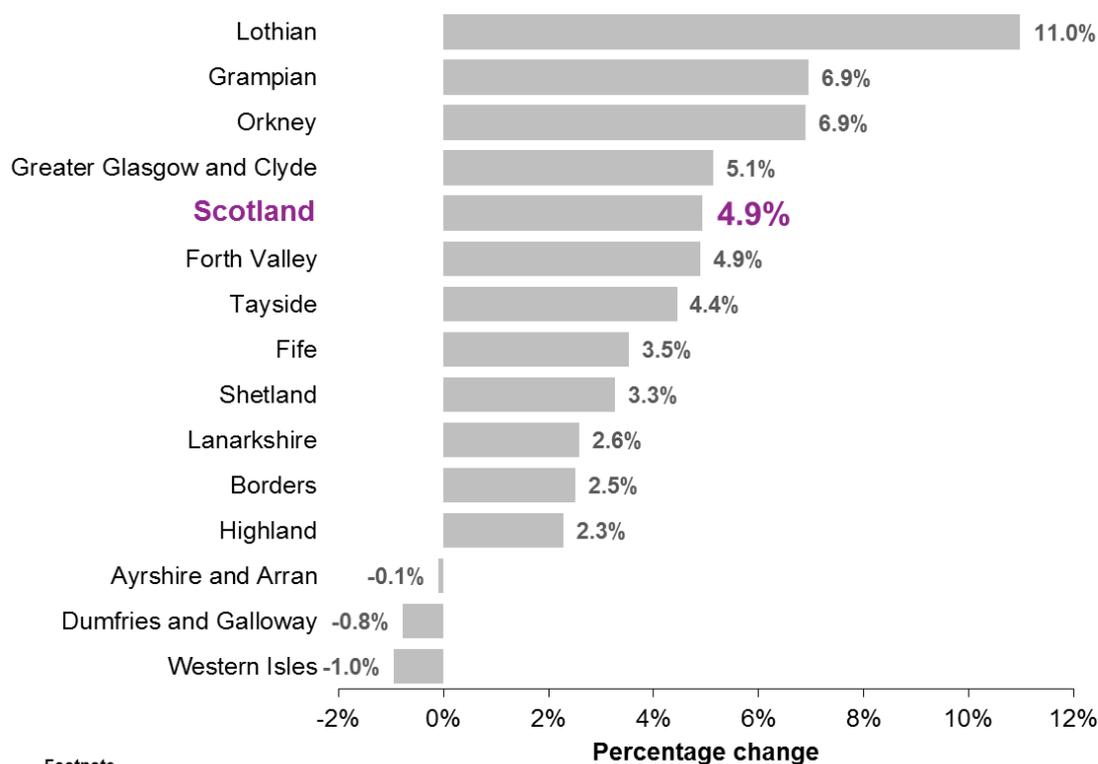
**Figure 13a: Percentage change in population, council areas, mid-2007 to mid-2017**



**Figure 13b: Percentage change in population, council areas, mid-2007 to mid-2017**



**Figure 14: Percentage change in population, NHS Board areas<sup>1</sup>, mid-2007 to mid-2017**



**Footnote**  
1 April 2014 NHS Board areas.

### What has contributed to population change over the last decade?

Table C compares the percentage change in population between mid-2007 and mid-2017 due to natural change, migration and other changes across the council areas. The relative importance of migration and natural change differs between council areas. For ease of presentation other changes have been included with migration for the analysis in this section.

In 14 council areas population growth is attributable to both net in-migration and positive natural change (meaning more people were born than died) over the past decade. City of Edinburgh, Midlothian, Aberdeen City and West Lothian are all good examples of places where both net migration and natural change have made a relatively large contribution to population increase.

Fifteen council areas had negative natural change and positive net migration. There were no council areas to have positive natural change and negative net migration.

In Argyll and Bute, West Dunbartonshire and Inverclyde, population decrease over the past decade is due to negative natural change and net out-migration. These are the only three council areas that have experienced negative net migration over the past ten years and they are the council areas that have seen the highest levels of depopulation over the last decade.

**Table C: Components of population change for council areas: mid-2007 to mid-2017**

|                       | Natural change | Net civilian migration and other changes | Percentage population change <sup>1</sup> |
|-----------------------|----------------|--|---|
| <b>Scotland</b>       | <b>0.40</b>    | <b>4.53</b>                              | <b>4.93</b>                               |
| <b>Council areas</b>  |                |  |   |
| Argyll and Bute       | -3.73          | -0.66                                    | -4.38                                     |
| Inverclyde            | -2.74          | -1.34                                    | -4.08                                     |
| West Dunbartonshire   | -0.55          | -1.37                                    | -1.93                                     |
| North Ayrshire        | -1.67          | 0.48                                     | -1.19                                     |
| Na h-Eileanan Siar    | -4.33          | 3.37                                     | -0.96                                     |
| Dumfries and Galloway | -3.08          | 2.30                                     | -0.78                                     |
| South Ayrshire        | -3.48          | 3.75                                     | 0.27                                      |
| East Ayrshire         | -0.43          | 1.25                                     | 0.82                                      |
| Clackmannanshire      | 1.42           | 0.25                                     | 1.68                                      |
| Angus                 | -1.58          | 4.00                                     | 2.41                                      |
| Scottish Borders      | -1.59          | 4.10                                     | 2.51                                      |
| South Lanarkshire     | 0.12           | 2.40                                     | 2.51                                      |
| North Lanarkshire     | 1.20           | 1.46                                     | 2.66                                      |
| Renfrewshire          | -0.46          | 3.34                                     | 2.89                                      |
| East Dunbartonshire   | -0.61          | 3.54                                     | 2.93                                      |
| Shetland Islands      | 1.66           | 1.61                                     | 3.27                                      |
| Dundee City           | 0.02           | 3.47                                     | 3.49                                      |
| Fife                  | 0.41           | 3.12                                     | 3.53                                      |
| Moray                 | -0.25          | 4.99                                     | 4.75                                      |
| Highland              | -0.29          | 5.28                                     | 4.99                                      |
| Falkirk               | 1.10           | 4.03                                     | 5.13                                      |
| East Renfrewshire     | -0.03          | 5.51                                     | 5.48                                      |
| Stirling              | -0.27          | 6.57                                     | 6.30                                      |
| Orkney Islands        | -1.39          | 8.29                                     | 6.90                                      |
| West Lothian          | 3.81           | 3.18                                     | 6.99                                      |
| Perth and Kinross     | -1.34          | 8.39                                     | 7.06                                      |
| Aberdeenshire         | 2.02           | 5.11                                     | 7.12                                      |
| Aberdeen City         | 2.19           | 5.50                                     | 7.69                                      |
| Glasgow City          | 1.49           | 7.12                                     | 8.62                                      |
| East Lothian          | 0.62           | 9.08                                     | 9.70                                      |
| Midlothian            | 2.39           | 9.70                                     | 12.09                                     |
| City of Edinburgh     | 2.60           | 9.94                                     | 12.54                                     |

**Footnote**

1) Ordered by percentage population change.

## 5. Background Notes

The Mid-year Estimates for Scotland Methodology Guide that accompanies this publication provides more detail on the methodology, as well as information on the quality of the data and known uses. This is available from the [NRS website](#).

### Population covered

The estimated population of an area includes all those usually resident there, whatever their nationality. Population figures relate to 30 June of the year shown and ages relate to age at last birthday.

Long-term international migrants are included, but short-term are excluded. A long-term migrant is defined by the United Nations (UN) as someone who changes country of residence for 12 months or more.

Other changes include changes in the armed forces and prison population and any rounding adjustments.

### Methodology changes for the mid-2017 estimates

Refugees were first included in the mid-year population estimates in 2016. GP registrations were used to identify the age, sex and location of refugees, along with other overseas migrants. This method has been changed for mid-2017, with refugees now included separately from other overseas migrants. Home Office administrative data on the age, sex and council area of refugees is used to estimate the age-sex structure refugees and to distribute them to council areas across Scotland.

Until this year NRS received total numbers of armed forces personnel, based on survey returns completed by each armed forces base in Scotland. NRS now receives single year of age and sex data from Defence Statistics at the Ministry of Defence. This more detailed data source allows changes in the armed forces population by single year of age and sex to be calculated. These changes are then applied to the armed forces derived from the 2011 Census, as was done previously.

In previous years, patient movements in England and Wales were recorded in the National Health Service Central Register. Another NHS data source, the Personal Demographic Service (PDS), is now used to record these movements. This data from the PDS is then used to estimate migration from Scotland to England and Wales.

Furthermore, NRS has adjusted the sex ratio adjustment factor that is applied for migrants from overseas. This adjustment corrects for an undercounting of young

males, due to them being less likely to register for a GP. The improved method now incorporates data on the sex ratio from several years of the International Passenger Survey and patient registrations captured in the National Health Service Central Register.

More detail on these changes and their impact is available in the [Mid-year Estimates for Scotland Methodology Guide](#).

### **Revisions**

Revisions and corrections to previously published statistics are dealt with in accordance with the Scottish Government Statistician Group corporate policy statement on revisions and corrections - a copy of which is available on the [Scottish Government website](#).

### **Publication of future population estimates**

Mid-year population estimates for 2018 will be published in Spring 2019.

## **6. Links to related statistics**

Population estimates for the UK and its constituent countries are available from the [Office for National Statistics website](#).

Population estimates for various small area geographies within Scotland are also available from the [NRS website](#). These areas include 2011 Data Zones, parliamentary constituencies, Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics, Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles and Urban Rural Classification. The small area estimates for mid-2017 will be released in August 2018.

Detailed information on migration for the period covering mid-2016 to mid-2017 and a compendium of figures on local area migration will be published in summer 2018. The latest figures up to mid-2016 are available from the [NRS website](#).

Provisional data on annual births and deaths for 2017 are published in the vital events section on the [NRS website](#).

Estimates of the population of settlements and localities within Scotland are also released by NRS on a biennial basis. The latest estimates for mid-2016 are available on the NRS website.

Population estimates of centenarians and people aged 90 and over are available from the [NRS website](#), with updated estimates for mid-2017 due to be released in September 2018.

## **7. Notes on statistical publications**

## **National Statistics**

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority (UKSA) has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in line with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics (available on the [UKSA](#) website).

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is National Records of Scotland's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

## **Information on background and source data**

Further details on data source(s), timeframe of data and timeliness, continuity of data, accuracy, etc. can be found in the About this Publication document that is published alongside this publication on the NRS website.

## **National Records of Scotland**

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