

Plans for future population and household projections

1. Purpose of this paper

To inform users of the proposals for the future publication of national (and sub-national) population and household projections for the UK and constituent countries over the coming years.

2. Summary

Population projections for Scotland (and the rest of the UK) are normally published every two years. The sources of data which feed into the projections are updated after each census.

As the census took place in 2021 in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and in 2022 in Scotland, the plans for the national population projections over the coming years are:

Base year	Potential date of publication
2021-based projections	Second half of 2023
2023-based projections	Second half of 2024
Future publications	Likely to revert to a 2-yearly cycle

Interim 2020-based national projections for each UK country were published in January 2022. The proposed plans are that all the publications listed above will also include variant projections, and be supplemented by sub-national population projections (for councils and health boards), and household projections in the months following.

None of the dates are finalised – this paper sets out our current thinking, to give users a chance to comment. Plans may change.

The 2021-based projections will include 2021 census data for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The 2023-based projections will include 2022 census data for Scotland.

3. 2020-based projections

[Interim 2020-based national projections](#) for each UK country were published in January 2022. They were classed as ‘interim’ to recognise the period of uncertainty in the mid-2020 base year and in setting long-term demographic assumptions following the onset of the coronavirus pandemic. No variant projections were produced, and they were not followed by sub-national population projections or household projections. Therefore, the latest set of

sub-national population and household projections remain 2018-based, published in March 2020 and September 2020 respectively.

4. 2021-based projections

For the next publication of national population projections (2021-based), the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the devolved administrations across the UK are proposing to include the full 2021 census results from England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Scotland's projections will be based on the rolled forward [2021-based mid-year population estimates](#) which were published on 13 July 2022.

5. 2022-based projections

There are no plans to publish a 2022-based set of population projections. A 2023-based set of projections can be produced within the same time period, which we think would be more beneficial for users.

6. 2023-based projections

The 2023-based set of projections are planned for publication around October – December 2024. These would include updated UK-wide census data and a full updated set of assumptions and variant projections.

Sub-national population and household projections for mid-2023 would follow in Spring/summer 2025 and will include results from Scotland's 2022 census.

7. Future projections

Following the 2023-based publication, future projections are likely to revert to a 2-yearly cycle.

8. Feedback

NRS are contacting Scottish users for feedback on these proposals and any potential impact on users' work programmes and data requirements.

Please send your comments to our new mailbox: population.migration@nrscotland.gov.uk and please reply by **9 September 2022**.

NRS: July 2022