

Changes made to long term migration assumptions for 2006-based sub-national projections

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Proposed short and long term migration assumptions were sent to council representatives for comment in October 2007.
- 1.2. The proposed figures were based on 5 year averages of in-migrants and out-migrants scaled so that net migration at Scotland level agreed with the assumptions used in the National Population Projections. This method differed from that previously used as the old method didn't work well when there was a large difference between the long term Scotland assumption and the 5-year average net migration.
- 1.3. Responses were received from 27 councils with 12 suggesting they would receive more migrants, 2 fewer and 13 being satisfied with the figures proposed.
- 1.4. The changes made to the long term assumptions in light of these comments are outlined below. The short term assumptions were also changed as a result of the changes to the long term assumptions.

2. Evidence which resulted in changes to the migration assumptions

2.1. Changes were made to migration assumptions where:

- There appeared to be something unusual about the historic period / data on which the assumptions were based, e.g. data quality checking showed unusual results or one or two of the years were unusual. On this basis the assumptions for Aberdeen City and Falkirk were changed.
- A previous barrier to house-building had been removed and there was evidence that this had already resulted in significant increase in house-building. This was true for Midlothian and their assumption was increased.
- The long term assumption looked unusually high and there was evidence that this was partly due to large numbers of A8 migrants. This was true for Highland and so their assumption was slightly reduced.

Additional small changes were made to Argyll & Bute and Edinburgh in order to ensure consistency with the national assumption.

3. Evidence which did not result in changes to the migration assumptions

3.1. Changes were not made to the migration assumptions where:

- There were planned housing increases.

- There were large numbers of A8 migrants – the projections assume that net A8 migration will fall to 0 for the long term assumptions. This meant that where a council's migration assumption looked unusually high and that council had experienced a lot of A8 migration the assumption may have been reduced. However large numbers of A8 migrants did not lead to assumptions being increased.
- The assumption was below the 5-year average – this was true for all councils and was a consequence of the long-term assumption for Scotland being below the 5-year average.
- The results of local population projections.
- Trends in migration – currently a straight 5-year average is used rather than giving more weight to more recent years.
- Other factors, the effect of which was impossible to quantify – e.g. Commonwealth Games, improved communication links.