

Other Changes to Mid-year Estimates

There have been a number of corrections for errors made in the compilation of the population estimates for mid-2001 and mid-2002. Brief descriptions of these corrections are shown below. Other adjustments have also occurred, that either take into account the changes to local authority boundaries that occurred in 2003 or consequential adjustments as a result of the changes arising from the Local Authorities Population Studies.

These results have been incorporated in the population estimates released on 9 September 2004 that can be found at www.statistics.gov.uk/popest Further information on the Local Authority Population Studies can be found at www.statistics.gov.uk/LAStudies

Unattributable Population Change

On 8 July ONS announced that the mid-2003 and revised mid-2002 population estimates will not include any allowance for unattributable population change. An adjustment was introduced in the mid-2002 population estimates in respect of the unexplained intercensal difference accumulated in population estimates. This adjustment assumed that the drift in population estimates over the current decade would replicate that over the previous decade and that it would be distributed evenly over the years. The need for the adjustment has been reviewed in the context of the unexplained intercensal difference being reduced to 209,000, ONS' plans to improve the quality of population estimates and in response to comments about the adjustment.

The unexplained intercensal difference has been reduced from 291,000 to 209,000 in light of the results of the Local Authority Population Studies. ONS has carried out research into possible adjustment methods, particularly about the assumption that it would be evenly distributed over the years and its application at the local level. It has not been possible to demonstrate that adjustments from other potential methods would deliver more reliable population estimates, either nationally or subnationally. Furthermore, it cannot be known to what extent there might be drift in the population estimates at the national and subnational levels over the current decade. Patterns are unlikely to repeat exactly as over the last decade. We will continue research to improve the quality of population estimates with the aim of minimising any divergence with results from the next Census. ONS will be conducting a Special Population Study in the mid-decade period. The aim is to reduce the risk that, when results become available from the 2011 Census, there are unexpectedly large differences between the rolled forward population estimates and the new census based population estimates. http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/LAStudy_FullReport.pdf#page=17

These plans, together with the reduction in the scale of the unexplained difference, have led to the conclusion that it is more appropriate not to make an adjustment for unattributable population change in the population estimates.

Consequently mid-2002 estimates have been revised to remove the previous adjustment for unattributable population change. This changes both national and local estimates. No adjustment has been made to mid-2003 estimates.

Unprocessed forms

The estimates released in September 2003 included an adjustment for unprocessed forms for some local authorities. In authorities that received a Local Authority Population Study adjustment, this issue has now been accounted for by the Local Authorities Population Study. To avoid double-counting the original adjustment made to mid-2001 estimates with respect to unprocessed forms has been removed. This applies in two authorities, Southwark and Manchester.

This issue affects mid-2001 estimates and consequently mid 2002 estimates.

Manchester

On 4 November 2003 provisional population estimates were released for Manchester to take account of findings from the Census Matching Project. This provisional adjustment to Manchester's population has been taken out of this revision of the mid-year estimates because final changes to Manchester's population are now included as part of the Local Authorities Population Study adjustment. This gives a net increase of around 6,000 persons to Manchester.

This issue affects mid-2001 estimates and consequently mid-2002 estimates.

Migration – International

Corrections were necessary to international migration inflows for mid-2002. These were due to compilation errors mainly to do with code matching and list processing. Changes as a result of this correction are in some cases substantial with 13 local authorities changing by more than 1,000 persons, and a substantial number changing by more than 100 persons.

This issue affects mid-2002 estimates only.

Migration – Internal

The internal migration component of mid-2001 and mid-2002 population estimates has been amended to correct for a processing error that created a number of false migrant records. These false records were concentrated in a small number of local authorities. Net changes to most authorities are small in mid-2002 with only 13 local authorities changing by more than 100. Changes to mid-2001 are substantially smaller with all changes under 100 persons.

This issue affects both mid-2001 and mid-2002 estimates.

The corrections to internal and international migration affect only the distribution of the population to individual local authorities, not the overall population estimates for England and Wales.

Prisons

An adjustment was required because of a coding error in the source data. The consequence of this was that approximately 900 prisoners in two new prison wings were assigned to the wrong local authorities. In addition there were three similar coding errors in other

authorities, but involving no more than five persons. This issue affects mid-2002 estimates only.

Schools

A correction was necessary due to an error in the source data. Quality assurance procedures found that for a number of schools the total number of pupils was given instead of the required total boarders only. This resulted in an adjustment to four local authorities. This issue affects mid-2002 estimates only.

The corrections to prisons and schools affects only the distribution of the population to individual local authorities, not the overall population estimates for England or for Wales.

Boundary Changes

In 2003 there were boundary changes affecting three local authorities in Wales: Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire.

In order to take account of these boundary changes, the difference was calculated between Census estimates calculated using old boundaries (which were used to calculate mid-2001 population estimates and rolled forward into mid-2002) and estimates consistent with published Census estimates which are based on 2003 boundaries. This difference has been applied to 2003 estimates. In addition the effect of the boundary changes on births, deaths and migration has been calculated for the period between Census day 2001 (20 April) and mid year 2002 and incorporated in 2003 estimates. (Components of change for 2003 are all based on 2003 boundaries.) No boarding schools, prisons, or military establishments were affected by the boundary change.