

## **NEW NORTHERN IRELAND POPULATION PROJECTIONS**

**9:30am – Thursday 18 December 2003,**

The Northern Ireland population, 1.697 million in 2002, is projected to increase by about 92,000 (5.4 per cent) to 1.788 million by 2017, according to new figures released today by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency.

The new figures show that:

- By 2017, the population is projected to have increased to 1.788 million from 1.697 million in 2002. This is equivalent to an average annual rate of growth of 0.35 per cent. Longer-term projections suggest the population will peak around 1.840 million in the early 2030s and then start to fall gradually.
- The net increase of 92,000 people between 2002 and 2017 is attributable to a natural increase (the difference between the numbers of births and deaths) of 100,000, partially counterbalanced by 8,000 net outward migration.
- The population will gradually become older with the average age expected to rise from 36.6 years in 2002 to 39.9 years by 2017.
- In 2002 there were 166,000 more children aged under 16 than adults aged 65 or over. The number of older people is projected to exceed the number of children from 2024 onwards.
- The number of children aged under 16 is projected to fall by 12.3 per cent from 393,000 in 2002 to 345,000 in 2017 and continue to decrease gradually thereafter.

- The number of males aged 16-64 and females aged 16-59 (the current definition of working age) is projected to increase from 1,037,000 in 2002 to 1,093,000 by 2017, an increase of about 56,000 (5.4 per cent). The numbers in this age group will decline thereafter.
- Between 2010 and 2020, the pensionable age for females will be increased incrementally from 60 to 65, and accordingly the proportion of females aged 60 to 64 who are of working age will increase over that decade. Taking this into account, the number of people of working age population in Northern Ireland is projected to rise by 9.0 per cent from 1,037,000 in 2002 to 1,130,000 in 2017.
- The number of people of pensionable age (as currently defined, aged 60+ for females, 65+ for males) is projected to increase from 266,000 in 2002 to 350,000 by 2017, an increase of 31.6 per cent.
- In 2017, after allowing for the change in age at which females can claim retirement pension, the number of people of pensionable age is projected to be 313,000 (17.7 per cent higher than 2002).
- The number of people aged 65+ will continue to rise after 2017, and there are projected to be twice as many people aged 65+ in 2040 than there are currently.

The tables and figures below summarise information regarding the 2002 population projections. The graphs are taken forward until 2040 to give a full picture of 2002 the projection series.

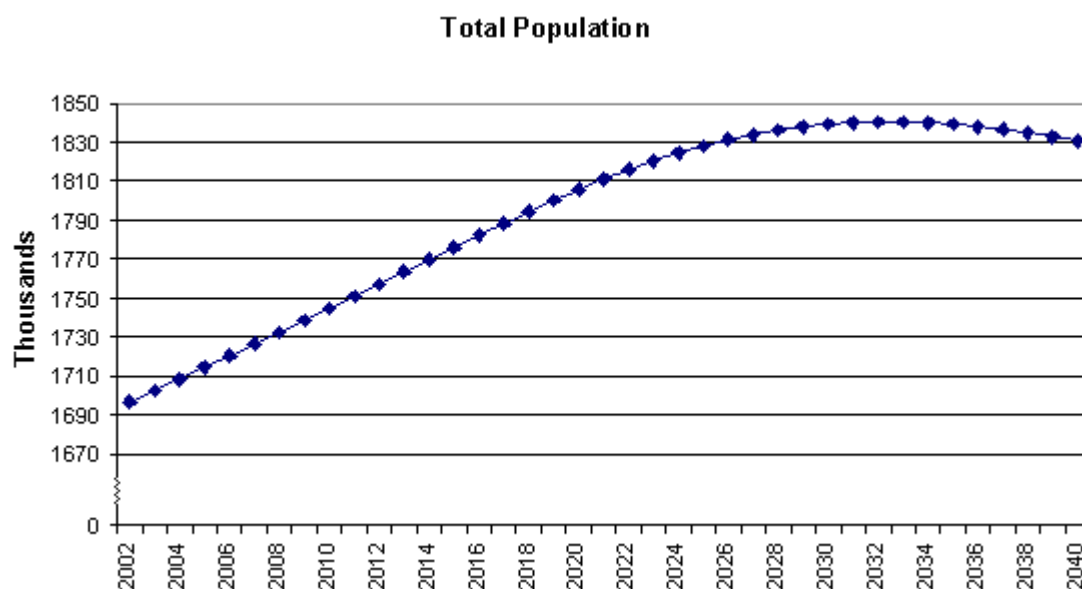
**Table 1 Projected components of population change, 2002-2017 (thousands)**

	2002-2007	2007-2012	2012-2017
Population at start	1696.6	1726.4	1757.2
Births	106.2	106.1	107.9
Deaths	73.4	72.9	74.2
Natural change	32.8	33.2	33.7
Migration	-3.0	-2.5	-2.5
Total change	29.8	30.7	31.2
Population at end	1726.4	1757.2	1788.4

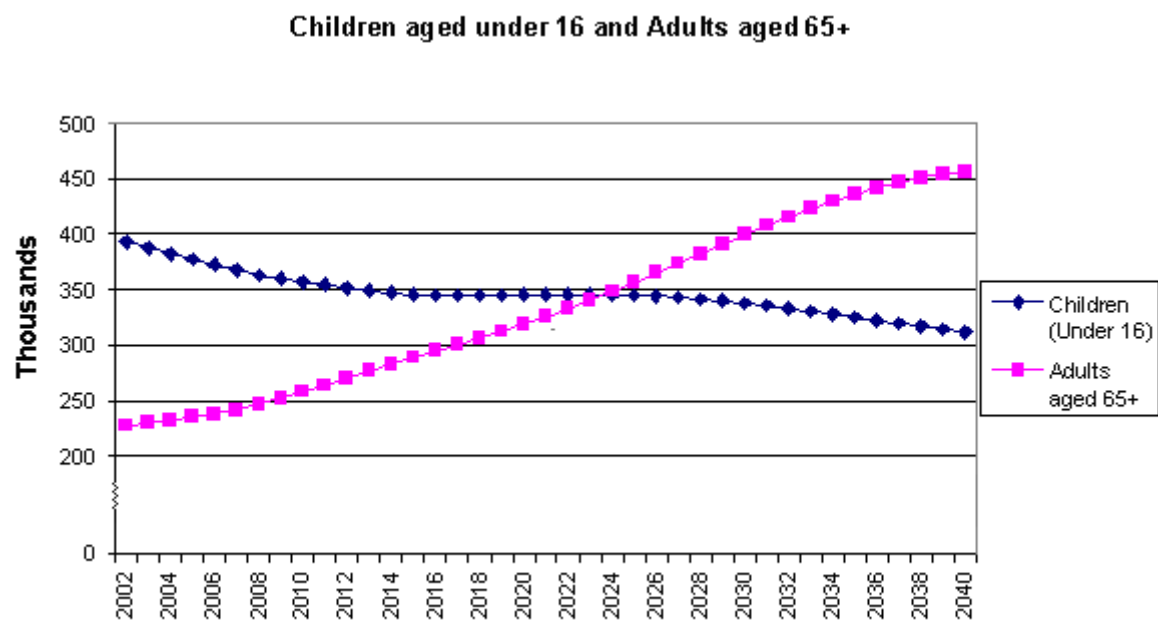
**Table 2 Projected make up of population, 2002-2017 (percentages)**

	2002	2007	2012	2017
Children (Under 16)	23	21	20	19
Adult Population (16-64)	63	65	65	64
Elderly (65+)	13	14	15	17
Total	100	100	100	100

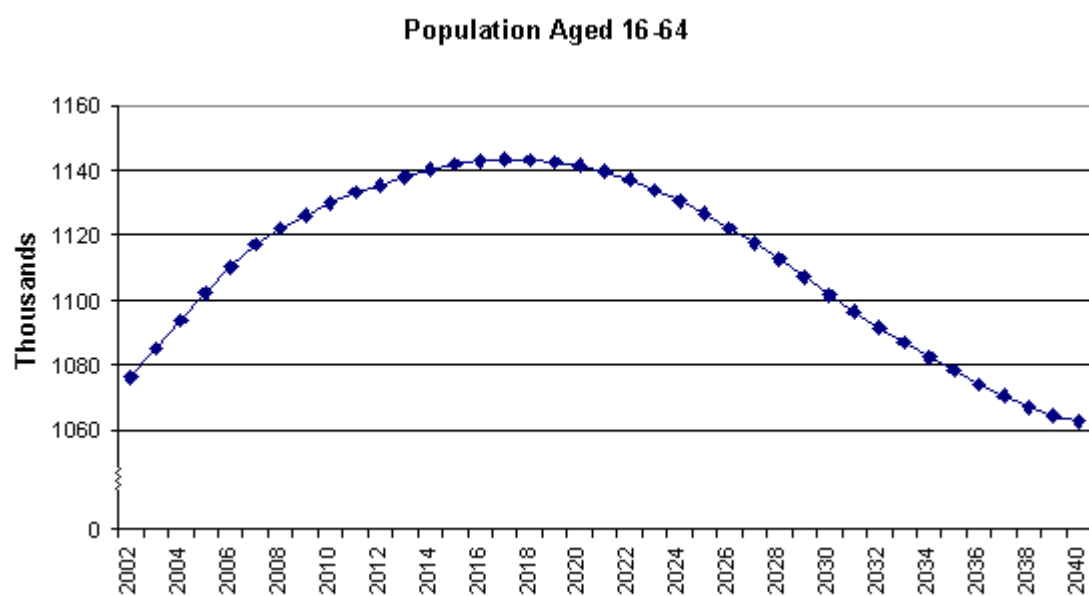
## 2002 Based Population Projections for Northern Ireland



**Figure 1**



**Figure 2**



**Figure 3**

## NOTES TO EDITORS

1. The Government Actuary's Department (GAD) produces national population projections for the United Kingdom and its constituent countries at the request of the Registrars General for England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. A new set of projections is normally made every second year, based on a full-scale review of the trends affecting the underlying assumptions about fertility, mortality and migration. The last "full" set of national projections, issued in November 2001, were based on the estimated population at the middle of 2000. However, following the publication on 30 September 2002 of the first results of the 2001 Census, an additional "interim" 2001-based set of projections was produced which took preliminary account of the results of the 2001 Census. These 2002-based projections replace the interim 2001-based projections. The next full set, scheduled for issue in October 2005, will be based on the estimated population at the middle of 2004.
2. Currently all women aged 60 to 64 are eligible for old-age pensions and are thus of "pensionable age". However, from 2020 onwards females will not be eligible for old age pensions until they are 65 years old. This change will be introduced incrementally over the period 2010 to 2020, and accordingly the number of women aged 60 to 64 who are of pensionable age will reduce incrementally over this period.
3. Full results of the 2002-based national population projections for the United Kingdom are available at: <http://www.gad.gov.uk/Population/index.asp> - the Government Actuary's Department (GAD) website. Corresponding information for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland is also published on the GAD website. The Northern Ireland projections are also available on the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency website at: <http://www.nisra.gov.uk>.
4. Further information can be obtained from:

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5. Statistical queries should be addressed to:

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