

Mid Year Population Estimates Highland

Summary

- **Highland's population has seen an increase over the past year.**
- **Highland's population continues to age.**
- **Deaths continue to exceed births.**
- **Highland's population growth is due to a greater number of people moving to Highland from England, Wales and Northern Ireland and from overseas.**

The population of Highland

Figures released on 27th April 2005 by the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) estimate the population of Highland to have been 211,340 on 30th June 2004, an increase of 2,260 (1.1%) since last year and an increase of 2,420 (1.2%) since 2001.

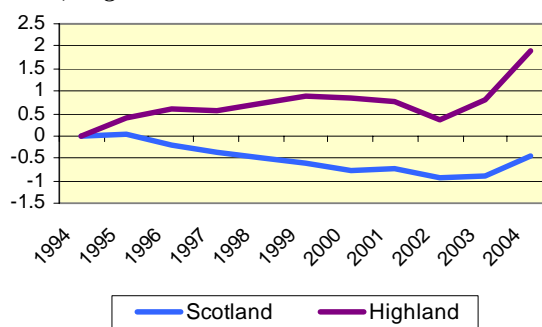
In mid-2004 it is estimated that 18.8% of the population were aged under 16; 61.9% were of working age and 19.3% were of pensionable age. There were more females (51.1%) than males (48.9%) in Highland.

Population change 2003-04 and 1994-04

Highland saw one of the largest population increases since mid-2003 of all Scottish Councils (1.1%); lower only than Aberdeenshire (1.5%), City of Edinburgh (1.2%) and Clackmannanshire (1.2%). Aberdeen City (-1.5 per cent), Dundee City (-0.9 per cent) and Inverclyde (-0.7 per cent) saw the greatest population declines of all Scottish Councils.

The population of Scotland as a whole has seen a general decline during the past decade until 2002.

Fig 1: Cumulative % population change 1994-2004, Highland and Scotland (GROS 2005)

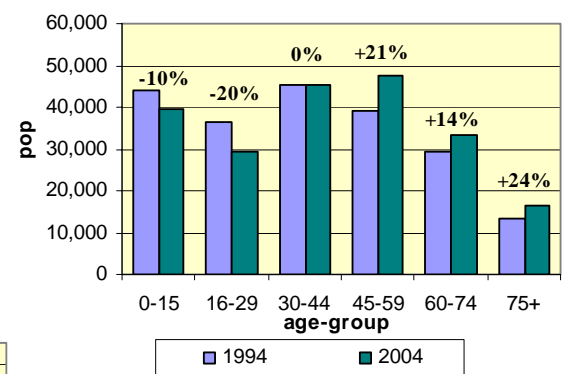


The population of both Highland and Scotland have seen a small rise in the two years since 2002. The cumulative population change in both Highland and Scotland since 1994 is shown in Figure 1. Highland's population increased gradually over most of the 1990s, before dipping slightly in the early 2000s.

Changing age structure of Highland's population

The age structure of Highland's population has changed considerably since 1994 (Fig 2). This is important as changes in different age groups will have different social and economic impacts. Of particular concern is the decrease of 10% in the number of children under 16, whilst there has been an increase of almost a quarter (24%) in the number of people aged over 75. The continuing ageing of the population is evident in the rise of the 45-59 age group (21%) and the fall in the 16-29 age group (-20%). The increase in the older population has been proportionally much greater than that seen nationally, where the 45-59 age group increased by 13%, the 60-74 age group by 1% and the 75+ age group by 16%.

Fig 2: Changing age structure of Highland's population, 1994 - 04 (GROS 2005)



Factors contributing to population change

Three factors influence population change – births, deaths and migration. Over the past few years there have consistently been more deaths in Highland than births (around 310 more per year). This means that without migration the Highland population would be in a state of decline.

During 2003/04, however, over 2,500 more people are estimated to have come to Highland to live than have left (net-migration). The growth in Highland's population since 2003 can, therefore, be wholly attributed to the influence of migration.

GROS Migration Assumptions

Migration is the most difficult part of population change to estimate. The other parts (births and deaths) are estimated using data from the civil registration system, which is thought to be highly accurate. In contrast, there is no comprehensive system which registers migration in the UK – either moves to and from the rest of the world or moves within the UK. Migration is therefore estimated using NHS data which records moves between doctor's surgeries and the International Passenger Survey.

The migration assumptions made by GROS for both Highland and Scotland over the past few years have been extremely varied, making it difficult to establish detailed trends so figures for individual years should be treated with caution.

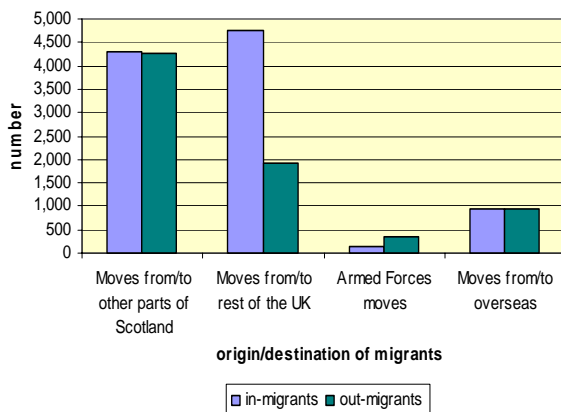
Origin and destination of migrants

During 2003/04 just over 10,000 people are estimated to have come to Highland to live, while around 7,500 have left the area.

Just under 4,500 people moved from Highland to other parts of Scotland, while a similar number made the reverse move. The greatest number of moves were between Highland and Grampian, Lothian and Greater Glasgow Health Board areas.

The situation with the rest of the UK is very positive with more than 4,500 people moving to Highland from the rest of the UK, and less than 2,000 moving out.

Fig 3: Origin and destination of migrants to and from Highland 2003-04 (GROS, 2005)



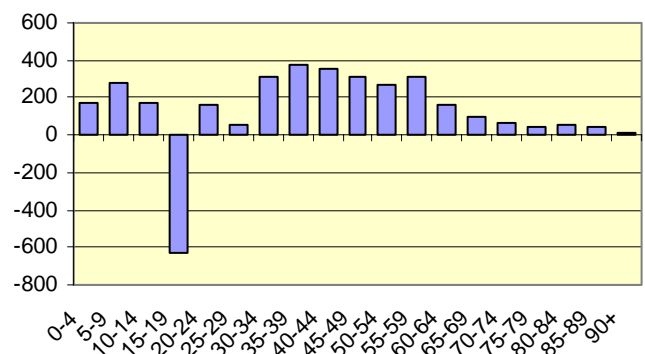
The overseas element is particularly difficult to measure but is estimated to be fairly balanced, with around 1,000 people moving in each direction to and from overseas.

The main difference from last year's figures is a greater number of people moving into Highland from the rest of the UK and an increase in the number of people coming to Highland from overseas. Moves into and out of Highland are illustrated in Figure 3.

Age structure of migrants

The age breakdown of net migration is illustrated in Figure 4, which clearly shows that the main source of out-migration in Highland is from the young adult population, largely accounted for by further education courses. Indeed, the 15-19 age group is the only group from which Highland has lost more population than it has gained through migration in the past year. All other age groups have gained population through migration, notably the 5-9 age group and the 30-59 age range.

Fig 4: Age breakdown of net-migration, Highland, 2004 (GROS 2005)



Future GROS population related publications

- The next set of population projections (based upon these estimates) are expected to be produced by GROS in October 2005 for Scotland and December 2005 for Local Authority Areas.
- 2004 Small Area population estimates (which can be aggregated to provide figures for Highland Council Administrative Areas) are due to be produced by GROS in October 2005.

Further Information

The full GROS 2004 Population Estimates report and tables are available to download from: [http://www.gros-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/library/recently-published-population-estimates/index.html](http://www.gros.scotland.gov.uk/statistics/library/recently-published-population-estimates/index.html)