

Migration Assumptions: P.E.O.P.L.E. 34 Regional Population Projections

July 2009



P.E.O.P.L.E. 34

Migration Assumptions Underlying the Regional Projection

British Columbia-level population projection 09/06 forms the control totals for population and the migration components for P.E.O.P.L.E. 34¹. Regional migration is projected using a combination of historical trends, and information on future developments that may have an impact on population. Historical trends are reflected in the allocation of provincial total interprovincial and international in-migration to the areas within British Columbia. In general, the long-term (beyond five years) projections are based on historical trends modified to reflect general assumptions. In the short-term, consideration is given to more specific events which will likely influence migration. This includes variations in resource based activity, as well as the refinement of these raw resources. Examples are: mine openings and closures; changes to the Allowable Annual Cut of timber; the fisheries; the building, reopening, or closing of smelters, mills, or processing plants. Other activities that are considered are the expansion or contraction of the transportation network as well as policies that may restrict or encourage population growth.

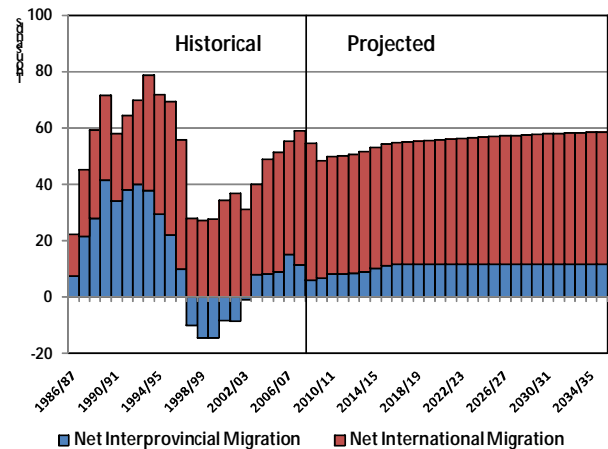
The short-term outlook for this projection is for a provincial economy that experiences a contraction before returning to growth. This is project to result in contin-

ued positive net interprovincial migration flows to British Columbia, though the gains will be modest. In the long-term, the migration to the province (including both international and interprovincial migrants) between 2009 and 2036, is projected to be approximately 1,550,000 people. This is up slightly compared to PEOPLE 33, due mostly to increases in projected net international migration.

British Columbia

Figure 1 presents the British Columbia total net migration assumptions. Projected net international and net interprovincial migration are derived through component and regression methods respectively, and are used as control totals for the determination of net migration to the areas within British Columbia.

Figure: British Columbia Net Migration Components



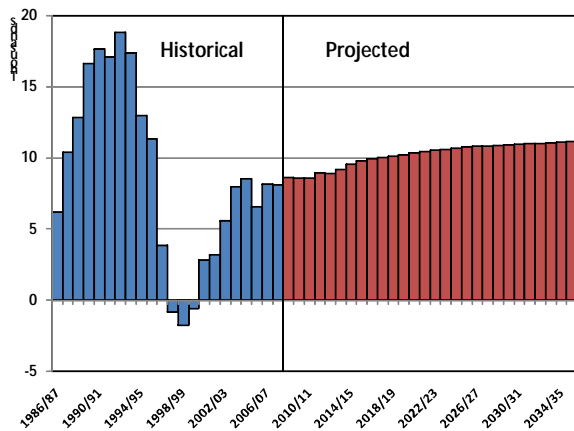
¹ See "Population Forecast 09/06 Technical Assumptions," Population Section, BC Stats, Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services, Government of British Columbia, June 2009.

Vancouver Island/Coast Region

Most of the population in the Vancouver Island/Coast region is concentrated in the southeast corner of Vancouver Island, particularly within the Capital and Nanaimo regional districts which have experienced population growth and expansions over the past five years.

The majority of the smaller communities in the northern portion of the region, and many in the more southerly areas as well, are dependent on the resource sector. Consequently, migration patterns to these areas tend to fluctuate with trends in this sector.

Figure 2: Vancouver Island / Coast Net Migration



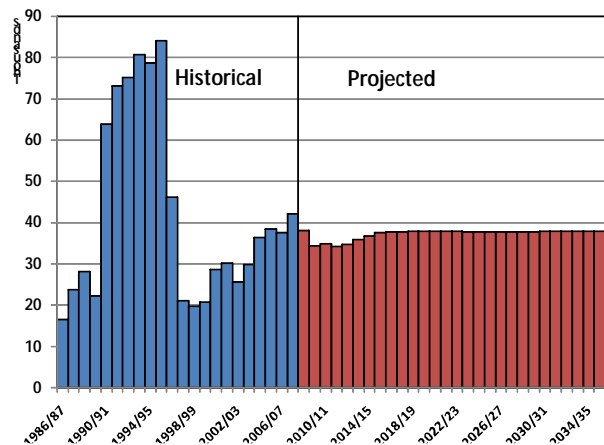
The short-term outlook for this region is for generally healthy net migration, as the area continues expansion of its urban areas. This positive outlook must be tempered somewhat by the continuing decline in labour in the coastal forest industry. Over the long term, it is expected that the onset of retirement for the 'baby boom' generation will lead to somewhat larger net inflows of migrants to areas like the Capital and Nanaimo regional districts. With the growing number of retirees, attractive areas, particularly those outside of large urban cores will likely experience population growth. From the most heavily populated

areas there will likely be some migration outward to nearby communities.

Mainland/Southwest Region

This is the most populous region in the province and receives the bulk of immigrants and interprovincial in-migrants. Approximately 45 per cent of interprovincial in-migrants and approximately 91 per cent of international in-migrants to British Columbia chose to initially settle in the Mainland/Southwest region over the 2002 to 2006 period. The Greater Vancouver regional district (GVRD) is the destination of most international migrants, and is also home to nearly 80 percent of non-permanent residents in the province. Conversely, in terms of intraprovincial migration (migration within the province) there are generally more people moving out of the area than are moving in. The area has experienced negative annual net intraprovincial migration since 1990. These trends are projected to continue with the area receiving the bulk of net international migration flows and the largest proportion of interprovincial in-migration. The area is projected to continue to send a large number of net intraprovincial migrants to other regions of the province. Over the long term, the distribution of growth in the

Figure 3: Mainland / Southwest Net Migration



Mainland/Southwest region will be influenced by the implementation of the *Liveable Region Strategic Plan* of the GVRD. This plan proposes a “growth concentration area” comprised of Burnaby, Coquitlam, Port Moody, Port Coquitlam, New Westminster, Vancouver, North Surrey, and North Delta. The plan is to concentrate growth in these areas and to reduce traffic congestion by locating jobs near where people live.

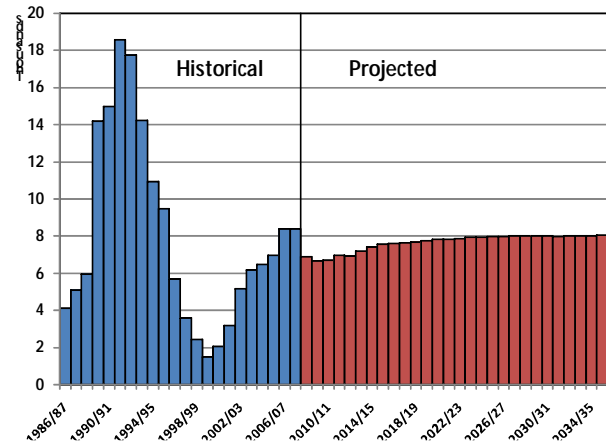
The long-term outlook is for reduced growth rates for areas outside the growth concentration area; however, as long as migration to the province continues to be strong, all areas within this region will continue to experience strong growth.

Thompson Okanagan Region

This region is generally known for agriculture and tourism, but it also has a strong manufacturing base and attracts people of working age as well as retirees. Activity in the forestry and mining sectors also influence migration flows to and from the area. The area has received positive net intra-provincial and international migration historically. Additionally, it has recently experienced increased net interprovincial migration flows, after several years of lower net flows in the late 1990’s. These positive net migration trends are projected to persist for this area.

Manufacturing and service sector growth, particularly in the Central Okanagan area, will likely continue to attract people and economic diversification should offer some stability. There is significant mining activity in the area. Forestry employs a sizable share of the total population. There will also likely be increased migration as the baby boomers’ begin to retire. This area is a

Figure 4: Thompson Okanagan Net Migration

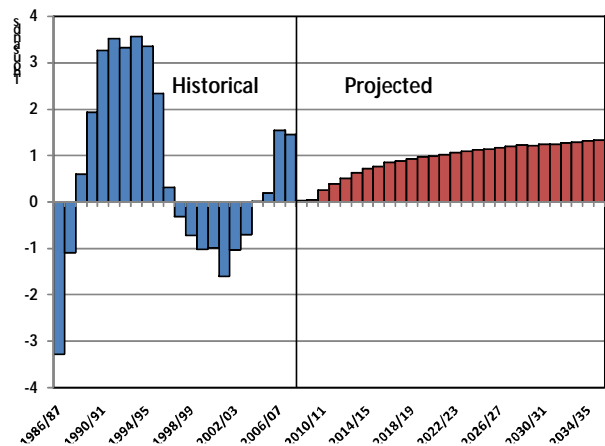


popular retirement centre, and the increase in the proportion of retirees in the population will support more service sector employment. Over the long term, the region is expected to continue receiving strong net inflows of population.

Kootenay Region

There are large coal mines in the area making mining, along with smelting, a major economic activity in this region. Depletion of reserves at the coal mines may cause increased outflows of population in the long run; however, exploration has recently increased. Tourism and the construction of four-season resorts will likely continue to attract workers particularly in the eastern

Figure 5: Kootenay Net Migration

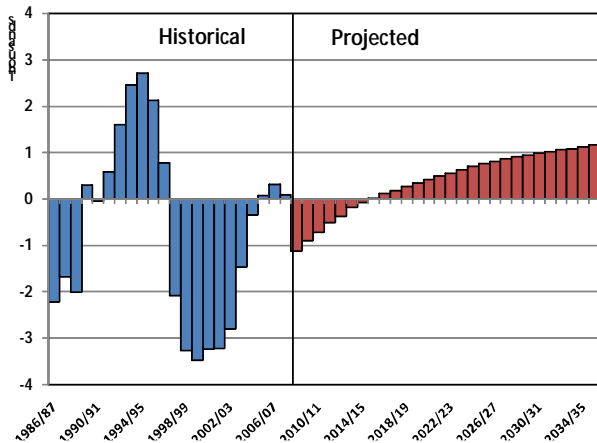


portion of the region. Overall, it is projected that this region will receive modest net inflows of migrants over the duration of the projection. Interprovincial migration will continue to figure more prominently in net migration levels for this region, due to its close proximity to urban centres in Southern Alberta.

Cariboo Region

The Cariboo region is home to a large number of sawmills and pulp mills and is highly dependent on the forest industry. In the coming years this area may face lumber supply shortages due to the infestation. Mining is becoming increasingly important in this region. There are several active mines in the area, and several in permitting stages. Farming and ranching activities also account for a sizable portion of local economic activity. In the short run, this area will continue to experience net migration outflows, although at lower than historical levels. In the long run, net migration to this area is projected to return to positive levels as its economy continues to diversify away from forestry activities.

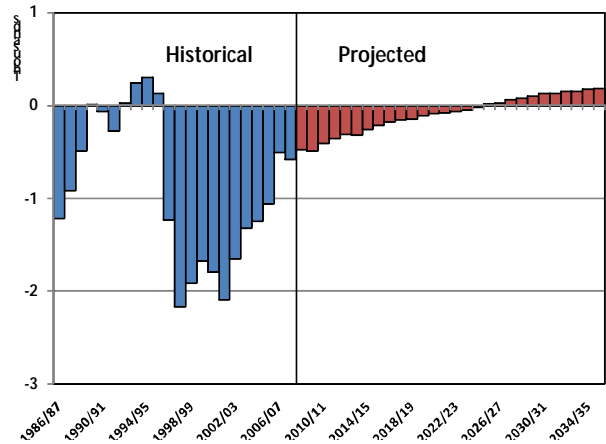
Figure 2: Cariboo Net Migration



North Coast Region

This region has experienced a net outflow of migrants over the last ten years. This trend is expected to continue over the short term, although at a lower level. There are several mines in the area and several more that are in planning and construction phases. The forestry industry continues to be important. The newly constructed inter-modal port in Prince Rupert under expansion and a proposed LNG terminal in Kitimat is receiving increasing support. There are also proposed pipeline and hydro system upgrades for this area. In the short term, the trend of steady out-migration will continue for the area, tempered by effects the increase in port activity including potential construction projects, and the increase in mining activity will have on the local economy.

Figure 7: North Coast Net Migration



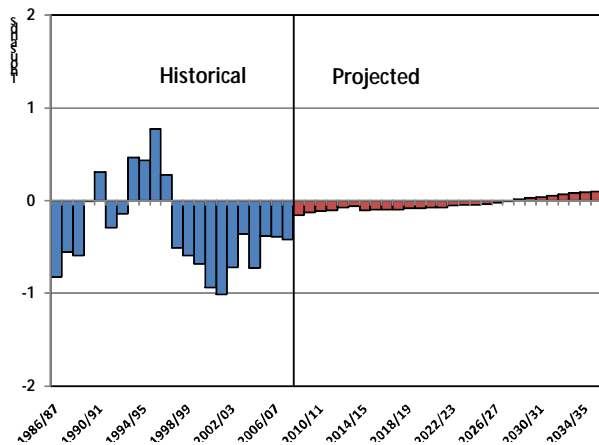
Nechako Region

Most of the population in this Development Region live in the Bulkley Valley, which is located in the southern portion of this region. Here, forestry is a major economic activity. Logging and milling activity will be negatively impacted in the long term by the mountain pine beetle infesta-

tion. This will have implications for the size of migration flows from this area.

Mining also plays an important role in migration patterns to the region. Not only is the region mineral rich, but Smithers is also one of the main supply and service points for mineral exploration and development in northern British Columbia. It is expected that developments in the mining industry will provide jobs as well as indirect and induced employment in the region. Net intraprovincial migration for this area has been negative for the past ten years. This trend is projected in the short run to continue, but at a lower level than previously.

Figure 8: Nechako Net Migration



Northeast Region

The Northeast region has benefited from a booming mining, oil and gas sector, but the recent downturn has put some of those plans on hold. The region has recently experienced positive net intraprovincial migration, but negative net interprovincial as areas in Alberta continue to draw migrants from this area. In the long run, an overall trend of modest, net in-migration to the area is projected as oil and gas exploration and construction pick-up to provide employment in the region. Therefore, despite

the inevitable fluctuations in resource-based activity, the outlook is for migration to be positive over the duration of the projection period.

Figure 9: Northeast Net Migration

