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Scotland: The new melting pot?

Thesis submitted to
the Graduate College of
Marshall University

In partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
in Geography

by

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Abstract

Discussion of population issues increasingly centers on the low fertility rates common in much of the developed world. As a result of these low fertility rates and increased longevity, populations across much of Europe are getting older and in many cases declining in size. In response, governments with low fertility rates have implemented a variety of policies to maintain their population. While many countries have tried to boost fertility, Scotland had opted for a less popular approach, i.e. pro-immigration. This thesis focuses on Scotland and the policy implemented by the government to combat low fertility.

Key words: Europe, Scotland, demography, low fertility, immigration

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Chapter 1

Introduction

During the twentieth century, the world was haunted by the dire predictions of neo-Malthusians, such as biologist Paul Ehrlich, that rapid population growth would inevitably overtake the world and devastate an already strained economy. Ehrlich's *The Population Bomb* (1968) stated that agricultural production would not be able to sustain the growing population and as a result, millions would starve. His ideas echoed those of the nineteenth century economist Thomas Malthus who argued that positive checks, i.e. famine, acted to limit population growth. Looking back we now know that these ideas and theories did not come to pass. Instead, today we live in a world where population growth has already stagnated and even begun to decline in much of the developed world. The twenty-first century will actually be a time of population decline for much of the developed world. In spite of this turnaround, many still equate population with excess.

At first glance, population decline may seem like a positive development. After all, fewer births mean fewer mouths to feed and less strain on parents, but it also means that in twenty years, there will be a declining workforce that has the potential to devastate an economy. It is the workers that sustain an economy and nation. The need for workers to support an aging population is especially vital within the developed world where life expectancy has increased dramatically. Retirement plans in Europe are generous and those retiring expect to be provided for. Unfortunately, the workforce is becoming too small to support the elderly population in countries such as Germany, Italy, and Scotland.

Population decline in Europe could foretell a decline in the overall population of the world “unseen since the 14th-century Black Death” (Elder, 2003, p. 1).

Scotland offers an interesting case study of these trends and their consequences. The country’s current Total Fertility Rate (TFR), which is the total number of children the average woman will have during her reproductive years, is 1.6. Scotland has experienced rapidly declining fertility rates that have already dipped far below the replacement rate, which indicates zero population growth. A fertility rate of 2.1 births per women merely maintains the current population. Fertility rates below this threshold indicate a declining population. Scotland’s current TFR of 1.6 is three-fifths what it was in 1971 (www.gro-scotland.gov.uk). A TFR of 1.6 is obviously well below 2.1 and means that there are not nearly enough babies being born each year to sustain the size of the current population. Over time, this contributes to significant changes in the population’s age structure. The top of a population pyramid would dominate leaving those aged 50 and below incapable to support the aging population. Increased life expectancy only exacerbates this trend.

Below you see a population pyramid of a relatively stable population (The United States) and a population pyramid of Scotland. Ideally, a population pyramid would have the bulk of the population in the middle (workforce) with the bottom and top remaining relatively narrow. The bottom would be large enough to support the top in twenty years but not so large as to strain the workforce. However in Scotland, the bulk of the pyramid is moving to the top (elderly) and the base is not wide enough to provide future support.

Figure 1.1 Population Pyramid of the United States 2000. (www.census.gov/ipc/www/idbpyr.html)

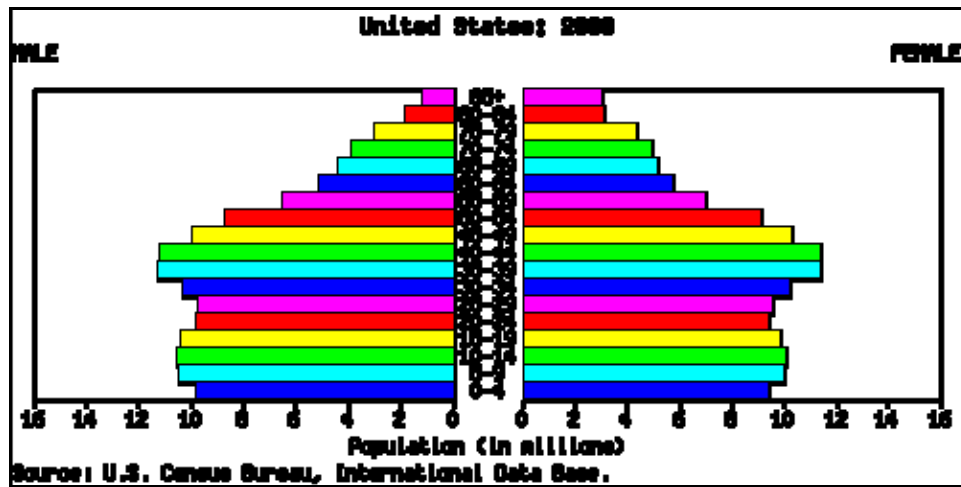
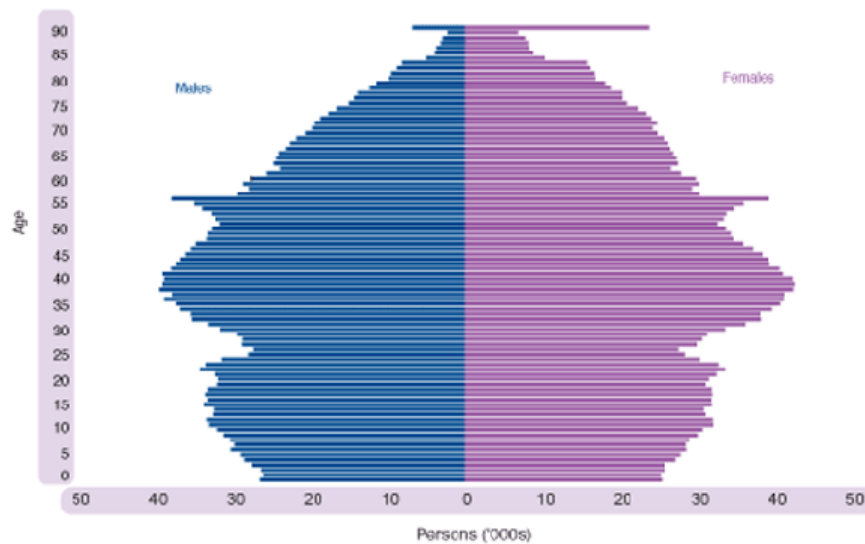


Figure 1.2. Population Pyramid of Scotland 2005. (www.gro-scotland.gov.uk)



While much of Europe has chosen pro-natalist policies, or initiatives intended to raise fertility rates, in response to declining populations, Scotland has turned to a pro-immigration policy to alleviate its fertility deficit. The purpose of this thesis is to understand why Scotland chose to implement a pro-immigration policy in response to low fertility and declining population and what impact this policy might have.

Much of the research for this thesis is based on published sources, such as journal articles, newspaper articles, internet websites, and books. A key source for the events in

Scotland will be *The Scotsman*, a Scottish newspaper. The statistics and figures necessary are available from government databases primarily the Scottish census website (www.gro-scotland.gov.uk). To augment these sources, email and mail correspondences have been conducted with the Scottish Executive as well as government sponsored websites such as www.scotlandistheplace.com and www.onescotland.com.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

A World in Decline?

Contemporary global population issues vary significantly by location. In the developed world many of the populations are declining due to low fertility rates while most populations in the developing world are growing, some rapidly, due to high fertility rates. The world's population currently stands at around 6.5 billion people and continues to grow, but there is significant spatial variation in growth rates. China is currently the most populous country in the world but as a result of its strict fertility controls, i.e. One Child Policy, India is poised to overtake China and become the most populous country in the world. Much of the rest of Asia, along with less developed countries in Africa and the Middle East, are also experiencing rapid population growth. While Europe, along with India and China, counts as one of the three major clusters of global population, it is lagging dramatically behind China and India, whom have a total of one-third the world's population. Europe has a population of around 731 million; whereas China has 1.3 billion and India has 1.2 billion (www.unpopulation.org).

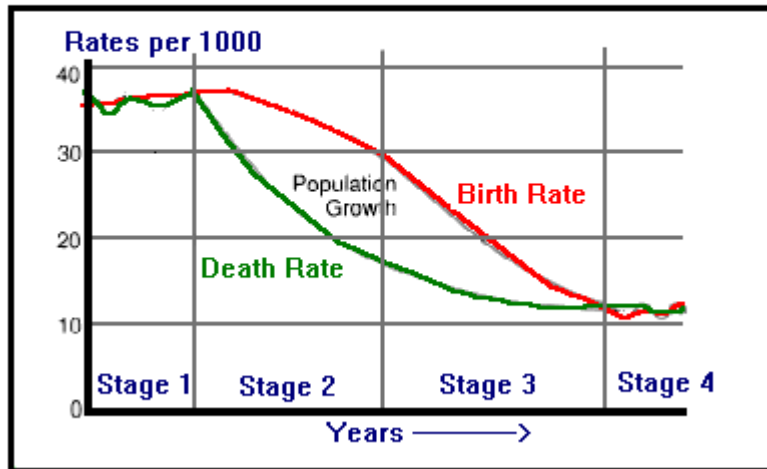
Europe was the major center for culture, tradition, innovation, and population for centuries but the Age of Exploration brought dramatic changes to European dominance. This era introduced new ideas, culinary variety, and culture but perhaps more important was the availability of new land. Suddenly, there was a way to disperse the people of Europe who were overpopulating the cities. People began to leave Europe for the possibility of better opportunities. For the first time in history, people were emigrating

from Europe in masses. This was a great benefit to the congested cities of Europe but as we see today the current emigrating populations of Europe, though slowed, are contributing to declining populations and threatening the very existence of some cultures. People are leaving in masses and taking with them their cultures and traditions. In some areas immigrants are coming in to fill the workforce, be it temporary or more lasting, and bringing with them their own cultures and backgrounds. This creates a mixing of cultures but nationalists see it as threatening their own culture.

Developed by various scholars during the twentieth century, the demographic transition model (see figure 2.1) graphs the development of a country with respect to birth and death rates. The model, which was based on Europe, illustrates the stages a country will go through while developing, i.e. industrializing. The first pre-industrial stage experiences little growth because the birth and death rates are high. The second stage is marked by a population explosion and rapid growth because the death rates decline but the birth rates remain high. Many developing countries are stuck in these early stages with declining death rates but persistently high fertility. For example, the average TFR of sub-Saharan Africa is 3.9 but in some areas it is greater than 6 (www.unpopulation.org). In the third stage, the birth rates begin to decline and the population experiences moderate growth. By the fourth stage, the population is once again stable with little growth but now it is characterized by low birth and death rates. The key to controlling a population is to go through the second stage as quickly as possible. The fourth stage seems like an ideal place to be but some countries are moving into a fifth stage in which the death rates are staying low but the birth rates are dropping even lower. This creates an unbalanced and declining population.

Figure 2.1. Demographic Transition Model. (www.geography.learnontheinternet.co.uk)

The Demographic Transition



Many European countries are battling low fertility rates and emigration. Since 1975, the average total fertility rate (TFR) for the European Union has declined and currently stands at 1.47. The standard number for maintaining a current population is called the replacement rate and is 2.1. Thus, much of the European Union is markedly below the replacement rate, which will result in population decline. Some of the lower rates are held by Italy (1.3), Germany (1.3), Spain (1.3), and much of the former Soviet Union territories (1.2). Other countries such as France (1.89) and the United Kingdom (1.7) are above the average for the EU but are still below the replacement rate needed to maintain a population (www.unpopulation.org).

Policies to Combat Decline

The growing global concern of population decline has prompted many countries to develop policies to halt or slow this trend. This is a sharp break from the former

outlook on population issues in which the world was scrambling to find ways to stop growth. A few decades later, some areas are actually attempting to create growth. In 1999, only eleven percent of governments were concerned with declining population but only thirteen percent of that eleven had policies to raise TFR and nine percent simply wanted to maintain current TFR levels (Zoubanov, 2000, p. 11).

Perhaps the most obvious policy to promote growth and address population decline is a pro-natalist approach. This is often preferred as it allows a country, i.e. a culture, to survive or endure. A pro-natalist policy is often the first approach used by governments. Romanian government adopted this approach at a time when much of the world was still reeling from the fear of overpopulation. In 1966, the government established a decree that forbid abortion and punished childless adults. Those who failed to produce children by the age of 25 had to pay extra taxes whether married or single (www.countrystudies.us/romania/). The pro-natalist policies were effective at first but quickly failed. The current TFR of Romania is 1.37 and continues to fall (www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook).

Recently France is a country that has jumped on this approach and has seen positive results. The TFR has risen to 1.9 and is projected to continue to increase (www.unpopulation.org). The French government offers cash prizes to women who have children. Mothers with lower incomes are given a bonus of \$1,200 American for each child and additional monthly supplements for the first three years of the child's life (France offers big baby bonuses, 2005, p.1). The government has expanded this to increasing cash benefits to women who have two or more children. Within this society it appears that more babies means more money (Zoubanov, 2000, p. 11). In September

2005, the government offered to pay women 750 Euros each month for one year if the woman would stay home after having a third child (Dau-Schmidt and Brun, 2006, p. 178).

Italy has a TFR of 1.3 and has decided to follow France by implementing a pro-natalist policy. A woman will receive \$1,300 American for her second child. The city of Lavaino has gone so far as to offer \$14,000 American over the course of five years to women who have multiple children. In spite of these incentives, the TFR of Italy has remained one of the lowest in Europe at 1.3 (Italy's Low Total Fertility Rate, 2005).

Family friendly policies have shown success in the Nordic countries of Norway and Sweden. In Norway there is no decline in birth rates. The TFR is near the replacement rate of 2.1. This has been attributed to their excellent child friendly services available for parents. The mother receives one year maternity leave with pay. When she returns to work she is given reduced hours at work but not in pay. The families are given additional child allowances to help support children. In Sweden, they have similar policies and additionally allow fathers to stay at home and encourage it so that women are not lost in the workforce (Zoubanov, 2000, p.11). Russia, which has one of the lowest TFR in the world at 1.14, has implemented a family friendly policy in which practices such as marriage and families are the norm and should be strived to obtain (Zoubanov, p.13).

Pro-natalist policies are so popular because they address long-term problems. Today children have become more of an expense and not an asset for many couples. Choosing to have children has been deemed "inconsistent with working" but children are needed to replace current workers and tax-payers. Having a child is a

great expense but some governments are advocating having more children because they are a benefit to the government (Dau-Schmidt and Brun, 2006, p.167).

It is too early to see if pro-natalist policies have truly had an impact of fertility and birth rates. The surge in births in places like France may represent a temporary shift and not a long-term trend. It may just be a repeat of Romania, in which fertility rates soared for a few short years. Within the first year (1966), the number of births increased by 92 percent but quickly declined with time and by 1980, the population was again declining (www.countrystudies.us/romania/).

Some countries with low TFR have strayed away from this path and have decided to offer tax breaks as a way to counter population decline. Germany has a TFR of 1.3 (www.unpopualtion.org) and has chosen to offer tax breaks to families with children but see pregnancy and child birth as a personal choice and do not advocate children (Zoubanov, p.12). Perhaps this is because their economy has continued to remain stable in spite of low birth rates.

Some countries have decided that increases in fertility are not realistic and so they have began to adjust to an ageing society. By raising the retirement age and cutting pension benefits, the workforce is less strained by the elderly. If retirement is delayed then there are more people in the workforce and if the benefits are lowered then fewer workers are needed. Most countries are raising the retirement age, i.e. Germany from age 63 to 65. Others are giving more incentives such as greater benefits to retire later without standardizing an age, i.e. Italy. Others are placing more money into the pension revenues, i.e. Germany from 20% to 25% (Zoubanov, 2000, p. 10). Yet unlike pro-natalist policies,

these options have proven unpopular because they require people to work longer, save more, or receive reduced benefits.

Immigration appears to be the least popular policy to stabilize the workforce and overall population. Many people fear immigration because they worry it will dilute their culture and traditions. They want to maintain their identity and view immigrants as a threat. Immigrants may contribute to the workforce and economy but they also bring their own culture and way of life. Immigrants introduce new religions, food, ideas, and traditions. Nearly all countries exude pride in their way of life and do not want new elements introduced. As a result, immigration is not supported by the people and thus the governments.

Reflecting this public attitude, there has been a rise in anti-immigration political parties in Europe in the last few decades. Some of the larger ones are the Vlaams Belang (Belgium), the Northern League (Italy), the Freedom Party (Austria), and the Front National (France) (Fekete, 2005, p.1). These parties often say that they are not against immigration but rather that they want strict controls over the flow of immigrants into their countries. It is this idea of preserving culture without diluting their culture with other cultures. Immigration is why the U.S. has been able to maintain the replacement rate but by many countries it is seen as a loss of culture and identity. Only recently have countries in Europe considered immigration as a plausible policy to combat population decline. France, Germany, and Russia see immigration as too high as it is and so the governments have not tried to increase immigrant numbers. In the U.K., immigration has helped to keep population numbers up but the government has deemed it necessary to

have a strong control over who is allowed to immigrate into its borders (Zoubanov, 2000, p.9).

In contrast, Scotland has been the only country to fully back immigration as a solution to population decline. Scotland has seen the benefit that immigration brings to a society. Millions of Scots have left Scotland and emigrated to new lands such as Canada and the U.S. With them, they take their culture but also their abilities and talents. Scotland wants to join with the ranks of the U.S. and prosper from immigration. The United States was influenced by Scottish thinkers and ideas and now Scotland wants to bring back some of the talent that emigrated (www.scotland.gov.uk).

Chapter 3

Study Area

Scotland: A Population in Need

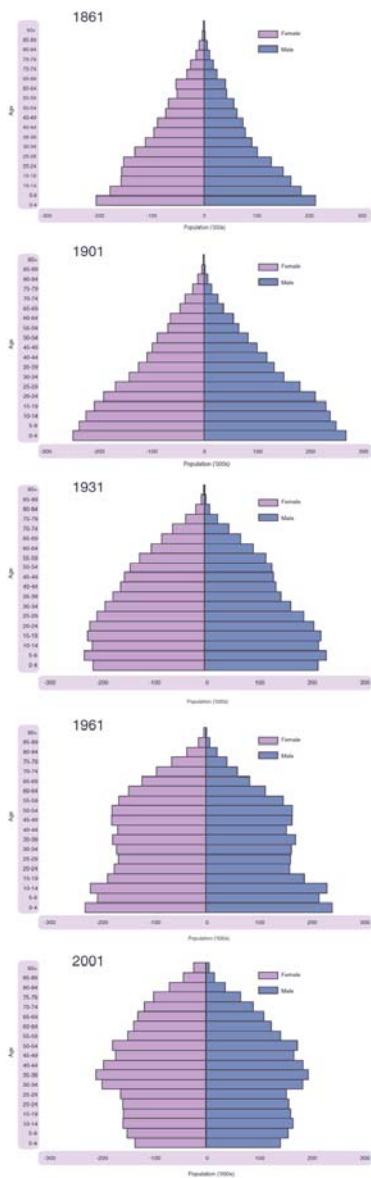
The United Kingdom has a TFR of 1.7, which has been declining since 1990, but Scotland has a TFR of 1.6, which began declining earlier in the 1980s (www.unpopulation.org). This was not always the case. In fact, the TFR in Scotland was higher than the rest of the United Kingdom until the 1970s and it peaked as high as 3.09 in 1964 (Bowditch, 2005, p.1). Since that peak, the population has continued to spiral down, from 5.24 million to 5.06 million today (Wilson & Rees, 2004, p. 191). Scotland may not have the lowest TFR in Europe but it is one of the few experiencing a major decline in population. The situation is so severe that the population is unable to support itself. The fertility rates are low and as a result the population is becoming an older society. There simply are not enough workers to support Scotland's ageing population at an acceptable standard.

If you examine Scotland from the perspective of the demographic transition model, you see that it follows the model fairly well but this does not factor in Scottish emigration. From 1855 until 1911, the country was in stage one and experienced high fertility rates but also high death rates. During this time, the number of those emigrating was high but there were also large numbers of immigrants from Ireland. The next era, 1912-1947, experienced a decline in fertility rates and the country entered the second stage of the demographic model. War created a decline in births and the population began to level off and thus the country was entering the third stage. The end of World War II

created a new era, 1948-1988, and the population experienced a baby boom but the number of those emigrating also increased and the population did not grow despite high fertility rates. By 1985, Scotland was in the fourth stage but rapidly shifted into a state of decline by the 1990s (www.gro-scotland.gov.uk). The following figure (see figure 3.1) shows the change in population within Scotland as it progressed through the demographic transition.

Figure 3.1. Population Pyramids of Scotland 1861,1901,1931,1961,2001 (www.gro-scotland.gov.uk)

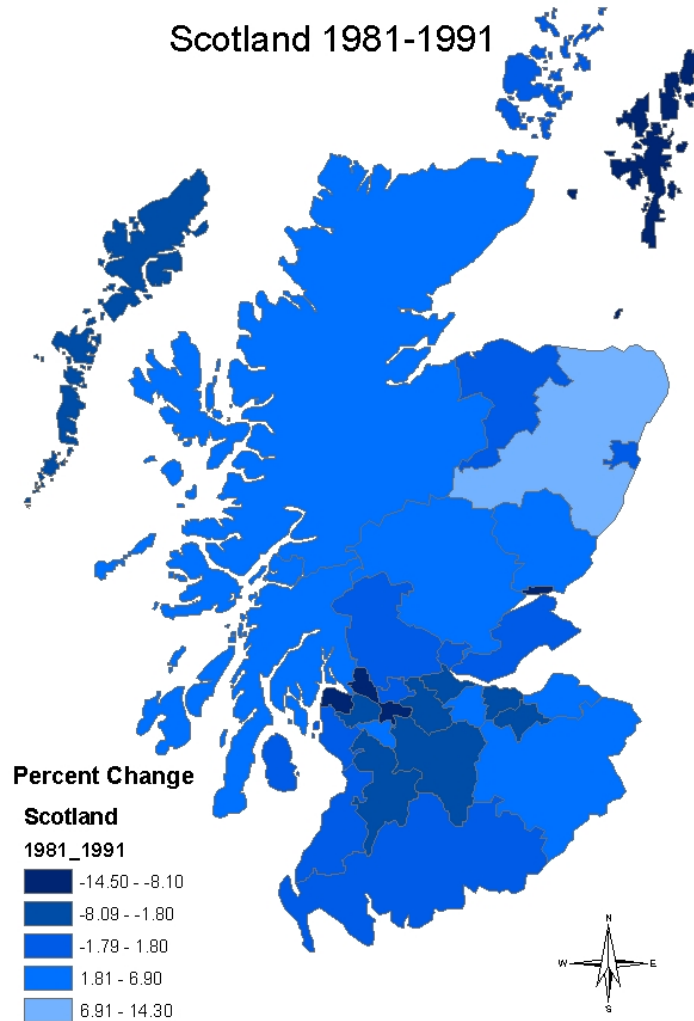
Figure 2.4 Population Pyramid, Scotland by 5 year age groups



The top pyramid is during stage one of the DTM and illustrates low growth. The second pyramid moves the country into stage 2 and large growth. The third stage is illustrated in the third pyramid as the growth begins to slow. More people are living longer and declining fertility results in moderate growth. The transition from the third to fourth stage is shown in the fourth pyramid in which the population pyramid is growing wider at the top. The last pyramid shows stage five, in which the base is narrowing and the top is widening. As the bulk of the population shifts to the top, the population is aging and the center, the workforce, is strained to support the top and the bottom.

Between 1981 and 1991, Scotland experienced significant losses in populations (see figure 3.2). Overall, the country lost 1.9 percent of its total population (96,870). The areas with the greatest loss were Glasgow (-11.7%), Dundee (-8.3%), the Shetland Islands (-4.5%), and Inverclyde (-9.7%) (www.gro-scotland.gov.uk). Some of the loss was attributed to internal migration, with some choosing to move within Scotland, but international migration was also a key factor to the decline in parts of Scotland.

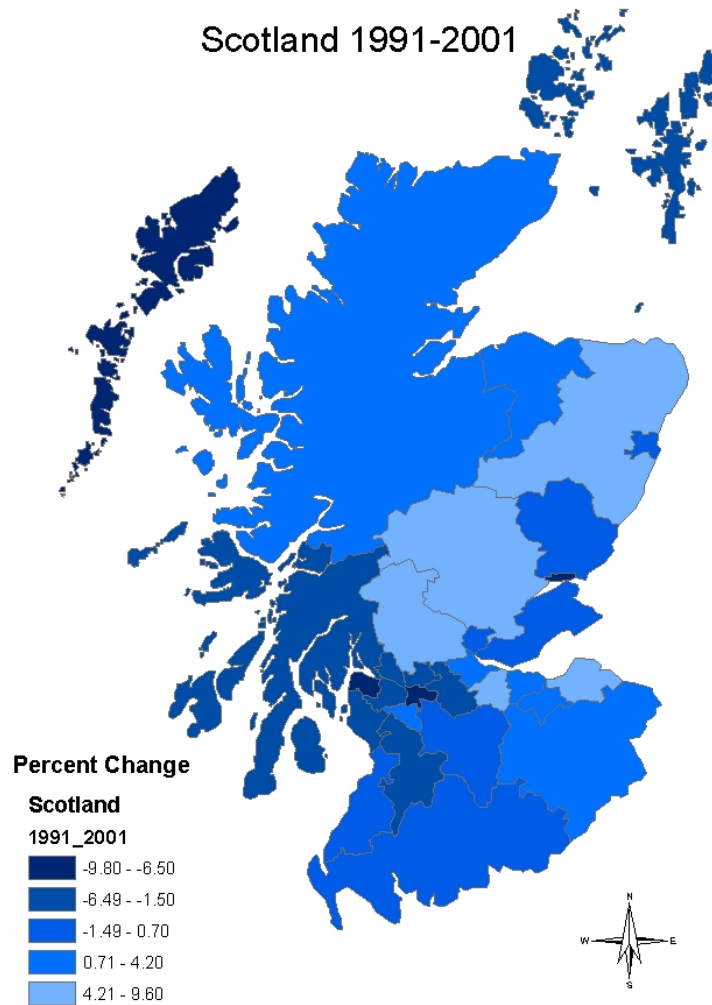
Figure 3.2. Map of Population Change within Scotland, 1981-1991.



Between 1991 and 2001, the loss of population was slowed in some areas but overall Scotland lost 0.4 percent (19,130) of its total population (see figure 3.3). The areas with the greatest losses were Dundee (6.5%), Eilean Siar (-9.8), Glasgow (-8.0), and Inverclyde (7.9%) (www.gro-scotland.gov.uk). The areas with the greatest loss

remained the same as the previous decade with the exception that the Shetland Islands were replaced by Eilean Siar.

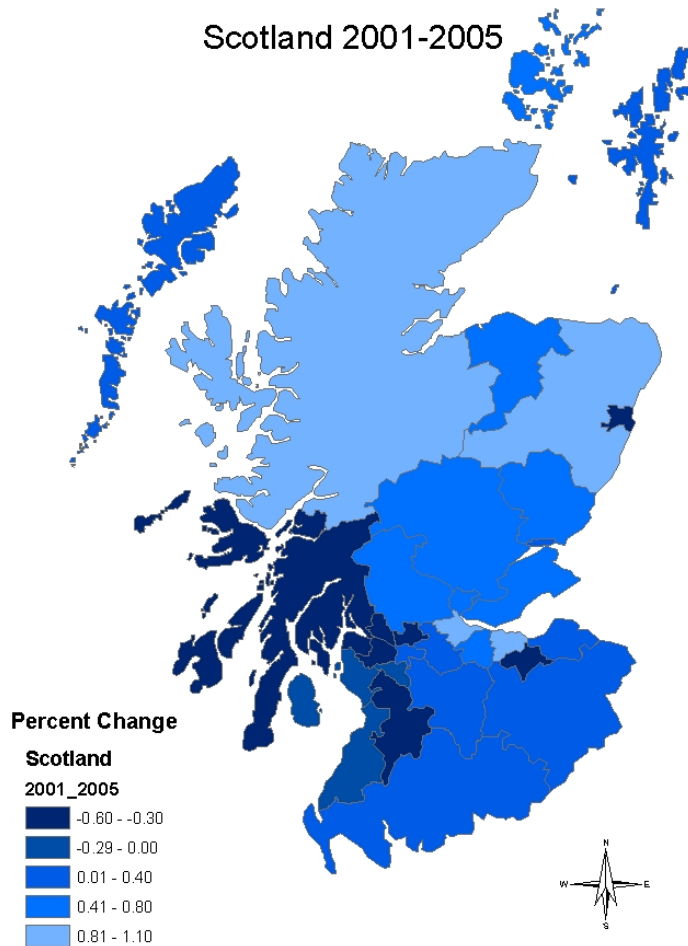
Figure 3.3. Map of Population Change within Scotland, 1991-2001.



Between the years 2001 and 2005, Scotland's population increased by 0.3 percent (see figure 3.4). The areas with the greatest losses were Aberdeen City (-4.0%) and Dundee (-2.5%). The areas with the greatest gain were Arberndshire (2.6%) and West Lothian (2.4%) (www.gro-scotland.gov.uk). Dundee City remained one of the areas of

greatest loss. Dundee City is an old industrial city and much of the jobs that were once there are no more and so many have continued to emigrate to areas with a greater opportunity.

Figure 3.4. Map of Population Change within Scotland, 2001-2005.



From 1981 to 1991, migration demonstrated the greatest spatial variability, ranging from 14.5 percent loss in some areas to a 14.3 percent gain in other areas. In the following decade, 1991-2001, this variability declined, ranging from a 9.8 percent loss to a 9.6 gain. From 2001 to 2005, the gap closed even further with a range of 0.6 percent

loss to a 1.1 percent gain. Since 1981, most council areas have not experienced much difference. The changes have been fairly slow with the exceptions of Aberdeenshire, Eilean Siar, Glasgow, and the Shetland Islands, which experienced a larger fluctuation in percent change.

Figure 3.5. Table of Population Change within Council Areas of Scotland. (www.gro-scotland.gov.uk)

Council Area	1981-1991 Loss & Gain		1991-2001 Loss & Gain		2001-2005 Loss & Gain	
	Population	Percent	Population	Percent	Population	Percent
Aberdeen	1626	0.8	-2210	-1	-8460	-4
Aberdeenshire	26947	14.3	11070	5.1	5910	2.6
Angus	2785	2.6	-30	0	190	0.2
Argyll & Bute	2572	2.8	-2220	-2.4	-110	-0.1
Clackmannanshire	-118	-0.2	-30	-0.1	170	0.4
Dunfries & Galloway	1668	1.1	610	0.4	150	0.1
Dundee	-14031	-8.3	-10090	-6.5	-3590	-2.5
East Ayrshire	-3343	-2.6	-3710	-3	-590	-0.5
East Dunbartonshire	486	0.4	-1920	-1.7	-1700	-1.6
East Lothian	3725	4.6	5740	6.8	1400	1.6
East Renfrewshire	5526	6.9	3640	4.2	200	0.2
Edinburgh	-9665	-2.2	12700	2.9	4650	1
Eilean Siar	-2218	-7	-2880	-9.8	-190	-0.7
Falkirk	-2646	-1.8	2770	1.9	2190	1.5
Fife	5771	1.7	2410	0.7	4830	1.4
Glasgow	-83148	-11.7	-50510	-8	-1040	-0.2
Highland	8887	4.6	5130	2.5	2420	1.2
Inverclyde	-9792	-9.7	-7240	-7.9	-1720	-2
Midlothian	-4047	-4.8	1420	1.8	-1340	-1.7
Moray	508	0.6	3010	3.6	720	0.8
North Ayrshire	756	0.6	-2240	-1.6	200	0.1
North Lanarkshire	-14791	-4.3	-5720	-1.7	1610	0.5
Orkney Islands	338	1.8	-300	-1.5	280	1.5
Perth & Kinross	5511	4.5	7580	6	2570	1.9
Renfrewshire	-9393	-5.1	-2840	-1.6	-2240	-1.3
Scottish Borders	2574	2.5	3120	3	2320	2.2
Shetland Islands	-3817	-14.5	-570	-2.5	-20	-0.1
South Ayrshire	-67	-0.1	-960	-0.8	-310	-0.3
South Lanarkshire	-7428	-2.4	-190	-0.1	3070	1
Stirling	669	0.8	5270	6.5	170	0.2
West Dunbartonshire	-8551	-8.1	-3930	-4	-1350	-1.4
West Lothian	5836	4.2	13990	9.6	3810	2.4

The population is expected to fall below the desired threshold of 5 million expressed by the Scottish Executive in the near future. Estimates as to when the population of Scotland will dip below the five million mark have varied over the past few years. In October 2002, the TFR was the lowest in 150 years at a rate of 1.4 (Denholm, 2004, p.2). Scotland had the “fastest-falling population of any country in Europe” (Bowditch, 2004, p.1). The situation seemed so bleak that the experts were claiming that the population would fall below the five million mark. In 2003, experts were saying it would happen as soon as 2009. In 2004, experts adjusted that date based on a slight TFR increase to 2017. The following year, in 2005, the experts extended that date yet again to 2036 (Gallagher, 2005, p.1). It has been recently projected that in ten years half the population will be aged 50 plus (Dinwoodie, 2007, p.1). In that same time frame, the number of working age Scots will be down seven percent (Naysmith, 2007, p.1).

According to John Randall, the Registrar General, the problem is not emigration but rather a natural decrease. A study he commissioned attributed the decrease in population to higher educational attainment, greater female participation in the workforce, delayed childbirth, and the idea of individualism (enjoyment instead of family) (Leader, 2006, p.2). This highlights the pivotal role women play in fertility and the struggle to obtain equal rights results in a conflict for many women. Women are often expected to choose between a career and a family. In developing countries, “more restrictions on women yield higher fertility” (Mackey and Immerman, 2005, p. 283). Developed countries have lower fertility rates because women have the right to choose. Greater education and career opportunities for women contribute to delayed marriage and childbirth. The differences between fertility in the developed and developing societies

suggest that differences in fertility are closely related to differences in gender equality (Schoppa, 2006, p.112).

While the empowerment of women has resulted in low fertility, it also contributes to an unbalanced ratio among the working age groups and the elderly and youth. There are more dependent groups than there are workers to support them. This imbalance has created challenges for nearly every aspect of Scottish society. For example, Scotland has had to close multiple primary schools recently because there just are not enough children to make opening the doors economically viable. 7700 primary schools have been closed nationwide (4.4%) but in some more rural areas the percents are as high as 9.7% (Macdonald, 2004, p.1). In 2005, a primary school was forced to close in the Western Isles, a more rural area, because it had only five students (Merritt, 2005, p.1).

With a declining population, a country is also hit with the burden of supporting its elders. People are also living longer and if there are not more workers to replace the current workforce, the social security systems of many countries are at risk. The number of pensioners will exceed the number of children for the first time in the United Kingdom in the immediate future (Innes, 2003, p.2). This adds to the strain of how to support an ageing society. In 2004, there was one inactive person (young or old) for every two workers in Europe but by 2050 there will be three inactive people per four workers (Harding, 2005, p1). This shift will further create an imbalance between workers and non-workers.

In March 2005, the number of births rose by 2.9 percent (the highest in 6 years) but there were still more deaths than births even though for the first time since 1989 the death rate was down 4.1 percent. The highest total fertility rates were recorded in Greater

Glasgow, Lothian, Lanarkshire, and Grampian. The lowest total fertility rates were recorded in Orkney, Shetland, and the Western Isles (Hardie, 2005, p.2). In 2005, it was projected that for the years 2036-2044, the number of those less than 16 years-old would decline 15 percent and the number of those aged 75 plus would rise seventy-five percent (Macleod, 2006, p.1).

The problem is not just a declining population but rather the loss of essential workers needed to support and maintain the economy. Japan and Germany have TFRs lower than Scotland and yet they both have continued to maintain economic growth and prosperity (Linklater, 2003, p.2). To be successful, you need doctors, teachers, entrepreneurs, and countless other jobs to be filled. Fertility is not the answer to promoting economy; keeping vacancies filled is. Jack McConnell understands this and has been extremely progressive in attracting immigrants to fill the void. Attracting young professionals to join your workforce helps you to get a leg up, as it were. Scotland would benefit from following countries, such as Ireland, who have been able to attract the return of former patriots due to a growing economy. In four years, 280,000 former Irish returned to Ireland. The population of Ireland will soon surpass Scotland (Gallagher, 2005, p.1). In just twenty-one months, 160,000 people migrated to Ireland and it is projected that by 2020, the population will grow from 4.1 million to 5.3 million and the percent of immigrants will rise to 19.5 of the total population (www.workpermit.com).

While successful pro-natalist policies would address these issues over the long-term, they do not address the issues impacting the countries today. A declining population means that in twenty years, there will not be as many new workers to support those born before. That means there will be fewer workers to become healthcare workers,

construction workers and teachers. Pro-natalist tactics do not solve the current problems associated with low fertility. Immigration, on the other hand, gives instant results, with working-age immigrants added to the workforce today.

Why Immigration?

Perhaps the simplest explanation for promoting immigration to Scotland was summed up in this statement: “for a growing economy, we need a growing population” - Jack McConnell (Linklater, 2003, p.3). Jack McConnell clearly sees linkages between demographic growth and economic prosperity. According to McConnell, “population decline is the single greatest threat to the country’s future prosperity” (Linklater, 2003, p.1). Based on this idea, a declining population means that the economy will subsequently decline. This is from traditional thinking that people innovate and the greater pool you have to choose from, the more likely you are to have an Einstein.

Fertility rates have been steadily declining throughout the 1990s and with it so has the number of working-age Scots. A report by the NHS of Scotland found that one in three women aged 40-50 years have no children (Macwhirter, 2005, p.1). Boosting fertility would eventually create an increase in the population but it would take two decades to increase the numbers of those working. McConnell decided not to choose a pro-natalist policy because it would do nothing to solve the current shortages of teachers, doctors, and other needed workers. If you leap to a pro-immigration policy, you add to the workforce instantaneously. In theory, a larger working population will solve the problems associated with supporting an ageing population as well as stimulate the economy.

The Fresh Talent Initiative was “inspired by the great wave of Scottish immigration that did so much to build Canada, Australia, and New Zealand in the 19th and 20th centuries” - Jack McConnell (Leader, 2004, p.1). The populations of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand are stable and their economies have continued to prosper. Scotland lost thousands of people when they emigrated abroad to set up new cities. Scotland experienced a decline in population and thus a decline in economic power. While these countries conversely benefited from Scottish migrants. McConnell sees the return of former Scots and the increase in immigration as the key strategy for not only population growth but also economic growth. According to Jack McConnell, if the Fresh Talent Initiative fails the economy of Scotland will contract. Tax revenues, public works, and consumers will all decline and schools will close (Bowditch, 2004, p.3). The major goal of the Fresh Talent Initiative is to retain and attract workers, preferably highly skilled workers.

Policy Approach

Unlike most other countries, Scotland has been progressive in its approach to combating population decline. The government has implemented pro-immigration policies in response to a declining population because it has seen the benefits immigrants can bring to a society, especially to an economy. According to Jack McConnell, “Scots have been welcomed overseas for 200 years and now we want Scotland to become known as one of the most welcoming countries in the world” (Macdonell, 2005, p.1). Those words spoken on April 5, 2004 by the First Minister encapsulate the ideas held by the

Scottish Executive to boost the dwindling population of Scotland. This bold statement also proves that Scots have been relocating overseas for 200 years adding to the decline.

Reflecting this belief, McConnell announced the Fresh Talent Initiative to boost population within Scotland in March 2004. The initiative was officially launched on June 22, 2005. The Scottish Executive has made it easier to relocate to Scotland via the Fresh Talent Initiative. The goal of this initiative is to attract 8,000 of the “best and brightest” per year until 2009 in an aim to keep the total population above the 5 million mark (Ross, 2005, p.2). The program was developed into 5 tiers of immigration: 1. highly- skilled (doctors) 2. skilled workers (teachers) 3. low-skilled (construction) 4. students 5. temporary workers (Macleod, p.2). The government has been campaigning to target tiers one and two more than the others groups. They want to bring in entrepreneurs and other innovators that will bring in new money and not simply recirculate money. To help attract and inform current students as well as potential immigrants, the government set up various organizations and websites to assist those interested.

The Fresh Talent Initiative is headed by Lorna Clark, who incidentally is not a native Scot, and is meant as a way to make moving to or staying in Scotland straightforward. The three targets of the initiative are: keeping Scots from emigrating, the return of native Scots, and attracting new people (McMahon, 2005, p.1). While the initiative states these three targets, the main focus is attracting new people. Students who have attended a university in Scotland are now able to stay for up to 2 years after graduating without applying for a work visa. After this period, the former students must apply for a work permit to continue to stay in Scotland. Prior to this measure, students

had to leave within 3 months of graduation if not approved for a work permit (Barnes, 2004, p.1).

The Relocation Advisory Service (RAS), which was created in October 2004, helps potential immigrants with the transition to Scotland. The Relocation Advisory Service has helped ease relocating to Scotland by directing interested parties to the necessary channels to immigrate. By bringing in these immigrants, the RAS is able to create a higher skilled pool of workers which new businesses can utilize. The RAS also helps new businesses obtain work permits and visas (www.scotland.gov.uk). An extension of the RAS is the website, www.scotlandistheplace.com, which helps answer any questions you may have about Scotland.

“Scotland is a welcoming country but you don’t have to scratch the surface too deeply to find pockets of racism” - Jack McConnell (Denholm, 2004, p.3). According to the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), “one-third of the population holds some degree of prejudice” (Denholm, 2004, p.2). Indeed, acts of racism have risen in recent years (www.onescotland.com). Polish immigrants, for example, are a large immigrant group in Scotland and have experienced discrimination. A 28-year-old graphic designer recalls having stones thrown at him by native Scots (Gray, 2007, p.1). Some have attributed the increase in acts of racism and discrimination as a reaction to increased immigration. Jack McConnell has been campaigning for an increase in immigration and racism is working against attracting some minorities. McConnell has stated that he is "convinced that making the most of the diverse cultures in Scotland is fundamental to a more prosperous Scotland" (www.bbcnews.com). In response, various government organizations have been created to promote diversity such as www.onescotland.com.

Work permits in the United Kingdom allow people to live and work in the U.K. for five years but after four years, you are eligible to apply for permanent residency. Generally, the permits are given to skilled workers (Kerr, 2003, p.3). The system has been criticized as being too lenient in letting people immigrate. The United Kingdom is flooded with an average of 150,000 applicants every year (Brady, 2005, p.1). The problem is not getting people to come to the U.K.; it is getting them to locate where population is needed. Most migrate to larger cities in England such as London. Only 6.5 percent of those who come to the United Kingdom chose to locate in Scotland (Kirkup, 2005, p.1). Suggestions of switching to a point system, as done in Australia, have been raised within the Scottish Executive (Macdonell, 2004, p.2). In Australia, a person wishing to migrate to the country must score a minimum of 115 points out of a total of 150. The points are determined by skill level with a preference for higher skilled workers, age, language, occupational demand, and spouse's skills (www.immigrationcentral.org/australia.html). In 2005, Jack McConnell pushed for extra points to be given to those who wish to relocate to the United Kingdom if they choose Scotland. This economic and social value scale would encourage more people to relocate to areas with low populations. This could allow more people to choose Scotland over England (Hetherington, 2005, p.1). A new point system has been implemented as of March 2006 but has not added the possibility for extra points for relocating to Scotland (www.workpermit.com).

McConnell's first policy to combat a declining population at the turn of the millennium was immigration. Many have criticized Jack McConnell's approach to population decline via immigration. Richard Wright has repeatedly stated that 8,000

immigrants per year are not nearly enough to impact or reverse population decline. According to him, one percent of the population is needed, 50,000 (Ross, 2004, p.2). Others have stated that a strong pro-natalist policy is needed because without one the population will continue to age (Wilson & Rees, 2003, p.206). It was not until after his pro-immigration policy was implemented and the subsequent criticism that McConnell added a pro-natalist approach in October 2005 (Brown, 2005, p.1). Phillip Rees, a professor at the University of Leeds who advises the U.K. government on pension issues, has proposed altering pension benefits based on the number of children you have (Legislate to procreate, 2004, p.1). Some even attempted to use a natural resource as a way to promote fertility- raspberries, which apparently can act as an aphrodisiac (Merritt, 2006, p.1). A third policy that has recently emerged is the improvement of internet access of the islands, which have been hit the hardest with population decline (Gallagher, 2007, p.1).

Chapter 4

Results

Impact of Immigration

The population of Scotland has been slowly increasing but the number of deaths per year continues to be higher than the number of births, which is indicative of a declining population (Denholm, 2006, p.2). Immigration has helped to boost the population. Since the inception of the Fresh Talent Initiative, Scotland has recorded a record number of immigrants (Gardham, 2005, p.1). In 2003, there was a 9,700 net loss due to emigration but in 2004 there was a 700 net gain (Denholm, 2004, p.1). In 2005, Scotland experienced the largest net gain of population with 27,000 (McGinty, 2005, p.1). In 2006, there were 72,900 Scots leaving and of that number 44,800 migrated to other parts of the United Kingdom, while 28,100 migrated overseas. In the same year 92,700 immigrants relocated into Scotland and of that number 57,300 came from other parts of the United Kingdom and 35,400 migrated from overseas. As a result, the net gain number declined to 19,800 (www.scotland.gov.uk). The net gain in migration within Scotland has resulted in the bulk of the population remaining in the working age middle but the percent of elderly still outweighs the number of children, especially if you compare those aged 0-4 which consist of 5.47 percent of the population versus the 7.09 percent that are aged 75 plus (www.scotland.gov.uk). Almost sixty percent, 59.72, are within the working age compared to the 19.20 percent within the children age and the 21.07 percent in the pensionable age bracket (see figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1. Population Profile of Scotland, 2005. (www.scotland.gov.uk)

Age Group	Percent of population
0-4	5.47
5-15	13.73
16-29	17.46
30-44	22.97
45-59	19.29
60-74	13.98
75+	7.09

Critics, such as Robert Wright, head of economics at Stirling University, have argued that the gain of immigrants is not due to the Fresh Talent Initiative but rather the introduction of new European Union members (Macdonell, 2005, p.2). In 2004, the European Union added ten new countries most of which were located in Eastern Europe (www.state.gov/). The ten countries include Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, Malta, and Cyprus. The first eight countries listed comprise what has been termed the A8, these are the eight Eastern European countries (www.state.gov/). The European Union makes migration easier for Europeans and so it may seem that people are simply immigrating to Scotland for opportunity and not because of the Fresh Talent Initiative.

Since the addition of the eight Eastern European (A8) countries into the European Union, 600,000 Eastern Europeans have relocated to parts of the United Kingdom (Fields, 2007, p.1). Poland is by far the dominant as well as the largest immigrant group comprising about sixty-five percent, 17,550, of all current immigrants into Scotland. The second largest group is Lithuanian with only eleven percent, 2,970 (www.workpermit.com). The workers from Eastern Europe are not the “highly-skilled” workers that were desired by the Fresh Talent Initiative but rather they are filling the less desired jobs. Dundee City, which has experienced a loss in population for the last 25 years, is benefiting from the immigration of these Eastern European workers. Three-quarters of the Bulgarians are choosing to locate in Dundee City, a traditionally industrial area, and work agricultural jobs (Fields, 2007, p.1).

Prime Minister Tony Blair announced that the surge of eastern Europeans into the United Kingdom has created an “intensely competitive” labor market (Little, 2007, p.1). This follows the concerns raised by Lord Turner, the former chair of the Low Pay Commission, which sets the minimum wage for the United Kingdom. According to Lord Turner, the “willingness of some immigrants from the eastern European countries to work below minimum wage is depressing wages for low-paid workers” (Little, 2007, p.1). The Department for Work and Pensions responded to these claims that "there is little evidence that migration from the new EU states has led to reduced wage growth in the economy” and that in fact the recent immigration from Eastern Europe “has helped the economy to grow" (Little, 2007, p.1).

Regardless of impact, three out of four Eastern European workers work for between £4.5 and £5.99 compared to the one in eight natives that earn less than £6 per

hour (Seetharamdoo, 2007, p.1). Eighty percent of the Eastern Europeans are under age 35 versus the native U.K. working age of 40 and the new immigrants work an average of two hours more per week (Seetharamdoo, 2007, p.2). It is too early to know what the lasting impact the recent surge has had or will have on the economy of Scotland but it is clear that the workers from Eastern Europe are filling lower-skilled, lower wage jobs.

The Fresh Talent Initiative aims at retaining students but has only managed to retain 2000 graduates since its inception (www.scotland.gov.uk). The majority of those who have contacted the Relocation Advisory Service under the Fresh Talent Initiative have been mostly aged 18-34 and post-graduates (see Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2. Table of RAS inquirers. (www.scotland.gov.uk)

Age	Percent	Education	Percent
18-34	40	Post-grad	45
35-64	26	Degree	37
65+	6	In College	10
Unknown	28	H.S. or below	8

The recent immigrants are mostly from Eastern Europe. This increase is due to the expansion of the European Union and the addition of eight new countries. The Fresh Talent Initiative only accounted for thirty-six percent of those contacting the Relocation Advisory Service to relocate to Scotland (www.scotland.gov.uk). The Fresh Talent Initiative has merely made it easier to relocate to Scotland. EU expansion, on the other hand, has triggered a surge in immigration to Scotland.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

Scotland has been experiencing population decline resulting from low fertility and emigration since the 1980s. In response, the government implemented a pro-immigration policy known as the Fresh Talent Initiative. The policy was officially launched in 2005 and since then it appears to be successful. The numbers of immigrants is at an all-time high and the country is experiencing a net gain of immigrants. In 2005, the country had a net gain of 27,000. Appearances are not always what they seem and in the case of the Fresh Talent Initiative it has not been successful in reaching its goal.

A major focus of the policy was to retain educated Scots as well as foreign students. The problem is that very few students have chosen to stay upon graduation and many of the working-age Scots are continuing to emigrate. The policy has not been successful in retaining the “best and brightest” as desired by Jack McConnell. Only 2000 foreign students have opted to extend their stay beyond graduation (www.scotland.gov.uk). Many of the immigrants are fleeing the poverty of Eastern Europe and are lower skilled workers who will not invigorate the economy as desired by the initiative. The idea behind the Fresh Talent Initiative was that by attracting highly skilled workers, economic growth would follow. The problem is that the people follow the economy and economic opportunities.

Ireland, for example, has recently had a boost in population as many ex-Irish patriots are returning home. This has occurred only since the economy has improved. Between 1988 and 2005, unemployment rates dropped from 16.2 percent to 4.3 percent

(Bushe, 2006, p.1). As a result, Ireland experienced the highest number of immigrants since 1987 with 86,900 in 2005 (Bushe, 2006, p.2). In 1973, Ireland was one of the poorest countries in the European Union, earning only sixty percent of the European Union average (www.scotland.gov.uk). Today, the country has the second highest GDP of the EU behind only Luxembourg. The growth in GDP has been attributed to the shift from agricultural based jobs to highly skilled jobs, such as IT and financial services, as well as foreign direct investment especially from the United States. The annual economic growth rate of Ireland was 9.7 per year between 1996 and 2000 (www.scotland.gov.uk). Ireland is experiencing these net gains of migration because people are attracted to the economic opportunities found there. Scotland, in contrast, has only experienced an annual economic growth rate of 2.3 percent with its GDP growth rate at 1.7 percent (www.scotland.gov.uk). Compared to Ireland's unemployment rate of 4.3, the unemployment rate on Scotland is slightly behind with a rate of 4.8 but the percent of those employed has declined to 75.1 from 75.5 percent indicating a decline in workforce (www.scottishlabour.org.uk).

The Fresh Talent Initiative set out with the goal of attracting the “best and brightest” but has failed thus far. There has been a surge in immigration with net gains but thousands continue to leave for better opportunities and those who are replacing them are lower skilled. The addition of the eight Eastern European countries into the European Union is the reason for increases in immigration not the Fresh Talent Initiative. Contrary to its original intent, the Fresh Talent Initiative has generally served to facilitate the movement of low skilled workers from Eastern Europe to Scotland.

Immigration is a band-aid on a much larger issue. People are living longer and if immigrants come and live longer as well, then there will have to be a continuous stream of immigrants to support the ageing population without addressing how to reform the social security system to alleviate the strain on the economy and workforce. Opportunity attracts and retains workers especially higher skilled workers. Scotland has to improve its economy first and the people will follow. Until then, Scotland's pro-immigration policies are likely to have little impact.

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