

# The NMC register Scotland mid-year update

1 April –  
30 September 2024



# Welcome to our mid-year report on the NMC register and what it tells us about the nursing and midwifery workforce in Scotland.

## The big picture

The number of nursing and midwifery professionals on the register in Scotland has only slightly increased to **74,566**. That's **81 (0.1 percent) more** professionals than six months ago, and **4,802 (6.9 percent) more** than in September 2019.

The total number of joiners to the register in Scotland has fallen – **1,066** people joined in the last six months. This is a decrease from **1,363** for the same period last year (**-21.8 percent**). Compared to September 2023, **213** fewer nurses joined (**-17.4 percent**). Over the last five years the pattern of midwifery joiners has fluctuated, and the last six months has seen this continue as there are 83 fewer midwives than this time last year, showing a 58.9 percent decrease.

Of the **1,066** people who joined the register in Scotland, **745 (69.9 percent of all joiners)** were educated in the UK, this is **37.4 percent fewer** than the 1,191 joiners from the same period last year.

## A look at international recruitment in Scotland

Our data relating to internationally educated professionals in our four nation reports, such as this one, can never be definitive because professionals may not yet have a registered UK address at the point of registration. This means there may be international professionals working in Scotland who aren't yet included in this data because they have yet to provide us with their UK address. We encourage all international joiners to our register to update their details through [NMC Online](#) at the earliest opportunity.

<sup>1</sup> The nursing associate role was introduced in 2019. Nursing associates can only practise in this role in England.

# 74,566

professionals on the register in Scotland



In the last six months

An increase of

# 81

+0.1%



## Nurses

70,507

+0.2%



## Midwives

3,736

-0.5%



## Dual registrants

317

-3.9%



## Nursing Associates<sup>1</sup>

6

-14.3%

In the last six months, compared to April-September 2023



# 1,066

joined the register

-21.8%



# 1,361

left the register

-3.0%

Nonetheless, our country-specific international data is a good indicator of trends over time. We have continued to see steady growth in the numbers of internationally educated professionals joining the register in Scotland.

India remains the largest source of international recruitment in Scotland, as the largest group of international joiners.

## A more ethnically diverse register

As with previous years, we're seeing a gradual shift in the ethnic profile of the register in Scotland largely due to the increasing numbers of international professionals joining.

The proportion of all registered professionals from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds<sup>2</sup> has continued to increase and reached **7.4 percent** on 30 September 2024. This is **0.7 percentage points higher** than six months ago (**6.7 percent**), and **2.1 percentage points more** than five years ago (5.3 percent).



<sup>2</sup> The NMC recognises that language in this area is constantly changing and that the people included within such broad terms encompasses diverse ethnic groups. We regularly keep the language that we use under review.

Top non-UK countries of education as of September 2024, change in the last six months

- 1 India**  
1,001 ↑ +12.3%
- 2 Philippines**  
796 ↑ +4.2%
- 3 Nigeria**  
446 ↑ +38.9%

**7.4%**  
of register in Scotland from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds. In 2019, **5.3%** of register in Scotland from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds.

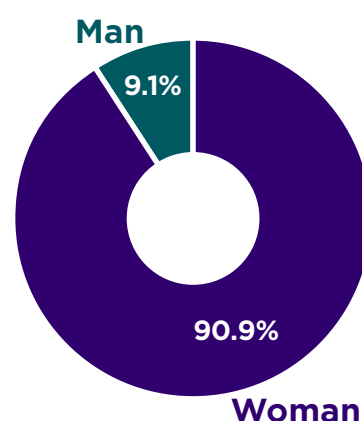


As of September 2024

**44 years, 8 months**  
average age of professionals in Scotland



Gender split of the register



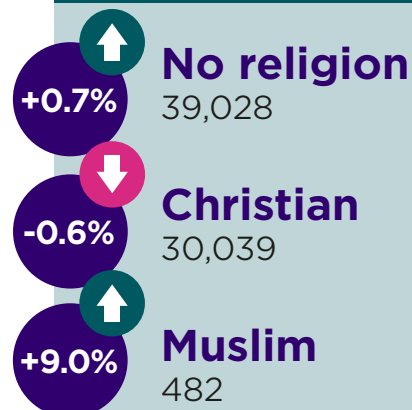
## Overall retention remains steady

The picture of leavers in Scotland has remained similar to previous years – **1,361** people left the register in the last six months. This is **42** fewer people (-3.0 percent) than the same period last year (1,403). In other countries we've seen increasing numbers of internationally educated professionals leaving the register, however we haven't seen this growth in Scotland – **49** people left this year, compared to **46** this time last year.

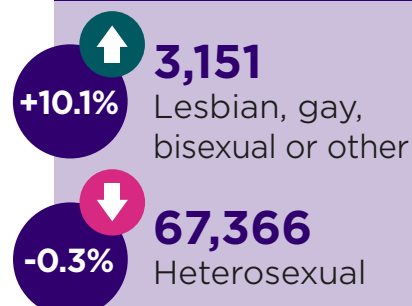
It is important to also look at the number of leavers as a proportion of the register. Through this lens, we see that **1.8 percent** of the register left in the past six months. In the same period last year, **1.9 percent** left – showing a slight fall in leavers.



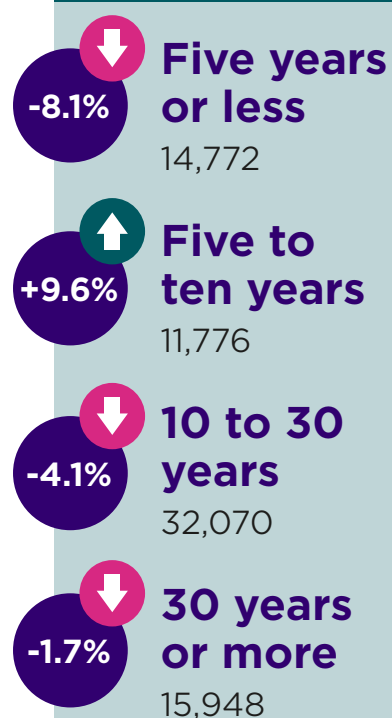
### Most common specified religions, change in six months



### Sexual orientation, change in the last six months



### Length of time since initial registration, change in the last six months<sup>3</sup>



<sup>3</sup> Length of time data are cumulative since initial registration and do not necessarily mean unbroken or continuous registration. Many registrants leave the register for a variety of reasons, for one or more periods during their careers.

## Sharing insights to support the sector

We hope this overview, alongside our comprehensive [data tables](#), will support workforce planning and research in Scotland, ensuring the most effective delivery of services that people and communities across the country rely on for their health and wellbeing.

If you have questions about our data or ideas for how we might improve the usefulness of this report, please [get in touch](#).



**Kuljit Dhillon**  
Interim Director  
of Strategy and Insight



### In the last six months



We shouldn't forget that behind our data are dedicated professionals who provide safe, effective and kind care to people everyday. We're grateful for everything they do for the people and communities they serve.



## What we do

Our vision is safe, effective and kind nursing and midwifery practice that improves everyone's health and wellbeing. As the independent regulator of more than 841,000 nurses and midwives in the UK and nursing associates in England, we have an important role to play in making this vision a reality.

We're here to protect the public by upholding high professional nursing and midwifery standards, which the public has a right to expect. That's why we're improving the way we regulate, enhancing our support for colleagues, professionals and the public, and working with our partners to influence the future of health and social care.




Our core role is to **regulate**. We set and promote high education and professional standards for nurses and midwives across the UK, and nursing associates in England and quality assure their education programmes. We maintain the integrity of the register of those eligible to practise. And we investigate concerns about professionals – something that affects very few people on our register every year.

To regulate well, we **support** nursing and midwifery professionals and the public. We create resources and guidance that are useful throughout professionals' careers, helping them to deliver our standards in practice and address challenges they face. We work collaboratively so everyone feels engaged and empowered to shape our work.

We work with our partners to address common concerns, share our data, insight and learning, to **influence** and inform decision-making and help drive improvement in health and social care for people and communities.

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The nursing and midwifery regulator for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland  
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