



# About us

Our vision is safe, effective and kind nursing and midwifery that improves everyone's health and wellbeing. As the professional regulator of almost 732,000 nursing and midwifery professionals, we have an important role to play in making this a reality.

Our core role is to **regulate**. First, we promote high professional standards for nurses and midwives across the UK, and nursing associates in England. Second, we maintain the register of professionals eligible to practise. Third, we investigate concerns about nurses, midwives and nursing associates – something that affects less than one percent of professionals each year. We believe in giving professionals the chance to address concerns, but we'll always take action when needed.

To regulate well, we **support** our professions and the public. We create resources and guidance that are useful throughout people's careers, helping them to deliver our standards in practice and address new challenges. We also support people involved in our investigations, and we're increasing our visibility so people feel engaged and empowered to shape our work.

Regulating and supporting our professions allows us to **influence** health and social care. We share intelligence from our regulatory activities and work with our partners to support workforce planning and sector-wide decision making. We use our voice to speak up for a healthy and inclusive working environment for our professions.



# About our register

We keep the register of all nurses and midwives eligible to practise in the UK, and nursing associates who can practise in England. We currently publish data from our register every six months. Our **previous report** was a mid-year update that we published in November 2020.

## How to interpret our data

Not everyone on our permanent register will currently be working as a nurse, midwife or nursing associate, or in the field they're registered in.

We collect the registered addresses of the professionals on our register. The data in the report is about those professionals with registered addresses in Scotland.

All of the people who joined our register in 2020–2021 joined through different processes, depending on whether they were from the UK, European Economic Area (EEA) or outside the EEA. Now that the UK has left the EU, everyone joining our register from outside the UK follows the same international process. However, no applications from people in the EEA that were received from 1 January 2021 were completed by 31 March 2021.

The number of joiners, leavers and total people registered won't add up exactly. That's because the joiners' data only includes people joining the register for the first time. It doesn't include people who re-joined after a break from practising.

The number of joiners and leavers are cumulative totals from the whole year (1 April–31 March). We're working to improve our systems so we can provide a more complete picture of joiners and leavers in the future.

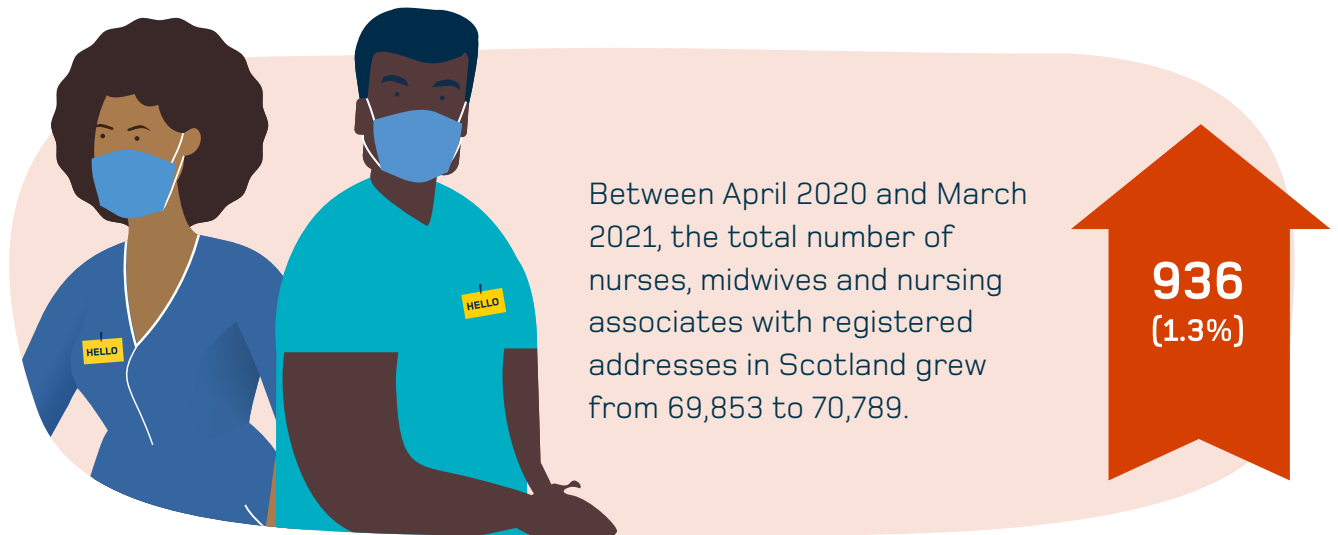
Our register changes every day and can vary considerably from the start of the month to the end of the month. Therefore, our data only offers a snapshot in time. This report gives a snapshot of our register on 31 March 2021.

We continually review the quality and content of our data and information.

When improved data or additional information become available, we retrospectively update our previously published information. This means that when comparing data in our latest reports against some of our previous publications, you may see small differences in some data.

In March 2020 we established a Covid-19 temporary register to support the UK's response to the coronavirus pandemic. Data from the Covid-19 temporary register is included in its own section at the end of this report.

# Size of our permanent register in Scotland on 31 March 2021



**Table 1**  
**Total number of people on the permanent register by registration type with an address in Scotland**

Registration type	March 2017	March 2018	March 2019	March 2020	March 2021
Nurse	64,040	65,177	65,303	66,084	66,960
Midwife	3,141	3,259	3,319	3,360	3,430
Dual registrant (nurse and midwife)	538	473	425	409	398
Nursing associate	n/a	n/a	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>67,719</b>	<b>68,909</b>	<b>69,047</b>	<b>69,853</b>	<b>70,789</b>

The nursing associate role was introduced in 2019, in England only. A small proportion of registered nursing associates have addresses in Scotland.



## Professionals who trained in the European Economic Area (EEA)

There were only marginal changes in the number of people on the permanent register in Scotland who trained in the EEA. Romania remained the most frequent EEA country of training, with 143 registered professionals having addresses in Scotland – two more than in the previous year.

**Table 2**

### Total number of people on the permanent register in Scotland by country of training in the EEA (top five countries)

	March 2017	March 2018	March 2019	March 2020	March 2021
Romania	134	125	134	141	143
Poland	110	122	118	121	123
Republic of Ireland	77	79	76	70	71
Spain	55	52	52	49	47
Italy	32	34	39	41	47
<b>Total EEA</b>	<b>601</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>629</b>	<b>639</b>	<b>670</b>

## Professionals who trained outside the European Economic Area (EEA)

The number of professionals on the permanent register in Scotland who trained outside the EEA continues to grow overall. India remained the most frequent non-EEA country of training but with a small decrease in the number of registered professionals. Nigeria replaced Zimbabwe in the top five, with 60 registered professionals.

**Table 3**

### Total number of people on the register in Scotland by country of training outside the EEA (top five countries)

	March 2017	March 2018	March 2019	March 2020	March 2021
India	630	641	641	656	646
Philippines	526	538	542	557	599
South Africa	100	102	101	103	104
Australia	40	42	46	69	94
Nigeria	32	33	39	51	60
<b>Total outside EEA</b>	<b>1,711</b>	<b>1,749</b>	<b>1,771</b>	<b>1,866</b>	<b>1,966</b>

This data is based on people on our permanent register with a registered address in Scotland. Some professionals on our permanent register who trained overseas may still have registered addresses outside the UK and therefore will not be included here. Data on the number of people on our permanent register with addresses outside the UK can be found in the UK registration data report.

# Profile of the permanent register in Scotland

## Age

The combined number of people aged 56 and above on our permanent register in Scotland has increased by 8.1 percent. The younger age group of below 21–40 also increased, by 2.6 percent. The number of people aged 41–55 decreased by 3.0 percent. This general pattern of growth in the lower and upper age brackets, and a squeeze in the middle, reflects the UK picture.

**Table 4**  
**Age profile of the permanent register in Scotland**

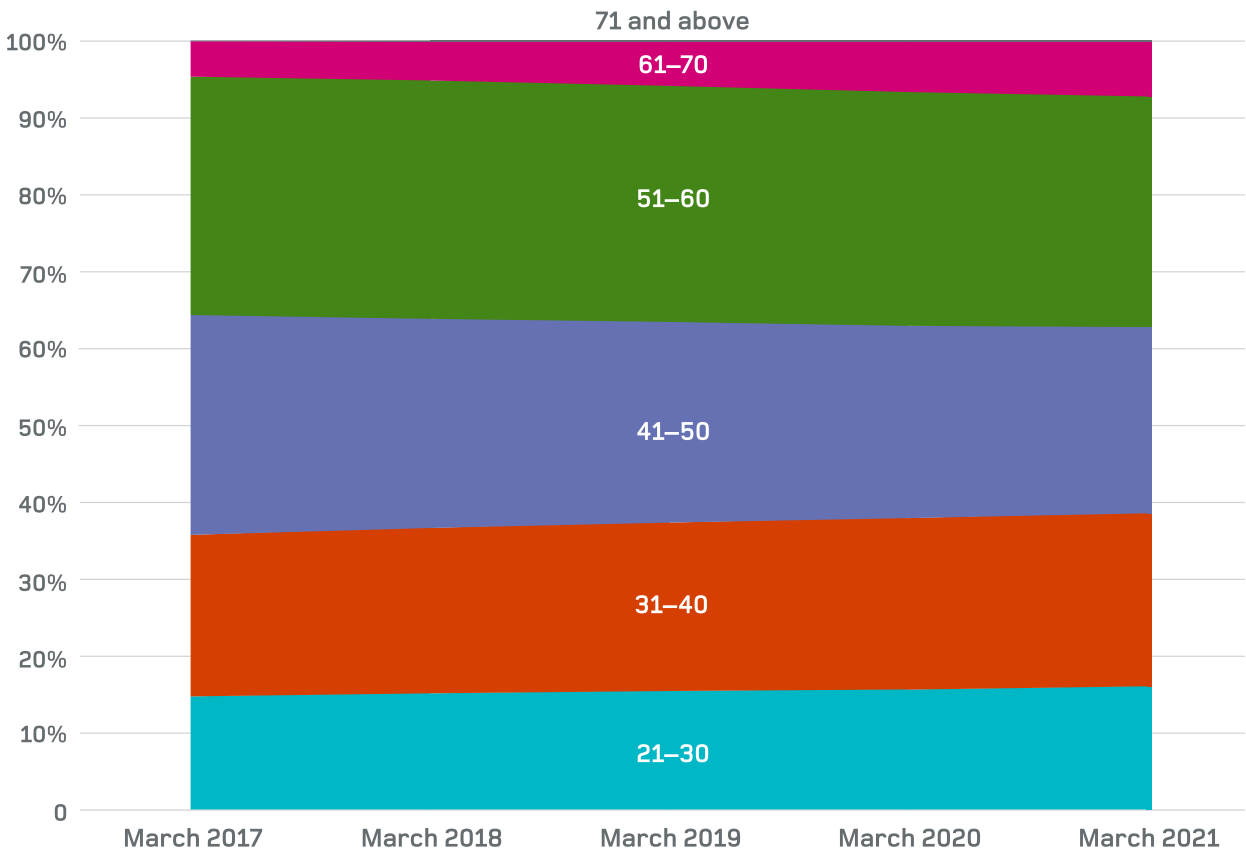
	March 2017	March 2018	March 2019	March 2020	March 2021
Below 21	18 +63.6%	8 -55.6%	9 +12.5%	7 -22.2%	13 +85.7%
21–30	9,975 +4.5%	10,446 +4.7%	10,666 +2.1%	10,920 +2.4%	11,271 +3.2%
31–40	14,221 +0.2%	14,815 +4.2%	15,104 +2%	15,572 +3.1%	15,891 +2%
41–50	19,387 -5%	18,737 -3.4%	18,020 -3.8%	17,480 -3%	17,146 -1.9%
51–55	12,793 +0.01%	12,747 -0.4%	12,259 -3.8%	11,806 -3.7%	11,260 -4.6%
56–60	8,104 +3.9%	8,571 +5.8%	8,951 +4.4%	9,397 +5%	10,002 +6.4%
61–70	3,121 +2.2%	3,470 +11.2%	3,912 +12.7%	4,527 +15.7%	5,049 +11.5%
71 and above	100 -8.3%	115 +15%	126 +9.6%	144 +14.3%	157 +9%

The percentage changes shown are from year to year within each age group.



Figure 3

### Age profile of the permanent register in Scotland



### Gender



**91%**

of people on our permanent register in Scotland identify as female



**9%**

of people on our permanent register in Scotland identify as male

This is slightly different from the UK picture, where 89 percent of people identify as female and 11 percent as male.

Of the 70,789 professionals on the permanent register in Scotland, 546 said their gender is not the same as it was at the time of birth.



## Ethnicity

Table 5

### Ethnicity profile of the permanent register in Scotland

	Nurses, midwives and nursing associates
Arab	6
Asian – Any other Asian background	142
Asian – Bangladeshi	10
Asian – Chinese	114
Asian – Filipina/Filipino	597
Asian – Indian	746
Asian – Pakistani	153
Black – African	1,003
Black – Any other black background	36
Black – Caribbean	65
Mixed – Any other mixed /multiple ethnic background	48
Mixed – White and Asian	120
Mixed – White and black African	55
Mixed – White and black Caribbean	335
Other – Any other ethnic group	183
Prefer not to say	1,270
Unknown	106
White – Any other white background	1,340
White – English/Welsh/Scottish/ Northern Irish/British	63,655
White – Gypsy or Irish Traveller	8
White – Irish	797
<b>Total</b>	<b>70,789</b>

## Fields of nursing practice

The number of nurses in all four fields of practice has increased in Scotland. The number of children's nurses rose by 3.4 percent and the number of learning disabilities nurses grew by 1.6 percent.

The third largest proportional increase was in adult nursing (1.2 percent) and there was a marginal rise in the number of mental health nurses (0.4 percent).

This data doesn't tell us what role nurses are currently working in. Nurses can hold more than one qualification and don't always work in the fields they are registered in.

**Table 6**

### Nurses registered in the four fields of practice

	Adult		Children		Learning disabilities		Mental health	
March 2017	50,355	-0.3%	4,006	+1.2%	1,758	-2.1%	10,533	-1.3%
March 2018	51,207	+1.7%	4,075	+1.7%	1,763	+0.3%	10,641	+1%
March 2019	51,184	-0.04%	4,135	+1.5%	1,755	-0.5%	10,577	-0.6%
March 2020	51,765	+1.1%	4,201	+1.6%	1,778	+1.3%	10,601	+0.2%
March 2021	52,388	+1.2%	4,345	+3.4%	1,807	+1.6%	10,648	+0.4%

The percentage changes shown are from year to year within each field of practice.



# SCPHN and specialist practice qualifications

A nurse or midwife can have multiple additional qualifications. Specialist community and public health nursing (SCPHN) is a distinct part of our register. Someone on our register can become a specialist community public health nurse by taking an approved programme and achieving the right standards.

Where an area of practice is identified on our register, this indicates the area the qualification focused on. 'Specialist practitioner' refers to someone who has a specialist practice qualification (SPQ). SPQs are post-registration qualifications that relate to particular fields of practice. However, gaining an SPQ doesn't change the field a person is registered in.

**Table 7**

## **Total number of registered Specialist Community and Public Health Nurses with an address in Scotland**

	March 2017	March 2018	March 2019	March 2020	March 2021
Health visitors	2,135	2,295	2,379	2,520	2,541
Occupational health nurses	423	421	423	412	407
SCPHN – RPHN	136	159	159	159	159
School nurses	56	56	73	89	101
Family nurses	34	33	32	31	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,784</b>	<b>2,964</b>	<b>3,066</b>	<b>3,211</b>	<b>3,238</b>

RPHN = Registered Public Health Nurse

**Table 8****Total number of special/recordable qualifications issued to professionals on the permanent register with an address in Scotland, sorted from high to low**

	March 2017	March 2018	March 2019	March 2020	March 2021
Nurse independent / Supplementary prescriber	3,914	4,336	4,762	5,221	5,641
Community practitioner nurse prescriber	3,421	3,506	3,397	3,370	3,323
SP – District nursing	1,640	1,616	1,557	1,521	1,492
SP – Adult nursing	962	933	898	856	830
Lecturer / Practice educator	673	634	583	535	501
Teacher	315	353	382	408	427
Nurse independent prescriber	183	170	158	148	143
SP – Community mental health nursing	144	140	135	130	122
SP – General practice nursing	143	137	130	117	109
SP – Mental health	65	60	58	57	57
SP – Community children's nursing	61	57	50	49	49
SP – Children's nursing	43	42	41	39	39
SP – Community learning disabilities nursing	38	36	34	35	34
SP – Learning disability nurse	0	1	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,602</b>	<b>12,021</b>	<b>12,186</b>	<b>12,487</b>	<b>12,768</b>

SP = Specialist practitioner

# Covid-19 temporary register in Scotland

In March 2020 we established a Covid-19 temporary register to support the UK's response to the coronavirus pandemic. We initially invited nurses and midwives who had left our permanent register within the last three years to join our Covid-19 temporary register.

In April 2020 we invited two further groups: overseas applicants, including nurses and midwives, who had completed all parts of their NMC registration process except their OSCE (objective structured clinical examination); nurses and midwives who had left the permanent register within the last four and five years.

In January 2021 we extended our invitation to a further group of overseas-trained nurses in the final stages of their application to join our permanent register. Since then we've also opened the Covid-19 temporary register up to those who left our permanent register more recently (currently before 30 April 2021).

**Table 9**

## **Total people on the Covid-19 temporary register with an address in Scotland**

	31 March 2021
Nurse	1,692
Midwife	101
Nurse and midwife	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,812</b>

The number of people with an address in Scotland make up 11.7 percent of the Covid-19 temporary register.

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