

The NMC Register Scotland mid-year update

1 April –
30 September 2025



Our unique data give an account of the nursing and midwifery workforce in Scotland – how many people are joining and leaving the professions, where they were educated, their demographic characteristics and more. The data are based on people who have given us an address in Scotland.

The big picture

As of 30 September, there are now **75,729** nurses, midwives and nursing associates on the Register in Scotland – that's **0.7%** (**498**) fewer than six months ago. This compares to **0.8%** growth of the Register as a whole across the four countries of the UK.

The decrease in the past six months is mainly due to a drop in the number of people joining the Register for the first time in Scotland during this half of the year. A total of **531** professionals in Scotland joined the Register in the six months to 30 September – **50.1%** (**534**) fewer than during the same period last year. This included **48.5%** (**488**) fewer nurses and **79.3%** (**46**) fewer midwives.

It is important to note that the data included in this report are captured on 30 September – in the middle of the peak period for new cohorts of graduates joining the Register.

The 12-month view provided by our annual registration report is a more reliable source for the numbers of new joiners than the mid-year report, because the bulk of the cohort may join the Register after the mid-year data is collected.²

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

² When looking at the whole year since September 2024, our data show an increase of 1.6% (1,164). This is the same rate of growth as during the year before (September 2023 – September 2024).

75,729

professionals
in Scotland

An decrease of

498

since April

-0.7%

-0.6% **Nurses**
71,655

-1.1% **Midwives**
3,774

-7.2% **Dual
registrants**
295

-16.7% **Nursing
associates¹**
5

In the last six months
compared to the
same period in 2024

-50.1% **531**
joined the
Register

+4.6% **1,423**
left the
Register

Ethnic diversity continues to grow

The profile of the Register in Scotland continues to become more ethnically diverse over time.

The proportion of all Black, Asian and minority ethnic professionals in Scotland increased to **8.5%** in the six months to September 2025. That's **0.5 percentage points higher** than on 1 April (**8.0%**) and **3.2 percentage points more** than five years ago (**5.3%**).

This makes it more important than ever that the whole health and care sector takes a zero-tolerance approach to racism and discrimination. At the NMC, we are committed to ensuring this through our Culture Transformation Plan – this has included signing UNISON'S Anti-Racism Charter and increasing the ethnic diversity among our Fitness to Practise panel members. We have also pledged to de-bias our regulatory processes, as well as de-bias Fitness to Practise referrals from employers and outcomes in nursing and midwifery education and training.

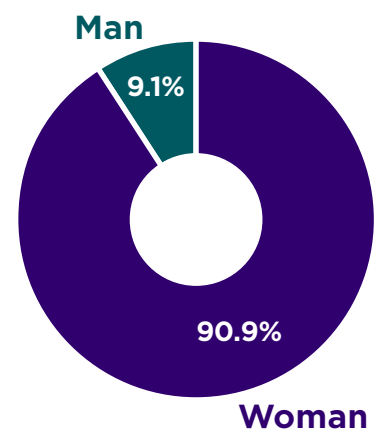


8.5%

of the Register are Black, Asian and minority ethnic professionals. In 2020, **5.3%** of the Register were from Black, Asian and minority ethnic.



Gender split of the Register



As of September 2025

44 years, 7 months

was the average age of people on the Register



Register as of September 2025

93.3%

UK educated

6.7%

Internationally educated



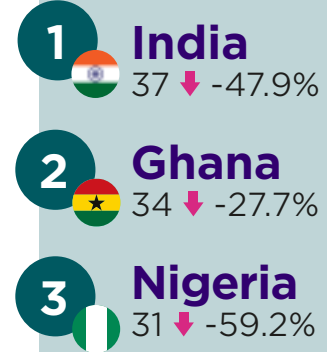
International recruitment

Our data relating to internationally educated professionals in our four nation reports 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 included in this data because they have yet to provide us with their UK address.

We know that at least **185** internationally educated professionals in Scotland joined the Register. That's a **42.4%** decrease compared to the **321** international joiners during the same period last year. This broadly reflects the UK-wide picture of a sharp fall in international recruitment.

India is the largest single source of international recruitment in Scotland, closely followed by Ghana and Nigeria, which are 'red list'³ countries.

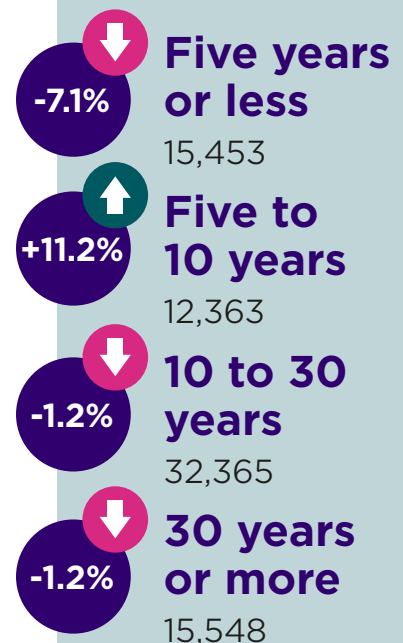
New joiners from non-UK countries of education in the last six months, and change from the same period in 2024



In the last six months compared to the same period in 2024



Length of time since initial registration, change in the last six months



³ The relevant codes of practice for international recruitment of health and social care personnel prohibit active recruitment from 'red list' countries designated by the World Health Organisation. The codes do not prevent individual health workers from 'red list' countries seeking employment independently, but employers should not be actively recruiting from those countries.

Overall retention

The number of leavers in Scotland has increased, with **1,423** professionals leaving the Register in the last six months. As a proportion of the Register, we see that **1.9%** of the Register in Scotland left over the past six months, a marginal increase from the same period last year (**1.8%**).

Sharing insights to support the sector

We hope this overview, alongside our comprehensive data tables, will support workforce planning and education commissioning across the four countries of the UK – ensuring the most effective delivery of services that people and communities 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 on research@nmc-uk.org.



Paul Rees MBE
Chief Executive and Registrar



As of
September 2025

1.5%

1,157
professionals
declared a
disability

As of September
2025, and change in
the last six months

-0.5%



**Adult
nurses**
55,689

-1.1%



**Children's
nurses**
4,775

-1.2%



**Learning
disabilities
nurses**
1,833

-1.2%



**Mental
health
nurses**
11,040

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



Who we are and what we do

Our vision is to provide safe and effective nursing and midwifery education and practice across the four countries of the UK – regulated by the NMC – a fit for the future organisation, with fairness and equity at the heart of everything we do.

The NMC's role is to **protect the public and maintain confidence** in the nursing and midwifery professions. As the largest independent regulator in Europe of more than 860,000 nursing and midwifery professionals, we have a crucial role in making this a reality.

We do this by ensuring that every registered nurse, midwife or nursing associate has benefitted from **effective education**. We promote high education and professional standards for nurses and midwives across the UK, and nursing associates in England.

We also ensure every nurse, midwife and nursing associate on our Register meets **clear standards of conduct and practice** which protects the public and the reputation of our professions.

We have a duty to **investigate** concerns and to take steps to **protect the public** in the relatively rare instances where we need to limit or restrict a nursing or midwifery professional's right to practise.




We are building a new NMC with integrity, fairness, respect, equity and effectiveness at its core.

We are determined to improve and modernise our culture and ways of working. This will ensure that the public and professionals feel confident in our work.

As part of this we will focus on **strengthening our core regulatory work** and investing in enhanced effectiveness.

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 The Nursing and Midwifery Council

The nursing and midwifery regulator for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland
Registered charity in England and Wales (1091434) and in Scotland (SC038362).

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Council**