

The NMC register Northern Ireland

1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022



About us

Our vision is safe, effective and kind nursing and midwifery that improves everyone's health and wellbeing. As the independent regulator of more than 758,000 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 educational and 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 2021.

How to interpret our data

Our four nation data reports are based on the number of people on our register with an address in the relevant UK country. Some internationally trained professionals who have joined our register have not given us a UK address yet – these people won't be included in any of the four nation data sets, but they will be included in the main UK data set. This means there may be more registered professionals in each UK country than we are able to confirm in our four nation reports.

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.

People who joined our register in 2021–2022 joined through different processes, depending on whether they were from the UK, the EU/EEA or outside the EU/EEA. Now that the UK has left the EU/EEA, everyone starting an application to join our register from outside the UK follows the same international process¹.

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 permanent 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 2022.

We continually review the quality and content of our data and information. When improved data or additional information becomes 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.

¹ Under the terms of UK Government legislation, anyone who had submitted a viable application to the NMC before 31 December 2020, remains eligible to complete the application within two years.

Size of our permanent register in Northern Ireland on 31 March 2022



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

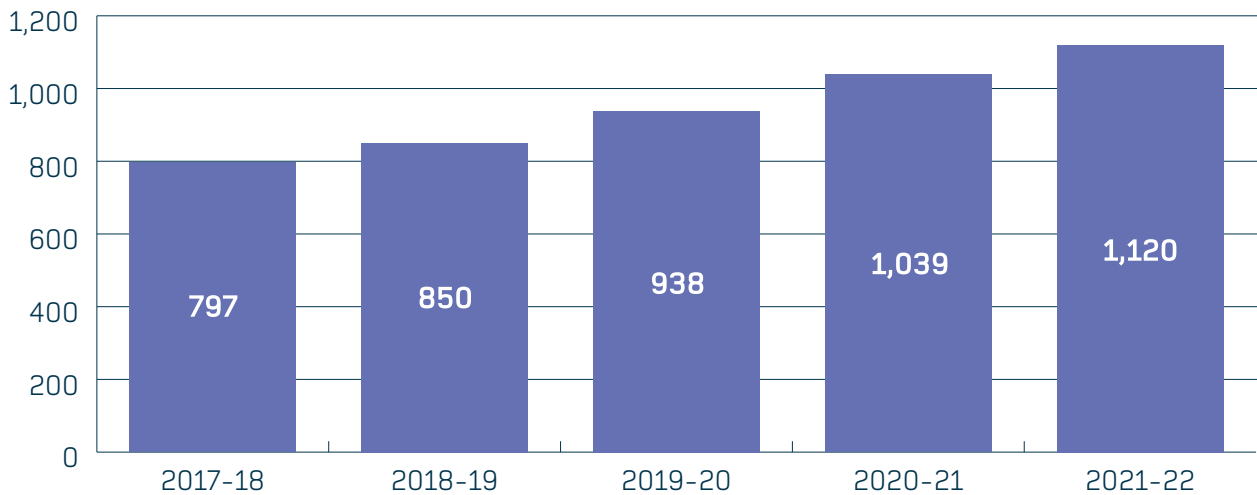
Registration type	March 2018	March 2019	March 2020	March 2021	March 2022
Nurse	22,967	23,324	23,953	24,596	25,275
Midwife	1,173	1,193	1,212	1,247	1,256
Dual registrant (nurse and midwife)	308	294	298	308	323
Total	24,448	24,811	25,463	26,151	26,854

Joining the permanent register

A total of 1,120 people joined our permanent register in Northern Ireland for the first time in 2021–2022. That’s 81 (7.8 percent) more than the previous year. The number of joiners has grown steadily over the past five years.

Figure 1

People with an address in Northern Ireland joining the permanent register for the first time



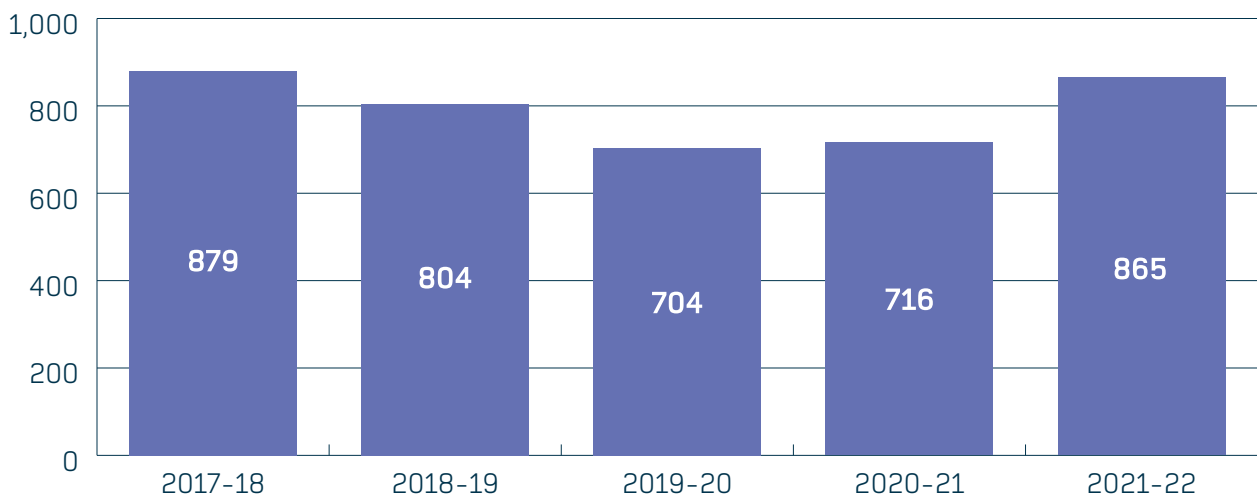
Joiners’ data doesn’t include those re-joining the register having previously left. Also, the overall number on the register is from one point in time, whereas the joiners’ and leavers’ data are the sum of activity over twelve months. Therefore, these figures won’t add up exactly.

Leaving the permanent register

The number of people leaving the permanent register in Northern Ireland continues to rise. This follows an increase last year for the first time following three years of decline. In 2021–2022 a total of 865 people left the register. That’s 149 (20.8 percent) more than in 2020–2021.

Figure 2

People with an address in Northern Ireland leaving the permanent register



Professionals who trained in the EU/EEA

The number of people on the register in Northern Ireland who trained in the EU/EEA has remained the same as last year: 670. There have been some small changes in the countries of training. Romania remained the most frequent EU/EEA country of training, with 274 registered professionals, followed by the Republic of Ireland with 158.

Table 2

People on the permanent register in Northern Ireland by country of training in the EU/EEA (top five countries)

	March 2018	March 2019	March 2020	March 2021	March 2022
Romania	266	267	274	274	274
Republic of Ireland	105	121	131	149	158
Poland	66	69	70	68	69
Portugal	68	68	67	62	55
Italy	30	30	30	31	31

Professionals who trained outside the EU/EEA

The number of people on the register in Northern Ireland who trained outside the EU/EEA has risen by 17.7 percent to 2,597. People who trained in the Philippines and India continue to represent a significant proportion of our permanent register.

Table 3

People on the permanent register in Northern Ireland by country of training outside the EU/EEA (top five countries)

	March 2018	March 2019	March 2020	March 2021	March 2022
Philippines	829	877	982	1,069	1,146
India	641	644	680	784	949
Zimbabwe	10	16	41	73	141
Nigeria	10	21	58	66	93
South Africa	41	42	43	46	45

Profile of the permanent register in Northern Ireland

Age

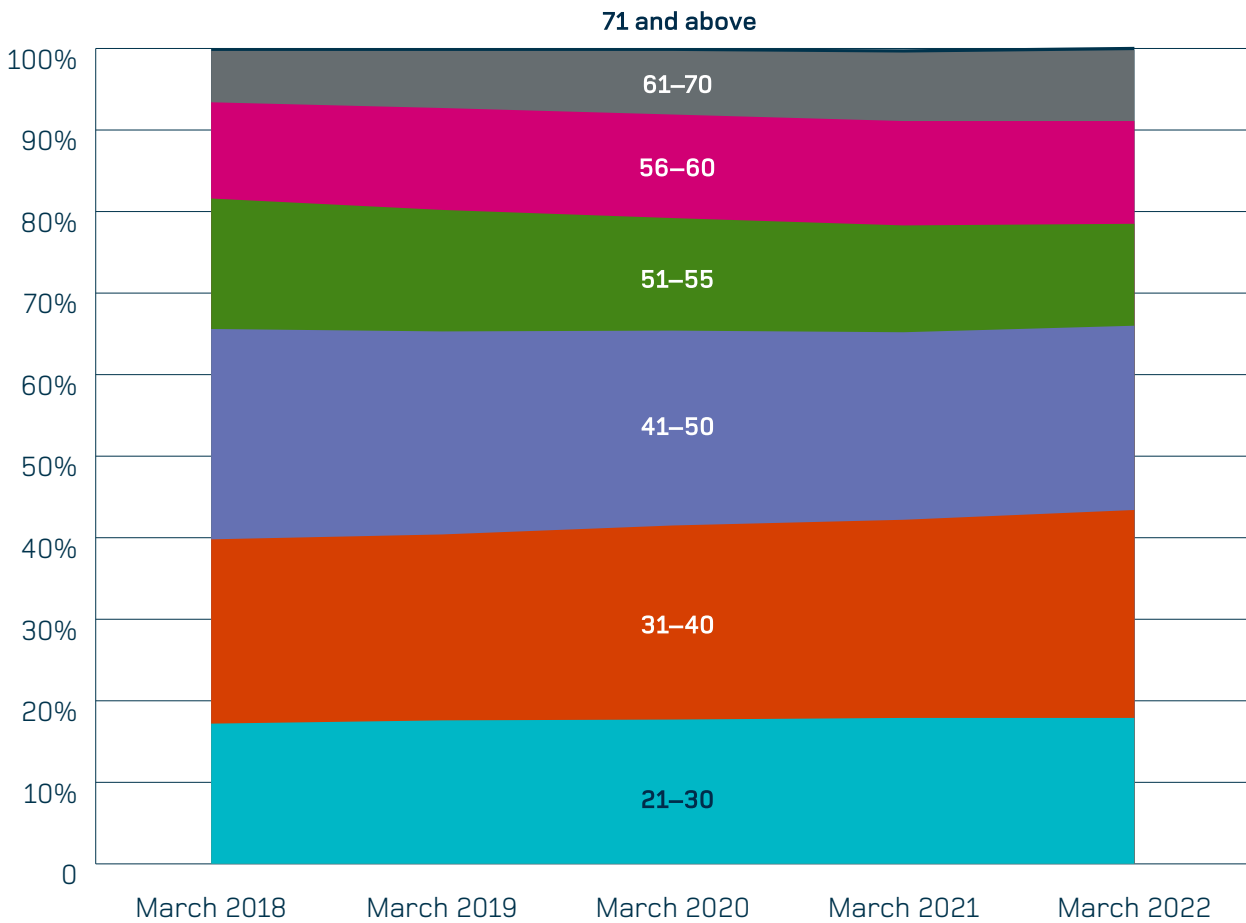
There was a 5.2 percent rise in the combined number of people aged 21–40 on our permanent register in Northern Ireland. The combined number of people aged 56 and above also increased by 2.9 percent. There was a 0.4 percent decrease in the number of people aged 41–55. This general pattern of growth in 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 Northern Ireland

	March 2018	March 2019		March 2020		March 2021		March 2022	
21–30	4,195	4,363	+4%	4,500	+3.1%	4,696	+4.4%	4,795	+2.1%
31–40	5,529	5,661	+2.4%	6,062	+7.1%	6,362	+4.9%	6,839	+7.5%
41–50	6,305	6,172	-2.1%	6,076	-1.6%	6,025	-0.8%	6,058	+0.5%
51–55	3,920	3,696	-5.7%	3,511	-5%	3,424	-2.5%	3,353	-2.1%
56–60	2,884	3,097	+7.4%	3,246	+4.8%	3,356	+3.4%	3,376	+0.6%
61–70	1,540	1,747	+13.4%	1,986	+13.7%	2,189	+10.2%	2,330	+6.4%
71 and above	75	75	0%	82	+9.3%	99	+20.7%	103	+4%



Figure 3
Age profile of the permanent register in Northern Ireland



Gender



92%

of people on our permanent register in Northern Ireland identify as female



8%

of people on our permanent register in Northern Ireland 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 26,854 professionals on the permanent register in Northern Ireland, 147 said their gender does not match their sex at birth.

Ethnicity

Table 5

Ethnicity profile of the permanent register in Northern Ireland

	Nurses, midwives and nursing associates
Arab	4
Asian – Any other Asian background	39
Asian – Bangladeshi	2
Asian – Chinese	24
Asian – Filipina/Filipino	1,129
Asian – Indian	898
Asian – Pakistani	5
Black – African	394
Black – Any other black background	9
Black – Caribbean	20
Mixed – Any other mixed /multiple ethnic background	9
Mixed – White and Asian	41
Mixed – White and black African	10
Mixed – White and black Caribbean	66
Other – Any other ethnic group	46
Prefer not to say	362
Unknown	142
White – Any other white background	606
White – English/Welsh/Scottish/ Northern Irish/British	17,270
White – Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0
White – Irish	5,778
Total	26,854

Fields of nursing practice

There are currently four categories of registered nurse, and these are called the four fields of nursing practice. They cover adult, children, learning disabilities, and mental health nursing.

The biggest proportional rise was in the number of children's nurses and adult nurses which both increased by 2.9 percent.

There was a marginal rise in the number of mental health nurses (0.8 percent) and learning disability nurses (0.5 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 with an address in Northern Ireland

	Adult	Children	Learning disabilities	Mental health
March 2022	20,745	1,915	828	3,023
March 2021	20,158	1,861	824	2,999
March 2020	19,623	1,798	826	2,952
March 2019	19,075	1,749	817	2,923
March 2018	18,856	1,710	804	2,882



SCPHN and specialist practice qualifications

The specialist community public health nursing (SCPHN) title is for registered nurses and midwives working in public health roles. They will have completed SCPHN courses approved by us.

Specialist Practice Qualifications (SPQs) are optional recordable qualifications that meet our standards but do not lead to admission to a part of the register or any protected title and function.

Table 7

Total number of registered Specialist Community and Public Health Nurses with an address in Northern Ireland

	March 2018	March 2019	March 2020	March 2021	March 2022
Health visitors	845	857	904	914	973
Occupational health nurses	110	108	103	105	102
SCPHNs without a field of practice	3	2	2	2	3
School nurses	84	83	92	104	117
Family nurses	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1,042	1,050	1,101	1,125	1,195

Table 8**Total number of special/recordable qualifications issued to professionals on the permanent register with an address in Northern Ireland**

	March 2018	March 2019	March 2020	March 2021	March 2022
Nurse Independent / Supplementary Prescriber	700	800	903	1,003	1,139
Community Practitioner Nurse Prescriber	1,408	1,435	1,467	1,488	1,514
SP – District Nursing	701	716	737	749	770
Teacher	179	179	177	176	172
SP – Adult Nursing	992	1,021	1,056	1,108	1,142
Lecturer / Practice Educator	225	211	208	202	195
SP – General Practice Nursing	105	98	94	89	87
Nurse Independent Prescriber	1	1	1	1	2
SP – Community Mental Health Nursing	37	37	36	36	35
SP – Community Children’s Nursing	85	84	89	94	93
SP – Mental Health	174	173	169	171	167
SP – Community Learning Disabilities Nursing	34	34	35	34	34
SP – Children’s Nursing	2	2	2	2	2
SP – Learning Disability Nurse	17	17	17	16	15
Total	4,660	4,808	4,991	5,169	5,367

SP = Specialist practitioner

Covid-19 temporary register in Northern Ireland

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); and 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. We then opened the Covid-19 temporary register up to those who left our permanent register more recently.

In July 2021 we closed the temporary register to new international joiners. But we reopened it to internationally trained nurses in December 2021, in light of increasing pressures that the pandemic was causing at the time.

We have now received confirmation from the UK Government that our temporary register will close on 30 September 2022. We are supporting eligible professionals to move across to the permanent register, if they want to keep practising after this date.

Table 9

Total people on the Covid-19 temporary register with an address in Northern Ireland

	31 March 2022
Nurse	322
Midwife	20
Nurse and midwife	3
Total	345

The number of people with an address in Northern Ireland make up 2.3 percent of the Covid-19 temporary register, which compares to 3.5 percent of the permanent register.

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