

# The NMC register Northern Ireland

1 April 2024 –  
31 March 2025



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

## The big picture

There are now a record **29,666** nurses and midwives on the NMC register in Northern Ireland. That's **941 (3.3 percent) more** than a year ago (March 2024).

The number of first-time joiners to the register has increased. A total of **1,461** professionals in Northern Ireland joined in the 12 months to March 2025 – a rise of **5.9 percent** compared to **1,380** joiners the previous year. That includes a slight rise in UK-educated professionals joining the register: **1,127**, compared to **1,121** the previous year.

Meanwhile **952** professionals in Northern Ireland left the register. That is **7.9 percent more** leavers than the previous year (**882** leavers in 2023–2024). However, when viewed as a proportion of the growing register it is only marginally higher than last year – **3.3 percent** of the register left, compared to **3.2 percent** in 2023–2024.

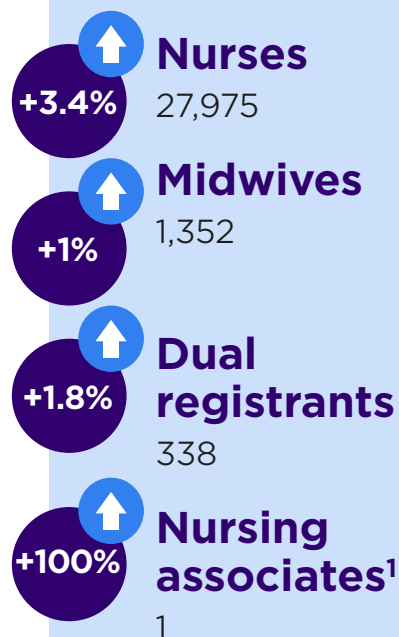


**29,666**  
professionals in  
Northern Ireland

An increase of  
**941**

+3.3%

As of March 2025,  
compared to  
March 2024



In the last 12 months,  
compared to same  
period in 2023–2024



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

## International recruitment

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 internationally educated professionals working in Northern Ireland who aren't included in these figures 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.

From the latest data, we know that at least **334** international professionals in Northern Ireland joined the register last year. Of these, **179 (53.6 percent)** were educated in India, which remains the single largest source of international recruitment.

## Demographic changes to the register

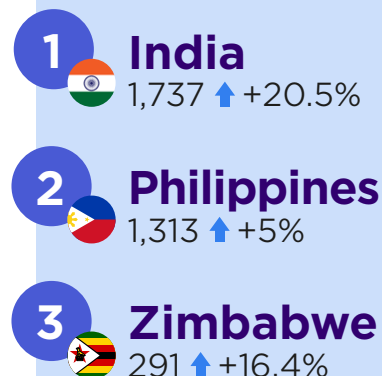
Ethnic diversity continues to increase among those registered in Northern Ireland, due to international recruitment from around the world, combined with an increasingly ethnically diverse cohort of UK-educated joiners.

Professionals from Black, Asian and ethnic minority backgrounds now make up **14.4 percent** of the total register in Northern Ireland. That's **1.3 percentage points higher** than last year and **6.1 percentage points more** than five years ago.

This picture of increasing ethnic diversity makes it more important than ever that professionals can practise in an environment that values diversity and tackles racism. As the professional regulator, we also have a responsibility to deliver fair outcomes and positive experiences for everyone on our register, regardless of their background or characteristics. This is something we are working towards through our [Fitness to Practise Improvement Plan](#) and [Culture Transformation Plan](#).

<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.

Non-UK countries of education as of March 2025, compared to last year



As of March 2025

**43 years, 8 months**

average age of professionals in Northern Ireland

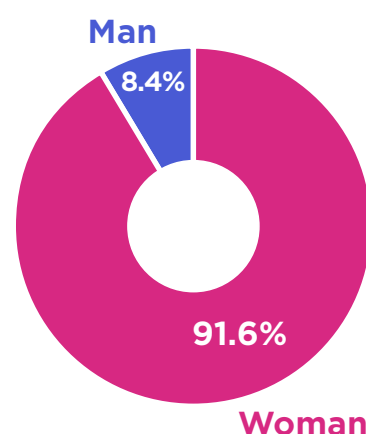


**14.4%**

of the register in Northern Ireland are from Black, Asian and ethnic minority backgrounds<sup>2</sup>. In 2020, **8.3 percent** of the register were from Black, Asian and ethnic minority backgrounds.



Gender split of the register



## Why are people leaving the register in Northern Ireland?

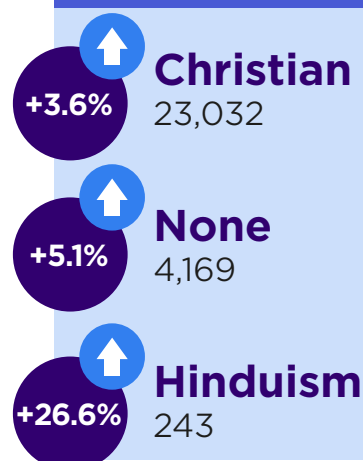
Since 2017 we've run an annual survey of professionals who left our register.

**This year's survey** shows no significant change in comparison to last year's findings. As for the UK overall, retirement is still the number one reason people leave the register. Physical or mental health is the second-most common reason, which is consistent with the UK-wide picture.

Only **28 percent** of leavers in Northern Ireland would recommend a career as a nurse or midwife – though this is higher than elsewhere in the UK and an increase compared to last year (when the proportion was **21.5 percent**).



Most common specified religions, change in 12 months



As of March 2025

**516** people have declared a disability

Length of time since initial registration, change in the last 12 months<sup>3</sup>



<sup>3</sup> Length of time since first registration does 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 insight for the benefit of all

We hope that this overview of our register in Northern Ireland, alongside our comprehensive data tables and NMC Register Leavers' Survey Summary can be used by partners and the wider sector in their workforce planning.

If you have questions about our insight or ideas for how we might improve the usefulness of this report, please get in touch on [research@nmc-uk.org](mailto:research@nmc-uk.org).



**Paul Rees MBE**

Interim Chief Executive and Registrar

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Rees".



As of March 2025,  
compared to last  
year



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 853,000 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 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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