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# The NMC register Scotland

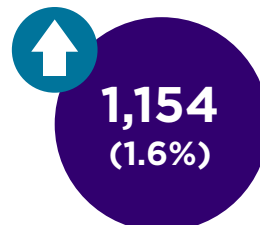
1 April 2022–  
31 March 2023



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# Size of our permanent register in Scotland on 31 March 2023

Between April 2022 and March 2023, the total number of nurses, midwives and nursing associates with registered addresses in Scotland grew from 71,802 to 72,956.



The total number of **nurses** in Scotland grew from 67,900 to **69,000**.



The total number of **midwives** in Scotland grew from 3,529 to **3,612**.



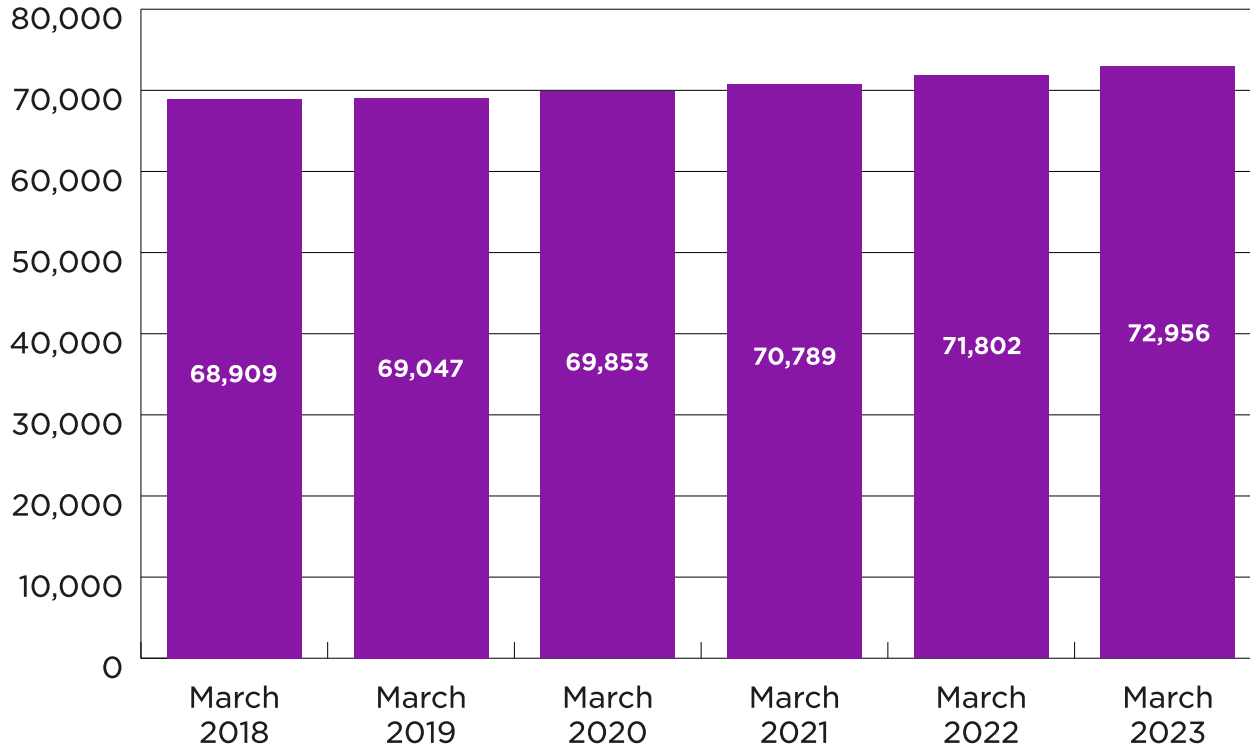
The total number of **dual registrants** (nurse and midwife) in Scotland decreased from 370 to **341**.



The total number of **nursing associates** on the permanent register with an address in Scotland remained at **three**.

**Figure 1**

Total number of people on the permanent register with an address in Scotland.

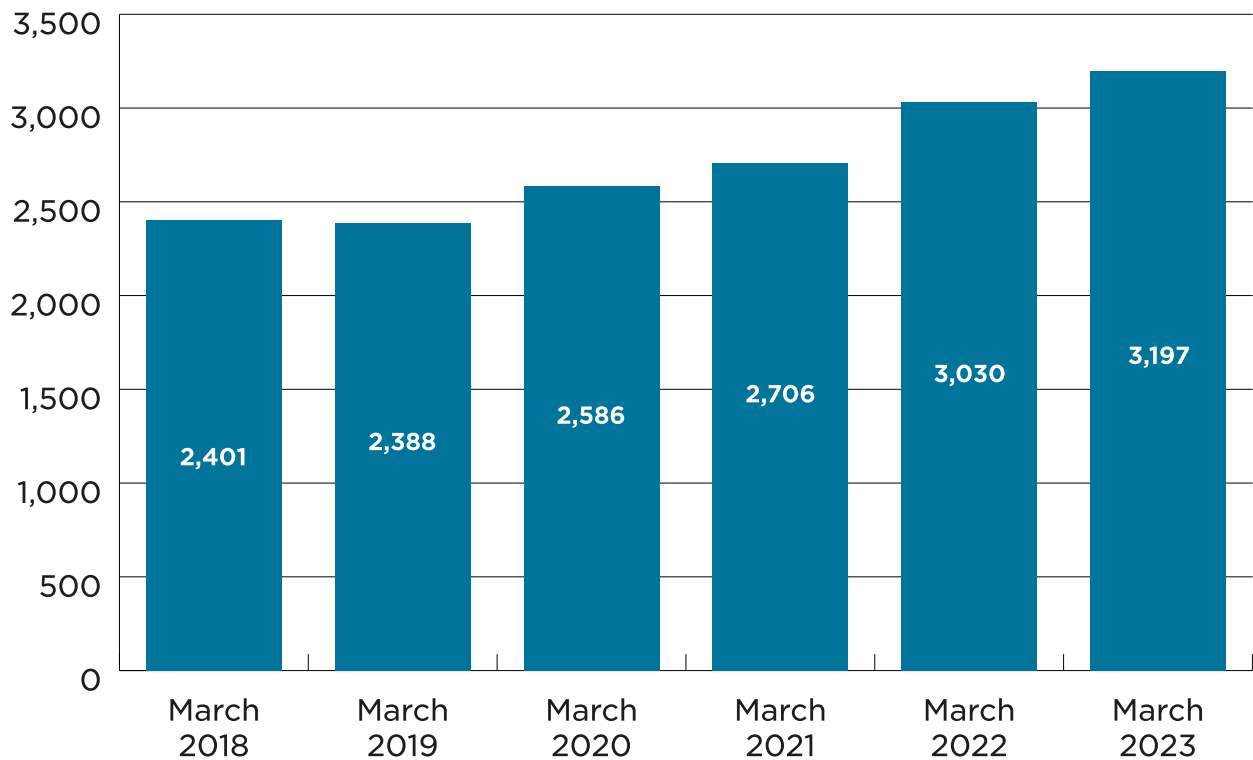


## Joining the permanent register

The number of people in Scotland joining our permanent register continues to grow steadily. A total of 3,197 joined in 2022–2023. That's 167 (5.5%) more than the previous year.

**Figure 2**

People with an address in Scotland joining the permanent register for the first time.



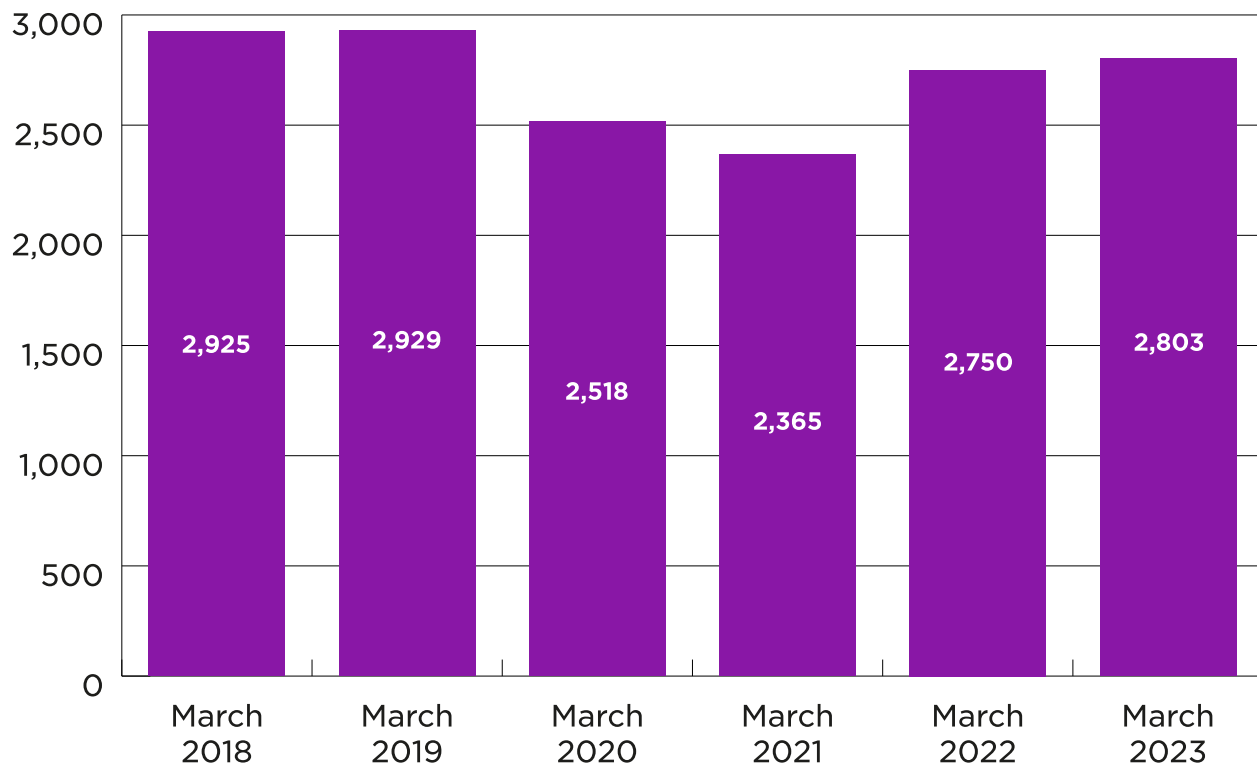
Joiners' data doesn't include those re-joining the register having previously left. Also, the overall number on the register is from one point in time, whereas the joiners' and leavers' data are the sum of activity over twelve months. Therefore, these figures won't add up exactly.

## Leaving the permanent register

The number of people in Scotland leaving the permanent register increased to 2,803. This is 1.9% (53) more than in 2021-2022.

**Figure 3**

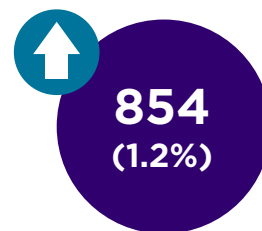
People with an address in Scotland leaving the permanent register.



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# Professionals from the UK


In the last year in Scotland, the number of professionals on our permanent register whose initial registration was in the UK grew from 68,708 to 69,562.




-  **803 more UK nurses**
-  **80 more UK midwives**
-  **28 fewer UK dual registrants**
-  **1 more UK nursing associate**

## People from the UK joining and leaving the permanent register

Since March 2018, there has been an increase in the number of people in Scotland joining the permanent register from the UK. Between April 2022 and March 2023, **2,967** people from the UK joined our register, up from 2,860 in 2021-2022.

 **Joining the register**  
**3.7%** (+107)

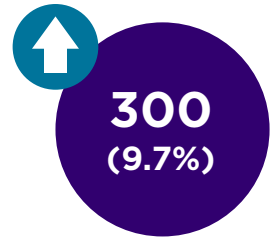
The number of people from the UK leaving the permanent register in Scotland has increased. In 2022-2023, **2,710** people left our register compared to 2,661 the previous year.

 **Leaving the register**  
**1.8%** (+49)

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# International professionals

The number of people on the permanent register in Scotland who were initially registered outside the UK has increased from 3,094 to 3,394 in the last year.



Of these, the total number of people whose initial registration was in the EU/EEA (European Economic Area) increased from 820 to **831** in March 2022-2023.



The number of people educated outside the EU/EEA increased from 2,274 to **2,563**.



 **297 more international UK nurses**

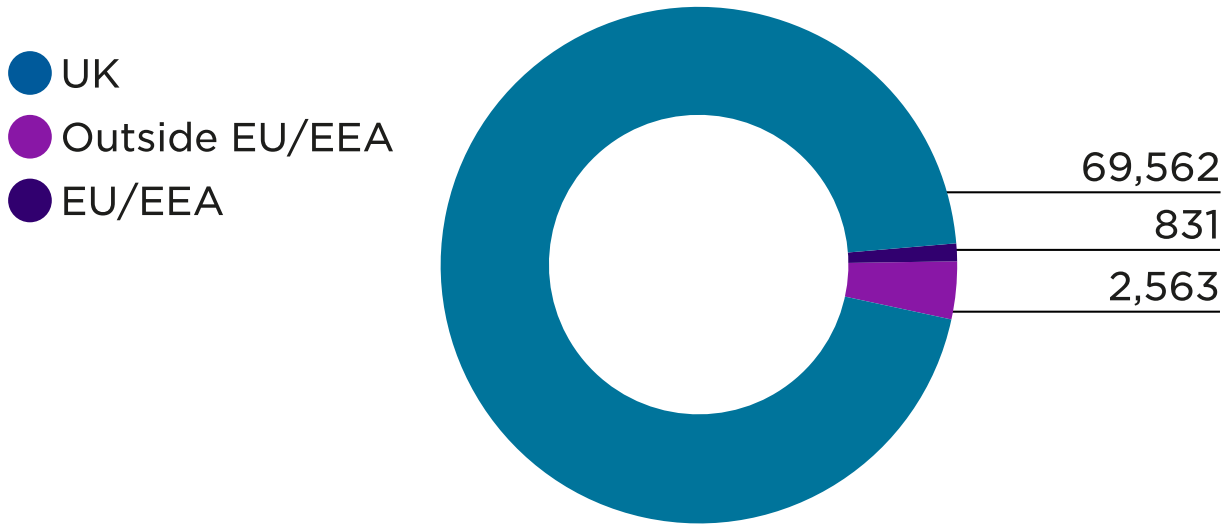
 **3 more international midwives**

 **1 less international dual registrant**

 **1 more international nursing associate**

**Figure 4**

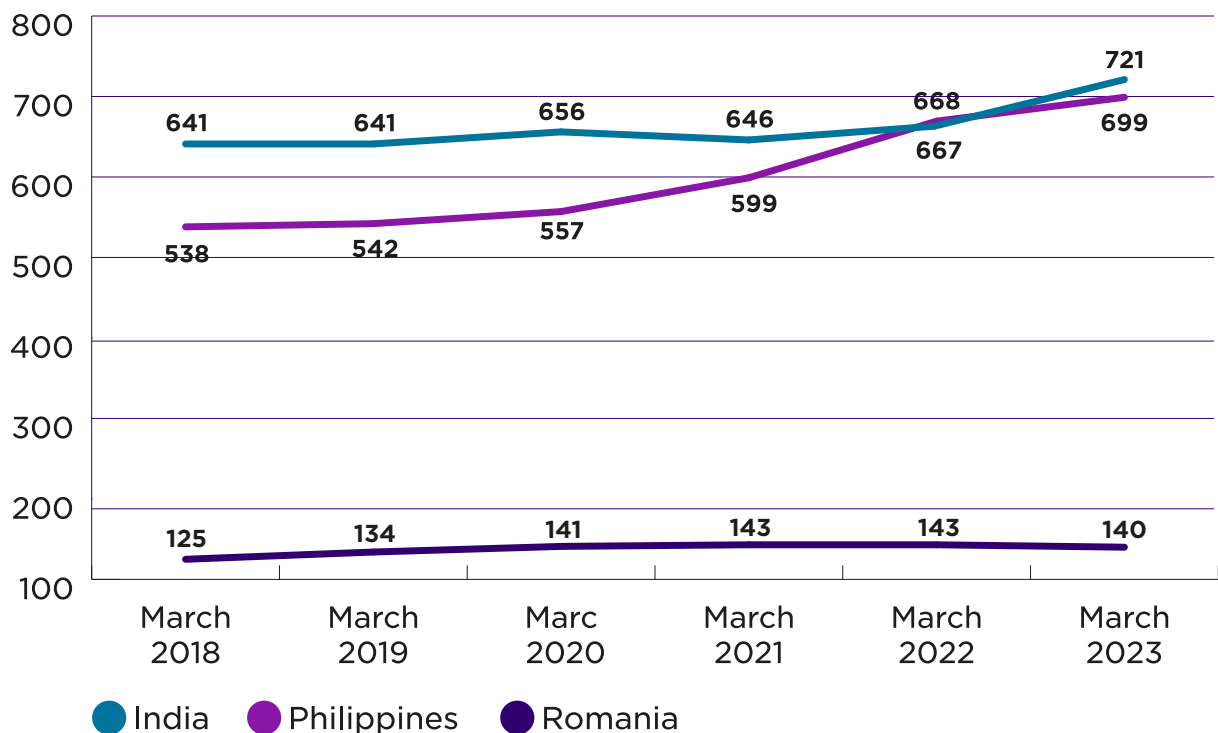
Total number of people on the permanent register in Scotland by initial registration from the UK, EU, and outside the EEA.



Meanwhile, **India** overtook the Philippines as the most frequent country of training outside the UK in 2022-2023, with an annual increase of **8.1%**.

**Figure 5**

Total number of people on the permanent register in Scotland outside the UK (top three countries).





# People from outside the UK joining and leaving the permanent register

Since March 2018, there has been an increase in the number of people joining the permanent register from outside the UK in Scotland. Between April 2022 and March 2023, **230** people joined, an increase from 170 in 2021-2022.

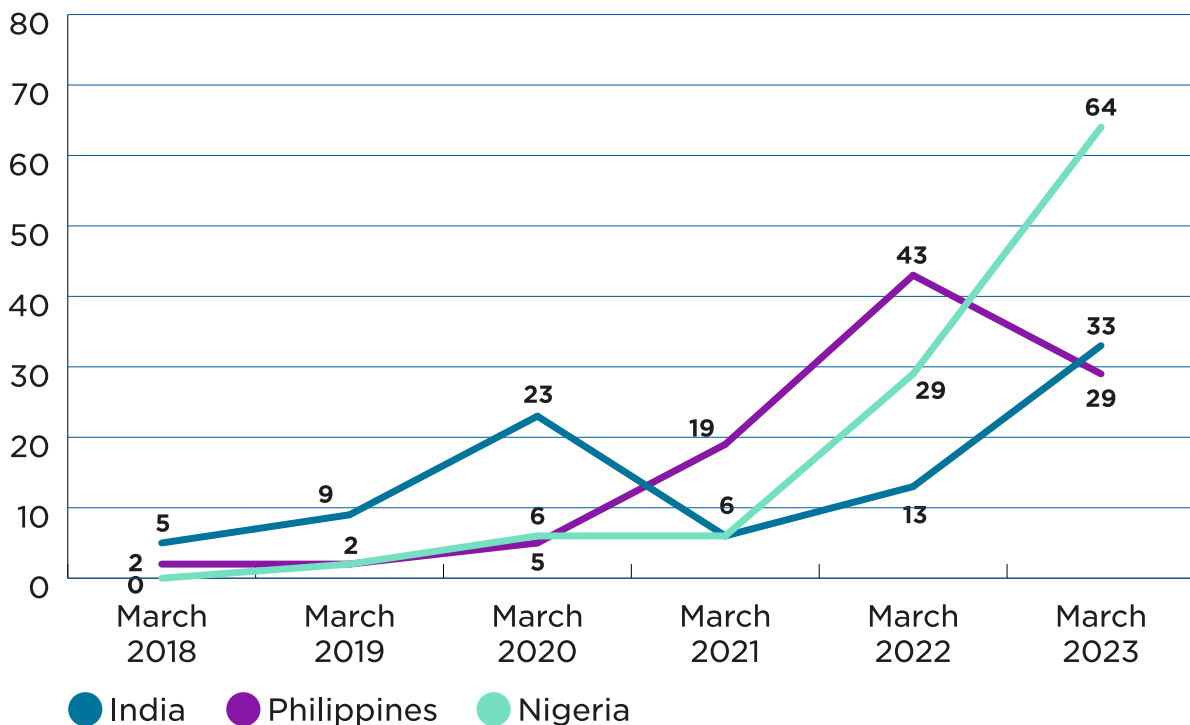
**Joining the register**  
**35.3%** (+60)

The number of people from outside the UK leaving the permanent register in Scotland remained relatively similar to the previous year. In 2022-2023, **74** people left our register, an increase from 71 in 2021-2022.

**Leaving the register**  
**4.2%** (+3)

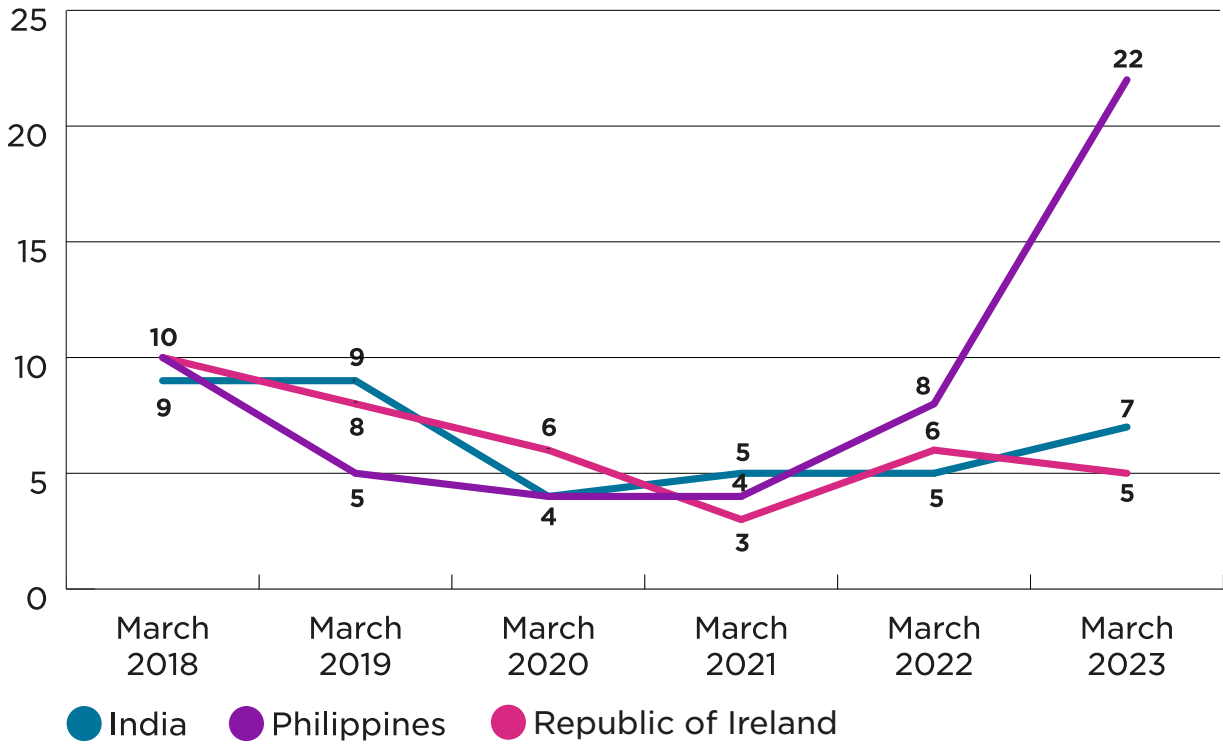
**Figure 6**

Total number of people with an address in Scotland joining the permanent register by country of training outside the UK since March 2018 (top three countries).



**Figure 7**

Total number of people with an address in Scotland leaving the permanent register by country of training outside the UK since March 2018 (top three countries).



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# Profile of the permanent register in Scotland

## Age


Professionals on our permanent register aged 21 to 40 grew from 27,981 to **28,917** in the last year.

 **21 to 40**  
**3.3%** (+936)

The number of people aged 41 to 55 fell from 27,794 to **27,488**.

 **41 to 55**  
**-1.1%** (-306)

Meanwhile, those aged 56 and above grew from 16,014 to **16,535**.

 **56 and above**  
**3.3%** (+521)

## Gender



**90.9%**

of people on our permanent register in Scotland identify as female.



**9.1%**

of people on our permanent register in Scotland identify as male.

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

Of the **72,956** professionals on the permanent register in Scotland, **713** (0.1%) said their gender is not the same as it was at the time of birth. That's **600** more compared to the previous year.

# Ethnicity

Of the 72,956 professionals on our register in Scotland, **67,235** are White, up from 66,489 in March 2022.

**4,240** are from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds, up from 3,850 the previous year.

 **White**  
**1.1%** (+746)

 **Black and minority ethnic**  
**10.1%** (+390)

## Figure 8

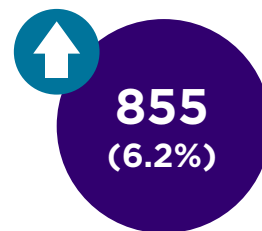
Ethnicity profile of the permanent register.



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# Length of time on the register

The number of professionals in Scotland who have been on our register for five years or less since their initial registration grew from 13,010 to 13,865 over the last year.



Meanwhile, the number of those on the register between **five and 10 years** increased from 10,715 to **10,844**.



The second greatest increase came from those registered between **10 and 30 years**, which grew from 31,730 to **31,957**.



The number of people on the register for **30 years or more** decreased slightly from 16,347 to **16,289**.



This does not indicate continuous service and there may have been gaps in people's registration between initial registration and current registration.

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# Fields of nursing practice

**There are the four fields of nursing practice. They cover adult, children's, learning disabilities, and mental health nursing.**

The number of **adult** nurses on the permanent register in Scotland continues to grow, from 53,032 to **53,743**.

The number of **children's** nurses rose from 4,486 to **4,613**.

The number of **mental health** nurses saw a small increase to a total of 10,753, up from **10,846** the previous year.

The number of **learning disabilities** nurses grew from 1,792 to **1,826**.

These data don't tell us which roles nurses are currently working in. Nurses can hold more than one qualification and don't always work in the fields they are registered in.

↑ **Adult nurses**  
**1.3%** (+711)

↑ **Children's nurses**  
**2.8%** (+127)

↑ **Mental health nurses**  
**0.9%** (+93)

↑ **Learning disabilities nurses**  
**1.9%** (+34)



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# 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 SCPHN by taking an approved programme and achieving the right standards.**

‘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.

The total number of registered Specialist Community and Public Health Nurses in Scotland has steadily increased. In March 2018, there were 2,904 SCPHN professionals. In the last year this has increased from 3,218 to **3,288**.



**Specialist Community and Public Health Nurses**

**2.2%** (+70)

The total number of professionals with special/recordable qualifications increased from 10,126 to **10,312** in the last year.



**Professionals with one or more special/recordable qualifications**

**1.8%** (+186)

Within the total number of professionals with one or more special/recordable qualifications, the number of people with a Nurse Independent/Supplementary Prescriber qualification has increased significantly since March 2018, from 4,304 to **6,595**.



**Professionals with a Nurse Independent/Supplementary Prescriber qualification**

**53.2%** (+2,291)

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# Why did people leave in Scotland?

**Since 2017 we've run an annual survey of professionals who left our register, to ask them why they left. We ran our latest survey throughout March 2023. Below is a summary of the findings for Scotland. You can read the [full report on our website](#).**

**26,618** nurses, midwives and nursing associates left our permanent register between January 2022 and December 2022. In March 2023, we invited a sample of **21,975** of these people to complete our leavers' survey. A total of **7,226** people responded, including **865** from Scotland.

This year we have refreshed our survey approach and questions to ensure its relevance for recent leavers and years to come. Because of this, findings from the 2023 leavers' survey should not be directly compared to that of previous years.

The refreshed leavers' survey was a 10 minute online survey looking to understand;

- **Why professionals left the NMC register**
- **The wider context surrounding individuals' decisions to leave**
- **If employment or demographic factors impact reasons for leaving**

Respondents were given 19 options as to their reasons for leaving. From these, they selected up to five choices, including one main reason for leaving.

The three most commonly selected reasons for leaving the register are different to previous years partly because of the refreshed survey answers. New categories of 'Physical and mental health' and 'Burnout or exhaustion' were two of the top three reasons cited by respondents, behind retirement.

Another new category, 'Lack of support from colleagues and senior members of staff' is also in the top 10 reasons why nurses, midwives and nursing associates left their profession. This was seen to be a part of poor workplace culture, making staffing, workload and quality of care challenges even more difficult.



**Table 1**

What was your main reason for leaving the NMC Register (10 most frequently selected responses): respondents in Scotland.

Rank	Reason for leaving	UK rank
1	Retirement	=
2	My physical or mental health	=
3	Concern about meeting the revalidation requirements	6
4	A change in personal circumstances	=
5	Burnout or exhaustion	3
6	Staffing levels	12
7	Other	=
8	Lack of support from colleagues or senior members of staff	=
=9	Quality of care provided to members of the public and people who use services	=
=9	Experiences of bullying, harassment, or discrimination	10
=9	Workload	11

In line with the UK picture, **52%** of leavers from Scotland have left the register earlier than planned. Leavers from Scotland also listed 'Retirement', 'My physical or mental health', however, they cited 'Concern about meeting the revalidation requirements' as their third reason for leaving, which ranks sixth in the UK survey. Respondents in Scotland also ranked 'Staffing levels' sixth, which ranks twelfth in the UK survey reasons for leaving.

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# 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 invited some nurses and midwives who had left our permanent register, as well as some overseas applicants to join.**

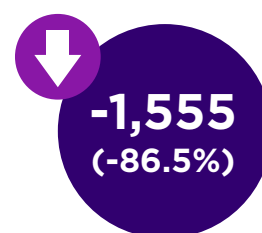
In line with the Government's 'Living with Covid' plan, we stopped accepting new people onto the temporary register from 24 March 2022.

In September 2022, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care announced that temporary registration would stay open for a further two years. We're therefore allowing professionals to continue with temporary registration to support the Covid-19 response and recovery.

In March 2023, we brought in changes to maintain the temporary register safely. These include applying conditions of practice or ending people's temporary registration, depending on when they left the permanent register and whether they have been practising.

## Size of the temporary register

The total number of nurses, midwives and nursing associates on the Covid-19 temporary register with an address in Scotland decreased from 1,797 in March 2022 to **242** in March 2023, a decrease of **86.5%**.



As of March 2023, there are **222** nurses, **15** midwives and **five** dual registrants on the temporary register.

The number of people with an address in Scotland make up **12.1%** of the Covid-19 temporary register.

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# 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 788,000 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 education 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 a tiny minority 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.



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