



Bord Altranais agus
Cnáimhseachais na hÉireann
Nursing and Midwifery
Board of Ireland

Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland report reveals 75,871 nurses and midwives currently practising in Ireland

Women continue to be in the majority in these professions, making up more than 90% of all practising nurses and midwives in Ireland.

10 October 2022: The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) has published a new data report, the 'State of the Register 2022', providing a breakdown of the number of nurses and midwives registered in Ireland. All nurses and midwives who wish to practise in Ireland must be registered with NMBI.

This data is provided by NMBI as information for policymakers and the public, and to inform workforce planning models. It has been made possible by the digitisation of NMBI's Register, including the application and annual renewal processes.

The data shows that, as of 1 June 2022, there are 81,431¹ nurses and midwives on the NMBI Register, with 75,871² self-declared as currently practising; and of these 66,471³ state they are patient-facing in their role.

The report also reveals that more than 90 per cent (68,310)⁴ of all nurses and midwives registered in Ireland are women, while the majority of new registrants in the past year came from overseas, outside the EU.

The 12 months from 1 June 2021 to 31 May 2022 saw a total of 4,937⁵ applicants joining the Register, with 1,555⁶ of these qualified in Ireland, 3,021⁷ from outside of the EU and 361⁸ from EU-based applicants.

The top overseas countries for new registrants were India (2,364)⁹, Philippines (391)¹⁰, United Kingdom (250)¹¹ and Zimbabwe (132)¹².

Trends also indicate that the number of Irish-educated registrants is continuing to increase, with numbers from 2021 the highest since this element was first reported on in 2015¹³, with an expected 1,800 Irish-educated nurses and midwives due to join the NMBI Register later this year (2022).

^{1, 2, 3, 4} Data represented on page 7 of the report

^{5, 6, 7, 8} Data represented on page 12, figure 4 of the report

^{9, 10, 11, 12} Data represented on page 12, table 5 of the report

¹³ Data represented on page 57, figure A of the report

Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD said: “This is a very welcome publication and a testament to the progress NMBI has made in digitising the Register of nurses and midwives. This data will be extremely beneficial for policy makers and those involved in workforce planning for the future of nursing and midwifery.”

The Chief Nursing Officer, at the Department of Health, Rachel Kenna said: “As a country we need to ensure that we are planning appropriately and effectively for the future of our health sector and the professions of nursing and midwifery. This publication provides us with reliable data on the nursing and midwifery resources that are available, including the core demographic details. This information is essential when we are engaged in evidence-based workforce planning.”

The President of NMBI, Essene Cassidy said: “As President of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) I am delighted that the Board is publishing its first ever ‘State of the Register 2022’. This publication, which will now be issued annually, has been made possible by the digitisation of the annual renewal process.

“On behalf of the Board, I want to sincerely thank our registered nurses and our registered midwives for their engagement with the online renewal in 2020 and again in 2021. The information our registrants provided has made this publication possible.”

NMBI CEO, Sheila McClelland said: “The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland is pleased to publish this report as it offers a comprehensive overview of the nursing and midwifery professions in Ireland. Nurses and midwives play a vital role in providing primary and critical healthcare, and our role in NMBI is to ensure that the care they provide is of a consistently high standard through education, registration and regulation.

“This report provides key insights for policy makers and workforce planners. These insights will also be used by NMBI in planning future education and regulation initiatives.”

NMBI Director of Registration, Dr Ray Healy said that while 1,800 Irish graduates are expected to join the Register later this year, an increasing number of applicants are coming from overseas.

Dr Healy said: “In recent months NMBI has focused on increasing the number of Decision Letters issued to overseas applicants who wish to join the Register and there has been a significant increase on 2021. Decision Letters allow applicants to fulfil a compensation measure through either an exam or a period of adaptation to bring applicants in line with EU Directive standards.”

In the 12-month period covered in the report, NMBI issued 3,567¹⁴ Decision Letters.

Dr Healy added: “In the full calendar year of 2021, NMBI issued 2,430 Decision Letters. Following the recruitment of additional staff, NMBI has significantly increased the number of Decision Letters issued so far this year (2022), with more than 5,000 issued to overseas applicants.”

A breakdown of registrant numbers across age brackets indicates that 55,106¹⁵, or 67.7%, of practising nurses and midwives are under the age of 50, while 2,900¹⁶ or 3.6% are above the age of 65.

The report also provides a breakdown of registrants across practice areas:

- General nursing continues to be the most common area of practice, with 54,797¹⁷ active nurses working in this area.
- The second highest number of nurses practising are psychiatric nurses (7,377)¹⁸.
- There are 3,999¹⁹ practising intellectual disability nurses and 3,371²⁰ practising children’s nurses.
- Despite there being 9,661²¹ midwives on the Register, 4,561²² (47.2%) of these are practising. However, it is important to note that many of those registered as midwives are also registered and working in nursing divisions of the Register and the number of practising midwives increased in the past year.

Further information on registration figures and statistics can be found by viewing the full report [here](#).

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¹⁴ Data represented on page 61, figure G of the report

^{15, 16} Data represented on page 8, figure 1 of the report

¹⁷ Data represented on page 15 of the report

¹⁸ Data represented on page 23 of the report

¹⁹ Data represented on page 27 of the report

²⁰ Data represented on page 19 of the report

^{21, 22} Data represented on page 31 of the report