

OECD Health Statistics 2025

Definitions, Sources and Methods

Professional nurses (ISCO-08 code: 2221)

Nursing professionals assume responsibility for the planning and management of the care of patients, including the supervision of other healthcare workers, working autonomously or in teams with medical doctors and others in the practical application of preventive and curative measures.

Inclusion

- General care nurse
- Specialist nurse
- Clinical nurse
- District nurse
- Nurse anaesthetist
- Nurse educator
- Nurse practitioner
- Public health nurse
- Specialist nurse

Exclusion

- Midwife (unless they work most of the time as nurses)
- Paramedical practitioner
- University lecturer
- Vocational education teacher
- Associate professional nurse
- Associate professional midwife
- Nursing aide
- Medical assistant (ISCO-08 code: 3256)

Note: Feldschers should be reported under this category of professional nurses, in those countries where this occupation exists.

Note: The number should be at the end of the calendar year.

Sources and Methods

Australia

Source of data:

- 2013 onwards: **Department of Health (DoH)**. NHWDS Nursing and Midwifery Practitioners Data. Data request. Also available at <http://hwd.health.gov.au/>. Data are as at the end of the re-registration period for the profession in the reference year.
- 2012: **Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2013**. Nursing and midwifery workforce 2012. National health workforce series no. 6. Cat. No. HWL 52. Canberra: AIHW. Also available at www.aihw.gov.au.

- 2011: **Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2012**. Nursing and midwifery workforce 2011. National health workforce series no. 2. Cat No HWL 48. Canberra: AIHW. Also available at www.aihw.gov.au.

- 2009 and earlier: **Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2011**. Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force 2009. Bulletin no. 90. Cat No AUS 139. Canberra: AIHW (and previous issues). Also available at <http://www.aihw.gov.au>.

Coverage:

- All nurses in Australia must be either registered or enrolled with the appropriate state or territory nursing/midwifery board to practice, and from 2011 onward with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). Professional nurses are equivalent to registered nurses in Australia. For registered nurses, a 3-year bachelor or post-graduate degree in nursing, or the equivalent, is usually required.

- From 2013, “practicing” and “professionally active” data exclude nurses with non-practising registration.

Break in time series:

- From 2011, data are based on information from the National Health Workforce Data Set (NHWDS). The NHWDS combines data from the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (NRAS) with health workforce survey data collected at the time of annual registration renewal. Registration data prior to 2011 was based on data from the now superseded state and territory nursing and midwifery boards and councils. For more information see Appendix A of *Nursing and midwifery workforce 2011* at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=10737422167>. Comparison of 2011 and later data with 2009 and earlier data should be made with caution.

- From 2013 the NHWDS is held by the Department of Health and the data has minor differences from the previous AIHW holdings due to the method of imputation for survey non-response and enhanced geocoding methods.

Austria

Source of data:

- Up to 2018: **Austrian Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection**, Hospital Statistics.

- From 2019 onwards: **Austrian National Public Health Institute (GÖG)**, Health Professions Registry.

Reference period: 31st December.

Coverage: Included are professional nurses (ISCO-08 code: 2221).

Deviation from the definition: Nurses working in other settings than hospitals are not included until 2018.

Break in time series: 2019: Change in data source and methodology in 2019.

Note: Three years of study are required to qualify as a professional nurse. The training curriculum for professional nurses meets the educational requirements for nurses (as defined by Directive 2005/36/EC).

Belgium

Data not available.

Canada

Source of data: **Canadian Institute for Health Information**.

Coverage:

All Qualified Nurses Data:

- Include RNs, NPs and registered psychiatric nurses (RPNs), where data available.

Breaks in time series:

1) registered psychiatric nurses were included when data was available.

2) the methodology for counting RNs and RPNs starting 2002 is nurses in direct care.

Note: To better ensure timeliness, CIHI collects data prior to the end of the 12-month registration period in each jurisdiction. Therefore, the population of reference for the nursing data is all regulated nurses who submit an active practising registration in a Canadian province or territory in the first 6 months of the registration year. The 12-month registration period varies among the provinces and territories, as each jurisdiction is responsible for setting the start and end dates of its own registration period.

- Due to voluntary reporting to CIHI of employment status in Manitoba, RN employment numbers may be understated. Please use with caution.
- Starting in 2023, CIHI revised its methodology for imputing missing values in data for 2023 and subsequent years. This change may have an impact on the trends. As a result, comparisons with data for previous years should be made with caution.

Chile

Source of data: **Ministry of Health** using as original source the National Registry of Individual Health Providers from the **Health Superintendence** (<http://www.superdesalud.cl/>), which was created by a law-ranking decree of November 2008, progressively installed since 2009, and is henceforth used. Its creation and maintenance are in charge of the Health Superintendence.

- The inscription in the Register has been progressive, and the changes in the figures that can be observed since 2010 are principally due to its progressive extension. The prevision is that this effect will remain at least until the end of 2013.

Coverage: Nationwide.

- Data include both public and private sectors' employed nurses.
- The difference between 2010 and 2013 figures of total nurses and professional nurses is due both to the incorporation in the Registry of the new professional nurses graduated from 2010 to 2013 and to the extensibility of the Registry.
- In Chile, the double grade nurse-midwife exists. Professionals with double grade are considered among nurses, because they generally practice as nurses. In the public sector, the double grade allows nurses to receive a better rent.

Colombia

Data not available.

Costa Rica

Data not available.

Czechia

Source of data: Institute of Health Information and Statistics of the Czech Republic. National Health Information System (Annual report on health personnel), National Registry of Healthcare Workforce
Reference period: 31st December.

Coverage:

- Data comprise general and paediatric nurses.
- Data relate to nurses working in health establishments. Those working in social care sector are not included.
- Double counting of nurses working in more than one health establishment.

Estimation method: In 2014, complete data are not available. Estimate is calculated from available data for 2014 and data from 2013.

Break in time series:

- Since 2004 data collected on basis of new legislation on non-medical professions.
- 2022: Change in data source to National Registry of Healthcare Workforce.

Denmark

Source of data: **The Danish Health Data Authority**, Registered Health Professionals, the Danish Register for Evaluation of Marginalisation, The Danish Civil Registration System.

Reference period: 31st December.

Coverage: All data 1992-2023, Licensed to practice 1980-2022

Break in time series: 2022 change in the data collection

Estonia

Source of data:

- Annual reports, **National Institute for Health Development**, Department of Health Statistics.
https://statistika.tai.ee/pxweb/en/Andmebaas/Andmebaas_04THressursid_05Tootajad/?tablelist=true.
- 1980-2003 nurses and assistant doctors, data published by **Statistics Estonia**
(https://andmed.stat.ee/en/stat/Lepetatud_tabelid_Sotsiaalelu.%20Arhiiv_Tervis.%20%20Arhiiv_tervis_hoiuasutused/TH05).

Reference period:

- 1980-2012: 31st of December.
- Since 2013: November.

Coverage:

- Presents practising nurses who provide services directly to patients.

Break in time series (for practising professional nurses): 1992, 2005, 2012 and 2013.

- The types of institutions included have been changed over the period in question. Until 1991 the data correspond more to professionally active nurses (practising + working in health sector).
- Since 1992, medical staff working in military, research or other areas have not been included.
- Until 2004, the source was an annual report on practising health care personnel based on their last or main educational qualification.
- From 2005, the head count distribution is made according to their main branch occupational activity.
- From 2012, the number of practising nurses does not include radiology nurses. Radiology nurses (by job specification - same as radiology technicians) are classified in the category of other health service providers.

Note: The decrease after 1991 was the result of the first reorganisation wave of health care system of the independent country. A large-scale legislative reform took place in the early 1990s. In 1991 the provider licensing system was enhanced, which was an important precondition for decreasing hospital network capacity to enable more efficient use of resources and to ensure quality. In 1994, after a detailed review of all providers, substandard providers were closed.

- The data collection methodology was changed in 2013. Aggregated data collection was replaced with data collection on a personal basis. From 2013, the predominant (main) area of practice is based on an occupation with the highest workload.

Finland

Source of data: **VALVIRA. National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health.** Register on Qualified Health Care Personnel.

Reference period: At the end of the calendar year.

Coverage: All individuals with a license to practise as a nurse– this includes all midwives and public health nurses as they automatically receive a license to practise as a nurse as well. As any acquired licenses do not expire, even upon retirement, this data includes only individuals under the age of 65 to better reflect the actually available work force.

Deviation from the definition: In the Finnish Classification of Occupations kept by Statistics Finland, code 2221 refers to nurses with a supervisory role – matrons and wardens – even though the classification is largely based on ISCO. As such, we include the codes of 2221 and 3221 from the Finnish Classification of Occupations as these reflect trained nurses holding a professional nursing license and their work description aligns with the description for the ISCO-08 code 2221.

Estimation method:

Break in time series:

France

Source of data: **Ministère des Solidarités et de la Santé - Direction de la Recherche, des Études, de l'Évaluation et des Statistiques (DREES)**, Sous-Direction de l'Observation de la Santé et de l'Assurance maladie, Bureau des Professions de santé.

- For independent workers: **Système national des données de santé (SNDS)**.
- For employees of the public hospital or in other sectors: **Base tous salariés**.

Reference period: 31st December.

Coverage:

- Health executive, independent nurses, salaried specialist nurses, salaried general care nurses.
- Data refer to metropolitan France and D.R.O.M. (overseas departments and regions) excluding Mayotte.
- Despite compulsory registration, many nurses are not registered in the *RPPS (Répertoire Partagé des Professionnels de Santé)*. As a result, the RPPS cannot yet be used to count the number of nurses, but should become so in the next few years. DREES has therefore carried out specific work to study the demography of nurses based on the *Base tous salaires*, whose data are not available since 2022 (incomplete data source).

Deviation from the definition: Health executive of all specialities are included, as it is not possible to distinguish precisely which are health executive nurses. According to the most recent estimates made with other sources, around 80% of them are actually nurses.

Germany

Source of data: **Federal Statistical Office**, Health Labour Accounts January 2025; special calculation by the Federal Statistical Office, <http://www.destatis.de> or <http://www.gbe-bund.de>.

Reference period: 31st December.

Coverage:

- Data include professional nurses with a 3-year education (nurses, paediatric nurses and nurses for the elderly).
- Excluded are nurses with a 1-year education and midwives.
- From 2000 onwards data from Health Labour Accounts have been completely revised. Therefore, comparable data before 2000 are not available.
- Data are rounded to the nearest thousand.

Greece

Source of data: **Hellenic Statistical Authority (EL.STAT)**.

Reference period: 31st December

Deviation from the definition: Only professional nurses working in hospitals are included.

Hungary

Source of data:

- Until 2016 (for practicing professional nurses) **Hungarian Central Statistical Office** (KSH in Hungarian) (<http://www.ksh.hu/>), Report on personnel of health service.
- From 2013 until 2014: **Office of Health Care Authorisation and Administrative Procedures** (EEKH in Hungarian) (<http://www.eekh.hu/>).
- From 2015 onwards, **Health Registration and Training Center** (ENKK in Hungarian) (<http://www.enkk.hu/>).
- From 2017, **National Healthcare Service Center** (ÁEEK in Hungarian) (<http://www.enkk.hu/>).
- From 2021, **National Directorate General for Hospitals** (OKFŐ in Hungarian) (<http://www.okfo.gov.hu/>).

The data source of practising nurses is from the Operational register.

The data source of nurses licensed to practice is from the Basic register.

Reference period: 31st December.

Coverage:

- From 1990: The report was completed according to the 1990 account of the Central Statistical Office "Number of posts and the staff of ancillary workers by activity". Nurse definition as of ISCO 88 (code 2230) includes graduated nurses, specialised nurses, ambulance nurses, and MCH nurses.

- From 2017:

* Head count data from the Basic register (licensed to practice) or from the Operational register (practising nurses).

* The classification of the professional nurses and associate professional nurses is based on the highest level of qualification obtained.

Break in time series: 2000, 2017.

- In 2000, health and social services were separated. Nurses working in social services have not been included in the data since 2000.

- From reference year 2017: With regards to the training requirements laid down in Directive 2005/36/EC, nurses were regrouped:

- Professional nurses: only nurses that have an education in compliance with the EC Directive on professional qualifications (e.g. minimum 3 years for a general nurse) and specialist nurses with an equivalent education (or longer) or nurses with a qualification (general nurse and general assistant) by which they can benefit from the acquired rights in compliance with the EC Directive and
- Nurses who do not meet the requirements of the Directive 2005/36/EC were moved to the Associate professional nurse category.
- Ambulance nursing graduates are excluded from the group of Nurses

Iceland

- Associate/Licensed practical nurses: Three years of education in secondary school (non-university) and 16 weeks of practical training in health institutions.

- Figures refer to nurses who are members of The Association of Icelandic Nurses and associate practical nurses who are members of the Icelandic Union of Practical Nurses.

Deviation from the definition:

Estimation method:

Break in time series:

Professionally active nurses

Source of data: **Directorate of Health, Association of Icelandic Nurses and The Icelandic Union of Practical Nurses.**

Reference period: 31st December.

Coverage:

- Professional nurses: Four years of university education leading to a B.Sc. degree.

- Associate/Licensed practical nurses: Three years of education in secondary school (non-university) and 16 weeks of practical training in health institutions.

- Figures refer to nurses who are members of The Association of Icelandic Nurses and associate practical nurses who are members of the Icelandic Union of Practical Nurses.

- Includes all nurses who are professionally active, according to labor union records. This may involve nurses in administrative or academic roles, as well as those in clinical settings.

Estimation method:

Break in time series:

Nurses licensed to practice

Source of data:

2016 and onwards: **The Directorate of Health**, Register of Licenced Health Care Professionals.

Until 2015: **The Directorate of Health**, Register of professional nurses.

Reference period: 31st December.

Coverage:

- Includes (from 2016) all professional nurses and associate professional nurses with a license (all ages regardless of employment status, employment location (inside or outside of the country) or nationality).

- Before 2016, only data for professional nurses are available.

Deviation from the definition:

Estimation method:

Break in time series: Break in series in 2016 is due to change in data source. The data source is the Register of Licenced Health Care Professionals instead of the Register of Nurses, which no longer exists.

Professional nurses

Source of data: **Directorate of Health - Association of Icelandic Nurses.**

Reference period: 31st December.

Coverage:

- Professional nurses: Four years of university education leading to a B.Sc. degree.
- Figures refer to nurses that are members of The Association of Icelandic Nurses.

Deviation from the definition:

Estimation method:

Break in time series:

Ireland

Source of data: **Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland - An Bord Altranais** (<https://www.nmbi.ie/Home>).

Reference period: Figures refer to as at end of December.

Coverage:

- Information provided refers to the total number of registered nurses on the Board's register as at the end of December of the reference year. This does not necessarily mean that each nurse is active in the field of nursing.

Deviation from the definition:

- Data contains midwives who have dual registration and are allowed to be professionally active and practicing in both nursing and midwifery fields.

Israel

Source of data: The data are based on the Nurses License Registry maintained by the Nursing Division and the Health Information Division in the **Ministry of Health**, for which the demographic information is periodically updated from the Population Registry at the Ministry of Interior.

Reference period: End of the year.

Coverage:

- Data are for all professional nurses. Data refer to registered nurses. The number of midwives is not included in the number of nurses.

- The training of registered nurses takes place mainly in universities and colleges. At the end of the four year academic courses, students receive an undergraduate degree in nursing and are listed as registered nurses. Academic conversion courses to become a registered nurse are also offered in nursing schools.

- Nurses work in all fields: general hospitalisation, geriatrics, psychiatry, community nursing, HMOs, and preventative medicine in public health. Nurses work directly with patients and in a variety of management positions, directing treatment, coordination and treatment in different fields (diabetes, trauma, preventing infections and more).

Note: The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

Italy

For practicing nurses:

Source of data:

- Until 2020: **COGEAPS**, <http://wp.cogeaps.it/>.

- Since 2021: **ISTAT** Integrated Data System on Health Personnel.

Reference period: 31st December.

Coverage: Practicing professional nurses.

Deviation from the definition: None.

Estimation method:

- Until 2020: data on the “Continuing Medical Training program” have been used to estimate the practicing personnel. In Italy health professionals have to be recorded in the professional register to be licensed to practice and to acquire “training credits” while practicing. These credits are registered in the Continuing Training Education database. The estimate of practicing personnel was done by counting, among all registered professionals, those who acquired at least one credit in the last three years.

- Since 2021: Data for the last year are provisional: except for data on professionals employed in the private sector, for other professionals (public sector employees, non-employees in the public and private sector) an estimate is made on the basis of the changes observed in years t-1 and t-2.

Break in time series: 2021: due to changes in data source. The Integrated Data System on Health Personnel provides more accurate data, exhaustive and compliant with the definition. Previous data were estimated and referred to nurses who acquired training credits in the last three years (as a proxy of being practicing). The new data source, based on the integration of individual data of professional registers with data from ISTAT's Registers (on jobs, on economic units, on training) and the Population Census, provides more accurate data on the number of practicing nurses. The increase in the number of nurses in 2021 is probably due to the under-estimation of previous data source.

For professionally active nurses:

Source of data:

- Until 2020: **ISTAT, Labour Force Survey**. <http://www.istat.it/it/archivio/8263>.

- Since 2021: **ISTAT** Integrated Data System on Health Personnel.

Reference period: Until 2020: two-year moving averages (year t is the average of the years t, t-1, e.g. year 2016 is the average of 2015 and 2016 data). Since 2021 31st of December.

Coverage: Until 2020: Sample survey. Nurses working in the Health sector or in other economic sectors.

Since 2021: Professionally active nurses.

Deviation from the definition: None.

Estimation method:

- Until 2020: Estimation from the sample survey. Data are affected by the statistical error due to the sample design.

- Since 2021: Data for the last year are provisional: except for data on professionals employed in the private sector, for other professionals (public sector employees, non-employees in the public and private sector) an estimate is made on the basis of the changes observed in years t-1 and t-2.

Break in time series: 2021: due to changes in data source. The Integrated Data System on Health Personnel provides more accurate data, exhaustive and compliant with the definition. The new data source based on the integration of individual data of professional registers with data from ISTAT's Registers (on jobs, on economic units, on training) and the Population Census provides more accurate data on the number of professionally active nurses.

For nurses licensed to practice:

Source of data:

- Until 2020: **FNOPI** (National Institute keeping the register of nurses). <http://www.fnopi.it>.

- Since 2021: **ISTAT** Integrated Data System on Health Personnel.

Reference period: 31st December.

Coverage: All professional nurses licensed to practice.

Deviation from the definition: None.

Estimation method: None.

Break in time series: 2021: due to changes in data source.

Japan

Source of data: **Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare**, Report on Public Health Administration and Services.

Coverage:

- Data consist of public health nurses and nurses.

- The survey for the number of certified public health nurses and nurses is conducted every 2 years.

- More than 3 years of study and a national examination are required to qualify as a nurse.

- More than 1 year of study and a national examination in addition to a qualification as a nurse is required to qualify as a public health nurse.

- Students who have obtained both public health nurse and nurse qualifications are double counted, so the number of students who have obtained public health nurse qualifications is excluded.

Korea

Source of data:

- Practising professional nurses: **Health Insurance Review & Assessment Service**, Health care resources by provider.
- Licensed professional nurses: **Ministry of Health and Welfare**, Yearbook of Health and Welfare Statistics.

Coverage: Nurses with:

- Educational level: majored nursing in university or community college (3 or 4 years of education).
- Task: nursing or medical assistance and health tasks by executive orders.

Break in time series: 2016. There is a break in the time series on practising nurses because of a new reporting system for health employment as of 2016.

Latvia

Source of data: **Health Inspectorate of Latvia**; Register of Medical Practitioners and Medical Support Staff.

Reference period: 31 December.

Lithuania

All nurses are treated as professional nurses in Lithuania.

Luxembourg

Source of data: **Ministère de la Santé**. Register of doctors and health professionals.

Coverage:

- Head counts.
- Data include graduate nurses, nurses specialised in paediatrics, psychiatry and anaesthesia, and medical technical assistants for surgery.
- Data should be considered with care due to methodological issues encountered during the census series concerning midwives, nurses and pharmacists.

Break in the series: 2003, 2005 and 2010 due to adjustments to the methodology.

Mexico

Source of data: **Ministry of Health**. Bulletin of Health Information and Statistics. National Health System, Vol. 1, "Human and material health resources" 1990 to 2002. For 2003 to 2023, data are taken from the National Health Information System (SINAIS). In the case of the private sector, for 2002 to 2023 the data are taken from the **National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI)**. National Survey on Medical units with Inpatient Hospital Services.

Coverage:

- The information includes general and specialist nurses. Midwives are not included.
- The data presented include human resources in the public and private health sectors.
- There may be double counting as nurses can work in both the public and private sectors simultaneously.

Netherlands

Source of data: **Social Statistical Database of Statistics Netherlands, BIG register** (official register of health care professionals) plus estimates.

Reference period: The last Friday before Christmas.

Coverage:

- Practising nurses : Data refer to nurses who are licensed to practice; and live and work in the Netherlands. Their license requires that they have been practising in the past five years.

Break in time series: 2023

- 2023 Re-registration effect. Since 2014, midwives, nurses and physiotherapists are obliged to re-register. The requirement is that they have been practising in the past 5 years.

New Zealand

Source of data: **Nursing Council of New Zealand.**

Coverage:

- Head count data.
- Data refer to registered nurses and include nurse practitioners.
- Three years of study are required to qualify as a registered nurse.

Norway

Source of data: **Statistics Norway**; Statistics on health-care personnel. Administrative registers. See http://www.ssb.no/hesospers_en/.

Reference period: 3rd week of November.

Coverage: The figures provided give the number of practising nursing within HP1-HP3. There is no guarantee that these professionals actually work in patient care as data refer to the education the nurses have rather than the job they hold within HP 1-3.

Break in time series: 2009, 2015.

- From 2009, "practising" data include all personnel within HP1-HP4.
- As from 2015, the register-based employment statistics will be based on a new data source for employees. Until the end of 2014, the main data source was The Central Register on Employers and Employees (EE register), produced by the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Organisation (NAV). In 2015, this reporting to NAV was coordinated with the reporting of earnings and personnel data to the Tax Administration and Statistics Norway. This common reporting system is called "a-ordningen" (the a-system).

Poland

See: "Practising nurses", "Professionally active nurses", and "Nurses licensed to practice".

Portugal

Source of data: **Statistics Portugal**, Health personnel statistics, <http://www.ine.pt/xurl/ind/0012841>

Reference period: 31st December.

Coverage:

- Becoming legally permitted to nurse is dependent on getting a professional license from the Council of Nurses.
- All nurses are registered by place of activity. Non-practising nurses are excluded.
- The number of nurses excludes the number of midwives. Midwifery is a specialty of nursing.
- Data include all active nurses licensed to practice. They include nurses working in administration, management, research and in other posts that exclude direct contact with patients.

Deviation from the definition:

- Nurses who hold a post / job under which nursing education is not required are not excluded.

Slovak Republic

Source of data: **National Health Information Center.**

- The data come from "The Annual report on structure and number of health professionals and health care workers in the Slovak Republic"; therefore, only data on professionally active nurses are provided. (A national administrative register of healthcare professionals is under development.).

Reference period: 31st December.

Coverage:

- There is no distinction between professional and associate professional nurses in the Slovak Republic. In 2024, data from columns J and L in the Nurses worksheet were removed because Total Professional Active Nurses also includes Professional Active Nurses and Associate Professional Active Nurses. Total professionally active nurses cannot be split into Professional Active Nurses and Associate Professional Active Nurses

- Employees of denationalised establishments emerging during the process of privatisation have been included in the statistical databases since 1998.

Slovenia

Source of data: **National Institute of Public Health, Slovenia**; National Health Care Providers Database.
Reference period: 31st December.

Coverage:

- From 1999 to 2002 data on Bachelor of Science in nursing (completed programme for midwives) are included within the number of qualified nursing staff. From 2003 on those data are shown separately.
- 2000-2002: Midwives are included in qualified nurses; break in series between 2002 and 2003.
- The National Health Care Providers Database is a registry with total (100 %) coverage of health workers.

Break in time series: 2003.

Note: Qualified (professional) nurses are defined as nurses with a Bachelor of Science in nursing (3 - year higher education) and state registered nurses (2 – year higher education).

Spain

Source of data:

- For “practising” and “professionally active” nurses: **National Statistics Institute (INE)**, based on the **Labour Force Survey**.

https://www.ine.es/dyngs/INEbase/es/operacion.htm?c=Estadistica_C&cid=1254736176918&menu=ultiDatos&idp=1254735976595.

- For nurses “licensed to practice”: **National Statistics Institute (INE)**, from the **Register of Nurses Council**.

https://www.ine.es/dyngs/INEbase/es/operacion.htm?c=Estadistica_C&cid=1254736176781&menu=ultiDatos&idp=1254735573175.

Coverage:

- Up to 2010, the data by occupation are classified according to the National Occupations Classification (CNO-94 Spain, code 272), the Spanish equivalent of ISCO-88, code 2230. The “practising” data include professional nurses (223 ISCO-88 code, midwives included) who are actively practising nursing in the health sector. The figures of practising midwives are not available, and it is not possible to subtract them from the total number of practising professional nurses. In the same way, the figures of professionally active midwives are not available, and it is not possible to subtract them from the total number of professionally active nurses.
- From 2011 to 2021 data are classified according to CNO-11 Spain, code 212. The CNO-11 code 212 is the Spanish equivalent of ISCO-08 code 222 (nursing and midwifery professionals). The figures of practising or professionally active midwives are not available, and it is not possible to subtract them from the total number of practising or professionally active nurses, respectively. Data based on Economically Active Population Survey and referring to CNO-11 codes at 4-digit level (Spanish equivalent of ISCO-08) are not available.
- From 2022 onwards data are classified according to CNO-11 Spain code 2121 and 2122, excluding code 2123 which corresponds to midwives. The CNO-11 codes 2121 and 2122 is the Spanish equivalent of ISCO-08 code 2221 (nursing professionals).
- During the **first quarter of 2005** various changes have been introduced into the **Economically Active Population Survey**:
 1. New variables have been included in accordance with Eurostat (Statistical Office of the European Communities) requirements, set forth in Regulation 2257/2003.
 2. A centralised procedure has been implemented for the process of the telephone interviews.
 3. With the goal of further standardising the survey process, the questions of the questionnaire have been reformulated.

- In **2021** various changes have been introduced into the **Economically Active Population Survey**:

1. New variables have been included in accordance with Eurostat (Statistical Office of the European Communities) requirements, set forth in Regulation (EU) 2019/1700 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 October 2019.
2. The data referring to CNO-11 codes at 4-digit level are available.

3. The target population is extended to people aged 15 years and older.
 4. Introduction of the CAWI (web interviews) for second and subsequent interviews.
- Before 2022, the figures of practising midwives were not available, and it was not possible to subtract them from the total number of practising professional nurses.
 - A university degree of 3 years is required to qualify as a professional nurse.
- Deviation from the definition: Data on “practising” and “professionally active” professional nurses include midwives until 2021.
- Estimation method: In 2024, data series from 2020 onwards have been updated with Spanish population figures imported from Census 2021 and recalculated by using three-year moving averages in order to reduce the large year-to-year fluctuations in data derived from the LFS. In 2014, data series have been updated with Spanish population figures imported from Census 2011 and recalculated by using three-year moving averages in order to reduce the large year-to-year fluctuations in data derived from the LFS. The number reported in 1996 is an average of 1995-1997; the number for 2012 is an average of 2011-2013.
- Break in time series:
- Data include midwives until 2021 and exclude them from 2022.

Sweden

Source of data:

- Before 1995: Data came from the register of certified nurses and population census 1990.
- From 1995: **National Board of Health and Welfare, LOVA-register.**

Reference period: 1st November.

Coverage:

- Licensed nurses registered in NACE-codes that are considered to be within the health-care sector.
- Full coverage.

Break in time series: Figures on nurses before 1995 are not consistent with the data from 1995 onwards because of differences in sources and methodology.

Switzerland

Source of data: **Federal Statistical Office (FSO)**, Neuchâtel; Hospital Statistics, Statistics of Medical-social Institutions, Community Nursing Statistics; yearly census.

Reference period: Data as of December 31.

Coverage:

- Employment in hospitals, nursing homes and community nursing home services. The ambulatory health care sector is not yet covered.
- The category Professional nurses corresponds to the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08) code 2221.

Estimation method:

- Hospital data: Until 2009, estimations were made with data on professions from 75% of hospitals. Hospitals giving valid information on professions are reasonably assumed to be representative of the whole category (university hospitals, acute hospitals, psychiatric hospitals, rehabilitation hospitals, and other specialised hospitals).
- Nursing homes data: In 2018, for the whole series (from 2007 to 2016), the method to identify nurses from medical-social institutions has been revised. The estimation of total nurses has been retrospectively adapted.

Break in time series: Since 2010, Hospital Statistics have been revised; no estimation needed.

Türkiye

Source of data:

- From 2000 onwards: **General Directorate for Health Services, Ministry of Health.**
- Up to 1999: **Health Statistics Yearbook - Ministry of Health.**

Reference period: 31st December.

Coverage:

- Total number of nurses in the MoH, university and private sectors.

- Ministry of Health, university, private and other sectors (other public establishments, local administrations and since 2012 MoND-affiliated facilities) are included.
- The number of nurses who work abroad or who are retired/unemployed or who have not graduated from schools yet is not included.
- Nurses acting as managers are included.
- Midwives are excluded, even if some of them act as nurses in Türkiye.

Deviation from the definition:

Estimation method:

Break in time series: 2018.

- In 2018, the used database for health personnel has been changed. This new source keeps the data as person-based. Health personnel data were collected from health facilities as health facility-based before 2018.

United Kingdom

Source of data:

- **England:** (<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/staff-number>)

* HCHS Nurses. 2000-2008: Non Medical Workforce Census; 2009 onwards: NHS Hospital & Community Health Service (HCHS) workforce statistics. (Data as at 30 September each year). The 2000-2008 data have been revised to exclude bank staff. The data from 2009 are headcount. HCHS Nurses are a component of Total, Professional and Associate Professional Nurses.

* General Practice - Practice Nurses. 2000-2014: General & Personal Medical Services Statistics; 2015 onwards: Primary Care Workforce Tool / National Workforce Reporting Service. (Data as at 30 September each year).

- **Wales:** Welsh Government: Staff directly employed by the NHS | GOV.WALES

(<https://www.gov.wales/staff-directly-employed-nhs>) GP workforce data for 2020 onwards is sourced from the Wales National Workforce Reporting System (WNWRS) which replaces the GMS Census .

- **Northern Ireland:** Department of Health Northern Ireland - <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/staff-number>

- **Scotland:** Information Services Division, Scottish Workforce Information Standard System. . From 2021, NHS Education for Scotland: Scottish Workforce Information Standard System.

Reference period:

- **Wales:** data for 2018 onwards at 31 December.

Coverage:

- Does not include private sector.

- **Scotland:** From 2007 onwards, data include nursing staff with Agenda for Change bands 5-9. For 2000 to 2006 (pre Agenda for Change), professional nurses are defined as registered nurses. Data exclude bank and agency staff.

- **Northern Ireland:** Includes NMC registered qualified nurses. Nurses (Band 5+) are qualified following either a 3 year programme leading to registration as a nurse with the Nursing & Midwifery Council or a Diploma/Degree in Nursing Sciences in one of the following areas: adult, mental health, learning disability or children's nursing.

- **England:** Data exclude bank staff.

- **Wales:** From 2022 Professional nurses includes GP workforce primary care nurses.

Break in time series:

- **England:** There are breaks in the time series in 2009 and 2015 which relate to changes in the collection methodology: 2009 - HCHS data changed from an annual census collection to monthly workforce statistics from the Electronic Staff Record (ESR); 2015 - GP Practice Nurse data changed from an annual census collection to a quarterly collection from the Primary Care Workforce Tool (PCWT) / National Workforce Reporting Service (NWRS). 2009-2017: Total Nurses do not equal sum of component parts due to HCHS staff working in more than one role.

- **England:** Up to 2008, data are based on rolecount; since 2009, they are based on headcount.

- **Scotland:** In 2014, figures for nurses have been added from 2000 to 2006. The methodology differs from the later years, since 2000-2006 figures are for employment rather than true headcount, and may double count nurses holding more than one post.

Northern Ireland: A new method for calculating headcount has been introduced for 2023 onwards, hence the break in series note.

Note:

- From 2007 onwards, the sum of professional nurses and associate professional nurses is slightly different from the total number of nurses. This is due to double counting. Professional nurses are categorised as AfC Bands 5-9 and Associate professional nurses AfC Bands 1-4, and it is possible for someone to work two positions on different bands.

United States

Source of data: **National Council of State Boards of Nursing** (NCSBN). Copyright by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc. All rights reserved.

The full title of the database: Nurse Licensee Volume and NCLEX Examination Statistics (several years). 1987-2016: The National Nursing Database: A profile of nursing licensure in the U.S. (2019 to present) - <https://www.ncsbn.org/national-nursing-database.htm>.

Coverage:

- Nationwide.

- Number of registered nurses (RN), holding an active license within a US jurisdiction available for employment for as December for each respective year.

- Registered Nurses (29-111). Assess patient health problems and needs, develop and implement nursing care plans, and maintain medical records. Administer nursing care to ill, injured, convalescent, or disabled patients. May advise patients on health maintenance and disease prevention or provide case management. Licensing or registration required. Include advance practice nurses such as: nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, certified nurse midwives and certified registered nurse anaesthetists. Advanced practice nursing is practiced by RNs who have specialised formal, post-basic education and who function in highly autonomous and specialised roles.

- Data include territories such as American Samoa. But exclude data from Puerto Rico.

Deviation from the definition: Exclude nurses working abroad.

Estimation method: Nurses with active licensure to perform nursing care in the United States.

Break in time series: No breaks in time series.

Further information:

- 1996 represents data for 1995-1996.

- Data is compiled by NCSBN Nursys, which is an electronic information system where nursing regulatory bodies enter licensure data on a frequent basis. Nursys is the only USA national database for verification of nurse licensure, discipline and practice privileges for RNs, LPN/VNs.

- NCSBN Nursys reports that due to an unknown number of individuals holding active licenses in more than one jurisdiction, the total number of active licenses nationwide may be higher than the total number of nurses. More information at <https://www.ncsbn.org/>.

NON-OECD ECONOMIES

Bulgaria

Source of data: **National Statistical Institute**, Exhaustive annual survey.

Reference period: 31st December.

Coverage: All nurses (head counts) (ISCO-08 code: 2221) who worked on a basic labour contract in outpatient and inpatient establishments, as well as those who practice in other health establishments - centres for emergency medical care, centres for transfusion haematology, homes for medical and social care for children, Hygiene-epidemiological inspections, and others.

Croatia

Source of data: **Croatian Institute of Public Health**, National Register of Health Care Providers.

Reference period: Status on December 31st.

Coverage: Public and private health sectors included.

Break in time series: Private nurses have been included since 1993.

Cyprus

Source of data:

2000-2004: **Public medical institutions.**

From 2005: Nursing Services (Ministry of Health) as regards the Public Sector, **Inspectors of Private Medical Institutions** (Ministry of Health).

Reference period: 31st December.

Coverage:

The figures referring to years 2000-2005 have been estimated since no actual data are available for this period for the private sector. From 2006 onwards the reported numbers are actual.

Numbers referring to Public Sector are actual for all years and have been obtained from administrative sources supplied from the public medical institutions, whereas the numbers referring to the private sector from 2006 onwards have been obtained from administrative sources of the Inspectors of Private Medical Institutions (Ministry of Health).

Deviation from the definition:

Assumed that in the Private Sector, there are no nurses holding administrative positions. All nurses have been considered as practising nurses.

For 2005, the number of associate professional nurses refers only to the public sector, no data available for the private sector.

In Cyprus, retired nurses usually do not renew their “licence to practice”, since in order to do so, they would need certificates for their participation in seminars, etc. Hence, it has been assumed that the retired nurses are not licensed to practice, so the number of “nurses licensed to practise” is equal to the number of “professionally active nurses”.

Estimation method: Not applicable, actual data used.

Break in time series: 2005 due to change in the data source.

Romania

Source of data: **National Institute of Statistics**, The activity of the sanitary and health care network – annual survey performed by NIS.

Reference period: data as of 31st December.

Coverage:

Data cover the "Nursing professionals" from public and private sector.

First series of nurses ISCED 5 graduated in 2007. The trend of increasing of number of professional nurses remains because of the increasing number of graduates.

Break in time series: 2010.

© OECD, *OECD Health Statistics 2025*. July 2025.

<https://www.oecd.org/en/data/datasets/oecd-health-statistics.html>