

The impact of Brexit on the NHS workforce

Since the UK voted to leave the European Union in June 2016, we have surveyed NHS trusts quarterly to help determine its impact on the EU workforce. Here are some of the results, and other key statistics.

89% decrease in European Economic Area (EEA) nurses and midwives joining the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) register for the first time in 18/19, compared with 15/16.

Numbers joining the NMC register

15-16:	9,389
16-17:	6,382
17-18:	805
18-19:	968 ¹



39,000+ full-time equivalent (FTE) nurse vacancies in the NHS.² That's 11 per cent of the nursing workforce.



This red line on the chart is for illustrative purposes only and does not accurately match the statistics presented.

8% of the social care workforce are EU nationals. The percentage of staff vacancies across the social care sector is also 8 per cent.⁴



6.4% of the nursing workforce in England have a known EU nationality in 2019. This is down from 7.4 per cent in 2016.³



76% of employers have had, or intend to have, a conversation with colleagues in social care about the impact Brexit is going to have on their services.⁵



56% of employers are confident that the EU Settlement Scheme will help them retain their current EU workforce.



52% of employers surveyed in 2019 still aren't sure of the further impact of Brexit on their workforce, a decrease of only 4 per cent from 2016.

2019	2016
52% not sure of impact	56% not sure of impact
27% negative impact	37% negative impact
21% stated neutral	5% stated neutral
0% positive impact	2% positive impact ⁷



21,791 licensed doctors in the UK are EEA graduates. The number has remained comparatively stable, with the figure being 22,873 in 2015.⁸



¹ NMC, Nurses and midwives from the EEA.

² NHS Improvement, Performance of the NHS provider Sector for the Quarter 4 18/19.

³ House of Commons Library.

⁴ Skills for Care, State of the adult social care sector.

⁵ Results are based on data collected from NHS Employers' survey of trusts, covering period Jan-March 2019 (response rate of 49 employers). The response rate of 49 reflects around 22% of all NHS trusts.

⁶ Results are based on data collected from NHS Employers' survey of trusts, covering period Jan-March 2019.

⁷ Results are based on data collected from NHS Employers' survey of trusts, covering period Jan-March 2019 (response rate of 49 employers) and data from October-December 2016 (response rate of 73 employers).

⁸ GMC, EEA doctors data.