

12 International comparison

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines certified nurses as first level (nurses who have had a minimum of three years of formal training, corresponding to registered nurses in Australia) and second level (nurses who have had between one and two years of formal training, corresponding to enrolled nurses in Australia).

Unfortunately, not all OECD countries use the same definition for certified nurses and formal training varies considerably across countries. A footnote has been used to indicate where the definitions are known to differ from the standard OECD definition.

These differences mean that comparisons with the OECD 'average' are not meaningful. However, Australia does appear to have a higher provision of registered nurses per 100,000 population than do most other English-speaking countries in the OECD.

Table 75: Certified nurses: OECD countries, 1996

Country	Certified nurses	Population ('000)	Per cent of population aged 65+	Nurses per 100,000 population
Australia	175,990	18,289	12.0	962.3
Austria	70,059	8,059	14.7	869.3
Canada (1995) ^(a)	264,305	29,615	11.9	892.5
Czech Republic ^(b)	83,832	10,316	12.5	812.6
Denmark (1995)	34,946	5,228	15.5	668.4
Finland	108,981	5,124	14.4	2,126.9
France (1995)	342,370	58,138	15.2	588.9
Germany (1995)	735,000	81,662	15.5	900.1
Greece (1993)	37,211	10,379	14.8	358.5
Hungary (1995)	49,479	10,106	14.0	489.6
Iceland (1994) ^(c)	1,952	266	11.1	733.8
Ireland	53,641	3,626	11.4	1,479.3
Italy (1995)	313,512	57,283	16.0	547.3
Japan	928,896	125,864	14.6	738.0
Korea (1995)	116,944	45,093	5.9	259.3
Mexico	96,775	96,582	4.1	100.2
New Zealand	37,026	3,640	11.3	1,017.2
Norway	65,232	4,381	15.6	1,489.0
Poland	215,295	38,618	11.5	557.5
Portugal	34,509	9,935	14.8	347.3
Spain ^(d)	177,034	39,270	15.5	450.8
Sweden (1995)	90,200	8,837	17.4	1,020.7
Switzerland (1990)	93,781	6,796	14.4	1,379.9
Turkey (1995) ^(e)	63,900	61,646	5.1	103.7
United Kingdom (1988)	^(f) 243,854	57,065	15.6	427.3
United States	2,161,700	265,557	12.7	814.0
Total	6,352,570	1,061,375	337.5	598.5

(a) Registered nurses employed in nursing as well as licensed nursing assistants. Some of the licensed nursing assistants may be unemployed or not employed in nursing. The licensed nursing assistants have at least one year of formal training.

(b) Data refer to full-time equivalent paramedical personnel.

(c) Enrolled nurses who have three years of training but not at university level are not included.

(d) Certified nurses in hospitals of the National Health Service only.

(e) Excludes midwives.

(f) Great Britain only.

Source: OECD Health Data File, 1998.