



Gofal Cymdeithasol **Cymru**
Social Care **Wales**



Social Workers
on the
Register in Wales
2017




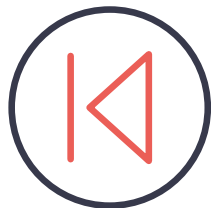
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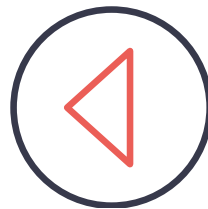
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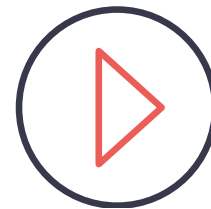
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1. Introduction

This is the seventh report of social workers in Wales. The purpose of the report is to comment on, scrutinise and make publically available a summary of the data so that we have a better understanding of the workforce.

The information from the report comes from the Social Care Wales Register of Social Care Workers (the Register). The information is collected when social workers apply for registration and when they tell us about any changes.

The report looks at the 5,965 individuals with a social work qualification on Part 1 of the Register as of 1 June 2017, and the analysis includes data about people joining and leaving the Register from 1 June 2016 to 31 May 2017. We look at the final year social work students to identify the number who passed, registered and gained employment in Wales.

2. Summary

The average social worker is 46 years old, white and female. Over a third have some Welsh language ability. The majority work for a local authority with a social work case load and have been in their current post for less than five years.

The average newly qualified social worker is 33 years old, white and female. Over a half have some Welsh language ability. The majority work for a local authority but under half have a social work case load. Most took between six and 12 months to obtain employment in social care/work.

The number of social workers on the Register has decreased for the first time. There are 98 less social workers on the Register compared to last year. Less social workers have joined the Register and more have left, however the number of social workers qualified outside the UK joining the Register has continued to rise. Turnover has increased from 5.5 per cent to 7.9 per cent. There are 131 less social workers employed by local authorities in Wales.

Interestingly, only 4.8 per cent who left the Register were under 30 years old, compared to 9.2 per cent in 2016. It was 5.4 per cent in 2012.

Almost all of the social work students in their final year of study on a social work degree in Wales qualified (241 out of 250). 92 per cent of these newly qualified social workers registered with us by 1 June, of whom 75 per cent had obtained a job in social care within a year, a decrease of seven per cent compared to last year. Over a third of all newly qualified social workers had a social care post at the time they qualified.



Only 45.6 per cent of newly qualified social workers had obtained a job as a social worker with a case load in Wales by the 1 June, which is a significant decrease from 57.6 per cent in 2016. Fewer social workers are qualifying and fewer are obtaining a social worker post within the following 12 months. In 2012, 89 per cent of newly qualified social workers obtained a social care post within 12 months, compared to 75.2 per cent this year.

3. Key points and trends

- **5,965 social workers on the Register**, a decrease from 6,063 last year.
- **12 per cent of social workers** have been in their **current job for more than 10 years**. A decrease of 1.3 per cent.
- There has been a further decrease in the number qualifying with the social work degree in the last five years.
- **480 social workers left the Register** and **382 joined**, resulting in a net reduction of 1.6 per cent since 2016.
- **237 newly qualified social workers** joined the Register (61.5 per cent of new registrants). Of these 222 qualified in Wales.
- Turnover of social workers in the last year was **7.9 per cent** (480 of 6,063 social workers left the Register), compared to 5.5 per cent in 2016.
- **The ratio of women to men** has stayed stable at roughly **4:1**.
- **46 has been the average age** of social workers since 2012.
- **36.7 per cent of social workers** declared they are **either fluent or had some Welsh language abilities**, an increase of 1.3 per cent.
- **45.6 per cent** (compared to 57.6 per cent in 2016) of all newly qualified social workers had obtained a job as a social worker with a case load in Wales by the 1 June.
- **31 individuals qualified outside the UK** and registered in Wales this year, the highest number since the Register opened.



4. What Social Care Wales is doing

We set the standards for social work training and education and completing an approved social work qualifying course is one of the criteria for joining the Register. We make sure social work qualifying training programmes are of an appropriate standard and give social workers the essential knowledge and skills they need. There are eight social work degrees and a range of post qualifying programmes. Four of these approved post qualifying programmes form the **CPEL Framework** (Continuous Professional Education and Learning) which is intended to support on-going social worker learning and development as they progress their careers.

We continue to commission Cardiff University, in alliance with Bangor, Swansea and Glyndŵr Universities, to deliver the Experienced Practice in Social Work, Senior Practice in Social Work and Consultant Social Work programmes. These, together with the Consolidation Programme for newly qualified social workers, comprise the CPEL Framework for social workers in Wales.

The third year independent evaluation of the CPEL Framework will be published in autumn 2017.

We continue to support social workers by the publication of **practice guidance**. Updated versions were published in spring 2017.

In 2016/17, we continued to lead on the national training plan for the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act. The plan included training for social workers. More information can be found on the **Information and Learning Hub**.

Data Unit Wales have published a report on the **Social Worker Workforce Planning data 2015-16**. The report aims to support local authorities and Social Care Wales in planning for future workforce needs and to inform the commissioning of social worker training in Wales.



5. Data and analysis

5.1 Number of social workers registered

- There are 5,965 social workers on the Register.
- This was a reduction of 1.6 per cent, and is the first year the number of social workers on the Register has gone down.

Table 1: Social worker's employment

Work Type	Total
Employed in social care	4,921
Self-employed in social care	257
Employed in social care by agency	204
On secondment in social care	18
Total working in social care	5,400

- 90.5 per cent of social workers on the Register (5,400 social workers) are currently working in social care, compared to 91.8 per cent last year.
- Of these, 4.8 per cent (257) are self-employed and 3.8 per cent (204) employed by an agency.
- There are 2.1 per cent of social workers on the Register with a main work address outside Wales, an increase from 104 to 128. This excludes 66 employed by an agency with a registered address outside Wales.
- Most of those on secondment in social care were working in various roles other than social worker.



Table 2: Reasons social workers not currently working in social care

Work Type	Total
Unemployed	152
Employment not known	142
Employed outside social care	112
Retired	50
Studying - not in employment	41
Employed outside UK	26
Career break	26
Self-employed outside social care	10
Carer – no employer	6
Total not working in social care	565

- The majority of social workers not currently practising but on the Register are either unemployed or their employer is unknown to us (52 per cent of those not practising).
- In future social workers will have to provide evidence they intend to practise social work in Wales to stay on the Register. This is likely to reduce the numbers in table 2.

5.2 Employment information

Table 3: Employment of all social workers on the Register by sector

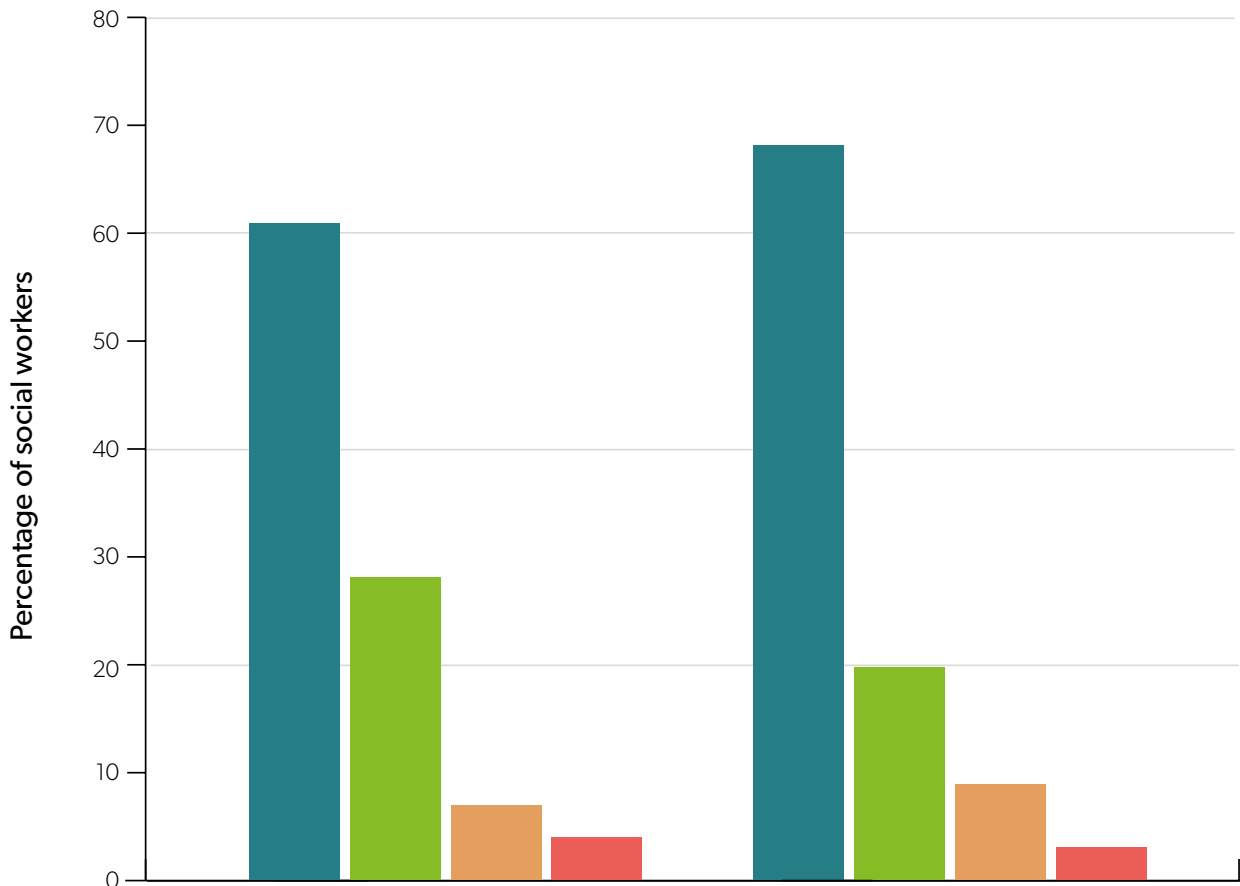
Sector	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Local authority – social services	4,146	75.2%	4,180	75.5%	4,246	76.5%	4,232	76.1%	4,067	75.3%
Third sector	368	6.7%	355	6.4%	369	6.7%	359	6.5%	333	6.2%
Private	265	4.8%	279	5.0%	274	4.9%	254	4.6%	245	4.5%
Self-employed	211	3.8%	223	4.0%	222	4.0%	234	4.2%	255	4.7%
Government	164	3.0%	149	2.7%	140	2.5%	143	2.6%	149	2.8%
Recruitment/employment agency	167	3.0%	184	3.3%	122	2.2%	118	2.1%	140	2.6%
Health and justice	75	1.4%	61	1.1%	71	1.3%	115	2.1%	104	1.9%
FE/HE Education	44	0.8%	42	0.8%	53	1.0%	47	0.8%	38	0.7%
Regulation/inspection	46	0.8%	44	0.8%	35	0.6%	32	0.6%	38	0.7%
Local authority – other	25	0.5%	22	0.4%	15	0.3%	30	0.5%	31	0.6%
Total	5,511	100%	5,539	100%	5,547	100%	5,564	100%	5,400	100%

- The percentages in the table have changed very little year on year since 2013.
- The biggest change in the last year has been the number working in local authority social services. This has fallen from 4,232 to 4,067 (less than one per cent), although the vast majority of social workers (75.3 per cent) continue to be employed in this sector.



5.3 Length of time in post

Figure 1: Length of time in current post compared to 2012



	June 2012	June 2017
0 to 5 years	60.9%	68.2%
5 to 10 years	28.1%	19.8%
10 to 15 years	7.0%	8.9%
15 years +	4.0%	3.1%

- This year, 68.2 per cent of social workers had been in their current job for five years or less. This is 7.2 per cent higher compared to five years ago.
- The percentage in their current post between five and 10 years has fallen by 8.3 per cent compared to five years ago, to 19.8 per cent in 2017.

5.4 Local authority social services in Wales

- Figures in the previous section refer to **all** social workers on the Register, some of whom are currently working outside Wales. This section looks at those working in local authority social services **in Wales**.
- The number of social workers on the Register and employed by local authority social services in Wales has decreased from 4,148 in 2016 to 4,017 (67.3 per cent of social workers and 74.4 per cent of those in social care employment).
- An additional 50 social workers on the Register, as mentioned in Table 3 above, are currently working for local authority social services outside Wales.

Table 4: Employment category of social workers in local authority social services in Wales

Type of employment	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Local authority – social services with a case load	3,073	3,205	3,288	3,262	3,163
Local authority – social services managing social workers no case load	431	461	460	450	441
Local authority – social services other posts	420	468	441	436	413
Total	3,924	4,134	4,189	4,148	4,017

- Over three quarters (78.7 per cent) of social workers working in local authority social services in Wales have a social work case load. This is similar to previous years.
- 44.2 per cent working outside local authority social services had a caseload, so considerably lower than those in social services.

Table 5: Number of social workers employed by local authority social services in Wales

Local authority	2015	2016	2017
Rhondda Cynon Taf	347	338	336
Swansea	345	348	335
Cardiff	345	354	317
Carmarthenshire	260	259	254
Caerphilly	227	233	227
Neath Port Talbot	218	221	226
Bridgend	232	219	219
Newport	224	221	209
Wrexham	199	205	191
Torfaen	172	182	191
Gwynedd	186	179	176
Conwy	186	178	168
Flintshire	166	160	159
Vale of Glamorgan	142	147	156
Powys	171	163	138
Pembrokeshire	148	146	134
Denbighshire	143	126	120
Monmouthshire	106	105	112
Blaenau Gwent	110	110	104
Ceredigion	102	104	100
Isle of Anglesey	80	75	73
Merthyr Tydfil	80	75	72
Total	4,189	4,148	4,017

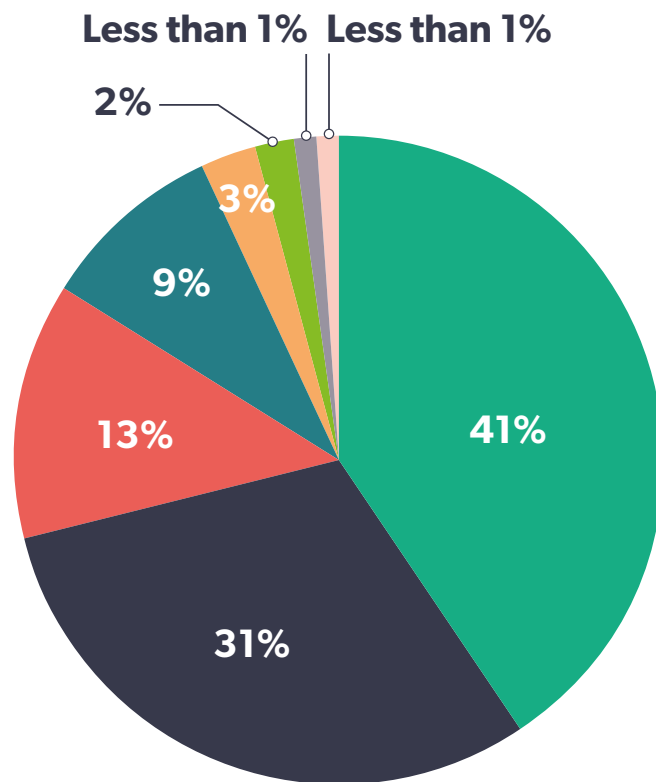
- Four of the local authorities have more social workers than in 2016 and 17 have less. One remained the same. There are 131 less social workers employed by local authorities in Wales in total compared to 2016.
- 17 of the 22 counties in Wales have seen a fall in the number of registered social workers. Powys has seen the biggest percentage decrease (-15.3 per cent), Cardiff (-10.5 per cent) and Pembrokeshire (-8.2 per cent).



- Four counties increased the number of social workers, the largest percentage gain being in Monmouthshire (6.7 per cent), Vale of Glamorgan (4.1 per cent) and Torfaen (4.9 per cent).
- The number of social workers employed in each unitary authority is broadly in line with the population of each authority. For example, 8 per cent of the population of Wales live in Swansea and 8 per cent of local authority social workers are employed in Swansea¹. The biggest difference is in Cardiff, where 11.5% of the population live but only 7.9% of local authority social workers are employed there.

5.5 Qualifications held

Figure 2: Qualifications held by social workers



- Diploma in Social Work
- Degree in Social Work
- Certificate of Qualification in Social Work
- Master's Degree in Social Work
- Qualified outside UK
- Certificate in Social Services
- Post Graduate Diploma in Social Work
- Other social work qualification

¹. Population data at 30 Jun 2015, Mid-year population estimates, Office of National Statistics



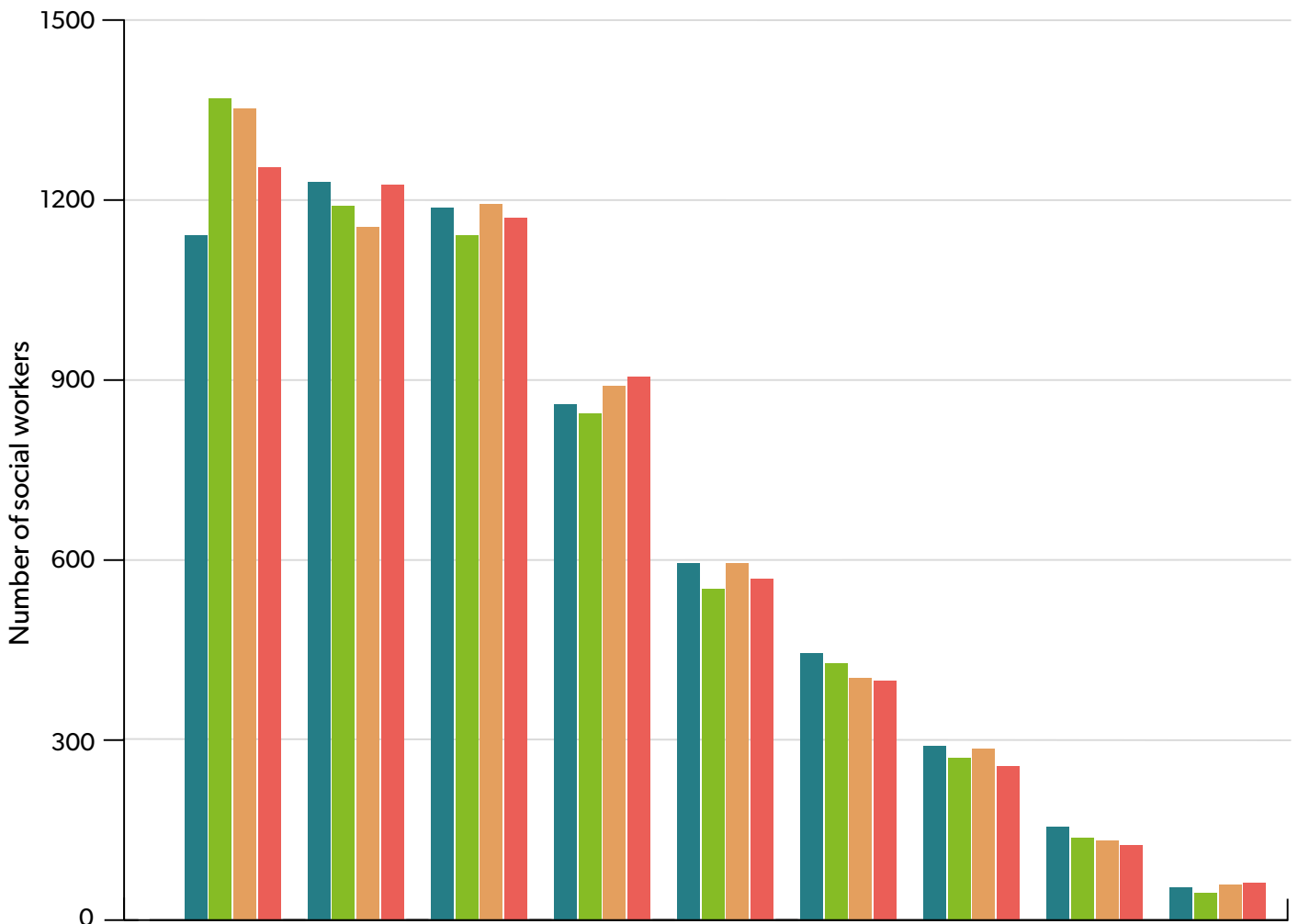
Table 6: Qualifications held by social workers

Qualification	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Diploma in Social Work	2,777	46.6%	2,672	44.7%	2,622	43.2%	2,468	41.4%
Degree in Social Work	1,372	23.0%	1,544	25.8%	1,690	27.9%	1,845	30.9%
Certificate of qualification in Social Work	1,053	17.7%	985	16.5%	920	15.2%	775	13.0%
Master's Degree in Social Work	369	6.2%	409	6.8%	487	8.0%	544	9.1%
Qualified outside UK	155	2.6%	151	2.5%	159	2.6%	166	2.8%
Certificate in Social Services	179	3.0%	168	2.8%	144	2.4%	126	2.1%
Post graduate Diploma in Social Work	23	0.4%	30	0.5%	27	0.4%	30	0.5%
Other social work qualification	31	0.5%	17	0.3%	14	0.2%	11	0.2%
Total	5,959	100%	5,976	100%	6,063	100%	5,965	100%

- The majority of social workers qualified with a Diploma in Social Work or a Degree in Social Work.
- The percentage with a UK social work degree (Bachelor or Master's degree) continues to increase each year as these have been the required qualifications to enter the profession since 2007.
- However the largest proportion of social workers (41.4 per cent) continue to hold the Diploma in Social Work. This falls each year as new social workers qualify.



Figure 3: Length of time since qualified



	Less than 5 years	5 to 10 years	10 to 15 years	15 to 20 years	20 to 25 years	25 to 30 years	30 to 35 years	35 to 40 years	More than 40 years
2014	1,141	1,230	1,187	860	595	445	290	156	55
2015	1,369	1,190	1,141	844	552	428	270	137	45
2016	1,352	1,155	1,193	890	594	403	285	132	59
2017	1,255	1,225	1,170	906	569	398	256	124	62

5.6 Newly qualified social workers

Table 7: Qualification outcome for final year social work students in Wales

Qualification	Number of social workers			
	In the year up to 1 June 2014	In the year up to 1 June 2015	In the year up to 1 June 2016	In the year up to 1 June 2017
Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work	2	3	3	0
Bachelor's degree in Social Work	209	196	168	161
Masters degree in Social Work	44	53	75	80
Total who qualified in social work	255	252	246	241
Referred	1	0	1	8
Deferred	1	0	0	0
Failed	4	7	4	1
Total number in final year of study	261	259	251	250

- 96.4 per cent of the 250 social work students in their final year of study qualified (241). This is a small decrease compared to the year up to 1 June 2016. The number of students who had referred, and therefore hoping to qualify at a later date, had risen to eight.

Table 8: Final year social work students in Wales: summary of registration and employment by 1 June

Status of registrants	Newly qualified social workers in Wales							
	2014		2015		2016		2017	
Qualified in Wales between June and May of year prior to the June report data	255		252		246		241	
Had registered as social workers by 1 June report date	223	87.5%	225	89.3%	232	94.3%	222	92.1%
Had obtained a job in social care by 1 June	179	70.2%	216	85.7%	179	72.8%	163	67.6%
Had obtained a job in social care in Wales by 1 June			212	84.1%	178	72.4%	158	65.6%
Had a social work post with a case load in Wales by 1 June	118	46.3%	174	69.0%	143	58.1%	109	45.2%
Had a social work post with a case load in a local authority social services in Wales by 1 June (including those working through an agency or on secondment)			160	63.5%	129	52.4%	101	41.9%

- 92.1 per cent of the students who qualified in 2016 registered in Wales before 1 June 2017, a 2.2 per cent decrease compared to 2015.
- 109 of the 222 who qualified and registered to work in Wales were employed as a social worker with a case load by the 1 of June. This is a decrease of 12.9 per cent compared to 2016. 101 were in a Wales local authority including those working through an agency or on secondment.
- A small percentage (2.3 per cent) of all those who joined the Register as newly qualified had obtained a job as a social worker in other sectors. A further 12.6 per cent were working in other posts in social care.



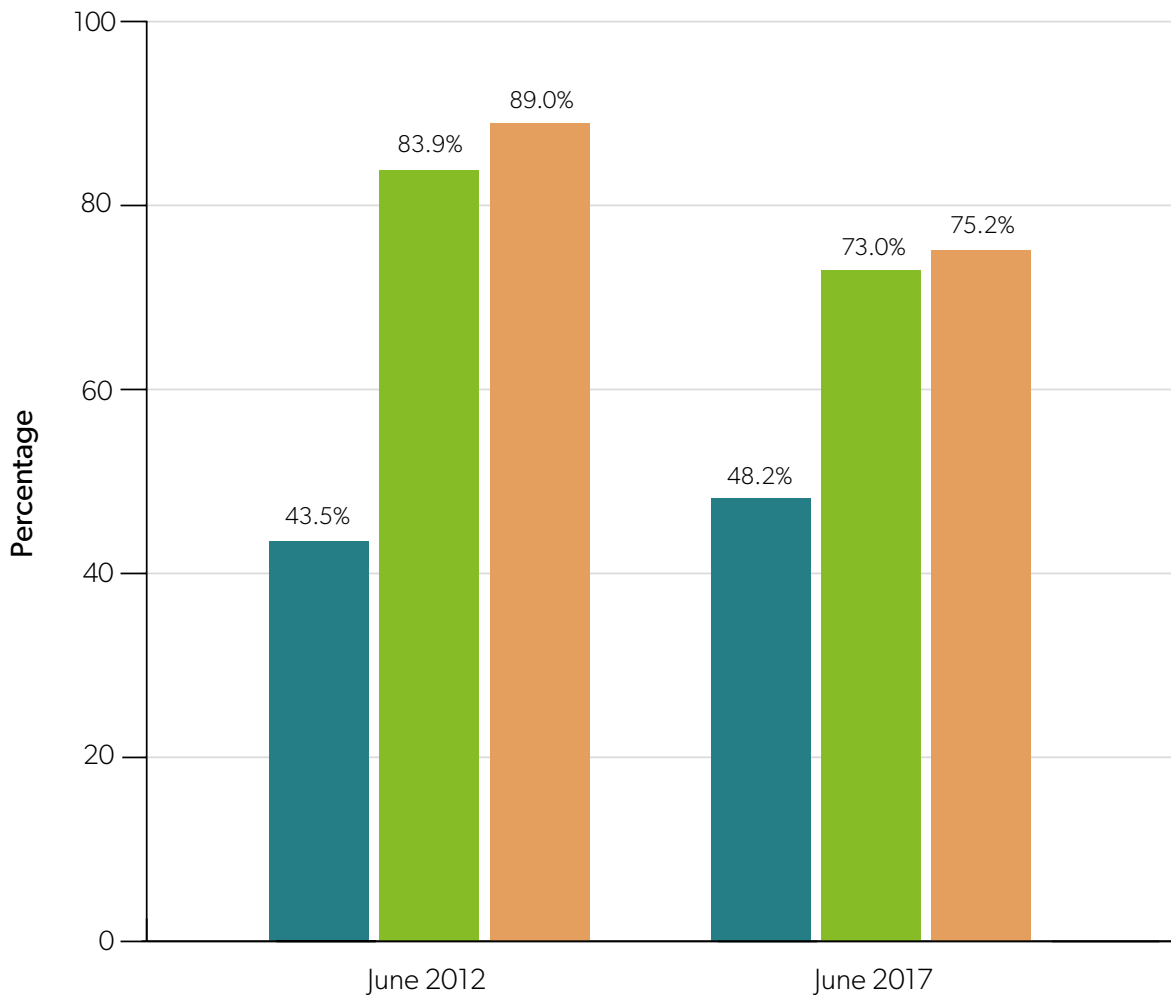
Table 9: Number of social workers qualified in the previous 12 months

	2014	2015	2016	2017
Qualified in Wales and registered in Wales	223	225	232	222
Qualified in Wales and did not register in Wales	32	27	14	19
Subtotal qualified in Wales	255	252	246	241
Qualified outside Wales and registered to work in Wales	34	24	18	15
Total newly qualified on the Register	257	249	250	237

- This year 19 (7.9 per cent) students qualified in but didn't register in Wales (compared to 5.7 per cent in 2016 but 10 per cent in 2015). It is not known if these students registered with other social work regulators to work outside Wales.

5.7 Time taken for newly qualified social workers to obtain a job

Figure 4: Length of time since graduating before newly qualified social workers, who qualified and registered in Wales, started in their current post in social care



- Already in social care job before qualifying
- In current post within 6 months of qualifying
- In current post within 12 months of qualifying

- Of the 222 newly qualified social workers who qualified in Wales and joined the Register, 48.2 per cent had a social care post at the time they qualified, an increase compared to 43.5 per cent five years earlier.
- 73 per cent had obtained a social care post within six months of qualifying. This is lower than five years ago when 83.9 per cent obtained a post within six months.
- 75.2 per cent had obtained a social care post within 12 months of qualifying, compared to 89 per cent in 2012.



Table 10: Employment category of all newly qualified social workers who registered in Wales

Type of employment	2014	2015	2016	2017
Local authority social work with a case load	134	160	137	108
Other posts	19	15	25	22
Local authority no case load	45	24	18	26
Third sector and private sector social work with case load	6	8	7	4
Agency social worker	5	5	5	7
Total in social care in Wales	209	212	192	167
Not employed or working outside social care or outside Wales	48	37	58	70
Total	257	249	250	237

- The number of newly qualified social workers in employment has dropped compared to previous years. As of 1 June 29.5 per cent of newly qualified social workers hadn't obtained a social work post, compared to 23.2 per cent in 2016.
- Of those in employment the majority are working for a local authority; however the overall number of newly qualified social workers with a social work case load working for a local authority has dropped from 54.8 per cent in 2016 to 45.6 per cent in 2017.

5.8 Social workers joining and leaving the Register

Table 11: Social workers joining and leaving the Register

	Social workers leaving or joining the Register					
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Left the Register	283	255	384	389	327	480
Joined the Register	400	461	432	406	414	382
Total on the Register at reporting date	5,719	5,911	5,959	5,976	6,063	5,965
Net difference	117 (2%)	206 (3.6%)	48 (0.8%)	17 (0.3%)	87 (1.5%)	-98 (-1.6%)

- For the first time more social workers left the Register (480) than joined the Register (382) in 2016 to 2017, resulting in a reduction of 1.6 per cent since 2016.
- The number of newly qualified social workers joining the Register this year is 237 (62 per cent of new registrants). Of these 222 qualified in Wales.
- The number of social workers who qualified more than a year ago and joined the Register in Wales decreased to 145.
- The number of social workers qualified outside the UK joining the Register continues to rise to 31.

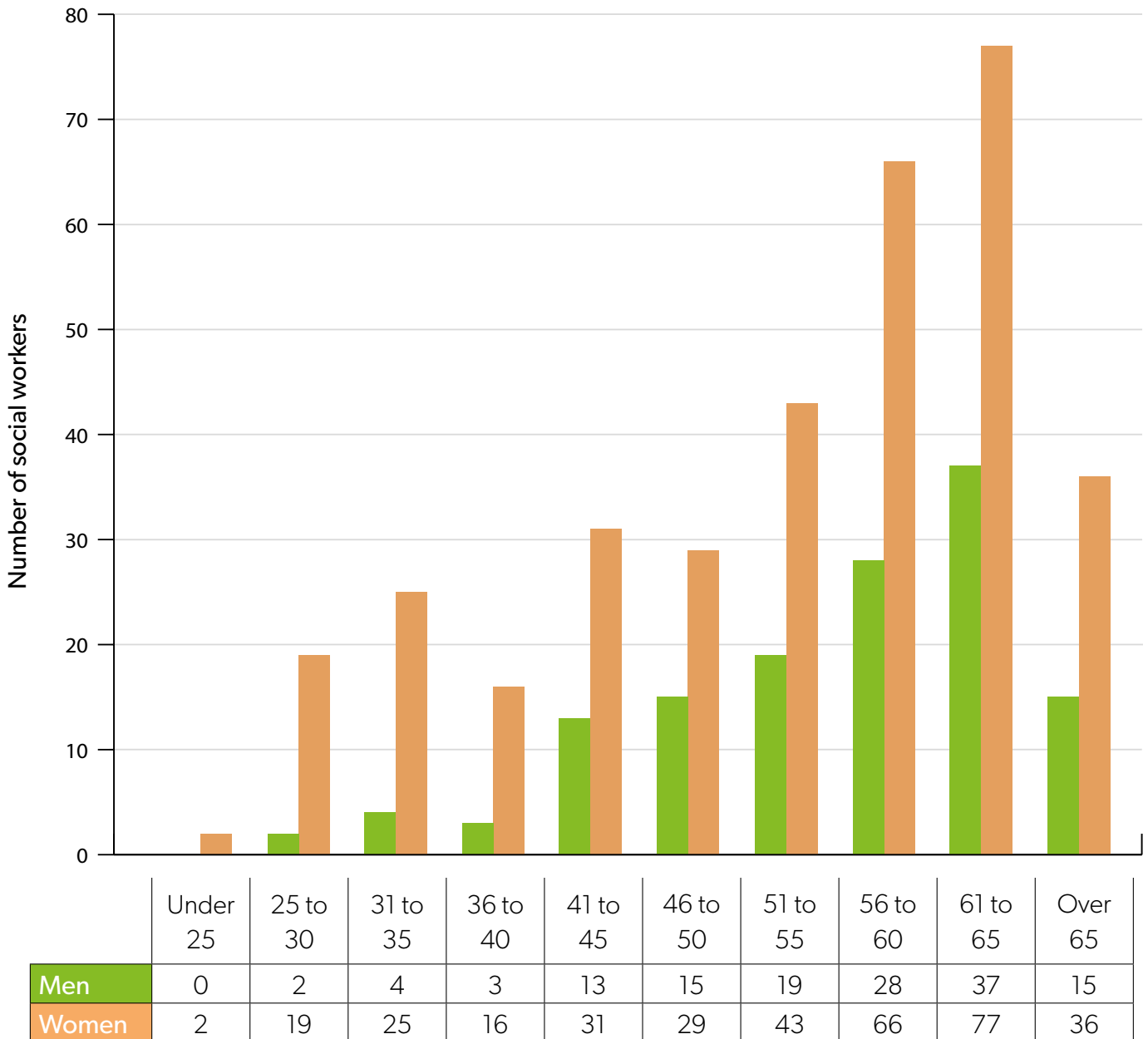


5.9 Turnover of social workers

- Turnover of social workers in the last year was 7.9 per cent, compared to 5.5 per cent in 2016.
- 467 social workers did not maintain their registration. This included 183 who contacted us to voluntarily remove themselves from the Register, 170 who did not complete a renewal application and 72 who were removed for not paying an annual fee.
- The most common reason given by those who voluntarily left the Register, as in previous years, was retirement (93 social workers, 19.4 per cent of all those that left).
- In addition, 15 had moved to a new job which did not require registration and 18 were working in social care outside Wales.



Figure 5: Age and sex of social workers who left the Register



- The most common age group of those who left, 43.3 per cent, was 56 to 65. Only 4.8 per cent who left the Register were under 30 years old, compared to 9.2 per cent in 2016.
- Of those who left the Register in Wales, 40.2 per cent (193 social workers) had been working in local authority social services. 44.2 per cent who left the Register were working with children (212 of the 480 who left).
- Of the social workers renewing their registration, over 99.9 per cent had undertaken at least 90 hours of training and learning (PRTL) in their three year registration period. Only one registrant gave their reason for leaving as unable to meet the PRTL requirement.



5.10 Age and sex of social workers

Table 12: Age of social workers

Age group	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Under 25	1.4%	1.2%	0.9%	0.8%	1.0%
30 and under	9.5%	9.4%	9.5%	9.1%	9.5%
31 to 50	51.7%	51.7%	51.0%	51.0%	51.6%
Over 50	38.7%	38.9%	39.5%	39.9%	38.8%
Over 60	9.4%	9.5%	10.4%	11.0%	10.6%

- As the table shows, there has been very little change in the age profile of social workers in the last five years.



Figure 6: Age and sex of all social workers on the Register

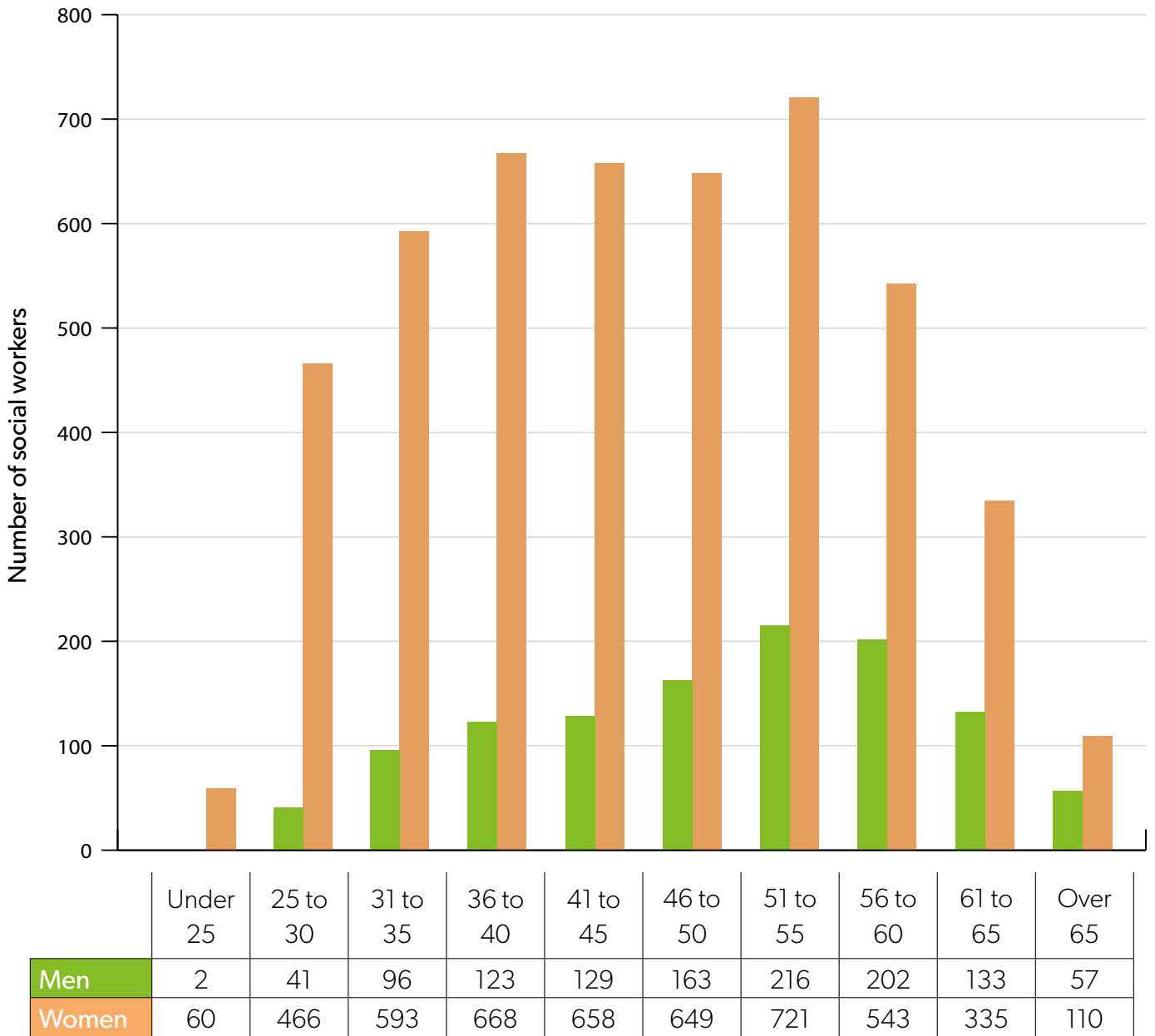
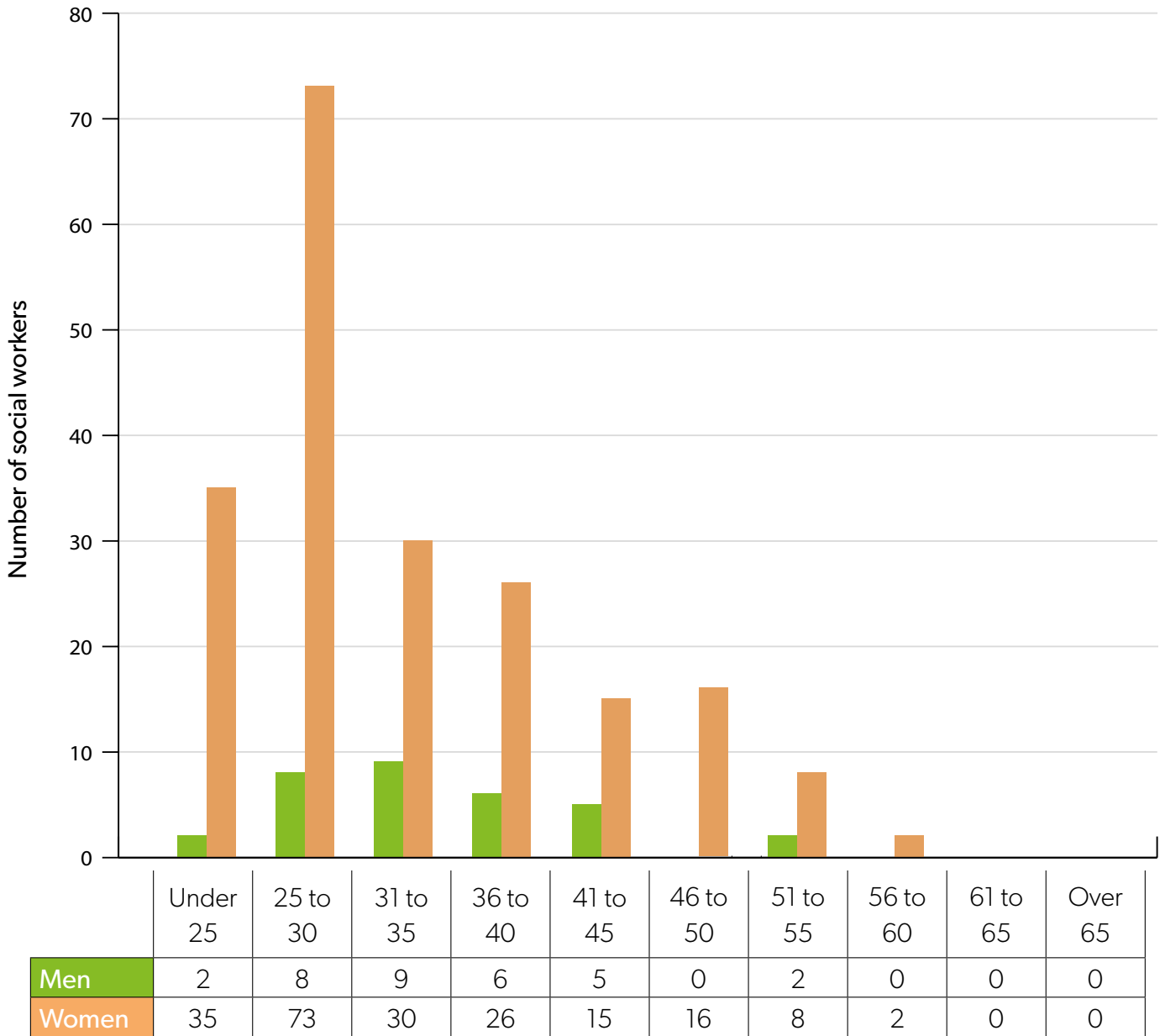


Figure 7: Age and sex of newly qualified social workers joining the Register in 2017



- The ratio of social workers remains approximately one man to four women.
- The percentage of men and women joining the Register as newly qualified social workers is very similar to last year. 86.5 per cent are women (compared to 86.4 per cent in 2016).
- 66.2 per cent of newly qualified social workers are under 35 years old compared to 21.1 per cent of all social workers on the Register.



- The average age of all social workers on the Register has remained at 46 years old since 2012. The average age of newly qualified social workers in 2017 is 33, similar to previous years but might be considered high given the expectation that graduates are usually younger.
- There has been a small but steady year on year decrease in the percentage of men on the Register from 21.9 per cent in 2012 to 19.5 per cent in 2017.

5.11 Diversity and Welsh language ability of social workers

Table 13: Disability declarations

Disability Declared	Percentage of social workers				
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
No	97.7%	97.9%	97.9%	97.9%	97.8%
Yes	2.3%	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.2%

- 79.6 per cent of social workers told us if they had a disability.



Table 14: Ethnic diversity

Ethnicity	Number	Percentage
White, White British, White Irish, White Welsh	4,078	87.5%
Any other White background	345	7.4%
Black African	42	0.9%
Other ethnicity	34	0.7%
Any other mixed background	22	0.5%
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	19	< 0.5%
Black Caribbean	17	< 0.5%
Black or Black British African	17	< 0.5%
Asian or Asian British Indian	16	< 0.5%
Indian	15	< 0.5%
Any other Asian background	9	< 0.5%
Mixed White and Asian	9	< 0.5%
Mixed White and Black African	9	< 0.5%
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	6	< 0.5%
Black or Black British Caribbean	6	< 0.5%
Any other Black background	5	< 0.5%
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	5	< 0.5%
Chinese	3	< 0.5%
Bangladeshi	2	< 0.5%
Pakistani	2	< 0.5%
Total	4,661	

- 77.1 per cent of social workers told us about their ethnicity.
- 94.9 per cent declared they were white, a small decrease compared to 2016 (95.1 per cent).
- In Wales 95.6 per cent of the population described themselves as white².

2. Source: "Local Labour Force Survey/Annual Population Survey 2016: Ethnicity by Welsh local authority" <https://stats.wales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Equality-and-Diversity/Ethnicity/ethnicity-by-year-ethnicgroup>



Table 15: Welsh language ability of newly qualified social workers compared to all social workers

	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Newly qualified	All social workers	Newly qualified	All social workers	Newly qualified	All social workers	Newly qualified	All social workers
Fluent Welsh	12.1%	13.5%	11.6%	13.5%	16.5%	13.6%	15.0%	13.8%
Some Welsh	32.0%	20.4%	31.6%	21.0%	29.8%	21.7%	39.7%	22.9%
No Welsh	55.9%	66.1%	56.6%	65.5%	53.6%	64.6%	45.3%	63.3%
Total declared some Welsh	44.1%	33.9%	43.3%	34.5%	46.4%	35.4%	54.7%	36.7%

- 79.5 per cent of social workers told us about their Welsh language ability.
- There is an increase in social workers declaring they have some Welsh (either some or fluent) to 36.7 per cent compared with 35.4 per cent in 2016.
- The percentage of newly qualified social workers who declared some Welsh increased by 8.3 per cent (54.7 per cent, compared to 46.4 per cent of newly qualified social workers in 2016).
- Of those social workers who were currently employed and had told us about their Welsh language ability, the percentage who spoke fluent Welsh was highest in Gwynedd (84.4 per cent) and Anglesey (80 per cent). The percentage with no Welsh at all was highest in Torfaen (85.1 per cent with no Welsh) and Newport (83.9 per cent).
- In the 2011 census, 19 per cent of the Welsh population said they were able to speak Welsh³.

3. Source: 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics. The 2011 Census question asked 'Can you understand, speak, read or write Welsh?'. The Census did not collect information on fluency levels or on frequency of use.



Contact us

We would be happy to hear from you if you have any comments or questions about this report.

If you have found the report useful we would be interested to hear how you have used the data.

Social Care Wales

South Gate House, Wood Street, Cardiff CF10 1EW

Tel: 0300 303 3444 | E-mail: info@socialcare.wales

Website: www.socialcare.wales | Twitter: [@SocialCareWales](https://twitter.com/SocialCareWales)

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