



Cyngor Gofal Cymru
Care Council for Wales

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Profile of Registered Social Workers in Wales

A report from the Care Council for Wales
Register of Social Care Workers June 2013

www.ccwales.org.uk



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides a profile of the characteristics of qualified social workers on the Register of Social Care Workers (the Register) in Wales at 1 June 2013. It is the third annual report using the data supplied to the Care Council for Wales (Care Council) by applicants to, and registrants on, the Register.
- 1.2 Information is also analysed about the movement of qualified social workers onto and off the Register between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013.

2. Social workers on the Register in Wales at June 2013

- 2.1 In June 2013 there were 5,911 (5,719 in 2012) registered social workers in Wales. Of these, 5,865 (5,694 in 2012) were registered on Part 1 of the Register which is for individuals with a social work qualification. In addition, 46 (25 in 2012) qualified social workers were registered on Part 2 of the Register as, at June 2013, they were working in one of the social care roles where registration is mandatory, that is, as a residential child care manager or worker, adult care home manager, or domiciliary care manager.
- 2.2 During the period June 2012 to May 2013, 255 registrants left the Register (4.5 per cent). In the same period, the Care Council granted registration to 467 who registered for the first time as a social worker, or returned to the Register as a social worker, in this year. This was a net increase in this profile of 212 registered social workers (3.7 per cent).
- 2.3 Not all registered social workers on the Care Council for Wales Register had a current work address in Wales. Of the 110 (146 in 2012) registrants who had a work address outside Wales, 45 (67 in 2012) worked in a county adjacent to Wales. All these registrants had requested to stay on the Care Council Register. In cases where they worked as a social worker in England they were also registered with the Health and Care Professions Council.

3. Characteristics of social workers in Wales

3.1 Employment status and sector

3.1.1 Some social workers have more than one job but this analysis is of only the primary job of registrants at June 2013.

Table 1 – Social workers employed or self-employed in social care by work category

Type of work in social care	Number	Percentage (of all registered social workers)
Employed in social care/services work	4,882	82.61%
Self-employed in social care/services	237	4.00%
Employed in social care/services work by an agency	186	3.15%
Employed in social care/services work, work address in England	80	1.35%
Social care work in health and justice sectors	73	1.23%
Employed in social care education ¹	42	0.70%
On secondment in social care/services	11	0.19%
Total	5,511	93.23%

3.1.2 Whilst social workers work in a range of jobs, 93.2 per cent of those registered in Wales in June 2013 were working in the social care sector. The number had risen to 5,511 from 5,330 in 2012. Those employed in social care/services work had fallen slightly to 4,882 (from 4,956 in 2012). The other categories had all risen slightly since 2012.

3.1.3 The number employed by an agency rose from 124 in 2012 to 186 in 2013, a 50 per cent increase.

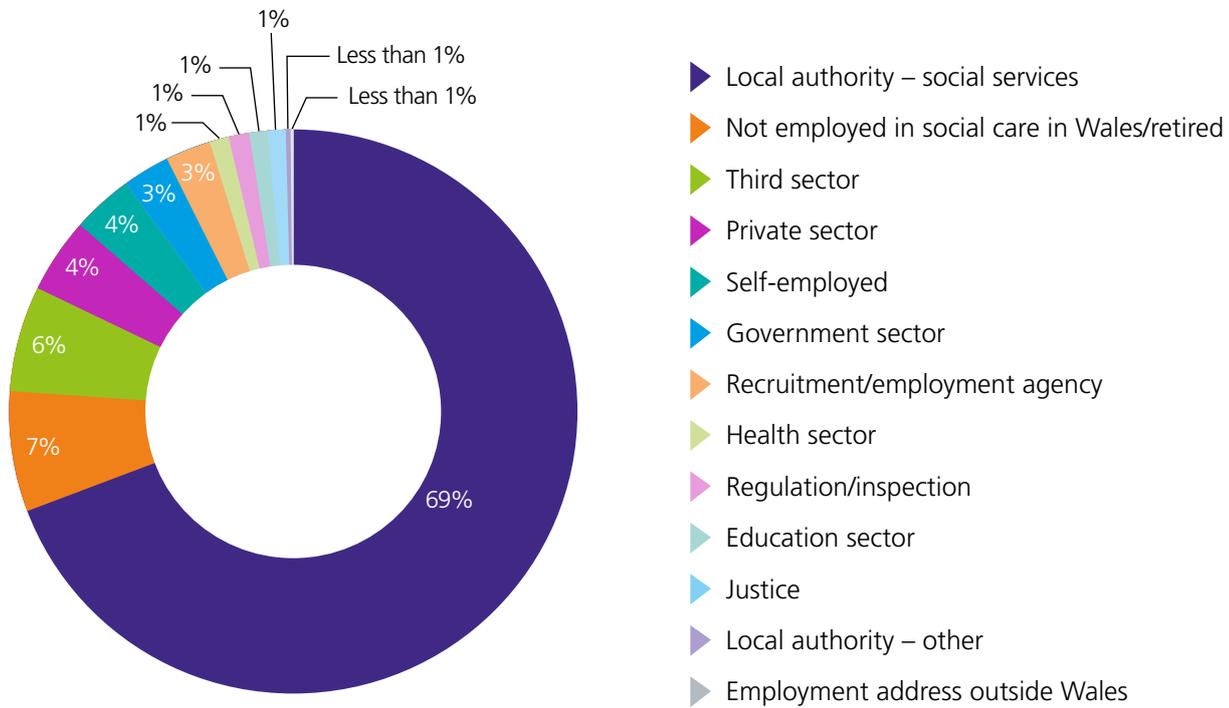
¹ Employed in education sector teaching social work or social care.

Table 2 – Social workers not employed or self-employed in social care by category

Other type of work	Number	Percentage (of all registered social workers)
Unemployed	163	2.76%
Employer not known	87	1.47%
Employed outside social care/services	56	0.94%
Retired	50	0.85%
Employed in health and justice sectors	16	0.27%
Outside the UK	12	0.20%
Self-employed outside social care/services	10	0.17%
Studying - not in employment	3	0.05%
Carer	3	0.05%
Total	400	6.76%

3.1.4 The percentage of registered social workers not employed in social care, retired, or where their current employer was not known, was 5.08 per cent. A further 1.69 per cent were employed or self-employed outside social care or outside the UK. The overall percentage on the Register but not employed or self-employed in social care was the same in 2012.

Figure 1 – All social workers in Wales: employment status including sector



3.1.5 Figure 1 includes all the social workers in Table 1, the percentages have been rounded. Social workers in Wales were predominantly employed by local authorities.

3.1.6 In the following table, where the registrant’s employment address was in Wales the sector has been provided. The self-employed registrants did not all have a work address in Wales, but have been included as they were registered to undertake work in Wales. Registrants with employment outside Wales have not been identified by sector.

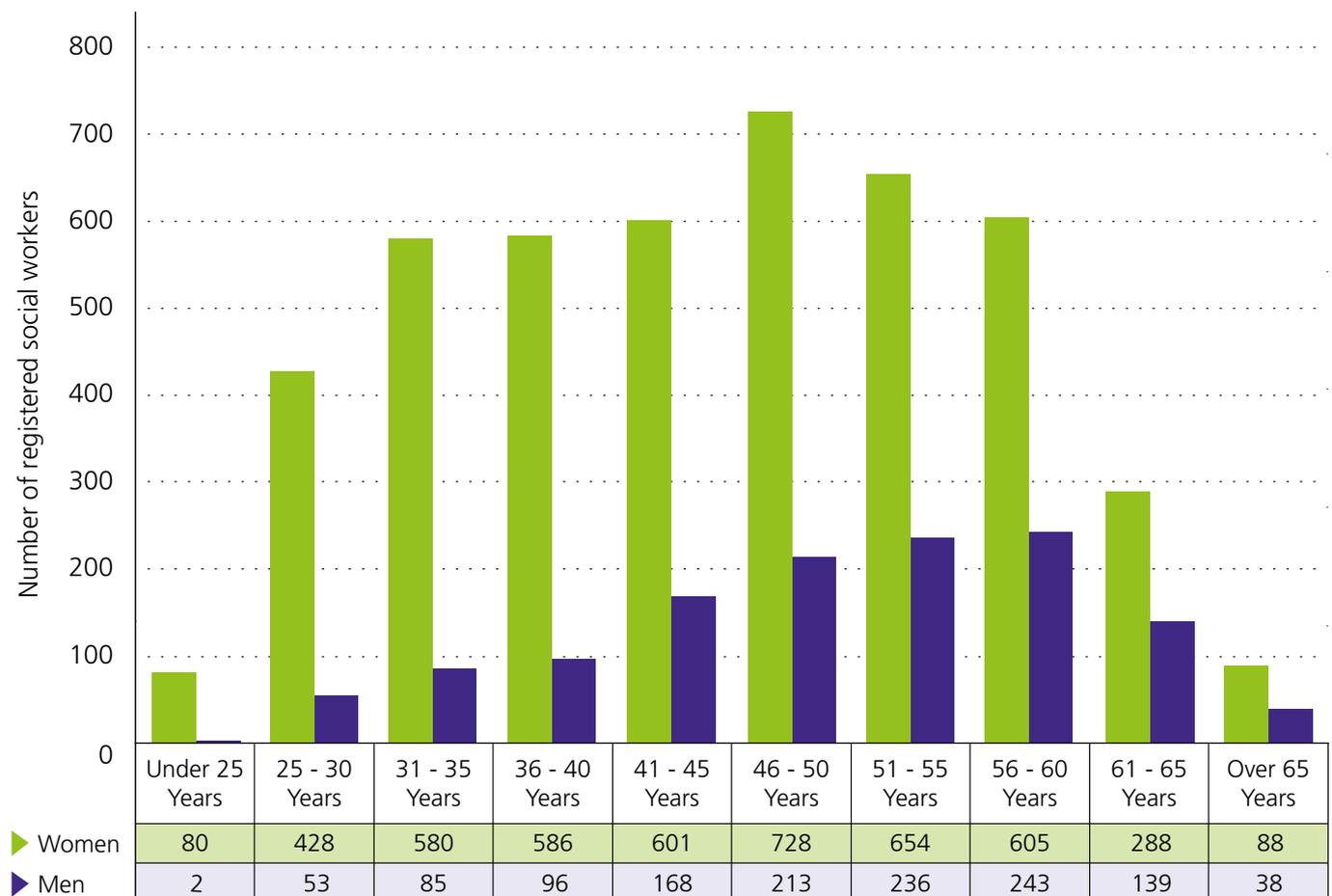
Table 3 – Employment sector of social workers where employment address was in Wales or status where no employment address in Wales

Employment sector in Wales or status	Number of registered social workers	Percentage of registered social workers
Local authority - social services	4,096	69.3%
Third sector	355	6.0%
Private sector	257	4.3%
Self-employed	212	3.6%
Recruitment/employment agency	168	2.84%
Government sector	155	2.62%
Health sector	48	0.81%
Education sector	44	0.74%
Regulation/inspection	43	0.73%
Local authority – other	25	0.42%
Justice	25	0.42%
Status where no employment address in Wales		
Social care employment address outside Wales	80	1.4%
Not employed in social care in Wales/retired	403	6.82%
Total	5,911	100%

- 3.1.7** The majority of employed social workers in Wales worked in social services departments in local authorities. The number had risen slightly from 4,062 in 2012.
- 3.1.8** The third sector had fallen in number and percentage (from 374, 6.5 per cent, in 2012). The remaining 25 per cent were distributed across the other categories. The government and regulation and inspection categories had fewer registrants, but all the other categories had slightly more than in 2012.
- 3.1.9** Of the 257 social workers employed in the private sector, over half (138) worked for foster care organisations.

3.2 Age and sex

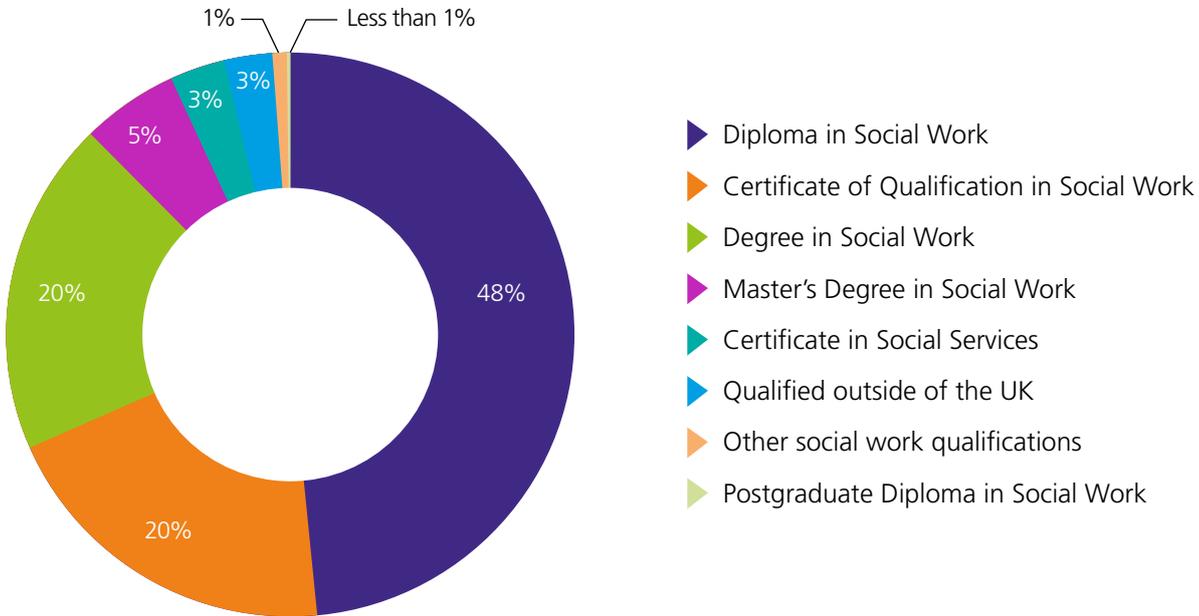
Figure 2 – Age and sex of registered social workers



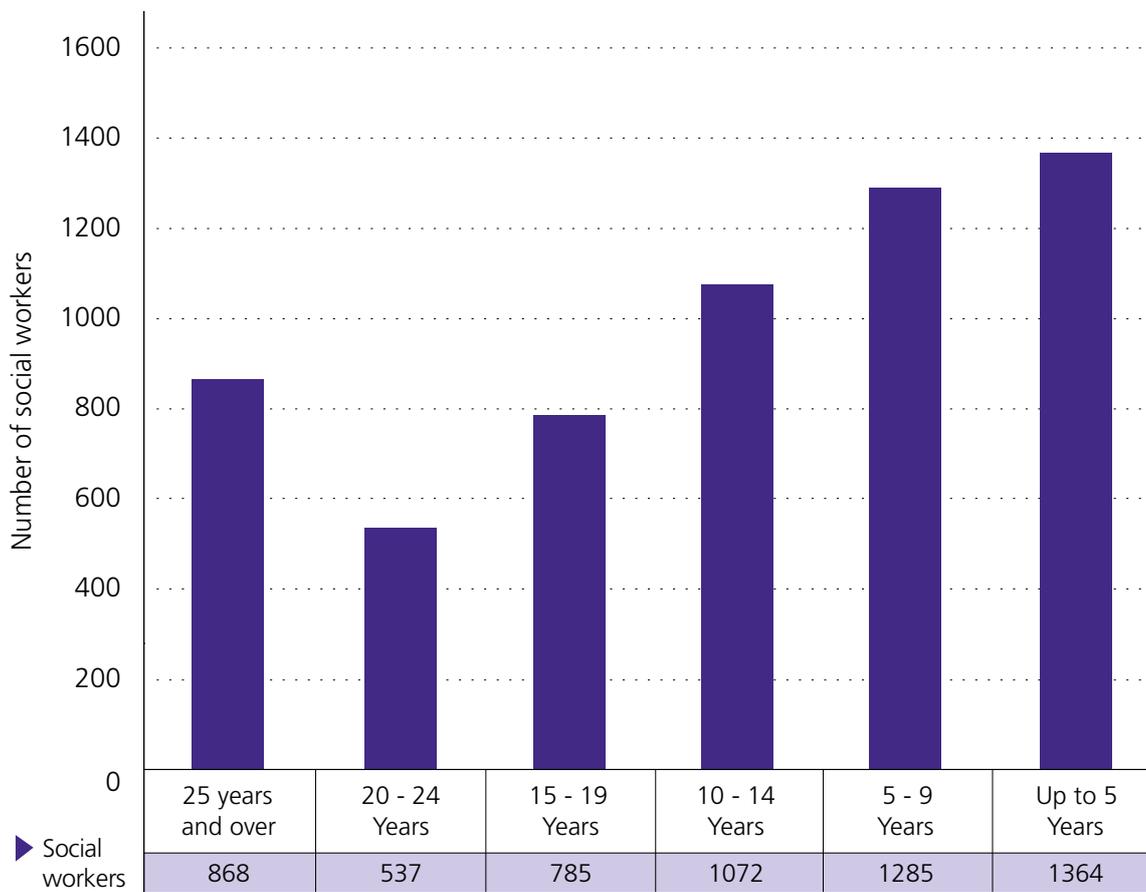
- 3.2.1** Most registered social workers in Wales were women (78 per cent). This percentage had not changed since the 2012 profile.
- 3.2.2** The proportion of men to women continued to be far less in the younger age groups than the older age groups. The percentage of men under 46 years old had fallen by 1 per cent since the 2012 profile to 15 per cent. There was no change in the percentage of men over 46 years.
- 3.2.3** Compared with 2012, the percentage of social workers over 55 years old had risen (by 1 per cent) to 24 per cent, those under 25 years old remained steady at 1 per cent (82).
- 3.2.4** At June 2013 there had been an increase in social workers in the age groups over 55 from 1,333 to 1,401. Those over 60 had risen from 511 to 553.

3.3 Qualification

Figure 3 – Social work qualifications held by registrants at June 2013



- 3.3.1** At June 2013, the Diploma in Social Work (DipSW), continued to be the most commonly held social work qualification, although the percentage had fallen 2 per cent compared with the 2012 profile. The DipSW was the current qualification from 1991 to 2005 when the social work degree was introduced in the UK.
- 3.3.2** The first graduates from the social work degree provided in Wales were in 2007. The percentage holding the social work bachelor's or Master's degree, or the Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work had risen to 25 per cent of registrants at June 2013, a 4 per cent rise on 2012.
- 3.3.3** The percentage of registrants qualified outside the UK with a qualification equivalent to the DipSW or a UK degree in social work (3 per cent) remained the same as in 2012.
- 3.3.4** The pattern of applications from people qualified outside the UK was similar to 2011-2012. There were 12 applications to register from June 2012 to May 2013 from people qualified in a variety of countries both inside and outside the EU, including India, Ireland, Germany, Portugal, the USA and Poland. Of these, nine held a qualification and experience in social work equivalent to the UK social work degree and were registered, one had a shortfall in their qualification and experience and was undertaking a practice placement to an agreed training plan, two applications were in process. In addition, four applicants who had applied before June 2012 were registered following successful completion of an adaptation period or aptitude test.

Figure 4 – Number of years since registered social workers qualified at June 2013

3.3.5 Over 75 per cent of registered social workers qualified at least five years ago and over half qualified 10 or more years ago.

Table 4 – Social workers registered at June 2013 who qualified during the previous five years

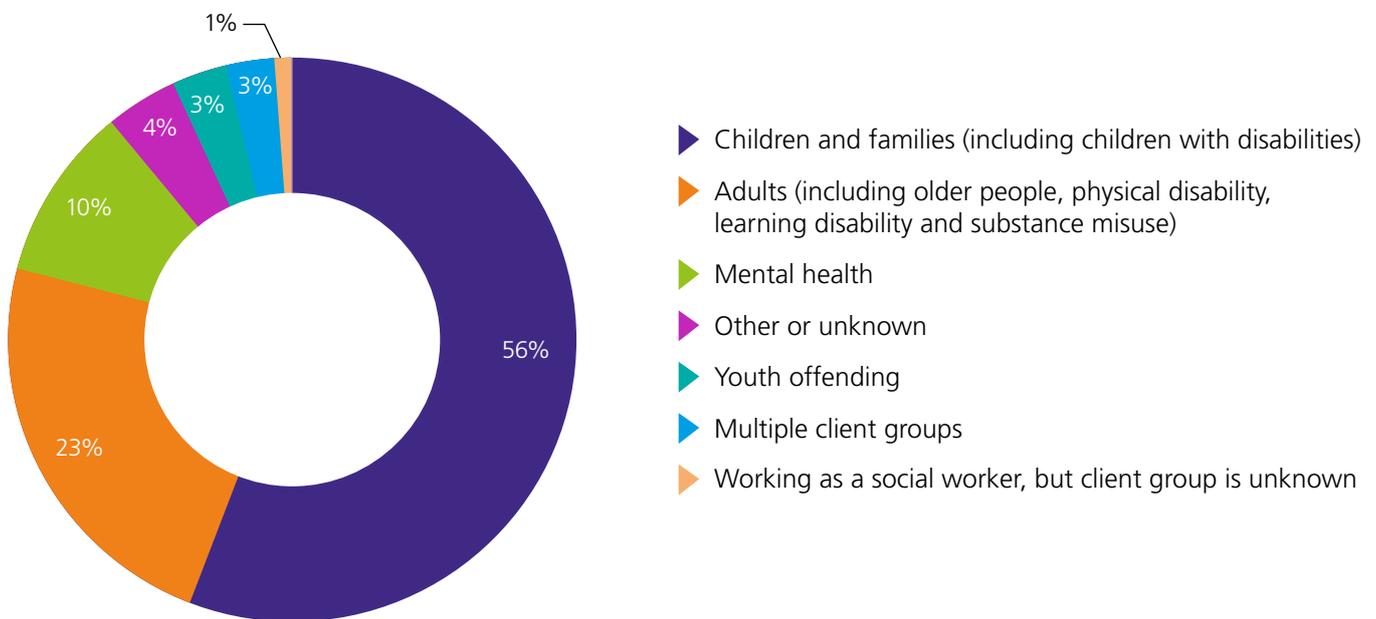
Length of time since qualifying	Number of social workers (at June 2013)
Up to 1 year	270
1 to 2 years	299
2 to 3 years	287
3 to 4 years	262
4 to 5 years	246
Total	1,364

3.3.6 There had been very little attrition from the Register of graduates who qualified over the last five years.

3.4 Client groups

3.4.1 Registrants provide information about which client groups they work with. The information provided has been categorised as follows: working with children and families; working with adults, including older people, physical disability, learning disability and substance misuse; working in mental health; working in youth offending. Those who described themselves as working with older people, children and families and additional client groups are categorised as working with multiple client groups. Some registrants were in a social work role but had not provided this information. All other registrants either described their client group as none of these categories or were unemployed.

Figure 5 – Client groups of registered social workers working in social care in Wales



3.4.2 There had been little change in the client groups of social workers in 2013 compared with those in the 2012 profile.

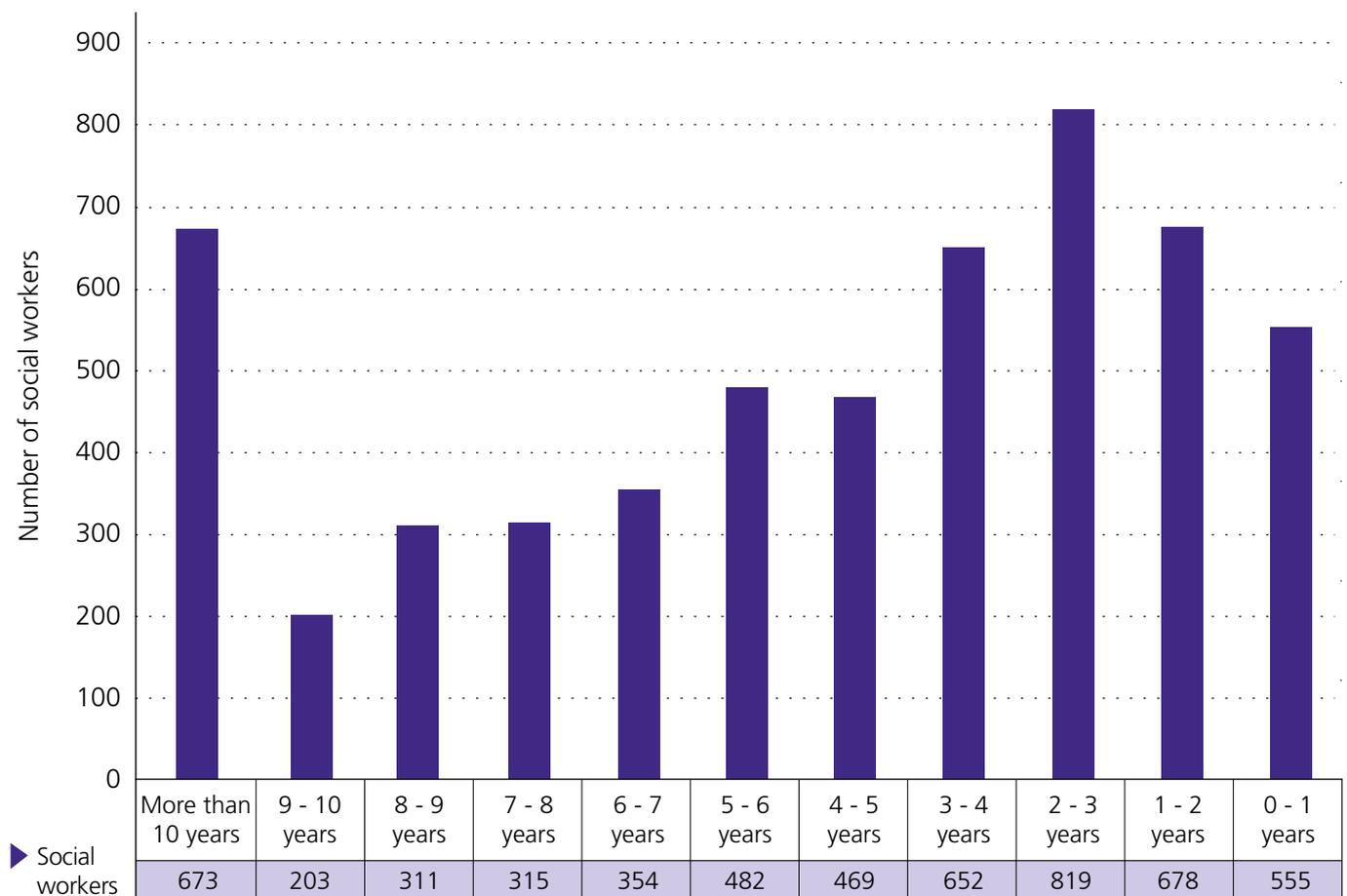
3.4.3 The pattern of the client groups of social workers working for local authority social services in Wales at June 2013 was very similar, the small variation being fewer working with children and families (54 per cent) and more working with adults (27 per cent).

3.4.4 The number of social workers with 'independent' in their job title halved from 149 in 2012 to 78 in 2013. This included 66 (67 in 2012) self-employed independent social workers, 52 of whom (55 in 2012) were working with children and families.

3.5 Length of time in post

3.5.1 This analysis is based on the information provided by registrants who were on the Register at June 2013 and their employers, about their employment changes during the year of the profile.

Figure 6 – Number of years registered social workers at June 2013 had been in their most recent job or self-employed



3.5.2 The movement of social workers into and between jobs has varied each year since the first profile was analysed in 2011. The number remaining registered and moving job was 868 in 2010 – 2011, 497 in the year 2011- 2012 and had risen again to 555 in the year 2012-13. In 2012 – 2013, this included 389 (347 in 2012) who moved to a different job. In 2012 – 2013, fewer social work students had obtained social care employment prior to qualifying, so a greater number moved into a new job during the reporting period. The profile of newly qualified social workers is discussed in section 6.

Table 5 – Number in each profile who had been employed in their current job over five years with the percentage employed or self-employed in social care

	June 2012 profile	June 2013 profile
In current job up to five years	3,211 (60%)	3,173 (58%)
In current job longer than five years	2,119 (40%)	2,338 (42%)
Total	5,330	5,511

3.5.3 At June 2011, only 23 per cent had been in the same job for five years, this increased to 40 per cent at June 2012 and to 42 per cent at June 2013.

3.6 Diversity

3.6.1 Equal opportunity data are collected on a voluntary basis as part of the application process. Of the registered social workers, 72.4 per cent provided information about their level of Welsh language ability (75 per cent in 2012). Of these registrants, 13.6 per cent stated that they were fluent Welsh speakers (14 per cent in 2012), whilst a further 20 per cent stated that they understood Welsh.

3.6.2 Of the 73.4 per cent of registrants who supplied monitoring information (65 per cent in 2012 profile), 2.2 per cent stated that they had a disability.

3.6.3 There had been an increase in ethnic diversity amongst social workers. Of the 73 per cent who indicated their ethnicity (71 per cent in 2012 profile), 95 per cent described themselves as White British, Welsh or Irish as in 2012. Other ethnic groups represented included Indian, African, Asian, Caribbean, Chinese and Bangladeshi. In the 2011 census, 96 per cent of the population of Wales gave their ethnic origin as White British².

² National Statistics Census 2001, www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/profiles/commentaries/ethnicity.asp

4. Profile of registrants with a social work case load or managing social workers

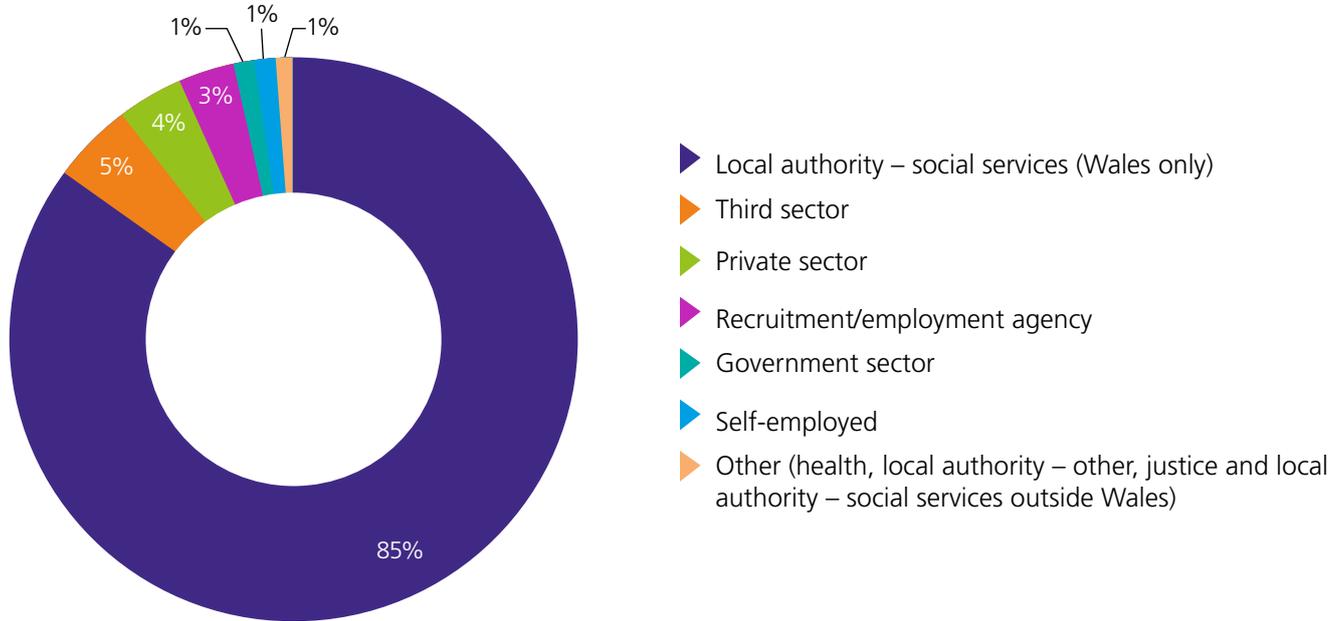
4.1 Out of the 5,911 on the Register, 5,511 social workers were working in social care at June 2013, 78 per cent described themselves as having a social work case load, managing social workers, or both. The 22 per cent of registered social workers who had employment and did not have a case load or manage social workers, worked in a wide variety of roles including directing, planning, operational management, inspection, education and training, reviewing, commissioning and in social care services.

Table 6 – How registered social workers described their job

	2011 Profile		2012 Profile		2013 Profile	
	percentage	number	percentage	number	percentage	number
Social work case load only	52%	2,913	58%	3,317	55%	3,268
Managing social workers - with or without a case load	19%	1,064	20%	1,144	18%	1,047
Neither managing social workers nor a social work case load (other category) or unknown	29%	1,624	22%	1,258	27%	1,596
Total		5,601		5,719		5,911

4.2 Fewer social workers described themselves as managing social workers than in 2012. While there were more social workers registered they described themselves as holding a wider range of roles.

Figure 7 – Registrants with a social work case load and who managed social workers by sector, or employment type where sector not relevant

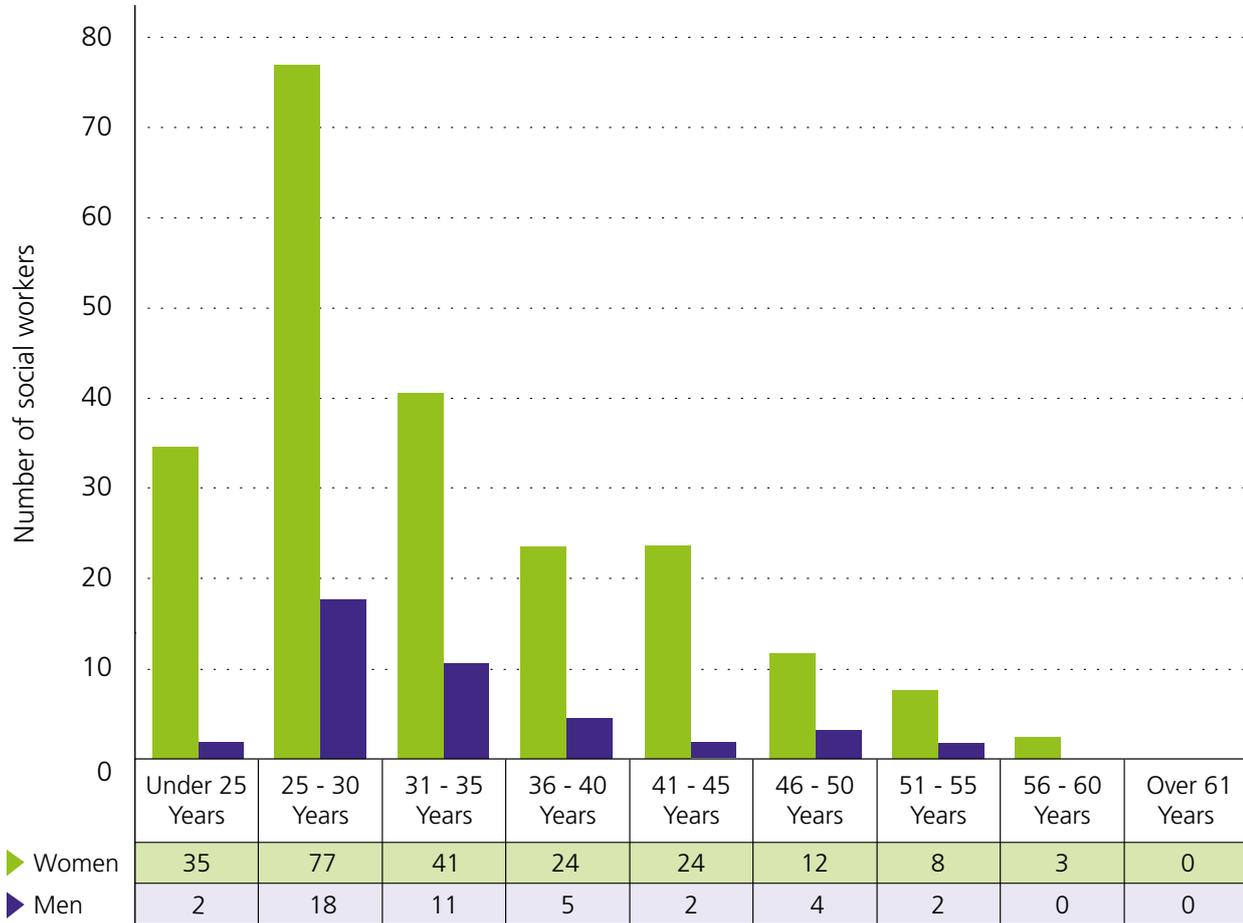


- 4.3** Of the 4,306 social workers who described themselves as having a social work case load, managing social workers or who managed social workers and had a social work case load, 85 per cent were employed by local authority social services.
- 4.4** The analysis of the client groups of social workers with a case load or managing social workers working in local authorities shows a similar pattern to figure 5. A slightly smaller percentage (52 per cent) worked with children and families, slightly higher percentage (27 per cent) worked with adults and in mental health (12 per cent).
- 4.5** Of the registered social workers working in a local authority with a case load and / or managing social workers, 4.5 per cent were qualified within the year of this profile. Of all the registered social workers working with children and families, 4.7 per cent had qualified within the year of this profile.

► 5. Profile of newly qualified social workers qualified with an approved UK bachelor or Master's degree, or postgraduate diploma, in social work

- 5.1** Between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013, 259 students qualified with either a bachelor's or Master's degree in social work from Welsh higher education institutions. This was 24 fewer than in 2011-2012 when 283 qualified, and also less than the 274 who qualified in 2010-2011.
- 5.2** There were more men who qualified in social work in Wales in 2012-2013. The number had increased from 30 in 2011-2012 to 38 in 2012-2013 (27 per cent increase). Nevertheless, the majority of graduates, 85 per cent (221), were women.
- 5.3** Of those 259 who qualified in Wales, 93 per cent (241) registered in Wales as newly qualified social workers. While a higher percentage of those who graduated in Wales in 2012-13 registered as newly qualified social workers, there were 14 fewer in number than in the previous year. The 18 (28 in 2012) social workers newly qualified in Wales who did not register with the Care Council may have registered with other UK care councils to work in other parts of the UK.
- 5.4** There was only a small decrease in the overall number of newly qualified social workers who registered to work in Wales, from 271 in 2011-2012 to 268 in 2012 -13. This is because, in addition to the 241 graduates from Wales, 27 new graduates qualified in England also registered to work in Wales. There were 11 more non-Wales UK graduates than in the previous year when there were 16.

Figure 8 – Age and sex of social workers registered to work in Wales at June 2013 who qualified with a UK degree in social work between June 2012 and May 2013



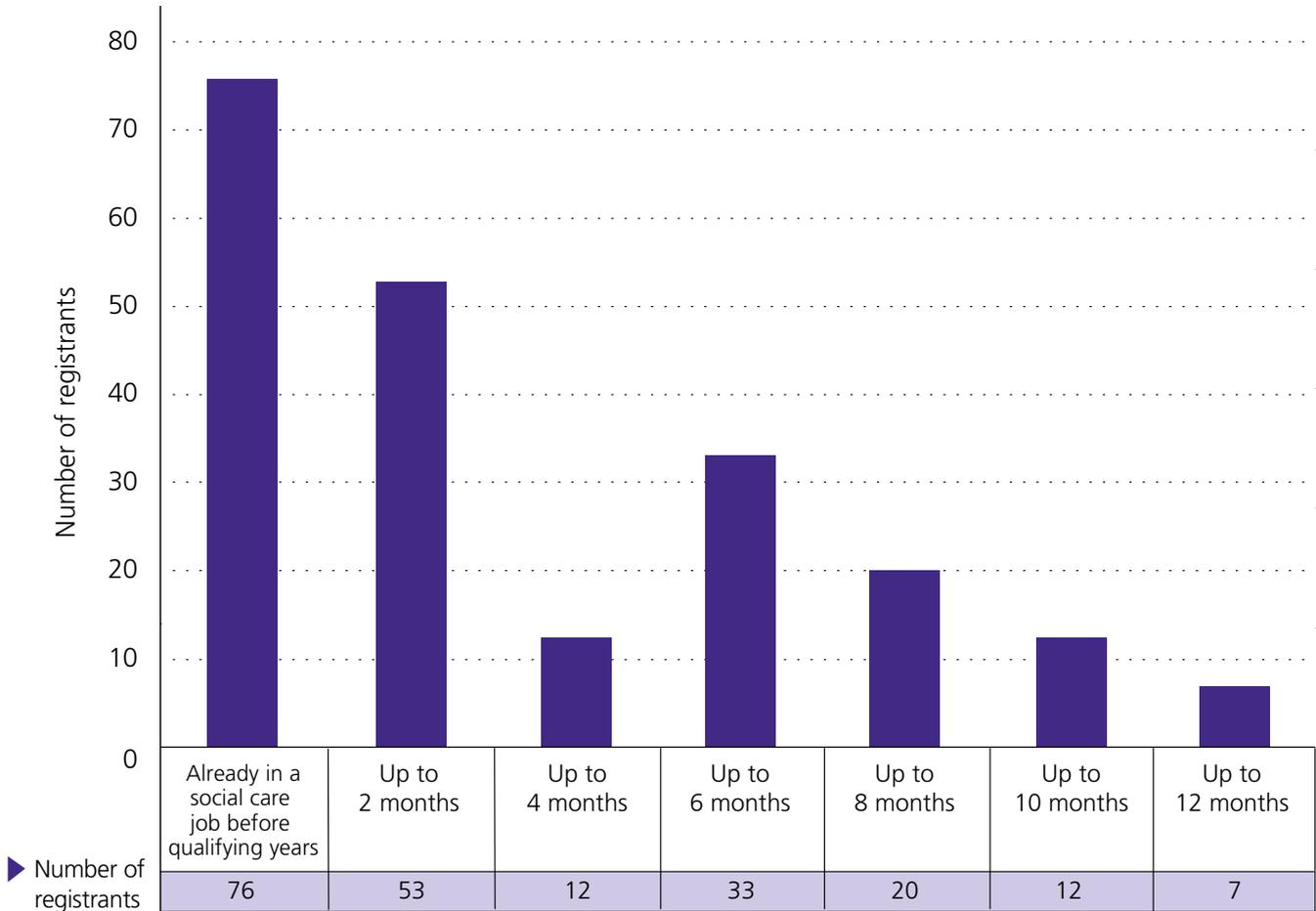
5.5 Newly qualified social workers registering in Wales have predominantly been female and in the younger age groups. The majority of the 268 newly qualified social workers registered at 1 June 2013 were under 36 years old (184, 68 per cent) and 83 per cent were women. The percentage of newly qualified social workers who are women remains higher than the 78 per cent of women on the Register as a whole. There were 44 male newly qualified social workers (six qualified in England) which was 10 more than in 2011-2012.

Table 7 – Newly qualified social workers: type of employment at 1 June 2013

Type of employment	Number of social workers qualified June 2012 - May 2013 and on the Register at 1 June 2013	Percentage of social workers qualified June 2012 - May 2013 and on the Register at 1 June 2013
Social worker in local authority	176	66%
Agency social worker	11	4%
Third sector and private sector social worker	7	3%
Social worker in England	1	Less than 1%
Total in social work: 195		73%
Other social care posts	16	6%
Agency social care posts	3	1%
Total in social care: 214		80%
Not employed in social care in Wales	54	20%
Total newly qualified social workers	268	100%

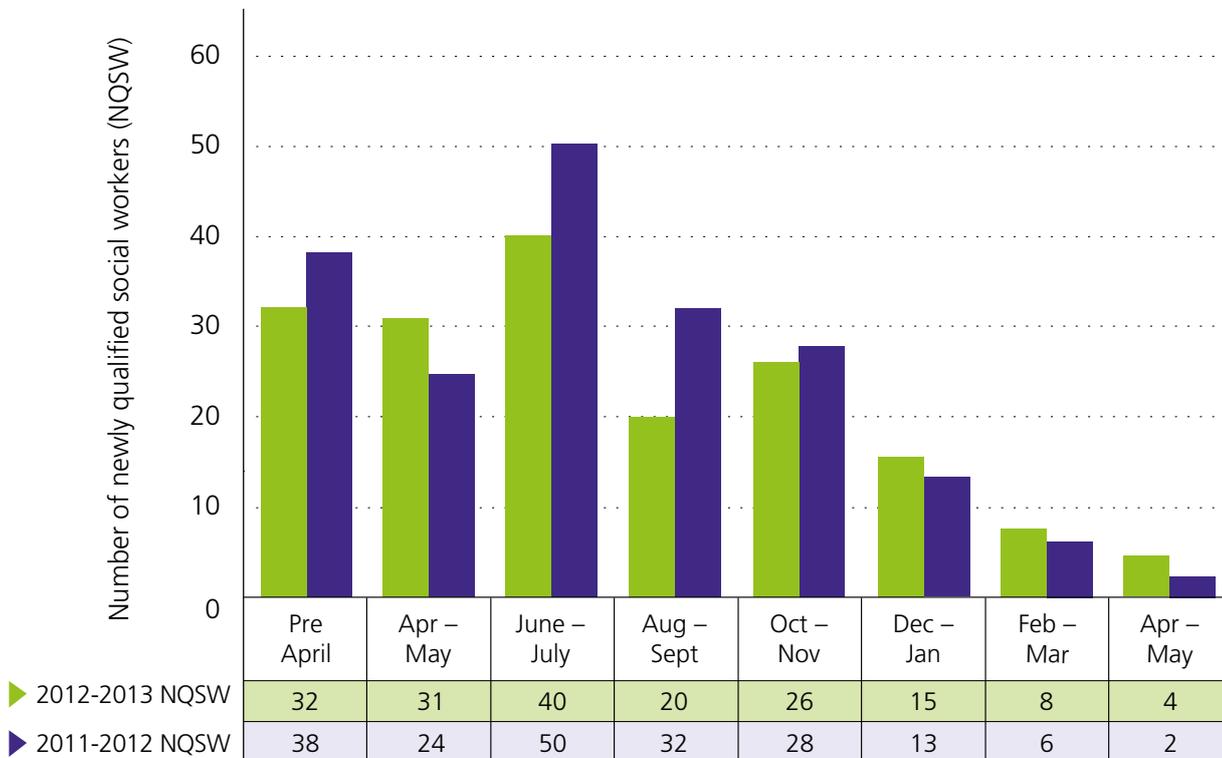
5.6 At 1 June 2013, of the 268 newly qualified social workers who had registered, 80 per cent (214) were employed in social care. The 54 registered graduates without social care employment in Wales at 1 June 2013 included 49 who qualified in Wales and five who qualified in England.

Figure 9 – Length of time since graduating that registered newly qualified social workers, with a job in the social care sector in Wales, started in their current post



- 5.7** Over a third (36 per cent) of the new social workers who registered were already in a social care post at the time of qualifying but not all were in a social work role. In 2011 – 2012, more students (111) were in a social care post at the time of qualifying. A small number of graduates from 2011 – 2012 (18) entered a social work job over 12 months from graduating.
- 5.8** Within six months of qualifying, 65 per cent (174) of the 268 graduates who registered had employment in the social care sector. In 2011 – 2012, 79 per cent of graduates who registered (214 of 271 graduates who registered) had employment in the care sector. This suggests that it look longer in 2013 for newly qualified social workers to obtain a job in social care. The trend has been for new graduates to take longer to obtain a job in each year the profile has been published.

Figure 10 – Month newly qualified social workers started in their current post in a local authority in Wales in 2011 - 2012 and 2012 - 2013



5.9 Newly qualified social workers who are employed by local authorities tend to either already have employment or obtain work during the summer they qualify. However, recruitment by local authorities also occurred more slowly in 2012 – 2013 than in 2011- 2012. By 1 June 2013, 157 graduates who had qualified in Wales and 19 who had qualified in England were in a social worker role in a local authority in Wales. This was fewer than in 2012, as 193 of the new graduates in 2011 – 2012 had obtained a social work post in a local authority by June 2012.

5.10 To summarise the data relating to the social work students who qualified in Wales in 2012 – 13, the number (259) was less than in 2011 – 2012, a higher proportion but a smaller number registered (241), a smaller number had social care employment by the reporting date and a smaller number had taken up a social work post. Of the 192 registered graduates from Wales who were in social care employment by 1 June 2013, 55.6 per cent (157) were known to be working in Wales in the post of social worker in a local authority (65 per cent in 2012). In addition, 7 per cent (19) had a social work post either through an agency or in the third or private sectors.

Table 8 – Client groups of newly qualified social workers in social care employment at June 2013

Client group	Number of newly qualified social workers working with each client group at June 2012	Number of newly qualified social workers working with each client group at June 2013
Children and families (including children with disabilities)	156	143
Adults (including people with physical disability, learning disability and older people and substance misuse)	36	48
Mental health	23	15
Youth offending	4	5
Multiple client groups	1	3
Working as a social worker, but client group was unknown	9	0
Total	229	214

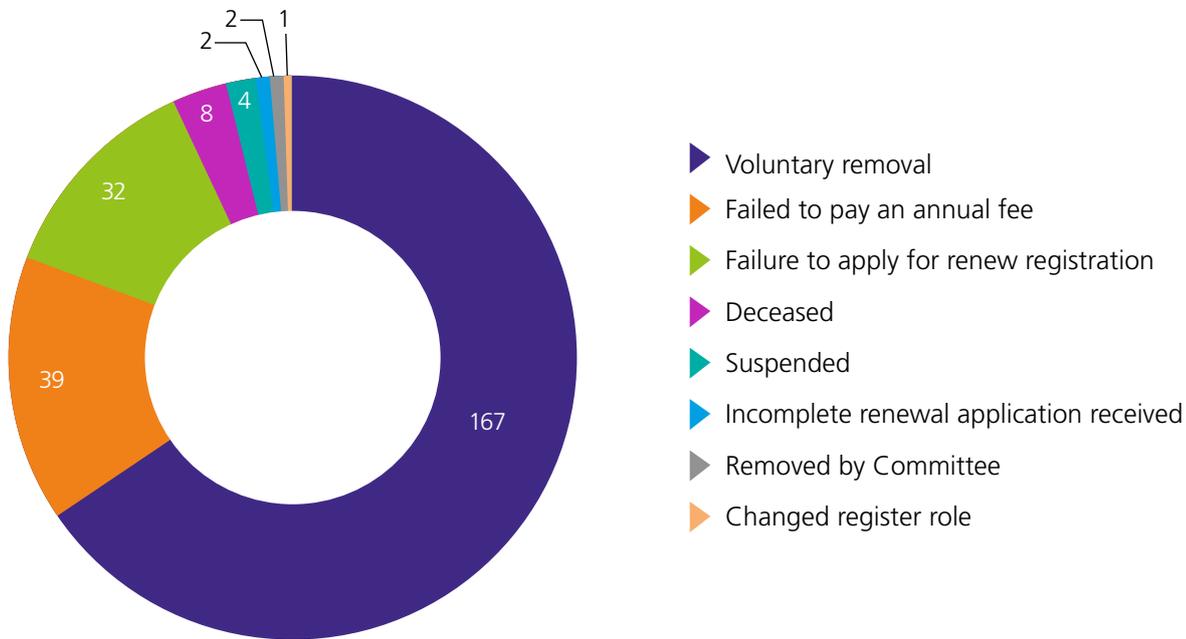
- 5.11** Most of the newly qualified social workers in social care employment at 1 June 2013, 67 per cent (68 per cent in 2012) were working with children and families.
- 5.12** The number of newly qualified social workers who described themselves as having a social work caseload in a local authority in Wales had fallen from 193 in 2012 to 175 in 2013. Slightly fewer (126, 72 per cent) than in 2012 (137, 71 per cent) were working with children and families.
- 5.13** As last year, a higher percentage of the newly qualified social workers were employed to work with children and families, (67 per cent), than the percentage of all registered social workers working with children and families (56 per cent).

6. Movement onto and off the Register by qualified social worker

- 6.1** The number of registered social workers in Wales is stable. For the three years of publishing a profile there has been a small net increase each year. The majority of new registrants continue to be newly qualified. There was a decrease in those who left the Register.
- 6.2** The Care Council granted 422 new registrations to social workers between June 2012 and May 2013. In addition 45 had either returned to the Register (36) or were registered as a social care manager or worker and counted for the first time in this profile of social workers (nine). So there were 467 new registrants in this profile.
- 6.3** A fall in the number of those who left the Register from 285 in 2012 to 255 in 2013 led to a net increase in this profile of 212.
- 6.4** The 268 new social workers who qualified and joined the Register between June 2012 and May 2013 are profiled in section 5. Others who joined the Register for the first time included a small number who graduated the year earlier, social workers who moved to work in Wales and those who had returned to social work after a gap.
- 6.5** Registrants leave the Register for a number of reasons. They can request voluntary removal if they are no longer practising as a social worker, or no longer wish to call themselves a social worker, or are not working in social care and cannot maintain their training and learning. If they do not pay their annual fee, or do not apply to renew, they are removed after appropriate warnings that once removed they cannot practice or call themselves a social worker or work in any of the groups where registration is mandatory.

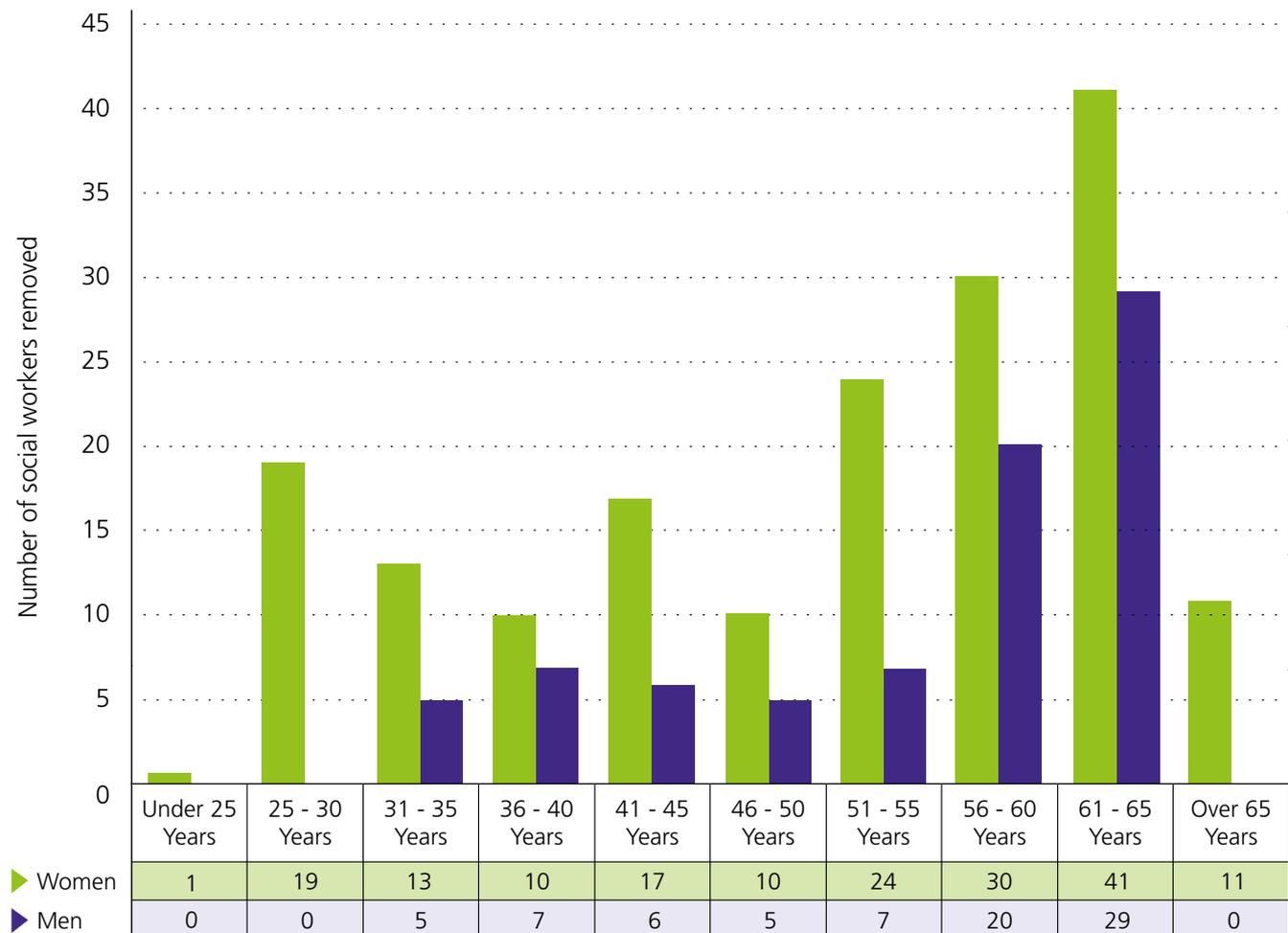
Profile of Registered Social Workers in Wales

Figure 11 – Qualified social workers removed from the Register between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013, by removal category



- 6.6** During the past year, a total of 255 qualified social workers had left the Register compared with 284 in 2011 - 2012.
- 6.7** Of the 255 who left the Register, 21 per cent requested removal because they had retired. There has been a decrease in the number giving their reason for removal as retirement in each year since 2011.

Figure 12 – Age and sex of qualified social workers removed from the Register during the past year



- 6.8** The age profile of those who were removed during the past year shows that while there is some attrition from all age groups, the numbers leaving increased in each age group from 51 to 65. Of all those who left the Register, 64 per cent were over 50.
- 6.9** Fewer people under 36 left the Register in the period of this profile, (38), than in 2011-12 (48). However, this age group includes those new to the Register and those recently qualified so it could be a concern. This is a higher number than in the two previous profiles.
- 6.10** It is a condition of registration that each registrant undertakes a minimum of 15 days post-registration training and learning in each registration period. During the period 1 June 2012 to 31 May 2013, only two of the individuals requesting voluntary removal gave their primary reason for leaving the Register as an inability to meet the training and learning requirement of being registered. This was the same number as 2011-2012. One qualified social worker was renewed with a condition that they make up a shortfall in their post-registration training and learning caused by exceptional circumstances, before their next renewal.

7. Summary

- 7.1** The Register of qualified social workers remains stable, with a slight increase in number each year. The number of staff moving job and those leaving the Register is relatively small. The majority of those who leave the Register were over 50.
- 7.2** The majority of registered social workers (93 per cent) were working in the social care sector, with 70 per cent employed by a local authority.
- 7.3** Women predominate in the social work profession in Wales. The majority of new graduates continued to be female but the number of men graduating with a social work degree in 2012 - 2013 had risen. Male registered social workers tended to be in the older age groups.
- 7.4** As in 2012, over half registered social workers worked with children and families (56 per cent).
- 7.5** Over three quarters of registered social workers qualified over five years ago.
- 7.6** A quarter now hold the UK social work degree. Social work students in Wales first qualified with a degree in social work in 2007. There has been little attrition of social work graduates from the Register, as those who qualified and registered in Wales have tended to remain registered.
- 7.7** Fewer social work students qualified in Wales than in either of the last two years. In addition, fewer registered than in 2011-12 and they took longer to obtain a social work post. There was a 9 per cent fall in the number of new graduates known to be working in a social work post in a local authority in Wales at the reporting date compared with 2012. There was an increase in the number qualified in England who registered to work in Wales, but not all had obtained employment.
- 7.8** Of the social workers working with children and families in local authorities, a smaller percentage were newly qualified than in 2012.
- 7.9** While there is some attrition from all age groups, in 2012 – 2013, 64 per cent of those who left the Register were over 50. As the newly qualified social workers tend to be in the younger age groups the age profile is becoming younger.
- 7.10** Maintaining training and learning post-qualifying is well established for social workers through the registration renewal requirements. This is being developed further by the Care Council working with partners to develop the Continuing Professional Education and Learning Framework for Social Workers in Wales. The first step towards the career development programme was taken in 2013 with the launch of the Consolidation Programme for newly qualified social workers.