

QUARTERLY EXAMINATION STATISTICS

Volume, Pass Rates & First-Time Internationally Educated Candidates' Countries

Multiple steps must be completed before a nurse can safely enter the profession. These steps typically include:

- Graduating from a recognized nursing program,
- Meeting the specific requirements of the state board of nursing, and
- Passing the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) NCLEX® examination for registered nurses (RNs) or licensed practical/vocational nurses (LPN/VNs).

Because passing the NCLEX is usually the final step in the nurse licensure process, the number of people passing the NCLEX ("pass rate") is a good indicator of how many new nurses are entering the profession in the U.S.

These tables provide the most recent data on the NCLEX testing volume and the associated pass rates. In addition, NCSBN has listed the top five countries where nurses were educated outside the U.S. and who are taking the NCLEX examination in hopes of obtaining nursing employment in the U.S.

For more detailed NCLEX Examination statistics, including historical pass rates, see [Exam Psychometrics](#) under the [NCLEX Examinations](#) section of NCSBN's website, www.ncsbn.org.

For general information about the NCLEX, visit the [NCLEX Examinations](#) section of NCSBN's website.

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2020 NCLEX® Volume and Pass Rates¹

Candidates	Jan. – March ²	April – June ³	July – Sept.	Oct. – Dec.	YTD Total
RN					
Total	60,007 (77.89%)	69,348 (75.23%)	85,255 (72.18%)	37,789 (58.63%)	252,399 (72.35%)
First-Time	49,860 (86.16%)	53,462 (87.02%)	64,620 (82.92%)	21,368 (73.62%)	189,310 (83.88%)
Repeat	10,147 (37.24%)	15,886 (35.57%)	20,635 (38.57%)	16,421 (39.13%)	63,089 (37.75%)
U.S.-Educated	52,101 (83.66%)	63,004 (79.93%)	76,491 (76.98%)	30,794 (65.18%)	222,390 (77.75%)
Internationally Educated	7,906 (39.83%)	6,344 (28.56%)	8,764 (30.28%)	6,995 (29.81%)	30,009 (32.32%)
PN					
Total	12,816 (74.71%)	12,732 (70.72%)	22,671 (72.22%)	13,333 (65.09%)	61,552 (70.89%)
First-Time	10,191 (85.56%)	9,100 (84.13%)	17,859 (82.60%)	9,071 (78.45%)	46,221 (82.74%)
Repeat	2,625 (32.61%)	3,632 (37.11%)	4,812 (33.71%)	4,262 (36.67%)	15,331 (35.15%)
U.S.-Educated	12,560 (75.49%)	12,445 (71.34%)	22,263 (72.86%)	13,013 (65.84%)	60,281 (71.58%)
Internationally Educated	256 (36.72%)	287 (43.90%)	408 (37.75%)	320 (34.69%)	1,271 (38.16%)

¹Number = the number of candidates taking the examination and seeking U.S. licensure.
 Percentage = percentage of candidates passing the examination (Pass Rate).

2020 First-Time Internationally Educated Candidates: Top Five Countries (with respect to volume)¹

Volume	Jan. – March ²	April – June ³	July – Sept.	Oct. – Dec.	YTD Total
1st	Philippines 2,495	Philippines 774	Philippines 1,489	Philippines 1,246	Philippines 6,004
2nd	India 332	Puerto Rico 317	Puerto Rico 355	India 347	India 1,258
3rd	Puerto Rico 230	India 240	India 217	Puerto Rico 288	Puerto Rico 1,258
4th	Nigeria 206	Nigeria 98	Nigeria 108	Nigeria 114	Nigeria 495
5th	Kenya 148	Nepal 79	Nepal 93	Nepal 89	Nepal 377

¹In this table, the count of first-time internationally educated candidates seeking U.S. licensure includes both RNs and PNs.

²The January quarterly data contain NCLEX examinations administered from Jan. 1 to March 24, 2020, due to COVID-19.

³The April quarterly data contain NCLEX examinations administered from March 25 to June 30, 2020, due to COVID-19.

