



EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA FOR 2012/2013 SCHOOL YEAR

The level of education of population determines every contemporary country and plays an important economic and social role of the present and the future. One of the main headline targets of the mutual European strategy 'Europe 2020' is to improve educational attainment levels of the population, especially to reduce the school dropout rate and to increase the number of young people with university degree or equivalent degree.

The main results of the yearly exhaustive surveys that characterize the activity of the educational institutions, conducted by the National Statistical Institute (NSI), are:

- The number of children in kindergartens for 2012/2013 was 235.0 thousand as an increase of 3.1% is observed in comparison with the previous school year.
- In 2012, 30.3 and 29.4 thousand students graduated secondary education in respectively general and vocational schools.
- For the 2012/2013 academic year, the number of enrollments in higher education remained almost unchanged in comparison with the previous academic year - 278.6 thousand persons as a decrease in the number of students in colleges (education-qualification degree "Professional Bachelor") and in private universities is registered.
- Significant increase of the number of Ph.D. students is observed. As of 31.12.2012, 5 371 Ph.D. students were enrolled in the country, or 14.2% more than the previous academic year.

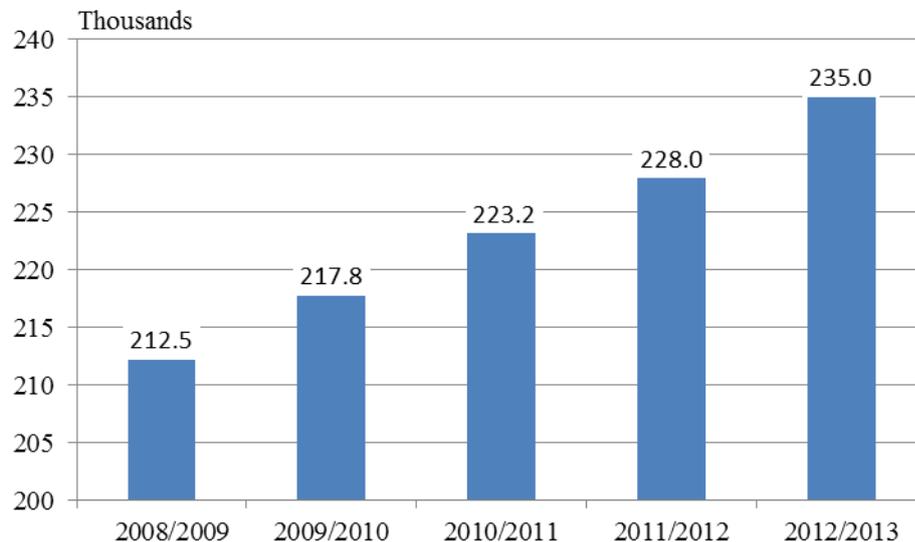
Pre-primary education

Kindergartens with director in 2012/2013 were 2 070 or 42 less than in 2011/2012, the decrease was mainly in the rural areas - 51. The number of children in kindergartens for 2012/2013 was 235.0 thousand, 22.6 thousand or 10.6% more than their number in 2008/2009 and increased with 3.1% in comparison with the previous school year. The coverage of children in kindergartens estimated by the group net enrolment rate¹ increased from 81.5% for 2011/2012 to 82.1% for 2012/2013.

¹ The group net enrollment rate of children in kindergartens is calculated as a percentage of the number of children in kindergartens in the age group 3-6 years to number of population in the same age group.



Figure 1. Children in kindergartens



The average number of children per kindergarten was 114 - in urban areas their average number was larger - 158 and for the rural areas it was 56. The average number of children, that formed one group, was the same as in the previous school year – 24. In urban areas the average number of children was 26 and in rural areas - 21.

The teaching personnel employed in kindergartens were 20.0 thousand from which 18.7 thousand were kindergarten teachers. In comparison with the previous school year the total number of pedagogical personnel increased by 286 persons or by 1.4%.

The number of licensed private kindergartens increased significantly, in 2012/2013 there were 65 or 15 more than the previous year, but they were still an alternative for a small part of parents. In private kindergartens were enrolled 2 357 children. Their relative share was only 1.0% of the total number of children enrolled in kindergartens.

General education

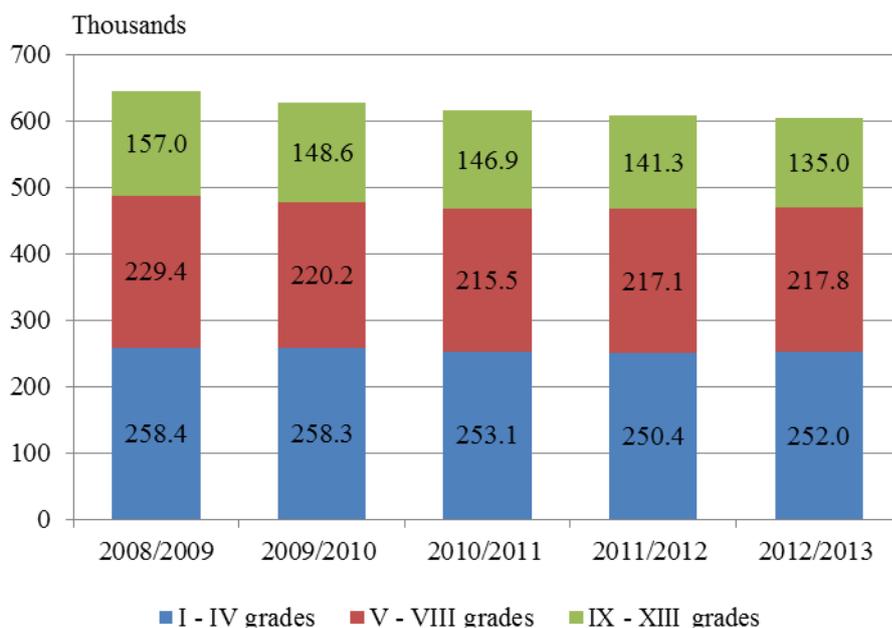
In the beginning of the school year 2012/2013 there were classes in 2 040 general education schools². Out of these 152 were primary schools, 1 337 - basic schools, 10 - lower secondary schools, 140 upper secondary and 401 - secondary general schools. With an alteration to the Law on Vocational Education and Training - SG, N50/2010, from 2011/2012 school year, sport schools passed to providing general programmes instead of vocational programmes. Besides this transformation, in comparison with the previous school year, because of closure or modification, the total number of general education schools decreased by 29.

² Incl. the Bulgarian schools abroad financed by state.



During the current 2012/2013 school year the number of students in all kinds of general education schools was 604.8 thousand, of which 107.9 thousand in rural areas. In comparison with the previous school year the number of students in general education decreased by 4.0 thousand or 0.7%.

Figure 2. Enrolments in general education schools by group of grades



During the previous 2011/2012 school year for different reasons 14.2 thousand students left the general education schools, of which 12.1 thousand were in basic education. The largest relative share was the share of students who left for family reasons – 6.7 thousand or 47.2% of the total number of leaving students, followed by those who left because had gone abroad – 34.3% and those who left because of unwillingness to study was also considerable – 12.5%.

The relative share of children in general education schools who studied foreign languages in the primary grades (I - IV) was 82.9 %. Of them, the largest share comes from those who studied English - 88.7%.

In 2012, 42.8 thousand students graduated from basic education and 30.3 thousand persons graduated secondary education in the general education schools.

The total number of the teaching staff (incl. directors and deputy directors with teaching activity) employed in general education schools during the 2012/2013 school year was 45.1 thousand or 1.2 thousand less than in the previous school year. 91.7 % of the teachers had tertiary education – an education-qualification degree of ‘Bachelor’ or ‘Master’ and 7.9% - had education-qualification degree - ‘Professional Bachelor’ (or the equivalent degree in past).

Women were predominant in the teaching profession (85.0% of the total number of teachers).

As of 1.10.2012 there were 69 active private general education schools in the country. Out of these there were 6 primary schools, 27 basic, 3 lower secondary, 27 secondary schools and 6 secondary general



schools. There were 6 510 students who studied in private general education schools. The number of students in the private sector was only 1.1% from the total number of students.

In schools and classes for students with special educational needs were enrolled 3.9 thousand pupils or 0.5 thousand (12.2%) less in comparison with the previous school year. 882 specialist teachers and 372 educators were taking care of their education and upbringing.

Vocational education and training (VET)

Vocational education and training during the school year 2012/2013 was carried out in 22 art schools, 19 sport schools, 416 vocational gymnasiums and 37 vocational colleges with enrollment after secondary education. The total number of the students in vocational education and training during the current school year was 142.7 thousand, and compared with the 2008/2009 school year decreased by 26.0 thousand or 15.4% and compared with the previous one – decreased by 3.0 thousand or 2.1%.

Boys were predominant in vocational education and training and were 60.6% of the total number of students.

The highest relative share in programmes for attainment of a third level professional qualification was for students who studied specialties in the field of ‘Engineering and engineering trades’ - 30.9%, followed by share of those in the field of ‘Business and administration’ – 17.7%. In the programmes for attainment of a second level professional qualification the share of students was highest in the field of ‘Engineering and engineering trades’ (27.2%) and ‘Agriculture, forestry and fishery’ (21.1%).

During the present school year the total number of teachers working in VET schools was 13.1 thousand, of which 93.6% were with completed education-qualification degree ‘Bachelor’ or ‘Master’.

In 2012, 29.4 thousand persons graduated with attainment of diploma for secondary education in art schools, sport schools, vocational gymnasiums and vocational schools.

In 2012, second and third levels of professional qualification were acquired respectively by 8.1 and 15.8 thousand persons.

586 students acquired first level of professional qualification in vocational schools and classes with enrollment after VI, VII and VIII grade.

In vocational colleges with enrollment after completed secondary education, 1 228 people acquired fourth level of professional qualification.

During the 2012/2013 school year 2 857 students were enrolled in 59 private VET schools, which was only 2.0% of the total number of enrollments in the vocational education.

In 2012/2013 the number of enrolments aged 16 or more years in programmes for vocational training against payment in Vocational Training Centers, vocational gymnasiums and vocational colleges, significantly increased. According to the level of professional qualification, their distribution was the following: first level – 13.6 thousand, second level - 4.3 thousand and third and forth - 6.4 thousand.

In comparison with the previous school year the number of enrolled students increased with 2.3 thousand persons or 10.4%. Indicative is the willingness of the individuals to improve or acquire new qualification, providing an advantage in the labour market.



Tertiary education

The total number of the students in Bulgaria enrolled in the four education-qualification degrees ('Professional bachelor', 'Bachelor', 'Master' and 'Doctor') in the academic year 2012/2013 was 284.0 thousand, which is 9.7 thousand, or 3.5%, more in comparison with the 2008/2009 academic year.

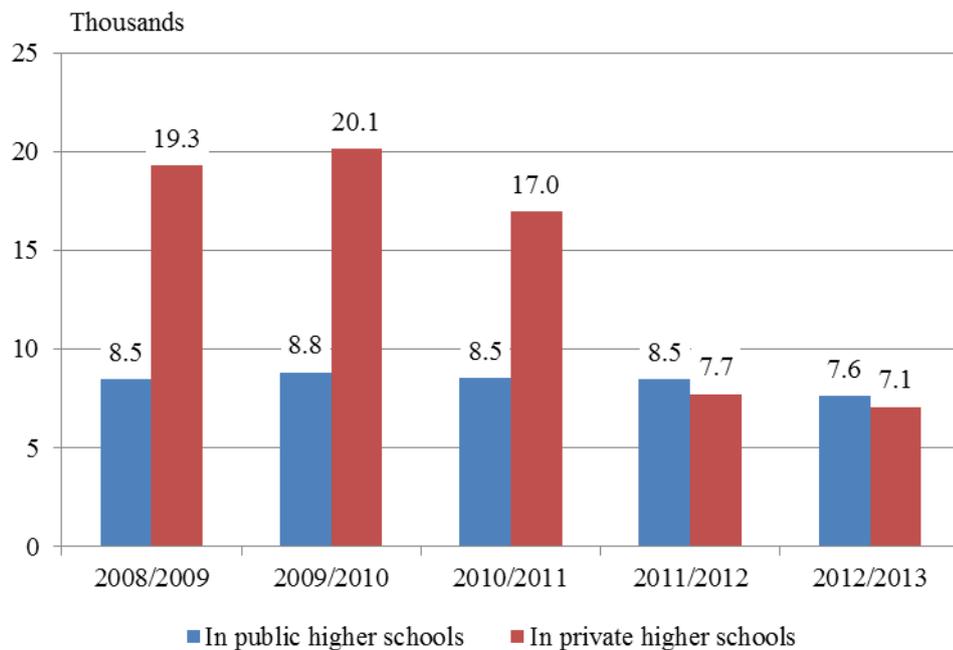
In 2008/2009 the total number of PCs in higher schools, which are used for teaching purposes, was 19.6 thousand and 100 students from the regular form of education were using 10.8 PCs. In the 2012/2013 academic year the total number of teaching purposes PCs had increased up to 23.0 thousand, out of which 16.6 thousand were used for teaching students directly in classes and 100 students from the regular form of education were using 11.9 PCs. The share of PCs with Internet access had increased from 89.4% in 2008/2009 academic year to 92.3% in 2012/2013.

'Professional bachelor' education-qualification degree

During the 2012/2013 academic year, for acquiring of the degree 'Professional bachelor', in colleges were enrolled 14.7 thousand students totally, of which 14.4 thousand, or 98.2%, were Bulgarian citizens. From the total number of the students in colleges, 7.1 thousand or 48.2% were enrolled in private colleges.

In 2012/2013 the number of students in colleges had decreased with 1.5 thousand, or 9.4% in comparison with the previous academic year. The decrease in private colleges was 0.7 thousand, or 8.4%.

Figure 3. Students in colleges





In the structure of the students by narrow fields of education, the highest relative share was found in the field of Business and Administration - 34.4%, followed by the field of Personal Services - 19.8% and Engineering and Engineering Trades - 17.1%.

In 2012 the degree 'Professional bachelor' was acquired by 4.2 thousand students of whom 98.3% were Bulgarian citizens.

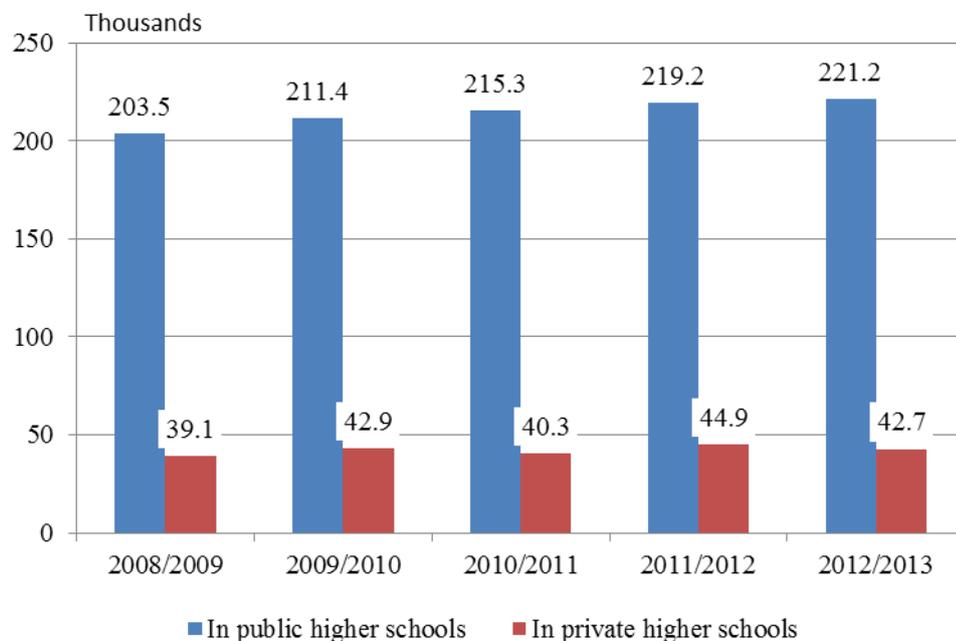
Among graduated students the highest number was found in the field of Business and Administration - 1.9 thousand, or 44.6% of the total, followed by the field of Personal Services - 0.6 thousand, or 14.8%, and Engineering and Engineering Trades - 0.6 thousand or 14.1%.

The number of the teaching staff in colleges was 1 091 persons, of whom 577 or 52.9% were on a full time employment.

'Bachelor' and 'Master' education-qualification degrees

During the 2012/2013 academic year the number of students, in the two education-qualification degrees 'Bachelor' and 'Master', in universities and specialized higher schools was 263.9 thousand. Of them, in private higher schools were enrolled 42.7 thousand students or 16.2% of the total number. The number of enrolled students in private higher schools declined with 4.9% in comparison with the previous academic year.

Figure 4. Students in universities and specialized higher schools



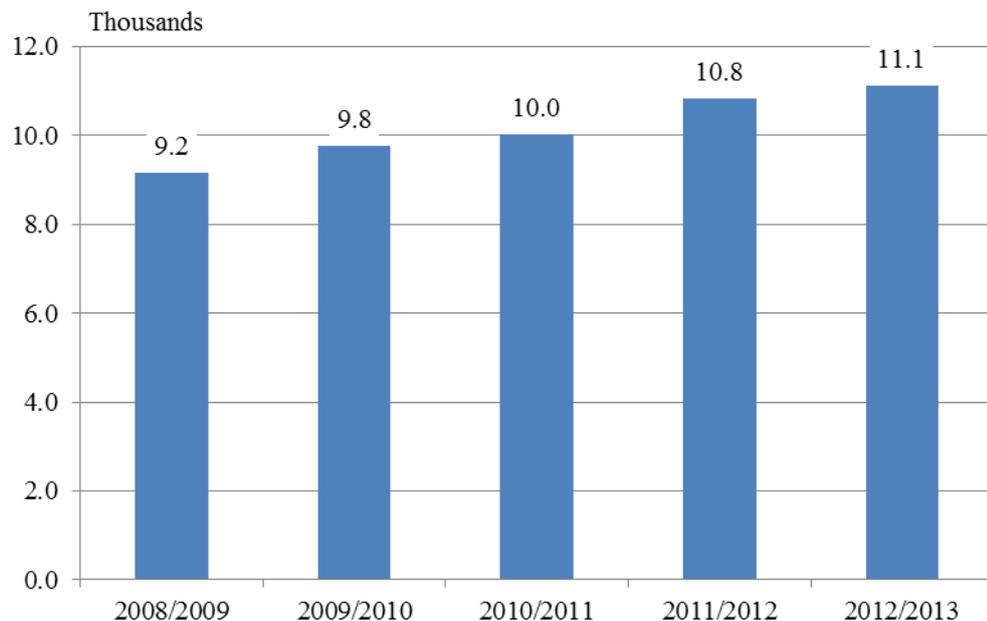
The structure of students by narrow fields of education shows that the highest proportion of students were studying in the field of Business and Administration (23.5%), followed by the field of Engineering and Engineering Trades (13.7%) and Social and behavioural science (11.7%). The lowest shares were registered in the fields of Life sciences (0.6%), Veterinary (0.5%), and Mathematics and Statistics (0.2%).



In the 2012/2013, students - Bulgarian citizens in universities and specialized higher schools were 252.8 thousand, or 95.8%. Their number had decreased by 0.5 thousand in comparison with the 2011/2012 academic year or by 0.2%.

Since the beginning of the observed period, the number of foreign students had gradually increased. During the current academic year it was 11.1 thousand, or 2.5% more than in the previous year.

Figure 5. Foreign students in universities and specialized higher schools



The largest increase was registered in the number of students from Greece – from 0.7 thousand in 2008/2009 to 2.4 thousand in the current academic year, or 3.2 times, just for the last year the increase was 24.2%. Follow students from Turkey, which number had increased 1.4 times during the reference period. At the same time the number of students from The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia gradually decreased from 2.2 thousand in 2008/2009 to 0.6 thousand in 2012/2013, or by 71.9%.

In 2012/2013 the students from Turkey represented 41.8% of the total number of foreign students in Bulgaria, followed by the students from Greece - 21.2% and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia - 5.6%.

International student mobility has gained an increased prominence in policy making in the field of higher education, which is accompanied by an increased need for statistical information. Since 2004/2005 academic year NSI has started collecting data and computing indicators on mobile students enrolled in Bulgaria. According to the Eurostat methodology the student mobility is measured by ‘country of prior education’ which means that mobile student is a student who has graduated secondary education abroad.

The number of mobile students enrolled for acquiring the educational-qualification degrees Bachelor and Master had increased from 9.0 thousand in 2008/2009 to 11.1 thousand in 2012/2013 or by 24.0%. In comparison with the previous academic year the increase was 3.2%.



In the academic year 2012/2013, the number of newly enrolled students for acquiring the educational-qualification degrees 'Bachelor' and 'Master after completed secondary education' was 52.2 thousand. Out of them 50.3 thousand, or 96.3%, were Bulgarian citizens.

Students, who continuing their education in Master programmes after completed Bachelor educational-qualification degree, were 26.2 thousand. Out of them 1.9 thousand, or 7.4%, were enrolled in post Professional bachelor programmes.

In 2012, 59.0 thousand students graduated with the degrees of 'Bachelor' and 'Master', of which 57.2 thousand were Bulgarian citizens.

The relative shares of graduated students were highest in the fields of Business and Administration (31.4%), Social and Behavioural Sciences (15.6%), Engineering and Engineering Trades (11.9%). The lowest relative shares were found in the fields of Veterinary and Mathematics and Statistics – by 0.3%.

15.1% of all graduates in the degrees 'Bachelor' and 'Master' had graduated in private universities.

In the academic year 2012/2013, the number of teaching staff in universities and specialized higher schools was 22.4 thousand persons. Regularly employed were 13.6 thousand or 60.9% of the total.

Qualification and scientific degree 'Doctor'

As of 31.12.2012, 5 371 Ph.D. students were enrolled in Bulgaria, of which 51.1% were women. Compared to the previous year the number of Ph.D. students had increased with 668 persons or by 14.2%.

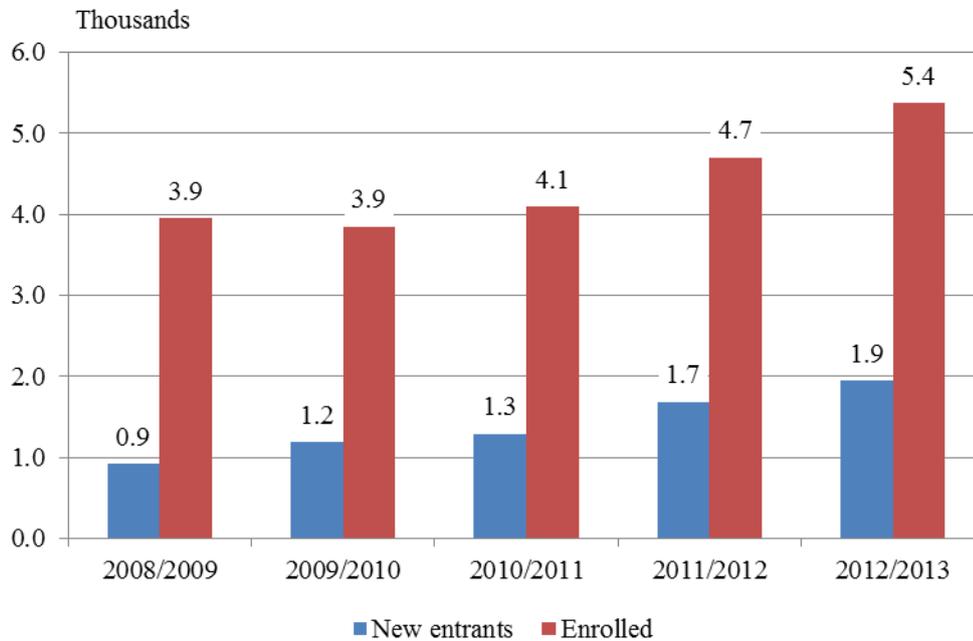
The Ph.D. foreign students enrolled in Bulgaria were 214 persons, or 4.0% of the total.

According to the distribution by age, the share of Ph.D. students aged 25-29 was highest - 34.3%, followed by those aged 30-34 (24.0%) and those aged 40 years and over (23.7%).

During the 2012 the number of newly enrolled Ph.D. students was 1 948, of which 972 or 49.9% were women.



Figure 6. New entrants and enrolled in Ph.D. degree



In 2012 a 'Doctor' degree was acquired by 979 persons of whom 506, or 51.7%, were women. 42.8% of the total number of graduates was older than 40 years.

The number of graduated males was highest in narrow field of Engineering and Engineering Trades – 15.0% of the total, followed by the field of Health (9.5%) and Social and Behavioural Sciences (8.7%). In the structure of the graduated females by narrow fields of education, the highest relative shares were Social and Behavioural Sciences and Humanities – by 13.4, followed by Teacher training and education science – 11.7%.



Methodological notes

Education statistics is developed on the basis of the Regulation N 452/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the production and development of statistics on education and lifelong learning, the current legal basis in Bulgaria in the area of education, the International Standard Classification of Education - revision 1997 (ISCED '97) and the concomitant methodological instructions.

The National Statistical Institute conducts yearly exhaustive surveys that characterize the activity of the educational institutions.

Educational institutions - directly conduct teaching via educational programmes to the enrollments in organized classes (groups) or via distance mode of learning. Those programmes lead to attainment of the educational degree and/or level of professional qualification. Non-formal training and informal learning, enterprises conducting courses for qualification, language courses and etc., are not covered by the definition educational institutions.

NSI with its surveys is aiming to determine the number of students in the educational system as of a given date of observation. This is the basis for calculating the internationally accepted indicator "Participation Rate of the Population in the Educational System", which represents the relative share of students enrolled from a certain age group in relation to the number of the constant population of the country in the same age group.

For more information and data on education, visit NSI's web page: <http://www.nsi.bg/otrasalen.php?otr=36>.



Annex

Table 1

Educational institutions by type

	(Number)				
	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Total	5303	5298	5200	5164	5067
Kindergartens	2291	2262	2138	2112	2070
General and special schools	2254	2201	2175	2144	2112
Primary (I - IV grade)	169	156	156	156	153
Basic (I - VIII grade)	1487	1453	1429	1431	1402
Lower secondary (V - VIII grade)	16	14	13	12	11
Upper secondary (IX - XIII grade)	167	165	166	139	140
Secondary general (I-XIII grade)	415	413	411	406	406
Vocational	487	487	484	499	494
Art schools	21	21	21	22	22
Sport schools ¹	-	-	-	22	19
Vocational gymnasiums	433	422	422	414	416
Vocational colleges	28	39	36	36	37
Vocational training schools	5	5	5	5	-
Vocational Training Centres ²	218	295	350	356	338
Higher	53	53	53	53	53
Independent colleges	10	10	9	8	8
Colleges, at the universities	28	23	22	21	20
Universities and equivalent higher schools	43	43	44	45	45

¹ Since 2011/2012 school year, all sport schools have been providing education on vocational programmes instead of general programmes (alteration to the Law on Vocational Education and Training - SG, N50/2010)

² Centres conducting programmes for attaining of professional qualification.



Table 2

**Pupils and students by level of International Standard Classification of Education
(ISCED - 97)**

	(Number)				
	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Total	1322952	1314836	1307705	1293961	1294682
Pre-primary education (ISCED - 0)	212454	217804	223186	227971	235015
Primary education (I-IV grade, ISCED-1)	261007	260340	255086	252372	253675
Lower secondary education (V-VIII grade, ISCED-2A)	235022	225055	219980	221274	221839
Vocational training for adults - first level professional qualification (ISCED-2C) ¹	5992	4640	8403	11219	13637
Upper secondary education (IX-XIII grade, ISCED-3A, 3C)	319813	306925	303375	282512	273498
Vocational training for adults - second level professional qualification (ISCED-3C) ¹	6441	4620	4737	4062	4272
Post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED-4C)	4368	4716	3224	2804	2381
Vocational training for adults - third and fourth level professional qualification (ISCED-4C) ¹	3608	3650	4449	6752	6406
Tertiary education (ISCED-5B, 5A, 6)	274247	287086	285265	284995	283959
Education in colleges (ISCED-5B)	27724	28947	25511	16210	14688
Education in universities and equivalent higher schools (ISCED-5A)	242574	254289	255659	264082	263900
Qualification and scientific degree 'Doctor' (ISCED-6)	3949	3850	4095	4703	5371

¹ Incl. students in vocational gymnasiums and colleges.



Table 3

Teaching staff by level of International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED - 97)

	(Number)				
	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Total	108305	106024	104078	102925	102488
Pre-primary education (ISCED - 0)	19348	19466	19579	19729	20015
Primary education (I-IV grade, ISCED-1)	15259	15054	14780	14666	14565
Lower secondary education (V-VIII grade, ISCED-2A)	21132	20122	19867	19504	19315
Upper secondary education (IX-XIII grade, ISCED-3A, 3C)	29412	28169	26903	25539	24684
Post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED-4C)	482	551	517	532	453
Tertiary education (ISCED-5B, 5A, 6)	22672	22662	22432	22955	23456
Education in colleges (ISCED-5B)	1566	1385	1375	1079	1091
Education in universities and equivalent higher schools (ISCED-5A)	21106	21277	21057	21876	22365