



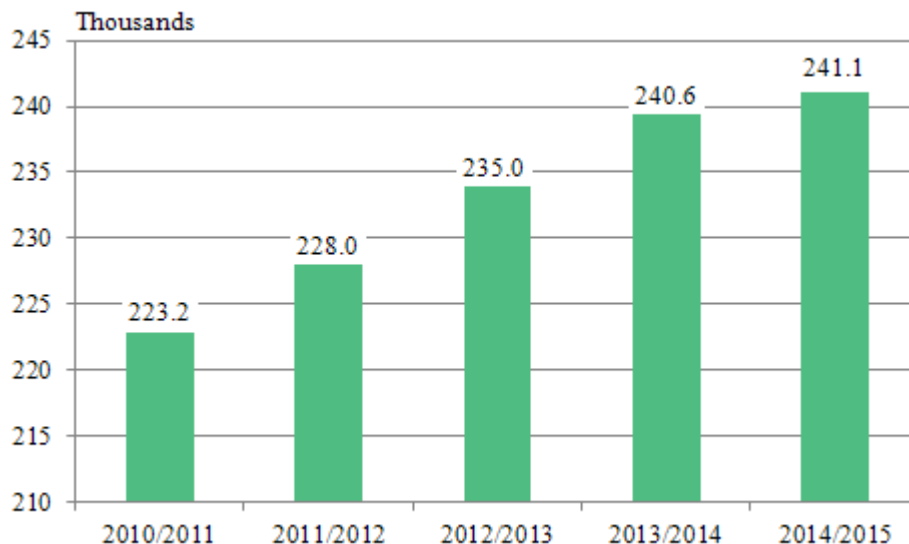
## EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA FOR 2014/2015 SCHOOL YEAR

120 years ago was introduced the first periodic reporting in the country - "Statistics of schools", which is the beginning of education statistics in Bulgaria. Today, the National Statistical Institute conducts annual exhaustive surveys on educational institutions in full compliance with established international methods and standards (ISCED 2011), which allows comparability of obtained results at international level.

### Pre-primary education

The number of kindergartens with director in 2014/2015 was 1 991 or 60 less than in 2013/2014. The number of children in kindergartens for 2014/2015 was 241.1 thousand, 17.9 thousand or 8.0% more than their number in 2010/2011 and increased with 0.2% in comparison with the previous school year. The coverage of children in kindergartens estimated by the group net enrolment rate<sup>1</sup> decreased from 83.6% for 2013/2014 to 82.9% for 2014/2015.

**Figure 1. Children in kindergartens**



The average number of children per kindergarten was 121 - in urban areas their average number was larger - 162 and for the rural areas it was 62. The average number of children, that formed one group, was the same as in the previous year – 24, while in urban areas it was 25 and in rural areas - 20.

<sup>1</sup> 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.



The teaching personnel employed in kindergartens were 20.5 thousand from which 19.2 thousand were kindergarten teachers. In comparison with the previous school year the total number of pedagogical personnel increased by 273 persons or by 1.3%.

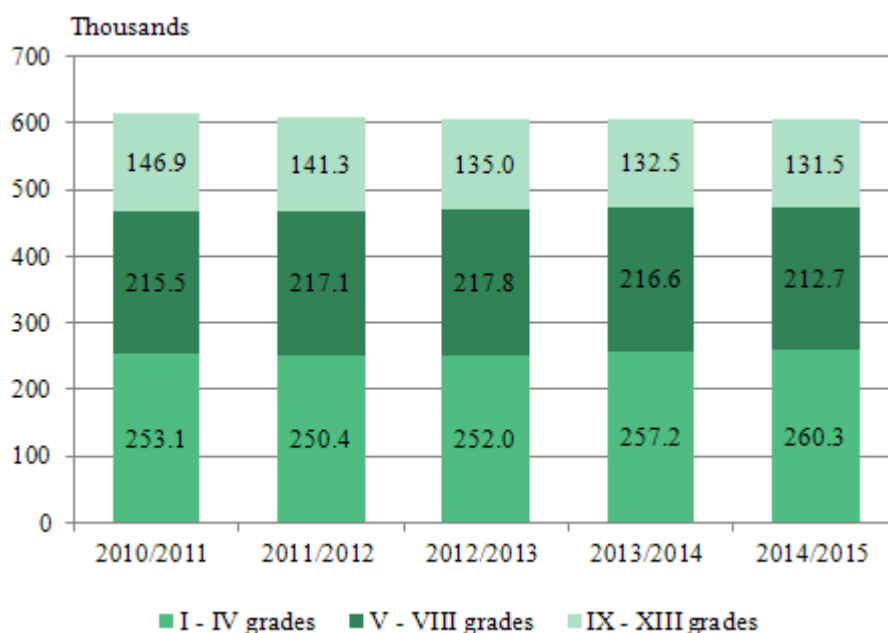
The number of licensed private kindergartens continued to increase, in 2014/2015 there were 88 or 13 more than the previous year, but they were still an alternative for a small part of parents. In private kindergartens were enrolled 3 292 children. Their relative share was only 1.4% of the total number of children enrolled in kindergartens.

### General education

In the beginning of the school year 2014/2015 there were classes in 2 019 general education schools<sup>2</sup>. Out of these 149 were primary schools, 1 325 - basic schools, 7 - lower secondary schools, 137 upper secondary and 401 - secondary general schools. In comparison with the previous school year, because of closure or modification, the total number of general education schools decreased by 7.

During the current 2014/2015 school year the number of students in all kinds of general education schools was 604.5 thousand, of which 105.7 thousand in rural areas. In comparison with the previous school year the number of students in general education decreased by 1.8 thousand or 0.3%.

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



During the 2013/2014 school year for different reasons 13.8 thousand students left the general education schools, of which 11.8 thousand were in basic education. The largest relative share was the share of students who left for family reasons - 5.9 thousand or 42.7% of the total number of leaving students,

<sup>2</sup> Incl. the Bulgarian schools abroad, financed by state.



followed by those who left because had gone abroad -39.6% and those who left because of unwillingness to study was also considerable - 10.1 %.

The early teaching of foreign languages becomes more common for the beginning stages of the primary education. The relative share of children in general education schools who studied foreign languages in the primary grades (I - IV) was 82.9 %, as the largest share was from those who studied English - 89.9%.

In 2014, 45.3 thousand students graduated from basic education and 27.3 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 2014/2015 school year was 45.2 thousand or 111 more than in the previous school year. Teachers with high education (education-qualification degree of 'Bachelor' or 'Master') were 92.5% and 7.1% education-qualification degree - 'Professional Bachelor' or the equivalent degree in past.

In the teaching profession women were predominant (85.0% of the total number of teachers).

There were 21 pupils on average for one class in the general education schools.

As of 1.10.2014 there were 70 active private general education schools in the country. Out of these there were 5 primary schools, 30 basic, 1 lower secondary, 27 secondary schools and 7 secondary general schools. There were 7 017 students who studied in private general education schools. The number of students in the private sector was only 1.2% from the total number of students in general education.

In 2014/2015 school year in schools and classes for students with special educational needs were enrolled 3.6 thousand pupils or 6.9% less in compassion with the previous school year. 828 specialist teachers and 335 educators were taking care of their education and upbringing.

### **Vocational education and training (VET)**

Vocational education and training during the school year 2014/2015 was carried out in 23 art schools, 24 sport schools, 394 vocational gymnasiums and 40 vocational colleges with enrolment after secondary education. The total number of the students in vocational education and training during the current school year was 141.0 thousand, and compared with the 2010/2011 school year decreased by 20.5 thousand or 12.7% and compared with the previous one - increased by 0.2 thousand or 0.1%.

Boys were predominant in vocational education and training and were 60.0% 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' - 29.7%, followed by share of those in the 'Business and administration' - 17.6%. In the programmes for attainment of a second level professional qualification the share of students was highest in the 'Engineering and engineering trades' (28.5%) and 'Personal services' (22.3%).

During the present school year the total number of teachers working in VET schools was 12.5 thousand, of which 94.2% were high educated with education-qualification degree 'Bachelor' or 'Master'.



In 2014, 26.2 thousand persons graduated with attainment of diploma for secondary education in art schools, sport schools, vocational gymnasiums and vocational schools.

In 2014, second and third levels of professional qualification were acquired respectively by 4.6 and 15.2 thousand persons.

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

In vocational colleges with enrolment after completed secondary education, 1 097 people acquired fourth level of professional qualification.

During the 2014/2015 school year 2 029 students were enrolled in 56 private VET schools, which was only 1.4% of the total number of enrolments in the vocational education.

In programmes for vocational training against payment in Vocational Training Centres, vocational gymnasiums and vocational colleges the number of enrolments aged 16 or more years was 15.7 thousand. According to the level of professional qualification, their distribution was the following: first level - 6.5 thousand, second level - 3.8 thousand, third level - 5.4 thousand and forth - 25 persons.

### **Tertiary education**

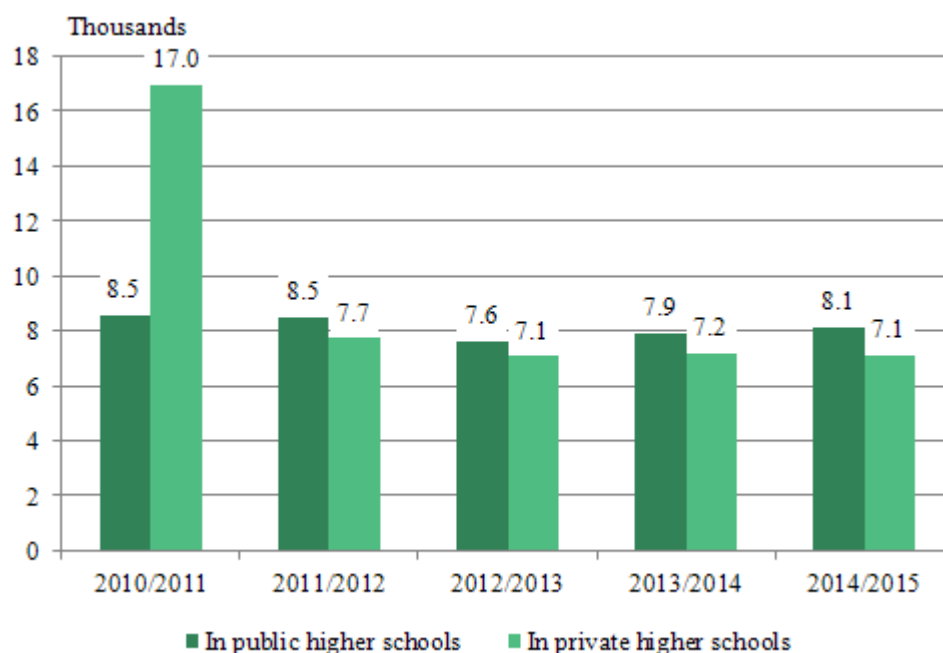
The total number of the students in Bulgaria enrolled in the four educational-qualification degrees ('Professional bachelor', 'Bachelor', 'Master' and 'Doctor') in the academic year 2014/2015 was 279.0 thousand, which is 6.3 thousand, or 2.2%, less in comparison with the 2010/2011 academic year and 1.5% less compared to the previous academic year.

#### ***Colleges ('Professional bachelor' educational-qualification degree)***

During the last three academic years the number of students enrolled in colleges remains relatively stable. In 2014/2015 academic year, for acquiring of the degree 'Professional bachelor', in colleges were enrolled 15.2 thousand students totally, of which 14.9 thousand, or 98.0%, were Bulgarian citizens. From the total number of the students in colleges, 7.1 thousand or 46.6% were enrolled in private colleges.



**Figure 3. Students in colleges<sup>3</sup>**



In the structure of the students by narrow fields of education, the highest relative share was found in the Business and Administration - 33.0%, followed by the Personal Services - 20.0%, Health - 17.8% and Engineering and Engineering Trades - 15.7%.

In 2014 the degree 'Professional bachelor' was acquired by 3.2 thousand students of whom 98.6% were Bulgarian citizens and 58.1% were women. Among graduated students the highest number was found in the field of Business and Administration - 1.1 thousand, or 35.3% of the total, followed by the field of Health - 0.6 thousand, or 19.0%, Personal Services - 0.5 thousand, or 16.1%, and Engineering and Engineering Trades - 0.5 thousand or 15.2%.

The number of the teaching staff in colleges was 1 018 persons, of whom 564 or 55.4% were on a full time employment.

#### ***Universities and equivalent higher schools ('Bachelor' and 'Master' educational-qualification degrees)***

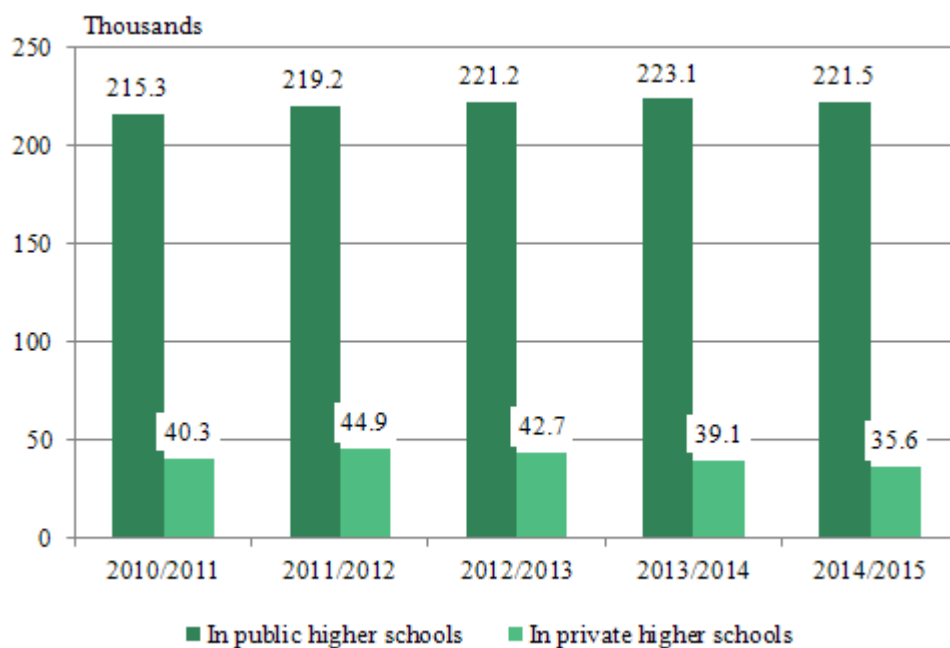
During the 2014/2015 academic year the number of students, in the two educational-qualification degrees 'Bachelor' and 'Master', in universities and specialized higher schools was 257.1 thousand. Of them, in private higher schools were enrolled 35.6 thousand students or 13.8% of the total number. The number of

<sup>3</sup> Since 2011/2012 academic year, the number of students in private colleges has decreased significantly due to the conversion of an independent private college into university and move on the relative students from educational-qualification degree 'Professional Bachelor' into 'Bachelor' degree.



enrolled students in private higher schools declined with 9.0% in comparison with the previous academic year.

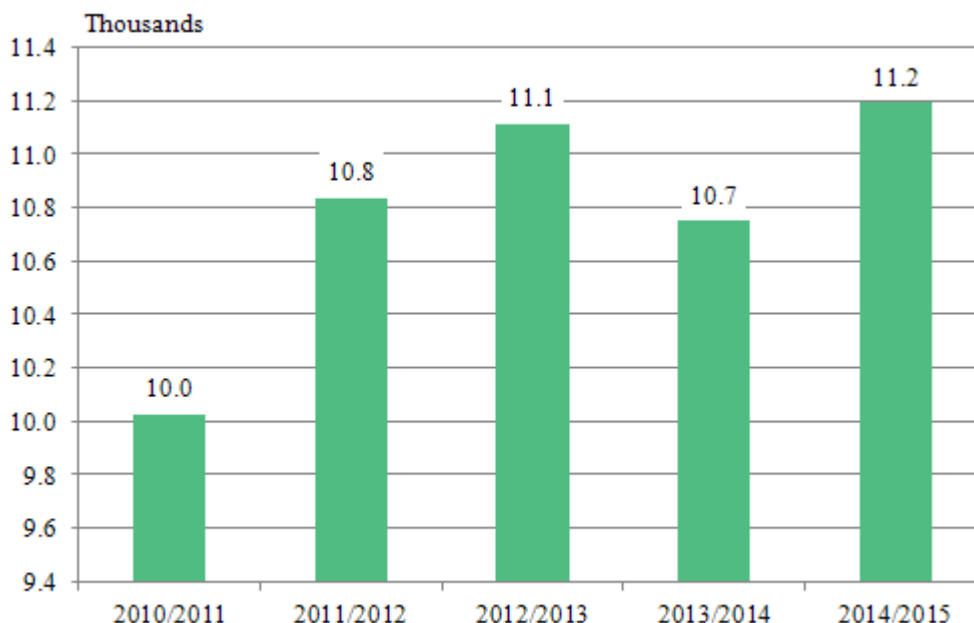
**Figure 4. Students in universities and specialized higher schools**



In the 2014/2015, students - Bulgarian citizens in universities and specialized higher schools were 245.9 thousand, or 95.6%. Their number had decreased by 5.5 thousand in comparison with the 2013/2014 academic year or by 2.2%. The number of the foreign students in the country, studying in universities and specialized higher schools, was 11.2 thousand, which is 4.1% more than in the previous year.



**Figure 5. Foreign students in universities and specialized higher schools**



In the universities and specialized higher schools the largest share of foreign students in the country came from Turkey - 28.4%, followed by Greece - 25.6%, Germany - 4.5% and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia - 4.4% of the total number of foreign students.

A gradual increase in the number of students from Greece is observed - from 1.3 thousand in 2010/2011 to 2.9 thousand in the current academic year, or 2.3 times. At the same time the number of students from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia decreased from 1.2 thousand in 2010/2011 to 0.5 thousand in 2014/2015, or by 57.0%. For the same period also the number of students from decreased, compared to the by 1.4 thousand (or 30.6%).

The number of mobile students<sup>4</sup> enrolled in universities and specialized higher schools had increased from 10.0 thousand in 2010/2011 to 11.1 thousand in 2014/2015 or by 11.5%. Compared to the previous academic year the increase is 3.2%.

In 2014/2015 the number of the academic staff in universities and specialized higher schools was 22.7 thousand, of whom 13.5 thousand or 59.4% were on a full time employment.

<sup>4</sup> 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.



### *'Bachelor' educational-qualification degree*

During the 2014/2015 academic year the number of students enrolled in the educational-qualification degree 'Bachelor' was 171.5 thousand, of whom 52.6% were women. Bulgarian citizens represented 97.4% of the enrolments and 14.7% were enrolled in private 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 (22.6%), followed by the field of Engineering and Engineering Trades (15.1%) and Social and behavioural science (12.3%). The lowest shares were registered in the fields of Transport services (1.2%), Life sciences (0.7%), and Mathematics and Statistics (0.2%).

In the academic year 2014/2015, the number of newly enrolled students for acquiring the educational-qualification degree 'Bachelor' was 45.0 thousand. Out of them 44.1 thousand, or 98.0%, were Bulgarian citizens.

In 2014, 32.4 thousand students graduated with the degree 'Bachelor', of which 31.2 thousand were Bulgarian citizens.

The relative shares of graduated students were highest in the fields of Business and Administration (28.5%), Social and Behavioural Sciences (17.9%) and Engineering and Engineering Trades (12.8%).

17.2% of all graduates in the degree 'Bachelor' had graduated in private universities.

### *'Master' educational-qualification degree*

During the 2014/2015 academic year the number of students in the educational-qualification degree 'Master' in universities and equivalent higher schools was 85.6 thousands of whom 59.0% were women. Bulgarian citizens represented 92.1% of the enrolments and 10.4 thousand, or 12.2%, were enrolled in private 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 (23.4%), followed by the Health (17.5%) and Law (12.5%). The lowest shares were registered in the Journalism, mass communication and information and Life sciences (by 0.4%) and Mathematics and Statistics (0.1%).

In the academic year 2014/2015, the number of newly enrolled students for acquiring the educational-qualification degree 'Master' after completed secondary education was 5.9 thousand. Out of them 4.6 thousand, or 77.5%, were Bulgarian citizens.

Students, who continuing their education in Master programmes after completed 'Bachelor' educational-qualification degree, were 27.2 thousand. Out of them 1.3 thousand, or 4.6%, were enrolled in post Professional bachelor programmes.

In 2014, 26.5 thousand students graduated with the degree 'Master', of which 97.3% were Bulgarian citizens.

The relative shares of graduated students were highest in the fields of Business and Administration (33.6%), Social and Behavioural Sciences (11.9%), Engineering and Engineering Trades (9.1%). The lowest relative shares were found in the fields of Veterinary, Journalism, mass communication and





information and Life sciences - by 0.5% of the total number of graduates in Master degree and Mathematics and statistics - only 0.1%.

14.1% of all graduates in the degree 'Master' had graduated in private universities.

### ***Educational and scientific degree 'Doctor'***

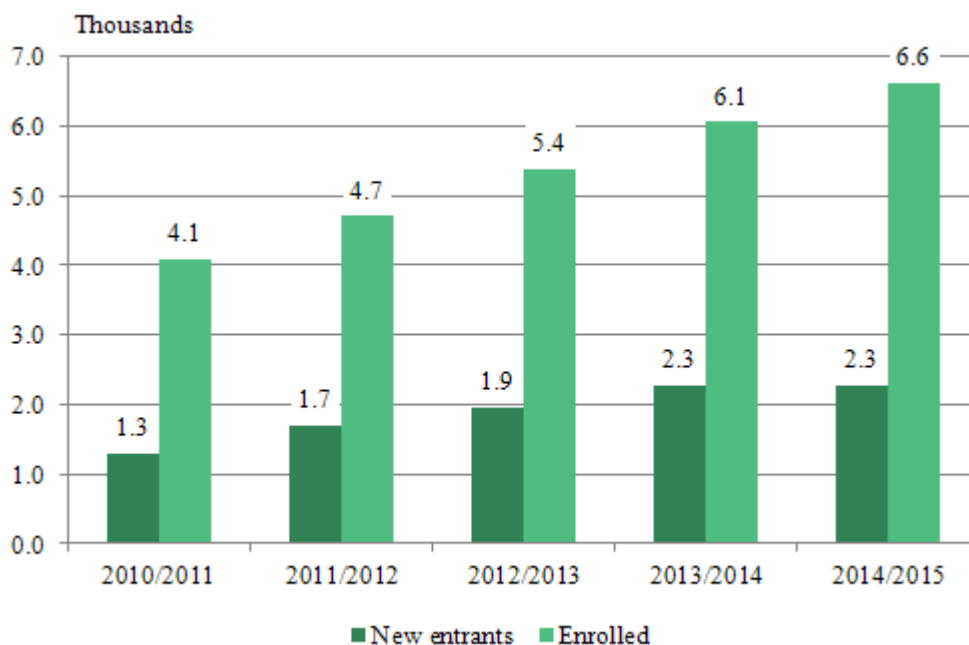
As of 31.12.2014, 6 617 Ph.D. students were enrolled in Bulgaria, of which 51.4% were women. Compared to the previous year the number of Ph.D. students had increased with 562 persons or by 9.3%.

The Ph.D. foreign students enrolled in Bulgaria were 340 persons, or 5.1% of the total Ph.D. students. Compared to the previous year their number had increased with 34.9%. The Ph.D. students coming from Greece were 19.7% of the total number of the Ph.D. foreign students enrolled, followed by those coming from Turkey (19.4%) and Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (10.9%).

According to the distribution by age, the share of Ph.D. students aged 30 - 39 was highest - 38.4%, followed by those aged 20 - 29 (34.3%) and 40 - 49 who represented 18.3% of the total number of Ph.D. students.

In 2014 in private universities and specialized higher schools were enrolled only 2.3% of the Ph.D. students.

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



During the 2014 the number of newly enrolled Ph.D. students was 2 284, of which 1 212 or 53.1% were women.



In 2014 a 'Doctor' degree was acquired by 1 363 persons of whom 719, or 52.8%, were women.

The number of graduated males was highest in narrow field of education Engineering and Engineering Trades - 17.4% of the total number of graduated males, followed by the fields of Health (11.3%) and Social and Behavioural Sciences and Humanities (10.2%). In the structure of the graduated females by narrow fields of education, the highest relative share was in the field of Health (12.4%), followed by the fields of Social and Behavioural Sciences and Humanities (11.5%) and Teacher training and education science (11.4%).



## 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 2011 (ISCED 2011) and the concomitant methodological instructions.

ISCED is designed to serve as a framework to classify educational activities as defined in programmes and the resulting qualifications into internationally agreed categories. The basic concepts and definitions of ISCED are intended to be internationally valid and comprehensive of the full range of education systems. The classification rests on three components: internationally agreed concepts and definitions; the classification systems and mappings of education programmes and related qualifications in countries worldwide. ISCED 2011 was adopted at the 36st session of the General Conference of UNESCO and the current year was defined as the first year for obligatory dissemination of statistical data distributed by the revised classification.

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 are not covered by the scope of the educational system according to the used definitions in ISCED 2011.

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 webpage (<http://www.nsi.bg/en>), section 'Education and Lifelong Learning'.



## Annex

**Table 1**

### Development of the educational system in Bulgaria

School year	Students enrolled in schools (I - XII grade)	Teaching staff (I - XII grade)	(Number)	
			Graduates secondary education	Graduates tertiary education <sup>1</sup>
1895/96	386076	9880	.	74
1900/01	355763	9565	.	89
1910/11	532993	13804	.	<sup>2</sup> 172
1920/21	693284	19488	.	1285
1930/31	850628	26825	10484	1293
1940/41	1092502	31825	23555	1914
1950/51	1067994	41400	43004	7689
1960/61	1306327	56374	48258	6298
1970/71	1454710	73722	93954	15947
1980/81	1358494	80290	97791	28012
1990/91	1366927	92182	97138	31359
2000/01	1069835	83734	79470	46319
2010/11	778441	61550	63043	59927
2014/15	747476	58087	<sup>3</sup> 53487	<sup>4</sup> 62010

<sup>1</sup> Excl. Ph.D. students.

<sup>2</sup> Data are for 1911/1912 school year.

<sup>3</sup> Data are for 2013/2014 school year.

<sup>4</sup> Data are for 2013/2014 school year.



**Table 2**

**Educational institutions by type**

	(Number)				
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
<b>Total</b>	<b>5200</b>	<b>5164</b>	<b>5067</b>	<b>5060</b>	<b>4975</b>
Kindergartens	2138	2112	2070	2051	1991
General and special schools	2175	2144	2112	2097	2087
Primary (I - IV grade)	156	156	153	150	150
Basic (I - VIII grade)	1429	1431	1402	1393	1386
Lower secondary (V - VIII grade)	13	12	11	8	7
Upper secondary (IX - XIII grade)	166	139	140	140	137
Secondary general (I - XIII grade )	411	406	406	406	407
Vocational schools	484	499	494	488	481
Art schools	21	22	22	23	23
Sport schools <sup>1</sup>	x	22	19	24	24
Vocational gymnasiums	422	414	416	402	394
Vocational colleges	36	36	37	39	40
Vocational training schools	5	5	-	-	-
Vocational Training Centres <sup>2</sup>	350	356	338	371	362
Higher schools <sup>3</sup>	53	53	53	53	54
Independent colleges	9	8	8	8	8
Colleges, at the universities	22	21	20	19	19
Universities and equivalent higher schools	44	45	45	45	46

<sup>1</sup>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 - State Gazette, No50/2010)

<sup>2</sup>Centres conducting programmes for attaining of professional qualification.

<sup>3</sup>Includes universities and equivalent higher schools and independent colleges.



**Table 3**

**Pupils and students by level of International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011)**

	(Number)				
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
<b>Total</b>	<b>1307705</b>	<b>1293961</b>	<b>1294682</b>	<b>1303836</b>	<b>1284910</b>
Pre-primary education (ISCED - 0)	223186	227971	235015	240622	241123
Primary education (I - IV grade, ISCED - 1)	255086	252372	253675	258840	261793
Lower secondary education (V - VIII grade, ISCED - 2)	219980	221274	221839	220934	217155
Vocational training for adults - first level professional qualification (ISCED - 2) <sup>1</sup>	8403	11219	13637	11176	6509
Vocational training - first level professional qualification, after VIII grade (ISCED - 3)	691	841	1011	831	988
Upper secondary education (IX - XIII grade, ISCED - 3)	302684	281671	272487	268395	267540
Vocational training for adults - second level professional qualification (ISCED - 3) <sup>1</sup>	4737	4062	4272	7300	3789
Vocational training for adults - third level professional qualification (ISCED - 3) <sup>1</sup>	4353	6660	6323	10278	5417
Post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED - 4)	3224	2804	2381	2001	1618
Vocational training for adults - fourth level professional qualification (ISCED - 4) <sup>1</sup>	96	92	83	165	25
Tertiary education (ISCED - 6, 7, 8)	285265	284995	283959	283294	278953
Education in colleges - Professional bachelor degree (ISCED - 6)	25511	<sup>2</sup> 16210	14688	15072	15244
Education in universities and equivalent higher schools - Bachelor degree (ISCED - 6)	178728	184069	180949	176344	171458
Education in universities and equivalent higher schools - Master degree (ISCED - 7)	76931	80013	82951	85823	85634
Educational and scientific degree 'Doctor' (ISCED - 8)	4095	4703	5371	6055	6617

<sup>1</sup> Incl. students in vocational gymnasiums and colleges.

<sup>2</sup> The number of students decreased significantly due to the conversion of an independent private college into university and pass over the relative students from educational qualification degree 'Professional Bachelor' into 'Bachelor' degree.



**Table 4**

**Teaching staff by level of International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011)**

	(Number)				
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
<b>Total</b>	<b>104078</b>	<b>102925</b>	<b>102488</b>	<b>101828</b>	<b>102799</b>
Pre-primary education (ISCED - 0)	19579	19729	20015	20269	20542
Primary education (I - IV grade, ISCED - 1)	14780	14666	14565	14767	14940
Lower secondary education (V - VIII grade, ISCED - 2)	19867	19504	19315	19277	19179
Upper secondary education (IX - XIII grade, ISCED - 3)	26903	25539	24684	24121	23968
Post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED - 4)	517	532	453	382	427
Tertiary education (ISCED - 6, 7)	22432	22955	23456	23012	23743
Education in colleges (ISCED - 6)	1375	1079	1091	1070	1018
Education in universities and equivalent higher schools (ISCED - 6, 7)	21057	21876	22365	21942	22725