



RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY (R&D) - 2025 - PRELIMINARY DATA

In 2025, the total amount of expenditure on research and development activity (R&D) was 1 697.2 million BGN (867.8 million EUR), which was 7.8% more than the previous year. The annual growth trend continued for the period 2021 - 2025.

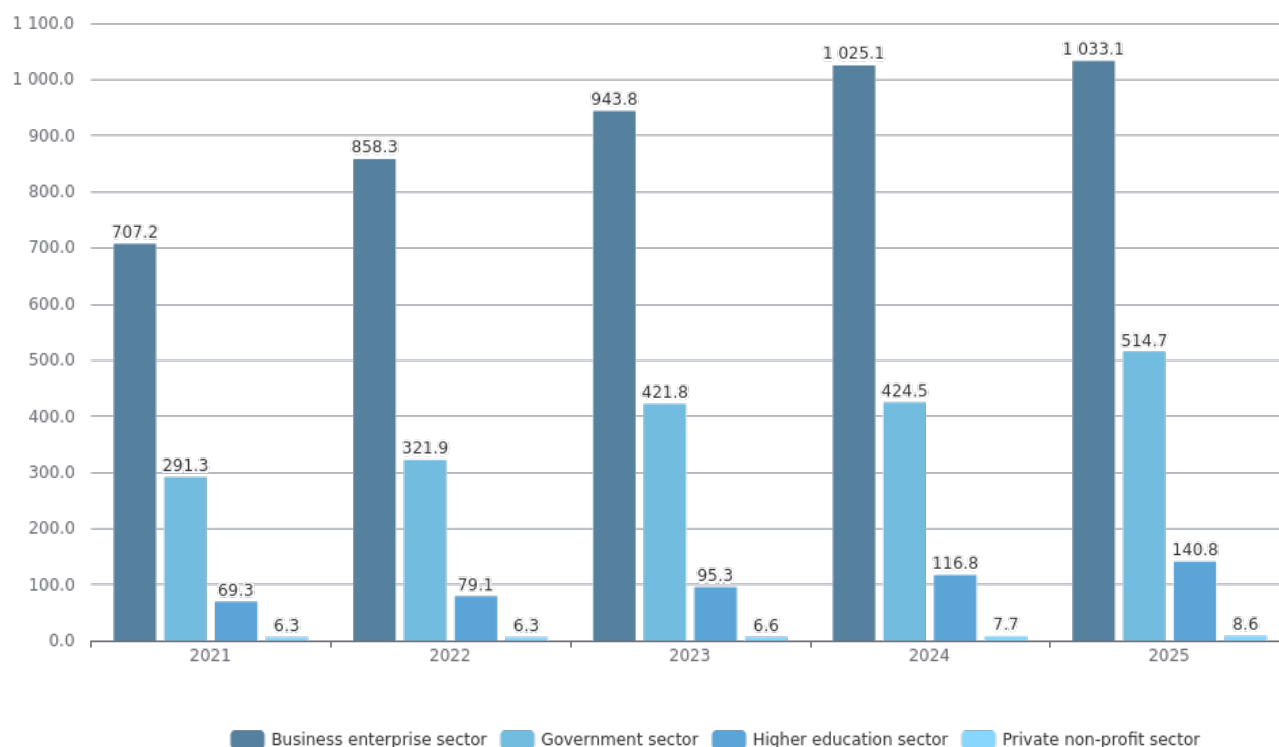
R&D intensity (R&D expenditure as a percentage of the gross domestic product) amounted to 0.75%, and it was 0.02 percentage points lower than in 2024.

Table 1. R&D expenditure

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
R&D expenditure (Million BGN)	1 074.0	1 265.6	1 467.5	1 574.1	1 697.2
R&D expenditure as % of GDP	0.77	0.75	0.79	0.77	0.75

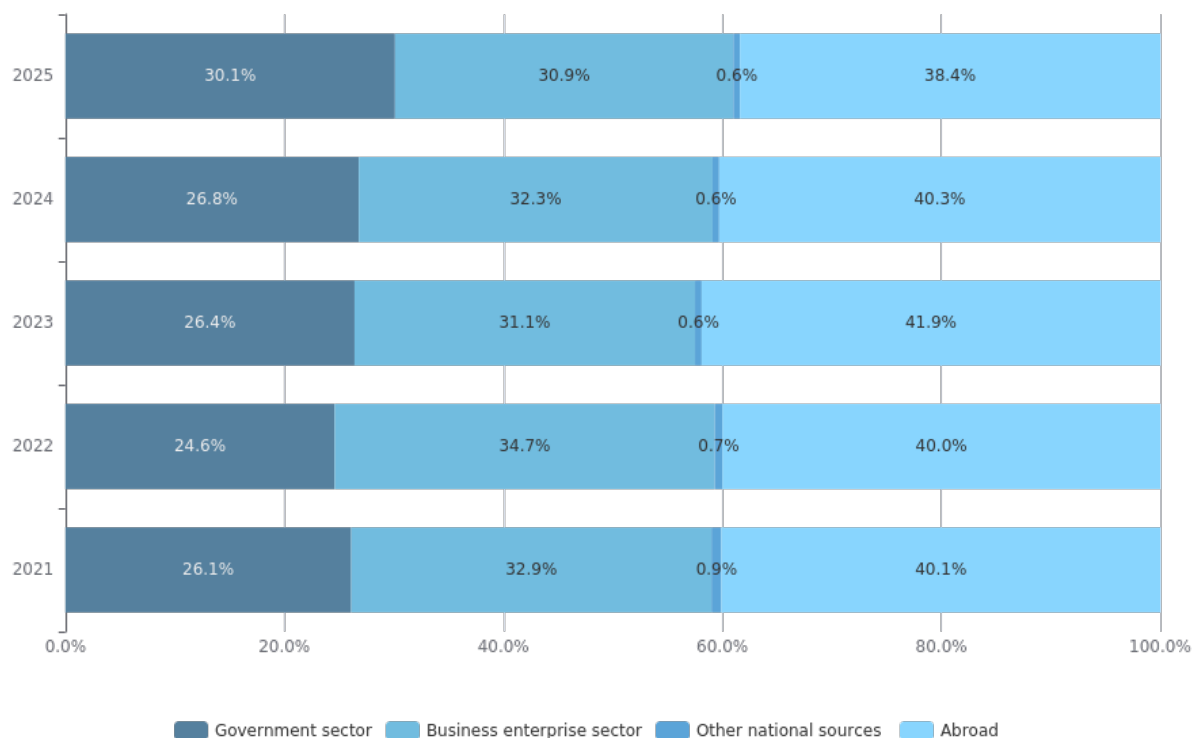
The Business enterprise sector was the largest of the four institutional sectors of R&D performance, with a share of 60.9% of the total R&D expenditure in 2025. It was followed by the Government sector, whose research institutes and organizations formed 30.3%. Spending on R&D by tertiary schools and university hospitals amounted to 8.3% and by non-profit organizations to 0.5%, respectively.

Figure 1. R&D expenditure by institutional sectors



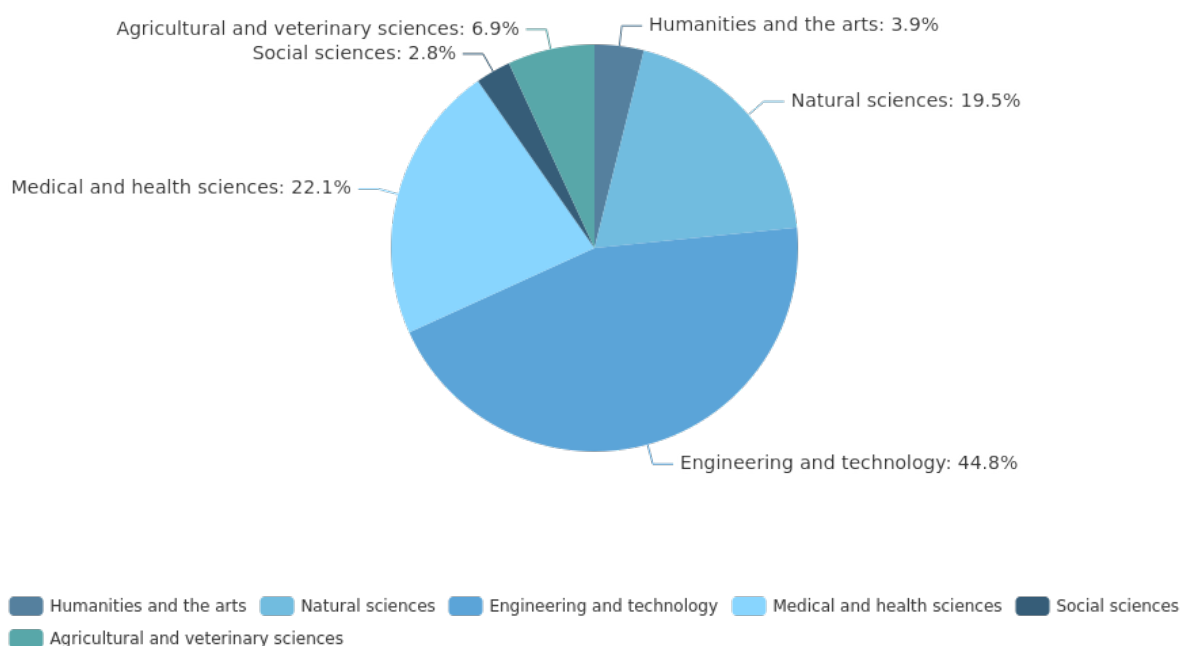
R&D activity was financed from the state budget, businesses, other national sources and from abroad. In 2025, the largest was the share of foreign sources of funds for R&D - 38.4%. The Business enterprise sector financed 30.9% of the total R&D expenditure, and the state budget - 30.1%.

Figure 2. R&D expenditure by source of funds



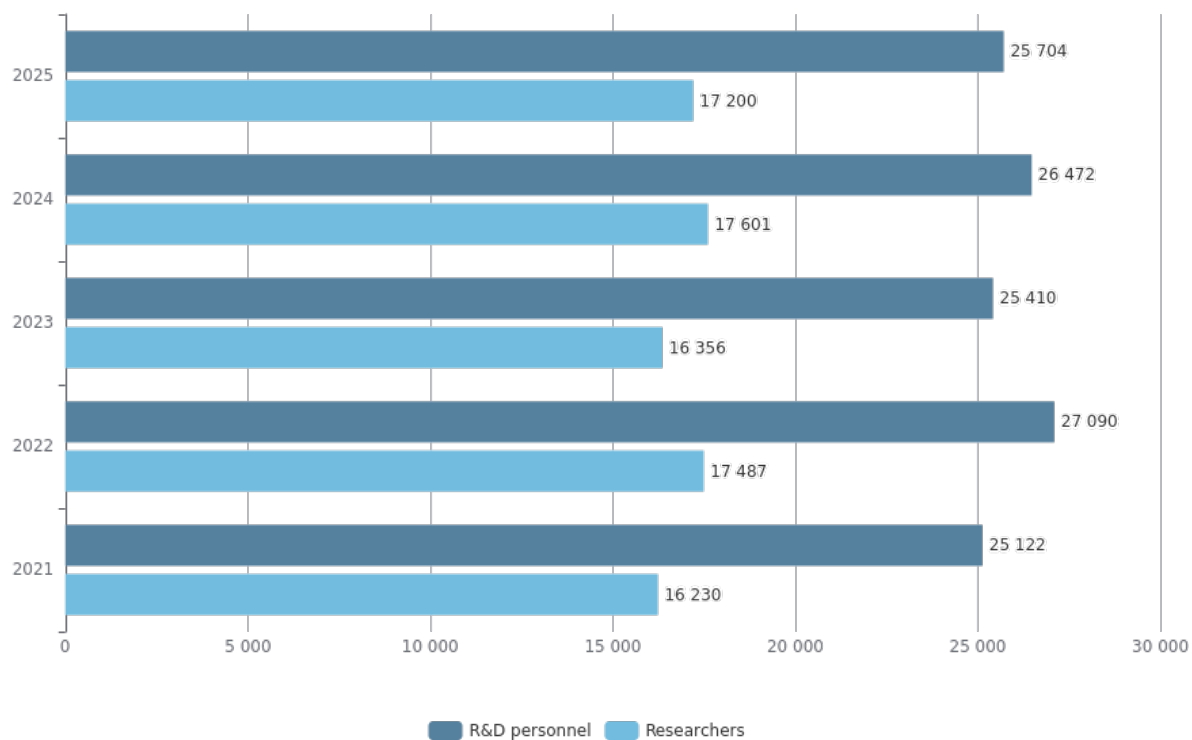
Regarding R&D expenditure by fields of science in 2025, as in the previous year, the highest share belonged to R&D expenditure in engineering and technology sciences - 44.8%, or 760.1 million BGN (388.7 million EUR), followed by the medical and health sciences with a share of 22.1%, or 374.2 million BGN (191.3 million EUR), and the natural sciences - 19.5%, or 331.4 million BGN (169.4 million EUR).

Figure 3. Structure of R&D expenditure by fields of science, 2025



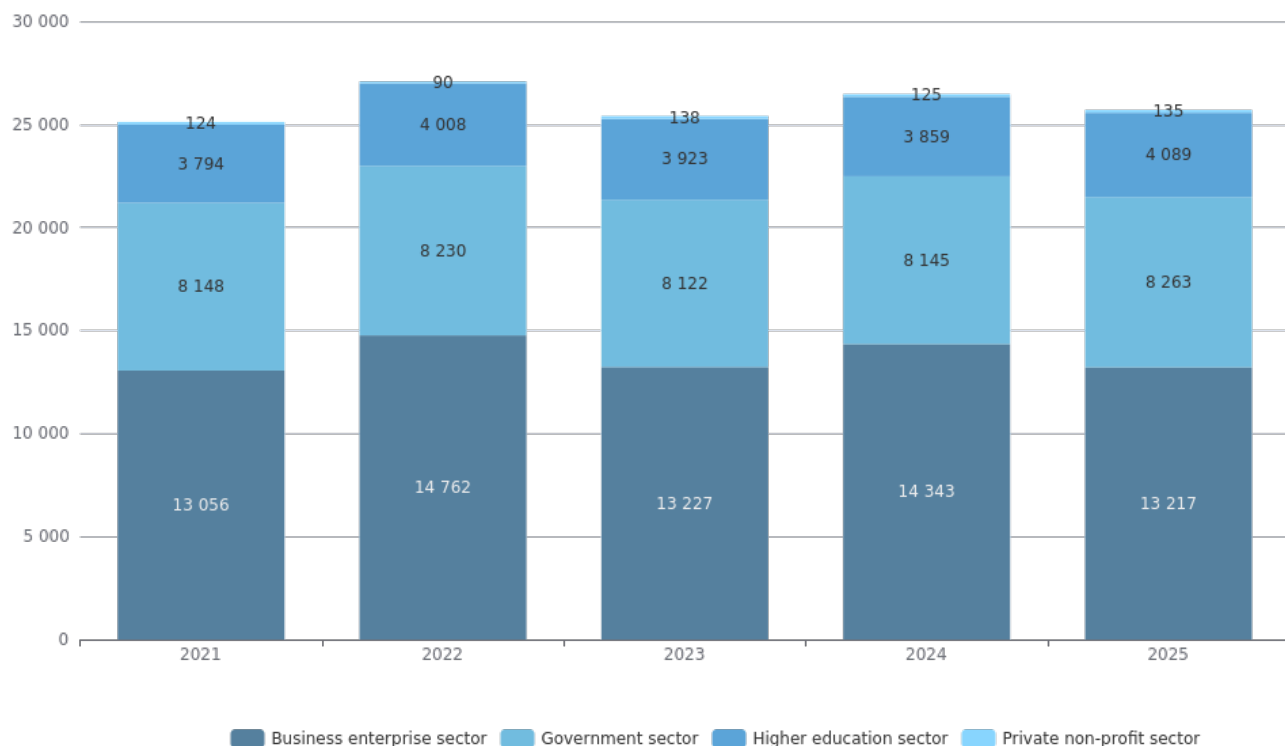
In 2025, the personnel engaged in research and development activity amounted to 25 704 persons (in full-time equivalent), which was 2.9% less than the previous year. The share of women in the total R&D personnel was 49.4%. The number of researchers in full-time equivalent was 17 200 persons, which was 2.3% less in comparison with 2024.

Figure 4. R&D personnel (in full-time equivalent)



In 2025, the main part of R&D personnel was concentrated in companies and research institutes in the business enterprise sector - 51.4% of the total R&D personnel (in full-time equivalent), or 13 217 persons. In organizations and institutions of the government sector, 8 263 persons were involved in R&D activity, which constituted 32.1%. In the higher education sector, 4 089 persons were carrying out research and development, with a relative share of 15.9%.

Figure 5. R&D personnel (in full-time equivalent) by institutional sectors



Methodological notes

Research and experimental development (R&D) comprise creative and systematic work undertaken in order to increase the stock of knowledge - including knowledge of humankind, culture and society - and to devise new applications of available knowledge. R&D activity covers basic research, applied research and experimental development.

The indicator 'R&D expenditure' is defined as all expenditure for R&D performed within a statistical unit, whatever the source of funds. The R&D expenditure comprises current costs and expenditure for acquisition of tangible and intangible fixed assets on R&D.

The indicator 'R&D personnel' measures the human resources going directly into R&D activity, responsible for the creation, application and dissemination of new knowledge. R&D personnel include all persons engaged directly in R&D, as well as those providing direct support to R&D (R&D managers, administrators, technicians and clerical staff). R&D personnel comprise researchers and other R&D personnel. Personnel in full-time equivalent (FTE) are calculated on the basis of working time spent on R&D activity during the reference year.

According to the methodological manual 'Frascati' (Guidelines for Collecting and Reporting Data on Research and Experimental Development - Frascati Manual, OECD, 2015), adopted by Eurostat, R&D expenditure and R&D personnel are distributed in four institutional sectors:

- Business enterprise sector - includes all enterprises whose primary activity is production of market goods and services (other than those included in Higher education sector);
- Government sector - comprises all institutional units, which are non-market producers and provide common services to satisfy the individual and collective needs of society and which are predominantly budgetary financed (other than those included in Higher education sector);
- Higher education sector - includes all universities, colleges, other institutions of post-secondary education, research and development sectors of higher education institutions and university hospitals;
- Private non-profit sector - includes foundations, associations, etc. providing non-market services.