



REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA
NATIONAL STATISTICAL INSTITUTE

REPORT

ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL PROGRAMME AND THE ACTIVITY OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL INSTITUTE IN 2025

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LIST OF BULGARIAN ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Administration Act
AIS	Automated Information System
BNB	Bulgarian National Bank
BSEC	Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization
CA	Customs Agency
CAIS	Cadastral-Administrative Information System
CAIS - EPP	Information System "Electronic Public Procurement"
CM	Council of Ministers
DGCAA	Directorate General "Civil Aviation Administration"
DIMESA	Directors of sectoral and environmental statistics and accounts
DPO	Data Protection Officer
EAMA	Executive Agency "Maritime administration"
EC	European Commission
EEA	Executive Environment Agency
ESA 2010	European System of Accounts 2010
ESF	European Social Fund
ESF+	European Social Fund Plus
ESS	European Statistical System
EU	European Union
FADN	Farm Accountancy Data Network
FMCS	Financial Management and Control system
FSDN	Farm Sustainability Data Network
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEOSTAT	National Statistics Office of Georgia
GNB	Gross Nutrient Balance
GNI	Gross National Income
HICP	Harmonized Index of Consumer Prices
HO	Head Office
IAU	Internal Audit Unit
ICT	Information and communications technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMS	Integrated Management System
INTRASTAT	Information system for Intra-Community trade in goods
IPA	Institute of Public Administration
IS	Information System
ISBC	Information System Business cycles
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Food
ME	Ministry of Energy
MEI	Ministry of Economy and Industry
MES	Ministry of Education and Science
MEW	Ministry of Environment and Water
MF	Ministry of Finance
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MH	Ministry of Health
MI	Ministry of Interior
MLSP	Ministry of Labor and Social Policy
MRDPW	Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works
MT	Ministry of Tourism
NACID	National Center for Information and Documentation
NAVET	National Agency for Vocational Education and Training
NCPHA	National Center for Public Health and Analysis
NEA	National Employment Agency
NFC	National Film Center
NRA	National Revenue Agency
NRPP	National register of populated places
NSI	National Statistical Institute
NSP	National Statistical Programme
NSS	National Statistical System
NSSI	National Social Security Institute
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

OOHI	Owner-Occupied Housing Index
OP	Operational programme
PFS	Public Finance School
POB	Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Bulgaria
PPPs	Purchasing Power Parities
PR	Property registry
PRODAGRO	Nomenclature of agricultural products
PRODCOM	Survey on output and sales of industrial products
PRODCOM.BG	Nomenclature of Industrial Production
PRODENERGY	Nomenclature of energy products
R & D	Research and Development activity
RA	Registry Agency
RSO	Regional Statistical Office
RSU	Register of statistical units
SAR	State Agency for Refugees
SEDA	Sustainable Energy Development Agency
SEECF	South-East European Cooperation Process
SJC	Supreme Judicial Council
SSD	Statistical surveys Department
STS	Short-term Business Statistics
UISAC	Unified Information System Against Crime
UN	United Nations
UN SDGs	UN Sustainable Development Goals
WG	Working Group

LIST OF ENGLISH ABBREVIATIONS

BI	Business Intelligence
CAPI	Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing
COICOP	International Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose
CPA	Statistical Classification of Products by Activity
CWPS	Working Party on Statistics
DATATHON	Competition to upgrade knowledge and skills in statistics
ECOICOP	Individual Consumption According to Purpose
EFAS	European Fisheries and Aquaculture Statistics Regulation
EDAMIS	Electronic Dataflow Administration and Management Information System
ESAC	The European Statistical Advisory Committee
ESSPROS	European system of integrated social protection statistics
ESTP	European Statistical Training Programme
FATS	Foreign-controlled enterprises statistics
JSON-stat	Simple lightweight JSON format for data dissemination
IAOS	International Association for Official Statistics
INCGROSS	Variable that represents monthly gross wages
NUTS	Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics
OSS	One Stop Shop
SAIO	Statistics on agricultural input and output
SDMX	Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange
SILC	Statistics on Income and Living Conditions
TESTA	Secure network infrastructure for cross-border sensitive information exchanges between EU Member States public bodies
VIES	VAT Information Exchange System

INTRODUCTION

The Report on implementation of the National Statistical Programme and the activity of the National Statistical Institute in 2025 is developed in compliance with Art. 9 (6) of the Law on Statistics.

The report is structured into five sections and presents the implementation of the tasks of the National Statistical Programme and the activities of the NSI and other Bodies of statistics in 2025.

The first section pays special attention to statistical surveys and activities performed for the first time in 2025.

The second section describes the results achieved on implementation of strategic goals laid down in the Strategy for Development of the National Statistical System of the Republic of Bulgaria for the period 2021 - 2027.

The third section presents the implementation of activities on the production of statistical information in the different thematic areas - demographic and social statistics, macroeconomic statistics, business statistics, statistics on agriculture, forestry and fisheries, multi-domain statistics, information technologies, statistical infrastructure and other activities.

The fourth section presents the resources needed in order to implement the activities of the NSI in 2025.

The fifth section introduces the audit assignments performed by the Internal Audit Unit and the activities implemented by the Inspectorate and the Finance Controller in 2025.

MAIN EVENTS IN 2025

- On June 25, 2025, the 145th anniversary of the establishment of Bulgarian statistics was celebrated. In this regard, an open-air exhibition was prepared, presenting the history of the institution during the period of the Third Bulgarian State and consisting of 28 panels - 14 in Bulgarian and 14 in English. The exhibition was positioned sequentially in the cities of Sofia, Vidin, Burgas, Varna, Ruse, Blagoevgrad and Plovdiv.
- On June 10, 2025, a delegation from the NSI visited the headquarters of the National Bureau of Statistics of China in Beijing and met with Commissioner Kang Yi and heads of units in the institution. The event was held in the context of the historical and traditionally good diplomatic relations between Bulgaria and China, and aimed to build on last year's meeting. On October 16, 2025, five-member delegation from the Zhejiang Provincial Bureau of Statistics of China visited the NSI. The purpose of the visit was to familiarize the guests with the Bulgarian statistical system, as well as with the organization and activities of the NSI. The possibility of signing a memorandum of cooperation between the two institutions was discussed.
- On 11 and 12 September 2025, the NSI in cooperation with DG Eurostat organized a high-level conference on theme "EU Enlargement: The role of Comparable and Reliable Official Statistics". The two-day event organized on the occasion of the 145th anniversary of Bulgarian statistics was attended by the Directors-General and Presidents of the national statistical offices from Southeast Europe, the Director-General of Eurostat and representatives of UNFPA's Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The conference was part of the official calendar of the 4th Bulgarian Chairmanship-in-office of the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEEC) and included a special SEEC dedicated session, during which opportunities for further strengthening the traditionally good cooperation between the national statistical institutes in the Southeast Europe Region through various joint initiatives was discussed.
- Two regional roundtables were held in Lovech and Varna on the topic "The National Statistical Institute as a full member of the OECD Committee on Statistics and Statistical Policy". The NSI organized them in connection with the commitments made in the National Roadmap with activities for the cooperation of the Republic of Bulgaria with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The events were attended by local government bodies and representatives of business organizations in both regions.
- In the period 7-8 May 2025, the NSI hosted a regular Eurostat Excessive Deficit Procedure (EDP) dialogue visit where the NSI is the lead institution. Foreign participants included the Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs of Eurostat, as well as the European Central Bank. Bulgaria participated with representatives of the NSI, the Bulgarian National Bank, the Ministry of Finance (MF) and the National Audit Office.
- The NSI, together with the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works (MRDPW) and other stakeholders, continued to actively participate in the processes of discussing and preparing proposals for changing the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS). On 26 March 2025, the Council of Ministers adopted a decision granting a mandate to the NSI to conduct negotiations with Eurostat for changing the scope of level 2 regions in the Republic of Bulgaria, in order to bring them into line with the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 and Regulation (EC) No 176/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 May 2003 on the establishment of a common classification of territorial units for

statistics (NUTS). The proposal for changing the classification was sent, in accordance with the requirements and within the deadline, to the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Bulgaria to the EU, which deposited it with the European Commission. According to the schedule established by the EC, a number of consultations were held during the year, in which the NSI confirmed the arguments included in the opinion to the official proposal in order to coordinate the proposed amendments. The new version of the classification is expected to enter into force on 1 January 2027.

- In the period 27 October - 2 November 2025, the NSI successfully organized training for young statisticians from the Western Balkan countries - Albania, Kosovo, the Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro. The training carried out within the framework of the project "Developing the administrative capacity of the National Statistical Offices of the Western Balkan partner countries through training of young statisticians with a view to assisting them in the EU accession process", within the framework of the "Bulgarian Development Aid" programme of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Its main goal was to familiarize the participants with the theoretical and practical aspects of the organization of statistical surveys in accordance with European standards and good practices. The program included lectures, practical exercises and discussions led by NSI experts with many years of experience in the field.

1. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 2025 THE NSI:

- held a number of working meetings with representatives of private data holders, at which the possibilities for providing data were discussed, in order to increase the efficiency, accuracy and timeliness of statistical information;
- in implementation of Commission Regulation (EU) 2022/2294, provided Eurostat with detailed data on hospitalizations by diagnosis, gender, age groups and territorial distribution of patients (NUTS2 level). The data source is the Directorate "National Health Data and eHealth" at the National Center for Public Health and Analysis (NCPHA) - the body of statistics in the field of health;
- uses as a source of statistical data on the academic staff in higher education an administrative register - Register of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, maintained by the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) through the National Center for Information and Documentation (NACID);
- conducted the statistical survey of libraries with a library collection of over 200 thousand items through a web-based application for data collection;
- used the SDMX technical standard for filling in and sending data to Eurostat under the European System for Integrated Social Protection Statistics;
- provided Eurostat with separate data sets on the number of third-country nationals who were issued with an EU Blue Card in the previous calendar year, on their family members admitted, as well as on the number of third-country nationals whose applications for an EU Blue Card were rejected, in accordance with Directive (EU) 2021/1883 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 October 2021 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly qualified employment and repealing Council Directive 2009/50/EC;

- used the SIMS standard for completing and sending to Eurostat metadata and a quality report for the economic accounts for agriculture in accordance with Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2025/1542 of 30 July 2025;
- in accordance with the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2016/792 of the European Parliament and of the Council on harmonised indices of consumer prices and the housing price index, as well as Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/1470, the scope of the Owner-Occupied Housing Index (OOHI) was expanded in 2025; The production and publication of a new indicator - "Owner-built housing price index and major repairs" has begun.
- completed the preparatory activities related to the implementation of the new European Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose, version 2 (ECOICOP, Version 2), which will enter into force in 2026. In 2025, the IS "Consumer Prices" was adapted and all time series with consumer price indices were recalculated according to the new classification;
- in connection with the preparation for the accession of the Republic of Bulgaria to the euro area from 1 January 2026, preparatory activities began in the second half of 2025 to calculate flash estimates of consumer price indices; Their regular production is planned to begin from the beginning of 2026 - with the publication of data for January 2026.
- in 2025, regular transmission of preliminary data for Annual Financial Accounts to Eurostat was successfully launched; Data for the entire time series from 1995 to 2024 were developed and provided.
- launched a new annual survey "Consumption of energy in data centers" for 2024;
- reported data from the annual "Hydrogen" survey for 2024;
- created a new section "Georeferenced Data" on the website; The data in the section is aimed at users with knowledge and experience in working with and analyzing spatial data related to statistical information.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC GOALS OF THE STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM, 2021 - 2027

Main direction in the activity of the NSI in 2025 was the realization of strategic goals and activities within the framework of the Strategy for Development of the National Statistical System of the Republic of Bulgaria for the period 2021 – 2027.

2.1. Goal 1: Modern and effective National Statistical System

Activity 2.1.2. Updating the legal framework

Updating the legislative framework is key to ensure the independence, quality and trust in official statistics - especially in relation to European standards. As with many regulatory reforms, an important aspect is not only the adoption of laws, but also their implementation and compliance with procedures, methodologies and standards.

The NSI participated in coordination procedures for amendments and supplements to laws, the changes to which are initiated by other institutions.

The National Assembly adopted an amendment and supplement to the Statistics Act, which was promulgated in the State Gazette No. 67 of 15 August 2025.

Activity 2.1.3. Development and implementation of new methods and technologies

In 2025, work began on developing the activities under the project "Development of the IS Foreign Trade" by adding a "Macrodata" module to generate various statistical outputs. Information on quasi-exports, obtained through the exchange of microdata with the Member States, was integrated into the data for third countries.

In 2025, a web-based application for the Annual report of enterprises realizing forestry activity was put into operation for the first time. The application collected information in real time to form the necessary indicators related to the economic accounts for forestry, in accordance with the EU legal framework.

In 2025, the project to upgrade the IS "Consumer Prices" was successfully completed in connection with the implementation of the new European Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose, Version 2 (ECOICOP, Version 2) and the use of data from retailers to calculate consumer price indices.

Activity 2.1.4. Use more administrative and new data sources

An experimental calculation of the average prices of fields and permanent grasslands was carried out in 2025, based on administrative data from the Registry Agency, with the aim of replacing the respondent survey. After a three-year parallel calculation of the average price of rented agricultural land based on data from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, it was decided that the survey of land prices and rent would henceforth be carried out entirely using administrative sources.

In 2025, a working meeting was held with representatives of "Yettel - Bulgaria", at which the possibilities for providing mobile data were discussed, with the aim of increasing the efficiency, accuracy and timeliness of statistical information in tourism.

In 2025, in the area of consumer price statistics, the use of the National Health Information System as an administrative data source in the production of price indices of medicines purchased with a prescription book, on a positive list of the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF), was expanded. The activities of the joint working group between the NSI, the Bulgarian National Bank (BNB) and the Association of Banks in Bulgaria to study the possibilities for using administrative data in the area of banking services also continued.

In 2025, interaction continued with the institutions for the use of administrative data for the needs of producing statistical information for the areas of environment and energy: Ministry of Environment and Water (MoEW), Ministry of Energy (ME), Ministry of Agriculture and Food (MAF), State Agency "State Reserve and Wartime Stocks", Executive Environment Agency, Executive Forestry Agency, Executive Agency "Survey and Maintenance of the Danube River", Agency for Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre, Public Procurement Agency, Agency for Sustainable Energy Development, Customs Agency (CA), National Revenue Agency (NRA), Directorate General "Civil Aviation Administration" (DG CAA), National Center for Public Health and Analysis, National Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology, Executive Agency "Automobile Administration".

Contacts, including meetings, were made with administrations and organizations regarding the need for administrative data for the implementation of the new requirements of European legislation in the field of environment and energy.

2.2. Goal 2: High quality and confidence in official statistics

Activity 2.2.1. Strengthening communication with stakeholders

In 2025, the NSI strengthened communication with the main stakeholders

(respondents, data provider institutions and users) in order to reduce the burden on respondents and improve the data quality. Since the beginning of June, a new website has been launched, which is bilingual, user-oriented, smartphone-friendly, interactive and with new modern functionalities that facilitate users of statistical information. The NSI website is easy to access and the main channel for the dissemination of statistical information.

During the year, 2 042 time series in Bulgarian and English were published, as well as the corresponding tables with the latest data and metadata in 47 statistical sections, 274 bilingual press releases and 144 news, as well as announcements for 66 competitions and 4 auction. The average number of visitors per day was 10 833.

The number of press releases with regional statistics published as of October 634.

The time series generated the most interest and most downloaded during the year are in English from the following areas:

- Consumer Price Indices;
- Industrial Production Indices and Industrial Turnover Indices;
- Construction Production Indices.

The Top 3 publications downloaded from the NSI's website in digital format are:

- Classification of economic activities (NACE.BG-2008 and NACE.BG-2025);
- Statistical Reference Book 2024;
- Statistical Reference Book Census 2021.

The press releases that generated the greatest interest during the year were about inflation and consumer price indices, population and demographic processes, employees under labour contract, and gross average wages and salaries.

The publication of press releases on social networks continued. The use of Instagram as a communication channel to reach a larger audience was launched.

Activity 2.2.2. Inclusion and active participation of the public

In fulfillment of Goal 2 "High quality and confidence in official statistics" from 2020, the NSI included the organization of outdoor exhibitions in its toolset for popularizing the statistical institution and its activities. In 2025, the exhibitions were on the theme: "145 years of Bulgarian statistics", and were presented in seven cities - Sofia, Varna, Burgas, Vidin, Plovdiv, Ruse and Blagoevgrad. The numerous audience in all cities had the opportunity to find answers to curious topics about the beginning of statistical activity, about the lifeline and bodies of statistics, about Bulgaria in the European Statistical System (ESS), about the population, the environment, as well as about the use of the Internet in the country. Attendance was measured by organizing accompanying initiatives - a QR quiz and a game "Scan and win!".

The NSI organised and held two regional roundtables in Lovech and Varna on the topic "The National Statistical Institute as a full member of the OECD Committee on Statistics and Statistical Policy". They were organized in connection with the commitments made in the National Roadmap with activities for the cooperation of the Republic of Bulgaria with the OECD. The events were attended by local government bodies and representatives of business organizations in both regions.

Activity 2.2.3. Open quality management

Open quality management of the European statistics is a priority direction in the development of the ESS. Quality management of the European statistics requires all Member States to implement effectively the legislation in the field of statistics and principles of the

European Statistics Code of Practice.

In the area of consumer prices, the NSI updated and sent to Eurostat: the inventory of sources and methods for the production of Harmonized Indices of Consumer Prices, housing price indices and house sales indicators, as well as the report on the sources and methods used to collect information necessary for calculating purchasing power parities.

A methodology "Environmental Statistics and Accounts" was implemented, which includes methodological and practical guidelines for environmental statistics and the production of environmental accounts. The effect of this is to improve the overall statistical process and data quality. The document is intended for NSI employees.

The development of a methodology and tools for the Ecosystem Accounts module continued in connection with the amendment of Regulation (EU) No 691/2011, with two inter-institutional meetings held, reporting requirements presented and possible data sources discussed.

In order to improve the data quality and to assist respondents, the guidelines for the reports on environmental and energy surveys are regularly reviewed and updated, if necessary. Time series are regularly reviewed and updated in connection with updating the methodology and/or new regulatory requirements. Active work with the Statistical Survey Departments (SSD) in the country continued, and in April 2025 the annual meeting "Statistics on the Environment and Energy" was held with the participation of experts from all SSD. The main goal of the meeting was to improve the work by increasing the expert capacity in SSD, and as a result - improving the quality of statistical data.

2.3. Goal 3: Transition from statistics to value-added statistics

Activity 2.3.1. Modern and effective communication

The rich in volume and content press releases and periodical publications continue to provide state institutions, the media, business, the academic community and the entire society with timely, objective, useful and European-quality statistical information on the current state of the various economic, social, educational and cultural activities in the country. The 20 publications issued - printed and electronic (on the NSI website), are bilingual - in Bulgarian and English, with data included at the national and regional level from various statistical areas. "Statistical Yearbook 2024", "Statistical Reference Book 2025" and the magazine "Statistics" comprehensively cover statistical information and satisfy the needs of different categories of users.

Another information channel is the digital library of the NSI. During the reporting period, it was visited by 23 817 users. 744 257 searches were made in the digital library, and 829 562 pages were read. Over 58 000 pages were scanned and converted into full-text format in the digital center.

Social networks are becoming one of the main communication channels. The number of followers of the NSI profile on Facebook has exceeded 14 thousand, for the year the content has reached over 680 thousand people and there are over 1.5 million content views, including bookmarks and registrations from other sources.

During the year, Instagram continued to strengthen as a communication channel. The NSI profile on the social network contains over 700 posts.

Activity 2.3.2. New, consumer-oriented statistical products and services

In 2025, the NSI continued to develop the IS "Single Entry Point NSI". The information system will be a portal for users to access specific NSI information systems for entering the relevant reports. Users will have easier access and greater use of all applications and services they need. The purpose of the portal is to provide a single entry, after which the

user will be able to work in the systems integrated without the need for repeated identification and authorization. In this way, respondents will be relieved in submitting information for the relevant NSI surveys.

IS "Business Statistics", IS "Business Cycles" and IS "Environmental Statistics" will be integrated in the current system "Single Entry Point NSI". Users will have direct access to these systems through the new information system. Within the framework of the project, integration with external systems will also be implemented, as well as connectivity with RegiX - the environment for inter-register exchange of the Ministry of e-Government. In the future, all the NSI systems used by external users for entering reports/surveys will be integrated into the system. This will lead to the elimination of unnecessary administrative burden for businesses and especially for enterprises in the categories of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises.

In response to the growing needs of various users for timely information, the NSI began upgrading the IS Foreign Trade by adding a Macrodata module to generate various statistical outputs. This will provide fast and convenient online access to data on the export and import of goods by using modern and secure IT solutions and tools.

In 2025, user improvements were implemented in the IS Environmental Statistics aimed at facilitating work and improving data quality: new automatic checks and clearer error messages.

Activity 2.3.3. Easily accessible and understandable statistics

In 2025, the NSI continued its initiatives to increase statistical literacy and culture by organizing: the Eighth European Statistics Competition for students, the International Statistical Poster Competition, the Statistical Essay Competition for students and the exhibition "145 Years of Bulgarian Statistics" in the Open-Air Gallery. 510 teams from 130 schools in the country participated in the Statistics Competition. 316 teams started the competition in category A (X - XII grade), and 194 teams in category B (VII - IX grade). The largest number of participants in both categories was from Sofia - 85 teams, followed by students from Gotse Delchev with 81 teams and Dobrich - 55 teams. 92 teams from 30 settlements and 50 schools in the country participated in the International Statistical Poster Competition, 56 students from 23 cities took part in the Statistical Essay Competition. The DATATHON competition was organized for the third time, and 24 teams from 11 cities in Bulgaria participated. The mass participation in the statistical initiatives is convincing proof that the NSI is working in the right direction and attracts more and more young people with each passing year, who expand their knowledge and skills in statistics.

Activity 2.3.4. Conditions for active participation of the media

For the NSI, the media are a key stakeholder, an important partner and a major data user. The Institute conducts open, timely and effective communication with them. One of the main policies in this regard, also enshrined in the European Statistics Code of Practice, is the equality of the media, together with all users, in the dissemination of statistical products and services. By introducing the new NSI website, the media are informed in advance which data will be published and when through the Release Calendar announced at the beginning of each year and developed exclusively for the convenience of users. The automated receipt of press releases always at the same time also contributes to the equality of users and the preservation of the trust built over the years. This policy was strictly followed in 2025.

The media was a natural partner of the NSI in order to popularize the activities of the institution. During the year, the NSI held numerous meetings and interviews, answered their inquiries and proactively provided them with information related to current topics. The NSI established new contacts and new media and journalists were introduced to the work of the institute and the importance of statistical information for society.

2.4. Goal 4: Active cooperation with national and international partners

Activity 2.4.1. Promoting partnerships at national level

In 2025, the NSI actively participated in the activities to improve the interaction within the National Statistical System and with other partner organizations. In order to increase the efficiency, achieve optimal organization and coordination in the interaction between the NSI and the NCPHA at the Ministry of Health (MH) and for a more fruitful implementation of their assigned functions and tasks, in 2025 an Agreement for cooperation and strategic partnership in the development, production and dissemination of statistical information in the field of public health statistics and information exchange was signed between the NSI and the Directorate "National Health Data and e-Health" at the NCPHA.

The scope of the data received was expanded and the cooperation agreement between the NSI and the NHIF was updated.

NSI employees attended meetings of the National Committee on the Farm Accountancy Data Network, the Monitoring Committee of the Strategic Plan for the Development of Agriculture and Rural Areas 2023 - 2027, and the Monitoring Committee of the Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Program 2021 – 2027.

During the year, cooperation and strategic partnership in data exchange between the Ministry of Finance, BNB, National Revenue Agency, CA and NSI continued on the basis of a Memorandum of cooperation in the development, production and dissemination of data in the field of government financial statistics signed between the institutions in 2024. Information exchange is carried out by an interdepartmental expert working group with representatives of the MF, BNB and NSI.

Activity 2.4.2. Extension of international cooperation

In 2025, the activities in the field of international cooperation were again aimed at strengthening the authority of NSI as a responsible and active partner both within the ESS, and in a number of international organizations, including the OECD, UN, the Organization for Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), the South-East European Cooperation Process, the International Statistical Institute (ISI) and others.

Cooperation within the European Union (EU):

An important part of the international activity was the participation of the NSI as an active partner within the ESS. In 2025, our country was again represented at the three regular meetings of the European Statistical System Committee (ESSC), which were held in February and May in Luxembourg, as well as in October in the city of Split, Croatia. Immediately before the last ESSC meeting of the year, the traditional meeting of the Directors-General (110th DGINS Conference) was held, dedicated to the topic "European Tourism Statistics: A Forward-Looking and Innovative Response to 21st Century User Needs". ESSC provides professional guidance to the ESS in the development, production and dissemination of European statistics in accordance with statistical principles. The Committee plays an important role in improving the quality of statistical data in the EU and in providing the necessary information for making informed decisions both at European and national level.

In the context of active participation in initiatives at the European level, the President of the NSI took part in the European Statistical Forum on the topic "Closing the data gaps on climate change". The event was held in Brussels from 16 to 17 January 2025 and was organized by Eurostat and the Directorate-General for Statistics of the European Central Bank. The European Statistical Forum is a conference for the exchange of views and experience on topics of strategic importance, with a view to strengthening cooperation and coordination between the European System of Central Banks (ESCB) and the ESS.

Deputy President of the NSI participated as a moderator in an international scientific conference on "New Techniques and Technologies for Statistics" (NTTS), which was held in the period 11 - 13 March 2025 in Brussels, Belgium. The event is organized by Eurostat and is held every two years. The aim of the conference is to create a dynamic platform for presenting and discussing the results of current scientific and innovative research in the field of official statistics, as well as to encourage the conduct of future such research. The conference examines topics related to the impact of new techniques, methods and technologies on the collection, production and dissemination of statistical data.

Within the framework of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU, the President of the NSI took part in a meeting of the heads of statistical offices of the ESS Member States, which was held in the period 10 - 11 April 2025 in Warsaw, Poland. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the changes in the main European act in the field of statistics - Regulation (EC) No. 223/2009. In addition, good practices and examples from business for access and use of data from private holders and their potential application in various statistical areas such as smart metering data, web sources, payment transactions, mobile data were discussed. Such forums provide participants with the opportunity to exchange experience and ideas, as well as to draw up a common approach to addressing current and potential future challenges facing European statistics.

In addition, the Chairman of the National Statistical Council participated in a seminar of the European Statistical Advisory Committee (ESAC), which was held in Athens on 26-27 March 2025. The event was organized in close cooperation with the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) and Eurostat under the motto "Statistical priorities in Europe: the users' perspective and mechanisms for consultations". ESAC ensures that user requirements, as well as the workload of respondents and producers of statistical information, are taken into account in the development of statistical programmes.

Among the most significant events in the international activities of the NSI in 2025 is the organization, together with Eurostat, of a high-level international conference on the topic "EU Enlargement: The role of Comparable and Reliable Official Statistics". The two-day event organized on the occasion of the 145th anniversary of the establishment of Bulgarian statistics, which took place on September 11-12, was attended by the heads of statistical offices from Southeast Europe, the Director General of Eurostat, representatives of the Regional Office of the United Nations Population Fund for Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The conference focused on the priority areas in which additional efforts are needed for harmonization with the ESS. Numerous issues were discussed regarding the challenges in the EU accession process, the communication of statistical data, the use of new and non-traditional methods of information collection, and peer reviews as a tool for improving national statistical systems. The conference is part of the official calendar of events on the occasion of the Fourth Bulgarian Presidency of the SEECF (July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026) and included a special closed session dedicated to the opportunities for further strengthening the traditionally good cooperation between the national statistical institutes in the South-Eastern Europe region through various joint initiatives.

At the invitation of the Director-General of Eurostat, the President of the NSI participated as a panelist in a conference dedicated to the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the European Statistics Code of Practice. The event was organized by Eurostat and took place in the period 6 - 7 November 2025 in Brussels, Belgium. The event was attended by representatives of the statistical offices from the ESS, the European Parliament, the European Commission, the Presidency of the Council of the EU, as well as other stakeholders - users of official statistical information. The participants discussed and highlighted the achievements over the past two decades since the establishment of the European Statistics Code of Practice and its impact on the process of collecting, processing and disseminating official statistics in the EU. The President of the NSI participated in a session dedicated to the principle of professional independence of statistical offices, which is a fundamental principle within the ESS to ensure trust in official European statistics.

The Deputy President of the NSI continued his participation in the meetings of the Executive Body of the Committee on Monetary, Financial and Balance of Payment Statistics in his capacity as a member of the Committee for the 2025-2026 term. Established by a Decision of the Council of the EU, the Committee aims to assist the European Commission in drawing up and implementing a multi-annual work programme in the field of monetary and financial statistics and balance of payments statistics. The composition of the Executive Body for the 2025-2026 term includes representatives of the central banks of Slovenia and the Netherlands and the national statistical institutes of Bulgaria, France and Finland.

In addition to participating in key events and forums at the European level, NSI representatives continued to participate in the meetings of various working groups in the field of statistics in 2025. Among the particularly important international participations were the meetings of the Council of the EU Working Party (WG) on Statistics (CWPS) in Brussels.

In the first half of 2025, Poland held the Presidency of the Council of the EU. The Polish Presidency aimed to accelerate work on a number of key statistical regulations: Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on European statistics on population and housing (ESOP); Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on non-financial commercial real estate statistics (CREI); Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on European statistics on fisheries and aquaculture (EFAS). The Polish Presidency successfully concluded the examination procedure of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/1131 of 26 March 2025 amending Regulation (EU) No 691/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards investments on climate change mitigation and introducing the classification of environmental purposes.

Denmark held the presidency from 1 July until the end of 2025. In the field of statistics, Denmark committed to following the programme of the Poland-Denmark-Cyprus trio. The main activity of the Working Party was aimed at continuing work on the Proposal for a Regulation on non-financial commercial real estate statistics (CREI) and the Proposal for a Regulation on European fisheries and aquaculture statistics (EFAS), as well as work on the Recommendation for a Council Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 2533/98 concerning the collection of statistical information by the European Central Bank (ECB). Within the framework of the Danish Presidency of the Council of the EU, the procedure for examining the Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Single Market and Customs Programme for the period 2028 - 2034 and repealing Regulations (EU) 2021/444, (EU) 2021/690, (EU) 2021/785, (EU) 2021/847 and (EU) 2021/1077 has also been launched within the framework of the Working Party on Competitiveness and Growth/Internal Market of the Council of the EU.

Cooperation within the UN and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE):

In March, the President of the NSI and the Head of International Relations and Projects Department took part in the 56th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) which was held in New York under the motto “Better Data. Better Lives”. The meeting was attended by the heads of statistical institutions from all 193 UN Member States. Along with the main session of the UNSC, a number of side events were also included in the programme. Of particular interest to the NSI representatives were the high-level seminar on “Using artificial intelligence and machine learning for the production of official statistics: opportunities, challenges and future directions”, organized by the Statistical Office of Austria, as well as a discussion on reducing the administrative burden on respondents organized jointly by the national statistical offices of the Netherlands and Denmark.

In 2025, several meetings of the High-Level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (HLG-

PCCB) were also held. The President of the NSI is a member as one of the five representatives for the North America and Europe region. Among the topics discussed were the preparation of the next UN World Data Forum in 2026, the holding of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4) in Seville, Spain, as well as issues related to the financing and sustainability of global statistical systems. In the period 10-11 November 2025, immediately after the 40th meeting of the Group, which was held in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the President of the NSI participated as a panelist in a discussion dedicated to the use of advanced technologies and methodologies to strengthen the capacity of national statistical systems. The discussion, organized by the Statistical Office of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, aimed to examine how national statistical offices are using modern technologies and innovative methodologies to improve the quality, timeliness and accessibility of data for evidence-based policymaking and sustainable development, and how modernization efforts can strengthen trust, transparency and ethical use of data, while respecting the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.

In cooperation with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), in June 2025, the NSI management participated in the 73rd plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES), which was held in Geneva, Switzerland. The topics included in the CES program included: use of non-traditional sources of data on migration and human mobility, dealing with misuse of data and misinformation, changes and innovations in survey-taking, use of administrative data for the preparation of statistics for hard-to-reach groups, problems with access to privately held data, and others.

During the year, NSI representatives also participated in meetings of various working groups at the UNECE in the field of national accounts, consumer price indices, confidentiality of statistical data, etc. The annual conference of the High-Level Group for the Modernization of Official Statistics was also held from 19 to 21 November. During the meeting, ongoing initiatives and innovative approaches for the modernization of official statistics were discussed, including the readiness to use artificial intelligence in the statistical process and related issues of trust in statistics and data confidentiality.

Cooperation within the OECD:

This year, the NSI continued to fulfill its commitments related to our country's full membership in the OECD in its capacity as a leading institution in the review of the legal instrument OECD/LEGAL/0417 "Recommendation of the Council on Good Statistical Practice" and a partner institution in the preparation of self-assessments for technical reviews of the OECD legal instruments within the framework of various thematic committees. In this context, the institute continued to provide the necessary timely and reliable information to the Bulgarian institutions for the conduct of the reviews in question.

Immediately after the CES meeting, NSI representatives took part in the 22nd meeting of the OECD Committee on Statistics and Statistical Policy. During the event, representatives of the member states discussed the opportunities and problems of using artificial intelligence in the process of producing official statistics, as well as the readiness of national statistics for its implementation. The participants discussed the introduction and use of the revised System of National Accounts and the updated Balance of Payments Manual, the distribution of household net wealth in OECD countries, the measurement of child care costs, and others.

In implementation of the activities set out in the National Roadmap for Cooperation with the OECD for the period from 2023 to 2025, two communication events of the round table type on the topic "The National Statistical Institute as a full member of the OECD Committee on Statistics and Statistical Policy" were organized in March in the Northwestern Planning Region and in September in the Northeastern Planning Region. Representatives of the regional statistical offices of the NSI, local government bodies, territorial offices of the central administration, regional representatives of business organizations, employer organizations and NGOs participated in the events. The main goal of the round tables is to familiarize with the activities of the NSI after the full membership of Bulgarian statistics in the OECD and the process of Bulgaria's accession, as well as the commitments arising from

this, including discussing the opportunities for cooperation between the institutions and the need of local authorities and businesses for statistical data.

Representatives of the institute participated in a number of virtual and on-place meetings of OECD thematic working groups in the areas of national economic and financial accounts, natural capital, international trade in goods, welfare measurement, and others.

Statistical cooperation within other international organizations:

In addition to the work within the ESS and cooperation in the OECD, in 2025 the NSI continued to actively participate in all significant international forums and discussions concerning current challenges and opportunities facing official statistics.

From 1 to 3 July 2025, the President of the NSI participated in the Fifth Congress of National Statistics of Poland, which was held in Warsaw. During the forum, he took part in a session dedicated to the use of new data sources for the preparation of tourism statistics. At the end of the event, representatives of public statistics and the private sector signed a declaration, declaring their cooperation for the planned, responsible and transparent use of data for the benefit of the economy in the context of the growing role of data as a basis for public decisions, research and socio-economic development.

In 2025, the NSI continued its membership in the International Statistical Institute (ISI) and the International Association for Official Statistics (IAOS). In October, the President of the Institute participated in the 65th World Statistical Congress, which was held in The Hague, the Netherlands. During the event, he presented the experience and good practices of the NSI in implementing the principles set out in the European Statistics Code of Practice in a session dedicated to the transformation of national statistical systems. In parallel with the congress in The Hague, the General Assembly of the International Statistical Institute was also held, in which the NSI participated as an institutional member.

In May 2025, NSI experts participated in a meeting of the Working Group on the exchange of statistical data and economic information at the BSEC. The Institute provided statistical data for the preparation of the second publication with main economic and social indicators for the countries of the region for the reference year 2023. The publication was prepared by the Coordination Center for the exchange of statistical data and economic information at the BSEC and was published in November on the organization's website.

In the period 3 - 4 November 2025, the Deputy President of the NSI took part in the academic conference "Beyond GDP: Measuring Just and Green Transitions for Resilient and Inclusive Economic Growth". The conference was held in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina and was organized by the Regional Cooperation Council in partnership with the Regional Studies Association within the framework of the South-East Europe Sustainable Development Strategy (SEE2030). The conference brought together leading regional and international experts to explore innovative indicators and methodologies for sustainable development. Immediately after the conference, the Deputy President of the NSI also took part in a meeting of the Network of the Statistical Authorities of the countries from the SEECP, during which a draft South-East Europe Inclusive Growth Index was discussed.

Working on grant agreements and other projects funded by the European Commission:

In 2025, the NSI successfully completed the implementation of ten projects funded by grants from the European Commission and co-financed by the state budget. They cover key areas such as demographic and social statistics, business statistics and multidomain statistics. In parallel, during the year, the NSI applied, concluded and is about to sign contracts with the European Commission for ten new projects, which are planned to be implemented in the period 2025 - 2027. During the past year, a presentation was made of the work on various projects financed by Eurostat, thus NSI employees had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the stages of application, implementation and reporting of the grant agreements.

The NSI continued its established practice of accepting trainees within the framework of the Instrument for pre-accession assistance IPA 2022. In the period September - November 2025, two trainees from the statistical offices of the Republic of North Macedonia and the Republic of Kosovo completed a three-month traineeship at the NSI in the areas of "Quality Management" and "Income and Living Conditions Statistics". The Instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA 2022) is a key instrument for providing technical assistance to EU candidate countries. Its main objective is to support the alignment of national statistical methodologies and practices with the requirements of the ESS. In this context, the NSI actively participates in the programme, establishing and developing traditions both in the training of officers from the statistical offices of the Western Balkan countries, and in the development of bilateral and regional cooperation.

Again, within the framework of the Instrument for pre-accession assistance in the field of statistics IPA 2022, in September 2025, the NSI hosted a training visit on the topic of "Purchasing Power Parities" (PPP) for experts from the Institute of Statistics of Albania. The event highlighted the fruitful cooperation between Bulgaria and Albania in the field of statistics, as well as the importance of study visits to promote the exchange of experience and good practices. In this way, the NSI continues to strengthen its role as a reliable partner in regional initiatives and as an active participant in the process of European integration in the field of statistics.

In October 2025, an NSI expert conducted a mission on Purchasing Power Parities to the Kosovo Agency of Statistics to share NSI experience and good practices related to the data validation process and ensuring comparability in the area of PPPs. In November 2025, the NSI conducted an expert mission for training in the State Statistical Office of the Republic of North Macedonia in the area of HICP and Housing Price Index (HPI). The missions contributed both to strengthening the capacity of the national statistical institutes of the partner countries and to further harmonizing statistical activities with the ESS methodology.

In 2025, the NSI continued its active participation in the Eurostat working groups on environmental accounts and monetary environmental accounts, energy statistics, waste statistics, water statistics, etc., as well as in the working meeting of the directors of sectoral statistics and environmental statistics and accounts. It also participated in the joint OECD and UNECE seminar on the implementation of the system of economic environmental accounts.

In July 2025, experts from the National Statistical Institute of Bulgaria and the Federal Statistical Office of Germany held a meeting to exchange experiences, where the applied methodologies for the allocation of waste generated by economic sectors were discussed. The meeting was held in accordance with Annex 1 to Regulation (EC) No 2150/2002 on waste statistics and aimed at comparability and harmonization of the approaches of the two countries.

In October 2025, the NSI hosted an expert team from the European Commission within the framework of a working visit dedicated to waste statistics in Bulgaria. The main objective of the visit was a comprehensive assessment of the methods for collecting, processing and reporting data used in fulfilling the requirements of the European legislation. During the discussions, methodological aspects, data validation and reporting processes, good practices and achieved results were examined. Particular emphasis was placed on the identified challenges and agreed actions to improve the quality, timeliness and transparency of statistical information.

Activity 2.4.3. Improving the scope of agreements and partnerships

In 2025, the work on updating and signing bilateral Agreements on cooperation and strategic partnership in the exchange of information between NSI, various institutions and private data holders continued. The total number of signed/renewed agreements during the year is 11 (eleven), and the partner institutions are: Social Assistance Agency, Financial Instruments Manager Fund, MES, Registry Agency (RA), National Health Insurance Fund,

Ministry of Interior, UNHCR, Billa Bulgaria and NCPHA. A multilateral memorandum for the development and annual updating of a national intellectual property map in the Republic of Bulgaria (by municipalities) was concluded between NSI, the University of National and World Economy, the Patent Office of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Ministry of Culture, the National Association of Municipalities and the National Association of Chairpersons of Municipal Councils. An agreement was also concluded on the project "Addressing the Challenges of the Labor Market" between the NSI, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, the Confederation of Independent Trade Unions in Bulgaria, the Confederation of Labor "Podkrepa" and the Employment Agency.

In 2025, the NSI signed agreements with four major retailers to provide data from fiscal devices (cash registers), called scanned data. The regular provision of this data, which will be used as a source of information in the calculation of consumer price indices, has also begun.

An Agreement on cooperation and data exchange with the Social Assistance Agency was signed in 2025. The exchange and use of administrative data will increase the scope and quality of statistical surveys in the field of demographic and social statistics.

In 2025, an updated Agreement on cooperation and strategic partnership in the exchange of information between the National Statistical Institute and the Ministry of Education and Science was signed. This significantly improved the compliance of the data received from the registers with the requirements set out in the EC regulations. Within the framework of the agreement, it is planned to expand the scope of the registers with additional variables that are necessary for the NSI to implement the regulations.

In order to provide additional information in the field of migration and international protection required under European legislation in the field, the agreement with the Ministry of Interior was also updated in 2025.

In connection with the entry of the Republic of Bulgaria into the Eurozone on January 1, 2026, the agreement with the National Social Security Institute was also updated.

In 2025, a study of the registers of the National Film Center (NFC), which contain information similar to that collected by the NSI, was launched. The aim is to verify the data from both sources and, if compliance and absence of significant differences are established, to envisage the use of the NFC registers as an official source of data on the activity of cinemas in the future. This will contribute to reduce the burden on respondents and will facilitate the process of data collection and processing.

In the context of active international cooperation and exchange of good practices, the NSI continued to pursue a consistent policy of developing bilateral cooperation with the statistical institutes of the countries within the framework of the European Neighborhood Policy - the East Group, the South Group, as well as with the countries of the Western Balkans. The aim of this policy is to expand the opportunities for joint initiatives in the field of official statistics. The NSI maintains bilateral agreements for cooperation in the field of statistics with Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Palestine, Azerbaijan, Serbia, the Republic of North Macedonia, Croatia, Romania. Cooperation with these countries is carried out on the basis of three-year plans for joint activities.

On 24 and 25 March 2025, the Executive Director of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Kosovo and the Director of the Population Registration Directorate met with the leadership of the NSI in Sofia. The purpose of the two-day visit was to discuss the possibilities for future cooperation in the field of statistics between the two institutions. During the meeting, the results of the last population and housing census, conducted in 2021 in Bulgaria and in 2024 in Kosovo, were discussed. The participants exchanged experiences and good practices in the field of macroeconomic statistics, the dissemination of official statistics and the improvement of statistical literacy among users - with a particular emphasis on young people. The possibility of signing a Memorandum of Understanding between the two institutions was discussed.

As a continuation of its partnership in the region, in the period 27 October - 2 November 2025, NSI organized training for young statisticians from the Western Balkan countries - Albania, the Republic of Kosovo, the Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro. The training carried out within the framework of the project "Developing the administrative capacity of the National Statistical Offices of the Western Balkan partner countries through training of young statisticians with a view to assisting them in the EU accession process", within the framework of the "Bulgarian Development Aid" programme of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its main goal was to familiarize the participants with the theoretical and practical aspects of the organization of statistical surveys in accordance with European standards and good practices. The program included lectures, practical exercises and discussions led by NSI experts with many years of experience in the field.

In addition to active work at the regional level, the NSI continued to deepen its cooperation with partners outside Europe. On June 10, 2025, a delegation from the NSI, led by the President of the NSI, visited the headquarters of the National Bureau of Statistics of China in Beijing and met with Commissioner Kang Yi and heads of units in the institution. The meeting took place at the invitation of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Sofia and was held in the context of the historical and traditionally good diplomatic relations between Bulgaria and China. It aimed to build on last year's meeting between Deputy President of the NSI and Deputy Commissioner of the National Bureau of Statistics of China.

As a continuation of the established good relations, on October 16, 2025, delegation from the Zhejiang Provincial Bureau of Statistics of China visited the NSI. During the visit, the guests were introduced to the Bulgarian statistical system, as well as the organization and activities of the NSI. In turn, they presented the structure and activities of the Chinese statistical system, with special attention paid to progress in the field of digitalization. The two sides agreed to prepare a document for future cooperation, which would expand the scope of joint initiatives by including new thematic areas.

In line with the efforts to expand international cooperation, the NSI continued its traditionally good relations with the National Statistics Office of Georgia (GEOSTAT). In recognition of the long-standing partnership, the President of the NSI received from the Executive Director of GEOSTAT a specially crafted honorary badge on the occasion of the 145th anniversary of the establishment of the statistical institution in Bulgaria. The President thanked for the attention and emphasized his satisfaction with the fruitful joint work between the national statistical offices of Bulgaria and Georgia, supported by the signed cooperation agreement in 2016.

3. REPORT BY THEMATIC DOMAINS

3.1. Demographic and social statistics

Demographic statistics

In 2025, the NSI continued regular processing and production of data on the surveys: birth, mortality, migration, marriages and divorces. This provided the necessary information for calculating the number and structures of the population, as well as the main demographic indicators in accordance with the requirements of Regulation No. 1260/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European demographic statistics. Data for the reference year 2024 were published and submitted to the EC in accordance with the set deadlines. The publication of weekly data on deaths on the NSI website continued, once a month ten days after the end of the last reference week of the month. In 2025, the provision of data on deaths by week to the European Commission was carried out every quarter.

Work carried out on the preparation and provision of data in accordance with Art. 5, 6 and 7 of Regulation No. 862/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council on

"Statistics on the prevention of illegal entry and residence", "Statistics on permanent residence permits and third-country nationals permanently residing" and "Statistics on returns" with the source Ministry of Interior. The NSI continued to provide data to Eurostat under Art. 4 of Regulation No. 862/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council on "Statistics on international protection" with the source SAR.

In 2025, the NSI started to report separate data sets on the number of third-country nationals who were issued with an EU Blue Card in the previous calendar year, on their admitted family members, as well as on the number of third-country nationals whose applications for an EU Blue Card were rejected in accordance with Directive (EU) 2021/1883 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 October 2021 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly qualified employment and repealing Council Directive 2009/50/EC.

In the field of population and demographic processes, the NSI prepared and provided data on questionnaires of the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Health Organization, as well as on joint questionnaires of Eurostat and UN. During the year, the experts viewed and verified various documents, reports and strategies prepared by other state institutions. In 2025, the NSI continued to prepare and upload data for the National Strategy for Roma Integration.

Labour market

In 2025, in compliance with the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2019/1700 and the related implementing EC regulations in the field of labor force statistics, the NSI continued to conduct the quarterly continuous statistical "Labor Force Survey", providing information on economic activity, employment and unemployment of the population aged 15 and over. The results were published in accordance with the deadlines set in the Release Calendar.

In the same year, the implementation of the additional module "Reconciliation of work and family life" began, as well as the preparation for the module "Employment in digital platforms", which will be included in the survey in 2026. Work on the EC project LFS 2024 Module "Young people on the labour market and educational attainment - details, including education interrupted or abandoned" was completed.

Data for the wage variable INCGROSS, for the reference year 2023, were collected and provided to Eurostat in accordance with the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2019/1700 and of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2240. Data from the Register of Insured Persons was also used to supplement missing information.

In 2025, preparations began for the implementation in 2026 of the statistical classification of economic activities NACE Rev. 2.1.

In the area of the labor market, data were prepared and provided for questionnaires to the OECD, ILO, World Health Organization, UNESCO and UNICEF.

Work continued on the regular annual and short-term employment and labour cost surveys in the area of statistical information provided by enterprises on wages and labour costs. The results of the surveys were published in accordance with the deadlines set out in the Release Calendar. The regular preparation, publication and transmission to Eurostat of data on the indicators: labour cost index, job vacancy statistics and short-term business statistics continued. The relevant quality reports and metadata for these indicators were also prepared. The regular provision of data on remuneration per hour worked in unadjusted and seasonally adjusted form to the OECD continued. Regular receipt of information from the administrative register of insured persons contributes to improving the quality and completeness of statistical data on employees and the average wages and salaries.

In 2025, the participation of experts in interdepartmental working groups and international meetings related to the labor market continued, as well as the review and

correction of documents, reports and strategies of other state institutions.

The National Employment Agency (NEA), as the main contractor of the state employment policy, collects, processes and disseminates data on the participants and the results of the implementation of measures laid down in it. The implementation of statistical activities in 2025 was based on the collection of register data through the IS of the NEA - National database for labour market and European social fund (ESF) as well as national representative survey on employers' attitudes in the country towards hiring a labour force with certain skills.

During the year, the basic information included in the statistical data sets that the NEA disseminates, was collected in the labor offices during the registration of job seekers and was carried out in the following ways: "face to face" in the offices (in 97.7% of cases), submitting an application through a profile in the National System for Secure Electronic Delivery of the MEG (1.83% of cases), by mail on paper and by e-mail (total 0.47%). Submission of applications for announcing job vacancies by employers was mainly carried out on the NEA website (in 95.2% of cases), as well as by e-mail. Verification of data was carried out by telephone and by checking in other registers - Commercial Register, NRA or through the RegiX inter-register exchange system.

The data from the register of job seekers and jobs are processed and aggregated through an application as a built-in functionality of the information system of the NEA - NDB ESF. The practice of data dissemination to stakeholders (Council of Ministers (CM), Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MLSP), Ministry of Economy and Industry (MEI), Ministry of Education and Science (MES), Ministry of Tourism (MT), BNB, NSI, National Social Security Institute (NSSI), district governors, etc.) continues by e-mail and on the NEA website.

During the year, the NEA prepared and provided data to the NSI on seasonal workers from third countries under Regulation No. 862/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council on Community statistics on migration and international protection.

At the end of August, the process of preparing the dataset for the implementation of the active employment policy in 2024 was completed. Information was collected from various sources on the participants and the funds disbursed under a total of 32 active programs, measures and projects financed with funds from the state budget and the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+). The data is part of the EC LMP Database according to Eurostat methodology and is in the process of validation by the Commission.

During the year, the NEA conducted one nationally representative survey among employers in the country on their labour force needs over the next 12 months. The survey was conducted through an online survey among all nearly 439 thousand active employers, through a stratified sample (280 countries) by regions and economic activities with a total number of 10 thousand randomly selected respondents and a target number of 4,000 respondents. A very good response rate was achieved – 42.8% (nearly five points higher than the previous year). After processing and validating the survey data, the regional employment commissions at the regional development councils in the 28 regions prepared their analytical reports on the demand for labor in each region, on the basis of which the NEA prepared a summarized analytical report on the results of the survey. The one-dimensional and two-dimensional distributions prepared on the basis of the survey conducted, together with the analytical report, are published on the NEA website.

In 2025, the regular monthly exchange of register aggregated data on registered unemployed persons and unemployed persons who started work - Ukrainian citizens with temporary protection status, continued in accordance with Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/382 of 4 March 2022 on establishing the existence of a mass inflow of displaced persons from Ukraine within the meaning of Article 5 of Directive 2001/55/EC and on granting temporary protection.

The main priority remains the construction of the new business intelligence (BI) system for data analysis and statistics production as part of the modernized IS of the NEA. The "System for assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of the services offered by the

Employment Agency, based on data from related administrative registers" is under construction and will soon allow the Employment Agency to have a true Data Lake platform, which will facilitate access to labor market data collected by all interested institutions. It is also expected to launch a Register of Inactive Persons, which will assess the actual number of people outside the labor market.

During the year, the implementation of the measures under the plan for implementing the recommendations of the OECD peer review continued with regard to the separation of statistical activity from the main activity of the NEA, the publication of a release calendar, metadata and quality reports, and the maintenance of automated data exchange between institutions maintaining registers.

Education and lifelong learning

In 2025, in implementation of the NSP, all planned exhaustive statistical surveys in the field of education and training statistics were carried out in accordance with the requirements of national and European legislation. The main source of data for non-financial indicators for all levels of education (pre- primary, basic and secondary, post-secondary and tertiary) in this year were the administrative registers of the MES, and for adult vocational training - the information system of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training (NAVET). A very small part of the data continued to be collected through statistical reports, directly from educational institutions, as this information is not yet available in administrative registers.

In 2025, for the first time, an administrative register was used as a source of statistical data for the academic staff in higher education - the Register of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria maintained by the MES through NACID.

The use of registers significantly improves the quality of statistical information by providing data for the calculation of key indicators without the need for statistical estimation, as well as improving the completeness of the data and reducing the burden on respondents, in this case educational institutions.

Regarding financial data on education, preparations for collecting data from various sources of information on education expenses began in October.

According to the deadlines, the non-financial data on the joint questionnaires of UNESCO, OECD and Eurostat (for the reference year 2023/2024) on enrolled students, staff, classes, foreign language learning and regional data on enrolled students were provided. For the first time, administrative data were used to fill in the questionnaires on enrolled students in tertiary education this year, which significantly improved the quality and completeness of the information, as many indicators were calculated without the need for statistical estimates. The remaining part of the questionnaires, concerning data on graduates, credit mobility of graduates (reference year 2024) and financial data on education (for the reference year 2023), are to be sent by the end of the year. The preparation of the data and the filling in of the questionnaires are in progress. This will meet the requirements of Regulation No 452/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the production and development of statistics on education and lifelong learning.

In 2025, an updated agreement on cooperation and strategic partnership in the exchange of information between the NSI and the MES was signed. This significantly improved the compliance of the data received from the registers with the requirements set out in the EC regulations. Within the framework of the agreement, it is planned to expand the scope of the registers with additional variables that are necessary for the NSI to implement the regulations.

In connection with our country's accession to the OECD and the inclusion of data for Bulgaria in the publication "Education at a Glance (EAG)", all data used for the analysis were checked and validated.

Culture

In 2025, all surveys in the field of cultural statistics were successfully conducted. They provide information on the activities of museums, theaters, cinemas, libraries with a library fund of over 200 thousand library units, radio and television operators, publishing activities in the country (books, newspapers and magazines) and film production. Data for the reference year 2024 were published in accordance with the set deadlines.

For the first time in 2025, the statistical survey of libraries was conducted through a web-based data collection application.

The statistical survey of cinemas provides data on the number and types of cinemas, films screened, the number of seats and halls in cinemas, as well as the number of screenings, viewers and ticket revenues. In 2025, a study of the NFC registers was launched, which contain information similar to that collected by the NSI. The aim is to verify the data from both sources and, if compliance is established and there are no significant differences, to envisage the use of the NFC registers as an official source of data on the activity of cinemas in the future. This will contribute to reduce the burden on respondents and will facilitate the process of data collection and processing.

Public health and healthy and safe working conditions

In 2025, according to the national legislation, NSP and Regulation (EC) № 1338/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on Community statistics in the field of public health and healthy and safe working conditions, the NSI carried out statistical surveys qualitatively and on time providing information in the various fields of public health statistics. National and European statistical information was provided and disseminated regarding deaths by cause, financial and non-financial health indicators.

In accordance with the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2019/1700 and its implementing regulations, the Commission started fieldwork (surveying) for the fourth wave of the European Health Interview Survey 2025. The methodology, tools and applications for the survey and self-survey were tested through a pilot study among 720 successfully interviewed individuals earlier in the year. The survey is being conducted in accordance with the terms of a grant agreement with the EC.

In line with the ESS's efforts in terms of setting priorities and in connection with the decision to conduct a critical and systematic review of the existing requirements and parameters in the individual statistical domains, the final report of the Review of Health Statistics was presented in 2024. As a result of the report and the need to take concrete steps to make important decisions regarding the future development of health statistics, Eurostat organised a workshop on "The Future of Health Statistics" in early 2025. The NSI participated with its expert in the work of the workshop, as well as in all subsequent activities related to discussion, development and work on improving the methodologies.

National Health Data and eHealth Directorate at the NCPHA at the MH performed all its statistical surveys and activities included in the NSP. As a body of statistics, it conducted the planned surveys on time and disseminated information on the main statistical indicators via the NCPHA Internet site, specialized printed and electronic publications.

In implementation of the survey "Accidents at work", **the NSSI** processed information on accidents at work registered in 2023. The data was processed according to the methodology defined by the Statistical System "Accidents at work", which includes all classifications and variables necessary to characterize the accidents at work. The methodology fully complies with the national legislation and ensures the application of the European statistics on accidents at work. The NSSI developed an electronic information publication "Accidents at work - number, distribution and indicators 2023". The publication contains data on the number, distribution and indicators on accidents at work for 2023; comparative tables

on the number and indicators on accidents at work registered in 2021, 2022 and 2023; comparison with data for previous years showing the trends of occupational injuries in the country. The data was published on the NSSI's website under the section "Statistics". The requirements of Commission Regulation (EU) 349/2011 implementing Regulation (EC) No 1338/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on Community statistics in the field of public health and healthy and safe working conditions were met in relation to statistical data on accidents at work. Statistical information on accidents at work registered in 2023 was sent directly to Eurostat through the single entry point for exchange of statistical data e-Damis that ensures secure data exchange and protection. The NSSI also sent an information on the scope and the number of insured persons for accidents at work distributed by economic activities of the NACE.BG-2008. The NSSI also submitted metadata on accidents at work to Eurostat through web application "ESS-Metadata Handler". The statistical information on accidents at work for the period 2019 - 2023 was also sent to the International Labour Organization through the NSI.

In implementation of the survey "Occupational diseases", the NSSI processed the information on the new cases of occupational diseases registered in 2023. Based on the data on cause of death provided by IS "Demography" of the NSI, the cases in which the person died in 2023 due to a recognized occupational disease in the past were also registered. The data was processed according to the methodology defined by the Statistical System "Occupational diseases", which includes all the classifications and variables necessary to characterize the occupational disease. The methodology fully complies with national legislation and ensures the implementation of the Guide for the collection and provision of data on European statistics on occupational diseases (document version of 24 October 2023, Working Group on Occupational Disease Statistics, Eurostat). The data was published on the NSSI's website under the section "Statistics". Data and metadata on occupational diseases were submitted directly to Eurostat electronically (via e-Damis).

Incomes and living conditions

The Household Budget Survey, which assesses household income, expenditure and consumption in 2025, was conducted according to the deadlines set in the NSP.

In implementation of a grant agreement with the European Commission No. 101190710 - 2024-BG-HBS2026/RD 10-10 of 30.10.2024 on the topic "Household budget survey 2026 wave including innovative tools and sources", a new tool was developed for conducting the survey in 2026 in accordance with the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2019/1700 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/126 and Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/2094. An application was developed for collecting and processing information from the statistical survey "Household Budget Survey" through electronic forms, which implements the new Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose (COICOP 2018). An opportunity was created for households in the sample to fill out an electronic diary. A pilot field test of the tool was conducted in October 2025. As a result, the functionalities of the application were improved for its implementation in 2026.

In 2025, the survey "Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (SILC)" was carried out under the framework Regulation (EU) 2019/1700 of the European Parliament and of the Council on household surveys. In addition to the standard target variables, the survey included additional variables from the 6-yearly Module "Energy and Environment", according to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/2527, and the 3-yearly Module "Health", according to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/1721. The activities to improve data processing, meet the technical requirements for the 6-yearly Module for 2025 and ensure the quality of data from the survey "Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (SILC)" are implemented under a grant agreement with the European Commission No. 101190892 - 2024 - BG-SILC on the topic "Income and Living Conditions - SILC Module 2025".

The fieldwork was carried out between March and May 2025. The processing and analysis of the survey information were carried out according to the deadlines set in the NSP. Preliminary data with survey results was submitted to Eurostat in December 2025 in accordance with the new requirements on information timeliness.

In order to improve the scope and quality of income statistics in 2025, the NSI continued to use the NSSI data on the amount of pensions received, pension supplements and additional benefits and allowances by type and month from the Pension Register, as well as annual data on persons receiving benefits and allowances under the Social Insurance Code (Register of benefits). The NSI supplemented the missing information on income and validated the data by using data on insured persons from the NSSI, data for persons receiving benefits from the Social Assistance Agency, and data for persons submitted an annual tax return from the NRA.

Social protection

Pursuant to Regulation № 458/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European system of integrated social protection statistics (ESSPROS) in 2025, the completion of statistical data for 2023 under core system and module on pension beneficiaries ended. The core system contains data on revenues and expenditures by social protection schemes and by functions. The requirements of Commission Regulation № 110/2011 regarding the appropriate data transmission formats, the results, which shall be transmitted and the quality measurement criteria for the ESSPROS module on net social protection benefits have been met. The source of data on social protection statistics are the information systems and registers of ministries and departments managing social protection schemes. The NSSI provided annual data on revenues and expenditures under schemes 01 to 06 (ESSPROS core system), as well as data on the number of pension beneficiaries divided by schemes, by type of pension and by gender, in accordance with the form for providing information on module on pension beneficiaries. The National Employment Agency provided data on income and expenditure under scheme 15 regarding periodic cash training benefits, as well as benefits in kind related to increasing employability.

In October, early estimates were prepared and sent to Eurostat for the social protection expenditures incurred in the country by ESSPROS functions relevant for 2024. The submission of early estimates under the core system is a pilot submission and is not the subject of implementation of a specific Regulation - the estimates are sent voluntarily by the countries willing to participate.

In 2025, statistical data on the recipients of benefits and unemployment benefits in Bulgaria were sent within the ESSPROS according to the methodology proposed by Eurostat for the voluntary collection of this type of data. The NSI, together with experts from the NSSI and the NEA, processed the available data from the register of recipients of unemployment benefits at the NSSI and the register of persons registered in the Labor office at the NEA.

As a result of the activities carried out, data was sent on the number of periodical cash unemployment benefits recipients in Bulgaria, including unemployment benefits under Art. 54a, para. 1 of the Social Insurance Code and under Art. 230 and 231 of the Law on Defense and Armed Forces of the Republic of Bulgaria, as well as scholarships, transport and accommodation expenses paid to unemployed persons participating in training for literacy, acquisition of professional qualification or key competences (for the duration of the training). In accordance with the requirement to eliminate double counting of recipients of benefits/assistance falling under the unemployment function, the NSSI made vertical aggregation of data on unemployment benefits recipients (administrated by the NSSI) and of data on “occupational allowance” recipients (administrated by the NEA) for the same reference period. The questionnaire on qualitative information of module was completed and sent to NSI. The data was sent to Eurostat and covers 2023, showing the total number of recipients of at least one of the listed benefits during the year on the one hand and the average

monthly number of benefits received during the period of reference year in total, by gender and by age group.

Crime and Justice

In 2025, the NSI carried out qualitatively and on time the annual statistical surveys on crimes, accused and persons convicted, and activity of the Local commissions for prevention of juvenile delinquency. In order to improve the quality of statistical information, a one-day online training was held for employees of the Statistical Surveys Departments of the RSO on surveys in the field of justice and crime statistics.

In fulfillment of its commitments as a national coordinator and in accordance with national legislation, the NSI provided statistical information on:

- the joint UN/Eurostat questionnaire, which includes data from all stages of the criminal process, illegal migration, crimes related to attacks against information systems and regional data on crimes registered by the police, according to the definitions of the UN International Classification of Crimes for statistical purposes;
- data on human traffic, in accordance with the definitions of Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on preventing and combating human traffic and protecting its victims.

In 2025, NSI experts participated in written consultations and workshops related to "Gender-Based Violence" survey within the framework of the Task Force on gender-based violence within the EU.

Active work carried out in the following interdepartmental working groups in connection with the introduction of the requirements of:

- Directive (EU) 2024/1226 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 April 2024 on the definition of criminal offences and penalties for the violation of Union restrictive measures and amending Directive (EU) 2018/1673.
- Directive (EU) 2024/1712 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 amending Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims.

In fulfillment of their commitments, NSI experts actively participated in the activities of the Interdepartmental Council for Methodological Guidance of the Unified Information System Against Crime (UISAC), as well as the Interdepartmental Expert Commission. In order to improve the quality of information received from the administrative source, targeted meetings were held with experts from the UISAC Department at the Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Bulgaria (POB), the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) and NSI. In addition, NSI employees also participated in regional seminars organized by the UISAC Department at the POB.

In 2025, NSI employees participated in national and international meetings on topics in the field of crime and justice.

3.2. Macroeconomic statistics

Annual economic accounts and Quarterly accounts

In 2025, a revision of the data on gross domestic product (GDP) for the period 2018 - 2023 and Gross National Income (GNI) for the period 2018 - 2023 was carried out. Updates of quarterly and annual data were made for 2024 on GDP and its components by output method, income method and expenditure method; data on employment and person-hours worked; regional accounts; quarterly and annual non-financial accounts by institutional sector. The revisions were related to changes in the methodology used and calculation procedures of specific statistical indicators and are a consequence of the work on the GNI verification cycle.

Quarterly non-financial accounts by institutional sectors were revised for the period

from 2018 to the second quarter of 2025. The revision in non-financial accounts by institutional sectors reflects the revision of the main macroeconomic indicators, the revision of the balance of payments data 6th edition and information from administrative sources.

In 2025, work continued on the development and improvement of national financial accounts. Pursuant to the Eurostat programme for data provision in the field of national accounts, preliminary and final data for 2024 was developed and submitted.

In 2025, the NSI continued regular transmission of Table 28A from the Eurostat transmission program concerning the structure of the debt of the general government sector by subsectors.

The data from the survey "Monthly collection of declarations from economic operators carrying out activities with excise goods" of **the Customs Agency** were sent in the specified format and deadlines according to the Memorandum of Cooperation between the NSI, the BNB and the Ministry of Finance. Summarized data from the survey were provided to state institutions and organizations by virtue of a regulatory act or signed agreements.

Government Finance Statistics

Efforts in the field of Government Finance Statistics were focused on further methodological development and improving the quality of data.

The work on reporting the Notification tables for debt and deficit of General Government sector twice a year (preliminary and final data) continued. According to the ESA 2010, data for 2024 as well as revised data for the period 2021 - 2023 were provided.

Work continued on the development and publication of monthly, quarterly and annual data on the deficit of the EU Member States, based on the obligations under EU Directive 85/2011.

In accordance with the requirements for the provision of additional data based on EU Directive 85/2011, the work continued on providing information on an annual basis on non-performing loans to the "General Government" sector, for the liabilities of public corporations and the participation of government in the capital of corporations as a percentage of GDP.

According to the Eurostat Programme for data provision in the field of government finance statistics, data was developed and provided according to ESA 2010:

- Table 2. Main macroeconomic indicators for the institutional sector "General government" – new data for 2024 as well as revised data for the period 2021 - 2023;
- Table 9. Taxes and social contribution by type of taxes and by subsectors of "General government" – new data for 2024 and revised data for 2010 and 2023;
- Table 11 - General Government expenditure by function – new data for 2024 as well as revised data for the period 2020 – 2023;
- Table 25. Quarterly non-financial accounts of the institutional sector "General government" – new data for first and second quarter of 2025 as well as revised data for the period 2021 – 2024.

Monitoring Own Resources

In 2025, the activities on the implementation of the European Union's Own Resources System continued, in accordance with the Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 842 of 27.11.2023 on determining the responsible institutions in the Republic of Bulgaria for the implementation of the European Union's own resources system. In fulfillment of these obligations, the NSI provides official data on the quantity of plastic packaging put on the market, necessary for calculating the national contribution to the EU budget under the own

resource based on non-recycled plastic packaging waste.

Within 2025, the NSI was implementing a project "Improvement of the methodology and data on packages placed on the market to ensure coverage of plastic packaging waste generation" funded by the EC. The project aims to improve the quality, completeness and comparability of statistical data on the survey "Packagings put on the market". As a result of the activities, the scope of the survey has been expanded, now including packaging from private imports and exports, as well as packaging related to e-commerce, which ensures more complete coverage of the sources of plastic packaging waste and increases the accuracy of the national estimates used in the implementation of the European Union's Own Resources System. The expected effect is a more accurate calculation of the quantities of plastic packaging and increased comparability of national data with EU requirements.

With regard to the own resource in the EU budget based on gross national income and in fulfillment of the obligation of the NSI, as defined in the above-mentioned Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 842 of 27.11.2023, to prepare summarized data on GNI and its individual components in the specified format and deadlines, in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2019/516, a Quality Report and a GNI Questionnaire were submitted to the EC and Eurostat within the prescribed deadline. They reflect the revision of the data for the period 2018 - 2023 based on new updated incoming information.

Consumer Prices

The main priority in 2025 was the conduction of monthly statistical surveys of consumer prices, which provided the necessary information for the calculation of consumer price indices and inflation. In 2025, the CPI weights were produced according to Eurostat's methodological recommendations on the construction of HICP weights in case of large changes in consumer expenditure.

During the year, the work continued on improving the methodology, construction and production of consumer price indices in connection with the harmonization with the European and international standards. In 2025, the NSI updated the sample of outlets and improved the selection of goods and services included in the consumer basket. The scope of some sub-indices was expanded, the system of statistical weights was improved through the expanded use of information from additional sources.

The inventory of the sources and methods for the production of the HICP, house price indices, house sales indicators and the report on the sources and methods used to collect information necessary for the calculation of purchasing power parities were updated and sent to Eurostat.

The preparatory work necessary for the inclusion of games of chance in the CPI/HICP started in 2025 as part of a pilot project of the European Commission. The successful implementation of the planned activities will provide the basis for the regular production of a sub-index on games of chance, which will be included in the CPI/HICP with data for January 2026, in accordance with the requirements of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2024/3159.

In the field of housing statistics, work continued on incorporating methodological improvements, optimizing data collection and production processes, and introducing new data sources. The NSI continued to use two administrative sources – Property register (PR) to the RA supplemented with information from CAIS (Cadastral-Administrative Information System). This improved the quality and scope of the data and increased the reliability of the information collected.

The scope of the OOH was expanded by starting the production and publication of a new indicator - "Owner-built housing and major renovations".

The NSI continued its participation in the European Comparison Programme on PPPs,

which is part of the current EC programme on statistics, coordinated by Eurostat/OECD, and achieved the goals set in the European work plan for calculation of PPPs. In 2025, the NSI conducted the planned six price surveys, two of which were on goods and services on harmonized European consumer baskets for the groups: E25-1 “Everything for the Home and Garden” and E25-2 “Transport, restaurants and hotels”. Four specialized price surveys were conducted: “Health services in hospitals”; for housing rents in selected real estate agencies in the capital; for selected conditional construction sites; for machinery and equipment. Additional national statistical information was prepared and sent to Eurostat in a timely manner.

In the field of consumer price, housing price and PPPs statistics in 2025, the NSI’s experts actively participated in the work of the Eurostat WG on Price Statistics, Real Estate Price Statistics and Purchasing Power Parities, as well as in Eurostat video conferences on “Commercial Real Estate Price Statistics”, “Commercial Real Estate Indicators” and “Harmonized Indices of Consumer Prices”.

3.3. Business Statistics

Annual Business Statistics

All activities on conducting regular annual surveys and data production in the field of SBS, statistics of foreign affiliates (FATS), foreign direct investments, expenditure on acquisition of tangible fixed assets, sales revenue of enterprises providing business services, statistics of financial and non-financial enterprises and annual specific surveys on economic activities, as well as monthly and annual survey on output and sales of industrial products (PRODCOM) were performed with high quality and on time.

In 2025, the NSI made an annual update of IS “Business Statistics” in relation to the requirements of European regulations in the field of business statistics and changes at the national level.

The NSI prepared and submitted to Eurostat final data on the activity of enterprises in the field of business statistics at national level for 2023 and preliminary data for 2024 in implementation of the requirements of Regulation (EU) № 2019/2152 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 November 2019 on European business statistics and repealing 10 legal acts in the field of business statistics, and Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/1197 of 30 July 2020 laying down technical specifications and arrangements pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2019/2152.

In the field of annual PRODCOM survey, the NSI provided the necessary reliable and internationally comparable statistical information based on the updated questionnaires, changes in the methodology and in the information technology system for collecting and validating the input PRODCOM data, according to the requirements of the Regulation (EU) № 2019/2152 of the European Parliament and of the Council. Preliminary and final annual PRODCOM data for 2024 at the required levels of detail and technical format were provided to Eurostat. In the area of the monthly PRODCOM survey, the NSI continued its work on improving the scope, accuracy and quality of primary statistical information collected through the IS Business Cycles.

In 2025, the NSI successfully completed work on the project “Global value chains - International Sourcing Survey” in the implementation of a Grant agreement with the EC. The project was implemented in accordance with the revised methodology and tools of the module included as a mandatory three-year survey in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/918 of 13 June 2022 laying down technical specifications of data requirements for the topic Global Value Chains pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2019/2152 of the European Parliament and of the Council. The project data were processed and submitted to Eurostat at

the end of September 2025. A final methodological report on the project was also prepared and sent to Eurostat at the end of December 2025.

In 2025, the NSI provided data for completing questionnaires to the OECD, to other international organizations, for national statistical publications, under concluded contracts, agreements and requests for statistical information in the specified areas.

The NSI continued to participate and provide assistance in the work of the Monitoring Committee of the OP "Innovation and Competitiveness" 2011 - 2027.

The NSI's experts took part in coordination procedures, consultations, on place and online meetings organized by Eurostat in the following areas: Structural Business statistics, FATS, PRODCOM.

Short-term Business Statistics

In 2025, all surveys included in the NSP that provide the information needed to calculate indicators in the field of short-term business statistics were carried out with high quality and on time, in accordance with national and European legislation. All short-term indicators were calculated in accordance with the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2019/2152 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European business statistics and Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/1197, published at national level and submitted to Eurostat.

In 2025, the work on evaluation, improvement of the methodology, improvement of data quality of short-term business statistics (STS) and maintenance of comparability of time series continued. The samples were updated to ensure better representation and to reflect changes in the structure of non-financial enterprises. The metadata for all indicators on the Eurostat's and on the NSI's website were updated.

The NSI received from the NRA within the agreed deadlines monthly information on the submitted VAT returns used to improve the quality and completeness of short-term statistical indicators in the field of industry, trade and services.

In 2025, the IS Business Cycles (ISBC) was upgraded by developing new functionalities to generate various statistical outputs.

In accordance with the requirements of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/137 amending Regulation (EC) 1893/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the statistical classification of economic activities (NACE Rev. 2.1), an analysis of the necessary changes and preparation of a Technical Specification for upgrading the ISBC begun. This will ensure its readiness for the production of short-term statistical indicators in accordance with the new classification of economic activities NACE Rev. 2.1 from the beginning of 2028.

NSI experts actively participated in training courses and in the following meetings organized by Eurostat: online meeting on metadata requirements for 2024, and annual meeting of the working group on Short-Term Business Statistics.

Energy Statistics

All activities related to conducting regular monthly, six-monthly, preliminary annual and annual surveys, as well as the production and publication of data, press releases and annotations in the field of energy statistics, were completed with the required quality and on time.

The NSI's tool in the field of energy statistics was updated in accordance with the latest amendments to the legislation.

For the new statistical survey for 2024 "Energy Consumption by Data Centers", a detailed study of the sources of information (administrative sources and information from the

Internet) was carried out. For the reporting, it was finally decided to use administrative data from the Agency for Sustainable Energy Development, which will contribute to reducing the burden on respondents.

During the year, experts participated in the implementation of the tasks under a grant agreement with the EC: "Improvement of the methodology and data on packages placed on the market to ensure coverage of plastic packaging waste generation".

In 2025, experts in the field of energy statistics took part in coordination procedures and consultations on numerous legislative documents within the framework of WG 14 "Energy", as well as in the following national reports: National Development Program Bulgaria 2030; 2025 Environmental Implementation Review Country Report; 2025 Country report - Bulgaria; "OECD Economic Review of Bulgaria" and others.

In this thematic area, NSI experts joined the following working groups: "Energy statistics" of Eurostat, WG14 "Energy" at the Ministry of energy, Eurostat group of Directors of sectoral and environmental statistics and accounts (DIMESA).

The NSI took an active part in trainings and conferences organized by:

- Eurostat: "Annual data on hydrogen and biomass"; "Accounting for biomethane in cross-border trade: energy statistics versus GHG emissions data"; "Webinars on best practices in using the new annual questionnaires of Eurostat and the International Energy Agency"; "Using smart meter data for official statistics";
- Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" and "Utilities" company: fifth edition of the "Energy and Climate" Winter School.

Transport Statistics

In the field of transport statistics, the main priority in 2025 was to conduct all annual and short-term surveys included in the National Statistical Programme. They were implemented with high quality and on time in accordance with national and European legislation.

The collection, processing and transmission of rail transport data to Eurostat continued pursuant to the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2016/2032 of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) № 91/2003 on rail transport statistics, as regards the collection of data on goods and passengers.

In the field of transport statistics, the NSI with the assistance of the statistical bodies Directorate General "Civil Aviation Administration" and the Executive Agency "Maritime Administration" at the Ministry of Transport and Communications conducted surveys in the field of air transport and activities of inland waterway and maritime ports. The good cooperation between the NSI and the two agencies has led to increasing the quality of the received data through more detailed verification.

All respondents submitted their reporting forms to the **DG "CAA"** when conducting the statistical survey on air transport. The NSI received summarized statistical information on air transport by the DG "CAA" within the deadline.

In 2025, the **Executive Agency "Maritime Administration"** carried out the surveys included in the NSP for 2025 on the activity of inland waterway and maritime ports.

The collection and submission of statistical information to Eurostat was carried out within the deadlines and in compliance with the specific nomenclatures and reporting forms of Regulation (EU) No 974/2018 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 July 2018 on statistics of goods transport by inland waterways, and Directive 2009/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 May 2009 on statistical returns in respect of carriage of goods and passengers by sea.

The information submitted by port operators and port owners covers 100% of the activity of the inland waterway and maritime ports of the Republic of Bulgaria related to cargo handling and passenger service.

During the year, the Executive Agency "Maritime Administration" continued its work on improving the quality of data, taking into account Eurostat recommendations and the methodological assistance of experts from the National Statistical Institute.

During the reporting period, the cooperation between the National Institute of Statistics of Romania and the National Statistical Institute of Bulgaria continued in connection with the regular exchange of statistical information on the transit of goods by inland waterways used in the production of statistical data provided to Eurostat.

During the period, the NSI participated in: working groups of the Operational Program "Transport Connectivity 2021 - 2027"; the Steering Committee of the project "Preparation of a draft National Plan for the Development of Combined Transport in the Republic of Bulgaria until 2030"; a working group under the Minister of Economy on a World Bank project to facilitate trade and transport in the Western Balkans; other international and interinstitutional working groups and committees.

In 2025, NSI participated in the following working groups of Eurostat: "Air Transport Statistics" and "Annual Coordination Meeting on Transport Statistics".

Tourism Statistics

In 2025, the NSI continued its activities related to the regular statistical surveys in the field of tourism, and completed on time the tasks of providing statistical information on the development of tourism in the country regarding: trips of Bulgarian residents abroad and arrivals of visitors from abroad to Bulgaria; the activity of accommodation establishments, tourist trips and tourism-related expenditure of the population, and tourism satellite accounts. All monthly and quarterly surveys are conducted in accordance with the recommendations of the World Tourism Organization and according to the requirements of Regulation (EU) No. 692/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European tourism statistics and Regulation (EU) No. 1051/2011 of the EC implementing Regulation (EU) No. 692/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European tourism statistics as regards the structure of quality reports and data transmission.

Experts from the NSI participated in an online seminar "Questions and Answers on Tourism Satellite Accounts", in an online meeting of the Working Group on tourism statistics. The seminar focused on the development of indicators for sustainable tourism development, alternative data sources and statistics on short-term accommodation offered through online platforms. Experts participated also in an in-person meeting of the Working Group on tourism statistics.

In 2025, NSI participated in the sixth voluntary transmission of data for the Tourism Satellite Accounts.

A working meeting was also held with representatives of "Yettel - Bulgaria", at which the possibilities for providing mobile data were discussed, with the aim of increasing the efficiency, accuracy and timeliness of statistical information in tourism.

NSI experts took part in "Training on the application of self-assessment tools in the context of the prioritized tourist flow data space" jointly with the World Bank and MEG under the programme "Research, Innovation and Digitization for Smart Transformation" 2021 - 2027 funded by the EU. Questionnaires related to data management, data availability and data quality were completed.

Experts from the "Statistics on tourism and business surveys" department participated in a working group together with the Ministry of tourism in connection with the unification of

data collection systems from accommodation establishments and "Working group for transposing the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2024/1028 of the European Parliament and of the Council on data collection and sharing".

Business Register

The Statistical Business Register (SBR) is a key source for creating frameworks for statistical surveys in the NSI, as well as for compiling consistent and comparable business statistics.

The main priority in 2025 for the Business Register aimed at implementing the vision of the ESS regarding the European System of Interoperable Statistical Business Registers in implementation of Regulation (EU) № 2019/2152 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

The Statistical Business Register aims to provide a full range of active statistical units “enterprises”, “local units” and “groups of enterprises”, as well as to record data on significant “units by the type of activity” and to provide conditions for sampling by definition criteria for monthly and quarterly statistical surveys. In order to maintain statistical units and their characteristics, the Business Register received daily data from the administrative sources: Trade Register and Register of NPLE (non-profit legal entities) of the Ministry of justice; Bulstat Register, annually and monthly data on the number of insured persons from the Register of Insured Persons by the NSSI, and from the annual statistical surveys for 2024.

In 2025, the new Classification of economic activities (NACE Rev. 2.1), which will enter into force from the reference year 2025, was implemented in the SBR.

The SBR is the main source of information for the preparation of data on family businesses and business demography. The information describes the life cycle of enterprises and presents data on the number of active enterprises, the number of newly born enterprises, the enterprise survival rates, the number of dead enterprises, as well as data on the change of their employment as of a certain moment.

The scope of SBR was studied in relation to the different types of units - legal and statistical and due mandatory characteristics for the reference year 2023. The NSI submitted completed questionnaires to Eurostat on the quality, metadata and questionnaires on metadata of business demography of enterprises and on registrations and bankruptcies.

In 2025, the NSI participated in the following Eurostat working groups: “Business Demography”, “Business Registers and Statistical Units”.

Statistics on foreign trade in goods

The main priority areas in 2025 in the field of statistics on foreign trade in goods were: expanded use of administrative sources of information; providing timely and reliable statistical information and improving of data quality; adapting the national system for the production and dissemination of statistics on foreign trade in goods in accordance with the changed requirements of European legislation and users’ needs of foreign trade data; participation in the Eurostat’s work on the discussion of strategic issues concerning the future development of statistics on international trade in goods.

In 2025, the work on the development of the activities under the project "Development of the IS "Foreign Trade" by adding a "Macrodata" module with the aim of forming various statistical outputs" began.

The NSI took measures for better use of the data collected by the Customs Agency from customs declarations. In 2025, their scope was expanded, in accordance with the obligation to provide information to Eurostat from columns H6 (import of postal items up to 1000 EUR) and H7 (import of e-commerce up to 150 EUR). The NSI's employees continued to use the simplified customs declarations issued in other countries received at the Customs Agency under the Uniform Permit for Simplified Procedures.

Quasi export information obtained through microdata exchange with Member States was also integrated with the third country data.

A working meeting was organized between representatives of the CA, the NRA and the NSI on the reporting of natural gas, in particular the sources of information for foreign companies that carry out physical imports and exports to and from Bulgaria, respectively, but do not have VAT registration.

In 2025, the NSI continued to work on improving the quality of primary data declared by traders. The NSI's experts made both direct contacts with the Intrastat operators and the National Revenue Agency. As a result, some inaccuracies in submitted Intrastat declarations were corrected. Methodological assistance was also provided to the respondents in declaring data in specific cases, which contributed to facilitating the business in fulfilling its monthly obligations to submit Intrastat declarations.

In fulfilment of its obligations, the NSI determined the thresholds for declaration and the thresholds for statistical value under the Intrastat system for 2026, as well as the types of data - subject of declaration.

The NSI continued to prepare and publish two press releases per month - on trade with third countries and on trade within the EU. Dissemination of data on statistics on foreign trade in goods continued through the IS "Infostat" which gives users direct access to more detailed data than those published in press releases.

In 2025, the NSI submitted to Eurostat data on trade in goods by invoicing currency, and business characteristics of enterprises. The monthly preparation and submission of microdata for the Member States also continued. Numerous responses to inquiries from various types of users of data on imports and exports of goods were also prepared. The obligations to the main users of data on foreign trade in goods - BNB, Ministry of economy and industry, MAF, Eurostat, UN and IMF on the production and provision of monthly detailed data and their updates - were implemented in a timely manner.

In 2025, the NSI's experts contributed to the overall innovation activity in the field of statistics on foreign trade in goods at European level through participation in Eurostat's steering, target and working groups. One of the key directions in joint work of the NSI, the NRA and the CA was the active participation in integration of the provisions on trade with third countries and the EU in the acts implementing the Regulation on European business statistics. The experts from these three institutions participated in preparing the answers to a number of Eurostat's questionnaires and written consultations. The NSI's experts actively participated in the Eurostat's joint meetings of the Task Force on methodology of statistics on foreign trade in goods and the Task Force on quality, which ensure reliability and security of the microdata exchange for intracommunity exports between the Member states.

The NSI, together with Eurostat, prepared quality reports on the provided data - aggregated and detailed monthly data on the export and import of goods as well as microdata sent to the Member states.

The data from **the CA** survey "Monthly collection of declarations from persons/economic operators carrying out import/export of goods to/from third countries" were sent in the specified format and terms according to the Agreement on cooperation and exchange of information between the NSI and the CA. Summarized data from the survey were provided to state institutions and organizations by virtue of a regulatory act or signed agreements.

In 2025, the "Analyses and Prognosis" Directorate in **the NRA** continued the monthly publication of data on the sales of liquid fuels realized on the territory of the country. The published time series cover the period since January 2019 and refer to the sales of liquid fuels of different characteristics, which allows the preparation of multi-layered analyzes of the fuel market in the country. In accordance with the policy to increase data quality and ensure the best estimates at a given point in time by using later information and/or refining the objects - final distributors, the time series for the period January 2025 - December 2025 will be revised at the beginning of 2026.

The NRA continued its activity to improve the quality of data declared by the obligated persons (Intrastat operators). Operational activities were improved, methods for controlling the reliability and quality of declared data were optimized. In this regard, their comparison with data available in other administrative sources continued: VAT declarations and the IS Fiscal Control (FC). Comparisons and comparative analyses carried out on the main branches of risk groups of goods with data from the FC. In the IS Intrastat, new reports were developed with data from the One Stop Shop (OSS) system in the NRA, containing data on distance sales of goods with European countries, in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 2019/2152, Annex V. The data from the OSS system will help to increase the quality and scope of the declared data and to update the Register of Intrastat operators. The NRA maintains and updates the register of obliged persons under the Intrastat system on a monthly basis. In 2025, the number of traders registered for the purposes of the Intrastat system exceeded six thousand persons. Work continued on the improvement and development of the IS Intrastat in accordance with changes in national and European legislation. In connection with Bulgaria's upcoming entry into the Eurozone and the introduction of the euro as the national currency, an analysis was carried out and a Technical specification was developed for the necessary changes in the IS Intrastat, in accordance with the requirements of the National Plan for the Introduction of the Euro in the Republic of Bulgaria. The employees of the two administrations - the NRA and the NSI work, if necessary, daily, in an operational order to achieve timeliness and control of the declared data.

3.4. Statistics on agriculture, forestry and fisheries

In 2025, NSI experts participated in Eurostat-initiated discussion and working groups to prepare a manual in the field of agricultural prices and for methodological improvements in the field of agrimonetary statistics.

In 2025, for the first time, data in the fields of agricultural prices, economic accounts for forestry and regional economic accounts for agriculture were transmitted to Eurostat on the basis of existing legislation, until then they were provided by agreement.

In 2025, the NSI developed and sent to Eurostat data on:

- annual data on economic accounts for agriculture - second estimate of farm incomes for 2024, final data for 2024, first estimate of farm incomes for 2025 and annual data on regional economic accounts for 2023 (NUTS2 level pursuant to Regulation (EC) № 138/2004);
- annual data for 2024 and quarterly and annual data (projection) for 2025 on prices and price indices of output and input in agriculture;

- annual data for 2024 on the average price of agricultural land and rent in agriculture (at NUTS2);
- annual data for 2023 for the European Forest Accounts (EFA).

In 2025, annual data for the agricultural sector (preliminary and final for 2024) and quarterly data for 2025 (including flash estimates) were developed for the purposes of preparing non-financial national accounts in current and constant prices.

Data and press releases on the economic accounts for agriculture and the prices and indices in agriculture and forestry were prepared and published on the NSI's website and in the IS "Infostat", according to the Calendar presenting the results of the statistical surveys carried out in accordance with the National Statistical Programme for 2025.

According to the deadlines in the Editorial Plan for 2025, tables with data for publication in the printed and electronic editions of the NSI were prepared.

In 2025, the **"Agrostatistics" Department, Ministry of agriculture and food**, conducted 19 statistical surveys in the field of statistics on crop production, livestock breeding, fruit and vegetable processing, land use and farm incomes.

In the field of crop statistics, at the beginning of 2025, the surveys' results on sown/planted and harvested areas, average yields and production of field crops, vegetables, vineyards and fruit species - harvest 2024 were published. Within these surveys, information was also collected on the size of the areas of permanent plantations that have not started fruiting, the agrotechnical measures carried out, as well as on the realization of the production by directions, and others. The surveys for the harvest 2025 were prepared. Survey conducted on wheat and barley yields before the harvest 2025, as well as survey on the activities of fruit and vegetable processing enterprises in 2024.

The survey on land cover and land use in Bulgaria (BANSIK 2025) was conducted in June-August 2025. Data were obtained on the agricultural area, including the main crops at the level of six statistical regions (NUTS 2).

In the field of statistics on livestock breeding, the results from conducted as of November 1, 2024 survey on the number of farm animals in Bulgaria were published. The survey collects information on bovine animals, sheep and goats, and pigs by type and category, production and realization of milk and animals slaughtered. The survey as of November 1, 2025 was prepared. The surveys on poultry and beekeeping in Bulgaria in 2024 were carried out and the survey on beekeeping in 2025 was prepared.

Information on the activities of slaughterhouses, dairies and hatcheries was collected on a monthly (for 2025) and annual (for 2024) basis. As a result of surveys on the activity of red and white meat slaughterhouses for 2024, information was collected on the production of meat from certain species and categories of animals according to the EU legal base. The survey on the activity of milk processing enterprises in 2024 provided information on the processed milk, the milk products and on their sale (in kind and value).

The implementation of the Integrated Farm Statistics 2023 (IFS2023) survey activities completed, with the EU regulatory framework being the Framework Regulation (EU) 2018/1091 on Integrated Farm Statistics. The detailed requirements for the variables observed in 2023 are set out in Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2286. Pursuant to the Agreement No. 101093815 – 2022-BG-IFS2023 between Eurostat and the MAF for the provision of a grant for the conduct of the study, the data required in the regulation was collected, controlled and processed. In a subsystem of the Information System for Agrostatistics (ISAS), information was entered for 43,739 farms included in the survey sample. At the end of 2024, a file was sent to Eurostat for validating the data of the holdings with the sent controls, and the number of validated holdings in 2025 was 35,522. A quality report was also sent, which, after answering questions and making corrections, was accepted by Eurostat. Final results of

the study were published. In implementation of the regulation, a Survey on the structure of fruit species was also conducted (in 2023), and information was obtained on the areas, age structure and density of the different significant types of plantations in the country. In addition, a study of the structure of nationally important fruit species was conducted and thus a complete picture of the structure of the main fruit species in Bulgaria in 2023 was obtained, and preliminary results were published.

On the topic of prices and economic accounts in agriculture, the main objective of the activities for the functioning of the Farm Accountancy Data Network (FADN), transformed into the Farm Sustainability Data Network (FSDN), was to provide information on the incomes of agricultural holdings necessary for making management decisions at the national level and for measuring the impact of the Common Agricultural Policy on Bulgarian agriculture. With the adoption of Regulation (EU) 2023/2674 at the end of 2023, Regulation (EC) No. 1217/2009 is amended with the aim of transforming the FADN into the FSDN. The implementing regulation (EU), which introduces the details of the operation of the FSDN, is 2024/2746. The aim is to expand the scope of the system and collect additional data on environmental and social farming practices related to the CAP and the Farm to Fork strategy. 29 new topics are added to the existing 13 topics in the FSDN, and some of them are related to the application of innovation and digitalization, risk management, soil management, irrigation, use of plant protection products, balance of harmful emissions, carbon dioxide capture in agriculture, organic agriculture, quality certificates, animal welfare, use of antimicrobials, working conditions, etc. Meetings of the National Committee for FSDN have been organized to adopt the selection plan for the upcoming 2026 accounting year and on other current issues. Work is underway to update the agricultural statistical report with the new variables from the FSDN under Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/2746, which will collect information for the reporting year 2025. The established farm accountancy data network is being improved, which has been upgraded to a Farm Sustainability Data Network for data entry, control, validation and analysis of results at the national and regional level. The sample of the data collection form was updated in its part on the subsidies in implementation of the Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/220, which collects information for the reporting year 2024 during the year. The individual data for the holdings from the selection plan for the reporting year 2024 was collected and entered into the EC's FSDN and RICA-1 systems. Business analysis and interactive visualizations with specialized software are being developed on the data from FSDN. For the reporting year 2023, the results for 2,226 farms for the FADN were validated by the General Directorate "Agriculture and Development of Rural Areas" at the EC.

With the adoption of Regulation (EU) 2022/2379 on statistics on agricultural input and output (SAIO), requirements for the collection of new variables were introduced, which led to the need to update the questionnaires that collect information on product surveys. The first reference period for the implementation of the SAIO is 2025.

In implementation of Regulation (EC) 1185/2009 concerning statistics on pesticides, a statistical survey on the use of pesticides for the five most common agricultural crops in the country - wheat, barley, rapeseed, sunflower and grain maize was carried out at the end of 2024 and the beginning of 2025.

Data on the amount of active substance nitrogen and phosphorus in fertilizers used in agriculture are sent annually to Eurostat at national level. The MAF has a commitment to send to Eurostat on a biennial basis data on Gross Nutrient Balance (GNB) in accordance with the Agreement on Statistical Data on Nutrient Balances, referring to gross nitrogen and phosphorus balance, biological nitrogen and phosphorus fixation, atmospheric nitrogen deposition, which are elements related to the local conditions of each country.

The draft Ordinance amending and supplementing Ordinance No. 3/1999 on the creation and maintenance of a register of farmers by a working group was prepared and adopted, after which conciliation procedures and public consultations were held. In issue 37

of the "State Gazette" of 02/05/2025, the Ordinance amending and supplementing Ordinance No. 3 of 1999 on the creation and maintenance of a register of farmers was promulgated. The adopted changes in Ordinance No. 3/1999 aim to reduce the administrative burden for farmers and the administration.

In 2025, the renewal of the MAF website continued, with the metadata and methodological notes on agricultural surveys conducted by the Agrostistics department being periodically supplemented and updated. The release calendar for 2025 of the surveys conducted by the MAF by topics and by dates was also updated on the MDF website. The publication of public information in an open format on the Open Data Portal continues.

The results of the surveys conducted by the Agrostistics Department are published regularly in the specialized bulletins on the MAF website, in the annual publications of the NSI - Statistical Yearbook, Statistical Reference Book, in the electronic overview of statistical information, in the electronic tables of Eurostat and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

In 2025, the **Executive Agency for Fisheries and Aquaculture** sent annual and quarterly data on the catch of fish and other aquatic organisms from commercial fishing in the Black Sea and on the Danube River, on the quantity of fish sold and the price at first sale from commercial fishing in the Black Sea and on the Danube River, as well as on the quantity of fish sold and the price at first sale from fish farms.

3.5. Multi-Domain Statistics

Business trends

In 2025, work continued on all statistical surveys in the field of business trends included in the NSP. They are carried out with the financial assistance of the EC under the "The Joint Harmonized EU Programme of Business and Consumer surveys" under the project "Business and Consumer Surveys".

The monthly business surveys in industry, construction, trade and the service sector provided information on the economic situation in the country. Business surveys show managers' opinions about the current and future economic situation in the country. The information from them is extremely up-to-date, as the data refer to the month in which the surveys are carried out. The indicators obtained from them can be used as components of composite leading indicators for analysis and detection of turning points in the economic cycle.

In accordance with the contract with the EC, additional (ad-hoc) harmonized questions were asked in the survey cards for the construction and trade sectors in February, regarding the difficulties in the various sectors caused by the pandemic, the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East, as well as geopolitical conflicts and protectionist trade policies in different parts of the world. In March and October 2025, in the "industry" and "services" sectors, the provision of information on investment plans, the structure of investments and the factors stimulating the investments of enterprises continued.

The Consumer survey provided data on the trends in the development of public opinion on key economic processes and phenomena such as the general economic situation in the country, inflation, unemployment, savings, intentions with regard to major purchases on long-term use objects, and the purchase of a home or a car.

At the end of September 2025, NSI submitted application documents for a new Framework Agreement with the EC with a duration of two years.

In October of the same year, an expert from NSI participated in the regular working meeting on business surveys and consumer surveys of the EC.

An expert from NSI participated as a lecturer in the training for young statisticians from the Western Balkans, which NSI organized under a project within the "Bulgarian Development Aid" Program of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A presentation was given on the work of NSI in the field of business trends - organization, data collection and results.

Indicators for monitoring national and European policies

In 2025, in fulfilling its functions as national coordinator according to Council of Ministers Decree 52/2023, the NSI continued reporting statistical data to the statistical departments of international organizations and according to the National set of indicators for monitoring and reporting on progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030 (UN SDGs). The data in the National set of indicators for monitoring and reporting on progress towards the UN SDGs were updated and are publicly available in the specialized section of the NSI website. A meeting of the interdepartmental working group was held to coordinate the development and updating of a national set of indicators for monitoring and reporting on progress towards the UN SDGs, as a result of which a proposal for amendments to the set of national indicators was prepared, including: including new ones and dropping indicators that cannot be backed up with data or are no longer relevant to the country.

The information published in IS "Monitorstat" was periodically updated with the latest data. The indicators on national and international strategies were simultaneously updated.

In 2025, the NSI continued the work on the project to upgrade the IS "Monitorstat" in implementation of an investment from the National Recovery and Resilience Plan C10.I10 "Upgraded strategic planning system".

Pursuant to Decision No. 681 of October 6, 2025 of the Council of Ministers approving the Methodology for Strategic Planning, the NSI prepared a draft decision of the Council of Ministers, which defines the conditions, order and terms for publishing information about strategic documents in the upgraded IS "Monitorstat" and presented it to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Innovation and Growth for submission to a meeting of the Council of Ministers.

Environmental statistics and accounts

In 2025, all activities related to conducting regular surveys and producing data in the field of environmental statistics and accounts were successfully completed and on time. The main priority remains the improvement of the methodology and the provision of reliable and comparable information on the state of the environment, the types of pressures and the main trends of the impact of economic activities.

The IS "Environmental Statistics" was improved based on the experience gained from the previous year, with the aim of facilitating the work of users and providing greater functionality. Actions were taken to adapt the system in connection with the upcoming introduction of the euro in the Republic of Bulgaria, including changes to data structures, updating currency codes and units of measurement (ISO 4217: EUR, "million EUR"), conversion rules and rounding at the fixed rate, metadata and validation checks were brought to the requirements for reporting in EUR.

In 2025, the "Environmental Statistics and Accounts" methodology approved by the President of NSI was introduced for use. This internal normative document defines the methodological and practical guidelines for ensuring the quality and comparability of data at the national and European level in the long term.

NSI experts took an active part in coordination procedures and consultations at the European and international level, including on the amendment of Regulation (EU) No. 691/2011 on European environmental economic accounts, and on the Statistical Classification of Products by Activities (CPA). At the national level, the experts participated in the preparation of the National Report on the State and Protection of the Environment, and in the updating of the National set of indicators for monitoring and reporting on progress towards

the UN SDGs.

In 2025, the participation of NSI's experts continued in the following Eurostat's international working groups: DIMESA, WG on environmental accounts, WG on monetary accounts and statistics, WG on waste statistics, WG on water statistics. At national level, the experts participated actively in: Expert group on plastic waste statistics, Interdepartmental WG for monitoring and reporting on progress towards the UN SDGs, Interdepartmental WG on National Food Loss and Waste Reduction Programme (2021-2026), Interdepartmental WG 20 "Environment" of the Foreign Affairs Council, Monitoring Committee of the "Environment 2021 - 2027" Programme, as well as in the verification of the National Inventory of Emissions of Harmful Substances for 2025, according to Directive (EU) 2016/2284.

During the year, NSI experts also participated in the Interdepartmental Working Group for the preparation of a draft amendment to the Regulation on organizing the national inventories of emissions of harmful substances and greenhouse gases into the atmosphere (Council of Ministers Decree No. 261/28.08.2014, SG No. 9/30.01.2024).

Experts participated in a seminar on the updated National Air Pollution Control Programme 2020 - 2030, as well as in a Coordination meeting for the creation of data space for pollution monitoring organized by the MEG.

In 2025, NSI experts also participated in a number of international seminars and forums, including Online Workshops on Eurostat Grants 2025, at which they presented the results of the development and pilot implementation of the "Environmental Statistics and Accounts" methodology - an example of good national practices in the field of data revisions for the sector of environmental goods and services.

Housing statistics

In 2025, the processing and production of data on the housing fund continued including the newly built, commissioned and demolished residential buildings. During the reporting year 2025, the collection of data on commissioned residential buildings in the regions of Sofia Municipality was significantly improved. In order to reduce the burden and make it easier for respondents to fill in the information in the "Residential Building Card" form, in the first quarter of 2025, the report was significantly optimized.

Regional statistics and geographic information systems

During the reporting period, the work continued on the preparation and dissemination of statistics by regional breakdown. The data published in the electronic publication "Regions, districts and municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria" were presented at the lowest level in compliance with the methodologies of the surveys and the requirements for statistical confidentiality.

The results from specialized statistical surveys "Disasters, accidents, incidents and crisis occurred", "Administrative-territorial and territorial division of the Republic of Bulgaria", and "Land use distribution of the Republic of Bulgaria" were published promptly on schedule. Part of them were based on spatial data from the current cadastral map of the country.

During the year, the activities continued on two EC projects in the field of regional statistics – "Data collection for city and subnational statistics" and "Improvement and re-development of demography, migration and population and housing census statistics".

For the first time, a new section "Georeferenced Data" was created on the NSI website. Data in the new section is aimed at users with knowledge and experience in working with and analyzing spatial data related to statistical information. Along with the published data for the Population Grid for 2021 and 2022, work continued on the processing of the data for 2023 and the start of activities to prepare the sets for 2024.

In 2025, the second edition of the survey "Equality between women and men in management", which is planned to be held every three years, was also conducted.

Science, technology and innovation

The statistical surveys on research and development (R&D) and innovation included in the NSP for 2025 were carried out on time and with the required quality. Data on R&D and innovation indicators were processed and produced in accordance with Eurostat's methodological guidelines and the requirements of Commission Implementing Regulations (EU) No. 2020/1197 and (EU) No. 2022/1092.

The data produced from the regular statistical survey on R&D for 2024 were published on the NSI's website as well as in the IS "Infostat" and sent to Eurostat within deadlines and in the required technical format (SDMX) and quality. Five quality reports on the R&D data for 2023 was prepared and submitted to Eurostat.

At the request of the OECD, statistical data were provided on a certain set of indicators for the innovative activity of enterprises in 2022.

In 2025, the NSI continued to produce and provide statistical data on R&D and innovation by indicators for monitoring and evaluation of European and national policies, such as the National Development Programme "Bulgaria 2030", as well as result indicators under Operational Programme "Science and Education for Smart Growth" 2014 - 2020.

The NSI's experts participated in online meetings and written consultations with Eurostat on R&D statistics and innovation.

In 2025, NSI experts participated in the monitoring committees of operational programmes "Competitiveness and innovation in enterprises" 2021 – 2027 and „Research, Innovation and Digitalization for Intelligent Transformation" 2021 - 2027 as well as in WG 16 "Education, mutual recognition of professional qualifications and scientific research" at the MES.

Information society

In the field of statistics on information society, in 2025 the NSI continued to conduct two annual statistical surveys on the ICT usage by individuals and in enterprises. In accordance with the need to provide data for monitoring of the priority goals under Europe's Digital Decade 2030, key variables were updated and new indicators were included to measure the progress of digital transformation in society and the economy.

The statistical data on the ICT usage and e-commerce in enterprises were collected and provided to Eurostat in accordance with the requirements of the Regulation (EU) 2019/2052 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European business statistics, and Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1883 concerning the data for the reference year 2025.

The statistical data on the ICT usage in households and by individuals were collected and provided to Eurostat in accordance with the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2019/1700 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a common framework for European statistics relating to persons and households, and the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/2182 concerning the data for reference year 2025. The survey introduced a new topic on the use of AI technologies by individuals for personal, professional or educational purposes. For the first time, a CAPI (personal interview using a tablet) method was used to collect data, and data on the use of ICT by selected indicators by individuals aged 75-89 at national level were prepared and provided to Eurostat.

Over the past year, NSI experts participated in a Eurostat working group on information society statistics, as well as joined the activities of a permanent working group of

the Digital Decade Council and a thematic working group "Research, Innovation and Digitalization for Smart Transformation" 2021-2027.

3.6. Information and communication technologies, statistical infrastructure

Information and communication technologies

A key priority in the area was to step up the exploitation of new digital data sources and lay the foundations for reliable smart statistics to produce new statistics in near real time with reliable algorithms. Users' access to and understanding of statistical data has been made easier, including by providing attractive and interactive displays, more personalised services such as data on demand and self-service analytics. Partnerships with public and private data holders and the technology sector strengthened to facilitate access to data for statistical purposes, the integration of data from multiple sources and the use of state-of-the-art technologies.

The information systems built for identification, collection and dissemination of information in the NSI allow every official in the administration to fulfill their duties by receiving useful external information in a timely manner. The activities for monitoring the functioning of the technical infrastructure are automated and ensure reliable and effective operation of the information systems and the services provided. The collection of information for security and event management (SIEM) is carried out with new software solutions (Qradar and Guardium).

A high degree of protection of NSI's public web services was achieved by building a secure perimeter for access to assets from the Internet, which provides visibility of requests and the ability to control access at the application level by means of content analysis and source reputation. The NSI increased efficiency and maintaining low levels of risks by real-time tracking of early-stage attack attempts, as well as logging of illegal actions against public web services provided by NSI.

Another top priority was to increase the capacity and redundancy of information systems by using effective means of storing and restoring information systems and statistical survey data. Reliable policies are applied to backup the databases and components of the information systems through specialized software for creating backup copies (Commvault). Information is stored in different locations.

Priorities were also the digitalization and digitization of services, the implementation of the smart data strategy, and the use of machine learning in official statistics.

The implemented request management and control system (nVisionI) is actively used, which guarantees timely information, a knowledge base for emerging cases, their solutions and response time.

Web-scraping tools have been developed for NSI surveys and actual data collection using these methods begun.

A Gitea solution for source code storage was introduced - free, standalone software for hosting Git repositories and software development, and the versions of the applications and information systems being developed.

In 2025, NSI continued to successfully use Eurostat's single entry point for the exchange of statistical data EDAMIS 4 (Electronic Dataflow Administration and Management Information System 4), which guarantees secure exchange of confidential data.

In 2025, the exchange of microdata on intra-community trade continued through Eurostat's secure TESTA network, which ensures maximum protection of individual data in cross-border exchange of information between public authorities of the Member States and provides connectivity with Eurostat and other ESS members.

In 2025, the NSI continued to enrich the datasets on the new national open data portal <https://data.egov.bg/>. The resources will be available in JSON-stat format and will be updated automatically.

In 2025, in order to facilitate the respondents, the Support Center provided assistance on technical and/or methodological issues. In the same year, the successfully implemented National Register of Populated Places functioned.

The document flow of the NSI was implemented by a new version of AIS "Document Flow", which provides the possibility of electronic document circulation, classification of documents and others. In compliance with an order of the MEG, identification with the Qualified Electronic Signature of the employees when working with AIS "Document Flow" has been implemented. The process of updating all NSI systems for entry with Qualified Electronic Signature has been started.

In 2025, the integration of IS "Monitorstat" and the Centralized Automated Information System "Electronic Public Procurement" (CAIS - EPP) was completed and integration for data exchange between IS "Monitorstat" and the State Fund "Agriculture" via RegiX was launched.

A new NSI website has been implemented since June 2025.

In 2025, a test exchange of data with the NRA related to an electronic work book began.

In 2025, a technical specification was prepared for the construction of the IS "Single Entry Point" for submitting annual activity reports containing statistical reports, accounting documents and annual financial statements. During the year, the upgrading of the IS "Single Entry Point NSI" stage 2 began.

In 2025, the IS Consumer Prices was upgraded in connection with the implementation of the new European Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose, version 2 (ECOICOP, Version 2 / UN COICOP 2018) and the use of data from retailers to calculate consumer price indices.

In the same year, data exchange with the Social Assistance Agency was launched.

During the year, the project "Development of the IS "Foreign Trade" was developed by adding a "Macrodata" module in order to generate various statistical outputs and provide out-of-warranty support for a period of 12 months. A technical specification was prepared for the upcoming construction of the IS "Transport", as well as the IS "Business Cycles" was upgraded with new functionalities.

In 2025, internal and external audits were carried out according to the Integrated Management System (IMS), which integrates ISO 27001:2013 and the QMS according to ISO 9001:2015.

Development of statistical information systems

In 2025, the NSI continued to develop and improve web-based applications for the needs of various statistical surveys: "Health care establishments and creches", "Short-term statistics on residential buildings and housing fund", "Statistics on Income and living conditions", "Housing price index", "Survey on prices of seeds and planting stock", "Survey of Bulgarian and foreign citizens entering and leaving Bulgaria", "Accommodation establishments", "Survey on tourist trips", "Consumer survey", "PRODCOM.BG-samples", "Vocational Training of the employees in the enterprises", "Prices of veterinary medical products", "Prices of mineral fertilizers", "Prices of plant protection products", "Prices of forages", "Producer prices on domestic market in forestry", "Annual report of enterprises realizing forestry activity", "Annual report of agricultural holdings", "Labour Force Survey", and others. The development of web applications facilitated and accelerated the work on data

entry and control and shortened the deadlines for providing the resulting statistical data. The applications provide both an easy and convenient way to enter data, ongoing control during data entry, as well as general control of all entered data. Convenient reports were developed in the applications in order to monitor the status of the entered data, the number of respondents who replied, etc. The applications are used both by the NSI, the RSOs and SSD employees and by the respondents.

The NSI continued to develop and improve desktop applications: “Trade deflators”, “Service deflators”, “Household Budget Survey”, “Agricultural land prices and rent”, “Housing price indices and indicators”, “Prices CIF/FOB”, “Import and export price indices”, “Catalogue of goods”, “Report of insurance and reinsurance enterprises”, “Activity of museums”, “Activity of theatres”, “Activity of radios”, “Activity of televisions”, “Survey on passenger bus transport”, Survey on road transport, Annual information for vocational training in vocational gymnasiums, schools and colleges, and others.

In 2025, the work on development of analytical outputs, specific analyzes and data processing for different statistical surveys continued by using the statistical package SPSS Statistics Server and SAS, which are the main analytical platform in the NSI.

Since the beginning of 2025, the newly developed web application "Activity of libraries" has been implemented, replacing the desktop application used until now, and collecting real data.

The work on the actual data collection continued with the developed web scraping tools for the purposes of price surveys in the NSI. In 2025, the implementation of a new method of collecting price data from the Internet using a powerful and flexible tool n8n was also started in order to automate the work process.

In 2025, work continued on the development of a web-based application for the IS Culture, which will replace the desktop applications and will include the following surveys as modules: Annual report on the activities of museums, Annual report on the activities of libraries, Annual report on the activities of cinemas, Annual report on radio programme activities, Annual report on film production, Annual report on television activities, Annual report on the activities of theaters, operas, circuses and musical ensembles and Annual report on the activities of community centers.

In 2025, work continued on the development of the new "Household Budget Survey" web application, which will replace the desktop application currently in use. A pilot study was conducted with the application in October 2025 to test data collection in the field. Its real operation will start in the beginning of next year.

A web-based application for the "European Health Interview" was developed. A pilot study was conducted with the app in July 2025 to test data collection in the field. Its actual field operation for real data collection started from October 2025.

In 2025, work continued on adding a log table and geocoordinates to all applications used by interviewers for the purpose of traceability of actions taken by users.

The use of the Gitea solution for source code storage and version control continued for all developed applications and information systems.

The NSI continued to develop web-based applications, which will replace the existing desktop applications with the aim of a convenient and easy way to enter data, accessibility from any device, a high level of data protection and security.

ICT infrastructure

In 2025, the main priority was the development of the ICT infrastructure to achieve reliable operation of information systems and to ensure the continuity of services provided to respondents and users of statistical information.

The NSI maintains and develops modern data centers – main (Data Center) and recovery (Disaster Recovery Center) that meet the high requirements for storage and protection of data and information assets.

In February 2025, a new end-to-end service was implemented to provide a print, copy and scan environment with controlled access and workload monitoring.

In April of the same year, the expansion of the possibilities for processing, storing and analyzing data in the institute's databases continued through the purchase of new SQL Server licenses.

In May 2025, the renovation of employee workstations continued, as well as the upgrading of the system software.

In August of the same year, the modernization of the communication infrastructure was carried out through the purchase and implementation of new hardware assets in the regional structures of the institute, which ensured the continuity of the services provided in the Head Office of the NSI and in the Regional statistical offices (RSO).

In 2025, the renovation and expansion of the computing capacity of NSI is underway through the purchase of new server configurations.

In 2025, the NSI continued to carry out continuous monitoring and maintenance of the operability of the technical means and information systems that build the information infrastructure.

During the year, the NSI focused on the modernization of the technical means, the expansion of the computing capabilities, the renewal of the current technological solutions and the updating of the software used.

Methodology, statistical metadata, classifications and standards

One of the main tasks in 2025 was to keep statistical classifications up-to-date and to provide methodological assistance to users. In 2025, the NSI worked on the new version of the product classification CPA 2.1 according to Commission Regulation 2024/3103 of September 2, 2024 amending Regulation (EC) No. 451/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council in connection with updating the classification of products by activities (CPA). The structure and explanatory notes of CPA 2.1 were developed.

In order to facilitate the users to use the classifications, the employees continuously prepared statements on respondents' inquiries about correct interpretation of the CPA. These statements are a tool for classifying statistical units, as well as they assist statisticians in conducting statistical surveys and improved international comparability.

For the purposes of statistical processing and continuation of the time series based on the changes occurred in the Combined Nomenclature 2026, the structure of the classification and the corresponding tables with the product classifications were updated. For the purposes of PRODCOM survey, a new version of the Nomenclature of Industrial Production (PRODPROM - 2025), the List of Z codes and the corresponding tables were developed, and for the purposes of foreign trade statistics and for the IS "Intrastat" of the NRA, an annual update of the self-explanatory texts of the Combined Nomenclature 2026 was carried out.

In connection with the implementation of NACE Rev. 2.1, the Nomenclature of energy products (PRODENERGY - 2025) and the Nomenclature of agricultural products (PRODAGRO - 2025) were developed.

The NSI continued its participation in maintaining the National Classification of Occupations and Positions 2011 and in updating the list of job titles and corresponding tables.

In 2025, the NSI continued to implement its obligations to the BNB as a data correspondent under the Special Data Dissemination Standard Plus (SDDS Plus) of the IMF: maintaining data files, preparing the advance release calendar, submitting the data and the calendar, and coordinating the annual metadata certification.

In 2025, the maintenance of the content and proper functioning of the National Register of Populated Places continued.

During the year, the uploading data to the IS "Data Catalogue" continued. The system contains information on all available structural and reference data in NSI and provides a universal, standard tool for systematizing the NSI data. The main objective of the system is, using primary data sources and validating primary data, to reduce redundant, contradictory or erroneous data and to maintain the quality of information at the highest possible level. The catalogue that contains systematized data reduces the number of duplicate data across surveys. The system plays a role in the integration of available information sources and has the ability to accept information through a data exchange standard.

The NSI prepared a "List of Standard Statistical Indicators for 2025". The list contains the statistical indicators on which the NSI provides free of charge information from the statistical surveys included in the NSP.

4. RESOURCE PROVISION

Staff

The NSI consists of a Head Office (HO) and six Regional Statistical Offices (RSO). The Regional Statistical Offices perform the functions and tasks of the NSI for production and dissemination of statistical information at regional level. The regional structures are as follows: The RSO - Severozapad, The RSO - Sever, The RSO - Severoiztok, The RSO - Yugoiztok, The RSO - Yug, The RSO – Yugoiztok.

The structural units in the NSI's Head Office are organized into General administration and Specialized administration according to the Administration Act.

The total number of personnel within the NSI in 2025 was 968, of which 321 employed at the Head office and 647 - at the RSOs. According to the Rules of Procedure of the NSI, the Head Office is organized into six directorates: "Business statistics", "Demographic and Social statistics", "Macroeconomic statistics", "Multi-Domain Statistics, Methodology and Registers", "Information systems and Infrastructure", "General administration" and structures directly subordinated to the President of the NSI: "Security of Information, Information and communication technologies and DM" Division, "Inspectorate" under Art. 46 of the Administration Act, Finance Controller, "Internal Audit" Unit, "International Relations and Projects" Department and "Communications and Secretariat" Department. Five directorates are in the specialized administration and one directorate - in General administration.

Strategy for the development of human resources

In March 2025, the "Strategy for the development of human resources 2025 - 2030" was approved in NSI. Taking into account the state of the external and internal environment, the strengths and weaknesses, the assessment of the opportunities and problems facing the development of the human resources system in NSI, the Strategy focuses on main goals, priorities and specific policies for the development of human resources and formulating the desired results. It covers several main goals and sub-goals to be pursued in the period 2025 - 2030, as well as the course of action, efforts and resources needed to achieve them. The main

objective of the "Strategy for the development of human resources at the NSI" is to provide the necessary human resources, through which the institute can carry out its activities without hindrance and develop. Human resource is considered in the necessary quantity and quality - not only as a total number of employees, but also as knowledge, skills and other characteristics that they must possess. Another strategic goal is the achievement of efficiency in the management and work of employees. The latter is directed as an impact and result to the external environment as well - i.e. it aims to increase the satisfaction of all groups of users with the services provided, increase statistical literacy, awareness of the importance and role of NSI.

One of the main problems to be solved is related to the recruitment and retention of employees in the NSI. This includes targeted recruitment efforts, ensuring continuity and interchangeability among employees, providing the necessary knowledge and skills in the field of statistics, computer and information technology, raising awareness about the importance of statistical work, attracting trainees and their subsequent employment, induction of newly appointed employees, offering opportunities for professional development and many others.

Conducting competitions for vacant positions

Personnel selection policies are aimed at replacing retiring employees with young, forward-thinking people who have just graduated from higher education or are continuing their studies at Bulgarian universities.

From January 2025 to the end of October 2025, 70 competitive procedures were launched for the appointment of employees to vacant positions in the NSI system. Of them, 50 are in the HO and 20 in the RSO. Thirty-five competitions in NSI have ended with the appointment of candidates.

Table 1. Competitions

(Number)

Structures	announced –upcoming	terminated	terminated due to lack of applicants	terminated due to the non- admission of applicants	without ranking	with ranking without appointment	with appointment
HO	8	3	2	4	11	1	21
RSO	5	0	0	0	0	1	14
NSI	13	3	2	4	11	2	35

It is noteworthy that the unsuccessful procedures again prevail in the HO compared to the RSO. This fact could be explained by the lower levels of unemployment in Sofia compared to other cities in the country. On the other hand, some of the announced positions require specific professional experience and knowledge that the applicants do not possess. Last, but not least, is the lower remuneration offered for some of the positions compared to the same in other administrations or in the private sector.

Peer reviews conducted at national statistical institutes for the period 2021 - 2023 reveal common challenges and risks, problems and limitations facing them. Identifying and finding sustainable ways to deal with them is of paramount importance to ensure the quality, rationality and reliability of official statistics and to meet the growing demand from users for more comprehensive and timely statistical products.

Among the main limitations are the unpreparedness of human resources in the rapidly developing technological world and the introduction of artificial intelligence in relation to the

implementation of strategic goals. The problems facing national statistical institutes in the ESS are common - the institutes need to invest in new technologies and effective strategies at all stages of the statistical production process, and this requires significant investment and resources. Investing in their modernization with appropriate financial and human resources is a mandatory condition for the modernization and expediency of the NSS and ESS.

Constraints and challenges in the field of human resources include insufficient funding of important processes and not very high remuneration of staff, which leads to difficulties in attracting and retaining qualified staff, as well as a general shortage of experts with specialized knowledge and skills. The need to invest in new sources and data management systems and to develop a set of specialized skills for the production of official statistics will lead to a streamlining of processes and a more efficient use of human capital.

Employed by age and education at the NSI

The structure of the NSI's staff by age groups is presented in Table 2, and by education in Table 3.

Table 2. Structure of the actually employed by age groups in the NSI

(Number)

Structures	Age category (years)					Total
	up to 29	30-45	46-55	56-65	over 65	
HO	23	96	108	54	1	282
RSO	12,5	219	208	168,5	9	617
NSI	35,5	315	316	222,5	10	899

There is a slight increase in the age category of employees up to 29 years old in the HO and a decrease in their number in the RSO compared to 2024. Again, it is an indicator that work in the state administration is not attractive for this age group and that serious measures need to be taken to attract young people.

Both for the HO and the RSO, representatives from the age group 30 - 55 years prevail. There is a decrease in the number of employees working in the category 56 - 65 years in the RSO by 10.5 people and their number remains the same in the HO. The number of employees over 65 years of age employed in the HO remains the same, and in the RSO they increase by one employee.

The NSI continues to follow the trend of terminating the legal relationship with the relevant employee upon acquiring the right to a pension for length of service and age. The Methodology for the continuity management of in NSI - part of the "Strategy for the development of human resources 2025 - 2030", defines the actions that should be carried out in order not to create difficulties in the work of the units in the event of termination of the legal relationship on various grounds or long-term absence of an employee. The aim is to ensure continuity in terms of the skills and knowledge of employees in each NSI structure, the development of an internal reserve of employees with the necessary competencies to meet the current or future needs of the administration.

Table 3. Structure of actually employed in the NSI by education

(Number)

Education degree							
Structures	Doctor	Master	Bachelor	Professional bachelor	Secondary education	Primary education	Total
HO	13	225	31	4	9	0	282
RSO	2	395,5	116,5	15	88	0	617
NSI	15	620,5	147,5	19	97	0	899

The data show that 89% of NSI employees have higher education, with an increase of 1% compared to 2024. More than half have a "master's" educational and qualification degree - 69% of those employed in the NSI. In second place are those with a "bachelor's" educational and qualification degree - 16%. It should also be noted the positive trend that the number of employees with a "doctor" educational and scientific degree is increasing compared to 2024, when there were 14 for the entire NSI system. The positive trend of reducing the number of employees with secondary education in recent years continues (in 2024 - 100).

Table 4. Continuing education of NSI employees in Bulgarian universities
(Number)

Type of education	HO	RSO	NSI
Doctor	5	2	7
Master	6	9	15
Bachelor	1	5	6
Total	12	16	28

Table 4 shows the number of employees who are currently continuing their education to obtain a higher educational and qualification degree in higher education institutions in the country. Their total number slightly decreases compared to 2024, at the expense of persons with already acquired educational qualifications and scientific degrees "doctor", "master" and "bachelor".

Table 5. Training of NSI employees in 2025

(Number)

Structures	Training at Training Centre Slivek and HO	Training at Institute of Public Administration	Training at Public Finance School	Other	Total
RSO	202	145		375	722
HO	163	85	7	44	299
Total	365	230	7	419	1021

In 2025, 365 persons from the HO and RSO took part in internal trainings and seminars at the HO of the NSI and in the Training Center "Slivek" of the NSI. Among the training topics are: Working with a software product for statistical data processing IBM SPSS Statistics - beginners and advanced; Working with the Microsoft Excel - beginners and advanced; Introduction to R; Fundamentals of manual testing (Manual QA) to ensure the quality of software development; Basics of VMware Virtualization; EU law and the Bulgarian administration; Working with Word text program - advanced; European Health Interview Survey (EHIS) 2025; Changes in the statistical tools of agricultural surveys and their impact

on the respondent burden and the quality of statistical information; Income and living conditions - EU-SILC module 2025; Consumption area - household budget survey wave 2026, including innovative tools and sources, and more.

237 NSI employees participated in various training courses of the Institute of Public Administration and of the Public Finance School.

419 persons participated in trainings and specialized seminars in other training institutions, necessary for the quality performance of the relevant position, such as: trainings on health and safety working conditions, trainings in the field of public procurement, the Unified Electronic Labor Record, new standards of management systems, trainings on defense-mobilization training and others.

In 2025, as in previous years, activities to improve working conditions continued. New computers with monitors were purchased for the needs of the employees of the HO of the NSI. Tablets and servers were also purchased.

The vehicle fleet of the NSI Head Office was renewed, with new vehicles purchased to meet the needs of the RSO.

Repairs were carried out in the administrative buildings of SSD - Pernik, SSD - Blagoevgrad and SSD - Varna.

Over 70 emergency and routine repairs were carried out based on requests entered in the Book of Damage and Repairs at the NSI Head Office by employees of the institute.

Contracts with operating companies, contracts for supplies, provision of services, maintenance, and subscription services were renewed and signed.

All requirements for maintaining strict fire safety in the NSI Head Office were met in accordance with the requirements of regulatory documents.

Budget

The implementation of the NSI's Budget 2025 is in compliance with the adopted Law on the State Budget of the Republic of Bulgaria for 2025 and current adjustments made (Annex 1). Planned revenues as of 31.12.2025 were implemented according to the specified plan - 53%. The implementation of the total expenditure for the same period amounts to 99%, including current costs (wages, salaries and other payments to staff and maintenance) - 99%.

5. INTERNAL AUDIT AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL

The Internal Audit Unit (IAU) performs internal audit of all structures, programmes, activities and processes in the NSI, including the second-level spending units in the NSI and/or the administrators of resources of the European Union. In carrying out audit engagements for providing assurance and consulting, the IAU complies with the requirements of the Law on Internal Audit in the Public Sector, the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing, the Code of Ethics of Internal Auditors, the Statute of Internal Audit and the approved by the Minister of finance methodology for internal audit in the public sector.

In the first quarter, and in compliance with the requirements of Art. 40, para. 5 of the Law on Internal Audit in the Public Sector, an annual report and questionnaire on the activity of the IAU for 2024 were prepared, presented and sent electronically to the Minister of Finance through the web-based module "Annual reporting" within the specified time.

In compliance with the legal requirements, the head of the IAU carried out an inspection of the summary report and questionnaire on the status of the financial management and control systems (FMCS) in the NSI in 2024. He gave an opinion on the conformity of the information submitted in the report and questionnaire with the findings of the performed internal audits. The report and the questionnaire for the FMCS were sent within the specified

deadline.

On the basis of Art. 14, para. 1, item 2 of the Law on Internal Audit in the Public Sector, the Internal Audit Unit at the NSI, in addition to a head, also has three full-time positions for internal auditors. These positions have been vacant for the period from 01.01.2025 to the present, which is why the unit does not have sufficient human resources necessary for its activities.

This in turn greatly hinders the full and effective implementation of the unit's activities, as well as ensuring optimal audit coverage.

In 2025, the head of the IAU took the necessary actions to announce and conduct the relevant competitions to fill the vacant positions of professionally trained internal auditors.

At the time of preparation of this report, a competition for the position of "Chief Internal Auditor" was held on 06.11.2025, at which two candidates appeared and successfully passed it. The first runner-up was offered a written offer to be appointed to the relevant position, but he refused to take it due to lower financial parameters compared to his current position.

On the basis of Art. 10e, para. 5 of the Civil Servant Act, which provides for the possibility of issuing an act for the appointment of the next ranked candidate, a written proposal was made to the second ranked candidate to be appointed to the position of "chief internal auditor" in the IAU, to which he gave his consent in writing and will be appointed by the end of the year.

Despite the appointment of one internal auditor, the internal audit unit will continue its efforts in 2026 to fill the other vacant positions in the unit by holding competitions for internal auditors. The goal is for the unit to have adequate human resources, which is a basic prerequisite for achieving the set goals.

In June, the Annual plan for the activities of the Internal Audit Unit at the NSI for 2025 was prepared and approved by the President of the NSI. Due to the above circumstances, the annual plan is based on the actually available human resources. The plan defines the subject, scope, objectives and resources for the implementation of the internal audit activity.

The Annual Plan for 2025 has been prepared based on the Strategic Plan for the Internal Audit Activity 2023 - 2025 approved by the President of the NSI.

In implementation of the annual plan, an assurance audit engagement on the topic: "Analysis and evaluation of the activity of the "Metadata, methodology and registers management" department in "Multi-domain statistics, methodology and registers" directorate is currently being carried out, which will be completed by the end of the reporting period.

An audit report will be prepared for the results of the engagement at the end of the year.

Towards the end of the reporting period, another assurance engagement is due to be launched.

During the reporting period, hard work was also done on the preparation of a new three-year strategic plan for the internal audit activity in the NSI for the period 2026-2029.

By the end of the reporting period, an annual plan for the internal audit activities for the next year is also due, as well as issues related to the preparation of the annual reporting.

The reporting of the audit activity of the IAU in the NSI for 2025 will be carried out by 28.02.2026 with the preparation of a report and questionnaire. They will be provided to the President of the NSI and will be submitted via the annual submission module to the Ministry of Finance within the legally specified deadlines.

The activity of **the Inspectorate of the NSI under Art. 46 of the Administration Act** in 2025 was in compliance with the goals set in the Strategic Plan for the activity of the Inspectorate of the NSI for the period 2021 - 2025 and the Annual Plan for the activity of the Inspectorate of the NSI in 2025. The key activities were in conformity with the goals and priorities laid down in the Strategy for Development of the National Statistical System, 2021 – 2027 and the National Statistical Programme for 2025. Throughout the year, the efforts of

the Inspectorate under Article 46 of the Administration Act were aimed at improving the quality and expanding the scope of the administrative control carried out over the activities of the general and specialized administration within the NSI structure.

In the implementation of the powers of the Inspectorate under Art. 46 of the Administration Act, the achievement of the following *main objectives* was of primary importance:

- To create optimal conditions for work of the structural units in order to implement the state policy in the field of statistics;
- To implement timely and effective measures to limit the corruption risk within the NSI system;
- To create a sustainable environment supporting the compliance with laws, by-laws and internal departmental acts, rules and procedures, and to prevent violations and corruption in the functioning of the administration, and work improvement;
- To increase the training and professional qualification of inspectors as a condition for the objectivity and impartiality of the administrative control.

The realization of the goals was determined by the performance of the following *main tasks*: carrying out planned inspections for the implementation of administrative control of all structures, activities and processes in the units of the NSI; carrying out unplanned inspections based on received reports or by order of the President of the NSI and proposing measures to prevent and eliminate violations; verification of the declarations under Art. 49 of the Counter-Corruption Act; implementing constant control over individual structural units and processes for implementing and complying with the requirements of the legislation when performing the assigned functions by the directorates of the general and specialized administration, as well as conducting an independent and objective assessment of the activities of the structural units of the NSI.

The inspectorate of the NSI under Art. 46 of the Administration Act exercised control over the implementation and compliance of laws and internal departmental acts in the organization of work and management of administrative structures, as well as for optimization of the work process. During the reporting period, the work continued on the implementation of ongoing control of the procedures and activities in the performance of the main functions of the specialized units and administrative control over the overall activity of the HO and RSO of the NSI.

During the reporting period, the inspectorate of the NSI under Art. 46 of the Administration Act carried out a total of 21 inspections, of which 16 were planned (including 12 monthly inspections) and five were unplanned based on received signals.

In implementation of the Annual plan for the activities of the Inspectorate in 2025, the following **four planned inspections** were carried out: thematic planned inspection and evaluation of the organization of the activity and compliance with the regulatory requirements in the evaluation of the performance of the position by the employees in the HO and RSO of the NSI in 2024; thematic planned inspection of compliance with the requirements for collection, reporting, storage, publication and the declarations not submitted on time under the Counter-Corruption Act by the employees of the HO and RSO of the NSI; complex planned inspection of RSO - Yugozapad and complex planned inspection of RSO - Severozapad. The complex planned inspection of RSO - Yugoiztok is in the process of implementation.

For the implementation of internal administrative control in 2025, the Inspectorate carried out **12 monthly planned inspections**. Monthly reports containing the findings, analyses, conclusions and recommendations of the administrative control were prepared and submitted for approval by the President of the NSI. The subject of the inspections included: the implementation of the resolutions of the NSI management; the contracts concluded and executed in the relevant month; the number of issued and executed/unexecuted orders of the NSI management; the international business trips of NSI employees; the prepared reports from participation in international business trips and resulting tasks for the NSI. Of particular

importance was control over the implementation of the decisions taken at the President's Council. The execution and reporting of the tasks assigned to the NSI employees through AIS "Document Flow" was controlled. In 2025, a monthly control was also carried out for the implementation of the activities set out in the NSP and the Editorial Plan for 2025. The timely implementation of the conducted statistical surveys and publications from the Calendar for dissemination of the results of statistical surveys, as well as the published publications, was monitored.

In 2025, the Inspectorate under Art. 46 of the Administration Act carried out **five unplanned inspections** on received signals and proposals against illegal and incorrect actions or inactions of NSI employees. When considering the received signals containing allegations of violation of the legislation, the civil service or the style of management, the main efforts of the inspectors were aimed at fully clarifying the circumstances and facts in each specific case in order to prepare a comprehensive and objective opinion, as well as recommendations for taking effective measures to solve the identified problem. Reports with the results of the inspections were timely prepared and submitted for approval by the President of the NSI. After clarifying each individual case, replies were sent to the senders of the signals within the statutory period.

As a result of the administrative control carried out in 2025, the Inspectorate under Art. 46 of the Administration Act of NSI gave a total of 45 recommendations and six proposals for the implementation of which subsequent control was carried out.

In 2025, the Inspectorate of the NSI carried out permanent control for the implementation of the provisions of the Counter-Corruption Act and the Ordinance on the organization and procedure for verifying declarations and establishing conflicts of interest. In the legally determined terms, the information from the sent declarations of property and interests under Art. 49, para. 1, item 2 and item 4 of the Counter-Corruption Act by the employees of the HO and RSO of the NSI was processed, stored and published in the registers in compliance with the provisions of the Personal Data Protection Act.

Periodic checks were carried out on the declared facts in the submitted declarations of incompatibility under Art. 49, para. 1, item 1 and item 3 of the Counter-Corruption Act by the newly appointed employees in the Head Office and RSO of the NSI to establish incompatibility in accordance with the requirements of the relevant regulatory acts. A total of 81 newly appointed employees in the NSI system were checked, of which 28 - in the Head Office of the NSI and 53 - in the RSO. Incompatibility was found for four employees, which was removed within the legally established period after instructions given by the Inspectorate under Art. 46 of the Administration Act.

Inspectors from the Inspectorate under Art. 46 of the Administration Act participated in four training courses for improving professional qualifications.

In fulfillment of the statutory requirements for the minimum number of inspectorates, in 2025 for vacant positions in the Inspectorate under Art. 46 of the Administration Act, four competitive procedures were conducted.

For the period from 01.01.2025 to 24.10.2025, the **Financial Controller** recorded and checked 1 344 dossiers with documents in the register and issued 1 344 checklists for commitment and expenditure.

The proclamation of the Financial Controller on the proposals for commitment or expenditure was always implemented within the deadlines set by the President of the NSI and described in the Internal Rules on implementation of ex-ante control of legality in the NSI.

During the period, the Financial Controller often needed to request additional documents or information, as well as to make on the spot visit in order to optimize the control and to give an accurate and efficient statement in the checklist filled by him.

In the first half of 2025, the Financial Controller prepared the summarized questionnaire and the report on the status of the Financial Management and Control Systems (FMCS) at the NSI in 2024 and sent them electronically to the Ministry of Finance.

In pursuance of the annual training plan for 2025, the Finance Controller participated in two trainings organized and carried out by the Public Finance School of the Ministry of

Finance. The first training was on the topic "Management and Control of Public Procurement" and was held during the period 28.05 - 29.05.2025, and the second training was on the topic "Financial Management and Control Systems in Public Sector Organizations - essence and basic requirements" and was held on 08.07.2025. For the successful completion of the training, the financial controller has been issued certificates from the Public Finance School, which have been provided to the employees in the Human Resources Department, General Administration Directorate at the NSI Head Office for storage and addition to the civil servant's dossier.

During the period of ex-ante control for legality, illegal actions and manifestations were not detected in the Head Office of the NSI.

In 2025, the **Data Protection Officer (DPO)**, in accordance with the requirements of national and European law, continued to carry out regular supervision of compliance with the requirements in the field of personal data protection, to guarantee the rights of data subjects, as well as the principle of statistical secrecy, regulated in Regulation (EC) No. 223/2009 on European statistics and the Statistics Act.

In the cases of proposals for new EU legislation in the field of statistics - regulations, delegated regulations and implementation regulations, they were necessarily checked to see if they correspond to the European and national law in the field of personal data protection, as well as to the recommendations of the European Data Protection Supervisory Authority. The opinions of NSI in the WG "Statistics" of the Council of the EU, respectively for the meetings of the European Statistical System Committee, were always justified from the point of view of the protection of personal data.

The data protection officer participated in the meetings of the President of the NSI with the Communications Regulation Commission and with representatives of mobile service operators for the preparation of future cooperation agreements.

Appendix 1. Information on the NSI budget for 2025

Indicators (in BGN)	Law on State Budget of the Republic of Bulgaria for 2025	Specified plan for the year as of 31.12.2025	Report as of 31.12.2025	Implementation of the plan/ report (%) as of 31.12.2025
1	2	3	4	5
I. REVENUES - TOTAL	950 000	950 000	507 450	53
Own revenues	950 000	950 000	507 450	53
Non-tax revenues	950 000	950 000	507 450	53
Property revenues and incomes	950 000	950 000	593 661	62
- Net revenues from sales of services, goods and production	850 000	850 000	527 055	62
- Rental property revenues	100 000	100 000	66 606	67
State fees				
Fines, sanctions and penalties			640	
Other revenues			5 204	
Revenues from the sale of non-financial assets			16 061	
VAT paid			-108 116	
II. EXPENDITURES - TOTAL	46 101 000	46 196 624	45 543 610	99
Total expenditure	46 101 000	46 196 624	45 543 610	99
Current expenditure	40 728 000	40 823 624	40 171 944	98
Personnel	35 797 300	35 291 820	34 642 661	98

Salaries and remunerations to the personnel under the Labour Code and the Civil Service Act	26 223 600	25 568 420	24 920 229	97
Salaries and remunerations to the personnel under the Labour Code	2 827 500	3 000 000	2 812 083	94
Salaries and remunerations to the personnel under the Civil Service Act	23 396 100	22 568 420	22 108 146	98
Other salaries and payments to the personnel	1 544 300	1 852 600	1 851 912	100
Mandatory social security contributions from employers	8 029 400	7 870 800	7 870 520	100
Social insurance contributions from employers for the State Social Insurance (SSI)	4 859 300	4 749 100	4 748 968	100
Health insurance contributions from employers	1 952 200	1 949 500	1 949 378	100
Contributions to additional compulsory insurance from employers	1 217 900	1 172 200	1 172 174	100
Maintenance	4 663 700	5 263 804	5 262 782	100
Taxes paid, charges and administrative sanctions	215 000	215 000	213 557	99
Expenditure for membership contributions and participation in non-profit organizations and activities	52 000	53 000	52 944	100
Capital expenditure	5 373 000	5 373 000	5 371 666	100
Fundamental repair of tangible fixed assets	562 300	444 500	444 360	100
Acquisition of tangible fixed assets	1 183 900	1 424 800	1 423 621	100
Acquisition of intangible fixed assets	3 626 800	3 503 700	3 503 685	100
NATURAL INDICATORS				
Staff positions - total	968	968	895	
Average annual full-time positions - total	968	968	895	
Staff positions	968	968	895	
III. TRANSFERS	45 151 000	45 246 624	46 169 142	102
III. A. TRANSFERS (SUBSIDIES, CONTRIBUTIONS) BETWEEN CENTRAL/STATE BUDGET AND OTHER BUDGETS	45 151 000	45 751 000	46 661 518	102
Transfers (grants/contributions) from the central budget (Net)	45 751 000	45 751 000	46 661 518	102
- Transfers (subsidies) from the central budget (+)			-492 376	
- Transfers received (+)		95 624	95 624	
- Transfers granted (-)			0	
- Transfer from MLSP under programmes of temporary employment (+/-)			0	

III. B. TRANSFERS BETWEEN BUDGETS AND ACCOUNTS FOR EU FUNDS	-600 000	-600 000	-588 000	
III. C. TRANSFERS FOR ASSUMED INSURANCE CONTRIBUTIONS AND TAXES			11 144 272	
IV. BALANCING ITEM (+/-) (I - II + III)			1 132 982	
V. FINANCING OPERATIONS			-1 132 982	

Appendix 2. Organizational chart of the NSI

