



## EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA FOR 2018/2019 SCHOOL YEAR

The main results from the National Statistical Institute (NSI) annual comprehensive surveys characterizing the activity of educational institutions are as follows:

- In the 2018/2019 academic year in kindergartens are enrolled 218.8 thousand children or with 1.0% less in comparison with the previous year.
- In 2018, high school graduates from general and vocational schools are respectively 26.5 and 23.0 thousand students.
- Enrolled in the varying degrees of higher education in 2018/2019 academic year are 229.5 thousand persons.
- As of 31.12.2018 for acquiring educational and scientific degree 'Doctor' in the country are trained 6 467, of which 504 foreign citizens.

### Pre-primary education

As of 1.12.2018 in the country functioned 1 834 independent kindergartens with director. There were enrolled 218.8 thousand children, of which 113.0 thousand or 51.6% were boys. In comparison with the previous year the number of children decreased by 1.0% (Figure 1).

The coverage of children in this educational level estimated by the group net enrolment rate<sup>1</sup> for the 2018/2019 school year was 78.4% and compared to the previous school year remains unchanged.

The average number of children in a kindergarten in the country was 119 as in the urban areas was significantly larger (154) than in the rural areas (62). A group was formed by average 24 children, respectively - 25 in urban and 20 in rural areas.

The teaching personnel employed in kindergartens were 19.8 thousand and in comparison with the previous school year increased by 182 persons or by 0.9%. Kindergarten teachers were 18.5 thousand, or 93.7% of all personnel in kindergartens.

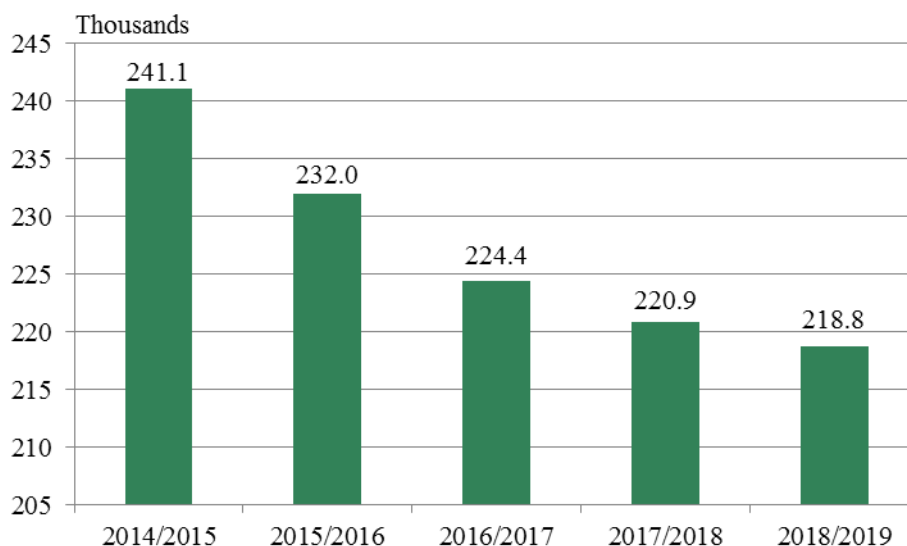
In 2018/2019 school year in the country had functioned 101 licensed private kindergartens or with 3 more than in the previous year. There were enrolled 4 606 children or 2.1% of all children in kindergartens.

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



**Figure 1. Children in kindergartens**



## General education

As of 1.10.2018 there were classes in 1 955 general education schools<sup>1</sup>. Out of them 131 were primary schools, 1 173 - basic schools, 68 - combined schools, 115 upper secondary and 468 - secondary schools. In comparison with the previous school year, because of closure or modification, the total number of general education schools decreased by 14. The students were 581.3 thousand, of which 86.1 thousand were enrolled in schools in the rural areas. There were 21 pupils on average for one class in the daily general education schools.

During the past 2017/2018 school year for different reasons 16.3 thousand students left the general education schools, of which 13.9 thousand were in basic education. The largest relative share was the share of the students who left because had gone abroad - 7.5 thousand or 46.1% of the total number of leaving students, followed by those who left because of family reasons - 6.5 thousand or 39.6% and those who left because of unwillingness to study - 8.8%.

In 2018, 71.8 thousand students graduated from basic education and 26.5 thousand students graduated from secondary education in the general education schools.

The relative share of children in general education schools who studied foreign languages in primary grades (I - IV) was 85.2%, as the largest share came from those who studied English - 91.9%.

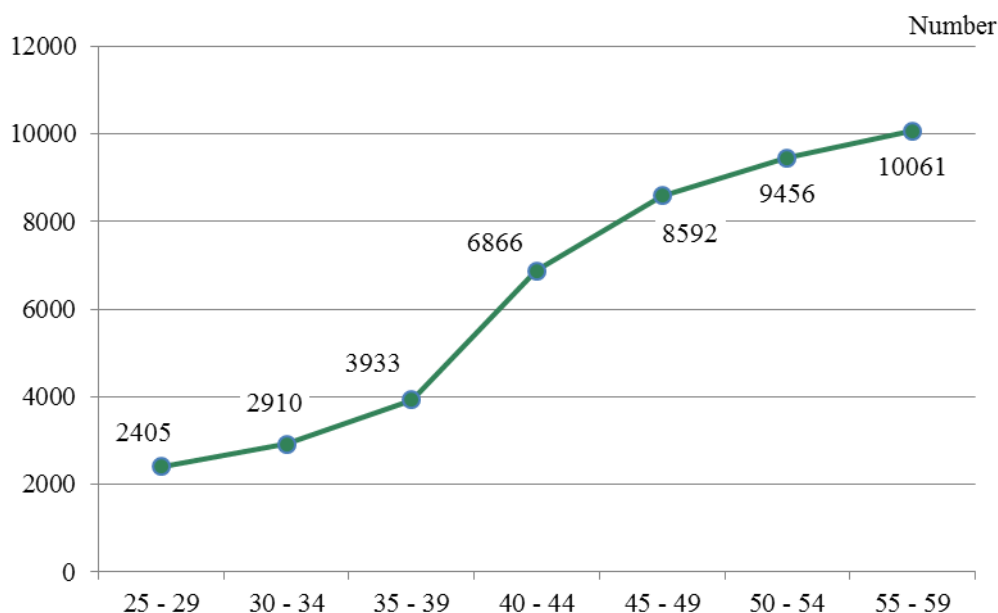
The total number of teaching staff (incl. directors and deputy directors with teaching activity) employed in general education schools during the 2018/2019 school year was 50.8 thousand. Of which 94.4% with education-qualification degree 'Bachelor' or 'Master', 4.9% were with education-qualification degree -

<sup>1</sup> Incl. the Bulgarian schools abroad, financed by state.



‘Professional Bachelor’ or an equivalent degree in past and 0.7% were with secondary education. In the teaching profession women were predominant and constitute 85.4% of the total number of teachers.

**Figure 2. Teaching staff in general schools by age groups in 2018/2019 school year**



As of 1.10.2018 there were 78 active private general education schools in the country, out of them 4 primary schools, 31 basic, 18 high schools and 25 secondary schools. There were enrolled totally 10 113 students or 1.7% from the total number of students in general education.

### Vocational education and training (VET)

Vocational education and training during the school year 2018/2019 was carried out in 21 art schools, 25 sport schools, 359 vocational gymnasiums and 25 vocational colleges with enrolment after secondary education. The total number of students in there was 136.2 thousand

Boys were predominant in vocational education and training and were 60.1% of the total number of students in this educational level.

In 2018, 23.0 thousand persons graduated with attainment of diploma for secondary education in art schools, sport schools and vocational gymnasiums. Level of professional qualification was acquired by the following number of students in the respective programmes:

- 530 students acquired first level of professional qualification in vocational classes;
- Second and third level of professional qualification in 2018 were acquired respectively by 2.5 and 13.4 thousand students;
- 783 students acquired fourth level of professional qualification in vocational colleges with enrolment after secondary education.



From the total number of students who acquired third level of professional qualification, the highest relative share was of those who studied specialties in the field<sup>1</sup> of 'Engineering and engineering trades'(25.0%), followed by those in the field of 'Business and administration' (21.3%).

The relative shares of students who acquired fourth level of professional qualification were highest in the fields of 'Security services' - 73.3% and 'Business and administration' - 15.7%.

During the 2018/2019 school year 1 073 students were enrolled in 33 private vocational gymnasiums and private vocational colleges with enrolment after secondary education, which was 0.8% of the total number of students in the vocational education.

During the present school year the total number of teachers (incl. directors and deputy directors with teaching activity) in vocational education was 11.7 thousand, of which 94.7% were with acquired educational qualification degrees 'Bachelor' or 'Master'.

In programmes for vocational training against payment for acquiring level of professional qualification in Vocational Training Centres, vocational gymnasiums and vocational colleges were enrolled 20.5 thousand students aged 16 years or more. According to the level of professional qualification, their distribution was as follows: first level - 9.1 thousand, second level - 6.2 thousand, third level - 5.1 thousand and forth level - 58 persons.

### **Tertiary education**

In the academic 2018/2019 year, the total number of students in Bulgaria enrolled in the four educational-qualification degrees ('Professional bachelor', 'Bachelor', 'Master' and 'Doctor') was 229.5 thousand, which is with 6.9 thousand, or 2.9% less compared to the previous academic year.

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

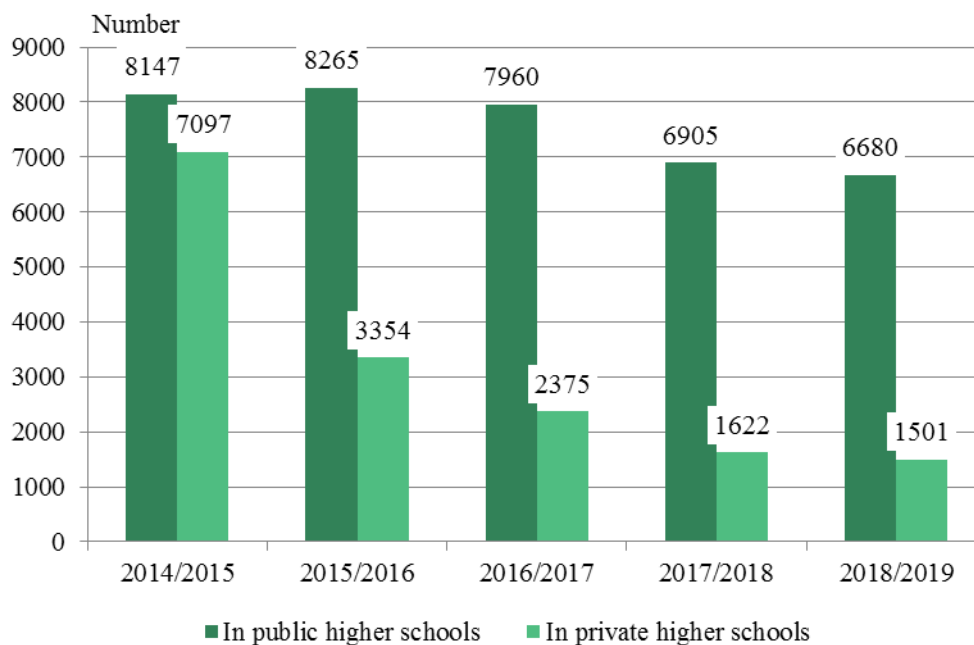
During the 2018/2019 academic year, for acquiring of the degree 'Professional bachelor', in colleges were enrolled 8 181 students. In comparison with the previous year their number decreased with 346 or with 4.1%. Out of the total number of students in colleges, 1 501 or 18.3% were enrolled in private colleges (Figure 3).

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<sup>1</sup> About vocational education and training the fields of education are presented in accordance to the List of Occupations for Vocational Education and Training (approved by Order No. 09-413/12.05.2003 of the Minister of Education and Science).



**Figure 3. Students in colleges**



The number of the teaching staff in colleges was 692 persons, of them 321 or 46.4% were on a full time employment.

In 2018, educational-qualification degree ‘Professional Bachelor’ was acquired by 1 869 students, of which 59.1% were women. The highest number of graduates was in specialities in the following fields of education<sup>1</sup>:

- ‘Health’ - 665 persons;
- ‘Personal services’ - 332 persons;
- ‘Engineering and engineering trades’ - 297 persons;
- ‘Business and administration’ - 295 persons;
- ‘Education’ - 103 persons.

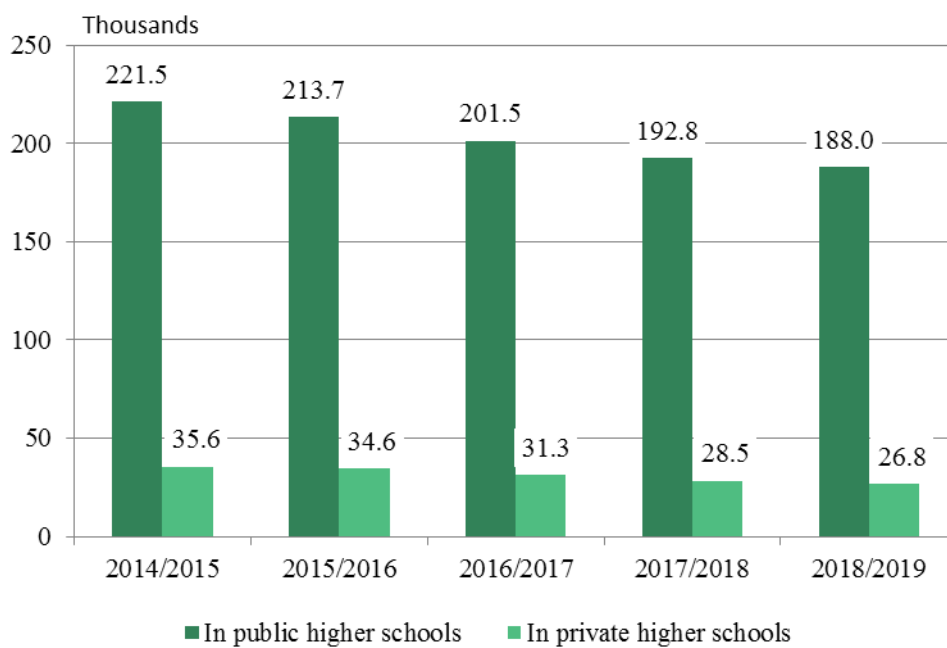
***Universities and equivalent higher schools (‘Bachelor’ and ‘Master’ educational-qualification degrees)***

In 2018/2019 academic year, for acquiring educational-qualification degrees ‘Bachelor’ and ‘Master’ in universities and specialized higher schools were enrolled 214.8 thousand students and in comparison with the previous year their number decreased by 6.4 thousand or by 2.9%. In private educational institutions were enrolled 26.8 thousand students or 12.5% of the total number enrolled in educational-qualification degrees ‘Bachelor’ and ‘Master’ (Figure 4).

<sup>1</sup> According to Classification of fields of education and training - 2015 (State Gazette, No. 46/17.06.2016)



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

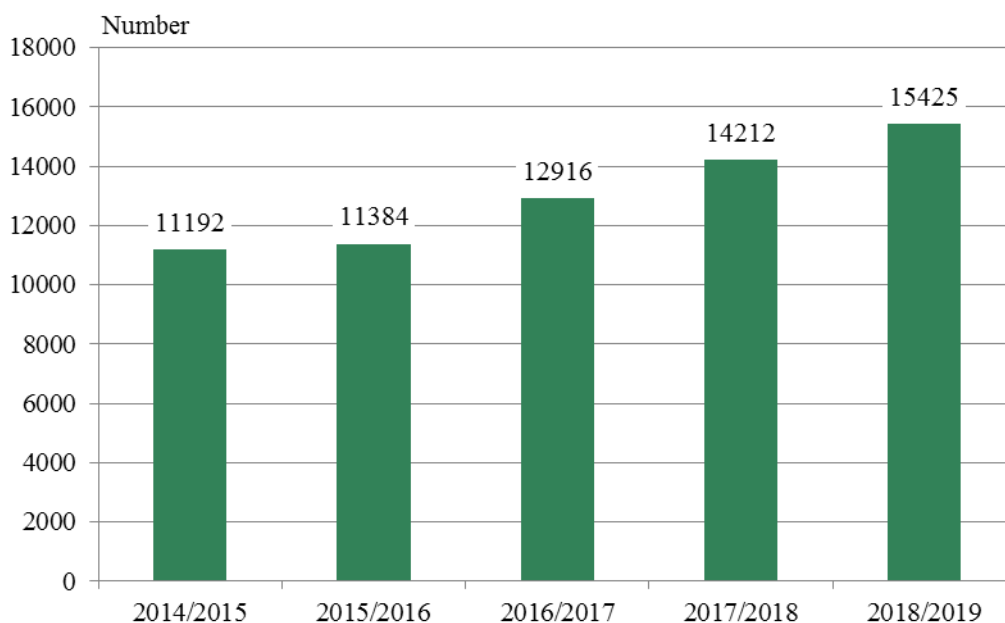


In the academic year 2018/2019, students - Bulgarian citizens were 199.4 thousand or 92.8% of all students in universities and specialized higher schools and in comparison to the previous year their number decreased by 7.6 thousand or by 3.7%. Foreign students were 15.4 thousand, which is 8.5% more than in the previous year and 37.8% more than in the academic year 2014/2015 (Figure 5).

The largest share of foreign students came from Greece (24.6%), followed by the United Kingdom (15.3%), Germany (8.9%), Turkey (7.9%) and Ukraine - 5.8% of the total number of foreign students.



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

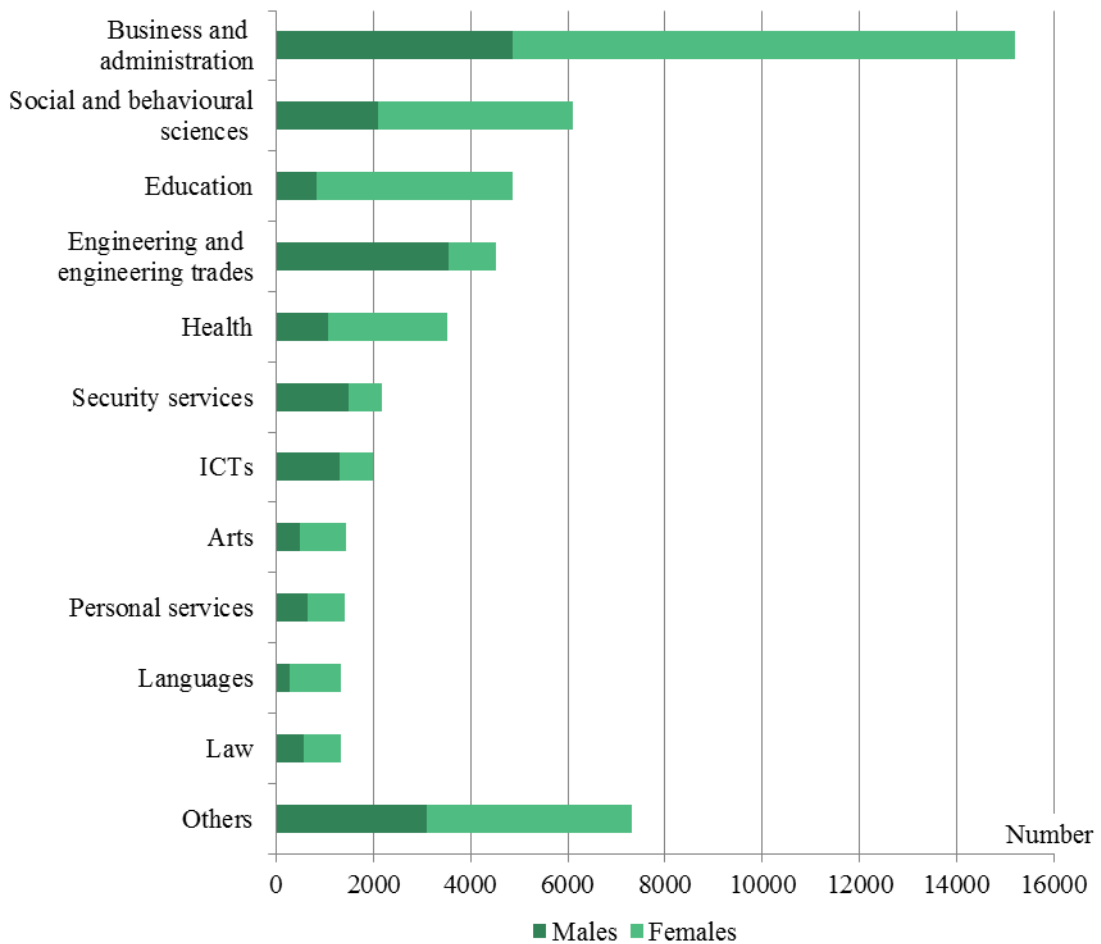


In 2018, from universities and specialised higher schools in the country graduated 51.2 thousand persons, of which 27.8 thousand obtained ‘Bachelor’ degree and 23.4 thousand - ‘Master’ degree.

Number of graduates was highest in the fields of education ‘Business and Administration’ - 15 204 persons, ‘Social and behavioural sciences’ - 6 113 persons and ‘Education’ - 4 875 persons. Differences among graduates by fields of education and sex were observed (Figure 6).



**Figure 6. Graduates from universities and specialized higher schools by fields of education and sex in 2018**



In 2018/2019 academic year, the number of academic staff in universities and specialized higher schools was 21.1 thousand, of which 50.0% were women. On a full time employment were 13.2 thousand or 62.5% of the academic staff.

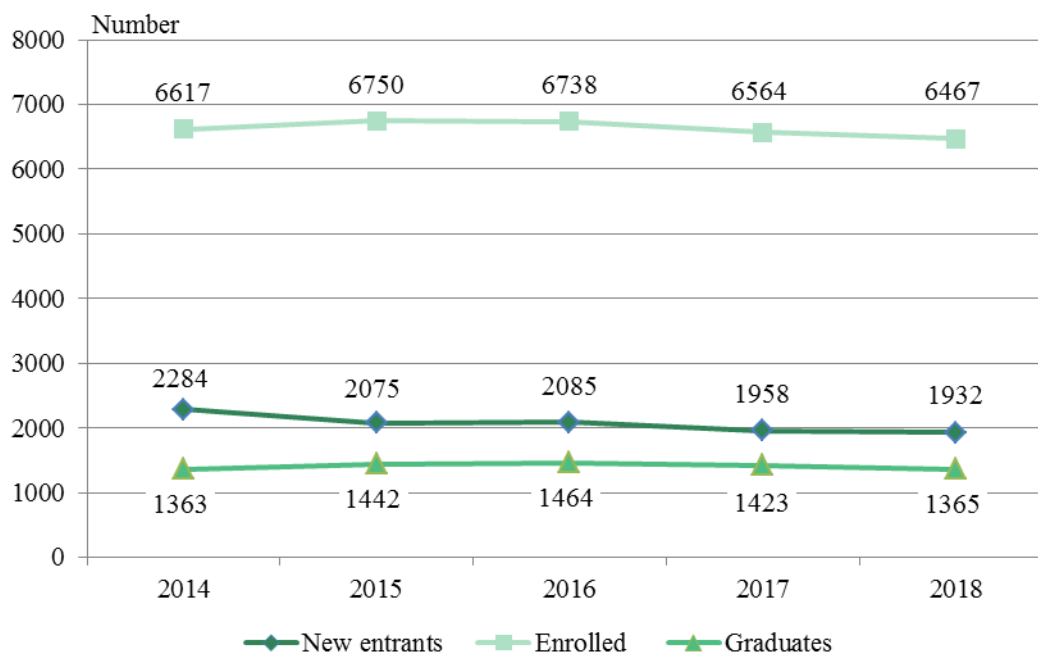




### *Educational and scientific degree 'Doctor'*

As of 31.12.2018, 6 467 Ph.D. students were enrolled in Bulgaria. In comparison with the previous year 2017 their number had decreased by 97 persons or by 1.5% (Figure 7).

**Figure 7. New entrants, enrolled and graduates in Ph.D. degree**



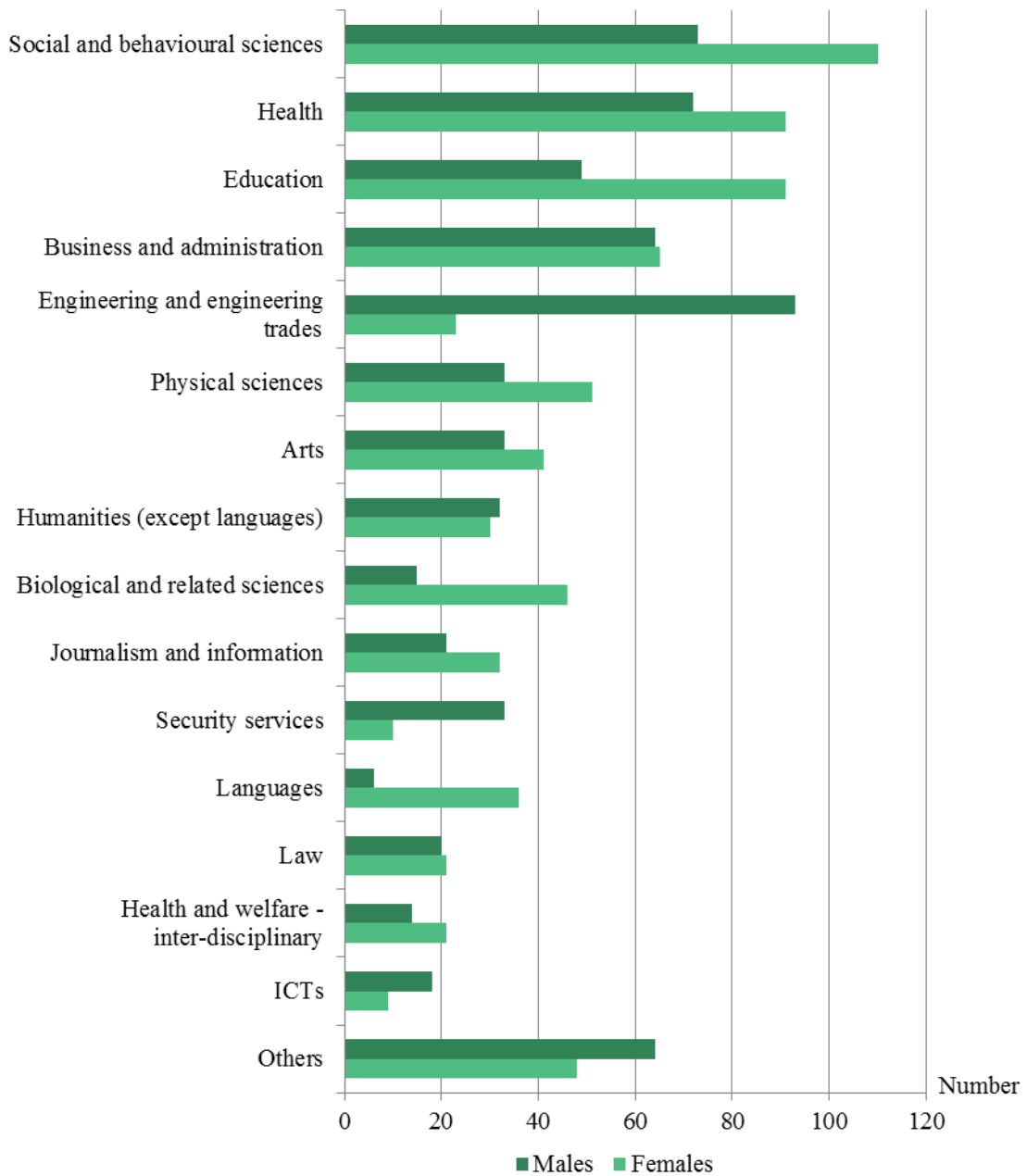
The foreign Ph.D. students were 504 or 7.8% of the total number. The largest share came from Greece - 24.0%, followed by Israel (10.5%) and Kosovo (7.1%).

In private institutions were trained 3.9% of the Ph.D. students. Out of them 103 persons, or 40.4% were foreigners.

In 2018, a 'Doctor' degree was acquired by 1 365 persons of whom 725, or 53.1%, were women. A considerable difference in the structure of the graduated males and females by fields of education was observed (Figure 8).



**Figure 8. Ph.D. students by narrow fields of education and sex in 2018**





## Methodological notes

Education statistics was developed on the basis of the Regulation N 452/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the production and development of statistics on education and lifelong learning, the current legal basis in Bulgaria in the area of education, the International Standard Classification of Education - revision 2011 (ISCED 2011) and the concomitant methodological instructions.

ISCED was designed to serve as a framework to classify educational activities as defined in programmes and the resulting qualifications into internationally agreed categories. The basic concepts and definitions of ISCED are intended to be internationally valid and comprehensive of the full range of education systems. The classification rests on three components: internationally agreed concepts and definitions; the classification systems and mappings of education programmes and related qualifications in countries worldwide.

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

Educational institutions - directly conduct teaching via educational programmes to the enrollments in organized classes (groups) or via distance mode of learning. Those programmes lead to attainment of the educational degree and/or level of professional qualification. Non-formal training and informal learning are not covered by the scope of the educational system according to the used definitions in ISCED 2011.

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

For more information and data on education, visit NSI's webpage (<http://www.nsi.bg/en>), section 'Education and Lifelong Learning' as well as the information system 'Infostat' ([https://infostat.nsi.bg/infostat/pages/module.jsf?x\\_2=42](https://infostat.nsi.bg/infostat/pages/module.jsf?x_2=42)).