

## POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROCESSES IN 2021

**According to the Demography statistics data population of the country as of the end of the 2021 is 6 838 937 persons. Compared to the previous year it has decreased by 77 611 persons or by 1.1%.** The population number and structures by the end of year are calculated based on the population data for the preceding year and data on the population natural and migration movement during the reference year.

The 18<sup>th</sup> Census of the population and housing fund was conducted in 2021. According to the preliminary assessment<sup>1</sup>, the expected number of the population who is usual resident of the territory of the country as of **7<sup>th</sup> September 2021 is 6 520 314.**

Difference between data for the population number and its structure from the current Demography statistics and censuses is mainly due to the unregistered international migration during the ten-years period between the censuses.

One of the main tasks of the censuses is to determine the real number of the persons who are usual residents of the territory of the country. That is why, recalculations of the population based on the results of the census and natural and migration change, calculated from the demography statistics for the respective years, in the census years are made.

After final data entry and processing of the data from Census 2021, the population number will be recalculated based on the counted population. The recalculation will cover 10-years period as main demographic indicators will be revised.

According to the National statistical programme project, first final data from Census 2021 will be presented and published after 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022.

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<sup>1</sup> Предварителна оценка за броя на населението на България към 7 септември 2021 година (nsi.bg) (Preliminary assessment of the expected number of the population who is usual resident of the territory of Bulgaria as of **7<sup>th</sup> September 2021**)

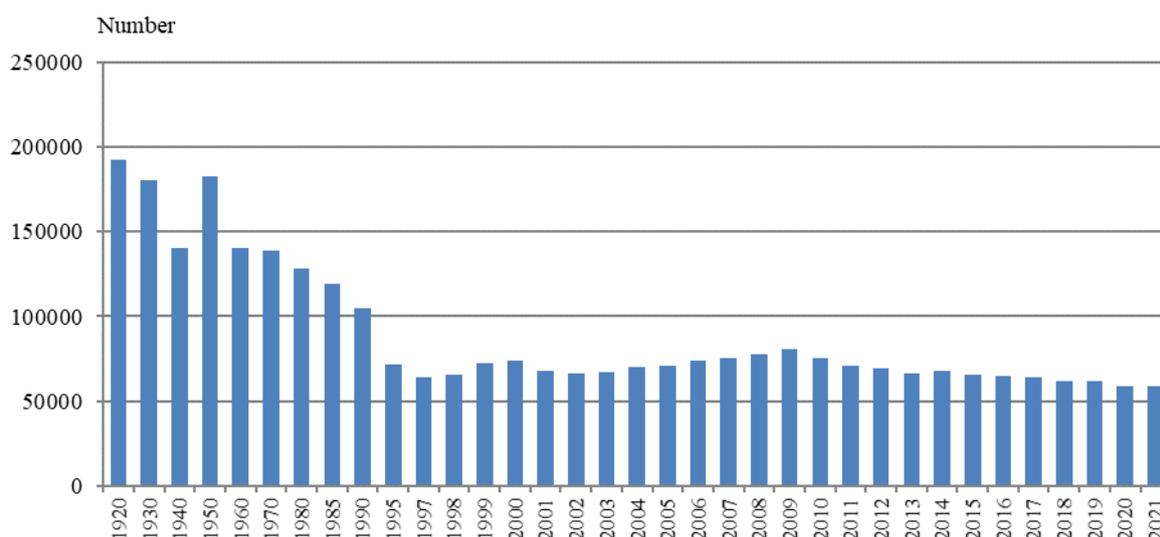
Change in the count and structure of the population in 2021 is defined by the main trend in the demographic processes.

- Number of live births decreases, crude birth rate is unchanged;
- Number of deaths and crude death rate increases;
- Infant mortality increases;
- Number of marriages and number of divorces increases.

## Fertility

There are 59 069 children born in 2021, of which **58 678 (99.3%) - live born**. The number of live births decreased by 408 children or 0.7% compared to the previous year.

**Figure 1. Live born children within the period 1920 - 2021**



**The crude birth rate<sup>2</sup> in 2021 is 8.5‰** and remains unchanged compared to 2020.

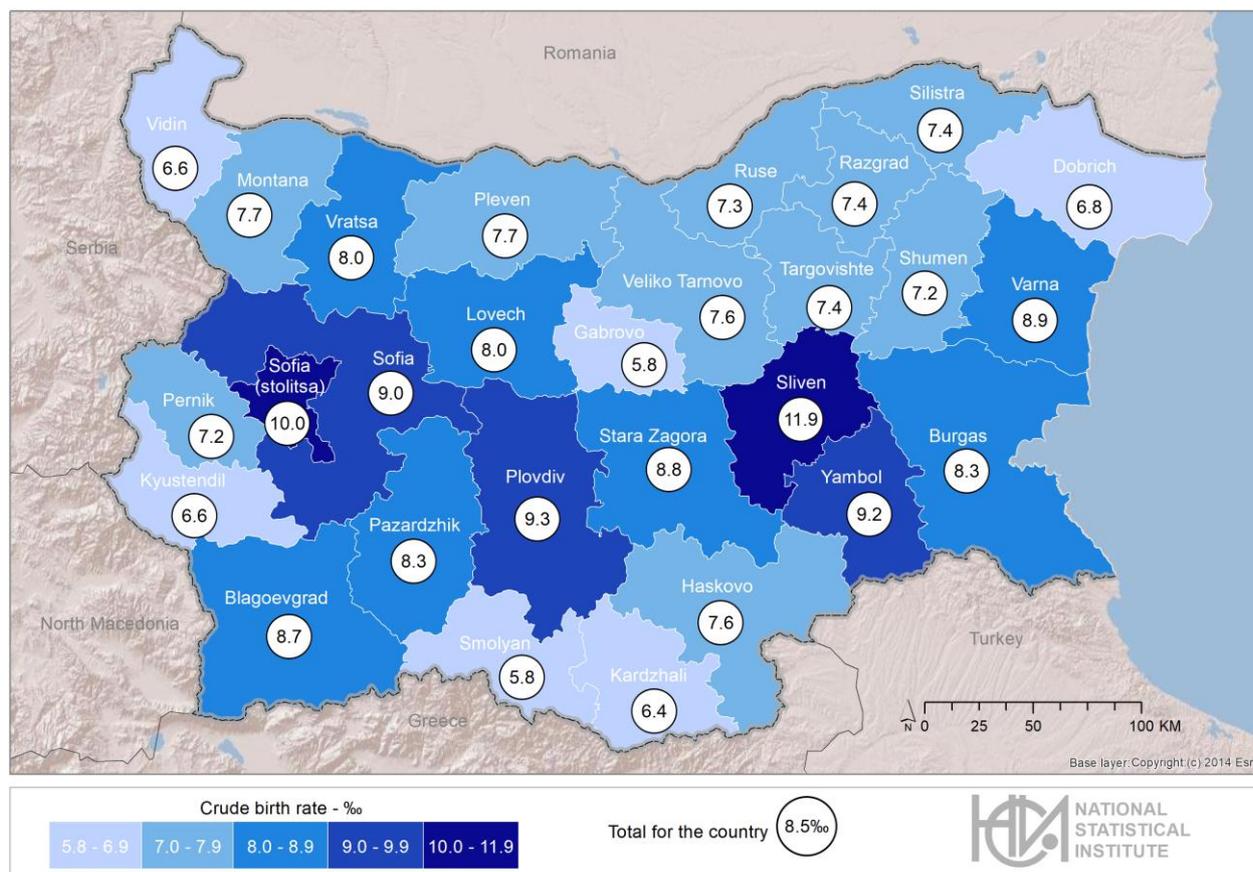
The number of live born males (30 073) is by 1 468 higher compared to the live born females (28 605), or 951 females correspond to 1 000 born males.

The number of live born children in urban areas is 43 692 and in rural - 14 986. Crude birth rate in urban areas is 8.7‰ and in rural - 8.1‰.

In Bulgaria, highest is the crude birth rate in districts Sliven - 11.9‰, Sofia (stolitsa) – 10.0‰ and Plovdiv - 9.3‰. The crude birth rate is lower than the country average in 20 districts and lowest in districts Kardzhali - 6.4‰ and Smolyan and Gabrovo – 5.8‰ each.

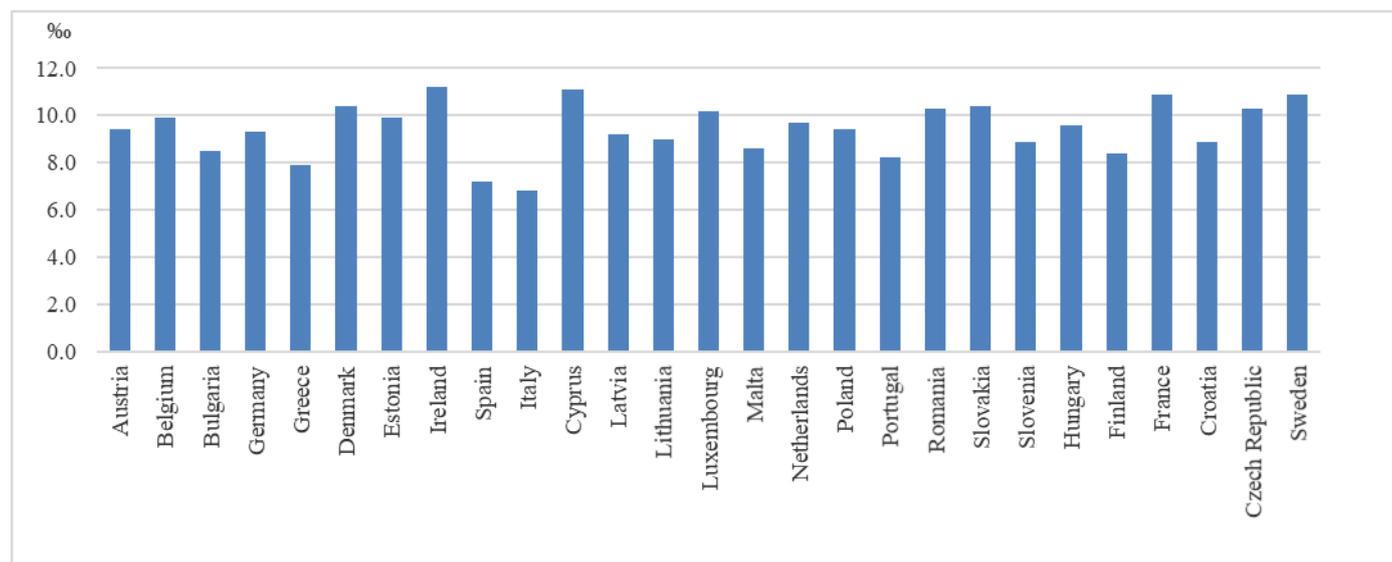
<sup>2</sup> Number of live born children per 1 000 persons of the average annual population during the year.

Figure 2. Crude birth rate by district in 2021



The crude birth rate in 2020 for EU-27 is 9.1‰ according to Eurostat data. Highest crude birth rate is observed in Ireland (11.2‰), followed by Cyprus – 11.1‰, France and Sweden - 10.9‰ each. Lowest crude birth rate is registered in Italy - 6.8‰.

Figure 3. Crude birth rate in EU member states in 2020



The number of women in fertile age (15 - 49 completed years) or the size and fertility of the fertile contingents in the country influences considerably the fertility levels and the character of population reproduction.

The number of women in fertile age as of 31.12.2021 is 1 432 thousand. It has decreased with 20 thousand compared to the previous year and with 218 thousand compared to 2011.

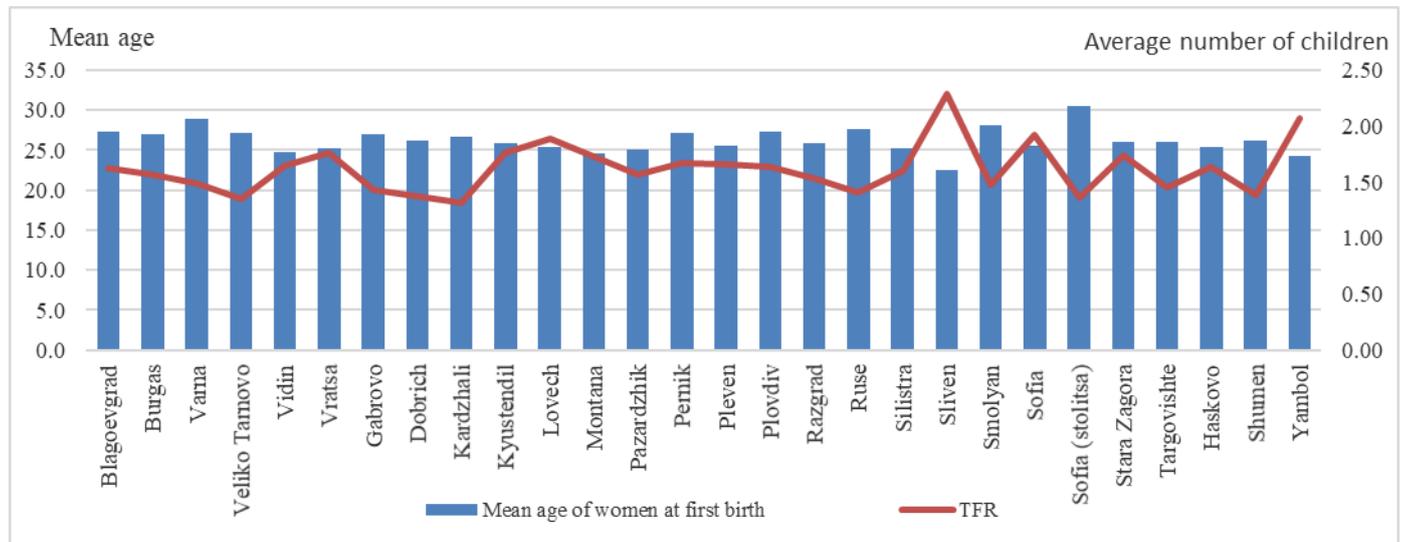
The number of children born by mothers aged below 18 years increases from 2 897 in 2020 to 3 015 in 2021. Number of children born by mothers of age 40 and more years decreases from 2 320 in 2020 to 2 278 in 2021.

Half of births (49.4%) in 2021 are first ones, 37.6% second and 12.9% - third or higher of rank.

Total fertility rate (TFR)<sup>3</sup> is one of the basic indicators characterising the fertility. **The average number of live born children per women in 2021 is 1.58** and it increases with 0.02 compared to 2020.

The mean age of women at first birth is 27.5 in 2021 remains unchanged compared to 2020. Mean age of women at first birth varies from 22.6 in district Sliven to 30.5 in district Sofia (stolitsa).

**Figure 4. Mean age at first birth and TFR by district in 2021**



There are 1 004 multi-foetal births registered in 2021 or 39 less than in 2020. In 999 of the cases, two children are born, in 5 - three children.

<sup>3</sup> Average number of live born children, whom a mother would give birth to during her entire fertile period according to the age specific fertility rates during the reporting year.

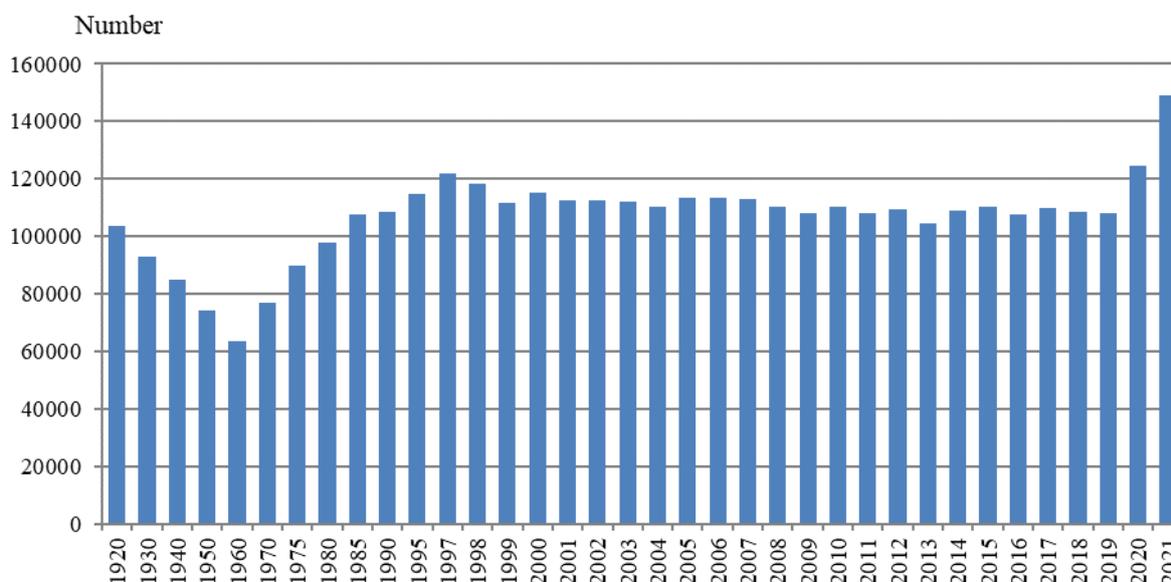
**The number of children born outside marriage in 2021 is 35 446 or 60.0%** of the total number of births. The share of extramarital births in rural areas (66.1%) is higher than in urban (57.9%). For 79.8% of the extramarital births data on the fathers exists, i.e. most probably the children are grown up in families by parents cohabiting without marriage.

Highest share of extramarital births is registered in districts Vidin (76.9%) and Lovech (76.3%). The share of extramarital births in all country regions is higher than 50.0% except in districts Blagoevgrad (49.2%), Razgrad (46.8%) and Kardzhali - (39.4%).

## Mortality

**The number of deaths in 2021 is 148 995 and the crude mortality rate<sup>4</sup> - 21.7‰.** Compared to the previous year the number of deaths has increased by 24 260 or 19.4%. The crude mortality rate remains too high.

**Figure 5. Deaths within the period 1920 - 2021**



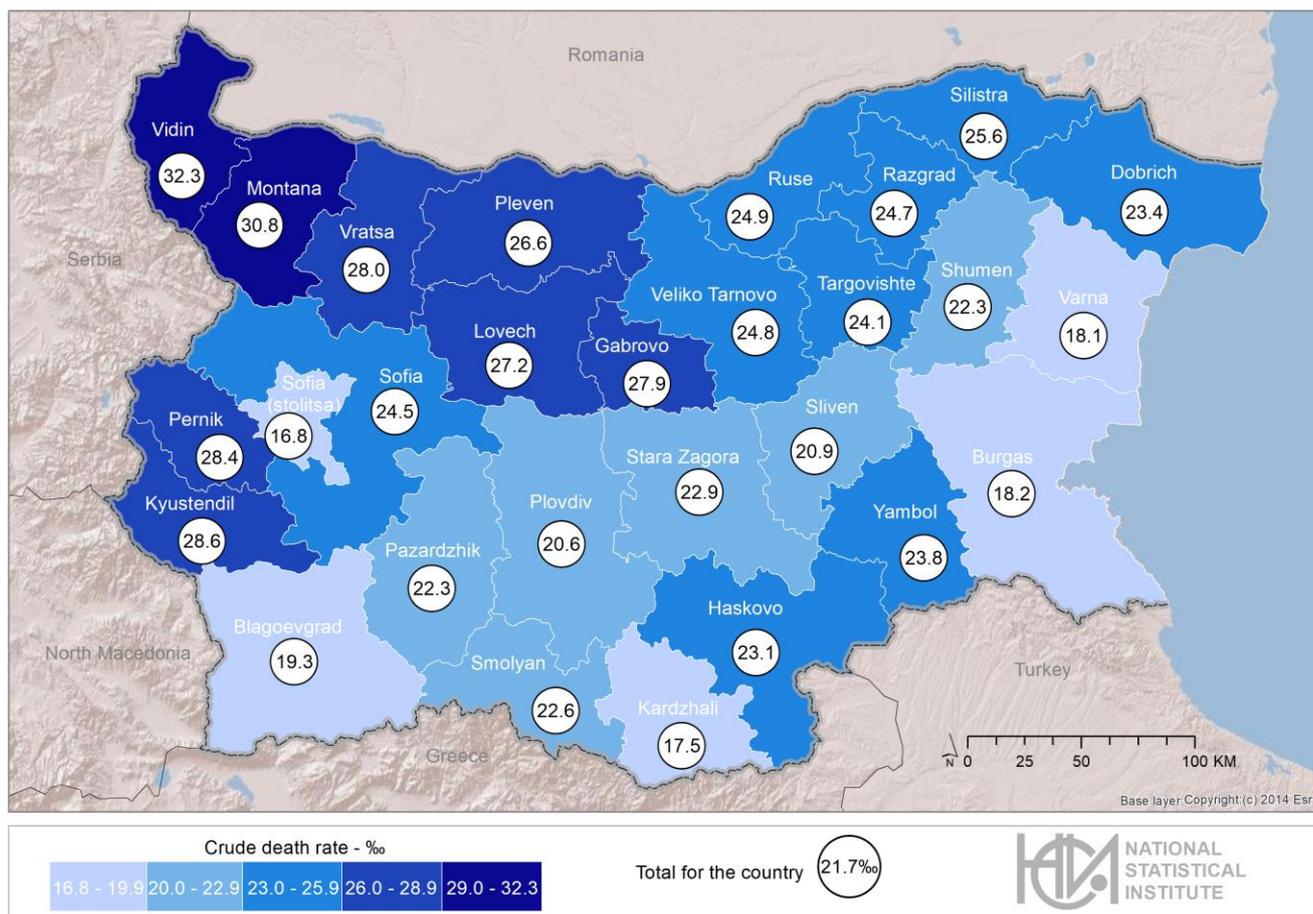
Mortality among males (23.2‰) continues to be higher than among females (20.2‰). In 2021 there are 1 078 deaths of males per 1 000 deaths of females. The considerable differences in mortality in urban and rural areas also remain unchanged. Mortality rate in rural areas (28.3‰) is higher than in urban ones (19.2‰).

**The mortality rate for EU-27 in 2020 is 11.6‰.** Mortality rate in Bulgaria is highest among the EU member states. Lowest is the mortality in Ireland - 6.5‰, Cyprus - 7.2‰ and Luxembourg - 7.3‰. Except in Bulgaria, rather higher compared to the average EU-27 value is the mortality in Lithuania - 15.6‰, Romania - 15.5‰ and Latvia - 15.2‰.

Highest is the mortality in districts Vidin - 32.3‰, Montana - 30.8‰ and Kyustendil - 28.6‰. There are seven districts where the mortality rate is lower than the country average. Lowest is the mortality rate in districts Sofia (stolitsa) - 16.8‰.

<sup>4</sup> Number of dead persons per 1 000 persons of the average annual population during the year.

Figure 6. Crude death rate by district in 2021



The premature mortality<sup>5</sup> in 2021 (20.3%) has decreased compared to 2020 (20.5%). There are considerable differences in the premature mortality indicator for male and female population. The dead females aged under 65 years represent 13.9% of all dead females, while among the males it is 26.2%.

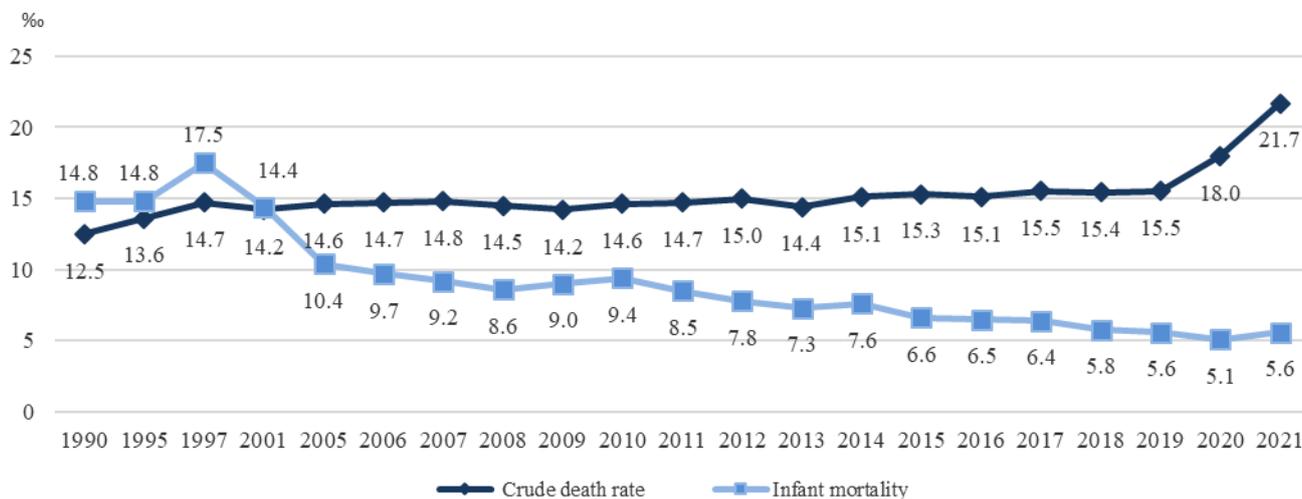
There are 326 children who die up to 1 year of age in 2021 and the infant mortality rate<sup>6</sup> is 5.6‰. The infant mortality rate was 14.4‰ in 2001 and 5.1‰ in 2020.

The infant mortality rate for 2021 is lower than the country average in 11 districts. Lowest values are registered in districts Kyustendil – 1.3‰, Blagoevgrad - 1.5‰ and Sofia (stolitsa) - 3.2‰. Highest infant mortality rate is registered in districts Sliven (14.8‰), Vidin (13.3‰) and Silistra (12.7‰).

<sup>5</sup> Share of deaths of persons below 65 years of age of the total number of deaths.

<sup>6</sup> Number of children who die up to 1 year of age per 1 000 live born.

Figure 7. Crude death rate and infant mortality rate

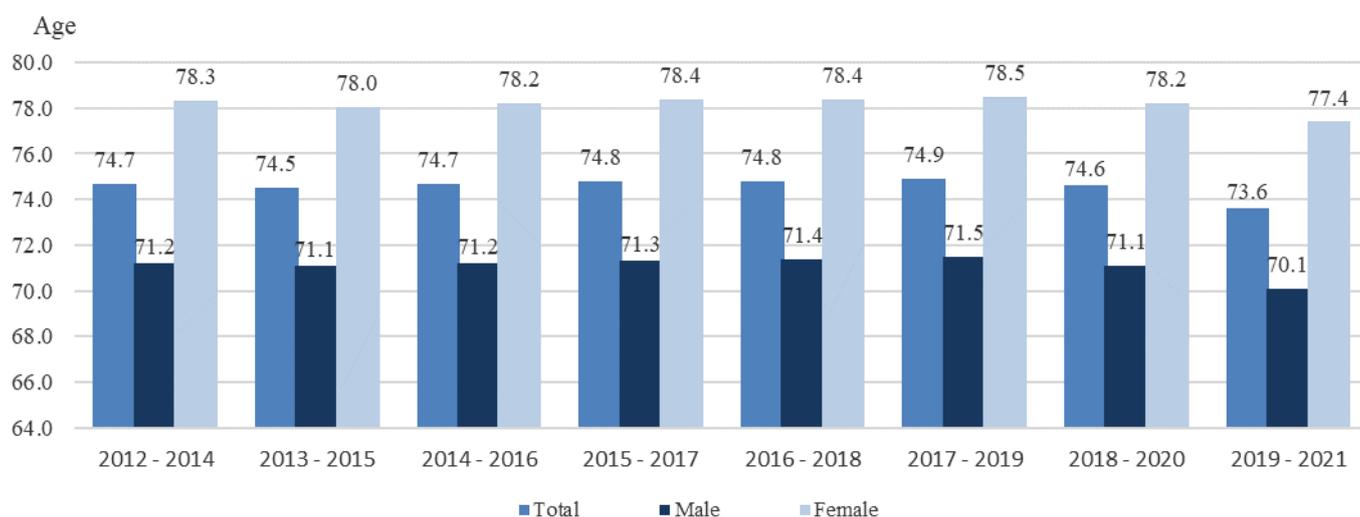


The different mortality rates among male and female population, as well as among the urban and rural population determine the difference in the life expectancy for separate population groups.

**Life expectancy for the country<sup>7</sup>, calculated for the period 2019 - 2021 is 73.6 years.** Compared to the previous period (2018 - 2020) it decreases with 1.0 year.

The life expectancy of male population is 70.1 years, whereas of female - 7.3 years higher or 77.4 years. The life expectancy of urban population (74.3 years) is with 2.4 years higher than of rural one (71.9 years).

Figure 8. Life expectancy by sex and period

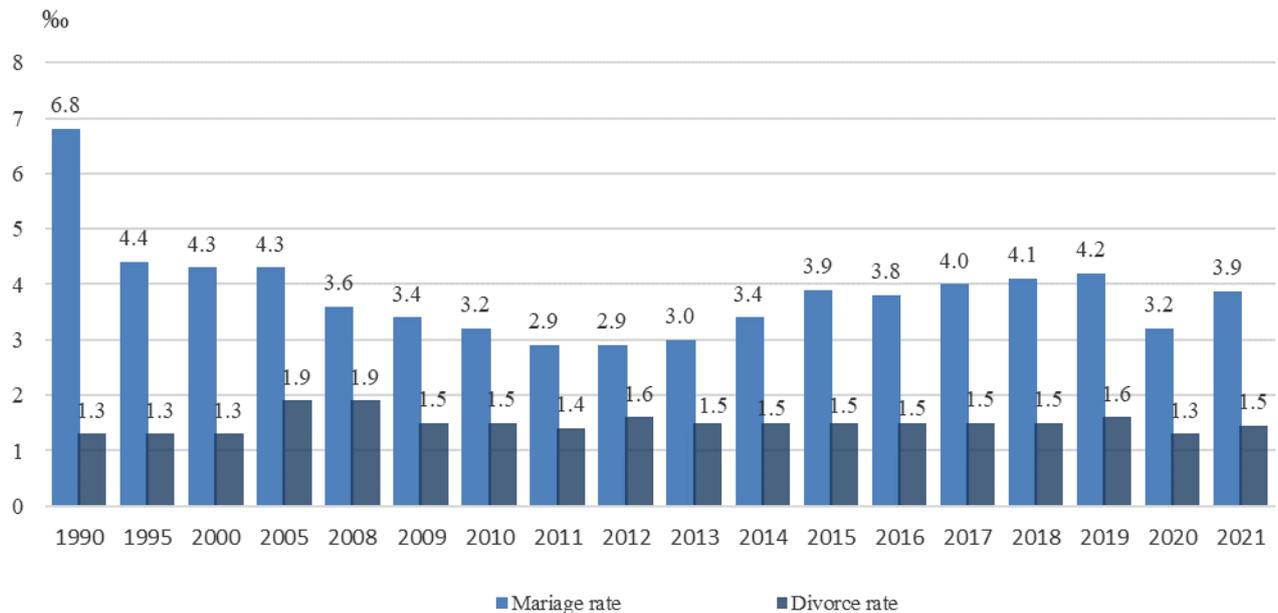


<sup>7</sup> Preliminary data.

## Marriages and divorces

There are 26 620 juridical marriages registered in 2021, or 4448 more than the previous year. The marriage rate<sup>8</sup> is 3.9‰. Nearly three quarters of the total marriages number (19 175) are registered among urban population.

**Figure 9. Marriage and divorce rates (per 1 000 population)**



The mean age at first marriage in 2021 is 32.8 years for males and 29.8 - for females. Compared to the previous year, the mean age at first marriage has increased by 0.3 years for males and 0.4 for females.

85.5% of females and 84.8% of males have married for the first time in 2021.

Highest is the marriage rate in districts Razgrad - 5.6‰, Silistra - 4.9‰, and Dobrich - 4.7‰. Lowest is the marriage rate in district Pernik - 2.4‰, Smolyan - 2.5‰, and Kyustendil - 2.7‰.

**The number of divorces in 2021 is 10 021** or 1006 more than in 2020. Out of the total number of divorces 77.4% refers to the urban population.

Highest is the number of divorces by 'mutual agreement' (65.5%), followed by divorces due to 'incompatibility of temperament' (21.7%) and 'virtual parting' (11.6%).

The divorce is not the first one for 10.0% of female and 10.8% of male who divorced in 2021.

The average duration of a marriage before the divorce in 2021 is 15.5 years.

<sup>8</sup> Number of marriages per 1 000 population.

## Internal migration

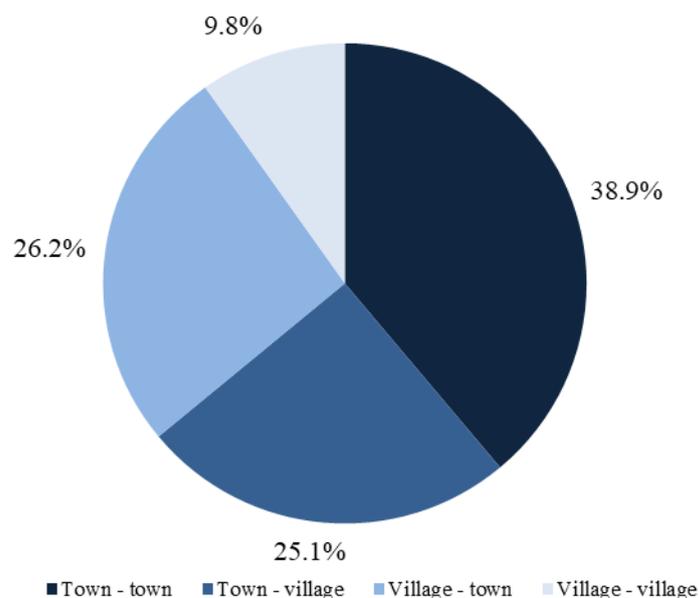
### 127 962 persons change their residence within the country in 2021.

Among the migrants within the country, 45.2% are male and 54.8% - female.

Highest is the share of internal migrants aged 20 - 39 years (30.8%), followed by persons below 20 years of age (24.2%).

The share of flow 'town-town' is highest one (38.9%), followed by the flow 'village - town' - 26.2% and 'town - village' (25.1%). Considerably lower is the number and share of the flow 'village - village' (9.8%).

**Figure 10. Directions of the internal migration in 2021**



Out of the internal migrants, highest is the number of people who migrated to Sofia (stolitsa) (20 955). Districts with highest shares of migrants to Sofia (stolitsa) are Sofia - 15.8%, Blagoevgrad - 6.5% and Plovdiv - 5.5%.

Lowest are the shares of migrants to Sofia (stolitsa) from districts Razgrad, Silistra and Targovishte - 0.7% each.



## International migration

**26 755 persons change their current address in Bulgaria with an address abroad in 2021** - 48.4% male. Every second emigrant (50.6%) is aged 20 to 39 years. The youngest emigrants (under 20 years) are 15.6% of the total number and the emigrants over 60 years of age - 9.8%.

Most preferred destination countries are Germany (23.9%), the United Kingdom (17.4%) and Spain (13.0%).

Persons who change their address abroad with an address in Bulgaria, or the immigration flow, includes Bulgarian citizens who have returned to Bulgaria and citizens of other countries granted residence permit or status in Bulgaria. **There are 39 461 persons who changes their address abroad with an address in Bulgaria in 2021.** Male represent 55.1% of the total number of immigrants and female - 44.9%.

Among the immigrants to Bulgaria, 34.9% are aged 20 - 39 years and 29.8% - 40 to 59 years. The youngest immigrants (under 20 years) are 16.8% and the oldest, over 60 years of age - 18.5%.

Highest is the share of immigrants from Turkey (21.2%), Germany (11.0%) and the Russian Federation (6.0%).

## Population natural and migration growth

The population number and structures are defined by the size and intensity of the natural and migration growth.

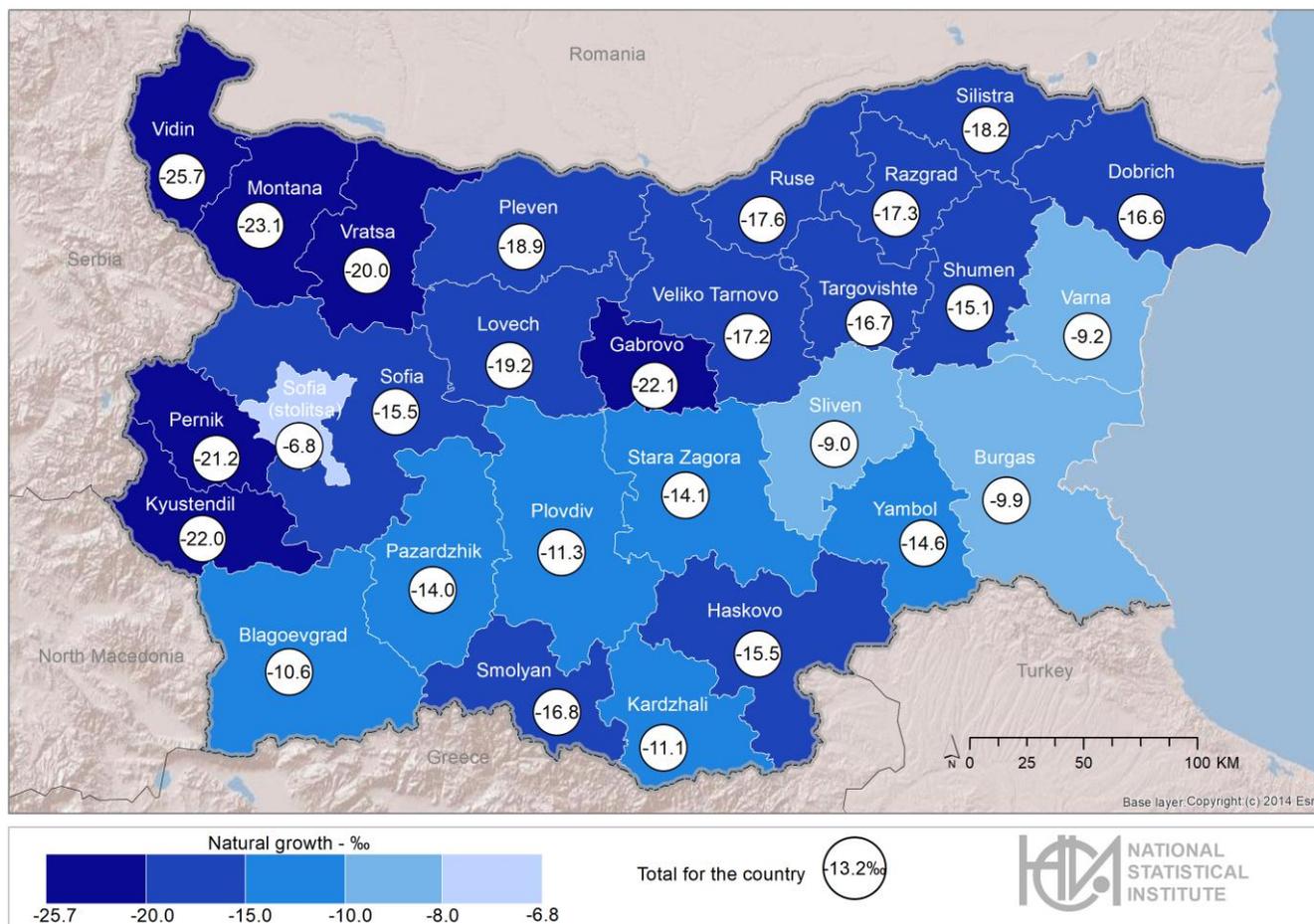
The difference between the number of live births and deaths represents the natural increase of population. The country's demographic development after 1990 is characterised by a negative natural increase. **Due to the negative natural increase the country population decreases by 90 317 persons in 2021.**

The population decrease, **measured through the natural increase rate is minus 13.2%<sup>9</sup>.** The natural increase rate in urban areas is minus 10.5‰, compared to minus 20.2‰ in rural areas.

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<sup>9</sup> Difference between the number of live births and number of deaths per 1 000 of the average annual population.

**Figure 11. Natural growth by districts in 2021  
(per 1 000 population)**



**The natural increase in all country districts in 2021 is negative.**

Lowest is the negative growth in districts Sofia (stolitsa) (-6.8‰), Sliven (-9.0‰) and Varna (-9.2‰). Highest is the population decrease due to the high negative growth in district Vidin - minus 25.7‰, followed by Montana - minus 23.1‰ and Gabrovo - minus 22.1‰. Higher than minus 10.0‰ is the natural growth in twenty-four country districts.

**The natural increase rate for EU-27 in 2020 is minus 2.5‰.**

In seven EU member states the natural increase is positive and highest is the rate in Ireland (4.7‰), Cyprus (3.9‰) and Luxembourg (2.9‰). Except in Bulgaria, rather high negative natural increase is registered in Lithuania - minus 6.6‰ and Latvia - minus 5.9‰.

Net migration (growth due to international migration) influences considerably the population number and structures. The net migration growth in 2021 is positive - plus 12 706 persons. The last is the difference between the number of immigrants and number of emigrants.



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Change of population due to the international migration measured through the coefficient of net migration is +1.8‰<sup>10</sup>.

There are eleven districts with a positive migration growth in 2021. Highest migration growth is registered in Kardzhali (12.6‰), Burgas (7.4‰), Varna and Plovdiv (6.0‰ each). Highest population decrease due to the negative migration growth is registered in districts Smolyan (-8.7‰), Kyustendil (-5.6‰) and Vratsa (-5.2‰).

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<sup>10</sup> Ratio of the net migration to the average annual population.



## Methodological notes

The population number and structures by the end of year are calculated based on the population data for the preceding year and data on the population natural and migration movement during the reference year.

Source of data on population number and structures is the Information System Demography of the NSI.

Data source on natural and migration movement of population (births, deaths, marriages, divorces, migration) is the Unified System for Civil Registration and Administrative Service of Population (Bulgarian acronym ESGRAON). Demographic events are registered through standard documents ESGRAON-CDS (Current Demographic Statistics): notification for birth, notification for marriage, notification for divorce, notification for death and address card for change of a present (current) address.

Data source on international migration are the Unified System for Civil Registration and Administrative Service of Population, document ESGRAON-CDS: notification for change of present address; National Revenue Agency; National Social Security Institute; Ministry of Interior; Estimates of emigration flows.

Data on population number and demographic events are distributed according to the administrative-territorial division of the country as of 31.12 of the reference year (settlements, municipalities, districts) and statistical regions according to the 'present address'. The last is the address corresponding to the residence declared by the person and officially registered.

The age of population by the end of year is calculated as of 31.12. in completed years.

The persons' age at occurrence of a demographic event is calculated in completed years based on the date of birth and the date of respective event, i.e. the age completed at the time of event.

The demographic indicators are calculated based on the average annual population. The last is an arithmetical average of the population number by the end of previous and the end of reference year.