



## MAIN RESULTS FROM THE ADULT EDUCATION SURVEY (THIRD WAVE, 2016)

Adult Education Survey is conducted every 5 years in all EU member states through a common methodology and a harmonized questionnaire in accordance with Commission Regulation (EU) № 1175/2014 of 30 October 2014. In Bulgaria the observation was conducted during the period 18 November 2016 - 15 January 2017. The representative sample for the country included 4 812 ordinary households and through a direct interview 6 530 persons were interviewed successfully.

The study of adult education and training was held for the third time in Bulgaria. A wide range of topics were involved: participation in various forms of Lifelong learning (formal, non-formal and informal education and training), characteristics of the trainings, participation obstacles, access to information on education and training possibilities, language skills, cultural events.

### **Population aged 25 - 64 participated in formal education or training<sup>1</sup>**

Of all individuals in active labour age (25 - 64 years), 113.9 thousand persons (or 2.9%) were enrolled in formal education in the last 12 months. Compared to the previous wave of the survey carried out in 2011, there was an increase of 16.7 thousand persons, or by 17.2%. Women in the surveyed age group were more often students in formal education - 3.2% than men - 2.6%. Of all persons enrolled in formal education or training the highest share was of those enrolled for acquiring Master's degree - 53.1 thousand persons or 46.6%.

On average, over the last 12 months, each participant spent 448.9 training hours in formal education. 98.1 thousand of the participants (86.1%) used online learning materials<sup>2</sup> during the training and 75.6 thousand (66.4%) contacted lecturers or educational institutions through a website or specially set up group on social networks.

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<sup>1</sup> Formal Education includes formal educational system (schools, colleges, universities, centers for vocational training) and leads to obtaining of an educational and/or professional qualification degree.

<sup>2</sup> Electronic textbooks, audio-visual materials, online dictionaries and etc.



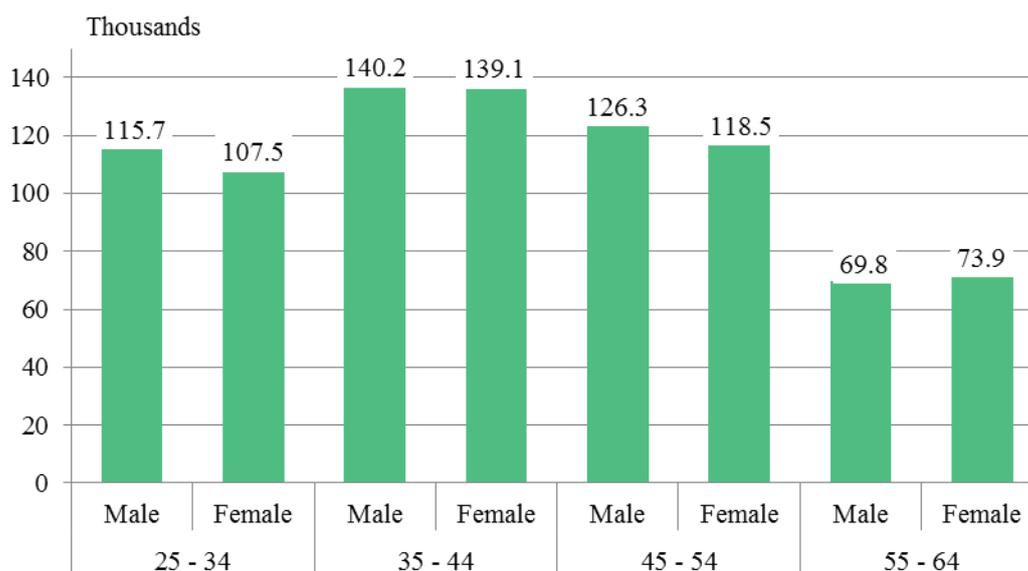
**Figure 1. Participants in formal education and training in 2011 and 2016 by sex**



### Population aged 25 - 64 participating in non-formal education or training<sup>1</sup>

According to the survey, 891.1 thousand persons (22.5%) aged 25 - 64 participated in at least one non-formal training in the last 12 months. Compared with the previous survey wave, there was a decrease of 2.0 percentage points.

**Figure 2. Participants in non-formal education and training by age and sex**



<sup>1</sup> Organized and purposeful education or training, but its successful completion does not lead to obtaining of an educational and/or professional qualification degree. The most widespread forms of non-formal education are courses, private lessons, seminars and workshops, guided on-the-job-training, instructions on a labour safety.

The distribution of the participants in non-formal learning according to the highest level of education completed was as follows:

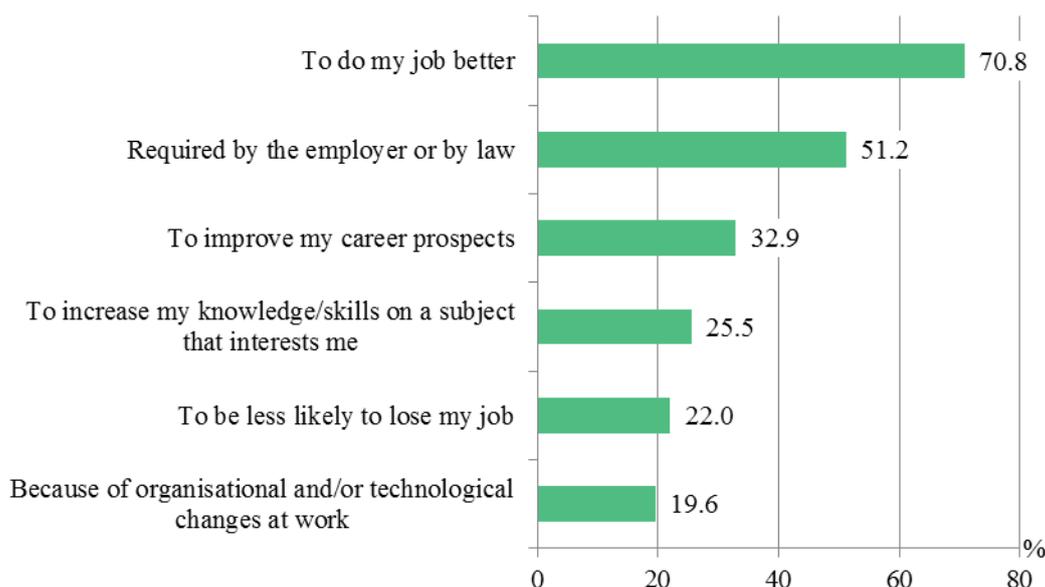
- 6.9% of those with basic (lower-secondary) or lower education;
- 20.5% of those with upper-secondary;
- 34.8% of those with tertiary education.

Concerning the labor status of the persons, the share of non-formal education participants was highest among the employed - 31.6%.

The share of guided-on-the-job training<sup>1</sup> was highest among training activities 59.0%, followed by seminars and workshops (25.4%), courses (13.7%) and private lessons (2.0%).

Participants in non-formal training indicated more than one reason for their participation, with the highest share of those willing to do their job better - 70.8%, followed by obliged by the employer- or the law (51.2%)

**Figure 3. Reasons for participation of the population aged 25 - 64 in non-formal education**



Just over two-thirds (69.1%) of non-formal participants pointed that they are currently using much of the new knowledge and skills they have acquired. Nearly three-quarters (74.8%) expect to use a lot of this knowledge in the future.

On average, each participant spent 39.8 hours on non-formal education or training in the last 12 months. The average amount spent for non-formal learning by one person or by a member of his household or relative was 25.9 BGN. Up to 23.7% of the trainings resulted with a certificate (license).

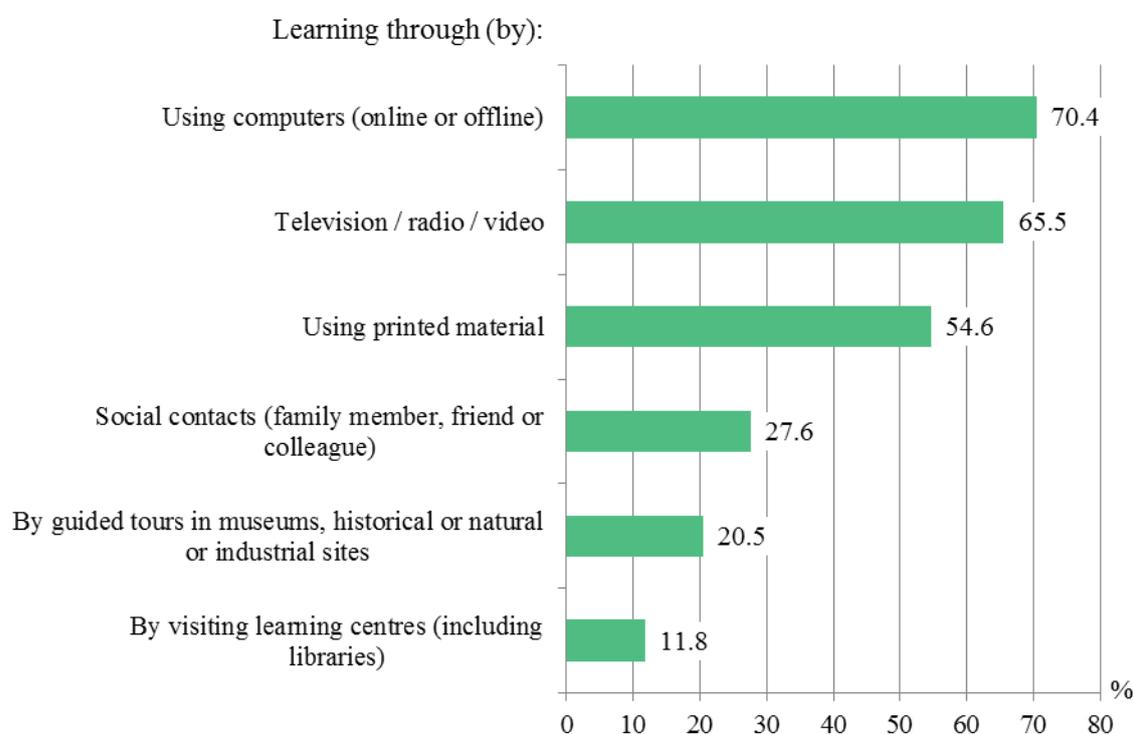
<sup>1</sup> A special form of non-formal education or training. It is characterized by planned period of training, instructions or practical experience, at the immediate place of work with the presence of a tutor.

The acquired new knowledge and skills from non-formal training helped to 74.5% of the participants to improve their professional performance, for 28.0% contributed to the implementation of new tasks (responsibilities) in the workplace, and for 9.6% led to an increase of pay.

### Population aged 25 - 64 participating in informal training<sup>1</sup>

The results of the survey showed that 2 013.4 thousand people, or 50.8% of the population aged 25 - 64, participated in informal learning in the last 12 months. Women were more active than men, respectively 52.5% and 49.1%. There were significant differences in participation by level of education - 73.0% of the persons with tertiary education had participated in informal learning, while this share was 48.0% among the persons with secondary education and 19.5% of those with basic or lower education. The share of participation rate was the highest for persons aged 25 - 34 years - 58.3%, compared to 51.1% for aged 35 - 54 and 42.8% for those aged 55 - 64. The main informal-learning methods used were via using a computer (online or offline) used by 70.4% of those who participated in this form of education, followed by learning via television or radio (65.5%).

**Figure 4. Participants aged 25 - 64 participated in informal learning by methods of learning**



<sup>1</sup> Purposeful (intentional) learning activity aimed to enhance personal knowledge and skills, without the presence of tutor and without a structured curriculum and timetable.



### Access to information on education and training possibilities

Over the past 12 months, 223.5 thousand (5.7%) aged 25 - 64 had searched information on education and training possibilities. Women were more active than men respectively - 6.7% and 4.6%. Free of charge information was received from 197.9 thousand persons, 41.0% via personal (face-to-face) contact, and 35.9% remotely via Internet, phone or email. According to the source of the free information obtained - the highest share were from educational institutions (36.3%) and employers or employers' organizations (24.9%).

**Figure 5. Persons who received free of charge information on learning possibilities by sex and by the institution from which the information was obtained**



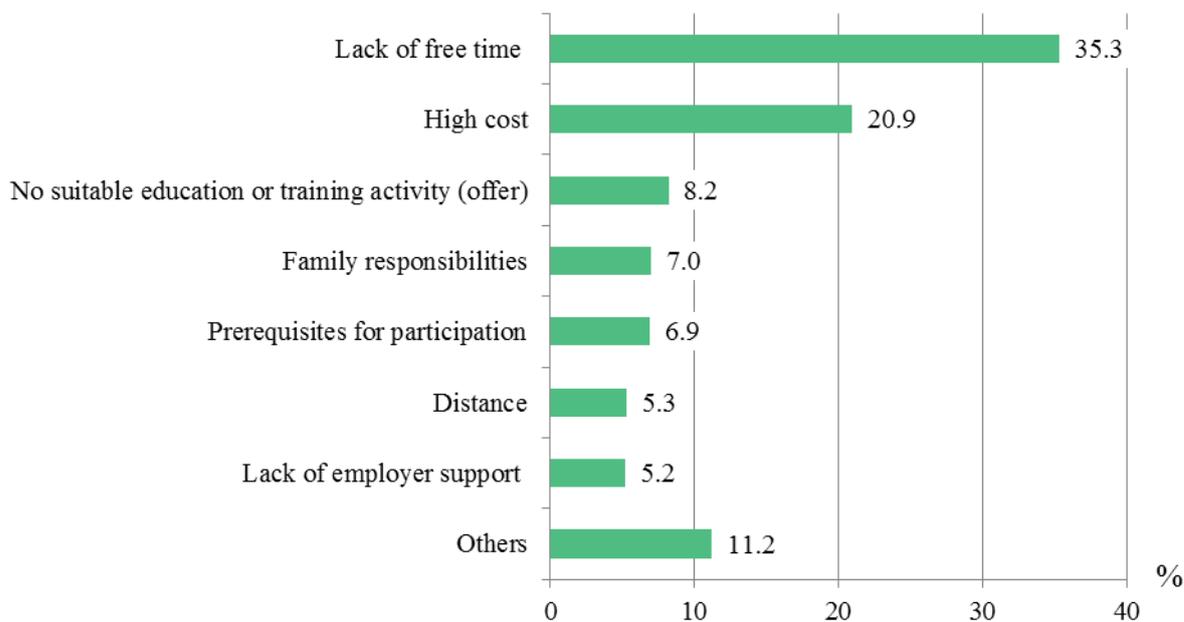
### Obstacles for participation in formal/non-formal education and training.

According to the results from the survey, 11.5% of the population aged 25 - 64 declared the need or wish for a particular training, but had failed to participate in the last 12 months.

The main obstacles for participation in education and training were: lack of free time (35.3%), too high costs for the educational program (20.9%) and lack of adequate training for the persons (8.2%).



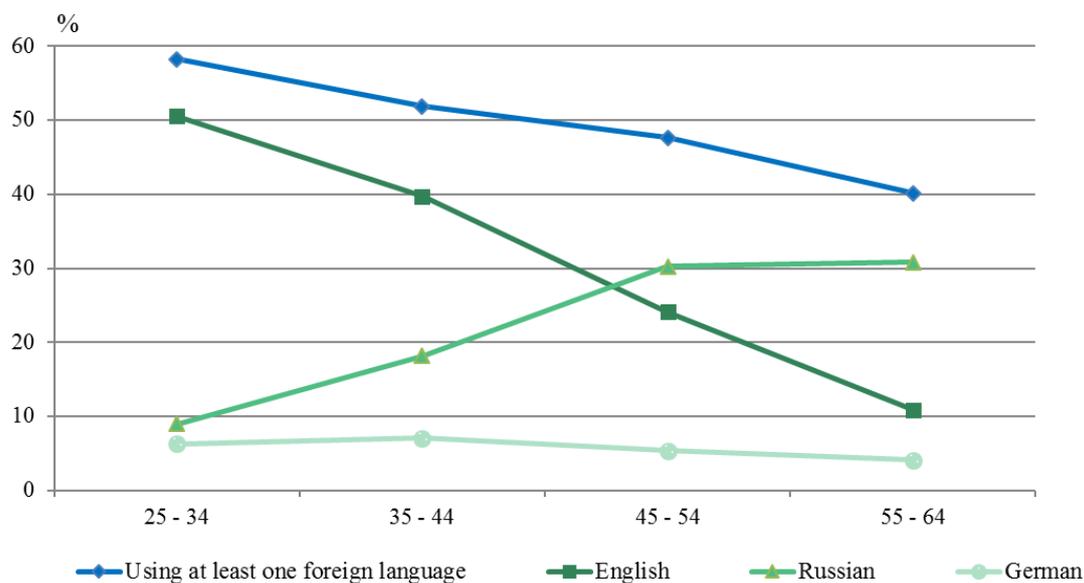
**Figure 6. Obstacles for participation in training of the population aged 25 – 64**



### Language skills

The survey results showed that 49.5% of the population in active labour age (25 - 64) use at least one foreign language. The largest share of used foreign languages was: English - 31.3%, followed by Russian (22.1%), German (5.7%) and French (3.2%).

**Figure 7. Population aged 25 - 64 by age groups and used foreign languages**



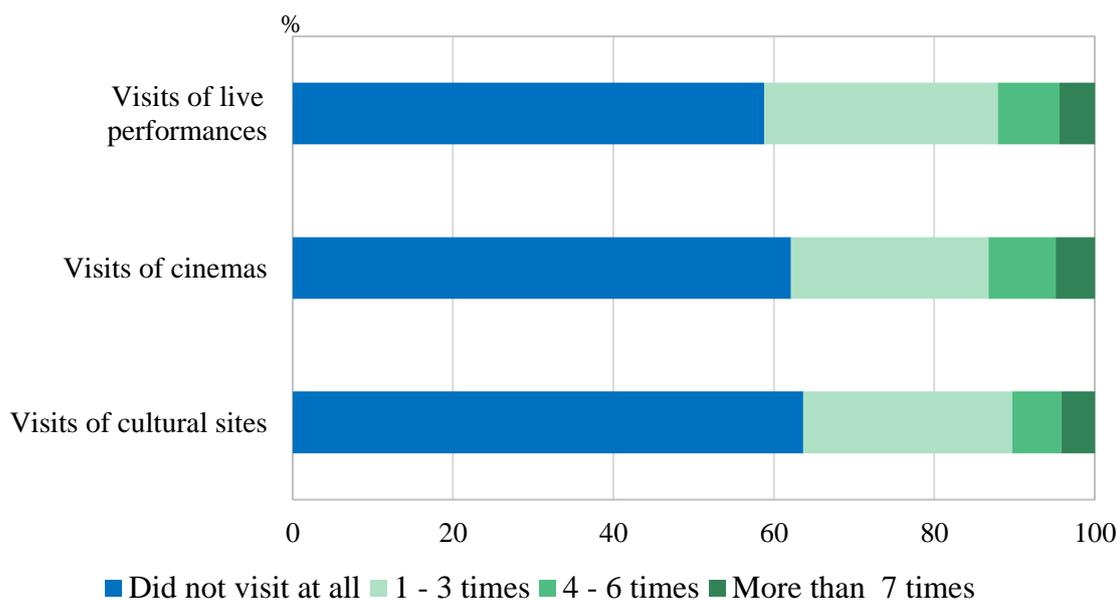
There were significant differences in the share of users of at least one foreign language. Among the youngest population (25 - 34) more than half use at least one foreign language (58.3%), whereas this relative share for persons aged 35 - 54 and (55 - 64) was respectively 49.8% and 40.2%.

### Participation in cultural events of the population aged 25 - 64

Survey data showed that 43.9% of the population aged 25 - 64 years did not participated in any cultural event (live, cinema or cultural landmark visit) in the last 12 months. Visited cultural events, at least once in the last 12 months, were as follows:

- 41.2% attended live performances (play, concert, opera, ballet);
- 37.9% attended cinema halls;
- 36.4% visited cultural landmarks (museums, art galleries, archaeological excavations).

**Figure 8. Cultural visits in the last 12 months**



Over the past 12 months, 53.1% had read at least one book in their free time and this share increased by 4.2 percentage points compared to 2011. Men who read at least one book during their free time were 45.1% and women - 61.2%.

Almost half of the population (45.6%) read newspapers (including electronic issues) every day or almost every day. Men were more active in this respect than women - 48.5% and 42.7%, respectively. Of those with basic or lower education, 9.3% read newspapers daily, and 44.3% and 67.6% among those with upper-secondary and tertiary education.



## **Participation of the population aged 18 - 24 in lifelong learning**

In accordance to the recommendations of the European Commission, 18 - 24 year olds were also included in the scope of the Adult Education Survey.

About two-thirds (64.3%) of the population aged 18 - 24 was involved in formal education in the last 12 months. Of the students of this age, the highest relative share was for those enrolled in the 'Professional Bachelor' or 'Bachelor' degree - 66.9%.

22.8% of the persons participated in non-formal education, half of them (49.2%) were enrolled in courses. 78.2% participated in informal learning, the highest share of learning method was by computer (online and offline) - 75.2%.

Of the population aged 18 - 24, 79.1% used at least one foreign language, and English was the most common - 93.3% of the foreign languages.

More than half (57.0%) of 18 - 24 year olds visited at least once in the last 12 months live performances (plays, concerts, operas, ballets, dance show). The proportion of visitors to the cinema hall was 75.3% and 49.1% visited cultural sites (museums, art galleries, ethnographic complexes, archaeological excavations, historical sites). Two-thirds (64.3%) of the population in the age group read at least one book in their free time during the last 12 months, this share was 55.9% for men and 73.0% for women.



## Methodical notes

The study of adult education and training is conducted for the third time in Bulgaria, following the 2007 pilot survey and regularly in 2011, and will be held in the future for a period of 6 years. The methodology used was prepared by Eurostat and was applied in all Member States of the European Union on the basis of Commission Regulation (EU) No 1175/2014 of 30 October 2014. The observation was conducted during the period 18 November 2016 - 15 January 2017.

All requirements regarding the application of the accepted definitions and classifications and the representativeness and accuracy of the results are fulfilled.

Participation in the various forms of Lifelong Learning (LLL) is established for a period of 12 months before the date of the interview.

Thematic areas included in the questionnaire are divided into the following main modules:

- Social-demographic characteristics of individuals;
- Access to information on education and training possibilities;
- Participation in formal education and training;
- Participation in non-formal training;
- Obstacles for participation in formal or non-formal education and training;
- Informal learning;
- Language skills;
- Participation in cultural events.

The representative for the country sample included 4 812 private households and in accordance to the survey's methodology from the universe were excluded institutional households such as boarding houses, institutions providing social services, prisons, etc.

The survey was conducted on the principle of the voluntary participation of individuals through a "direct interview" (another person from the household was not allowed to answer instead of the individual that had to be interviewed). Individuals from the 18-24 and 65-69 age groups were additionally interviewed. Totally 6 530 respondents in 4 336 households were interviewed and the response rate was 77.4%.

### Formation of the sample

A two-stage sampling was used for the survey, divided by administrative regions and place of residence (urban/rural). As a result, 56 strata were formed. At the first stage, clusters were selected with a probability proportional to their size for each stratum. In the second stage, six households from each cluster were selected by systematic selection. All persons in the age range of the selected households were subjected to the survey.



### Stochastic accuracy of the results for some basic indicators

The stochastic accuracy of the results obtained from the sample was estimated by the calculation of stochastic errors, which are burdened by the estimates obtained from the realized volume of the sample, the average number of interviewed persons in one cluster and the volume of the general population. These stochastic errors determine the deviation of the indicators obtained from the sample from the same parameters of the general population.

The country's population as of 31.12.2016 were used for weights.

Indicator	Estimated value of the indicator (weighted)	Coefficient of variation	Standard error	95% Confidence interval
Participation rate in formal education and training, age 25-64, total - %	2.87	0.108	0.311	[2.26;3.48]
Participation rate in non-formal education and training, age 25-64, total - %	22.47	0.038	0.858	[20.78;24.15]
Participation rate in non-formal education and training, age 25-64, women - %	22.33	0.049	1.095	[20.18;24.48]
Participation rate in non-formal education and training, age 25-64, men - %	22.60	0.048	1.083	[20.47;24.72]
Participation rate in non-formal education and training, age 25-34, total - %	23.63	0.076	1.803	[20.09;27.17]
Participation rate in non-formal education and training, age 35-54, total - %	25.70	0.045	1.144	[23.45;27.45]
Participation rate in non-formal education and training, age 55-64, total - %	14.64	0.073	1.069	[12.54;14.67]
Participation rate in non-formal education and training, age 25-64, low educational attainment (ISCED 0-2) - %	6.87	0.17	1.167	[4.58;9.16]
Participation rate in non-formal education and training, age 25-64, medium educational attainment (ISCED 3-4) - %	20.47	0.051	1.04	[18.43;22.51]
Participation rate in non-formal education and training, age 25-64, high educational attainment (ISCED 5-8) - %	34.76	0.049	1.7	[31.43;38.09]
Participation rate in informal learning, age 25-64, total - %	50.76	0.026	1.301	[48.21;53.31]

More information and data from the Adult Education Survey can be found on the website of the National Statistical Institute, section "Education and Lifelong Learning" (<http://www.nsi.bg/en/node/3374/>), as well in the Infostat - Information System ([https://infostat.nsi.bg/infostat/pages/module.jsf?x\\_2=42](https://infostat.nsi.bg/infostat/pages/module.jsf?x_2=42)).



## Annex

Table 1

### Participation in formal, non-formal and informal education by sex, age, education, labour status and residence

	Persons who have participated in formal education in the last 12 months		Persons who have participated in non-formal education and training in the last 12 months		Persons who have participated in informal learning in the last 12 months	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Total</b>	<b>113895</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>891113</b>	<b>22.5</b>	<b>2013413</b>	<b>50.8</b>
<b>By sex</b>						
Male	51785	2.6	452152	22.6	982328	49.1
Female	62111	3.2	438961	22.3	1031086	52.5
<b>By age</b>						
25-34	72178	7.6	223222	23.6	551224	58.3
35-54	(39495)	(1.9)	524168	25.7	1041911	51.1
55-64	(2223)	(0.2)	143723	14.6	420279	42.8
<b>By educational attainment</b>						
Basic education or below	(6583)	(1.0)	43657	6.9	124118	19.5
Upper secondary education	46947	2.2	444543	20.5	1042827	48.0
Tertiary education	60365	5.2	402913	34.8	846469	73.0
<b>By labor status</b>						
Employed	82437	3.0	865688	31.6	1589931	58.0
Unemployed	(6635)	(1.1)	(21262)	(3.5)	184130	30.4
Inactive	(24824)	(4.0)	(4163)	(0.7)	239353	38.5
<b>By residence</b>						
Urban	102994	3.5	753673	25.5	1650190	55.9
Rural	(10901)	(1.1)	137440	13.6	363224	35.8

( ) - Because of the representative nature of the study, the data enclosed with parentheses are not accurate enough.



**Table 2**

**Persons who have looked for and have received free of charge information about learning possibilities by sex, age, education, labor status and residence**

	Total - Number	Persons who have looked for information in the last 12 months		Persons who have received free of charge information in the last 12 months	
		Number	%	Number	%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3948319</b>	<b>223453</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>197882</b>	<b>5.0</b>
<b>By sex</b>					
Male	1991675	92265	4.6	72639	3.7
Female	1956644	131189	6.7	125244	6.4
<b>By age</b>					
25-34	937611	84601	9.0	64366	6.9
35-54	2031274	110965	5.5	108912	5.4
55-64	979434	27887	2.8	(24605)	(2.5)
<b>By educational attainment</b>					
Basic education or below	629839	8562	1.4	(7661)	(1.2)
Upper secondary education	2163253	74224	3.4	62947	2.9
Tertiary education	1155228	140668	12.2	127274	11.0
<b>By labor status</b>					
Employed	2725952	177334	6.5	160032	5.9
Unemployed	602057	29180	4.8	(24341)	(4.1)
Inactive	620310	16939	2.7	(13510)	(2.2)
<b>By residence</b>					
Urban	201195	6.8	179900	6.1	201195
Rural	(22258)	(2.2)	(17982)	(1.8)	(22258)

( ) - Because of the representative nature of the study, the data enclosed with parentheses are not accurate enough.



Table 3

**Use of foreign languages by sex, age, education, labor status, residence and main languages**

	At least one foreign language used		By main languages used:					
			Russian		English		German	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1922190</b>	<b>49.5</b>	<b>858440</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>1217605</b>	<b>31.3</b>	<b>223447</b>	<b>5.7</b>
<b>By sex</b>								
Male	923428	47.3	415874	21.3	584270	29.9	120944	6.2
Female	998762	51.7	442566	22.9	633334	32.8	102503	5.3
<b>By age</b>								
25-34	540743	58.3	83247	9.0	468822	50.5	(58850)	(6.3)
35-54	995758	49.8	479216	24.0	643903	32.2	124801	6.2
55-64	385689	40.2	295977	30.8	104881	10.9	39796	4.1
<b>By educational attainment</b>								
Basic education or below	103625	16.6	(17774)	(2.9)	(8890)	(1.4)	(3346)	(0.5)
Upper secondary education	850927	40.2	438810	20.7	422698	20.0	82214	3.9
Tertiary education	967638	84.2	401856	35.0	786017	68.4	137887	12.0
<b>By labour status</b>								
Employed	1507158	56.0	646522	24.0	1050715	39.1	185883	6.9
Unemployed	179353	30.6	76386	13.0	78477	13.4	(15775)	(2.7)
Inactive	235679	38.5	135532	22.2	88413	14.5	(21789)	(3.6)
<b>By residence</b>								
Urban	1650115	56.9	1114173	38.4	743259	25.6	203742	7.0
Rural	272074	27.6	103431	10.5	115181	11.7	(19705)	(2.0)

( ) - Because of the representative nature of the study, the data enclosed with parentheses are not accurate enough.

**Table 4**

**Persons who have visited cultural events in the last 12 months by type of the event, sex, age, education, labor status and residence**

	Live performances		Cinemas		Cultural sites	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1586349</b>	<b>41.2</b>	<b>1462510</b>	<b>37.9</b>	<b>1391993</b>	<b>36.4</b>
<b>By sex</b>						
Male	666477	34.5	737872	37.9	593502	30.8
Female	919872	47.9	724637	37.8	798491	41.9
<b>By age</b>						
25-34	408553	44.7	519299	55.7	363745	40.0
35-54	852833	42.9	796685	40.2	745732	37.8
55-64	324963	34.2	146526	15.4	282516	29.8
<b>By educational attainment</b>						
Basic education or below	67396	11.0	43463	7.0	(33644)	(5.5)
Upper secondary education	714187	34.0	688483	32.7	605721	29.1
Tertiary education	804766	70.6	730564	64.4	752629	66.4
<b>By labor status</b>						
Employed	1285097	48.2	1264481	47.3	1166628	44.1
Unemployed	120196	20.6	95068	16.2	78591	13.5
Inactive	181056	30.1	102960	17.1	146774	24.4
<b>By residence</b>						
Urban	1398441	49.0	1307741	45.7	1235029	43.6
Rural	187908	18.8	154769	15.4	156965	15.8