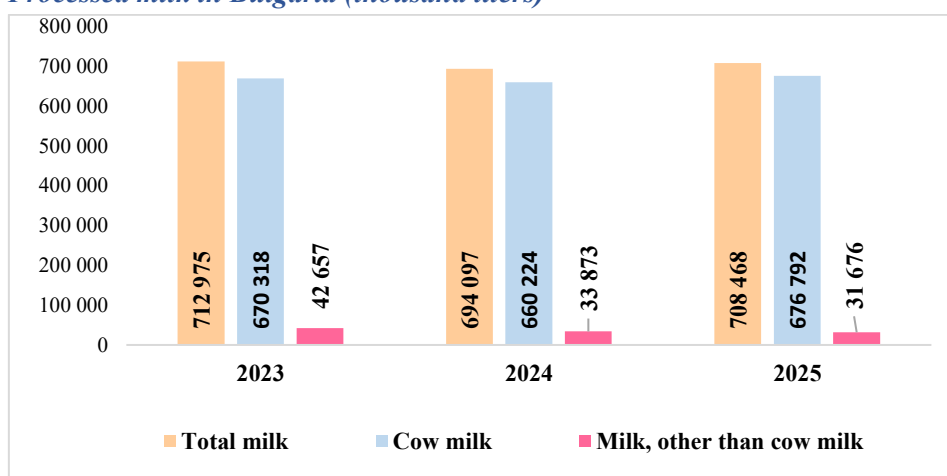




Dairies activity in Bulgaria in 2025

246 dairies (milk processors) with active status for dairy processing are interviewed and provide data on milk processing and manufactured milk products in 2025. Based on data from reporting entities, the processed raw milk is 708.5 million liters (deliveries from EU member states and imports from third countries incl.). Processed cow milk dominates (95.6%), with an increase of 2.5% compared to 2024. Ewe milk takes second place in 2025 (with a share of 2.8%) and is 4.0% less compared to previous year. Goat milk accounts to 1.2% of the processed milk with a decrease 14.4% compared to 2024. Processed buffalo milk and mixed milk are 0.4% of the total milk, with a decrease of 1.7% in 2025.

Figure 1
Processed milk in Bulgaria (thousand liters)



Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostatistics Department, Dairies activity in 2025

Table 1

Quantities of processed milk declared in 2023, 2024 and 2025, deliveries from EU member states and imports from third countries incl.							
Type of milk	2023		2024		2025		Change 2025/2024
	Quantity (thousand liters)	Share of processed milk (%)	Quantity (thousand liters)	Share of processed milk (%)	Quantity (thousand liters)	Share of processed milk (%)	
Cow milk	670 318	94.0%	660 224	95.1%	676 792	95.6%	2.5%
Ewe milk	27 265	3.8%	20 781	3.0%	19 958	2.8%	-4.0%
Goat milk	11 473	1.7%	9 943	1.4%	8 515	1.2%	-14.4%
Buffalo milk, mixed milk and cream	3 919	0.5%	3 149	0.5%	3 203	0.4%	1.7%
Total :	712 975	100%	694 097	100%	708 468	100%	2.1%

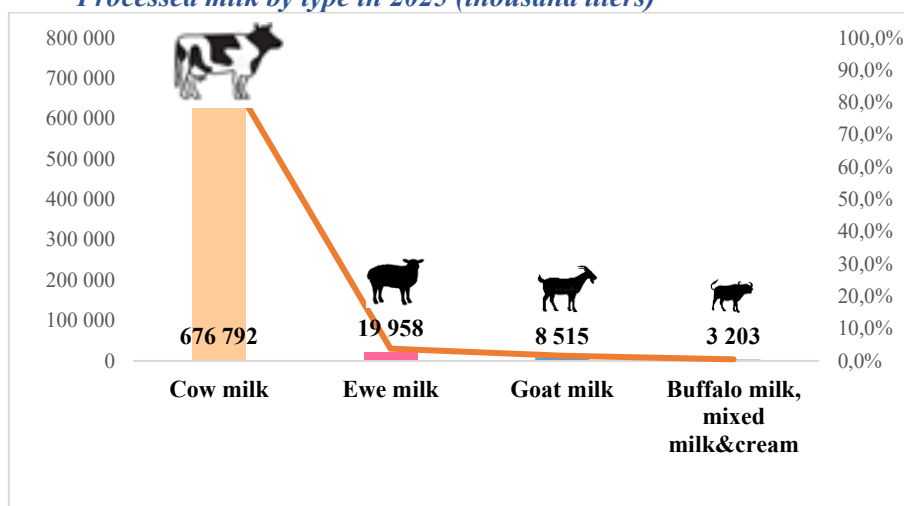
Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostatistics Department, Dairies activity in 2025

In 2025 according to data provided by milk processing enterprises, and in addition of the amounts indicated in Table 1, there are extra 1 345 tons of concentrated milk input in the dairy products, 7 746 tons of milk powder and cream powder, 1 226 tons milk concentrate* and 6 065 tons other products (cream, leaven, whey). The processed quantities of raw milk, delivered by EU member states or imported from third countries amount to over 54 thousand tons in total. Input raw materials of non-dairy origin (fats and/or proteins) are 4 459 tons.

*milk concentrate – material, obtained by concentrating milk protein by ultrafiltration of milk, semi-skimmed milk or skimmed milk.

Results and analyses

Figure 2
Processed milk by type in 2025 (thousand liters)



Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostistics Department, Dairies activity in 2025

Table 2

Dairy enterprises - Legal status 2025			
Legal status	Number	Quantities of processed milk, Deliveries from EU member states and imports from third countries incl. (thousand liters)	Share of the total processed milk
Sole trader (ST)	28	19 739	2.8%
Companies	211	610 969	86.2%
Other	7	77 760	11.0%
Total:	246	708 468	100%

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostistics Department, Activity of the dairies in 2025

In 2025, the number of dairy processing enterprises - interviewed and providing data (Table 2) increased by 4.7% compared to 2024. The sole traders process 2.8% of the milk, and companies - 86.2% of the total processed milk. Co-operatives, civil associations and others process 11% of the milk, which is 75.477 thousand liters more compared to 2024.

Table 3

Average fat and protein content in processed raw milk in 2025		
Type of milk	Milk fat content	Milk protein content
Cow milk	3.75%	3.28%
Ewe milk	6.52%	5.20%
Goat milk	3.69%	3.23%
Buffalo milk	7.07%	4.70%

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostistics Department, Dairies activity in 2025

Based on data provided by 246 dairy enterprises - 8 575 persons are employed under an employment contract on 31.12.2025, which is 15.5% more compared to employed persons in 2024. The districts: Plovdiv, Sliven, Silistra, Dobrich and Veliko Tarnovo have the largest numbers of employees. Ruse, Kyustendil, Pernik, Pleven and Montana have the least number of employees.

The total value (VAT excl.) of milk products sold by dairies is 1.387 billion BGN in 2025, which is 7.3% more than in 2024.

Table 4

Processed milk, internal deliveries by statistical regions (NUTS 2) in 2024 and 2025 (thousand liters)					
Statistical Region	2024		2025		Change milk total 2025/2024
	Milk total quantity	Cow milk incl.	Milk total quantity	Cow milk incl.	
Severozapaden	50 633	47 239	43 346	40 124	-14.4%
Severen tsentralen	164 738	161 446	166 306	162 458	1.0%
Severoiztochen	58 523	51 469	54 455	47 361	-7.0%
Yugoiztochen	141 886	135 254	146 217	140 990	3.1%
Yugozapaden	42 464	40 636	40 718	39 155	-4.1%
Yuzhen tsentralen	191 617	179 970	203 337	192 640	6.1%
Bulgaria	649 861	616 013	654 379	622 728	0.7%

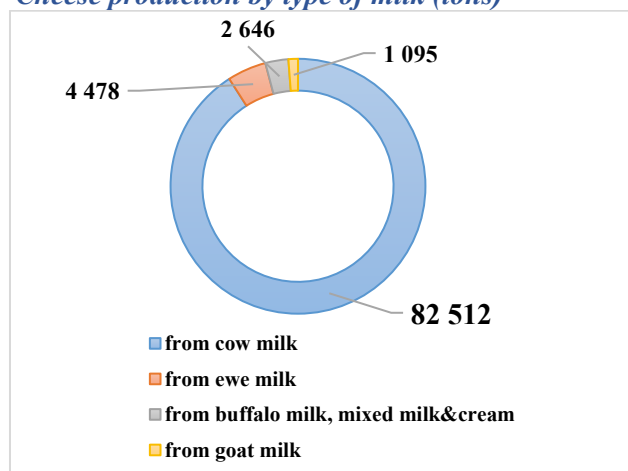
Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostistics Department, Dairies activity in 2025

Table 5

Dairy products by processors and by type of milk in 2025							
Product for consumption		Production 2024	Production 2025				Product quantity change 2025/2024
		Quantity	Quantity	Share of each product in the product group (%)	Number of dairies	Average production	
Packaged milk for drinking (thousand liters)		68 622	84 798	100%	55	1 542	23.6%
Cream - fresh or sour(tons)		2 804	3 220	100%	36	89	14.8%
Natural yoghurt - (tons)	from cow milk	157 846	164 525	99.2%	134	1 228	4.2%
	from ewe or mixed milk	688	539	0.3%	26	21	-21.7%
	from buffalo milk	243	233	0.1%	14	17	-4.1%
	from goat milk	574	620	0.4%	9	69	8.0%
	Total:	159 351	165 917	100%	137	1 211	4.1%
Flavoured yoghurt (with or without additives, milk desserts and milk based drinks (tons)		8 392	9 387	100%	21	447	11.9%
Cheese (tons)	from cow milk	82 172	82 512	90.9%	213	387	0.4%
	from ewe milk	4 970	4 478	4.9%	68	66	-9.9%
	from buffalo or mixed milk	2 850	2 646	2.9%	54	49	-7.2%
	from goat milk	1 307	1 095	1.2%	44	25	-16.2%
	Total:	91 299	90 731	100%	221	411	-0.6%
Processed cheese (tons)		1 352	1 373	100%	26	53	1.6%

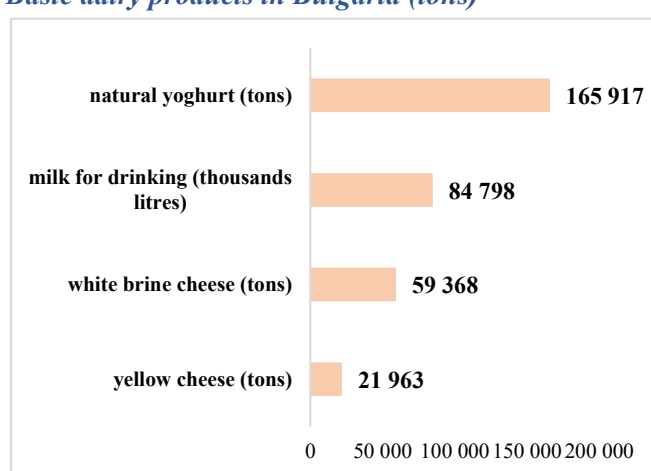
Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostistics Department, Dairies activity in 2025

Figure 3
Cheese production by type of milk (tons)



Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostistics Department, Dairies activity in 2025

Figure 4
Basic dairy products in Bulgaria (tons)



Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostistics Department, Dairies activity in 2025

In 2025, the production of natural yoghurt increases 4.1% compared to 2024 (165 917 tons), with the increase in the yoghurt from cow and goat milk. The production of natural yoghurt from ewe and mixed milk plummets down by 21.7% and from buffalo milk by 4.1. Yoghurt from cow milk has the largest share 99.2%, followed by yoghurt from goat milk with 0.4%.

Flavoured yoghurts (with or without additives) are 9 387 tons or 11.9% more than in 2024.

There is a slight decrease of 0.6% in the cheese production compared to 2024. Cheese from cow milk has the largest share of 90.9%, followed by cheese from ewe milk with 5.0% (Table 5). The cheese production from goat milk decreases by 16.2% in 2025 and is 1.2%.

Production of basic dairy products by statistical regions (NUTS 2)

Table 6

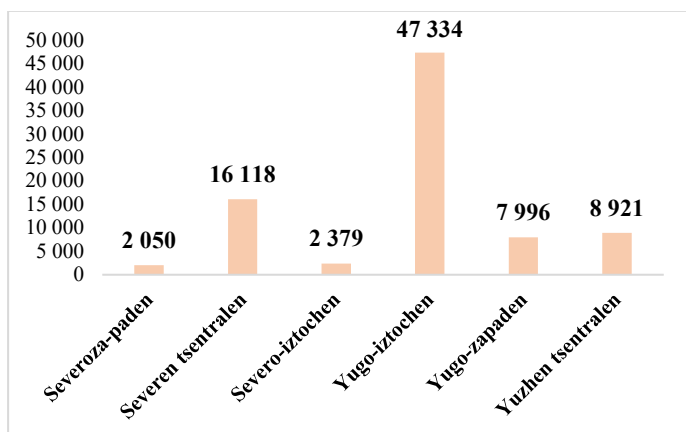
Production of basic dairy products by statistical regions in 2025 (NUTS 2)							
Dairy products	Severoza-paden	Severen tsentralen	Severo-iztochen	Yugo-iztochen	Yugo-zapaden	Yuzhen tsentralen	Bulgaria
Packaged milk for drinking (thousand liters)	2 050	16 118	2 379	47 334	7 996	8 921	84 798
Natural yoghurt - (tons)	12 859	56 085	7 277	26 413	16 898	46 385	165 917
White brine cheese (tons)	4 770	22 857	7 763	5 087	2 870	16 021	59 368
Yellow cheese (tons)	1 349	3 214	471	4 037	688	12 204	21 963

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostistics Department, Dairies activity in 2025

The production of packaged milk for drinking in 2025 (Figure 5) increases 23.6% compared to 2024. The highest production is in Yugoiztochen region, with a share of 55.8% of the total production. Severen tsentralen region records the largest production of yoghurt with 33.8%, and white brine cheese with 38.5% of the total production at national level.

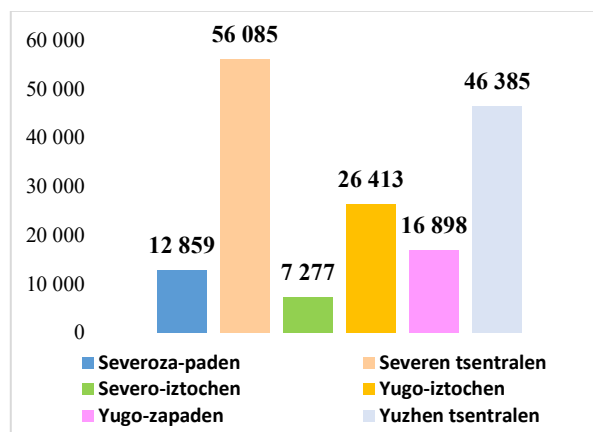
The largest quantity of yellow cheese is produced in Yuzhen tsentralen region - 55.6% of the total production.

Figure 5
Packaged milk for drinking by statistical regions
(thousand liters)



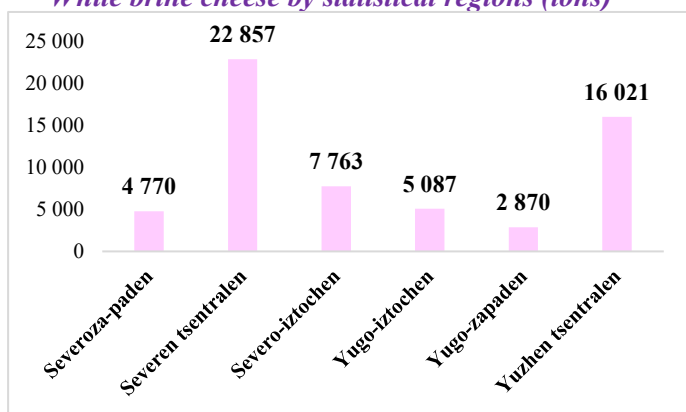
Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostatistics Department, Dairies activity in 2025

Figure 6
Yoghurt production by statistical regions (tons)



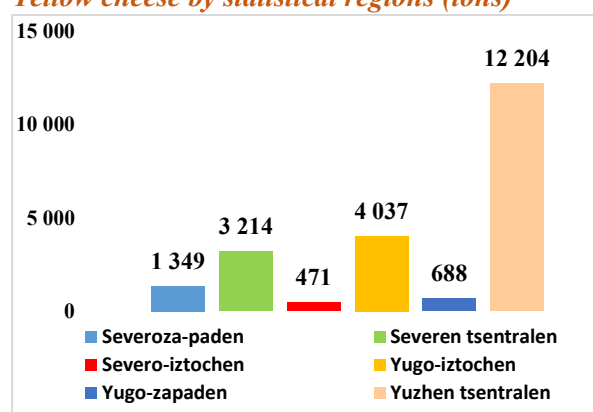
Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostatistics Department, Dairies activity in 2025

Figure 7
White brine cheese by statistical regions (tons)



Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostatistics Department, Dairies activity in 2025

Figure 8
Yellow cheese by statistical regions (tons)



Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostatistics Department, Dairies activity in 2025

165 917 tons yoghurt, 84.8 million liters packaged milk for drinking, 59 368 tons white brine cheese and 21 963 tons yellow cheese are produced in 2025.

There is 23.6% production increase of packaged milk for drinking compared to 2024. In 2025, the largest share takes the semi-skimmed milk with 52.9%, the smallest share takes the skimmed milk with 0.6% (Table 7).

The manufactured yellow cheese in 2025 is 3.0% less than in 2024. The largest decrease is in yellow cheese produced from ewe milk, by 30.7%. Yellow cheese from cow milk takes the largest share with 98.2%.

The production of white brine cheese decreases in 2025 with 148 tons (or 0.2%) compared to 2024. The largest share (87.7%) takes the white brine cheese from cow milk. The production of brine cheese with added vegetable fat and/or proteins decreases 2.1% in 2025.

The production of melted and smoked cheese is 1.6% more in 2025 compared to the previous year. Other types of cheese (soft cheese, blue cheese, etc.) increase by 0.8%.

The production of cream is 3 220 in 2025, which is an increase of 14.8%.

Butter production climbs to 1 023 tons which is an increase by 4.5%.

Table 7

Comparison of main products production by dairy enterprises in 2024 and 2025					
Products for consumption		Production 2024	Production 2025		Change 2025/2024
		Quantity	Quantity	Share of each product in the product group (%)	
Packaged milk for drinking (thousand liters)	Whole	35 301	39 440	46.5%	11.7%
	Semi-skimmed	32 292	44 874	52.9%	39.0%
	Skimmed	1 029	484	0.6%	-53.0%
	Total:	68 622	84 798	100.0%	23.6%
Cream – fresh or sour (tons)	Total:	2 804	3 220	100.0%	14.8%
Natural yoghurt (tons)	Whole or semi- skimmed	137 029	136 659	82.3%	-0.3%
	Skimmed	3 498	4 932	3.0%	41.0%
	For drinking	18 824	24 326	14.7%	29.2%
	Total:	159 351	165 917	100.0%	4.1%
Butter (tons)	Total:	979	1 023	100.0%	4.5%
White brine cheese (tons)	From cow milk	51 690	52 044	87.7%	0.7%
	of which: non- dairy materials as fats and/or proteins incl.	12 329	12 072	20.3%	-2.1%
	From ewe milk	4 485	4 168	7.0%	-7.1%
	Other type of milk	3 341	3 156	5.3%	-5.5%
	Total:	59 516	59 368	100.0%	-0.2%
Yellow cheese (tons)	From cow milk	22 111	21 561	98.2%	-2.5%
	From ewe milk	332	230	1.0%	-30.7%
	Other type of milk	195	172	0.8%	-11.8%
	Total:	22 638	21 963	100.0%	-3.0%
Fresh cheese (curd incl.) (tons)	Total:	5 378	5 601	100.0%	4.1%
Other cheese (tons)	Total:	3 767	3 799	100.0%	0.8%
Processed cheese (tons)	Total:	1 352	1 373	100.0%	1.6%
Other products (tons)	Total:	9 408	2 554	100.0%	-72.9%

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostistics Department, Dairies activity in 2025; c – confidential data

Milk production and distribution in Bulgaria

Table 8

Milk production and distribution in Bulgaria in 2025 (thousand liters)		
Type of distribution	Total milk	Of which cow milk
Processed in dairy enterprises	654 380	622 728
Direct sales, own consumption and other uses in farms	108 388	59 018
Total milk production:	762 768	681 746

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostistics Department, Dairies activity in 2025

Registered farmers and dairy processing enterprises under Regulation № 26/2010 on the specific requirements for direct supplies of small quantities of raw materials and food of animal origin sold a total of 36 562 thousand liters of raw or processed milk, of which 27 092 thousand liters cow milk (74.1%) and 5 537 thousand liters ewe milk. Raw milk sold directly to consumers is 27 934 thousand liters, and processed milk is 8 628 thousand liters. 158 tons white brine cheese, 293 tons yellow cheese, 1 385 tons yoghurt, 1 322 tons pasteurised packaged milk for drinking and other milk products are produced.

Methodological notes

Purpose – The purpose of the survey is to determine the number of dairy processing enterprises, to collect information on the quantity of raw milk deliveries by type, the quantity of intermediate products deliveries used as materials in the production, the end dairy products, the legal status and the number of persons employed under an employment contract in the enterprises, the market distribution and the sales value.

The survey information is used for analyses and programs in the sector. It is provided to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food (MAF), the National Statistical Institute (NSI), scientific and industry organizations, Eurostat, FAO, etc. and serves for decision making on management level for the implementation of agrarian policy at national and community level.

Legal framework:

The statistical survey is based on the National Statistical Programme as a national regulatory document. The survey results correspond to the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2022/2379 of the European Parliament and of the Council on statistics on agricultural input and output, Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/2745 laying down rules for the application of Regulation (EU) 2022/2379 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards animal production statistics as well as Regulation (EEC) No 3924/91 on the establishment of a Community survey of industrial production (PRODCOM).

Source of information – The survey is organised by the Agrostatistics Department at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and implemented by experts in the 28 regional directorates. The regional experts conduct an interview with the dairy manager or a person authorized by him, fill-in the statistical questionnaire or receive the data via e-mail. 52% of the respondents were provided with password access to the agrostatistics information system (ISAS) and filled the information for 2025 online.

Surveyed Statistical indicators:

1. Quantity of milk transferred for processing, quantity of intermediate products delivered, quantity of manufactured milk products, quantity of manufactured milk products sold, sales value (VAT excl.);
2. Legal status and number of persons employed under an employment contract;
3. Main indicators on milk and milk products - quantity of processed milk by type of milk (liters), fat and protein content (%), manufactured milk products (liters, kg), quantities of dairy products sold (liters, kg), value of the quantities sold (BGN);

Respondents – All Bulgarian dairy processors are surveyed exhaustively. The list of dairies is composed by the Agrostatistics Department at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, based on the conducted surveys on dairy enterprises activity in recent years and the Bulgarian Food Safety Agency (BFSA) register. All enterprises registered with milk processing activities during the year are surveyed exhaustively. Newly created dairy processors are added every year, their information obtained from the BFSA register. The organization and control of the survey is carried out by the Agrostatistics Department of the General Directorate Agriculture and Regional Policy at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

Confidentiality – The national confidentiality rules are defined in the Statistics Act. According to Art. 25 individual statistical data as well as statistical information that summarizes data for less than three statistical units or for an aggregate in which the relative share of the value of a studied parameter of one unit is over 85 percent of the total value of this parameter for all units of the population cannot be disclosed or provided. Individual data obtained for the purposes of statistical survey cannot be used as evidence before executive and judicial authorities.

Accessibility and transparency – data on dairies activity is available to users on the Ministry of Agriculture and Food website:

<http://www.mzh.government.bg/bg/statistika-i-analizi/izsledvane-zhivotnovodstvo/danni/>

according to the National Statistical Program deadlines. Main results are published in the Results and Analysis series newsletter. The data is published in the Statistical Reference Book (Agrostatistics Department) and the Statistical Yearbook (NSI), and also transmitted to Eurostat. Additional information, beyond the published one, for all characteristics is available and provided upon request, under observation of the Statistics Act requirements.

Distribution of administrative districts by statistical regions (NUTS 2):

Severozapaden: Vidin, Vratsa, Montana, Lovech, Pleven;

Severen tsentralen: Veliko Tarnovo, Gabrovo, Ruse, Silistra, Razgrad;

Severoiztochen: Varna, Dobrich, Targovishte, Shoumen;

Yugoiztochen: Burgas, Sliven, Stara Zagora, Yambol;

Yugozapaden: Blagoevgrad, Kyustendil, Pernik, Sofia-cap., Sofia region;

Yuzhen tsentralen: Kardzhali, Pazardzhik, Plovdiv, Smolyan, Haskovo.

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