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NATIONAL
CHAMBER OF CRAFTS

NATIONAL REPORT | 2026

NATIONAL MAP OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA FOR 2025





The National Intellectual Property Map of the Republic of Bulgaria by Municipality is an annual study by the Institute and Department of Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer at UNWE, in partnership with the Ministry of Culture, the Patent Office, the National Statistical Institute, the National Association of Municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria, the National Association of Chairpersons of Municipal Councils in the Republic of Bulgaria and the National Chamber of Crafts.

The National Intellectual Property Map consists of an interactive online resource available at www.iptt-unwe.bg, a National Report on intellectual property covering all 265 Bulgarian municipalities, an IP INDEX of the municipalities and districts, and individual intellectual property profiles of the Bulgarian municipalities.

The main purpose of the National Map is to serve as a governance tool in setting the country's strategic development priorities and allocating resources when shaping state policies in the fields of culture, education, innovation and economic growth, as well as in the development of local initiatives by local authorities, with a view to promoting regional competitiveness.

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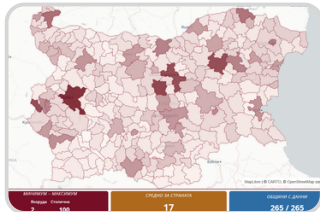
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COMPONENTS OF THE NATIONAL MAP OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

1

INTERACTIVE NATIONAL MAP OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

An online tool that visualises intellectual property activity across the territory of all 265 municipalities and 28 districts.



map.ipitt-unwe.bg

2

NATIONAL REPORT 2026



Summarises the results at district and municipal level, identifies the main trends and sets out recommendations for the development of intellectual property in the Republic of Bulgaria.

3

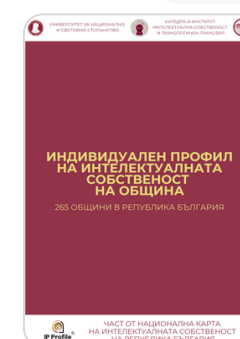
IP INDEX OF MUNICIPALITIES AND DISTRICTS



Contains four indices built on the data: the intellectual property, industrial property, literary and artistic property, and crafts indices.

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INDIVIDUAL PROFILES OF THE MUNICIPALITIES



Contains four indices built on the data: the intellectual property, industrial property, literary and artistic property, and crafts indices.



Prof. Dimitar Dimitrov, PhD Rector of UNWE. Specialist and long-standing lecturer in defence and security, with over 100 publications in Bulgaria, the USA, the UK and Germany. Has specialised in the USA, Germany and the Netherlands. Holder of an honorary plaque of the Ministry of Defence.

Mr Evtim Miloshev

Minister of Culture of the Republic of Bulgaria. Bulgarian producer and media manager with over 30 years of experience in the television and film industry, co-founder of “Dream Team Productions”. Founder and long-standing chair of AFTP. Caretaker Minister of Tourism in 2024 and 2025. Holder of the “Golden Age” honorary sign.



РЕПУБЛИКА БЪЛГАРИЯ
МИНИСТЕРСТВО НА КУЛТУРАТА



ПАТЕНТНО ВЕДОМСТВО НА
РЕПУБЛИКА БЪЛГАРИЯ



Ms Olya Dimitrova

President of the Patent Office of the Republic of Bulgaria. Graduate chemical engineer with a qualification in the legal protection of intellectual property. Over 20 years of experience in various positions at the Bulgarian Patent Office.

Assoc. Prof. Atanas Atanasov, PhD

President of the National Statistical Institute. Specialist and long-standing lecturer in statistics, with over 60 publications. Has taken part in more than 130 projects. Has advised numerous institutions, including the World Bank and the administration of the Council of Ministers.





Mr Daniel Panov Chair of the Management Board of the National Association of Municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria. Graduated in public administration and holds a doctorate in disaster and accident protection. Former military serviceman. Elected Mayor of Veliko Tarnovo four times.

Mr Ventsislav Spirdonov

Chair of the Management Board of the National Association of Chairpersons of Municipal Councils in the Republic of Bulgaria. Lawyer with specialisations in history, finance and law. Elected Chair of the Municipal Council of Veliko Tarnovo Municipality three times.



Ms Radosveta Gospodinova

Executive Director of the National Chamber of Crafts since 2025. The National Chamber of Crafts is the representative organisation of craftspeople in Bulgaria. It protects the interests of its members, supports the development of crafts and preserves Bulgarian traditions. Its members include 20 regional chambers, sectoral organisations and associations.

PROJECT LEADER

Assoc. Prof. Nikolay Krushkov, PhD

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Assoc. Prof. Nikolay Krushkov, PhD (project leader), Chief Assist. Prof. Ivan Nachev, PhD (research team leader), Assoc. Prof. Hristin Strizhlev, PhD (Head of the Department and Institute of Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer at UNWE), Prof. Maria Markova, DSc, Assoc. Prof. Radostin Vazov, PhD, Chief Assist. Prof. Aleksandar Aleksandrov, PhD, Chief Assist. Prof. Boyko Takov, PhD, Chief Assist. Prof. Vladislava Pacheva, PhD, Chief Assist. Prof. Dimitrina Papagalska, PhD, Chief Assist. Prof. Polina Stoyanova, PhD, Chief Assist. Prof. Silvia Todorova, PhD, Chief Assist. Prof. Stefan Radev, PhD, Assist. Prof. Gergana Tsankova, PhD, Dr Iskren Konstantinov (intellectual property expert), Mr Genadi Edrev (technology transfer manager), Mr Milen Lazarov (intellectual property expert)

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MAPPING AND DATA

Assoc. Prof. Georgi Penchev, PhD (development of the interactive map)

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, NETWORKS AND PLATFORM DEVELOPMENT

Mr Valeri Diklyovski, Mr Georgi Vazharov, Mr Kaloyan Yonov, Mr Petar Stoev, Mr Tsvetomir Stoilov

WITH REGARD TO ALL DATA

The raw data used for the purposes of the study were provided to the Institute of Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer at UNWE by the following organisations: the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Patent Office of the Republic of Bulgaria, the National Statistical Institute and the National Chamber of Crafts.

WITH REGARD TO INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY DATA

The data provided by the Patent Office of the Republic of Bulgaria include one applicant per object. Where there are two or more co-applicants, the available data include only the applicant named first in the application. This may lead to inaccuracies in the aggregated data on the total number of applications filed by a given person where that person is named as a co-applicant in a position other than first in the application.

Despite the efforts made to optimise the raw data for maximum accuracy of the final results, some inaccuracy may exist in the aggregated data on the filing activity of an individual person in cases where, during the period under review (01.01.2020 - 31.12.2025), that person filed applications for registration of objects writing their name in different ways (for example, by combining abbreviations, shortened forms and other variants of the same name).

WITH REGARD TO APPLICATIONS FOR INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY OBJECTS

The processed raw data, and accordingly the aggregated results, include only published official data on applications filed for industrial property objects. It should be noted that, with regard to inventions, pursuant to Art. 46c(1) of the Law on Patents and Utility Model Registration (LPUMR), the Patent Office publishes the patent application in the Official Bulletin immediately after the expiry of 18 months from its filing date. This makes it impossible to publish data on this filing activity for 2025, and the data on patent applications therefore cover the whole of 2024. The data on the other industrial property objects (utility models, trade marks and designs) cover the whole of 2025. With regard to utility

models, pursuant to Art. 77, publication in the Official Bulletin is made within one month of the entry of the utility models in the State Register of Utility Models. With regard to industrial designs, pursuant to Art. 36 and 37 of the Law on Industrial Design, a formal examination is carried out within two months of payment of the application fees, followed by a substantive examination within a further two months, before a decision on registration and publication in the Official Bulletin is taken.

Under certain conditions laid down in the LPUMR, applicants may file, in parallel with the application for an invention, an application for registration of a utility model. In this way, while the complex patent examination of the claimed invention is under way, the right holder may exercise the exclusive right conferred by the registered utility model. After a patent for the invention is granted, the two objects continue to have effect independently until the expiry of their respective terms of protection.

WITH REGARD TO LITERARY AND ARTISTIC PROPERTY DATA

The processed raw data in this field were provided by the Ministry of Culture and the National Statistical Institute and cover the period 2020 - 2025. Data on the chitalishta (community cultural centres) in the country are collected from the primary source over a 5-year cycle; the information in the report therefore refers to 2022, and the next updated data for this indicator will be available in 2027.

WITH REGARD TO CRAFTS DATA

The processed raw data in the field of crafts were provided by the National Chamber of Crafts. Owing to amendments and supplements to the list of crafts in the Law on Crafts, adopted in 2001, a number of craftspeople are registered as practising a craft whose name does not correspond to the current nomenclature of crafts under Annex No. 1 to the Act. The registers have recorded 160 crafts since 2001, whereas under the current version of the Act there are 57.

It should be noted that, owing to gaps in the keeping of the regional registers of craftspeople, a number of data are missing. The following gaps were identified among the 10 376 craftsperson records examined:

	NAME, SURNAME	QUALIFICATION	CRAFT	CERTIFICATE NO.	MUNICIPALITY	ADDRESS	DATE OF REGISTRATION
Missing records, no.	262	3	0	1043	0	1600	1985

NATIONAL LEGISLATION

- Law on Patents and Utility Model Registration, promulgated SG No. 27/1993
- Law Ratifying the Hague Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Industrial Designs, promulgated SG No. 83/1994
- Law on the Protection of New Plant Varieties and Animal Breeds, promulgated SG No. 84/1996
- Law on Industrial Design, promulgated SG No. 81/1999
- Law on the Topology of Integrated Circuits, promulgated SG No. 81/1999
- Law on Protection of Competition, promulgated SG No. 102/2008
- Law on the Protection of Trade Secrets, promulgated SG No. 28/2019
- Law on Marks and Geographical Indications, promulgated SG No. 98/2019
- Ordinance on the Drawing Up, Filing and Examination of Applications for Registration of Industrial Designs, Council of Ministers Decree No. 268 of 1999
- Ordinance on the Drawing Up, Filing and Examination of Applications for Patents for Inventions and Utility Models, adopted by Council of Ministers Decree No. 195 of 2023, promulgated SG No. 88/2023

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS

- Regulation (EU) 2017/1001 on the European Union trade mark
- Directive (EU) 2015/2436
- Paris Convention, 1883, Stockholm Act of 1967, as amended in 1979
- Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks, 1891
- Convention Establishing the World Intellectual Property Organization, 1967, as amended in 1979
- Hague Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Industrial Designs, 1925 / London Act 1934 / Hague Act 1960 / Geneva Act 1999
- Nice Agreement Concerning the International Classification of Goods and Services for the Purposes of the Registration of Marks, 1957
- Council Directive 87/54/EEC of 1986 on the legal protection of topographies of semiconductor products

- Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and their International Registration, 1968
- Locarno Agreement Establishing an International Classification for Industrial Designs, 1971
- International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants, 1961 / Revised in 1972, 1978 and 1991
- Strasbourg Agreement Concerning the International Patent Classification, 1968 (1971)
- Patent Cooperation Treaty, 1970
- Vienna Agreement Establishing an International Classification of the Figurative Elements of Marks, 1973
- European Patent Convention, signed in Munich on 5 October 1973
- Madrid Agreement for the Repression of False or Deceptive Indications of Source on Goods, 1891
- Geneva Treaty on the International Recording of Scientific Discoveries, 1978 (not in force)
- Budapest Treaty on the International Recognition of the Deposit of Microorganisms for the Purposes of Patent Procedure, 1977
- International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants, 1961
- Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks, 1989
- Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992
- Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, 1994
- Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization, 1994
- Trademark Law Treaty, Geneva, 1994
- Singapore Treaty on the Law of Trademarks, 2006
- Regulation (EC) No 1610/96
- Regulation (EU) 2019/933

NATIONAL LEGISLATION

- Law on Copyright and Related Rights, promulgated SG No. 56/1993
- Law on Radio and Television, promulgated SG No. 138/1998
- Law on the Protection and Development of Culture, promulgated SG No. 50/1999
- Law on Access to Public Information, promulgated SG No. 55/2000
- Law on the Legal Deposit of Printed and Other Works and on the Disclosure of Distributors and Providers of Media Services, title amended SG No. 94/2018
- Law on Genetically Modified Organisms, promulgated SG No. 27/2005
- Law on the Administrative Regulation of the Production of and Trade in Optical Discs, Matrices and Other Carriers Containing Subject Matter of Copyright and Related Rights, promulgated SG No. 74/2005
- Law on Consumer Protection, promulgated SG No. 99/2005
- Law on Patronage, promulgated SG No. 103/2005
- Law on the Film Industry, promulgated SG No. 105/2003
- Law on Electronic Commerce, promulgated SG No. 51/2006
- Law on Medicinal Products in Human Medicine, promulgated SG No. 31/2007
- Law on Electronic Communications, promulgated SG No. 41/2007
- Law on Cultural Heritage, promulgated SG No. 19/2009
- Law on Public Libraries, promulgated SG No. 42/2009
- Ordinance on the Procedure for the Deposit, Storage and Provision of Copies of Works, promulgated SG No. 13/2001
- National Accounting Standards

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS

- Directive 98/44/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the legal protection of biotechnological inventions
- Regulation (EC) No 864/2007 on the law applicable to non-contractual obligations (Rome II)
- Directive 2001/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 May 2001 on the harmonisation of certain aspects of copyright and related rights in the information society, as amended by Directive (EU) 2019/790
- Directive 2006/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 on rental right and lending right and on certain rights related to copyright
- Directive 2012/28/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on certain permitted uses of orphan works
- Directive 2014/26/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on collective management of copyright and related rights
- Rome Convention for the Protection of Performers, Producers of Phonograms and Broadcasting Organizations, 1961
- Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, 1970
- Convention for the Protection of Producers of Phonograms Against Unauthorized Duplication of Their Phonograms, 1971
- Brussels Convention Relating to the Distribution of Programme-Carrying Signals Transmitted by Satellite, 1974
- UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2003

- WIPO Copyright Treaty, 1996
- WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty, 1996
- International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2001
- Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances, 2012
- Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled, 2013
- Directive (EU) 2019/790 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on copyright and related rights in the Digital Single Market
- Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, 1886
- Universal Copyright Convention, 1952
- Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (Hague Convention), 1954
- Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, 1994
- Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity, 2010
- International Accounting Standards, IAS 38 “Intangible Assets”
- International Financial Reporting Standards, AS 38

NATIONAL LEGISLATION

- Law on Vocational Education and Training, promulgated SG No. 68/1999
- Law on Crafts, promulgated SG No. 42/2001
- Law on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications, promulgated SG No. 13/2008
- Law on Cultural Heritage, promulgated SG No. 19/2009
- Law on Marks and Geographical Indications, promulgated SG No. 98/2019

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS

- Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC concerning the definition of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, 2003
- Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the recognition of professional qualifications, 2005
- Regulation (EU) 2019/1753 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the action of the Union following its accession to the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement, 2019
- Council Decision (EU) 2019/1754 on the accession of the European Union to the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement, 2019
- Regulation (EU) 2023/2411 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of geographical indications for craft and industrial products, 2023
- Commission Delegated Regulation supplementing Regulation (EU) 2023/2411, 2025
- Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and their International Registration, 1958; Geneva Act, 2015
- UNESCO Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore, 1989
- Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), 1994
- Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2003

Author

An author is the natural person whose creative activity has resulted in the creation of a work.

Copyright

The totality of economic and moral rights in works of literature, science and art that result from creative activity. Copyright protection extends to objectively expressed forms and not to ideas, procedures, methods of operation or mathematical concepts as such.

Applicant

In the context of industrial property, the applicant is the person who is legally entitled to file an application for registration of an industrial property object and who will become the holder of the intellectual property right once protection is obtained. The applicant is usually the creator of the invention, utility model, industrial design or trade mark, or the creator's employer.

Enforcement of intellectual property rights

Intellectual property rights are enforced through administrative, civil and criminal law procedures, in accordance with the legislation of the respective country.

Craft

A craft is the production of articles or the provision of services from the list of crafts annexed to the Law on Crafts, performed by hand or with craft-specific tools by qualified craftspeople.

Application

Industrial property objects obtain protection through a formal procedure before the patent office of the respective country. The procedure is initiated by filing an application for protection (a standard form) with the respective office.

Inventor

An inventor is the person who has created an invention or a utility model.

Invention

A technical solution to a problem in any field of the economy. All inventions that cumulatively meet the statutory requirements for patentability, namely novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability, are eligible for a patent. Discoveries, scientific theories and mathematical methods, aesthetic creations, schemes, rules and methods for performing mental acts, playing games or doing business, computer programs and presentations of information are not inventions.

Industrial property

A branch of intellectual property. The protection of industrial property has as its object patents for inventions, utility models, industrial designs, trade marks, trade names, geographical indications, and the repression of unfair competition.

Intellectual property

Intellectual property is a category of property that refers to rights in intangible creations of the mind, such as inventions, trade marks, designs, and works of literature, science and art.

Cultural and creative activities organised by chitalishta

Chitalishta organise core cultural and creative activities, such as celebrations of notable dates and anniversaries, book presentations and discussions, celebrations and festivals, folk gatherings, curated museum collections, film and video screenings, etc.

Cultural organisations registered with the Ministry of Culture

A cultural organisation is an entity established under Art. 4(1) or founded under Art. 10(1), items 1 and 2 of the Law on the Protection and Development of Culture, whose scope of activity is the creation, dissemination and preservation of cultural values in the fields of theatre, music, cinema, audiovisual arts, visual arts, literature, literary translation, dance, circus, fine arts, architecture, design and folklore, including the preservation of cultural and historical heritage.

Literary and artistic property

A branch of intellectual property. The protection of literary and artistic property has as its object works of literature, science and art, regardless of the mode and form of their expression.

Trade mark

A trade mark is a sign capable of distinguishing the goods or services of one person from those of other persons. Such signs may be, for example: words, including personal names, letters, numerals, drawings, figures, the shape of goods or of their packaging, colours, sounds, or any combination of such signs. A trade mark registration is valid for 10 years and may be renewed indefinitely for further periods of 10 years.

International Classification for Industrial Designs

Industrial designs are classified according to their function and application in production. When an application for registration of a design is filed, the relevant classes of the internationally recognised Locarno Classification are indicated.

International Classification of Goods and Services for the Registration of Marks

Trade marks are classified according to the goods and services for which they are used. When an application for registration of a trade mark is filed, the relevant classes of the internationally recognised Nice Classification of goods and services are indicated.

Music ensembles

As used in the study, the term includes philharmonic orchestras, folk song and dance ensembles and orchestras.

Intellectual property object

The objects of industrial property are patents for inventions, utility models, industrial designs, trade marks, trade names, geographical indications, and the repression of unfair competition. The object of literary and artistic property is any work of literature, art and science that results from creative activity and is expressed in any manner and in any objective form.

Patent

A patent is the protective title issued by the patent office of the respective country, certifying the protection and the exclusive right of the holder in the invention. The term of a patent is twenty years from the filing date of the application.

Utility model

A technical solution of a constructive or structural nature that is new, involves an inventive step and is industrially applicable. Legal protection of a utility model is granted by registration with the Patent Office. The maximum term of protection of a utility model is 10 years.

User

Users are natural and legal persons, such as publishers, theatres, concert organisers, radio and television organisations, undertakings providing public electronic communications services through an electronic communications network, catering and entertainment establishments, phonogram producers, film producers, internet content providers, online content-sharing service providers and others, who bring the work to the knowledge of the public (readers, viewers and listeners) directly or through other persons, namely distributors.

Performances

As used in the study, the term includes theatre performances, opera and operetta performances, performances by music ensembles - philharmonic orchestras, activities of the National Agency "Music", and events organised by societies and associations.

Work

Any result of creative activity in the field of literature, art or science, expressed in any manner and in any objective form.

Industrial design

An industrial design is the visible appearance of a product or part of a product, resulting from the features of its shape, lines, pattern, ornamentation, colour combination or a combination thereof. The maximum term of protection of an industrial design is 25 years.

Recitals and concerts

As used in the study, the term includes theatre recitals and concerts, opera and operetta recitals and concerts, recitals and concerts by music ensembles - philharmonic orchestras, activities of the National Agency “Music”, and events organised by societies and associations.

Related rights

Holders of related rights are the persons who add value in the process of bringing authors' works to the knowledge of users. These are performers in respect of their performances; phonogram producers in respect of their phonograms; producers of the first fixation of a film or other audiovisual work in respect of the original and the copies obtained as a result of that fixation; radio and television organisations in respect of their programmes; and press publishers in respect of their press publications.

Period for publication of the patent application

The period after the expiry of which the Patent Office publishes the application in the Official Bulletin. It is 18 months from the filing date or, where priority is claimed, from the priority date.

SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

WHAT THE DATA SHOW FOR 2025

All data examined in this report cover the period 2020-2025, with the focus on 2025. **On the basis of the data, we may conclude that no growth in intellectual property is observed in the country.** The total number of applications for utility models, industrial designs and trade marks by applicants from the territory of Bulgaria moves within a narrow range throughout the period: 3 884 in 2020, a low of 3 305 in 2022 and 4 037 in 2025.

Industrial property shows a certain restructuring. The share of trade marks rises from 85% to 93% of all applications filed for utility models, industrial designs and trade marks, while **technical objects shrink by half**: utility models and industrial designs together fall from 595 applications in 2020 to 282 in 2025. **In other words, protection is shifting from the technical solution to the commercial designation.**

Literary and artistic property shows the opposite movement, but also with an internal reshuffle. **The printed word is shrinking steadily**: the total circulation of books, magazines and newspapers falls from about 137 million in 2020 to nearly 100 million in 2025, i.e. by more than a quarter. **At the same time, the performing arts have tripled**: performances and recitals together grow from 7 523 in 2020 to 23 942 in 2025, which can, of course, largely be attributed to the coronavirus pandemic at the beginning of the period.

The overall picture for 2025 is of a country with a stable institutional network and **growing consumption of culture**, but with shallow **and limited domestic technical output**.

Stolichna Municipality is present in 25 of the 25 indicators examined. Its share, however, varies drastically. The capital accounts for 99% of magazine circulation, 92% of newspaper circulation, 65% of cultural organisations, 60% of trade marks and 64% of published titles. In theatres and performances its share falls to 40%, among craftspeople to 34%, in museums to below 10% and in chitalishta to 4%.

We could single out **a group of municipalities following the capital**, which have a broad profile. These are Ruse and Plovdiv (19 appearances each), Stara Zagora and Veliko Tarnovo (18 each), Burgas and Varna (16 each), Pleven (13) and Blagoevgrad (12).

Ruse is the most balanced municipality outside the capital: it is in the top 10 for all four industrial property objects, is included in 13 of the 19 literary and artistic property indicators and is second in the country by number of registered craftspeople.

Plovdiv has almost the same breadth, but a different emphasis: second by types of crafts (95) and by volume of industrial property, but outside the top 10 by number of craftspeople.

Crafts show the largest gap (59 municipalities with no activity) and the most divergent ranking, in which municipalities such as Kyustendil and Troyan appear with significant activity. **Stara Zagora and Varna** hold strong positions in both branches of intellectual property but **are completely absent from the crafts rankings.**

In a number of small municipalities such as Tundzha, Maritsa, Sopot, Panagyurishte and Aksakovo, significant activity is observed; however, it results from the activity of individual enterprises, the presence of an industrial zone or proximity to a district centre, rather than from a municipal profile.

As regards literary and artistic property, activity is widely distributed across the territory, sustained mainly by **chitalishta, museums and recitals.**

Industrial property in Bulgaria

The section is driven entirely by trade marks. They account for 93% of the volume of applications in 2025: 3 289 applications in 2020, a low of 3 031 in 2022 and a peak of 3 761 in 2025 (including applicants from abroad). **The growth in the last year comes entirely from legal persons**, which increase from 2 931 to 3 069, while natural persons remain below their 2020 level (708).

Technical objects show a decline. Utility models fall from 463 applications in 2020 to 200 in 2025, and industrial designs from 132 to 82. Patent applications number 164 in 2020 and 118 in 2024.

The most pronounced trend is **the withdrawal of natural persons from technical protection**. For utility models they filed 83 applications in 2020 and 28 in 2025, for industrial designs 26 compared with 17, and for patents 69 compared with 40. **Legal persons lead in all four indicators.**

The territorial reach is expanding only where the entry barrier is low, namely trade marks. In 2025, 152 of 265 municipalities had an application for an industrial property object filed in their territory, i.e. just over half, compared with 132 in 2024. Only **four municipalities** appear in all four top 10 rankings for patents, utility models, trade marks and industrial designs: **Stolichna, Plovdiv, Ruse and Stara Zagora**. Burgas and Varna are in three of the four, and Blagoevgrad, Kazanlak, Veliko Tarnovo and Troyan in two. This is where the most interesting exceptions to the overall picture appear. **Tundzha is third in the country by inventions filed, and Maritsa third by industrial designs**, both being rural municipalities without an urban centre. Sopot with 7 utility models and Panagyurishte with 5 reflect a concentrated industrial base rather than a broad economic profile. Aksakovo and

Kostinbrod are included because of specific manufacturing enterprises. **Industrial design is the only field in which regional leadership does not lie with the capital:** Plovdiv District leads with 23 designs against 20 for Sofia City District. In the ranking by municipality, Stolichna remains first with 20 against 13 for Plovdiv.

Trade marks continue to show the highest activity: 3755 applications from the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria in 2025, compared with 200 utility models, 118 applications for inventions (2024) and 82 published industrial designs.

As regards the territorial reach of the indicators, growth is observed only for trade marks: 145 municipalities in 2025, the highest value for the period. For the other subjects, the reach remains between 26 and 47 municipalities.

The most sought-after form of protection in academia is the utility model. The total number of objects of these organisations for the period 2020-2025 is 272 industrial property objects from 30 higher education institutions, of which 119 are utility model applications. The leader is TU-Sofia with 70 objects (26%), followed by UNWE (26), Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski” (22), Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” (21), Trakia University (20) and Medical University - Plovdiv (18). These six universities account for 65% of the applications of higher education institutions.

Literary and artistic property in Bulgaria

The section shows several different dynamics. **The printed word is shrinking:** newspaper circulation falls by 28%, magazine circulation by 31% and book circulation by 7%. The number of titles, however, decreases by less than 5%, meaning that the average circulation per title shrinks by about a quarter. **The market is not disappearing but fragmenting into more and smaller publications. Newspapers are the only indicator in the report deteriorating simultaneously in circulation, titles and coverage.** The performing arts are the most dynamic part: **performances and recitals together grow 3.2-fold in six years.** The structure, however, is changing. Performances have plateaued since 2023 (about 16 100), i.e. all the growth comes from recitals and concerts, which rise from 4 633 to 7 818 and already account for one third of all stage events, compared with 7% in 2020.

Municipal-level activity in literary and artistic property is distributed considerably more evenly. Stolichna Municipality (19 of 19 indicators) is followed by Veliko Tarnovo, Plovdiv and Stara Zagora with 14 each, Varna and Ruse with 13 each, Pleven with 12, Burgas with 11 and Blagoevgrad with 10.

Publishing activity (circulation and titles of books, magazines and newspapers) **is extremely concentrated and dominated by the same eight municipalities. The institutional and event indicators, however, show a different geography:** Stara Zagora (58), Sliven (51), Tundzha (40) and Kyustendil (40) lead in chitalishta; Karlovo is second in the country in museums with 16, and Tryavna and Panagyurishte are in the top 10; in recitals and concerts, Koprivshtitsa is fifth with 252 events, and Byala and Vratsa rank ahead of Varna and Burgas.

Literary and artistic property in Bulgaria

Vetrino, a municipality with fewer than five thousand inhabitants, is fourth in the country by circulation of newspapers published (984 300) and sixth by number of titles. Svishtov enters the top 10 by titles published thanks to its university publishing house. Kavarna, Madan and Kozloduy appear in the top 10 by magazine circulation, which at this scale usually means a single periodical with a high circulation.

The institutional network is stable - 2575 public libraries, 479 museums, 85 cinemas, 3319 chitalishta (2022).

Electronic media show a divergence - **television operators increase** to 123, while **radio operators continue to decline** to 70.

There is **strong concentration in the capital** - 99% of magazine circulation and 92% of newspaper circulation. The only exception is recitals and concerts, where the capital accounts for 16%.

Crafts in Bulgaria

According to the data provided by the National Chamber of Crafts, the Republic of Bulgaria has **10 367 registered craftspeople in 160 crafts**. Only 1749 craftspeople practise a craft in the category of “artistic crafts”.

Crafts show a significant divergence between the number of craft types and the total number of practising craftspeople in the municipalities. By **number of registered craftspeople**, the leading towns are Stolichna (3508), Ruse (656), Burgas (455), Sliven (386), Kyustendil (384), Gabrovo (333), Dobrich (321), Pazardzhik (281), Troyan (254) and Veliko Tarnovo (251). By **number of different crafts practised**, the order is different: Stolichna (119), Plovdiv (95), Gabrovo (63), Ruse (57), Shumen (50), Veliko Tarnovo (48), Pernik (43), Burgas (42), Haskovo (41) and Dobrich (39). Kyustendil is fifth by number of craftspeople but is not in the top 10 by diversity, i.e. it is concentrated in a small number of crafts. Plovdiv is exactly the opposite: second by diversity, but outside the top 10 by number of craftspeople.

Gabrovo is the only municipality outside the capital that holds a high position in both rankings (number of craftspeople and number of craft types) and comes closest to the profile of a genuine crafts centre.

There is a **pronounced age crisis**: the average age of craftspeople is 60.6 years, compared, for example, with 45.3 years for the country's population. There is an **inverted qualification pyramid** - 9 458 master craftspeople, 682 journeymen and 223 apprentices.

There is a **systematic decline in annual registrations of craftspeople** - from 1130 in 2008 to 92 in 2025, while as many as **19 crafts are practised by a single registered craftsperson**.

Municipalities with low activity

The north-west, and especially Vidin District, shows the most severe deficit in all three sections examined - industrial, literary and artistic, and crafts.

Fourteen municipalities have no industrial property object, no activity in the field of literary and artistic property and no registered craftsperson: Boynitsa, Bregovo, Gramada, Dimovo, Zemen, Kaynardzha, Kovachevtsi, Makresh, Ruzhintsi, Strumyani, Sarnitsa, Treklyano, Chuprene and Yakoruda. This is the hard core of zero activity.

By section, the picture is as follows: **45 municipalities are absent from the industrial property data for 2020-2025, 40 are absent from the literary and artistic property data for 2020-2025, and 59 have no registered craftsperson.** Crafts show the largest gap, namely over 22% of Bulgarian municipalities.

Geographically, the problem is concentrated. Vidin District has the most empty municipalities in all three sections: 7 of 11 without industrial property, 9 of 11 without literary and artistic property and 9 of 11 without craftspeople. It is followed by Montana, Blagoevgrad, Varna, Silistra, Stara Zagora and Pleven. In other words, the crisis is mainly in the north-west, with a second area in Silistra and Razgrad.

Special attention should be paid to **25 municipalities that appear in the data for both industrial and literary and artistic property but have no registered craftsperson.** They include Tundzha, which is third in the country by applications for inventions and has 40 chitalishta, as well as Vetrino, Primorsko, Devnya, Berkovitsa, Belogradchik and Nikopol.

There are also opposite cases: the four municipalities of Zavet, Nikolaevo, Satovcha and Tsar Kaloyan have registered craftspeople but do not appear in either of the other two sections.

INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY

INVENTIONS

A technical solution to a problem in any field of the economy.

Data summary

In 2024, 118 patent applications were filed from the territory of Bulgaria - **a decrease in applications from Bulgaria** compared with 2023: 118 against 252 applications. **Legal persons lead** significantly throughout the period: 78 against 40 applications for 2024.

Among the ten legal persons leading by number of applications, seven represent the scientific community: BAS through the Institute of Robotics (11), the Space Research and Technology Institute (10), the Institute of Mechanics (2) and the Institute of Solid State Physics (2), while among higher education institutions the leader is the Technical University of Sofia (5), followed by the Medical University - Plovdiv (3) and Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" (2).

A total of 24 municipalities and 5 higher education institutions have published patent applications in 2024.

It should be noted that among the leading applicants, both a scientific organisation (SRTI of BAS) and a private company (EnduroSat) are engaged in **space technologies**.

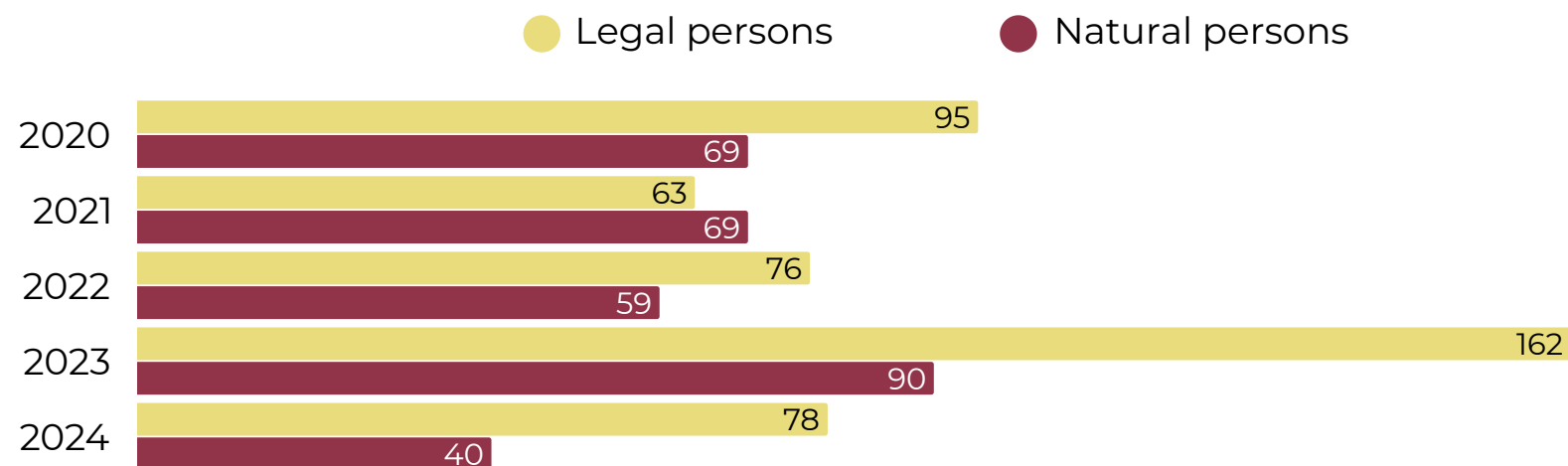
The data lag one year behind the other indicators in the study because of the 18-month period for publication of patent applications under the Law on Patents and Utility Model Registration.

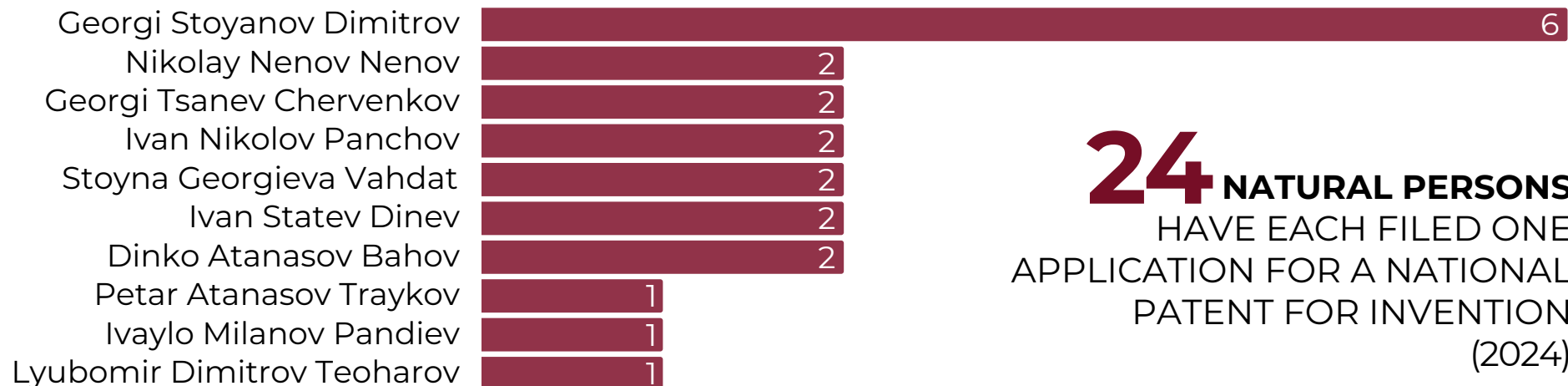
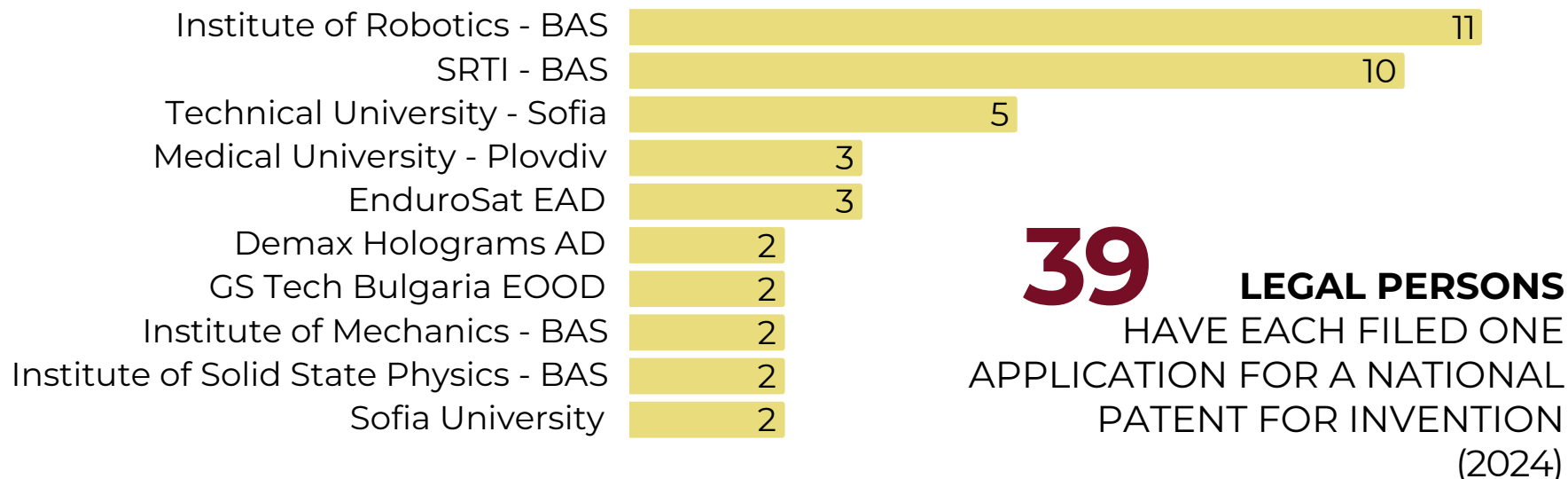
124 **APPLICATIONS FILED** (2024)
INCLUDING FROM ABROAD

78 **OF WHICH BY LEGAL PERSONS** (2024)
LOCATED IN THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

40 **OF WHICH BY NATURAL PERSONS** (2024)
LOCATED IN THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

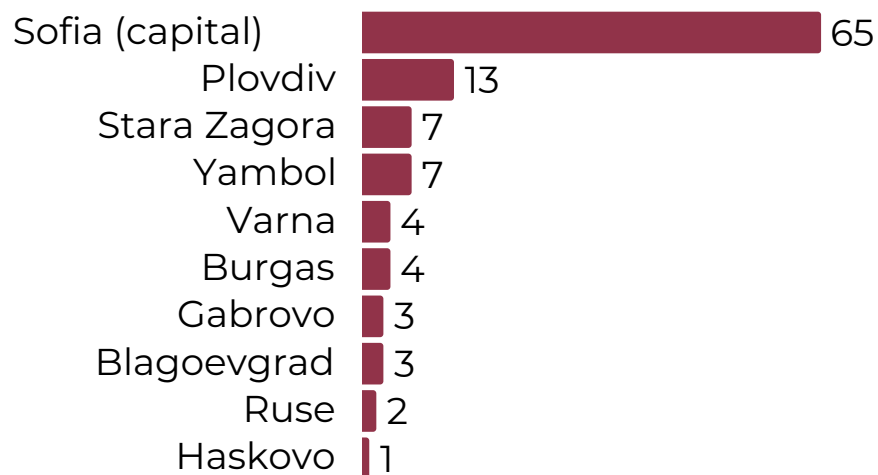
NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS FILED BY NATURAL AND LEGAL PERSONS FROM THE TERRITORY OF BULGARIA



TOP 10 NATURAL PERSONS WITH THE HIGHEST FILING ACTIVITY FOR INVENTIONS (2024)**TOP 10 LEGAL PERSONS WITH THE HIGHEST FILING ACTIVITY FOR INVENTIONS (2024)**

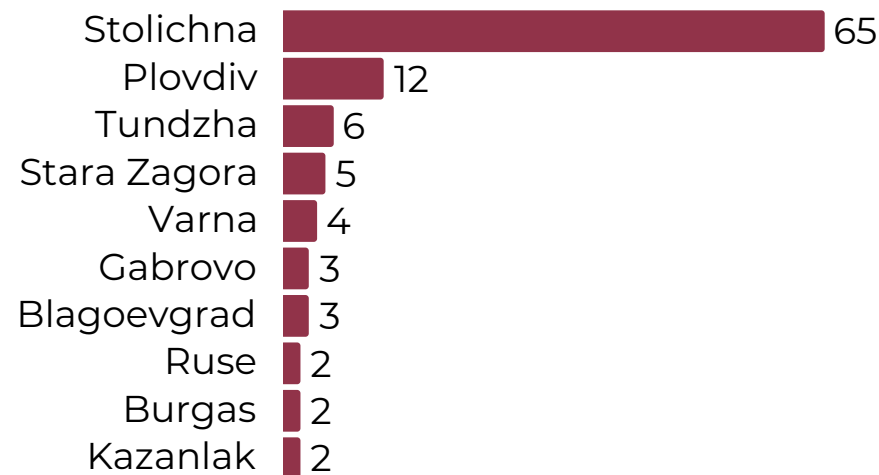
TOP 10 DISTRICTS WITH THE HIGHEST FILING ACTIVITY FOR INVENTION APPLICATIONS

(2024)



TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE HIGHEST FILING ACTIVITY FOR INVENTION APPLICATIONS

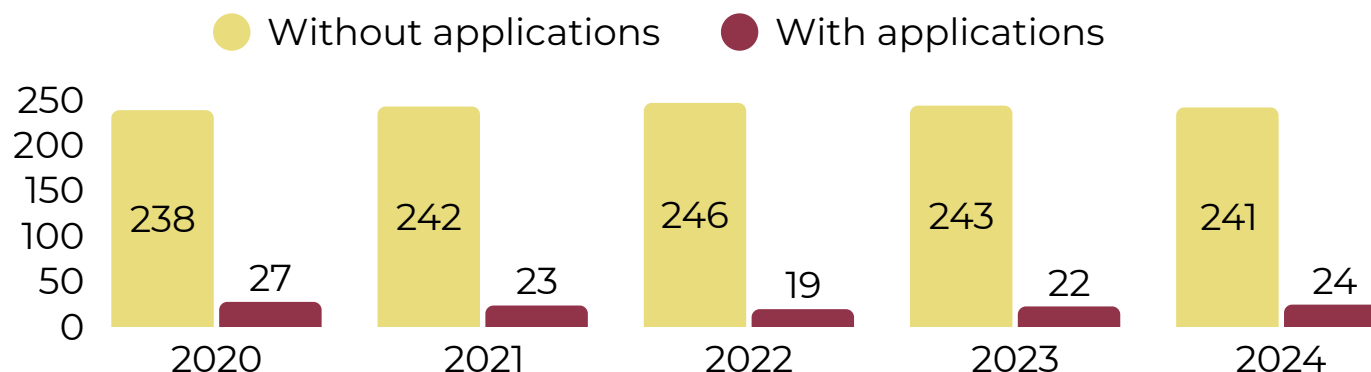
(2024)



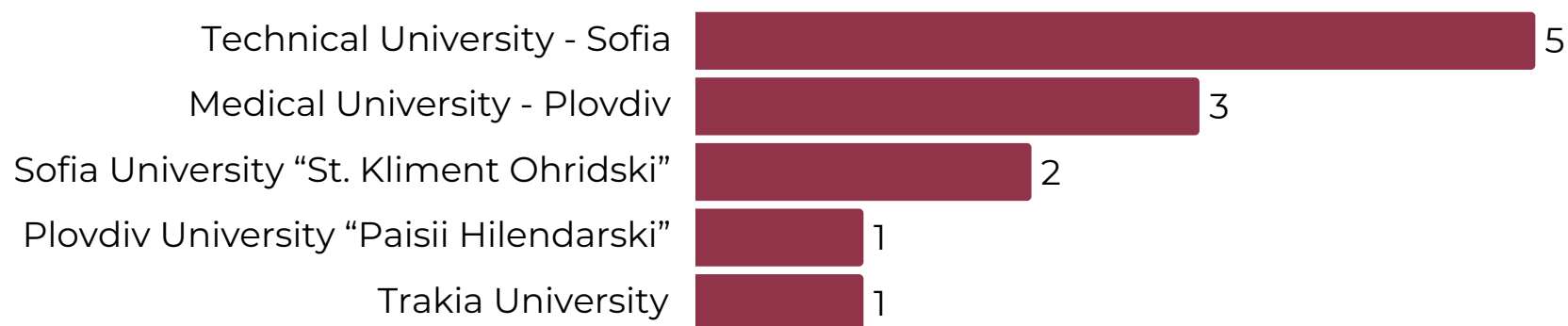
NUMBER OF MUNICIPALITIES WITH AND WITHOUT INVENTION APPLICATIONS FILED

IN THE PERIOD 2020-2024,
PATENT
APPLICATIONS
FOR INVENTIONS
WERE FILED
FROM THE TERRITORY OF

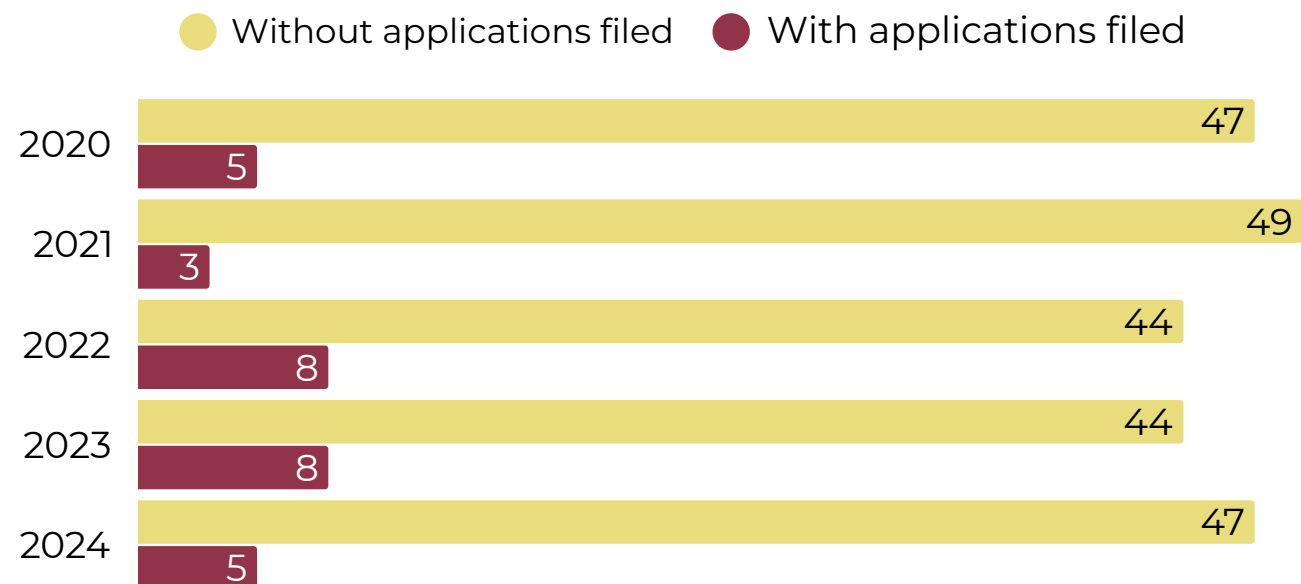
53 MUNICIPALITIES



INVENTION PATENT APPLICATIONS FILED BY HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (2024)



HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS WITH AND WITHOUT APPLICATIONS FOR NATIONAL INVENTION PATENTS



5 HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS
HAVE FILED APPLICATIONS
FOR NATIONAL INVENTION
PATENTS (2024)

*Until September 2024, there were
52 higher education institutions in
Bulgaria.*

UTILITY MODELS

A technical solution of a constructive or structural nature - a so-called “minor invention”.

Data summary

In 2025, 200 applications for registration of utility models were filed - **a decline in applications** from 258 in 2024. There is a **steady decline in natural-person applicants**, from 83 in 2020 to 28 in 2025.

The utility model is the most sought-after form of protection among higher education institutions: 10 of them filed applications in 2025, with TU-Sofia accounting for 18 applications.

The number of municipalities from whose territory applications were filed is almost double that for invention patent applications - 47 municipalities and 21 districts with applications. There is no significant change compared with 2024.

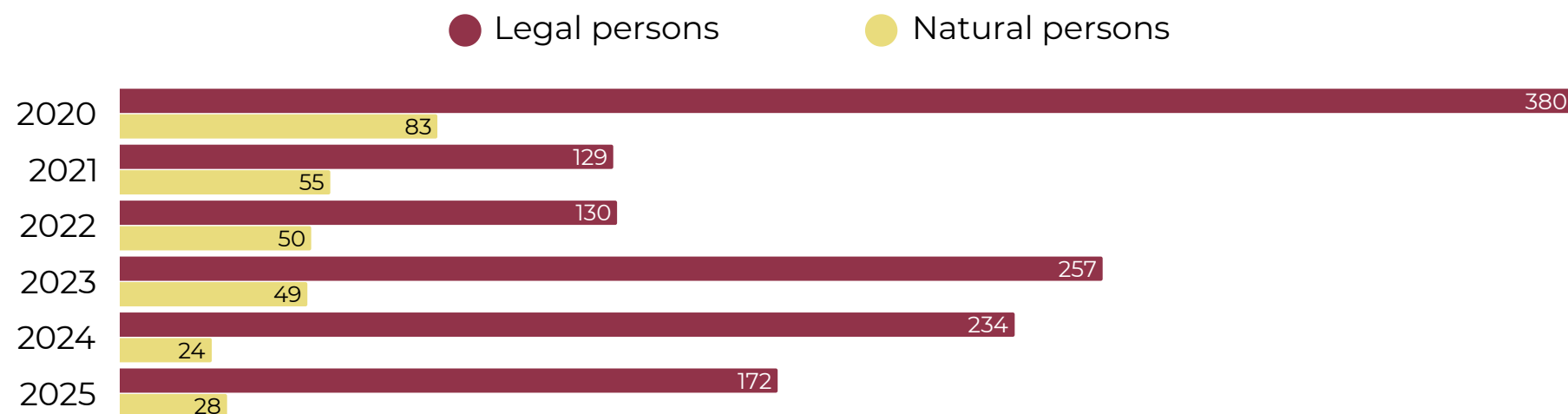
Strong fragmentation among natural-person applicants - 26 persons with one application each, while the leader has only 2.

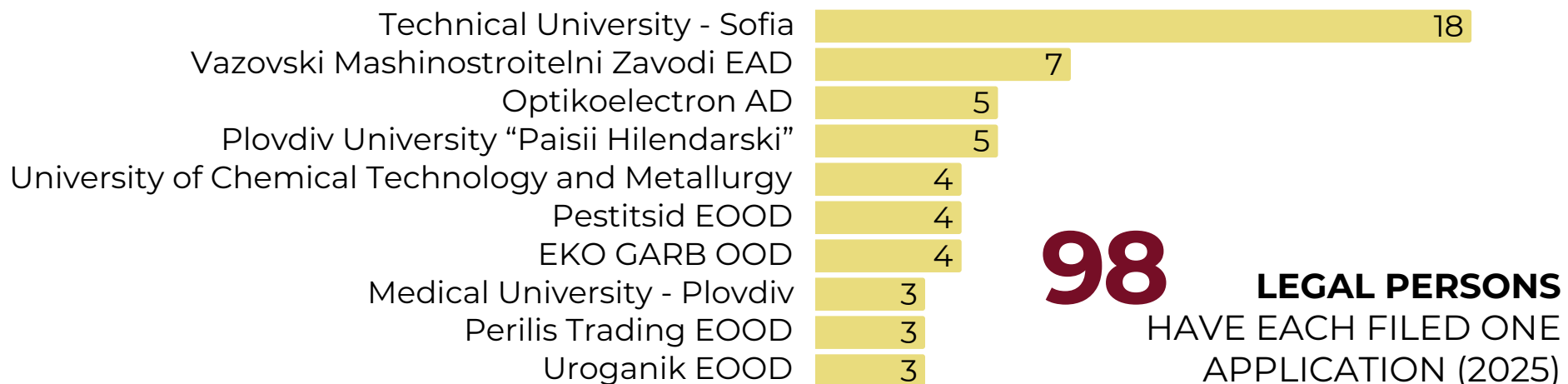
200 APPLICATIONS FILED (2025)
INCLUDING FROM ABROAD

172 OF WHICH BY LEGAL PERSONS (2025)
LOCATED IN THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

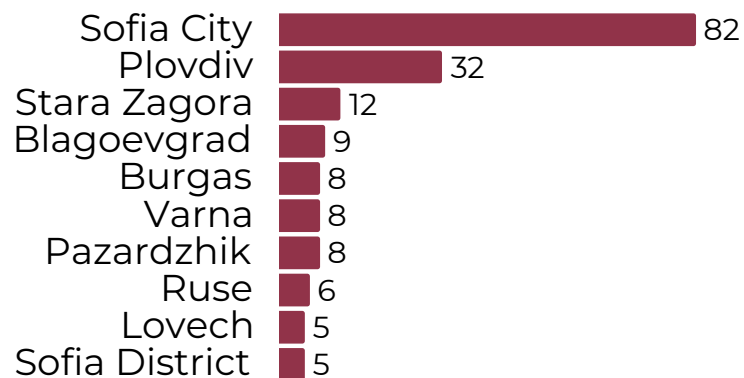
28 OF WHICH BY NATURAL PERSONS (2025)
LOCATED IN THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS FILED BY NATURAL AND LEGAL PERSONS FROM THE TERRITORY OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

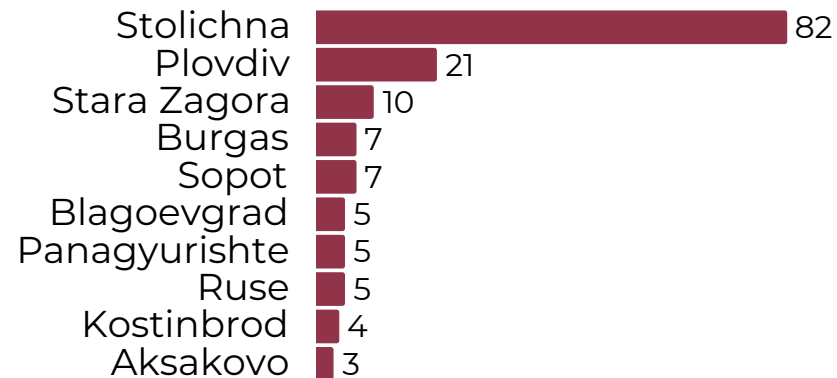


TOP 10 NATURAL PERSONS WITH THE HIGHEST FILING ACTIVITY FOR UTILITY MODELS (2025)**TOP 10 LEGAL PERSONS WITH THE HIGHEST FILING ACTIVITY FOR UTILITY MODELS (2025)**

TOP 10 DISTRICTS WITH THE HIGHEST FILING ACTIVITY FOR UTILITY MODEL APPLICATIONS (2025)



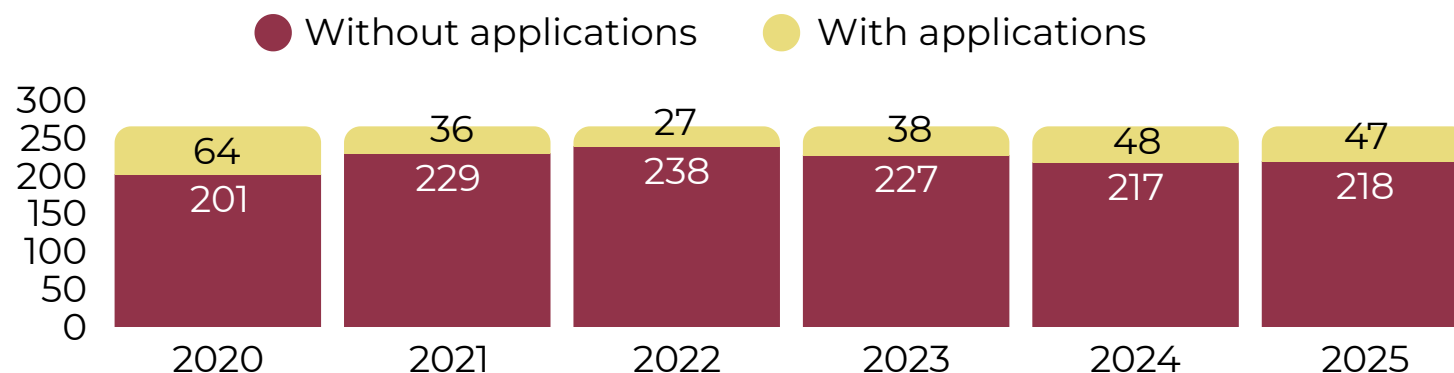
TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE HIGHEST FILING ACTIVITY FOR UTILITY MODEL APPLICATIONS (2025)

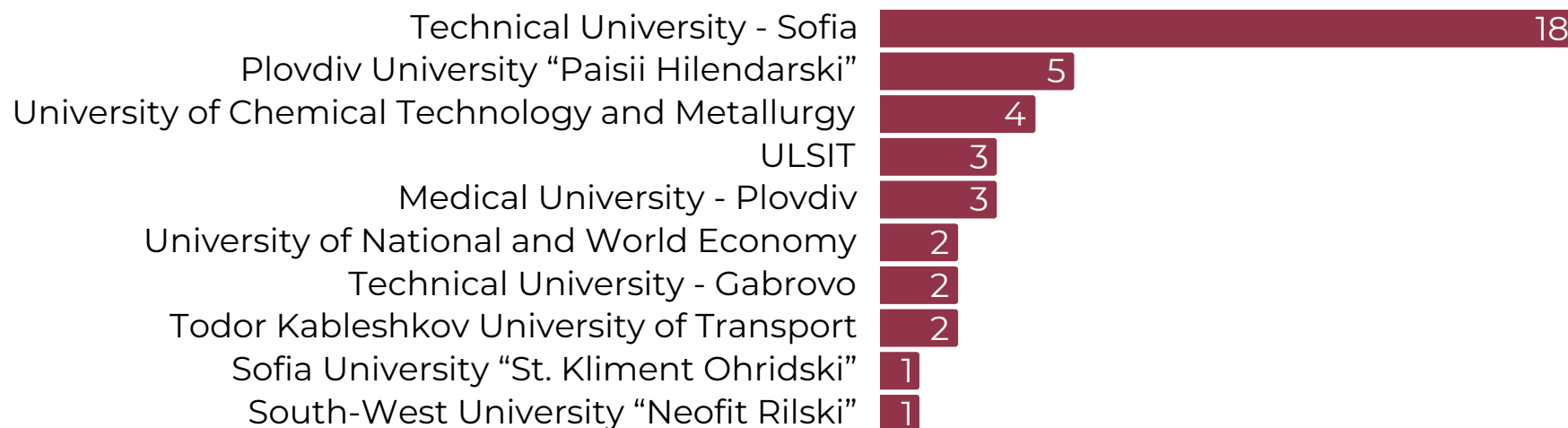
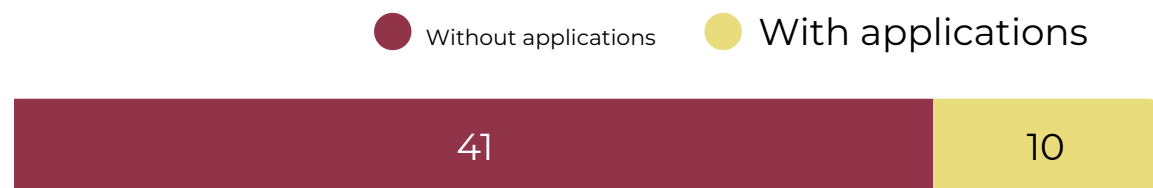


21 DISTRICTS
HAVE FILED
UTILITY MODEL
APPLICATIONS
(2025)

47 MUNICIPALITIES
HAVE FILED
UTILITY MODEL
APPLICATIONS
(2025)

NUMBER OF MUNICIPALITIES WITH AND WITHOUT UTILITY MODEL APPLICATIONS FILED



TOP 10 UNIVERSITIES WITH THE HIGHEST FILING ACTIVITY FOR UTILITY MODELS (2025)**UNIVERSITIES WITH AND WITHOUT UTILITY MODEL APPLICATIONS FILED (2025)**

10 UNIVERSITIES
HAVE FILED APPLICATIONS
FOR UTILITY MODELS

After September 2024, there are now 51 higher education institutions in Bulgaria.

INDUSTRIAL DESIGNS

*The visible appearance of a product
or part of a product.*

Data summary

In 2025, 82 applications for registration of industrial designs were published. **Activity recovered compared with the unusually low 2024** (38 applications), but remained below the 2020-2023 levels (132, 120, 94, 109).

This indicator is **the only one in the field of industrial property in which the capital does not rank first at district level**: Plovdiv District (23) is ahead of Sofia City District (20). In the ranking by municipality, Stolichna remains first with 20 against 13 for Plovdiv.

Territorial activity is observed in 26 municipalities and 16 districts - **the narrowest territorial reach after inventions**.

Industrial design is the least represented object in the academic sector: only 2 higher education institutions with 1 application each.

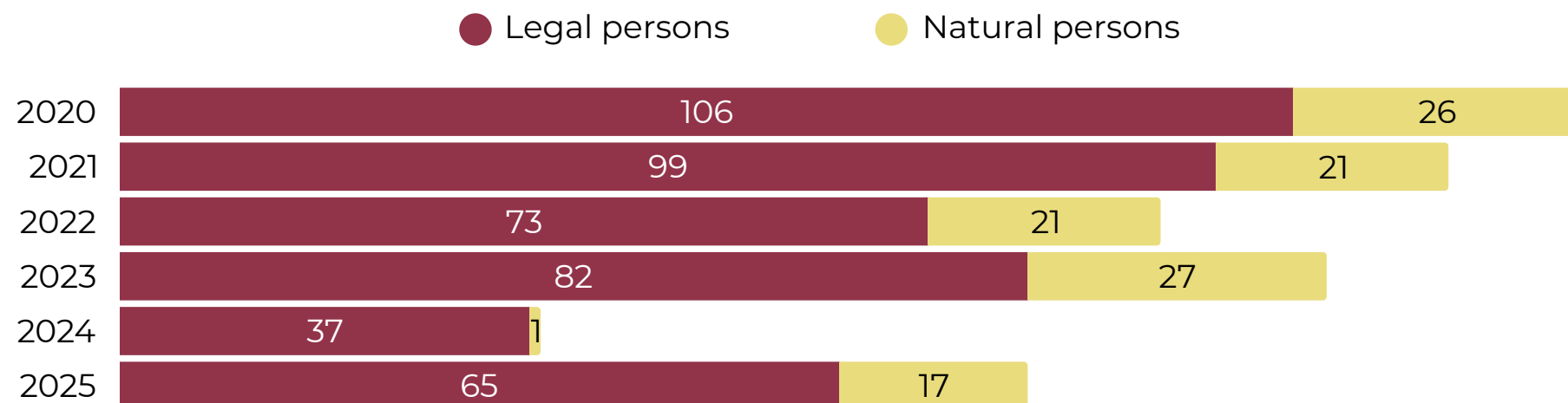
Here too, as with utility models, there is **fragmentation in applications by natural persons** - 15 applicants have one application each, and only one person has 2.

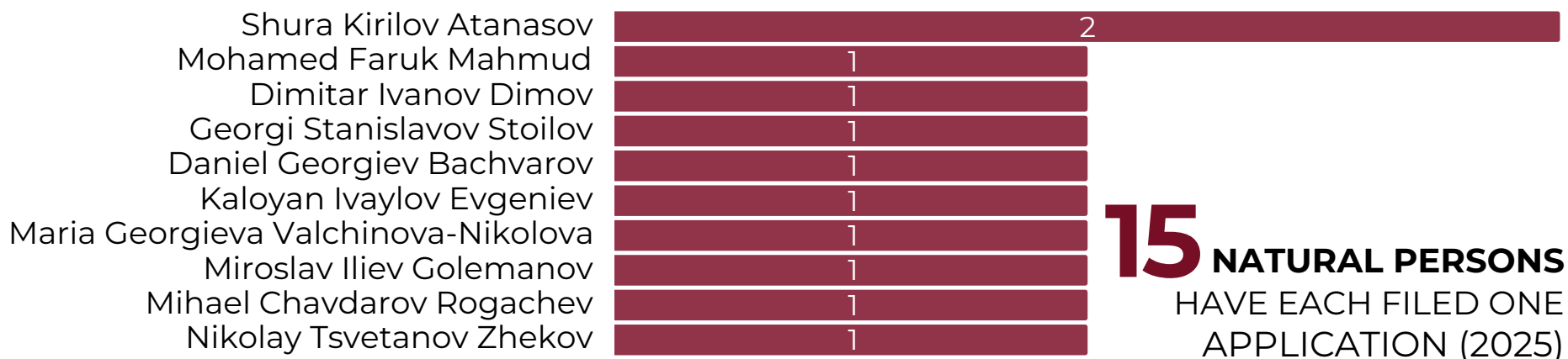
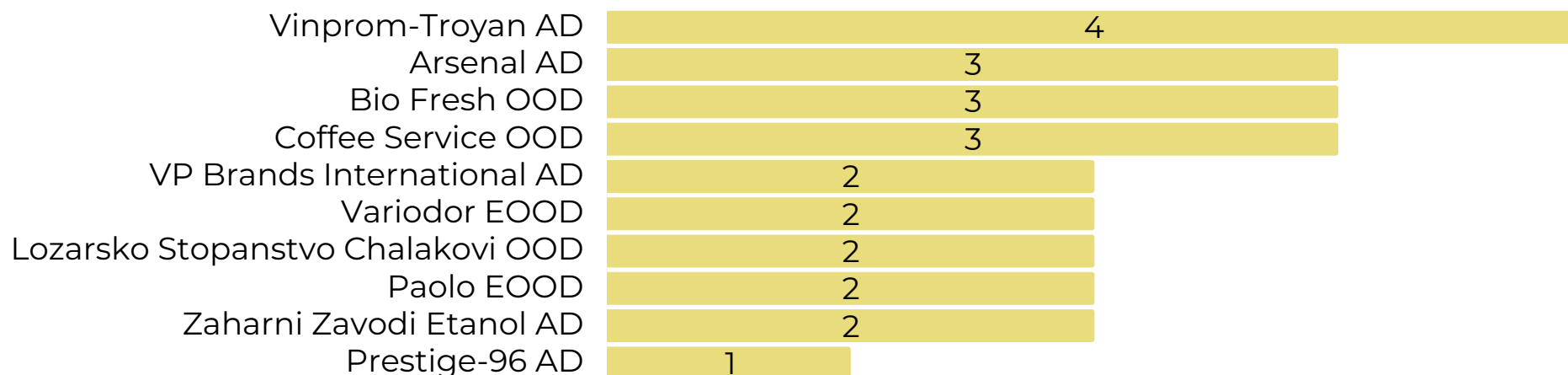
82 PUBLISHED APPLICATIONS (2025)
INCLUDING FROM ABROAD

65 OF WHICH BY LEGAL PERSONS (2025)
LOCATED IN THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

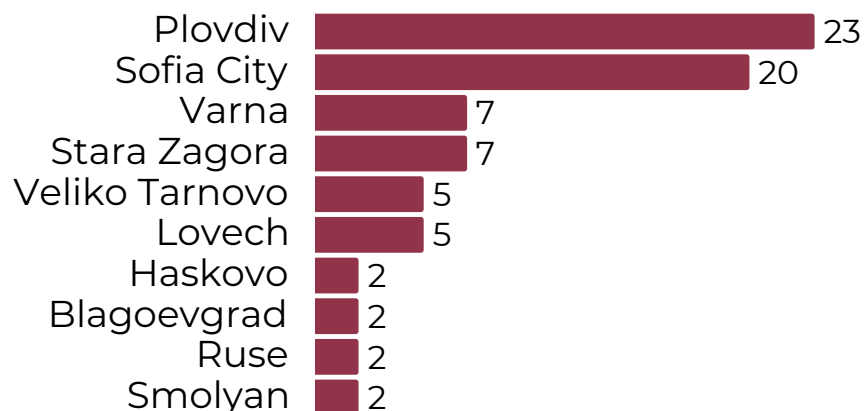
17 OF WHICH BY NATURAL PERSONS (2025)
LOCATED IN THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS FILED BY NATURAL AND LEGAL PERSONS FROM THE TERRITORY OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

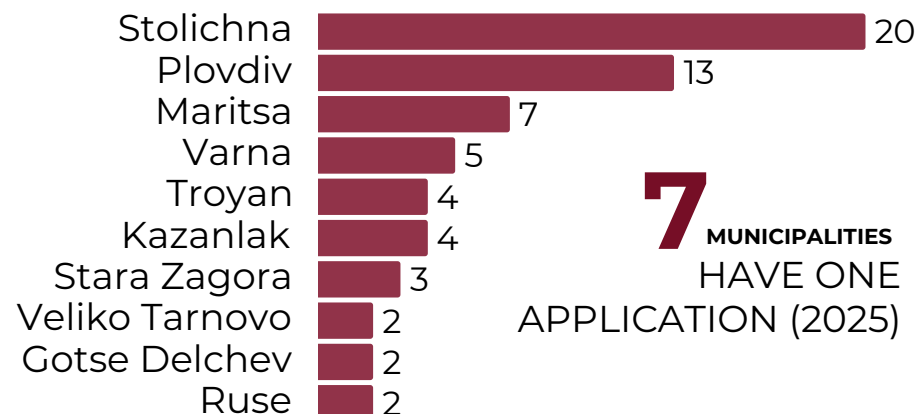


TOP 10 NATURAL PERSONS WITH THE HIGHEST FILING ACTIVITY FOR INDUSTRIAL DESIGNS (2025)**TOP 10 LEGAL PERSONS WITH THE HIGHEST FILING ACTIVITY FOR INDUSTRIAL DESIGNS (2025)**

TOP 10 DISTRICTS WITH THE HIGHEST FILING ACTIVITY FOR INDUSTRIAL DESIGN APPLICATIONS (2025)



TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE HIGHEST FILING ACTIVITY FOR INDUSTRIAL DESIGN APPLICATIONS (2025)

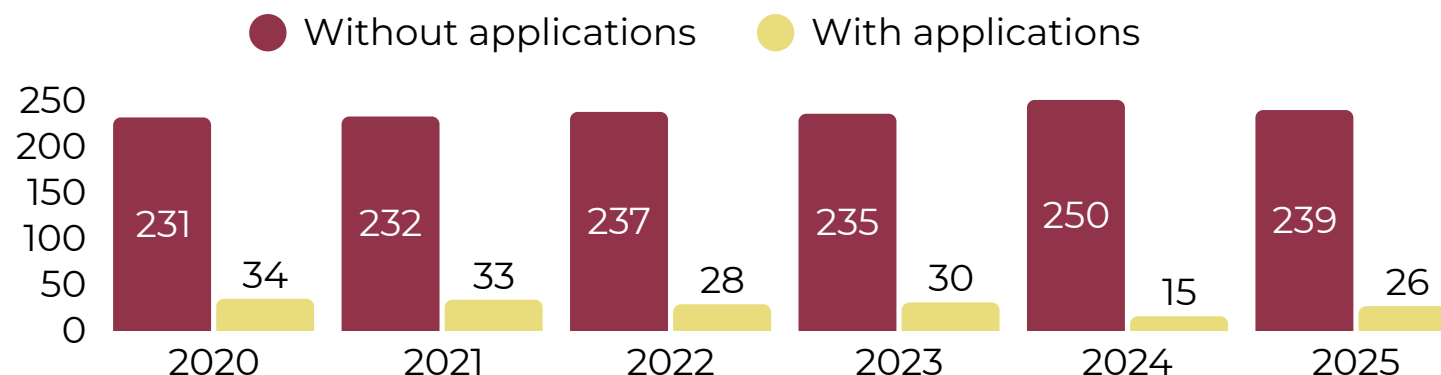


7 MUNICIPALITIES
HAVE ONE
APPLICATION (2025)

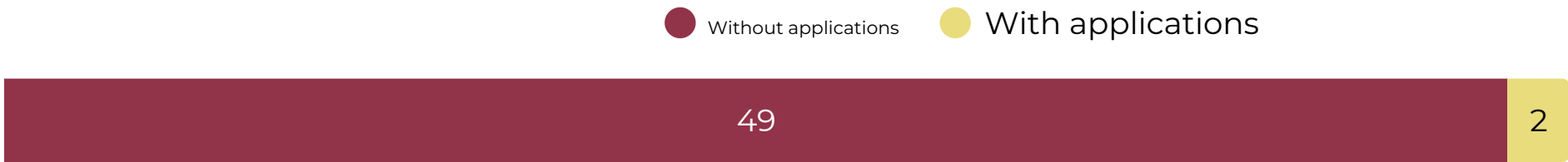
16 DISTRICTS
HAVE FILED
INDUSTRIAL DESIGN
APPLICATIONS
(2025)

26 MUNICIPALITIES
HAVE FILED
INDUSTRIAL DESIGN
APPLICATIONS
(2025)

NUMBER OF MUNICIPALITIES WITH AND WITHOUT INDUSTRIAL DESIGN APPLICATIONS FILED



UNIVERSITIES WITH AND WITHOUT INDUSTRIAL DESIGN APPLICATIONS FILED (2025)



FILING ACTIVITY FOR INDUSTRIAL DESIGN APPLICATIONS (2025)



TRADE MARKS

A sign capable of distinguishing the goods or services of one person from those of other persons.

Data summary

Traditionally, applications for registration of trade marks account for the largest volume among the industrial property indicators - 3755 applications filed from the territory of Bulgaria in 2025, of which 3 069 by legal persons and 686 by natural persons located in Bulgaria.

Compared with 2024: **legal persons increase** (2931 to 3069), **natural persons increase** (612 to 686).

Trade marks are the indicator in this section with the **widest territorial coverage** - 145 municipalities with applications, compared with 125 for 2024. **Applications were filed from the territory of all 28 districts**, i.e. full national coverage, which no other object achieves.

The gambling sector retains its dominance: Euro Games Technology (171) and EGT Digital (57). 7 higher education institutions have filed trade mark applications, **with UNWE leading with 6 applications.**

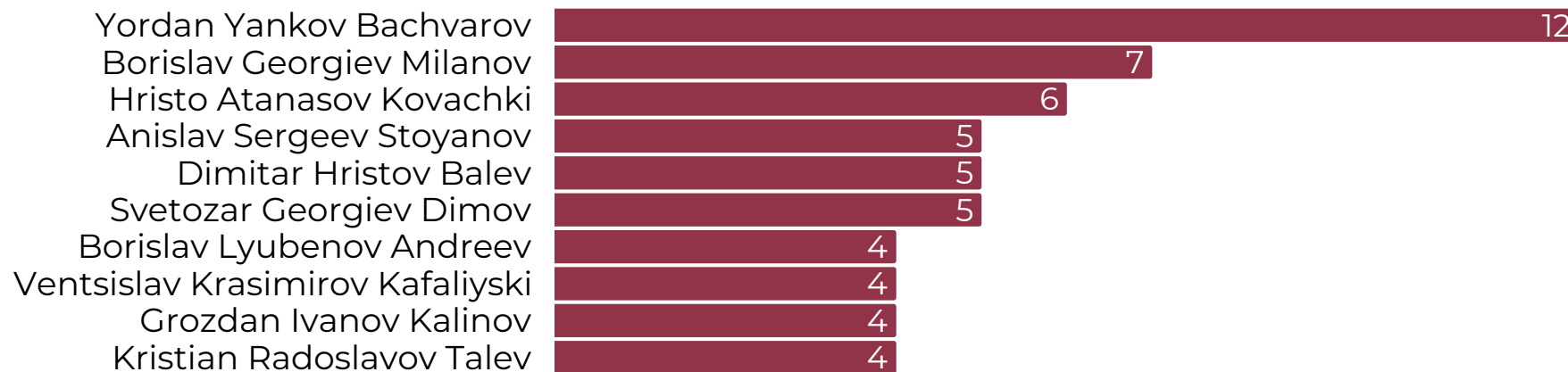
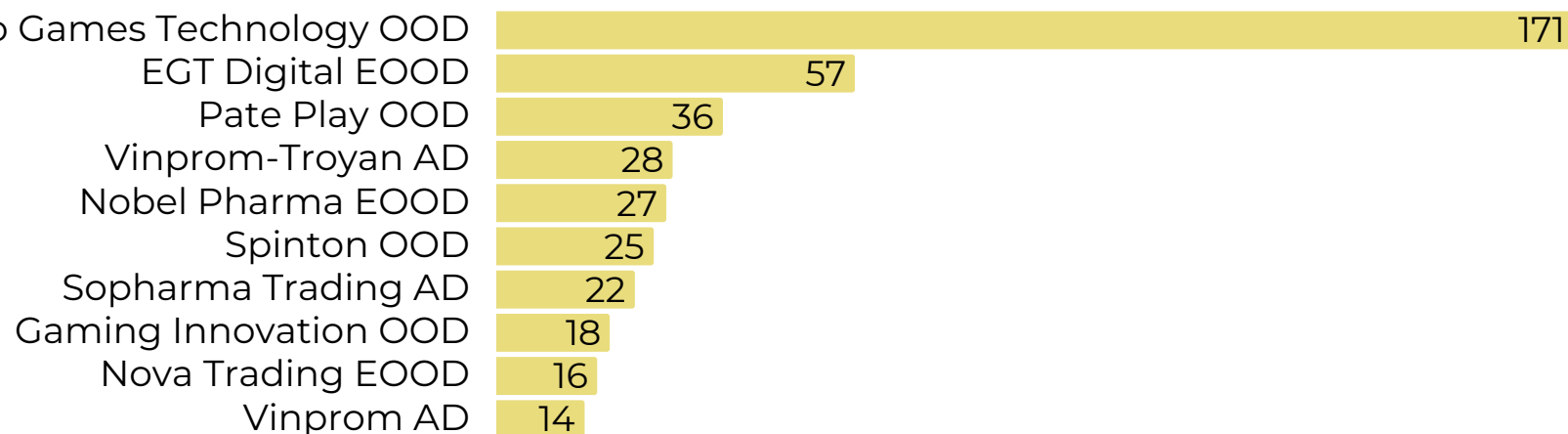
3 761 **APPLICATIONS FILED** (2025)
INCLUDING FROM ABROAD

3 069 **OF WHICH BY LEGAL PERSONS** (2025)
LOCATED IN THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

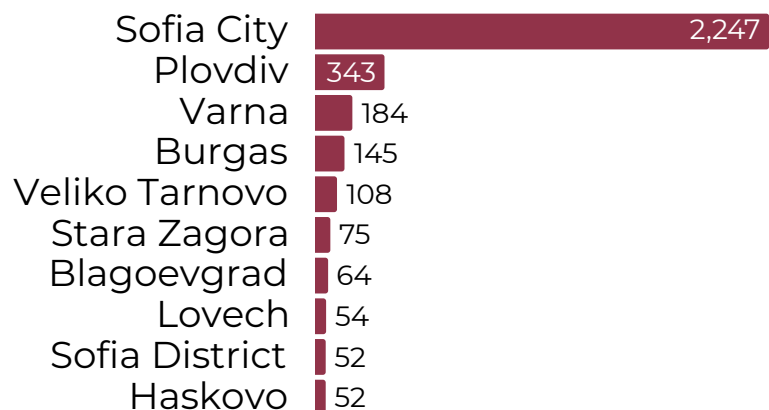
686 **OF WHICH BY NATURAL PERSONS** (2025)
LOCATED IN THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS FILED BY NATURAL AND LEGAL PERSONS FROM THE TERRITORY OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

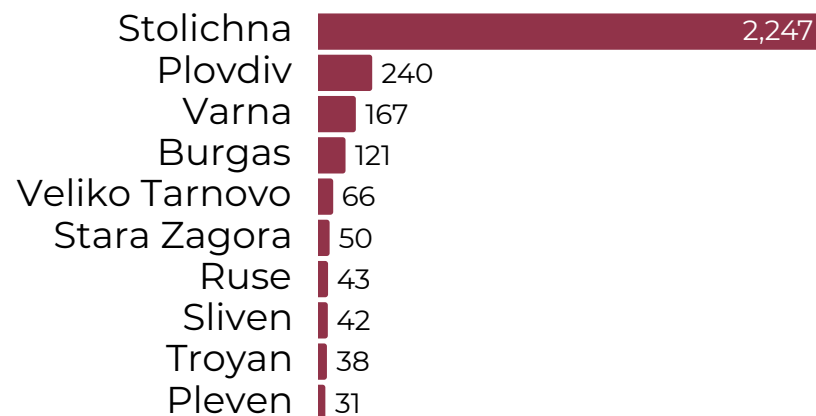


TOP 10 NATURAL PERSONS WITH THE HIGHEST FILING ACTIVITY FOR TRADE MARKS (2025)**TOP 10 LEGAL PERSONS WITH THE HIGHEST FILING ACTIVITY FOR TRADE MARKS (2025)**

TOP 10 DISTRICTS WITH THE HIGHEST FILING ACTIVITY FOR TRADE MARK APPLICATIONS (2025)



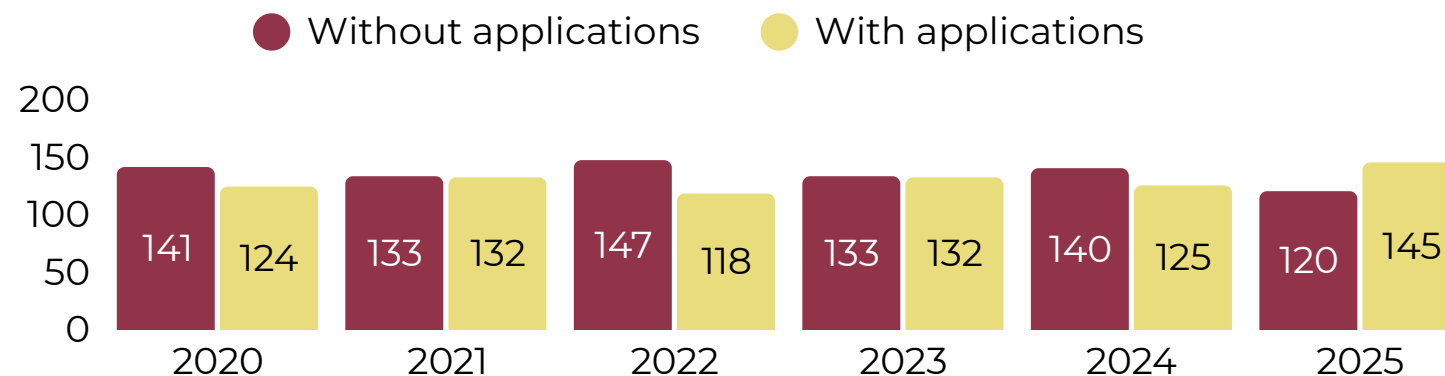
TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE HIGHEST FILING ACTIVITY FOR TRADE MARK APPLICATIONS (2025)



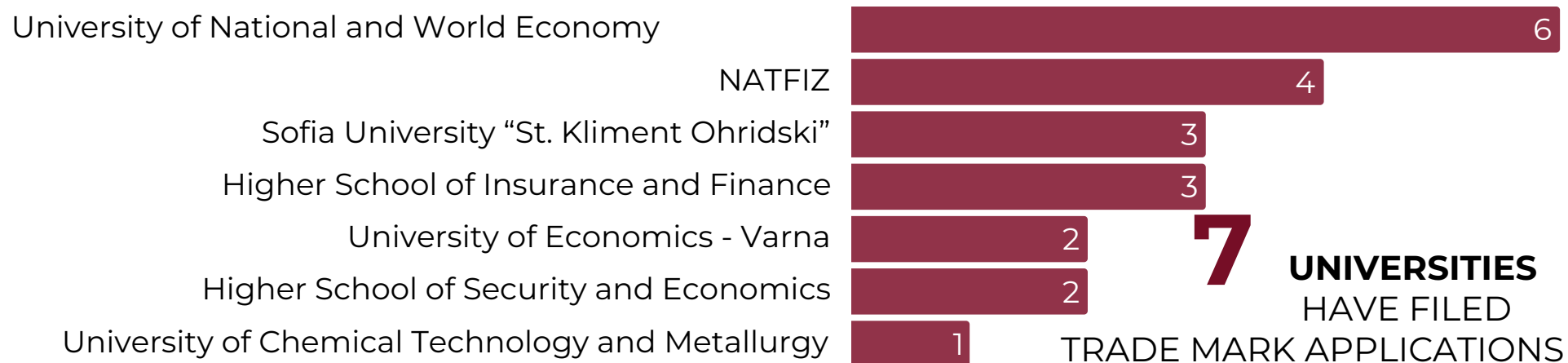
28 DISTRICTS
HAVE TRADE MARK
APPLICATIONS (2025)

145 MUNICIPALITIES
HAVE TRADE MARK
APPLICATIONS (2025)

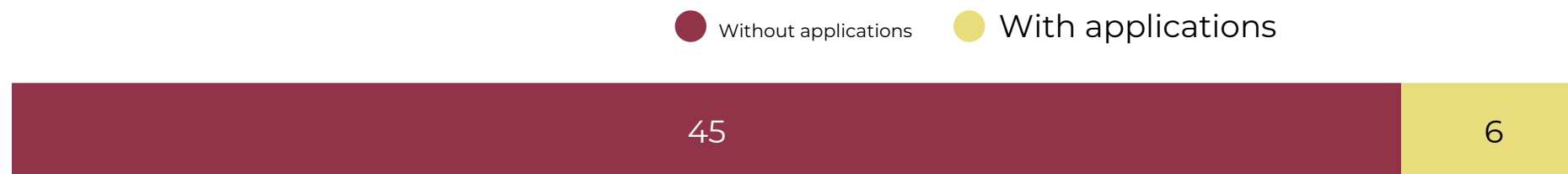
NUMBER OF MUNICIPALITIES WITH AND WITHOUT TRADE MARK APPLICATIONS FILED



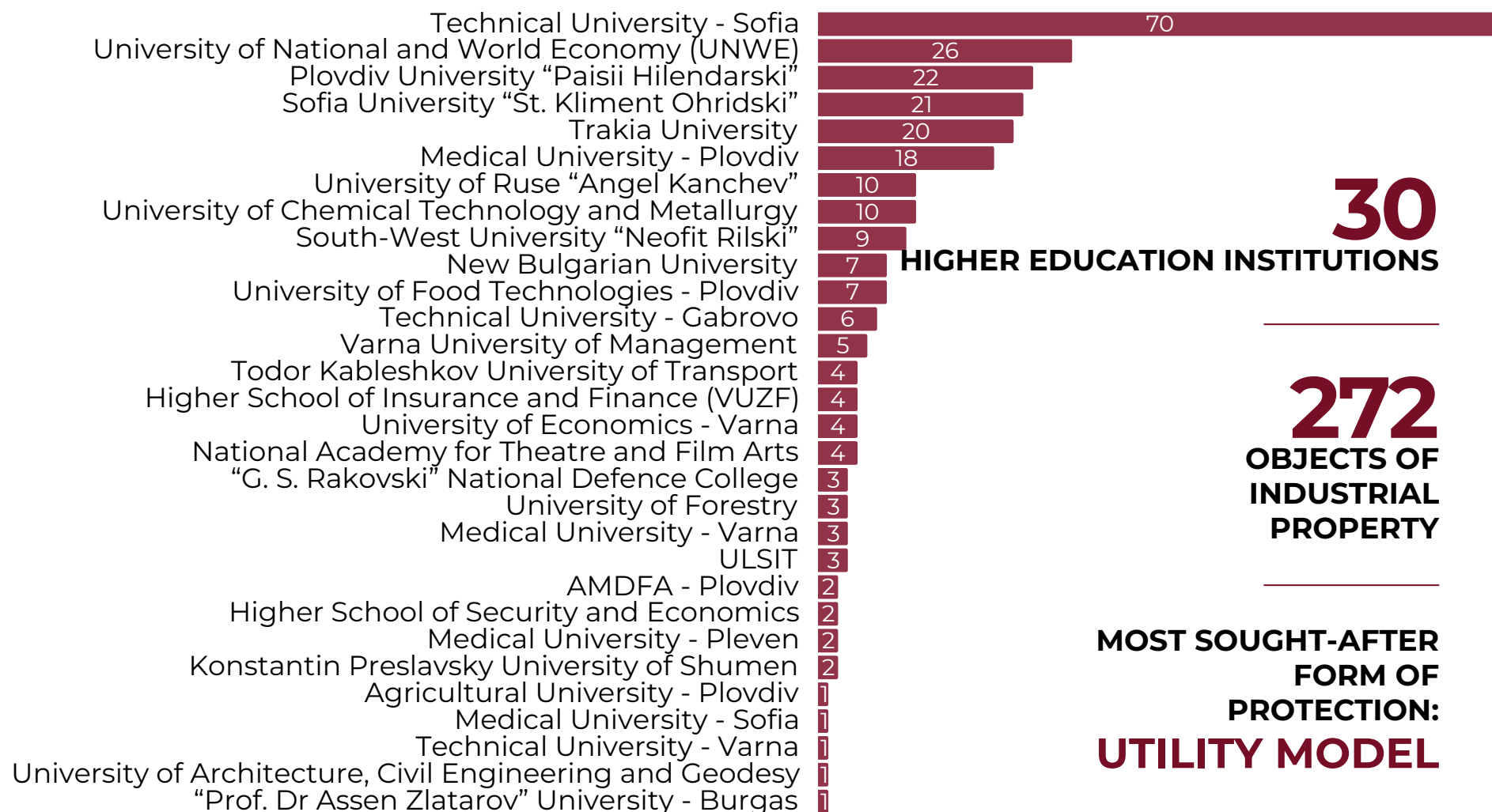
UNIVERSITIES WITH FILING ACTIVITY FOR TRADE MARKS (2025)



UNIVERSITIES WITH AND WITHOUT TRADE MARK APPLICATIONS FILED (2025)



FILING ACTIVITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA FOR 2020-2025 (NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS FOR INVENTION PATENTS, UTILITY MODELS, TRADE MARKS AND INDUSTRIAL DESIGNS)



LITERARY AND ARTISTIC PROPERTY

CINEMAS AND FILMS PRODUCED

Data summary

In 2025 the country has 85 cinemas, **an increase of 15 cinemas compared with 2020.**

The number of municipalities with a cinema is unchanged compared with 2024 - 53 municipalities, 43 of which have only one cinema.

Film production reached a record for the period 2020 - 2024: 44 feature films and 146 short and medium-length films in 2024. **Feature film production has grown for the fourth consecutive year:** 20, 24, 37, 44.

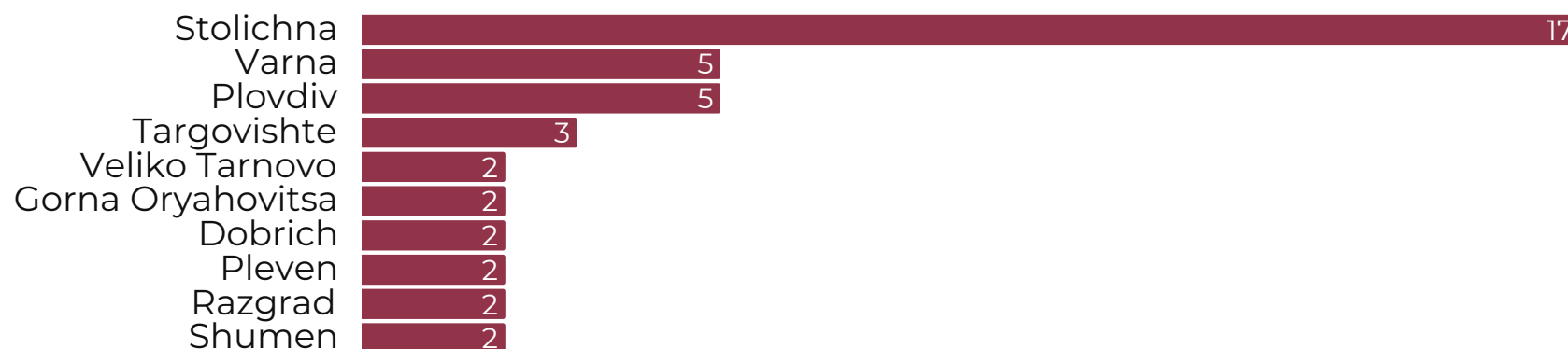
There is **absolute territorial concentration in film production** - only 1 of 265 municipalities produced a film throughout the period: Stolichna Municipality.

The most recent film data provided for the purposes of the study are for 2024.

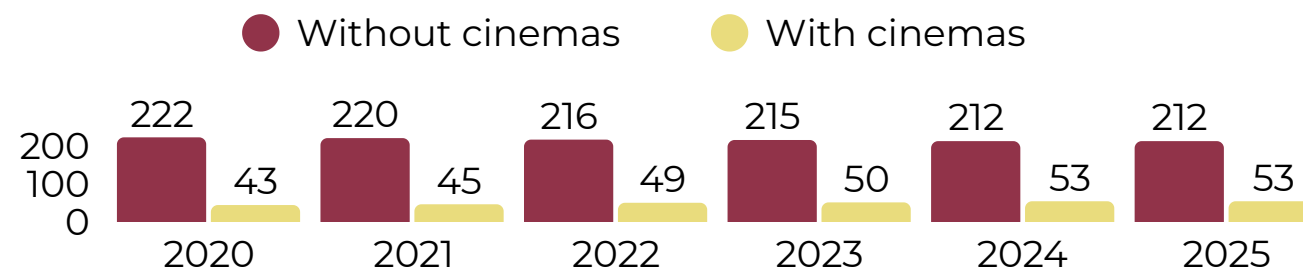
NUMBER OF CINEMAS



TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE MOST CINEMAS (2025)

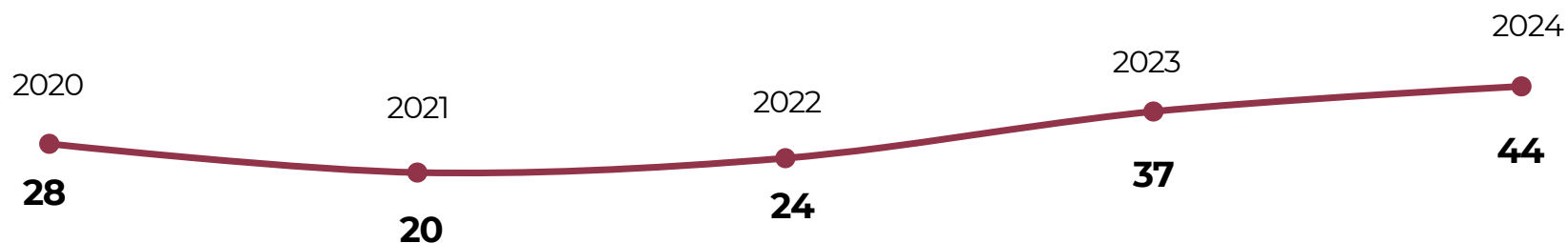


NUMBER OF MUNICIPALITIES IN BULGARIA WITH AND WITHOUT A CINEMA (2025)

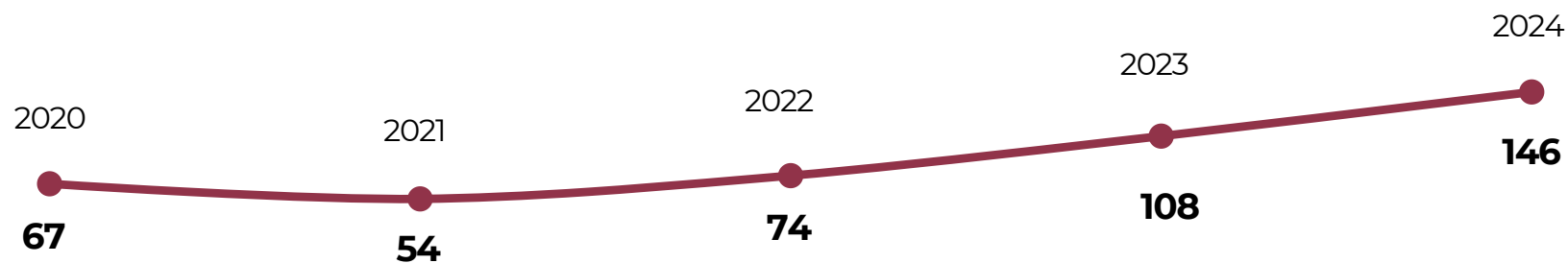


43 of 53 MUNICIPALITIES
WITH A CINEMA HAVE ONLY
ONE CINEMA (2025)

NUMBER OF FEATURE FILMS PRODUCED (2024)



NUMBER OF SHORT AND MEDIUM-LENGTH FILMS PRODUCED (2024)



1 of 265 MUNICIPALITIES
 HAVE PRODUCED A FILM IN THE PERIOD 2019 - 2025
 STOLICHNA MUNICIPALITY

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS PUBLISHED

Data summary

The total circulation of books and pamphlets published is 5 312 526 for 2025, compared with 6 306 386 for 2024 - **a significant decline in circulation.**

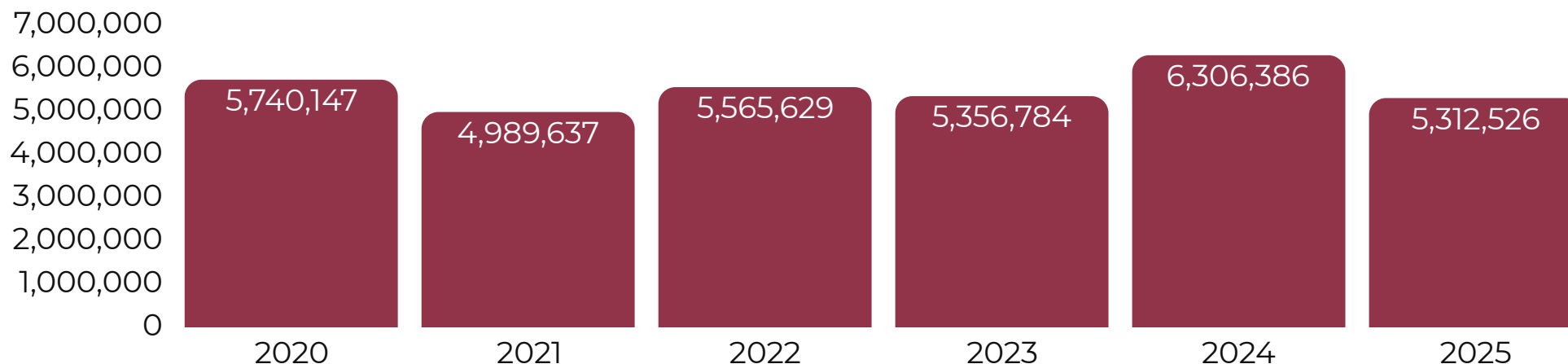
The number of titles published has increased compared with 2024 - 10 267 titles in 2025, but remains below the peak of 11 828 in 2022.

The average circulation per title continues to decline, which means that **publishing activity is fragmented.**

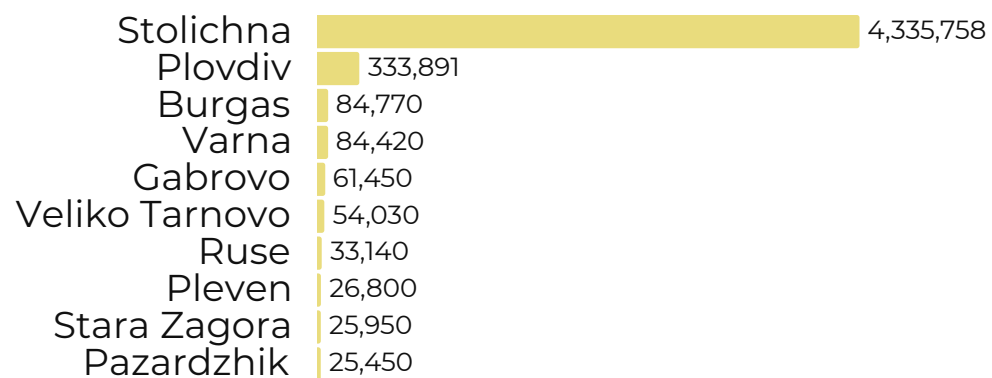
Within the period 2020-2025, 2025 shows the widest territorial coverage: 93 municipalities with published titles, compared with 54 in 2020. Of all 93 active municipalities, 24 have only one published title each.

Stolichna Municipality accounts for 64% of titles and 82% of circulation.

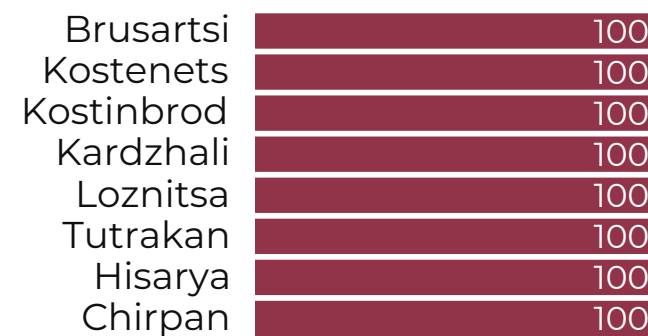
TOTAL CIRCULATION BY YEAR, NUMBER



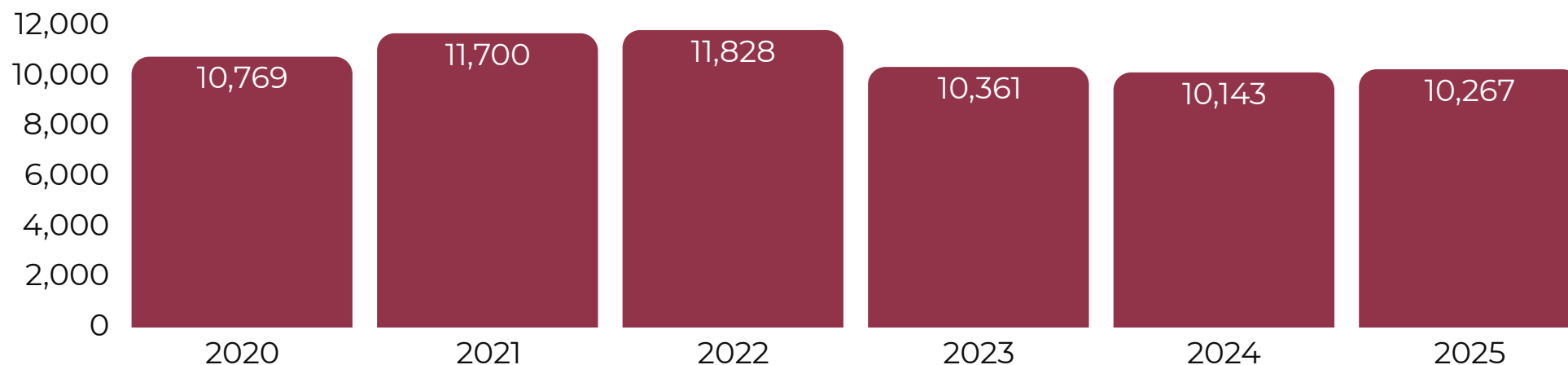
TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE HIGHEST CIRCULATION OF BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS PUBLISHED, NUMBER (2025)



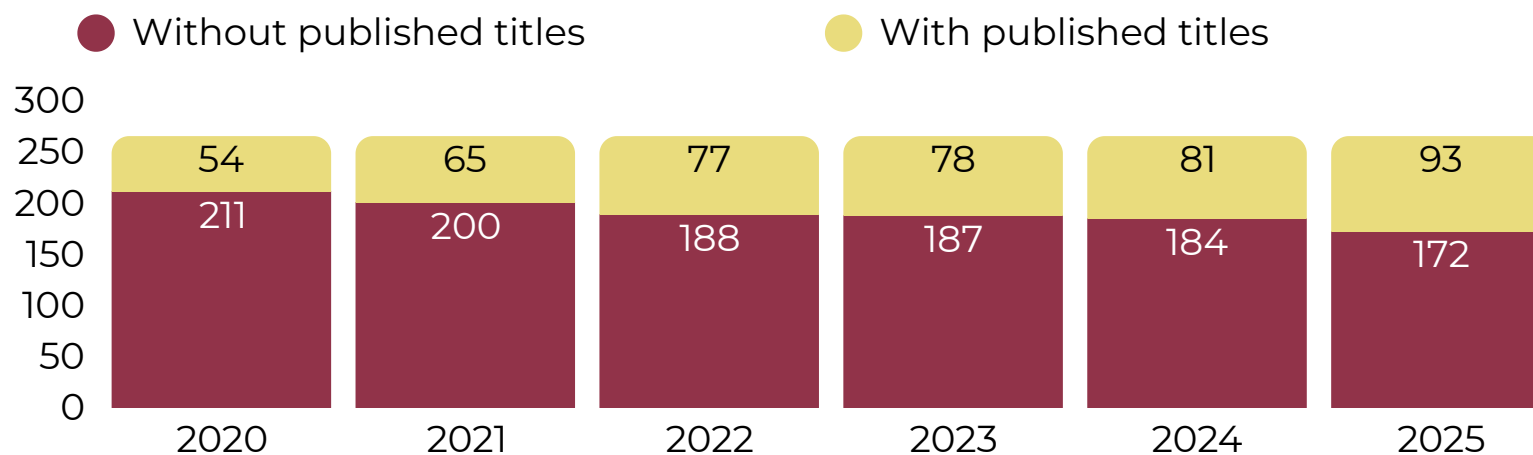
MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE LOWEST CIRCULATION OF BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS PUBLISHED, NUMBER (2025)



NUMBER OF TITLES PUBLISHED



NUMBER OF MUNICIPALITIES IN BULGARIA WITH AND WITHOUT BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS PUBLISHED



24 of 93
MUNICIPALITIES HAVE
PUBLISHED ONLY
ONE TITLE EACH
(2025)

TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE MOST TITLES PUBLISHED, NUMBER (2025)

24 of 93 MUNICIPALITIES
HAVE PUBLISHED ONLY ONE
TITLE EACH (2025)

MAGAZINES AND BULLETINS PUBLISHED

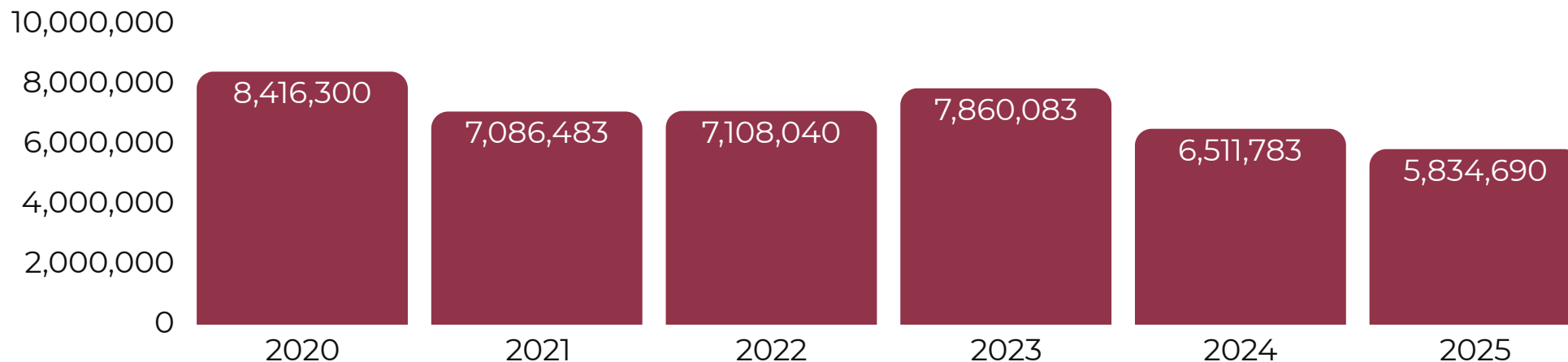
Data summary

The total circulation of magazines and bulletins published in 2025 is 5 834 690, **a significant decline in circulation** from 8 416 300 in 2020, i.e. about 31% for the period 2020-2025.

The total number of magazine and bulletin titles published is increasing, from 481 in 2024 to 525 in 2025. **Fragmentation** is evident in the ratio between the two indicators: the number of titles increases (+9.1%), while circulation shrinks over the last year (-10.4%).

We can note **stagnation in territorial coverage** in the publishing of magazines and bulletins - 24 municipalities in 2025, and between 18 and 27 throughout the period. **Exceptional concentration in publishing**: Stolichna Municipality accounts for 82% of titles and 99% of circulation.

TOTAL CIRCULATION OF MAGAZINES AND BULLETINS PUBLISHED, NUMBER



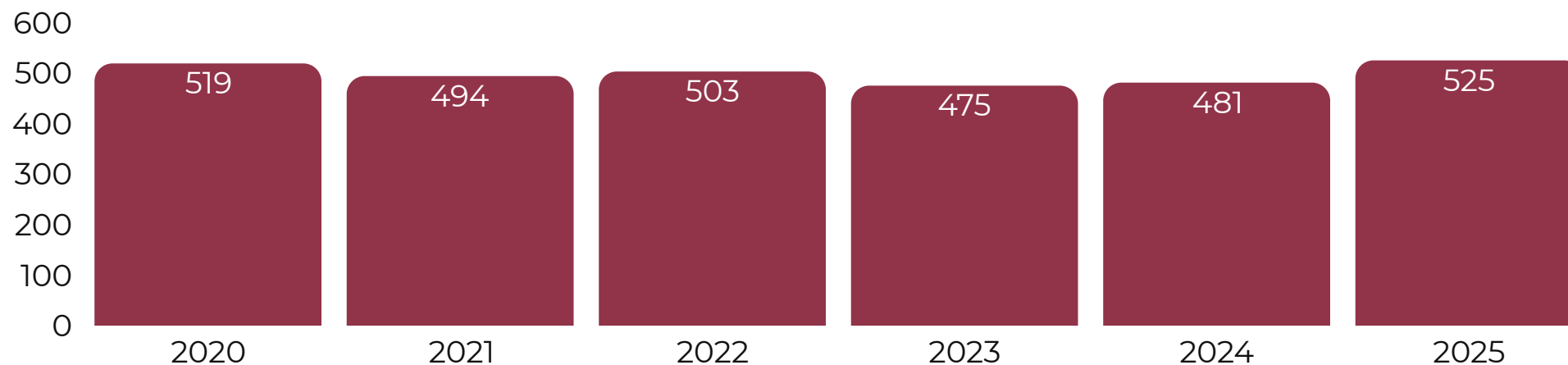
TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE HIGHEST CIRCULATION OF MAGAZINES AND BULLETINS PUBLISHED, NUMBER (2025)

Stolichna	5,758,386
Plovdiv	22,095
Ruse	17,110
Kavarna	12,500
Madan	7,700
Kozloduy	3,000
Pernik	2,400
Varna	1,621
Stara Zagora	1,484
Blagoevgrad	1,303

MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE LOWEST CIRCULATION, NUMBER (2025)

Veliko Tarnovo	671
Haskovo	661
Simeonovgrad	432
Smolyan	230
Svishtov	220
Yambol	190
Lovech	100
Pravets	100
Dolna Mitropolia	1
Montana	1

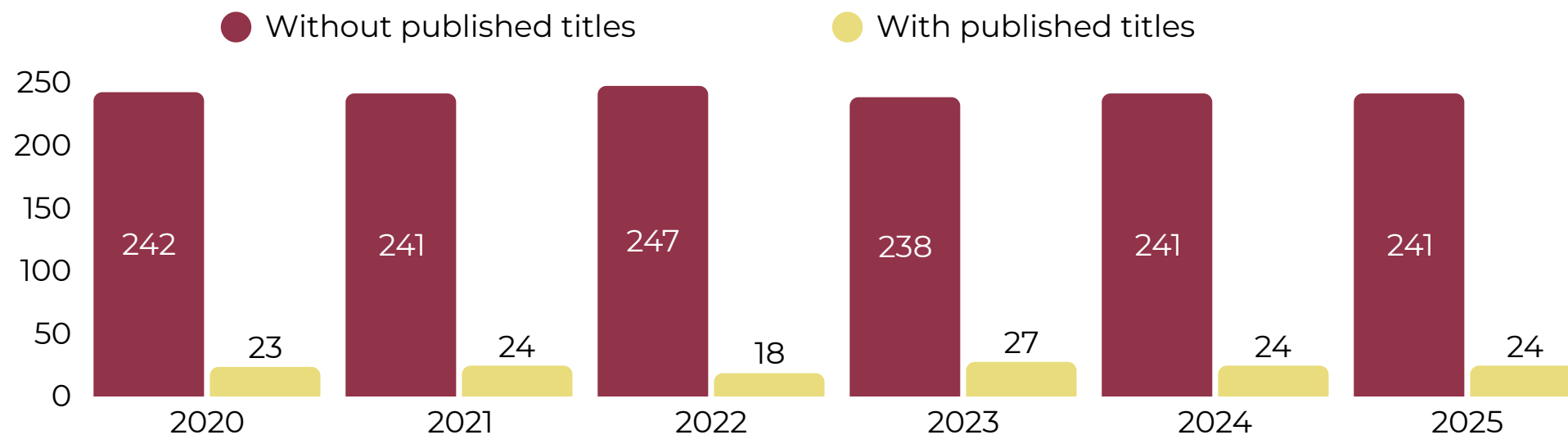
TOTAL NUMBER OF MAGAZINE AND BULLETIN TITLES PUBLISHED



TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE MOST MAGAZINE AND BULLETIN TITLES PUBLISHED, NUMBER (2025)



MUNICIPALITIES IN WHICH MAGAZINE AND BULLETIN TITLES HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED



NEWSPAPERS PUBLISHED

Data summary

In 2025, the total circulation of newspapers published is 88 500 917, a decrease compared with 2024, when it was 95 622 768, and **a decrease of about 28% compared with 2020.**

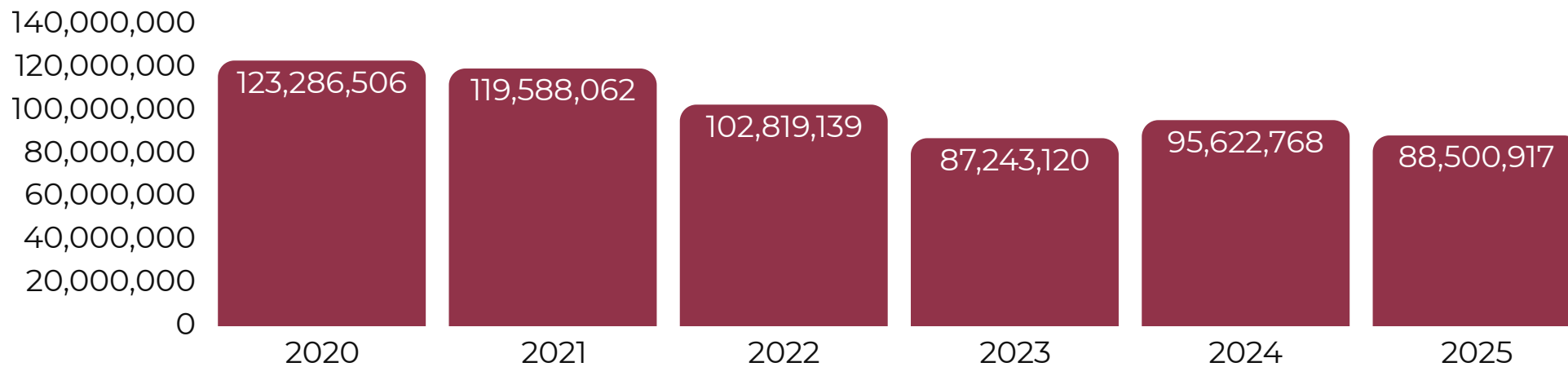
The number of titles published in 2025 is 167 - **the lowest number of titles for the period** (209 in 2020).

Territorial reach is also shrinking: 57 municipalities in 2025 compared with 63 in 2024. At the same time, 37 of the 57 municipalities publish only one title each.

The “newspapers published” indicator is the only one in the section to deteriorate simultaneously in circulation, titles and territorial reach.

Here too the capital leads - **Stolichna Municipality accounts for 92% of total circulation.**

CIRCULATION OF NEWSPAPERS PUBLISHED, NUMBER



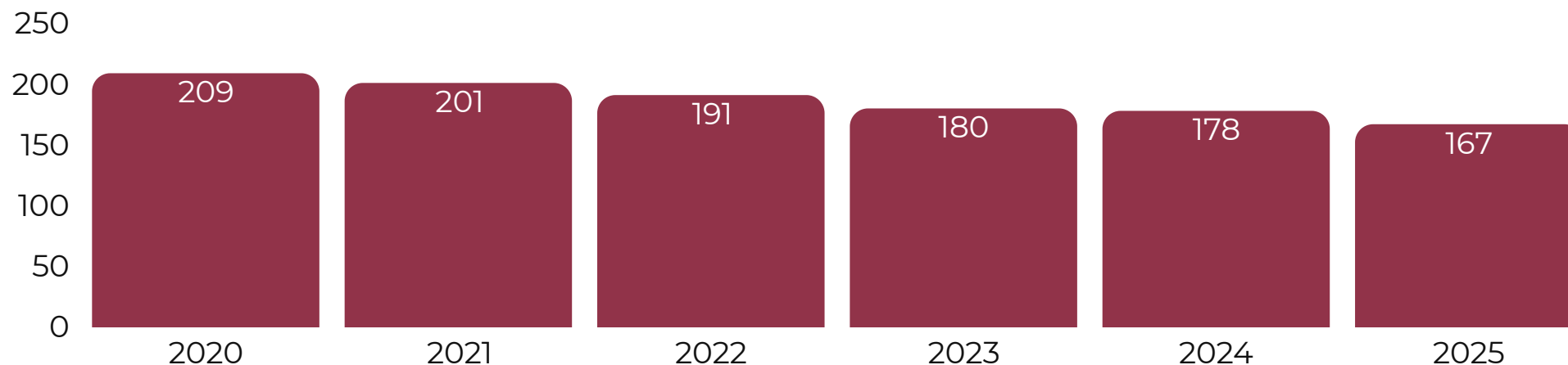
TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE HIGHEST CIRCULATION, NUMBER (2025)

Stolichna	81,044,062
Veliko Tarnovo	1,600,822
Ruse	993,400
Vetrino	984,300
Blagoevgrad	847,086
Stara Zagora	329,500
Dupnitsa	251,482
Karnobat	245,000
Dobrich	231,460
Plovdiv	210,200

MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE LOWEST CIRCULATION, NUMBER (2025)

Bratsigovo	5,500
Zlatograd	5,100
Malko Tarnovo	5,000
Panagyurishte	4,700
Oryahovo	3,000
Razgrad	2,900
Polski Trambesh	2,100
Etropole	1,500
Elhovo	340
Haskovo	300

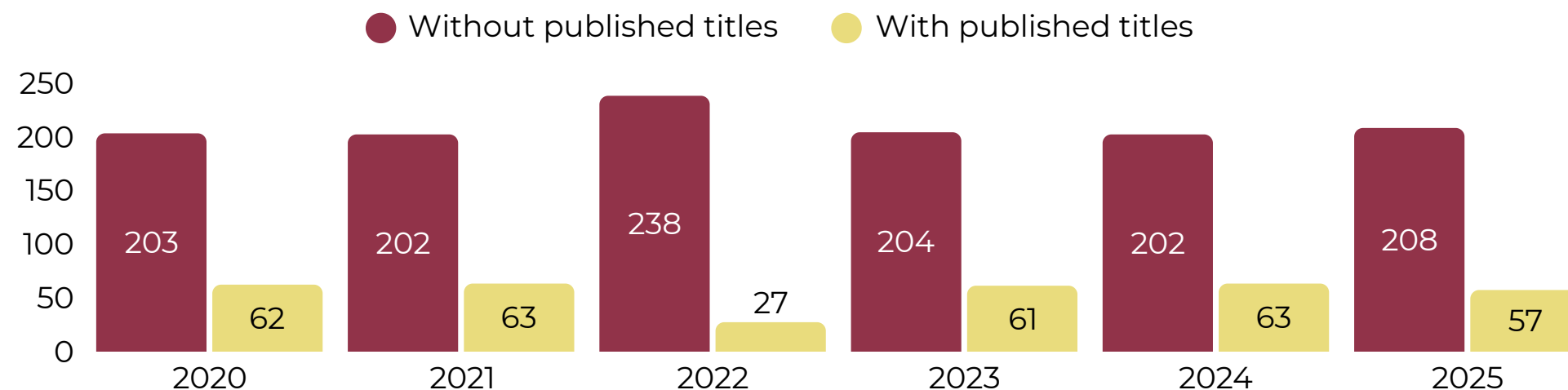
NUMBER OF NEWSPAPER TITLES PUBLISHED



TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE MOST TITLES PUBLISHED, NUMBER (2025)



MUNICIPALITIES IN WHICH NEWSPAPERS ARE PUBLISHED



37 of 57 MUNICIPALITIES
PUBLISH ONLY ONE TITLE EACH (2025)

CHITALISHTA

Data summary

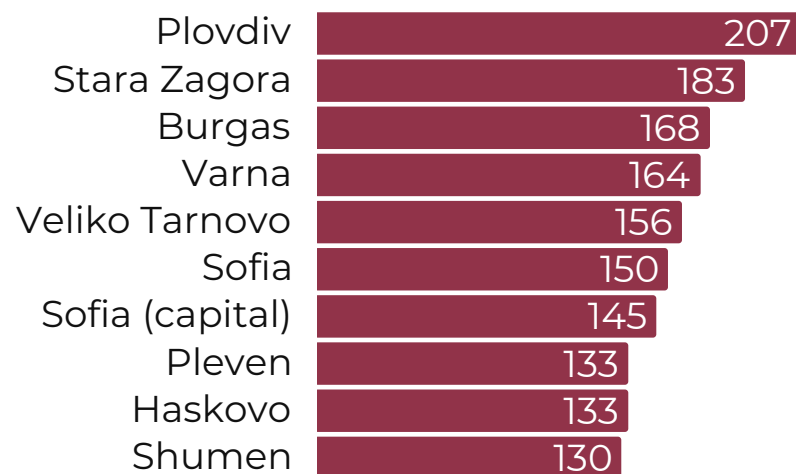
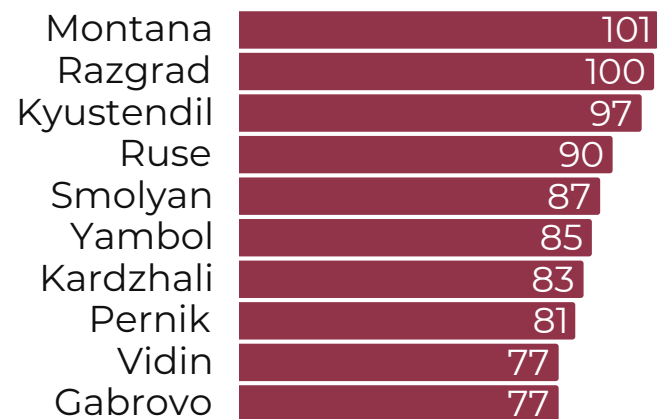
It should be noted that new **data on Bulgarian chitalishta are collected by the NSI every five years;** the latest collection took place in 2022 and the next survey will be in 2027.

The total number of chitalishta is 3319 in 2022, practically unchanged compared with the 2017 count - 3321.

This is **the only indicator in the report with 100% municipal coverage.**

The leading districts are Plovdiv (207), Stara Zagora (183) and Burgas (168).

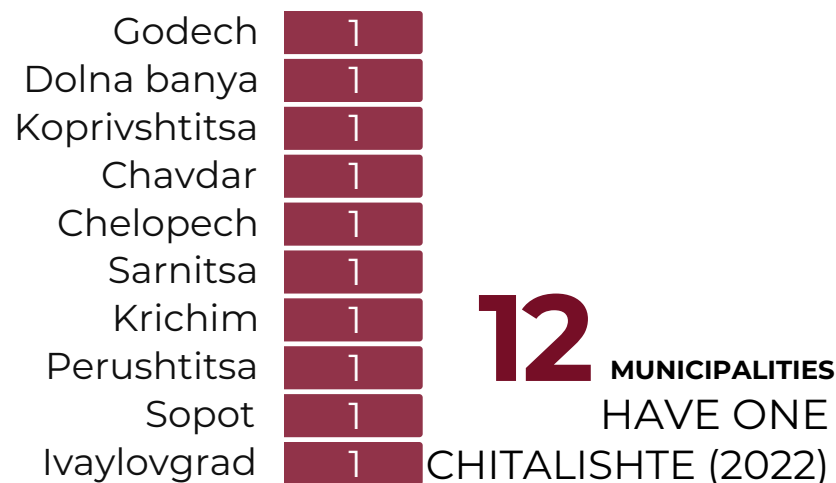
Stolichna Municipality has 142 chitalishta, about 4% of the total, the lowest concentration in the capital in the entire report. **Only 12 municipalities have one chitalishte each.**

TOTAL NUMBER OF CHITALISHTA IN BULGARIA (2017; 2022)**TOP 10 DISTRICTS WITH THE MOST CHITALISHTA** (2022)**DISTRICTS WITH THE FEWEST CHITALISHTA** (2022)

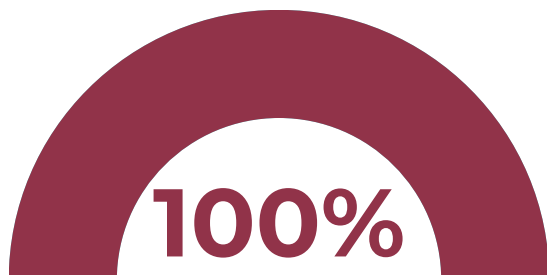
TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE MOST CHITALISHTA (2022)



MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE FEWEST CHITALISHTA (2022)



MUNICIPALITIES IN BULGARIA WITH CHITALISHTA (2022)



National statistics track the development of chitalishta in the Republic of Bulgaria every 5 years. The next survey will be carried out in 2027.

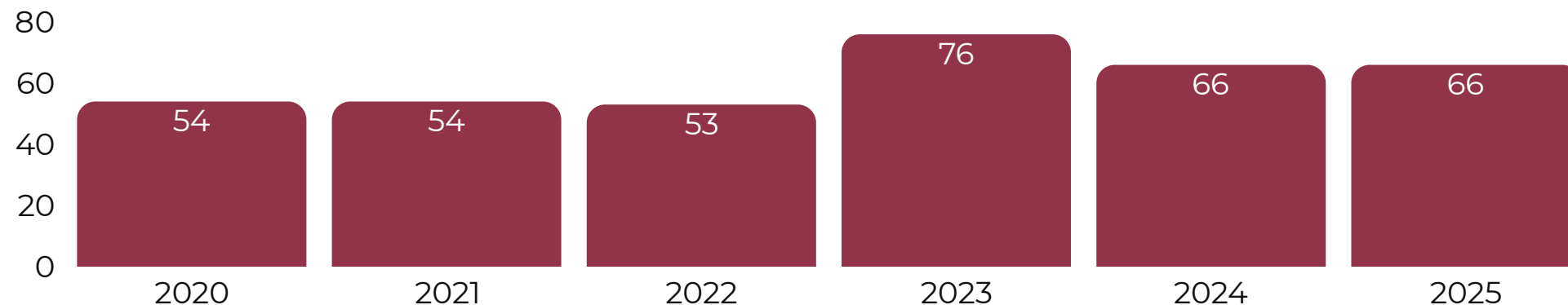
MUSIC ENSEMBLES

Data summary

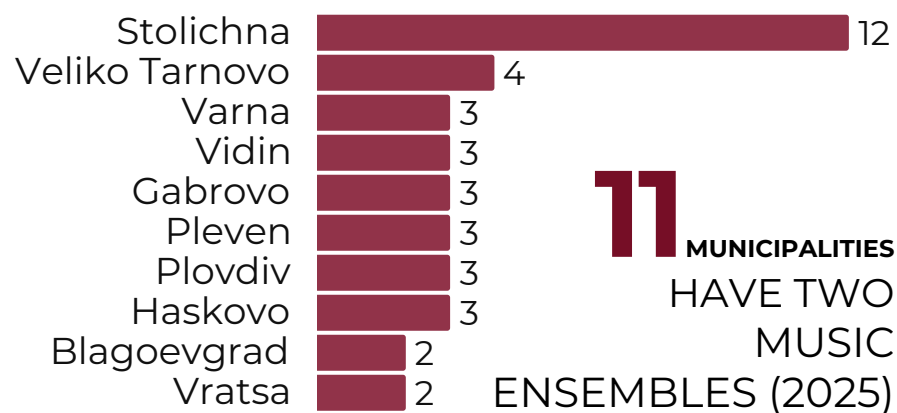
In 2025 there are 66 ensembles, and **the data are unchanged compared with 2024**. For the period 2020-2025, the peak was 76 music ensembles (2023).

Music ensembles are registered in 29 municipalities, and for the period 2020-2025 the number of municipalities ranges from 27 to 31. **Stolichna Municipality has 12 ensembles, i.e. 18% of the total**. At the same time, 11 municipalities have two ensembles, and most of the rest have only one.

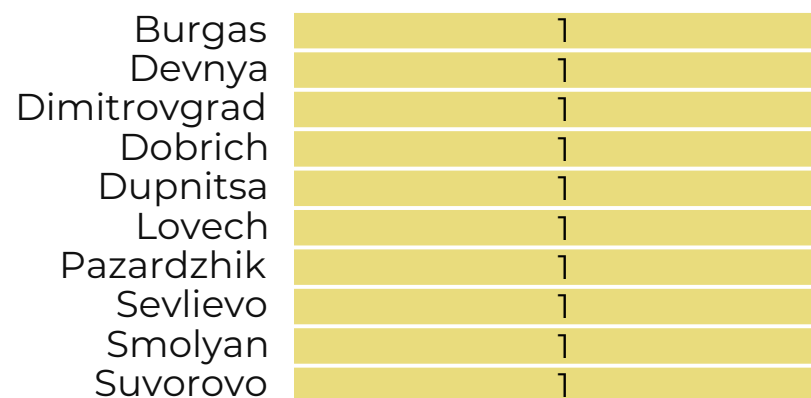
TOTAL NUMBER OF MUSIC ENSEMBLES



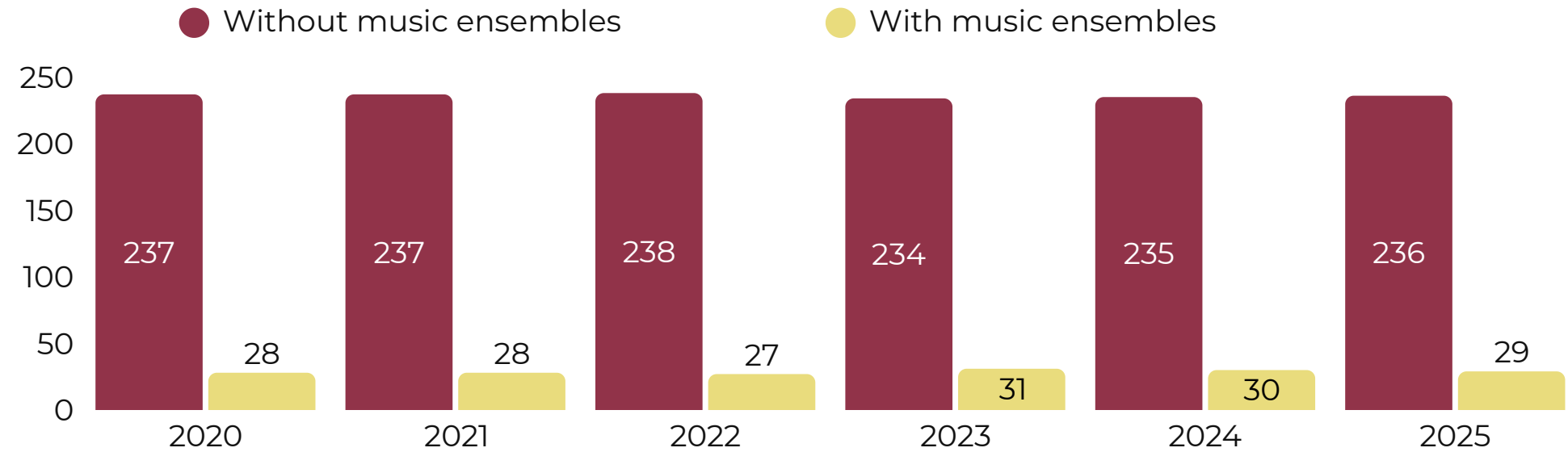
TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE MOST MUSIC ENSEMBLES (2025)



MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE FEWEST MUSIC ENSEMBLES (2025)



MUNICIPALITIES WITH MUSIC ENSEMBLES



PERFORMANCES

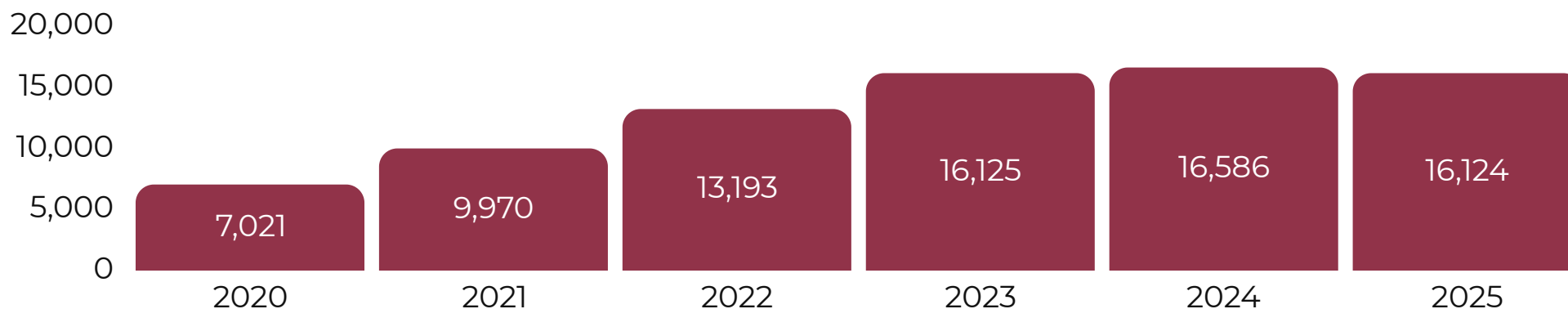
Data summary

In 2025, 16 124 performances took place. For the third consecutive year this indicator has hovered around 16 000. **Stabilisation of the indicators and full recovery from the 2020 slump** - 7 021.

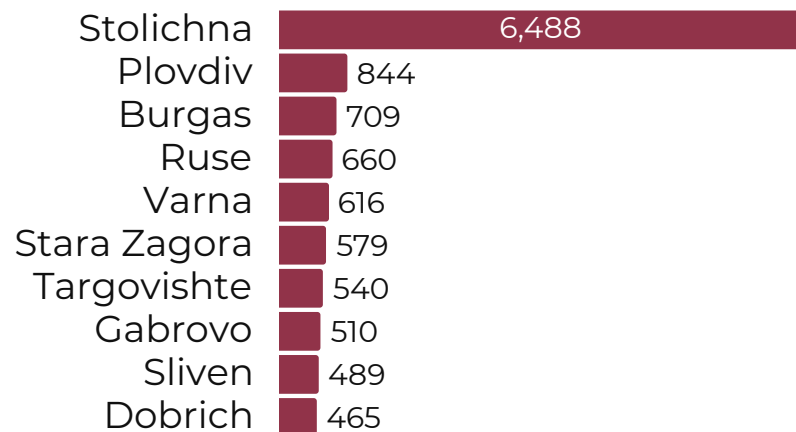
No significant change is observed in the territorial distribution of performances - 32 municipalities.

Stolichna Municipality has 6 488 performances, i.e. 40% of the total. The spread within the top 10 municipalities by number of performances is considerable - from 6 488 for Sofia to 465 for Dobrich.

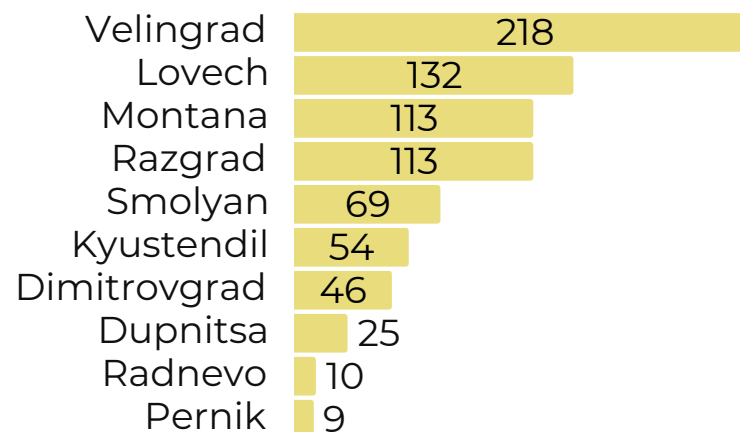
TOTAL NUMBER OF PERFORMANCES



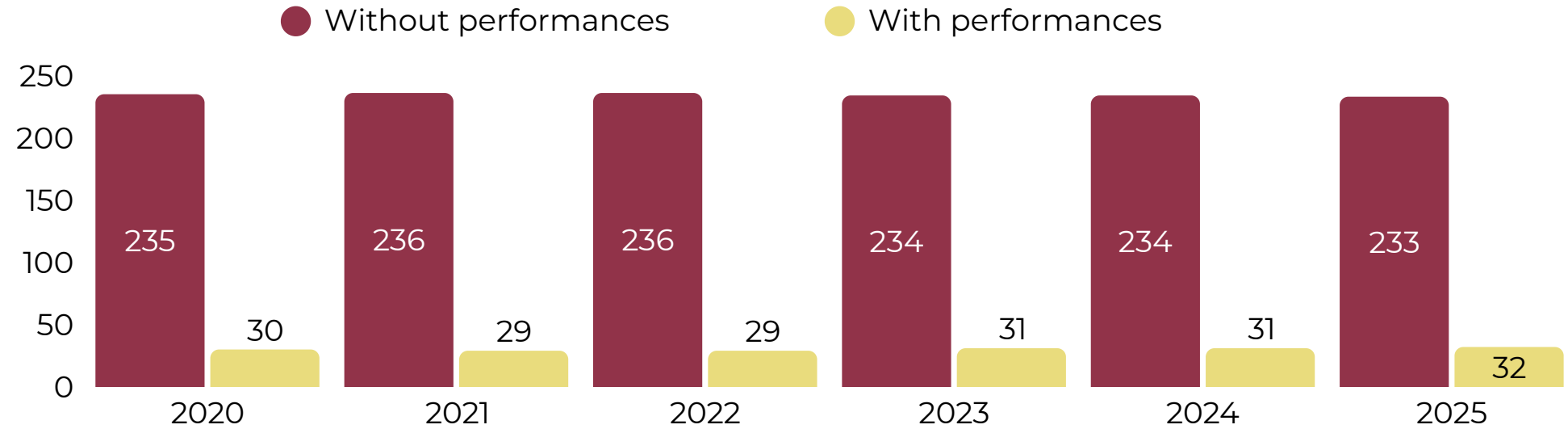
TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE MOST PERFORMANCES (2025)



MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE FEWEST PERFORMANCES (2025)



MUNICIPALITIES WITH PERFORMANCES



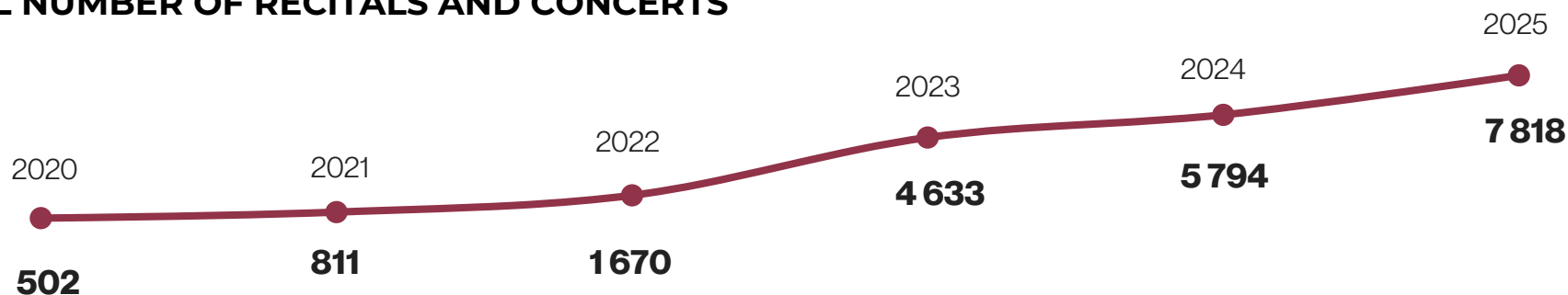
RECITALS AND CONCERTS

Data summary

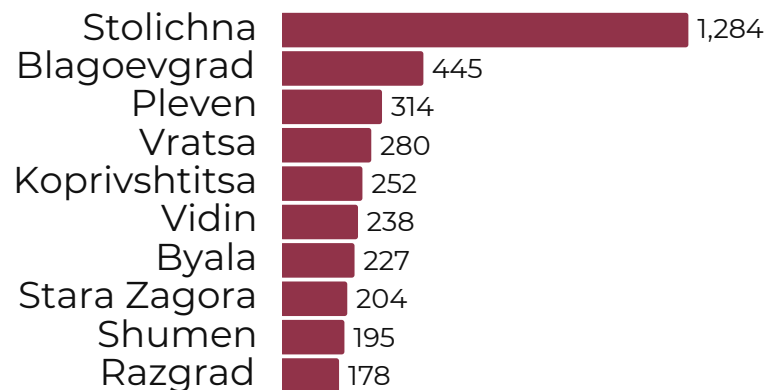
Recitals and concerts are the fastest-growing indicator in the report - 7 818 in 2025 compared with 502 in 2020. **There has been continuous growth in every year of the period** - 502, 811, 1 670, 4 633, 5 794, 7 818.

The territorial expansion of coverage is also significant: from 21 municipalities in 2020 to 186 in 2025. Stolichna Municipality has no marked dominance in this indicator, accounting for 16% of the total. Only 13 municipalities have one recital or concert for the year.

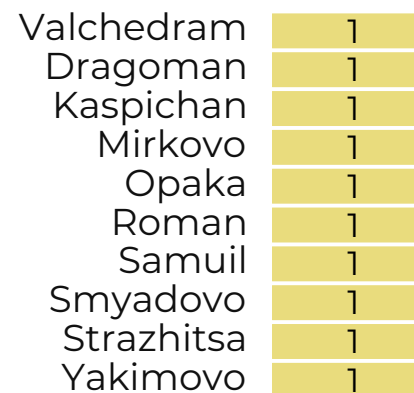
TOTAL NUMBER OF RECITALS AND CONCERTS



TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE MOST RECITALS AND CONCERTS (2025)

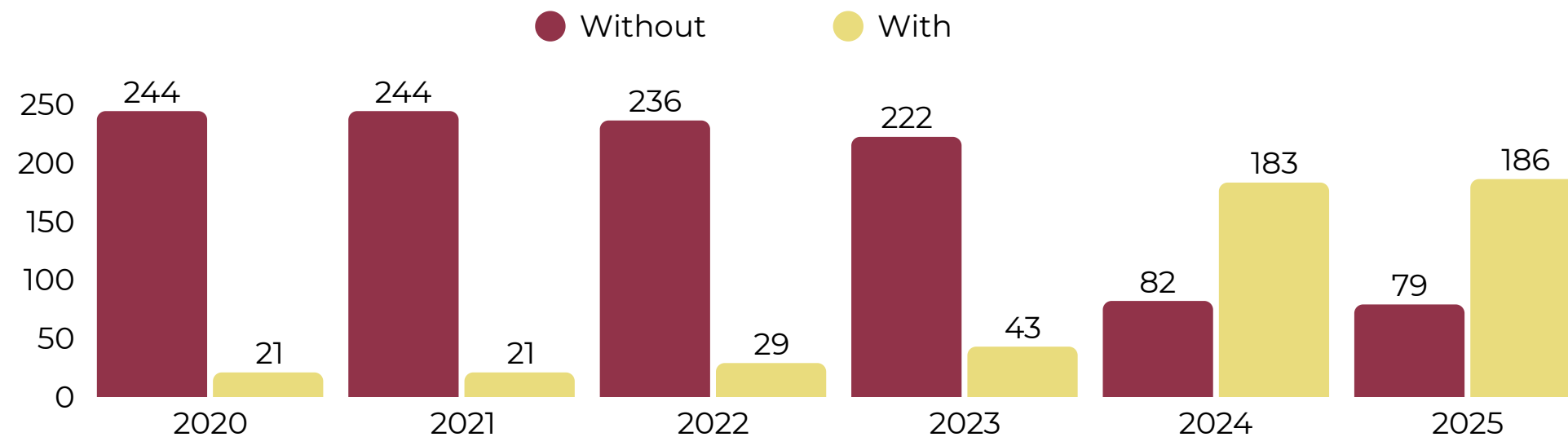


MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE FEWEST RECITALS AND CONCERTS (2025)



13 MUNICIPALITIES
HAVE ONE
RECITAL/
CONCERT (2025)

NUMBER OF MUNICIPALITIES IN BULGARIA WITH AND WITHOUT RECITALS AND CONCERTS



THEATRES

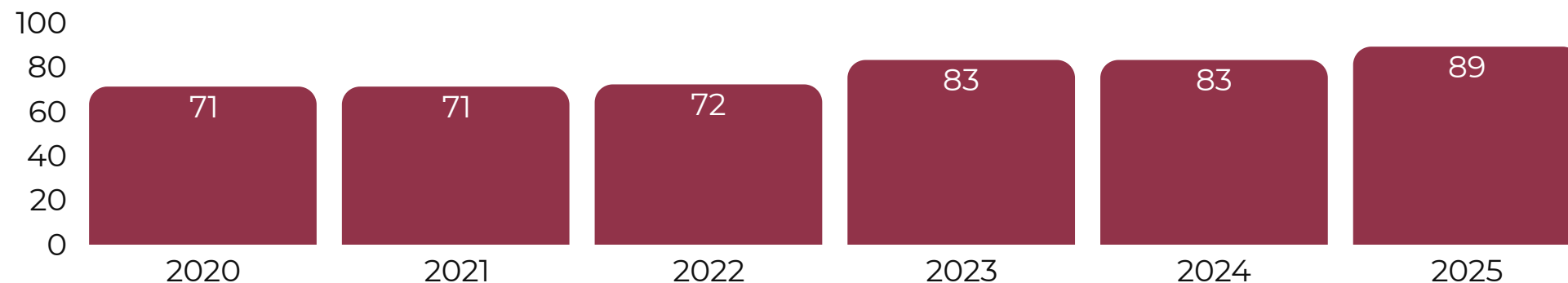
Data summary

In 2025, the number of theatres is 89, **the highest value for the period 2020-2025** (71, 71, 72, 83, 83, 89).

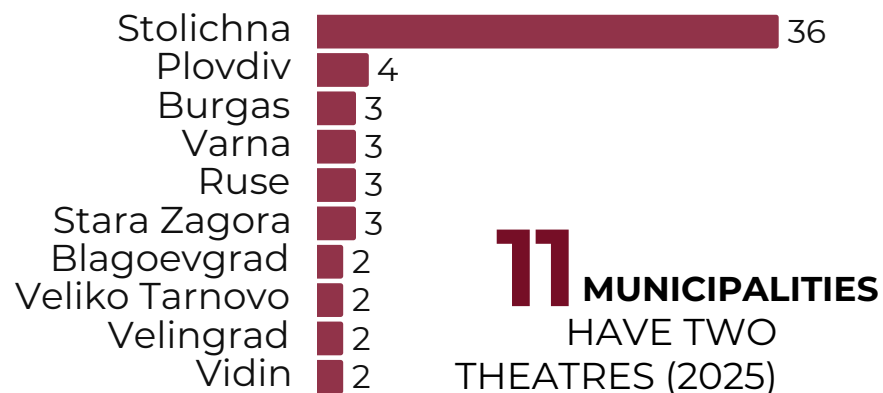
The entire increase is in the capital: Stolichna Municipality has 36 theatres, i.e. 40% of the total. The growth in the number of theatres does not translate into wider access outside the capital.

Territorial coverage has remained unchanged since 2023 - **32 municipalities with a theatre**. 15 municipalities have only one theatre, and 11 municipalities have two.

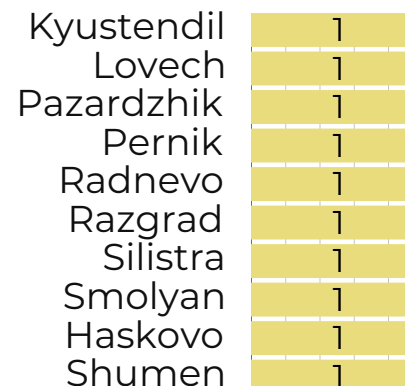
TOTAL NUMBER OF THEATRES



TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE MOST THEATRES (2025)

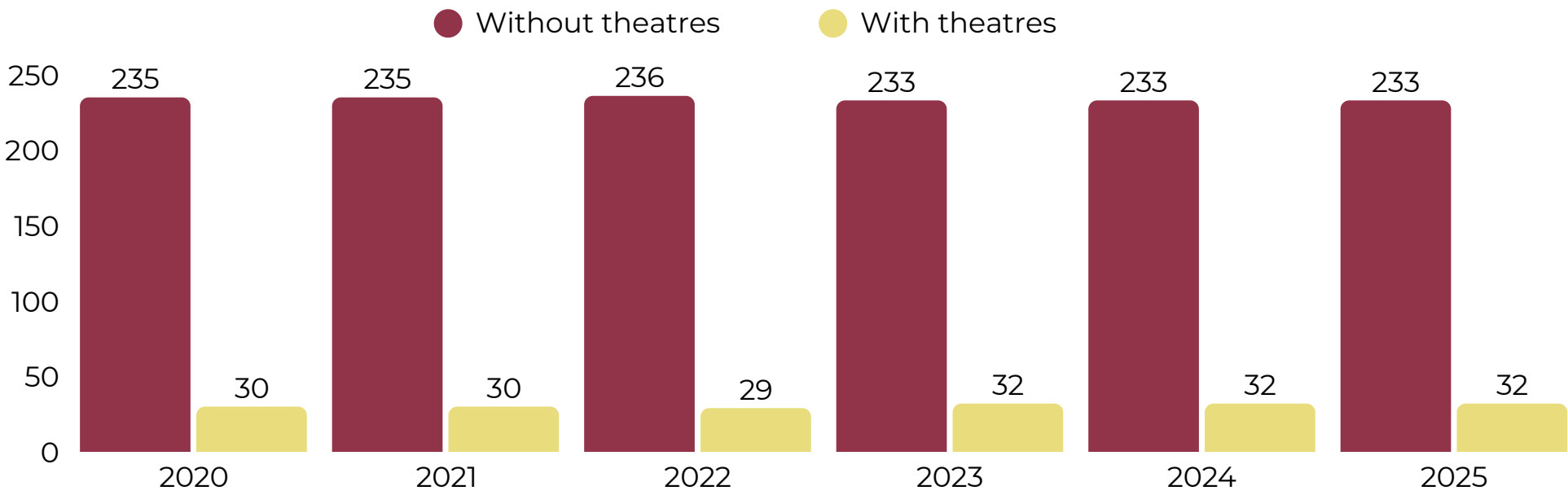


MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE FEWEST THEATRES (2025)



15 MUNICIPALITIES HAVE ONE THEATRE (2025)

MUNICIPALITIES WITH THEATRES



STATE CULTURAL INSTITUTES AND SCHOOLS IN THE FIELD OF THE ARTS

Data summary

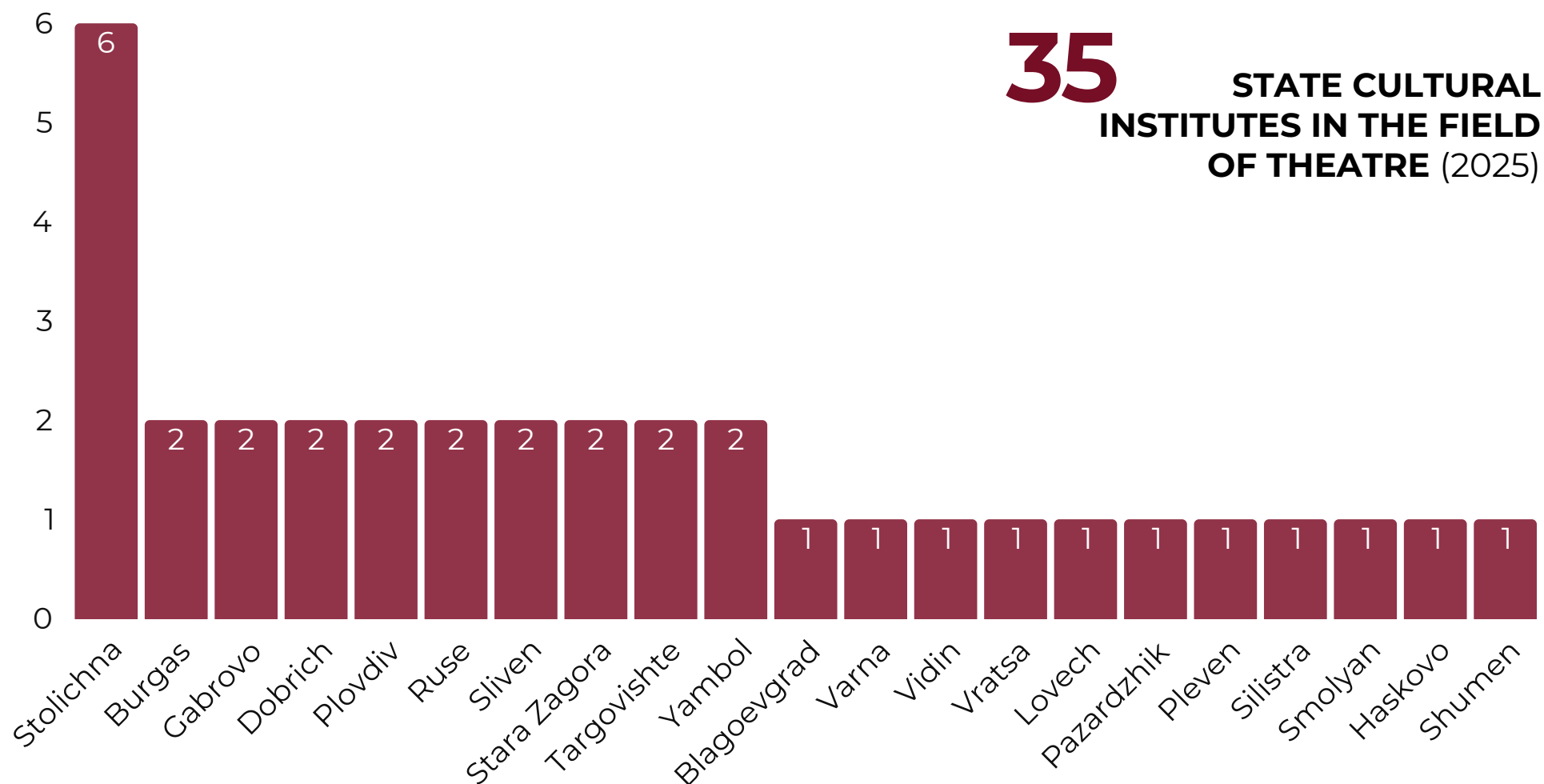
In 2025, there are 35 state cultural institutes in the field of theatre, located in 21 municipalities.

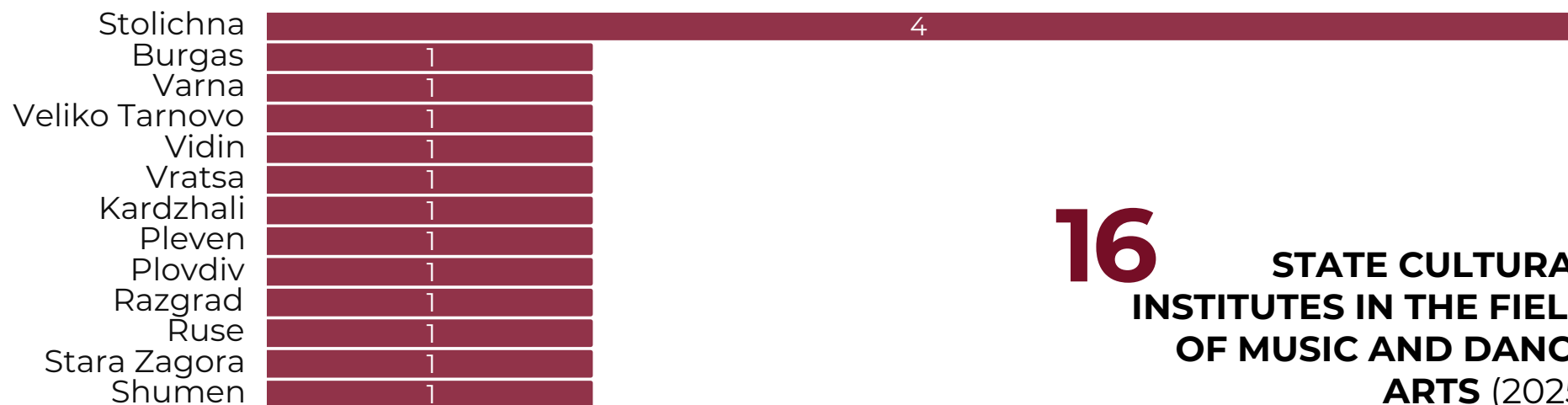
In the field of music and dance, there are 16 institutes, located in 13 municipalities, 4 of them in Stolichna Municipality.

There are 5 state operas in the country: Sofia, Ruse, Plovdiv, Burgas and Stara Zagora.

As regards education in the field of arts and culture, the data show 23 operating schools in 14 municipalities, 7 of them in Stolichna Municipality.

The state network is more evenly distributed than the other indicators: the capital accounts for 17% of theatre institutes, compared with 40% of all theatres. Concentration is highest among arts schools: 30% of them are in the capital.

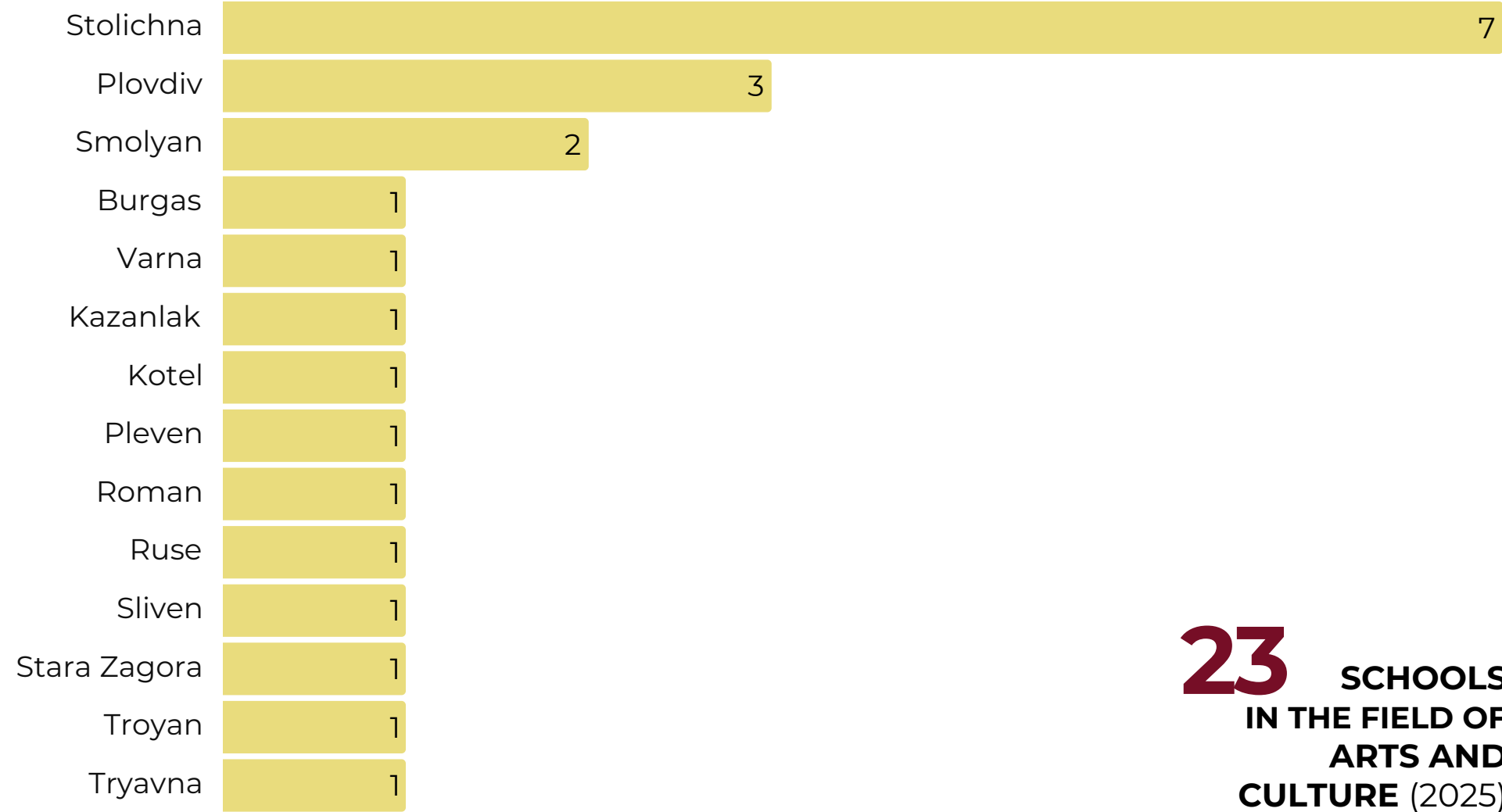
**TOTAL NUMBER OF STATE CULTURAL INSTITUTES IN THE FIELD OF THEATRE BY MUNICIPALITY
(2025)**

TOTAL NUMBER OF STATE CULTURAL INSTITUTES IN THE FIELD OF MUSIC AND DANCE BY MUNICIPALITY (2025)

16 STATE CULTURAL
INSTITUTES IN THE FIELD
OF MUSIC AND DANCE
ARTS (2025)

TOTAL NUMBER OF STATE OPERAS BY MUNICIPALITY (2025)

TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS IN THE FIELD OF ARTS AND CULTURE BY MUNICIPALITY (2025)



MUSEUMS

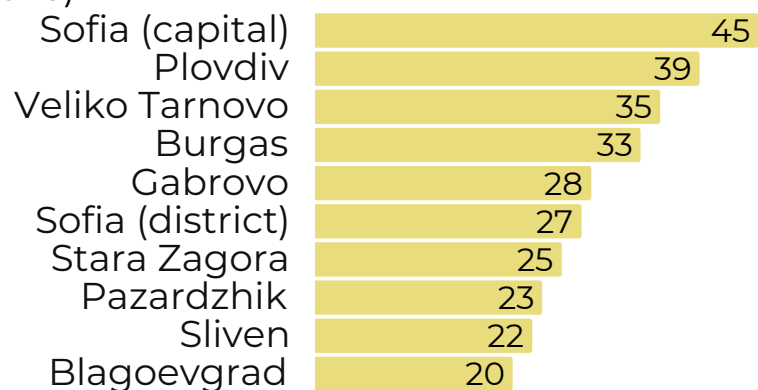
Data summary

In 2025 there are 479 museums, **an increase in the number of museums** compared with 2024 - 471. There is also **an increase in territorial distribution** - 154 municipalities have museums, compared with 144 municipalities in 2024. 34 municipalities have only one museum each.

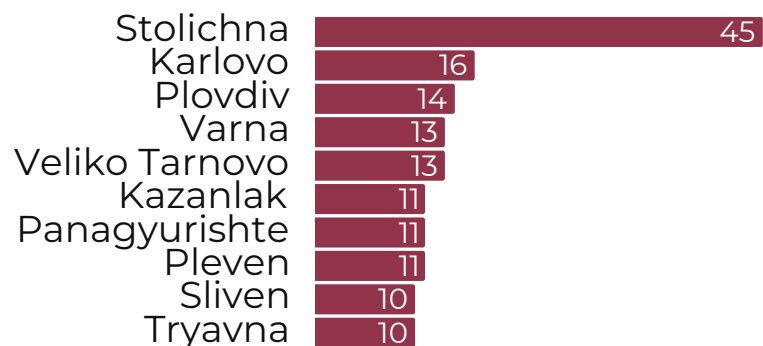
All 28 districts have museums. Stoliczna Municipality has less than 10% of the total - 45 museums, the lowest concentration in the capital among the institutional indicators in this section. The leading districts outside the capital are Plovdiv (39), Veliko Tarnovo (35) and Burgas (33).

479 TOTAL NUMBER OF MUSEUMS (2025)

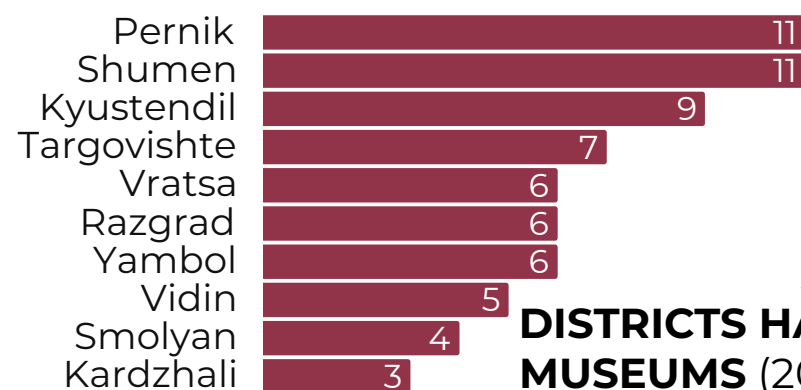
TOP 10 DISTRICTS WITH THE MOST MUSEUMS (2025)



TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE MOST MUSEUMS (2025)



DISTRICTS WITH THE FEWEST MUSEUMS (2025)



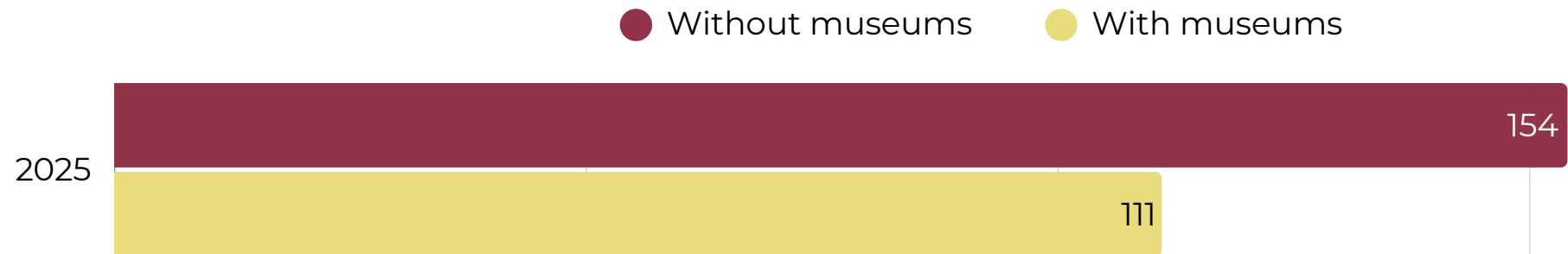
**ALL
DISTRICTS HAVE
MUSEUMS (2025)**

MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE FEWEST MUSEUMS (2025)



**34 MUNICIPALITIES
HAVE ONE
MUSEUM (2025)**

MUNICIPALITIES WITH MUSEUMS (2025)



LIBRARIES

Data summary

In 2025 there are 2575 public libraries in the country, **a slight increase** compared with 2571 in 2024.

As regards territorial distribution, **264 of 265 municipalities have a public library.** The only exception again this year is Suhindol Municipality.

The library is the most widespread cultural institution in the country after the chitalishta, which cover all 265 municipalities.

The leading districts are Plovdiv - 186, Stara Zagora - 150 and Burgas - 133.

There are 49 libraries in the country with a collection of over 200 000 items - unchanged for the third consecutive year. These libraries are in 30 municipalities, compared with 29 throughout the previous period, and 20 of these municipalities have only one each. **The mass network of libraries covers the whole country, while the large collections are found in only 30 municipalities.**

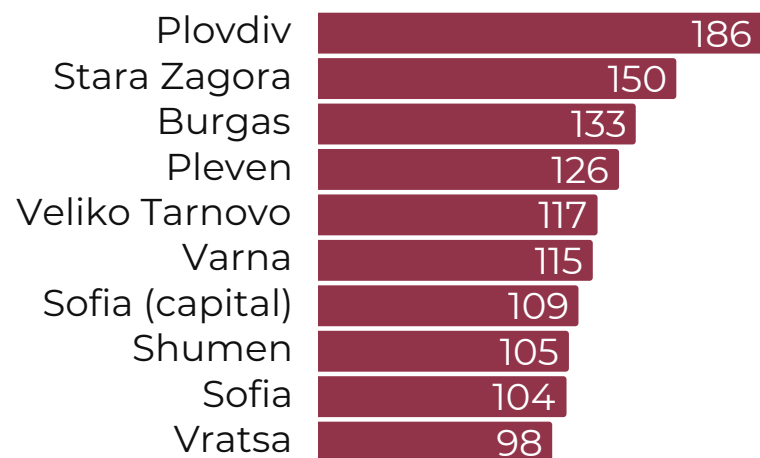
2 575 NUMBER OF PUBLIC
LIBRARIES (2025)

28 DISTRICTS HAVE PUBLIC
LIBRARIES (2025)

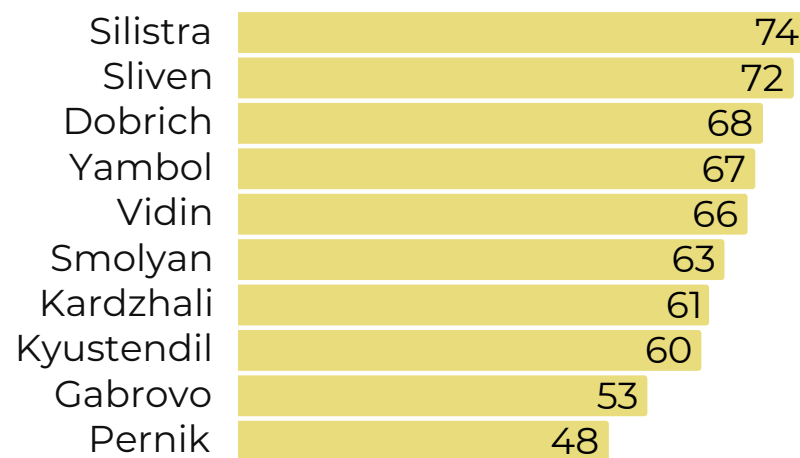
264 MUNICIPALITIES HAVE PUBLIC
LIBRARIES (2025)

NO LIBRARY
IN SUHINDOL MUNICIPALITY

TOP 10 DISTRICTS WITH THE MOST LIBRARIES
(2025)



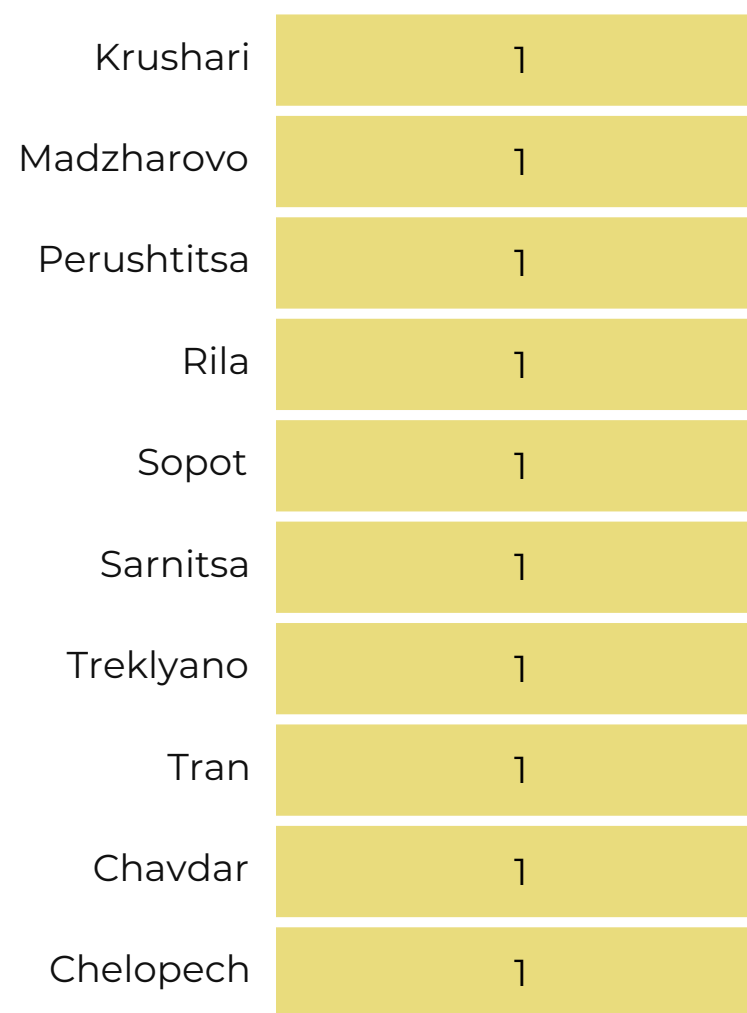
DISTRICTS WITH THE FEWEST LIBRARIES
(2025)



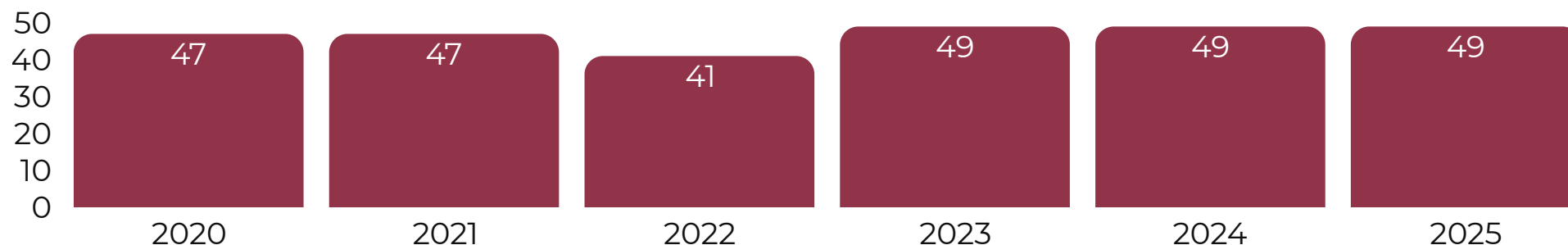
TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE MOST LIBRARIES (2025)



MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE FEWEST LIBRARIES (2025) 17 MUNICIPALITIES HAVE ONE LIBRARY EACH

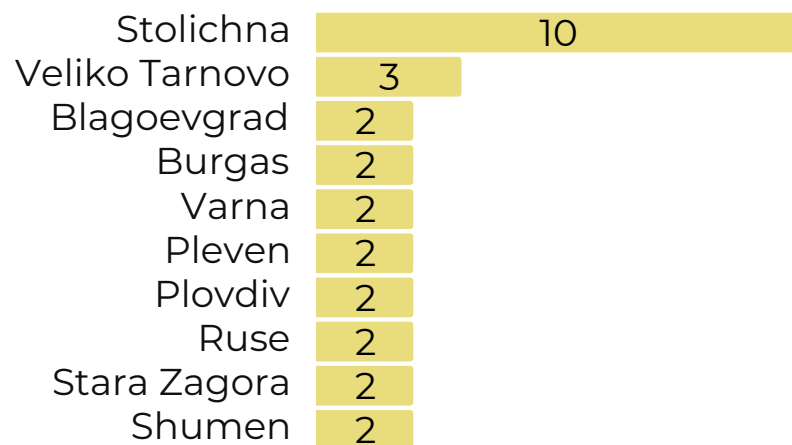


TOTAL NUMBER OF LIBRARIES WITH HOLDINGS OF OVER 200 000 LIBRARY ITEMS



TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE MOST LIBRARIES (2025)

WITH HOLDINGS OF OVER 200 000 LIBRARY ITEMS

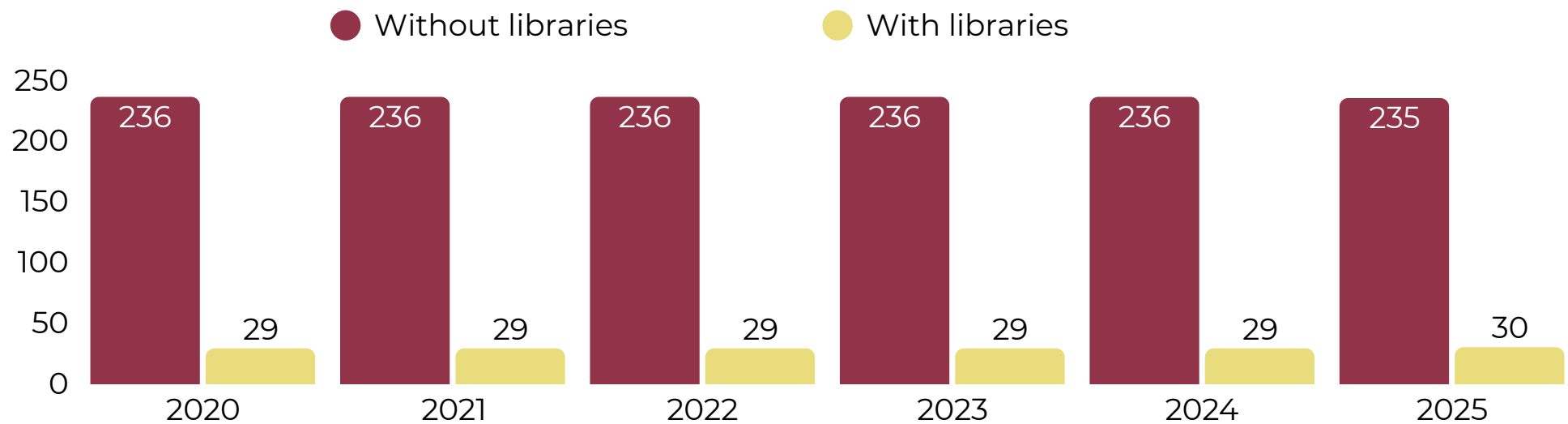


MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE FEWEST LIBRARIES (2025)

20 OF THE 30 MUNICIPALITIES HAVE ONE LIBRARY EACH
WITH HOLDINGS OF OVER 200 000 LIBRARY ITEMS

20 MUNICIPALITIES
HAVE ONE
LIBRARY
OF THIS TYPE
(2025)

MUNICIPALITIES WITH AND WITHOUT A LIBRARY WITH HOLDINGS OF OVER 200 000 LIBRARY ITEMS



RADIO AND TELEVISION OPERATORS

Data summary

Mixed trends are observed: television operators increase to 123 in 2025, while **radio operators decrease** to 70.

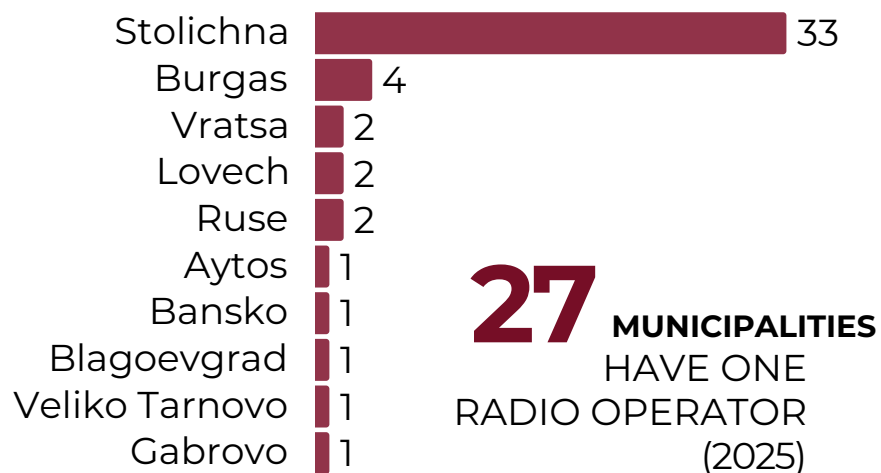
Radio operators decline throughout the period 2020-2025: 77, 74, 73, 73, 71, 70. Television is recovering from the lowest level for the period, 112 in 2022: 113, 119, 123.

Stolichna Municipality concentrates 33 of the 70 radio operators and 76 of the 123 television operators. In total, 32 municipalities have a radio operator with its registered office in their territory, 27 of which have only one operator. Meanwhile, 27 municipalities have television operators, with 13 municipalities having only one television operator and 6 municipalities having two.

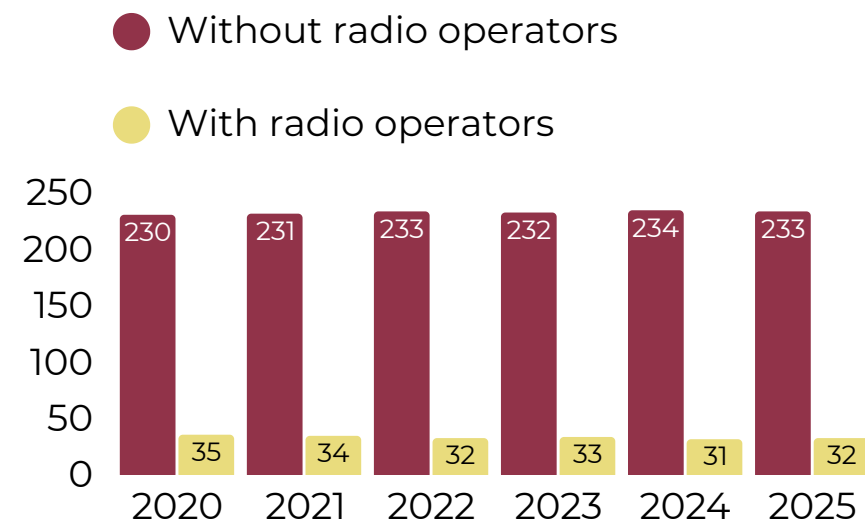
NUMBER OF RADIO OPERATORS IN THE COUNTRY



TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE MOST RADIO OPERATORS WITH A REGISTERED OFFICE IN THE TERRITORY OF THE MUNICIPALITY (2025)



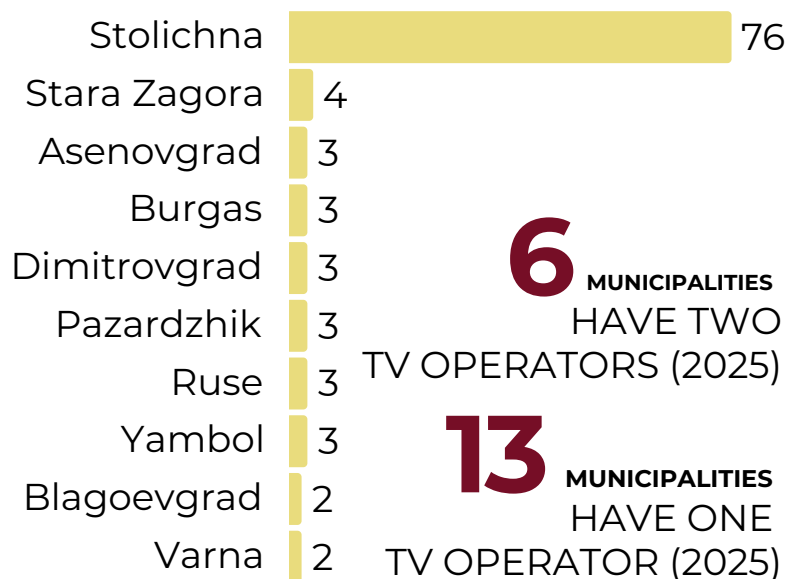
NUMBER OF MUNICIPALITIES IN BULGARIA WITH AND WITHOUT RADIO OPERATORS WITH A REGISTERED OFFICE IN THE TERRITORY OF THE MUNICIPALITY



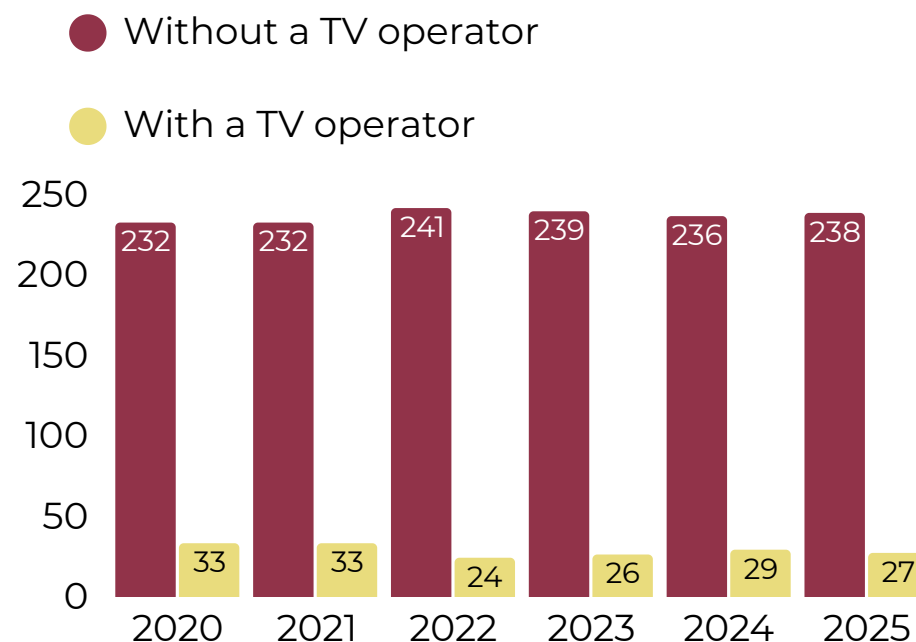
NUMBER OF TELEVISION OPERATORS IN THE COUNTRY



TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE MOST TELEVISION OPERATORS WITH A REGISTERED OFFICE IN THE TERRITORY OF THE MUNICIPALITY (2025)



NUMBER OF MUNICIPALITIES IN BULGARIA WITH TELEVISION OPERATORS WITH A REGISTERED OFFICE IN THE TERRITORY OF THE MUNICIPALITY



CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS REGISTERED WITH THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE

Data summary

As at 2025, there are 3403 registered cultural organisations, an increase of about 9% compared with 3120 in 2024. 16 organisations are registered outside Bulgaria.

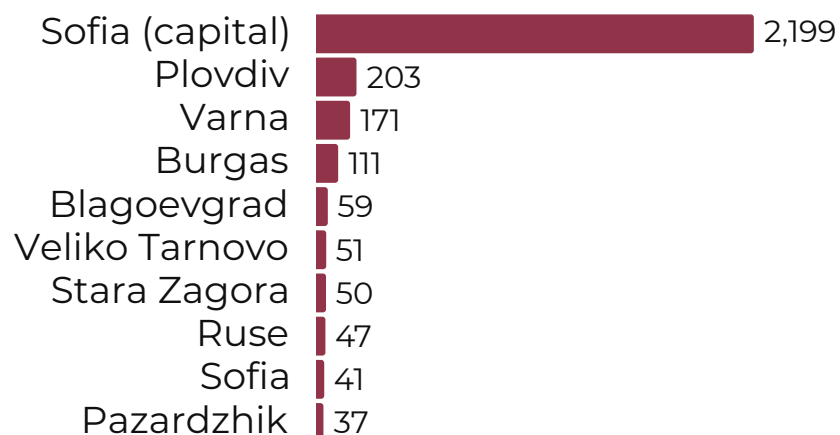
More than 60% of municipalities have cultural organisations, which means that almost 40% of them have no such organisations. 69 municipalities have only one organisation each. **All 28 districts have registered cultural organisations.**

65% of all cultural organisations are registered in the territory of Stolichna Municipality.

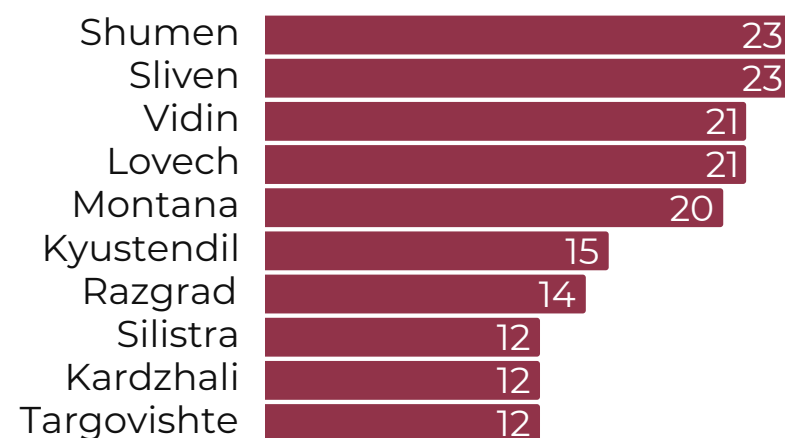
3 403 NUMBER OF REGISTERED
ORGANISATIONS (2025)

16 NUMBER OF ORGANISATIONS REGISTERED
OUTSIDE BULGARIA (2025)

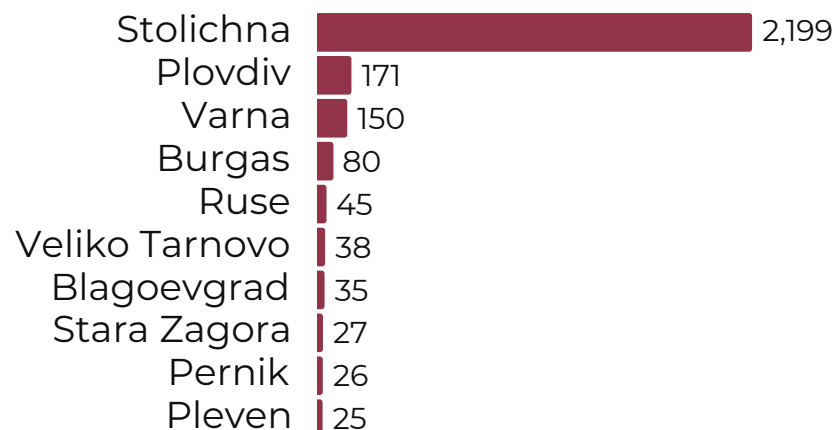
**TOP 10 DISTRICTS WITH THE MOST CULTURAL
ORGANISATIONS (2025)**



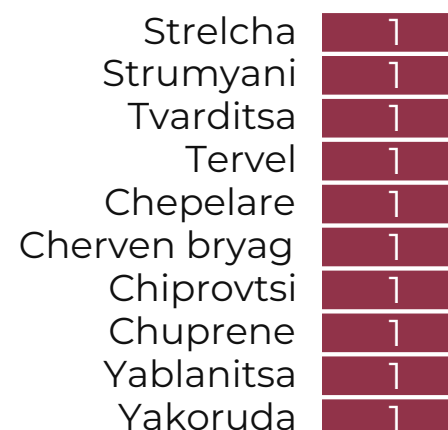
**DISTRICTS WITH THE FEWEST CULTURAL
ORGANISATIONS (2025)**



TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE MOST CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS (2025)

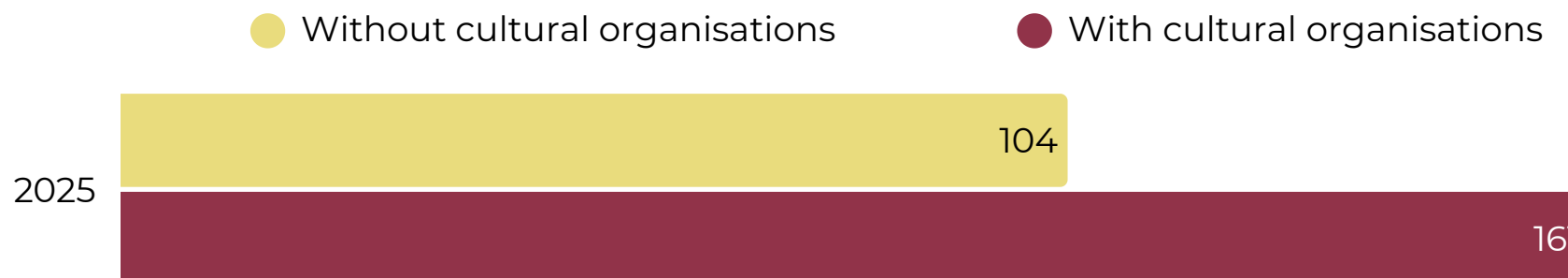


MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE FEWEST CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS (2025)

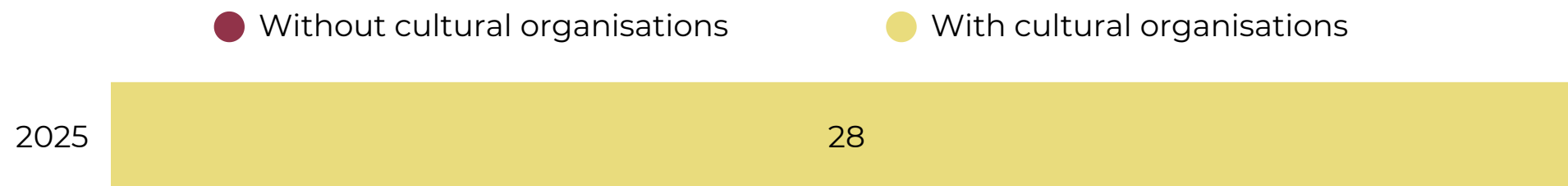


69 MUNICIPALITIES
HAVE ONE
CULTURAL
ORGANISATION
(2025)

NUMBER OF MUNICIPALITIES IN BULGARIA WITH AND WITHOUT CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS (2025)



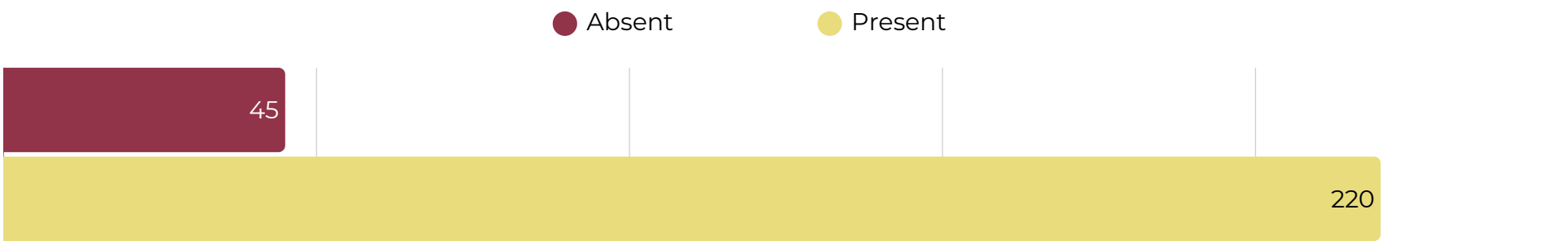
NUMBER OF DISTRICTS IN BULGARIA WITH AND WITHOUT CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS (2025)



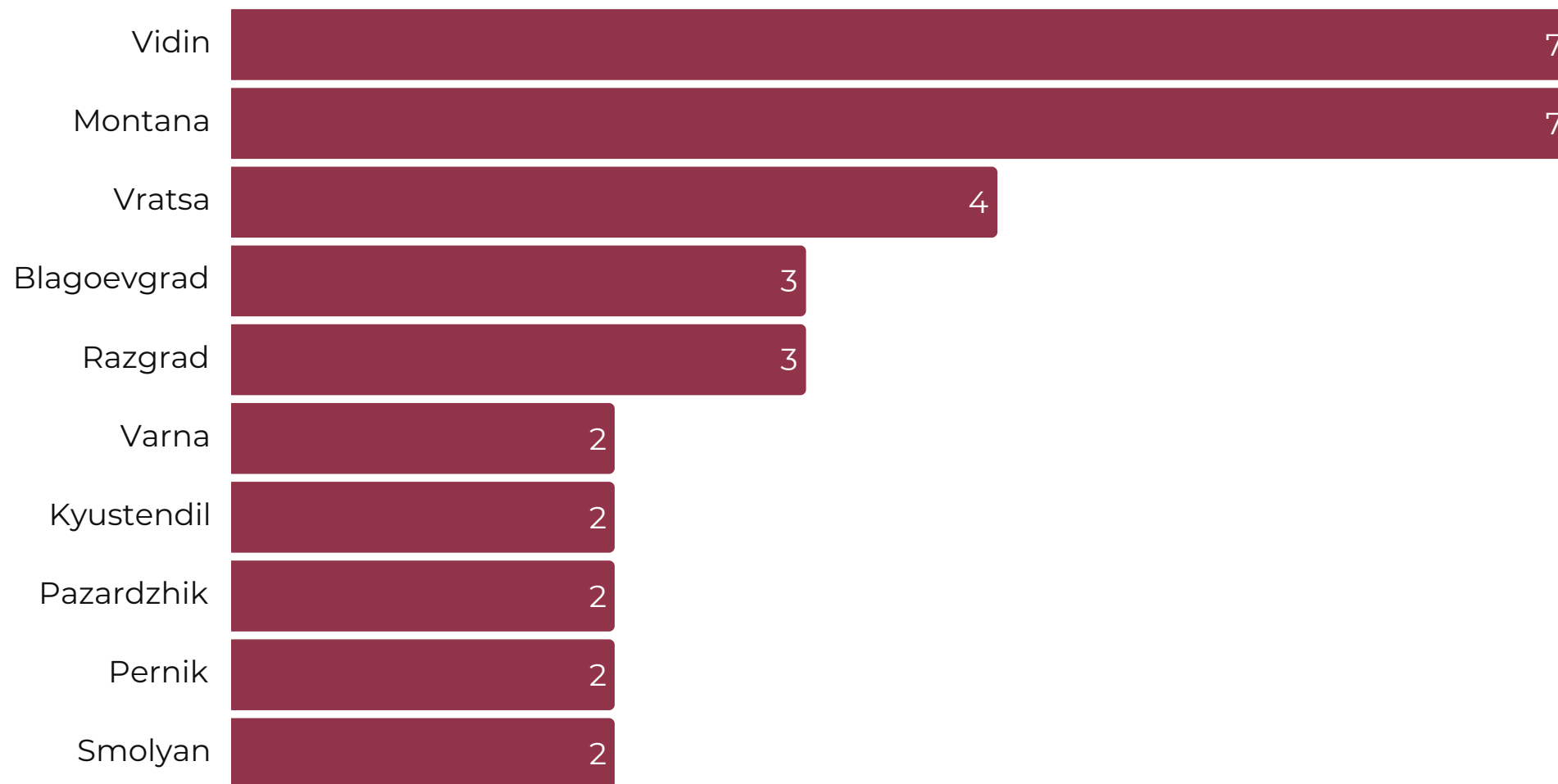
AGGREGATED DATA ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

DISTRICTS AND MUNICIPALITIES ABSENT FROM THE INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY DATA EXAMINED (2020 - 2025)

NUMBER OF MUNICIPALITIES ABSENT FROM THE INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY DATA EXAMINED (2020-2025)



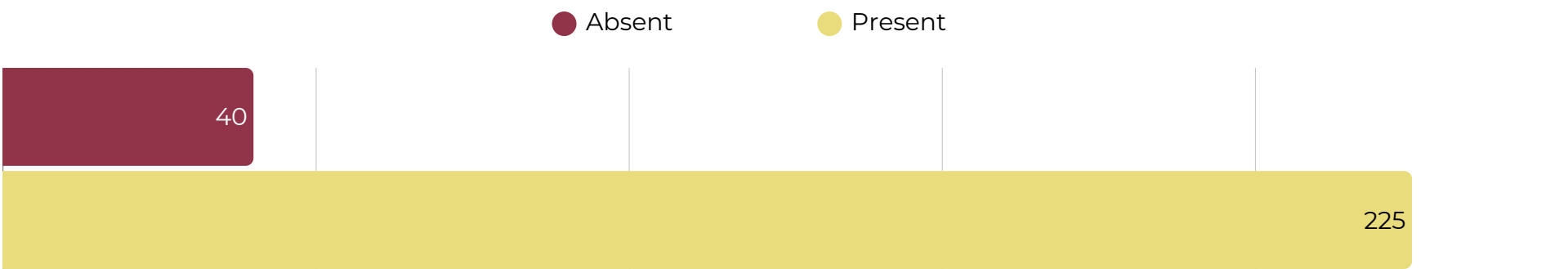
Anton, Antonovo, Banite, Batak, Boboshevo, Boynitsa, Boychinovtsi, Borino, Borovan, Bregovo, Brusartsi, Byala - Varna, Valchedram, Georgi Damyanovo, Gramada, Dimovo, Dalgopol, Zavet, Zemen, Zlataritsa, Ivanovo, Iskar, Kaynardzha, Kovachevtsi, Koprivshtitsa, Loznitsa, Makresh, Medkovets, Mizia, Nikolaevo, Oryahovo, Ruzhintsi, Satovcha, Smyadovo, Strumyani, Sarnitsa, Topolovgrad, Treklyano, Ugarchin, Hayredin, Tsar Kaloyan, Chiprovtsi, Chuprene, Yakimovo, Yakoruda.

DISTRICTS WITH THE MOST MUNICIPALITIES ABSENT FROM THE INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY DATA EXAMINED (2020-2025)

DISTRICTS AND MUNICIPALITIES ABSENT FROM THE LITERARY AND ARTISTIC PROPERTY DATA EXAMINED (2020 - 2025)

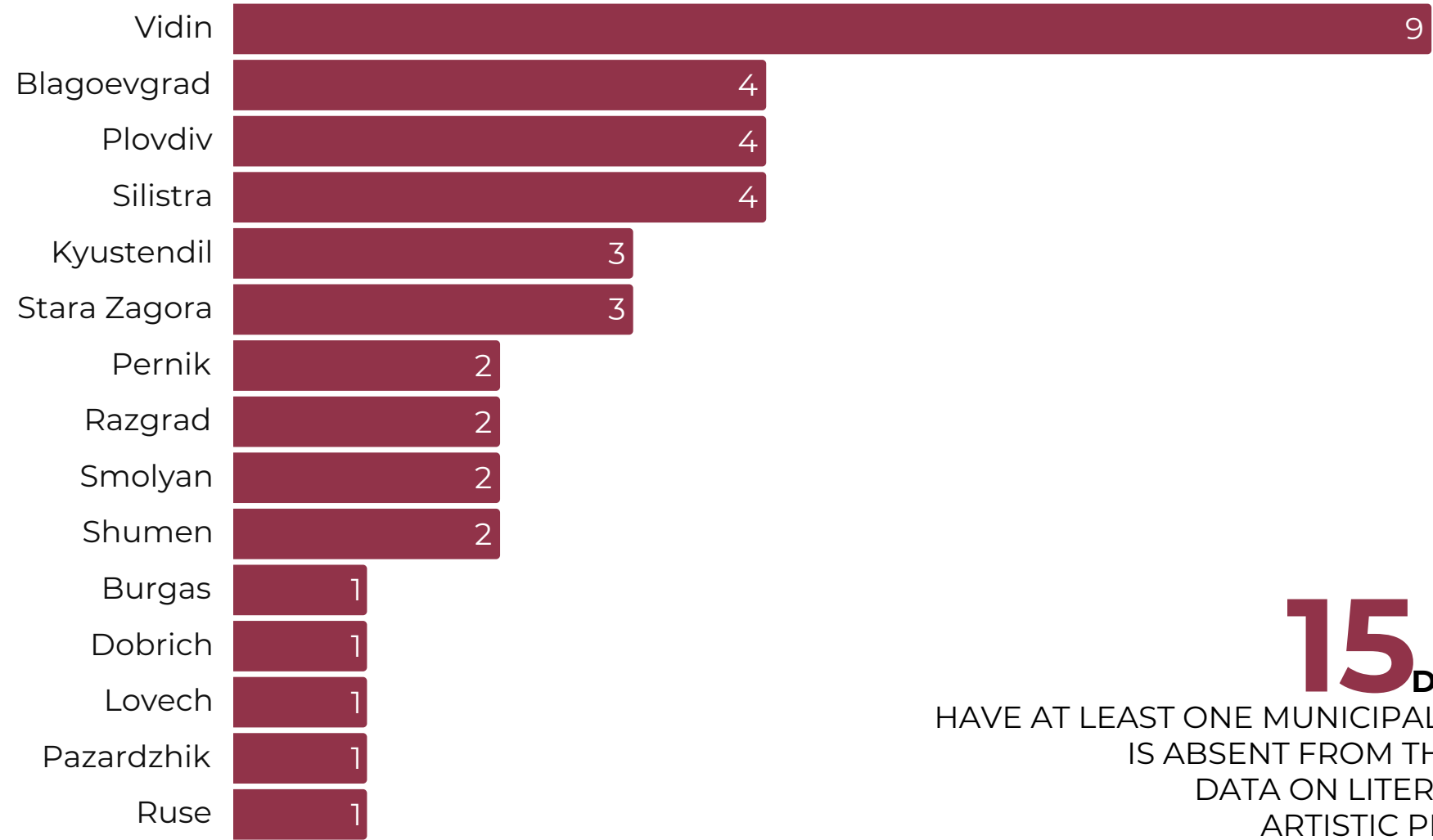
NUMBER OF MUNICIPALITIES ABSENT FROM THE LITERARY AND ARTISTIC PROPERTY DATA EXAMINED (2020-2025)

EXCLUDING THE DATA ON CHITALISHTA, WHICH ARE PRESENT IN ALL BULGARIAN MUNICIPALITIES



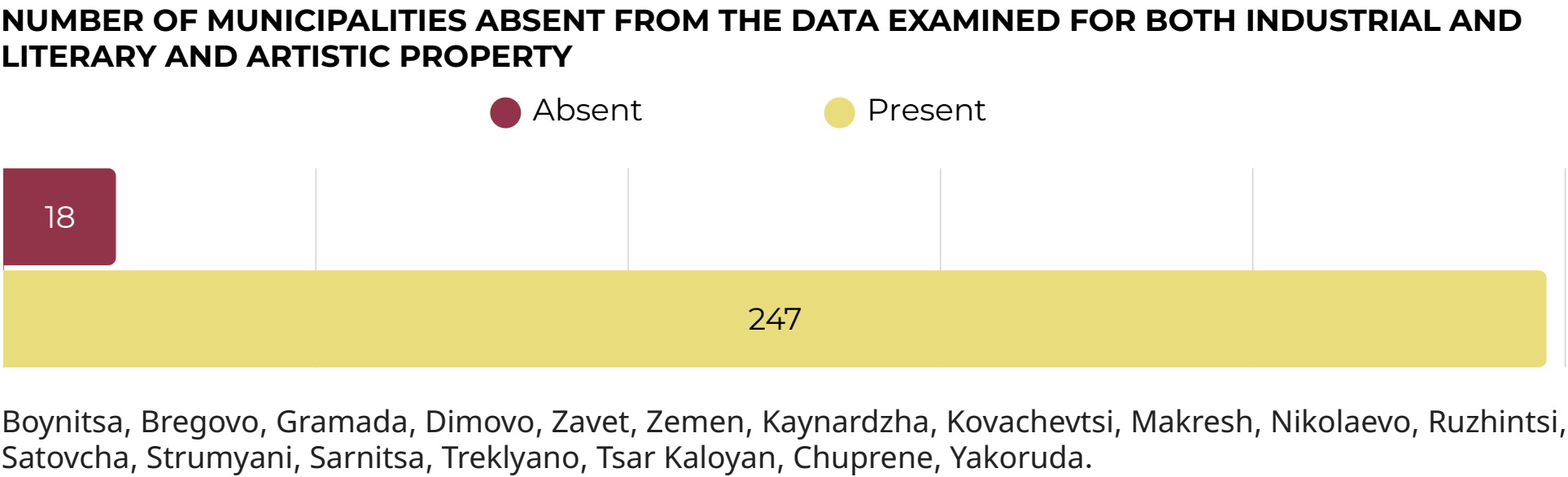
Alfatar, Apriltsi, Boynitsa, Borovo, Bregovo, Glavinitsa, Gramada, Gurkovo, Garmen, Dimovo, Dobrich-selska, Dospat, Zavet, Zemen, Kaynardzha, Kaloyanovo, Kameno, Kaolinovo, Kovachevtsi, Kocherinovo, Krichim, Kuklen, Kula, Makresh, Nevestino, Nedelino, Nikola Kozlevo, Nikolaevo, Novo selo, Opan, Ruzhintsi, Satovcha, Sitovo, Strumyani, Saedinenie, Sarnitsa, Treklyano, Tsar Kaloyan, Chuprene, Yakoruda.

DISTRICTS WITH THE MOST MUNICIPALITIES ABSENT FROM THE LITERARY AND ARTISTIC PROPERTY DATA EXAMINED

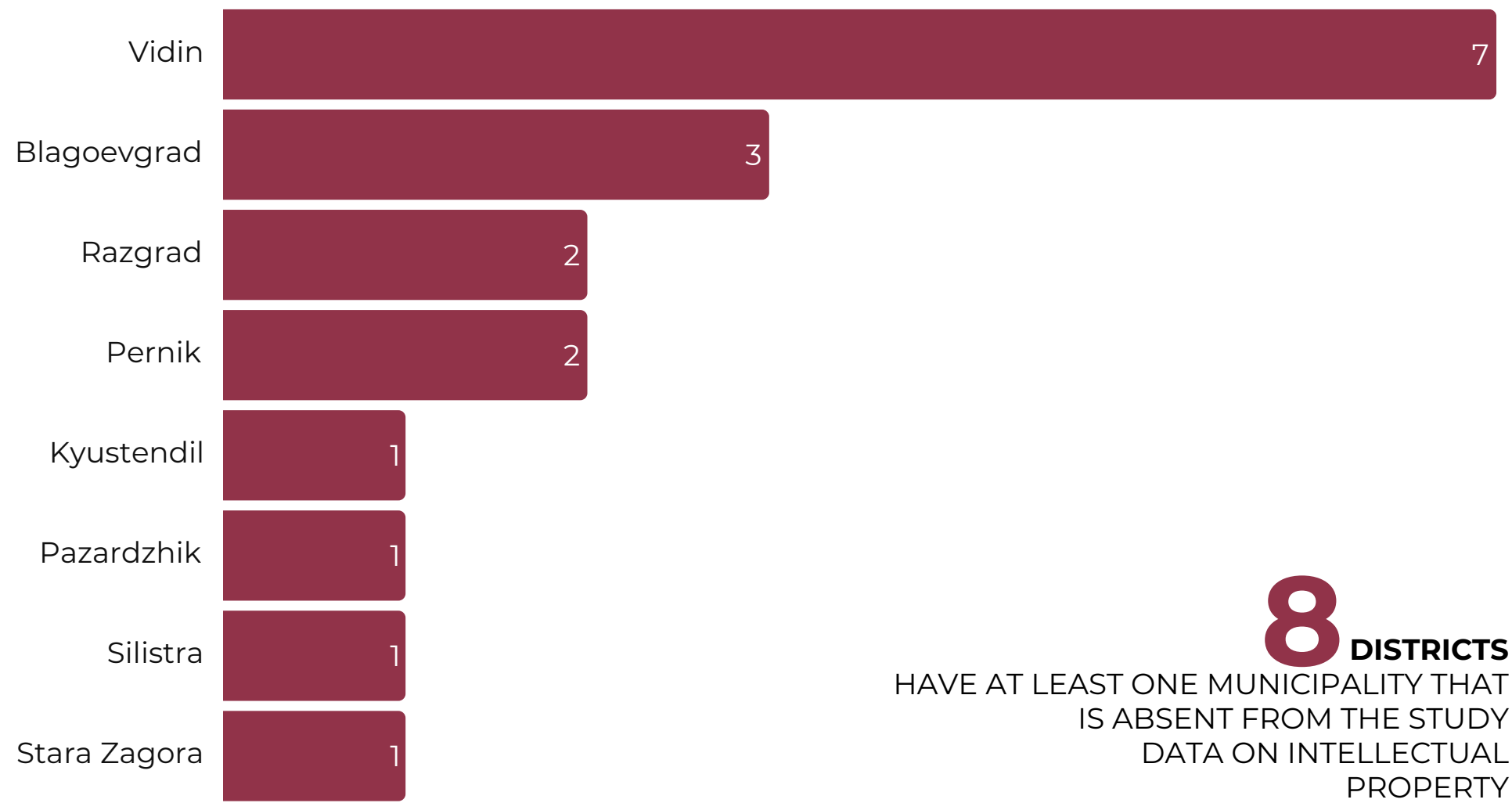


15 DISTRICTS
HAVE AT LEAST ONE MUNICIPALITY THAT
IS ABSENT FROM THE STUDY
DATA ON LITERARY AND
ARTISTIC PROPERTY

DISTRICTS AND MUNICIPALITIES ABSENT FROM THE DATA EXAMINED FOR BOTH INDUSTRIAL AND LITERARY AND ARTISTIC PROPERTY



DISTRICTS WITH THE MOST MUNICIPALITIES ABSENT FROM THE DATA EXAMINED FOR BOTH INDUSTRIAL AND LITERARY AND ARTISTIC PROPERTY



CRAFTS

Data summary

There are 10 367 registered craftspeople in the country in 160 crafts, of whom **1749 craftspeople, or 17%, fall into the category of “artistic crafts”**.

The average age of craftspeople is high - 60.6 years. By comparison, the average age of the country's population is 45.3 years. **Only 0.8% of craftspeople are under 34.**

There is an **inverted qualification pyramid** - 9 458 master craftspeople, 682 journeymen and 223 apprentices (4 records have no qualification indicated), i.e. over 42 masters per apprentice. Apprentices are concentrated in three crafts: hairdressing (141), health and hygiene services (42) and cosmetics (21).

For 19 crafts, only one craftsperson each is registered.

There is a **systematic decline in craftsperson registrations**: from a peak of 1130 in 2008 to 92 in 2025, the lowest value since 2001.

The sector is dominated by activities without a national specificity or cultural connection:

hairdressing (2933), cosmetics and massage (516) and car repair (427).

As regards territorial distribution, **206 municipalities have registered craftspeople** and 59 have none.

Every district has at least one registered craftsperson.

Stolichna Municipality concentrates 34% of craftspeople and 119 of the 160 types of crafts. 39 municipalities have only one craftsperson each, and 46 municipalities only one type of craft practised.

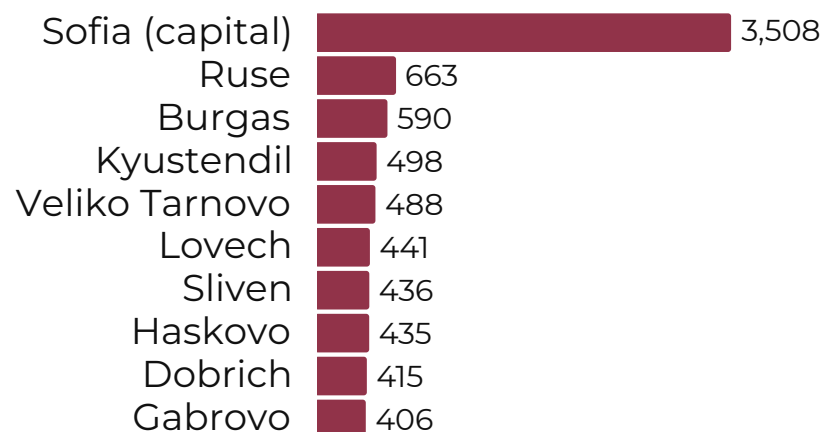
A craft is the production of articles or the provision of services, performed by qualified craftspeople by hand or with specific tools.

10 367 **TOTAL REGISTERED CRAFTSPEOPLE**
1 749 **REGISTERED CRAFTSPEOPLE IN THE CATEGORY “ARTISTIC CRAFTS”**
8 618 **REGISTERED CRAFTSPEOPLE IN THE CATEGORY “OTHER”**
160 **CRAFTS LISTED IN THE REGISTER OF CRAFTSPEOPLE**

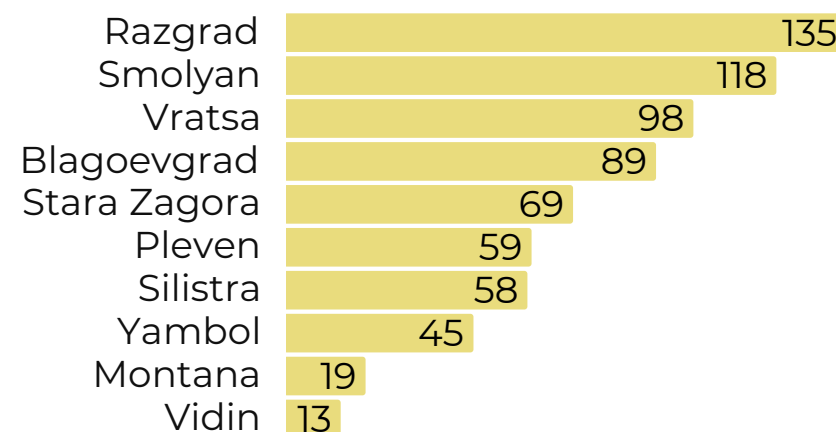
NUMBER OF MUNICIPALITIES WITH REGISTERED CRAFTSPEOPLE (2025)



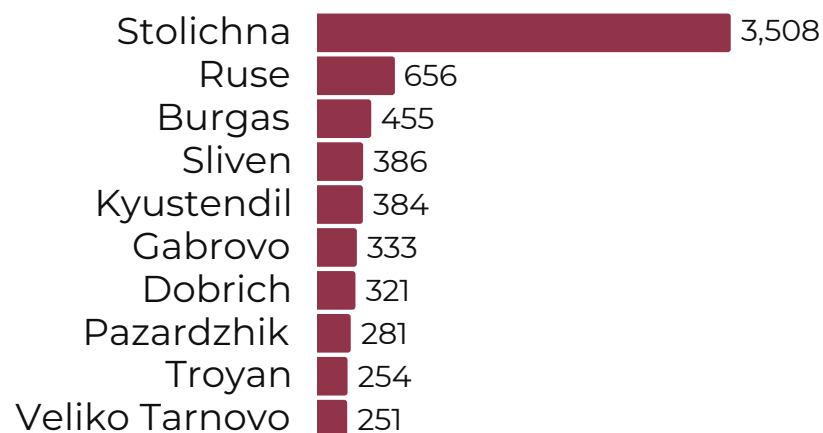
TOP 10 DISTRICTS WITH THE MOST CRAFTSPEOPLE (2025)



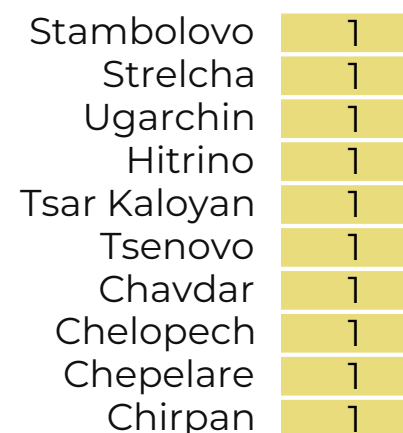
DISTRICTS WITH THE FEWEST CRAFTSPEOPLE (2025)



TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE MOST CRAFTSPEOPLE (2025)



MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE FEWEST CRAFTSPEOPLE (2025)

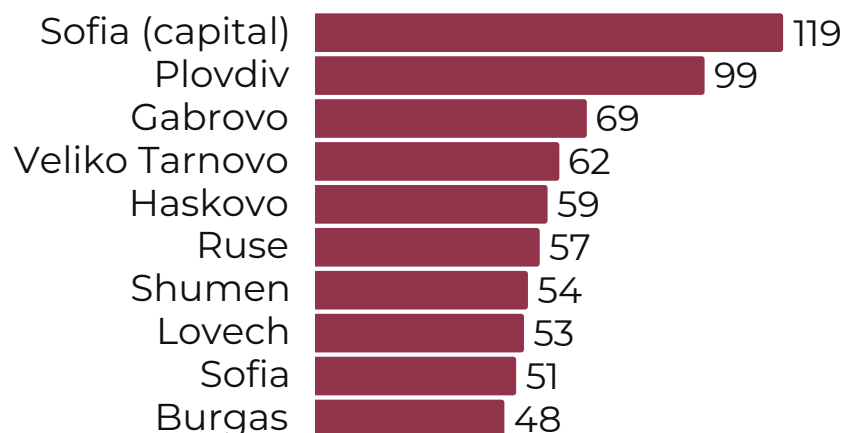


39 MUNICIPALITIES
HAVE ONLY
ONE
CRAFTSPERSON
(2025)

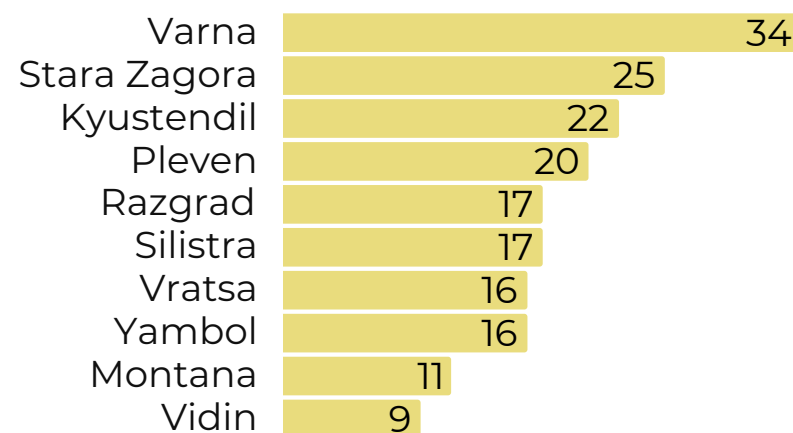
CRAFTS

NATIONAL REPORT 2025

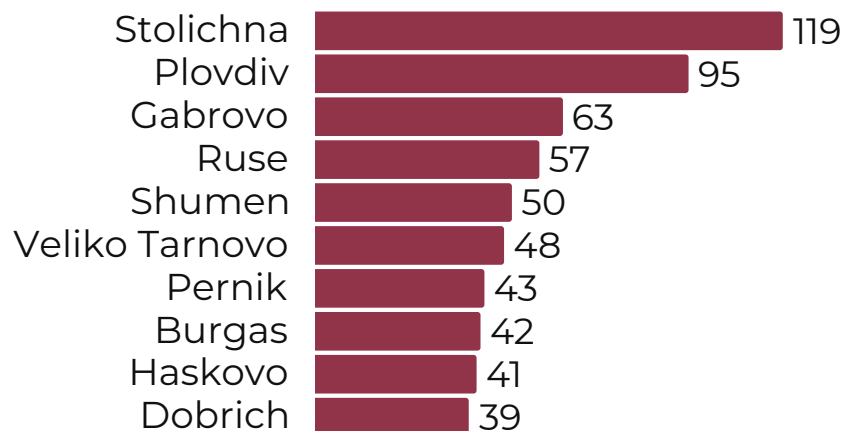
TOP 10 DISTRICTS WITH THE MOST TYPES OF CRAFTS (2025)



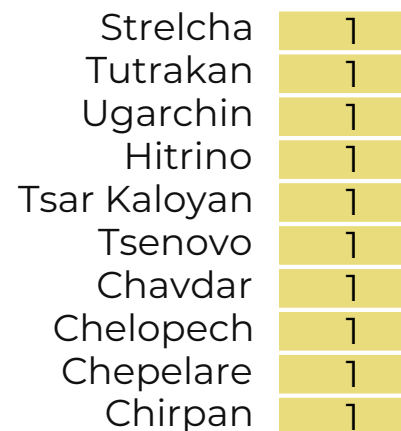
DISTRICTS WITH THE FEWEST TYPES OF CRAFTS (2025)



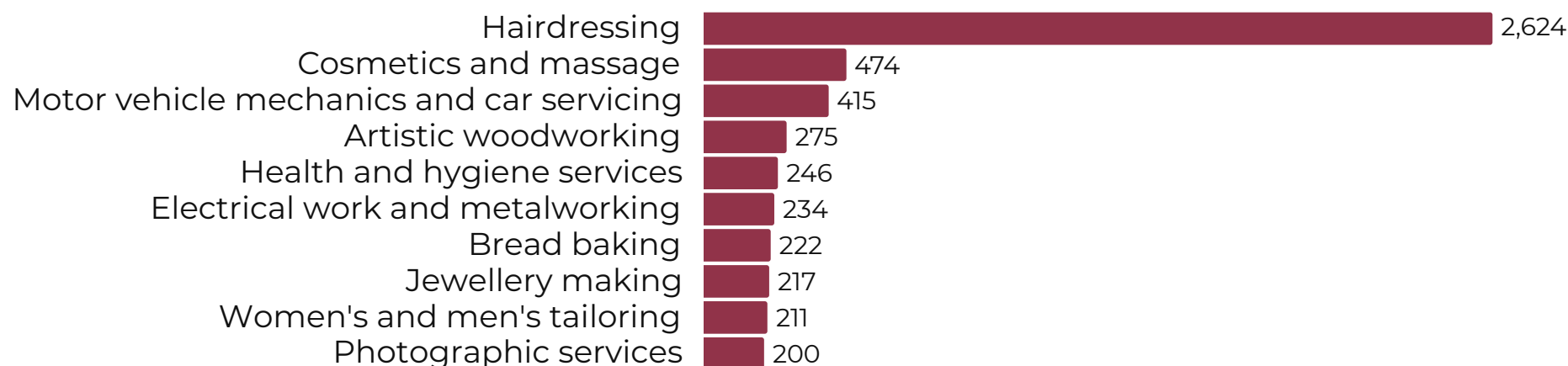
TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE MOST TYPES OF CRAFTS (2025)

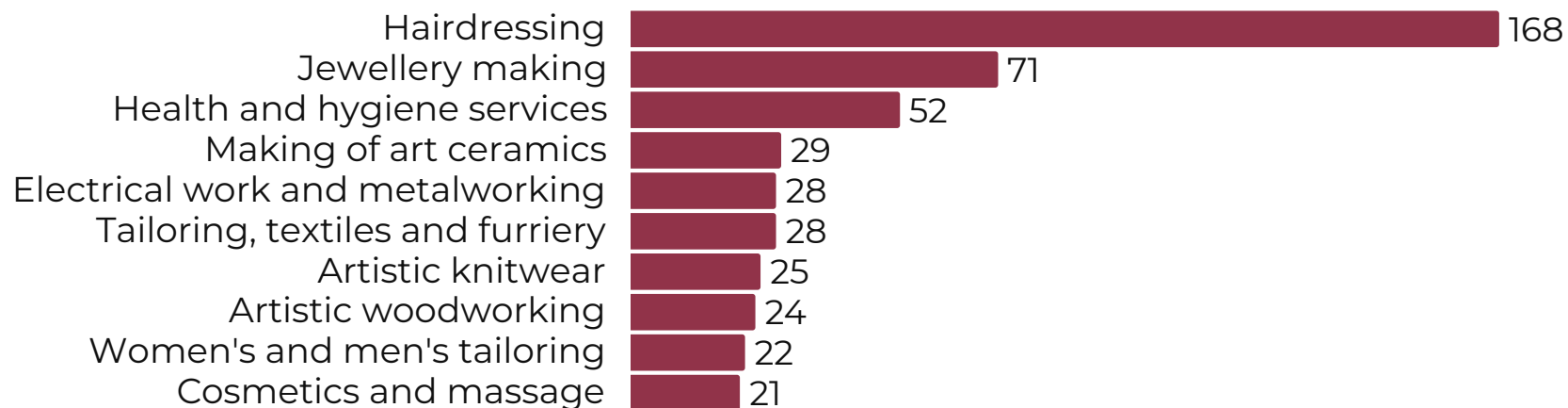
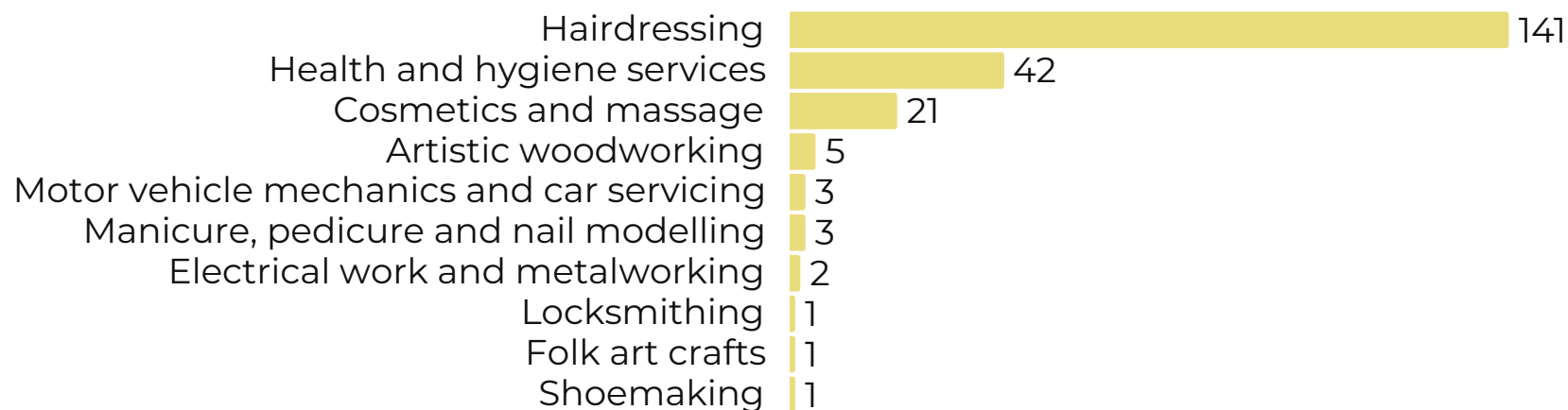


MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE FEWEST TYPES OF CRAFTS (2025)



46 MUNICIPALITIES
HAVE ONLY
ONE TYPE OF
CRAFT
PRACTISED (2025)

**NUMBER OF CRAFTSPEOPLE BY
QUALIFICATION (2025)****TOP 10 CRAFTS WITH THE MOST MASTER CRAFTSPEOPLE (2025)**

TOP 10 CRAFTS WITH THE MOST JOURNEYMEN (2025)**TOP 10 CRAFTS WITH THE MOST APPRENTICES** (2025)

BASED ON 7 502 OF 10 367 RECORDS OF REGISTERED CRAFTSPEOPLE FOR WHICH THE RELEVANT DATA ARE AVAILABLE, WE CAN CONCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

AVERAGE AGE OF CRAFTSPEOPLE

60.6 yrs

AVERAGE AGE OF THE POPULATION IN BULGARIA IS 45.3 YRS (2024)

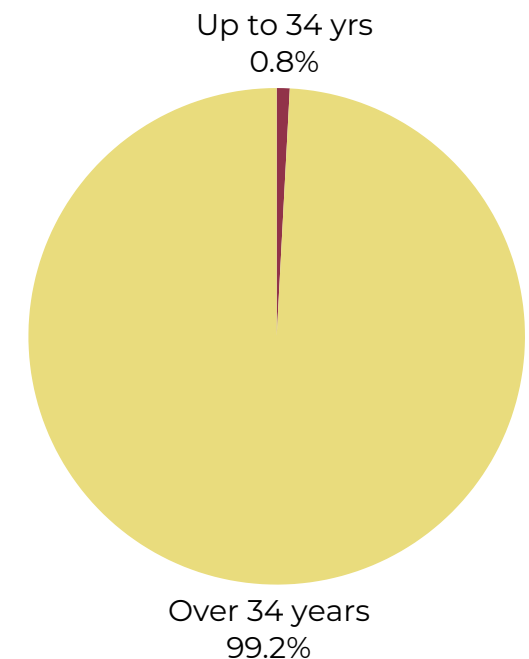
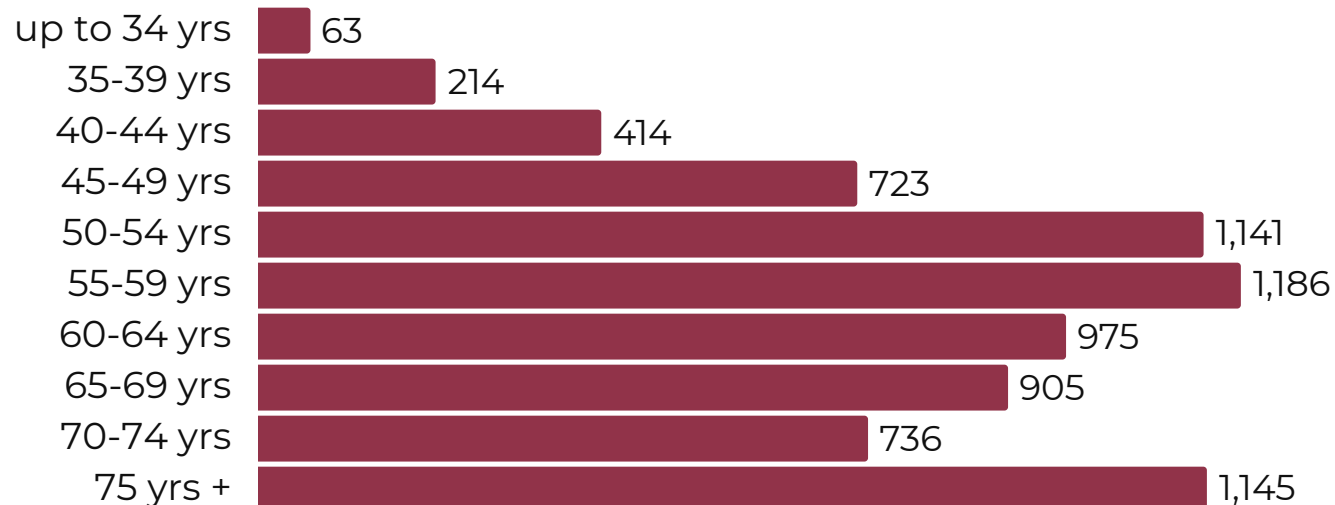
THE OLDEST CRAFTSPERSON

104 yrs

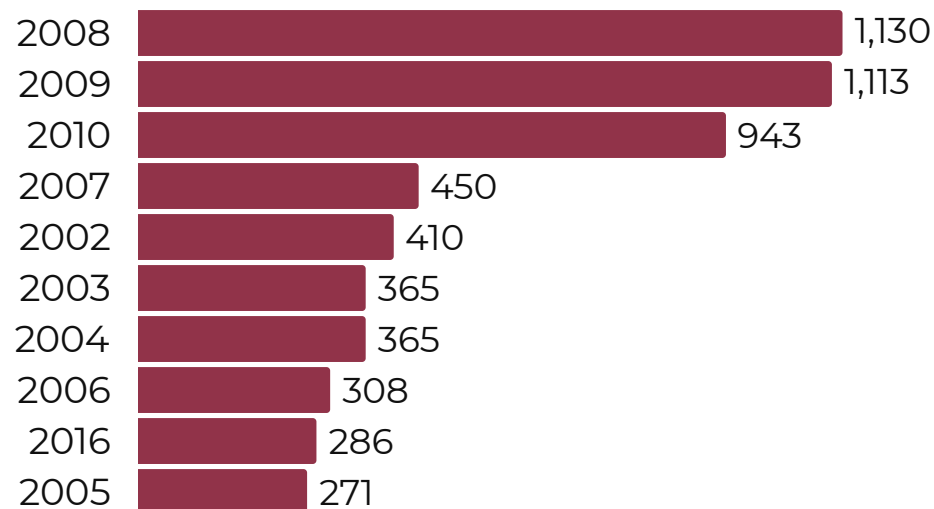
% OF CRAFTSPEOPLE UNDER 30 YRS

0.14%

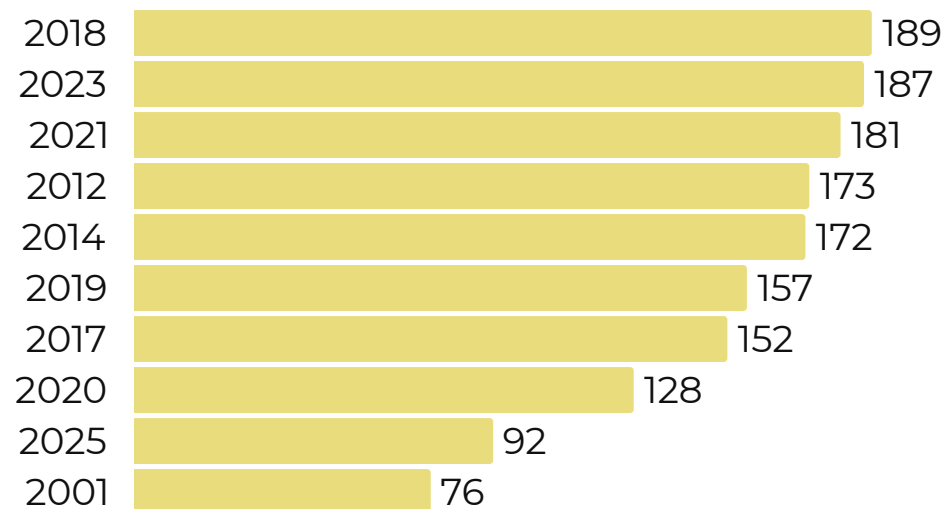
AGE OF CRAFTSPEOPLE (2025)



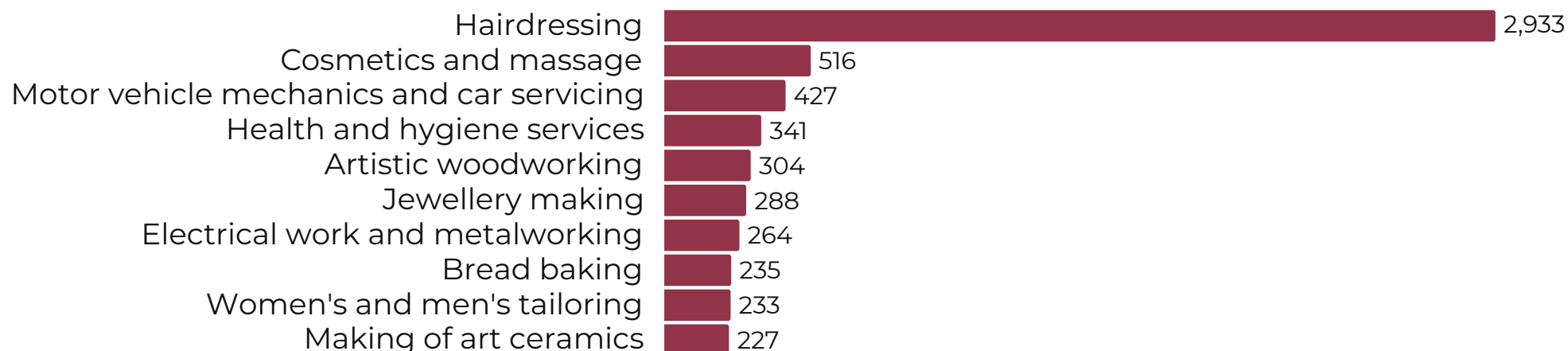
YEARS WITH THE HIGHEST REGISTRATION OF CRAFTSPEOPLE, NUMBER (2025)



YEARS WITH THE LOWEST REGISTRATION OF CRAFTSPEOPLE, NUMBER (2025)



TOP 10 TYPES OF CRAFTS WITH THE LARGEST NUMBER OF PRACTISING CRAFTSPEOPLE (2025)



ENDANGERED CRAFTS WITH A SINGLE REGISTERED CRAFTSPERSON (2025)

Rope making	1
Wood turning	1
Well construction	1
Making and repair of articles of copper and its alloys	1
Making and repair of period weapons	1
Car body making	1
Making of harp instruments	1
Making of dolls in folk costume	1
Making of decorations and advertising panels, woodcarving and stonemasonry	1
Making of wrought-iron articles	1
Blacksmithing	1
Shipbuilding and boatbuilding	1
Lithography	1
Oil pressing	1
Processing of rock materials	1
Brewing and malting	1
Making of articles of precious metals	1
Zincography	1
Metal fitting	1

DISTRICTS AND MUNICIPALITIES WITHOUT CRAFTSPEOPLE

59 OF 265

MUNICIPALITIES
HAVE NO REGISTERED CRAFTSPERSON

Alfatar, Anton, Belitsa, Belogradchik, Berkovitsa, Boynitsa, Borovan, Borovo, Bratya Daskalovi, Bregovo, Brezovo, Brusartsi, Byala-Varna, Vetrino, Valchedram, Georgi Damyanovo, Glavinitsa, Gramada, Gulyantsi, Gurkovo, Devnya, Dimovo, Dobrich-selska, Zemen, Iskar, Kaynardzha, Kovachevtsi, Kresna, Krivodol, Lesichovo, Letnitsa, Makresh, Medkovets, Mirkovo, Maglizh, Nikola Kozlevo, Nikopol, Novo selo, Opaka, Pavel banya, Perushtitsa, Pordim, Primorsko, Ruzhintsi, Samuil, Sitovo, Strumyani, Suvorovo, Saedinenie, Sarnitsa, Treklyano, Tran, Tundzha, Hadzhidimovo, Hayredin, Chiprovtsi, Chuprene, Yakimovo, Yakoruda.

EACH OF THE 28 DISTRICTS OF BULGARIA HAS A REGISTERED CRAFTSPERSON

The districts with the most municipalities without a registered craftsperson are Vidin (9), Montana (7), Blagoevgrad (5), Varna (4), Silistra (4), Stara Zagora (4), Pleven (4).

RECOMMENDATIONS AT NATIONAL LEVEL

1 Of key importance for ensuring national competitiveness is the identification of sectors of the economy that will develop intensively in the period 2028-2033. The sectors identified in the *Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation 2021-2027*, namely “Mechatronics and Microelectronics”, “Industry for Healthy Living, Bioeconomy and Biotechnology”, “New Technologies in Creative and Recreative Industries” and “Clean Technologies, Low-Carbon and Circular Economy”, **are either no longer relevant or, if they are confirmed as priorities for the next programming period, should be given clear objectives and numerically measurable indicators of what has been achieved over the years and of the progress in these economic sectors.**

2 Research activity in higher education institutions and research organisations should focus as a priority on the scientific fields that serve the sectors of the economy that will develop intensively in the next programming period (2028-2033), i.e. specialisation in science is needed.

Arguments:

The complex inter-institutional coordination of state policy for the promotion of research and innovation, under the Law on the Promotion of Research and Innovation, is to be “carried out by the Council of Ministers, the Minister of Education and Science and the Minister of Innovation and Digital Transformation” (LPRI, Art. 8(1)), and this complex coordinated policy should contribute above all to:

- (1) identifying the sectors of the economy that will develop intensively;
- (2) focusing research on the fields of science that support the sectors of the economy that will develop intensively;
- (3) aligning the results of science and education with the needs of the sectors of the economy that will develop intensively.

Strategic alignment of national priorities in education with national priorities in the economy would allow (1) targeted training of personnel specifically for the national economy and (2) targeted research specifically for the benefit of the sectors of the economy identified for intensive development.

Proposed for the second consecutive year

3 Support for research should apply where research is focused on scientific fields supporting the sectors of the economy identified for intensive development.

Arguments:

The National Strategy for the Development of Scientific Research in the Republic of Bulgaria 2017-2030 states on p. 21 and p. 27, respectively, that:

(1) “Bulgaria cannot afford a significant presence in all scientific fields”.

(2) Bulgaria “has lacked a consistent national policy for the promotion of scientific research over the past decades”.

Proposed for the second consecutive year

4 For the purpose of ensuring national competitiveness, a significant share of research in Bulgaria should be applied in nature, with the clear national objective that applied research should support the activity of the sectors of the national economy identified for intensive development.

5 The results of applied research in Bulgaria should lead to the filing of an application for an invention, utility model or industrial design, or result in innovative methods, systems, technologies or products protectable as know-how, under the institution of production and trade secrets, or through the system of copyright and related rights. National competitiveness, as well as corporate competitiveness, should be based on home-grown technologies.

Arguments:

Over the past 6 years, state funding of research has increased in nominal terms (from BGN 1 023.8 million in 2020 to BGN 1 574.1 million in 2024), but has decreased as a percentage of the country's GDP (from 0.85% in 2020 to 0.77% of GDP in 2024). Over the same period, the number of applications for inventions and utility models has been declining steadily, which shows that research and development (R&D) is not materialising into filing activity.

The insufficient focus of R&D on applied fields and the absence of protection for its results are probably due to:

(1) research being directed towards fields of fundamental science without a direct link to industry, or (2) a lack of familiarity with the intellectual property system.

- 6** Assigning national supra-departmental monitoring and evaluation to the Security Council at the Council of Ministers, enabling the allocation of national resources to the competent ministries (MES, MIDT, MEII) on the basis of:
- monitoring the alignment of the results of education and science with the needs of the sectors of the economy identified for intensive development; analysing the alignment of
 - research activity with the academic specialisation of higher education institutions;
 - evaluating the results of research activity (in the applied part of science) on the basis of the number of patent applications for inventions and applications for registration of utility models filed for the systems, methods, technologies, prototypes and products created, as well as all objects of intellectual property admissible under the legislation.

Arguments:

(1) Under Art. 5(1), item 6 of the Rules on the Functions, Tasks and Organisation of Work of the Security Council at the Council of Ministers, the Security Council “gives opinions on the allocation of resources” of the State.

(2) Under Art. 27(1), item 1, the Security Council determines the criteria, organisation and coordination of the activities of ministries and agencies, with ministers “organising the work of their administrations in connection with the analysis of political, economic and technological problems related to national security”.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CRAFTS SECTOR

- 7 Registration** as a craftsperson with the respective Regional Chamber of Crafts and obtaining a qualification (apprentice, journeyman, master) **is not mandatory** under the Law on Crafts and is not a precondition for practising the respective craft; however, registration should create opportunities for recognition and publicity based on a standard of quality and identity. Registration makes the craftsperson visible and verifiable for clients and partners. Creating a website such as the National Map is of key importance.
- 8 Centralised and consistent keeping of a register of craftspeople at national level would allow targeted policies to be developed that bind the State and the municipalities. Consistent keeping of the national register of craftspeople should be established.** There is a lack of consistency and digitalisation in the keeping of the regional registers of craftspeople and, accordingly, in the national register of the National Chamber of Crafts, which is based on the regional ones. This makes it difficult to establish the overall state of the Bulgarian crafts sector and is a main reason for collecting, processing, analysing and presenting the data in this report.
- 9 The Ministry of Culture, as part of the functions assigned to it, should also carry out activities to identify and support crafts at risk of disappearing,** which are of cultural significance for the country and should be supported regardless of their economic benefit to the national economy.

Rope making, Wood turning, Well construction, Making and repair of articles of copper and its alloys, Making and repair of period weapons, Car body making, Making of harp instruments, Making of dolls in folk costume, Making of decorations and advertising panels, woodcarving and stonemasonry, Making of wrought-iron articles, Blacksmithing, Shipbuilding and boatbuilding, Lithography, Oil pressing, Processing of rock materials, Brewing and malting, Making of articles of precious metals, Zincography, Metal fitting.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CRAFTS SECTOR

10 The NCC, as the national-level organisation of craftspeople in Bulgaria, should coordinate with the legislative, executive and local authorities to implement all policies in support of crafts on the basis of amendments and supplements to the legislation on crafts. Crafts of different economic and cultural significance are brought together in a single law. The Law on Crafts brings together in its Annex No. 1 both crafts of cultural and historical significance for the people and the State and crafts (such as hairdressing and motor vehicle mechanics) that have no significant national specificity in their practice and whose development should be determined entirely by the supply of and demand for the respective service or product. This combination of artistic crafts at risk of disappearing with other economic activities could have a negative effect on the formulation of a targeted national policy for the preservation of culturally significant crafts.

11 Protecting the interests of craftspeople by implementing the new European system for the protection of geographical indications for craft products:

- **Adoption of the ordinance under Art. 106a(10) of the LMGI.** The Patent Office and the Ministry of Economy and Industry should publish a draft and hold a public consultation, and an ordinance on the drawing up of applications under the new regime should be adopted.
- **Approval of templates.** Templates should be created which, where necessary, correspond to the standard forms in the annexes to the Regulation - for the single document (Art. 10), the reasoned statement of opposition (Art. 26) and the personal declaration (Art. 51).
- **Transformation of already registered national geographical indications into European ones.** The role of the State, and in particular of the BPO, is key in filing a request for the transformation of protected national geographical indications into European ones under Art. 70 of the Regulation.
- **Identification of names of craft and industrial products for future application for registration.** The Patent Office, together with the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Innovation, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Tourism, with the coordinating role of the National Chamber of Crafts (NCC), should draw up a comprehensive prioritised list of the products with potential for future applications for registration. The existence of such a list will help promote Bulgarian craftspeople and their authentic products by enabling prioritised policies that create protective mechanisms against imitations, as is the case, for example, with imitation martenitsi imported from China. In this way, protection simultaneously strengthens the competitiveness of Bulgarian craftspeople and protects Bulgarian national identity.

- **Building producer groups.** The National Chamber of Crafts and the regional chambers should initiate the establishment of associations by craft to act as applicants for new geographical indications and initiators of potential future amendments to product specifications. Communities built in this way also increase the potential for developing craft tourism beyond the traditional framework of ethnographic museums, which preserve the memory of crafts but do not present the living craft tradition.
- **Control infrastructure.** The Patent Office should announce the procedure for designating certification bodies and natural persons with delegated control tasks, and hold a dialogue with the accredited bodies and the Executive Agency “Bulgarian Accreditation Service”. It would be particularly useful for the National Chamber of Crafts to be authorised as a certification body, given the capacity it has built through the 20 regional chambers of crafts, if legislation and budgets allow.
- **Information on funding.** The Patent Office, in the presence of the NCC, should publicly explain the parameters of Voucher 5 and which part of the costs is eligible under the individual procedural scenarios.
- **National complementary instrument.** A scheme should be provided to cover the part of the product specification costs falling outside the scope of Voucher 5, through existing programme instruments and the local action groups (Strategic Plan for the Development of Agriculture and Rural Areas 2023-2027).
- **Drawing on foreign experience.** Working contacts should be established with the competent authorities and with applicants in the Member States that have taken action under the regime, including through the publicly available data in the SESIS information environment.
- **Proactive information activities.** Information measures should be taken out to the regions with a concentration of craft production and adapted to the working rhythm of the craftspeople. It is key to explain the benefits of the protection afforded by geographical indications for craft products and how they differ from trade marks.

RECOMMENDATIONS AT MUNICIPAL LEVEL

1 Every municipality can adopt policies to promote the creation of innovations in its territory and their protection as intellectual property objects of their creators through:

- the creation, on the basis of a share of municipal taxes and fees, of a municipal earmarked fund to promote innovation in business and creative activity;
- the provision of earmarked municipal funding of state fees for applications for inventions, utility models, trade marks and industrial designs, where the applicant is from the territory of the municipality and meets relevant local criteria supporting the local economy.

2 Every municipality can adopt policies to promote the intellectual property objects registered in the territory of the municipality through:

- presentation of the municipality's intellectual property objects in a dedicated section of the municipality's website, "Intellectual property objects from the territory of the municipality";
- inclusion, in the municipality's international activities, of the systematic promotion of local innovations (protected by patents for inventions, registered utility models and industrial designs, or local books, creative ensembles and their performances, creative works, performances, recordings and programmes created and protected by the system of copyright and related rights).

Arguments:

In the long term, this support attracts local, national and international investment, creates jobs and ultimately leads to higher budget revenue from local taxes and fees.

3 Every municipality can provide, free of charge, **municipal premises to actively working creators and creative organisations** with a registered address in the territory of the municipality.

Arguments:

Supporting the creative activity of creators and creative organisations registered in the territory of the municipality.

4 Every municipality can set aside, free of charge, a dedicated part of a **shopping street** (for smaller municipalities) or an entire street (for larger municipalities), on which the municipality builds and provides exhibition premises to actively working creators and creative organisations with a registered address in the territory of the municipality, for the commercial display of finished creative works created in the territory of the municipality.

Arguments:

Supporting the commercial activity of creators and creative organisations registered in the territory of the municipality.

5 In order to stimulate creativity and inventiveness at local level, every municipality (jointly with the regional education inspectorates) can adopt **policies in the field of secondary education**, including holding classes on “The Intellectual Property System” and providing online teaching materials for students in the 11th and/or 12th grade.

Arguments:

In the long term, this municipal support encourages young people towards critical thinking, innovation and entrepreneurship by building knowledge of the role of the legal monopoly guaranteed by intellectual property.

Institute of Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer “Prof. Dr Borislav Borisov” at UNWE

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