

Introduction

The publication you hold in your hands freely follows its earlier edition and at the same time further expands it. It is mostly concerned with the comparison of the Czech Republic and European Union countries, but also with other world countries, in the form of selected indicators in tables and graphs. The major used country groups are exactly defined below. The selection of data was primarily governed by the interests of users and also by the existence and availability of data in international sources.

Also this year there are 11 thematic areas in the publication, covering economic, social as well as environmental areas of life. Apart from the standard information regarding the population, labour market, environment, individual economic sectors and macroeconomic data, especially the GDP, were also included indicators on information society, selected regional indicators and many others. Wide range of data and tables of international comparison can also be found on www.czso.cz or in other publications produced by the Czech Statistical Office.

Differences in data

This publication primarily uses data published by Eurostat. It may differ from the data published by the CZSO. Among the causes of these differences are: methodological differences, use of other models for seasonal adjustment, different indicators, variant definitions of general indicators, different coverage (e.g. different size groups), rounding, harmonization (comparability between states) and so on. For more information see the website of the Czech Statistical Office:

http://www.czso.cz/csu/redakce.nsf/i/rozdily_mezi_daty_zverejnovanymi_ceskym_statistickym_uradem_a_eurostatem

Differences in data released in individual years of this publication may be caused by changes in methodology which the statistical offices of all member countries make in different years. For example, the new classifications (NACE, CPA ...) get into use. In some cases, the data is recalculated backwards, and the aggregates change. As a result of changes in the economy, the data in some countries become confidential and cannot be published. Differences arise also through the use of new data sources. If the source used failed to update data in a given year and it is already certain that no update will be performed, we tried to replace it with another source and we put a new definition of the indicator. Some tables disappeared completely, some new, hopefully interesting for users, were added. For all tables, the data source and the date of which the data is valid, are indicated. The Czech Statistical Office is not responsible for data from other sources.

Explanatory notes:

EU 15 refers to the European Union of 15 countries (till 30 April 2004: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom).

EU 25 is the European Union of 25 countries. Ten new countries joined the European Union on 1 May 2004 (Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia), which changed the EU 15 into EU 25.

EU 27 is the European Union of 27 countries after the accession of Bulgaria and Romania on 1 January 2007.

Euroarea refers to the territory of the EU Member States, which adopted the euro as the common currency in compliance with the Treaty establishing the European Community. The special supreme session of the European Union held in May 1998 stated that eleven of its countries had qualified for the introduction of the common "Euro" (Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain). The exchange rates of the currencies of these countries to the euro were permanently fixed as of the end of 1998 in the form of conversion coefficients.

In 2001, these countries were joined by Greece and Euroarea (11 countries) and became **Euroarea (12 countries)**. Euroarea further extended. Slovenia joined the Euroarea on 1 January 2007 – **Euroarea (13 countries)**, Malta and Cyprus on 1 January 2008 – **Euroarea (15 countries)**, Slovakia on 1 January 2009 – **Euroarea (16 countries)** and Estonia on 1 January 2011 – **Euroarea (17 countries)**.

EFTA (European Free Trade Association) – this group includes Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

Purchasing Power Standard (PPS) is an artificial currency that reflects differences in national price levels that are not taken into account by exchange rates. This unit allows meaningful volume comparisons of

economic indicators over countries. Aggregates expressed in PPS are derived by dividing aggregates in current prices and national currency with the respective Purchasing Power Parity (PPP).

Purchasing Power Parities (PPP) are the currency exchange rates that equalise the purchasing power of different currencies. This means that a given sum of money, when converted into different currencies at the PPP rates, will buy the same basket of goods and services in all countries. In other words, PPPs are the rates of currency conversion, which eliminate the differences in price levels among countries.

Participation rate expresses the percentage of general population over the age of 15 who are currently employed or are actively seeking employment (the labour force). Persons who are not in the labour force include retired people, stay-at-home parents, students, people in prisons or similar institutions, as well as discouraged workers who cannot find work etc.

Employment Rate (or Employment-to-population Ratio) is the ratio of employed persons to the population 15 years and over.

The data for the Chapter 5 **Industry, energy, construction** were extracted from Eurostat database and are based on the classification NACE Rev. 2.

Chapters 11 **Regions** and 12 **Geographical breakdown** are devoted to the regions of the European Union. Compared to previous years, they were supplemented by maps and cartograms serving for a quick comparison of the level of some economic and social characteristics of individual regions. Regions are classified according to the classification NUTS (La nomenclature des unités territoriales statistiques), which is an administrative classification dividing the European Union (EU) into regions at three levels (NUTS 1, 2 and 3). The current version of NUTS divides the territory of the European Union and its 27 Member States into 97 NUTS 1 regions, 271 NUTS 2 regions and 1303 NUTS 3 regions.

In this publication, we give either NUTS 3 regions data either only NUTS 2 regions for different countries. Due to the limited extent of this book, it was not possible to give data for all 1303 (NUTS 3) regions, or view the maps of large countries (France, Great Britain) in such a detailed breakdown.

Given that some of the regions within the EU have the same name, the distinction is made by adding the appropriate shortcut of the state. Some NUTS regions occur at multiple levels (e.g. Luxembourg is the state, and at the same time the region at NUTS 1, 2 and 3 level). In these cases, the code ends at zero for the region with the identical territory at the next lower level. Coding must not be identical for different NUTS levels, even if the territorial extent of these regions is identical.

Maps should allow the user to locate individual regions, but their borders are only indicative. The map scales for individual countries vary. For each country map, the name of the state in Czech, English and national language is given. Czech translations are provided with the names of some regions that are normally given only in the national languages. The overseas territories are located in small windows on the side of the map. For better orientation selected significant headquarters are drawn, the size of the circle corresponds to the approximate number of inhabitants in the administrative or geographic boundaries.

The aim of this publication is to serve the wide range of users interested in information relating to the position of the Czech Republic in comparison to the other countries. The CZSO employees welcome possible further ideas and comments from the readers and will use them in further improvement of their work.