

Dear Users of the Statistical Yearbook,

The title you have in your hands is a sort of an anniversary – it is the 15th volume in the history of the Czech Republic. Let me use this opportunity and remember a few facts. The first Statistical Yearbook of the Czech Republic in 1993 contained besides data on the Czech Republic also selected indicators on the no more existing Czechoslovak Federative Republic; it had 441 pages and was partly bilingual (Czech-English tables, preface and list of contents). Since 1994 the Statistical Yearbooks have been Czech-English throughout and their size nearly doubled (about 800 pages today). The Yearbook came out also in 2002 when the floods in August completely destroyed the premises of the Czech Statistical Office in Prague. The contents of the Yearbook were modified in response to the transformation to a market economy and preparations for joining the EU; a number of indicators came out of use and new ones appeared. More distinct changes were made in 2000 (a new design) and 2001 (arrangement and internal chapter structure); the arrangement of the Yearbook has been stable since. Joining the European Union in 2004 had an impact on the contents, e.g. external trade data presentation or introduction of standard structural indicators comparable between EU countries. As of 1998 the Statistical Yearbook is also published electronically on CD-ROM.

For your better orientation in the book I would like to mention new things in this volume. The improvement effort indicated a year ago is most apparent in the revision of introductory methodological notes to all chapters including completion of some key indicator descriptions. On top of that:

- tables in Chapter 3. Environment are arranged by areas: land, air pollution, waste management, water management, and environment-related economic issues. The Table Potential emissions of industrial fluorinated greenhouse gases is new;
- Chapter 5. National Accounts has been extended by adding two new tables – Detailed tax and social contribution receipts of the general government sector and General government expenditure by function (COFOG);
- Chapter 6. Finance has one more table – Local budget expenditure by kind-of-activity budget classification;
- the form of Chapter 13. Science and Technology, Information Society is not yet stable. Besides minor changes in the contents you will find new information on business sector expenditures on R&D in foreign affiliates, external trade in high-tech goods, technology balance of payments, and use of mobile telephones by individuals;
- in the context of the prepared enlargement of the Schengen area (31 December 2007) there is no point in observing international person arrivals in the Czech Republic and Czech resident departures abroad in the current conception of Chapter 18. Trade, Hotels and Restaurants, Tourism. Basic tourism indicators of the Czech Republic from the Tourism Satellite Account including explanatory methodology are included instead;
- an amendment to the School Act enacted in 2005 circumscribed the observation and publication of certain indicators in Chapter 21. Education. The figures are partly replaced by similar ones (broken down by founder) presented in new tables;
- a new table – Expenditures on social protection according to the core system of ESSPROS (The European System of Integrated Social Protection Statistics) has been added to Chapter 24. Social Security;
- to increase the variety of indicators in Chapter 26. International Comparisons, some structural indicators (SI) are no more split by gender and new sustainable development indicators (SDI) are presented;
- the closing Chapter 28. Elections contains the results of the last local council election and election to the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic held in 2006.

The Statistical Yearbook was prepared in participation of specialists from ministries and other institutions and experts from the Czech Statistical Office. I would like to express my thanks to all of these and also to Scientia Publishers responsible for the printing and distribution of the Yearbook in the Czech Republic and abroad.

Please note that in compliance with the Czech Statistical Office's dissemination policy an electronic version of this Statistical Yearbook will be available free at http://www.czso.cz/eng/redakce.nsf/i/statistical_yearbooks_of_the_czech_republic starting three months after the publication. I believe that your comments and suggestions (see the addresses given three pages earlier) may help to further improve the Yearbook in response to your needs.

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