

METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Agricultural censuses have been conducted every ten years in all the European Union member countries on the basis of EU/EC legislation requirements. The legal act currently in force is the Regulation (EC) No 1166/2008 of the European Parliament and the Council of 19 November 2008, on farm structure surveys and the survey on agricultural production methods and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 571/88. The implementing regulation for this legislation is the Regulation (EC) No 1200/2009 of 30 November 2009.

The aim of Agricultural census 2010 was to obtain detailed and complex information about the whole scale of the Czech agriculture, i.e. about size and structure of agricultural holdings, their equipment, specialisation of their production and other gainful activities. This time the survey questionnaire contained a new part called Survey on agricultural production methods (SAPM), which covered variables such as tillage methods used, animal housing capacity, establishing of landscape features, etc. A large part of the SAPM variables was surveyed for the first time; it refers especially to variables bringing information on the environmental impact of agriculture (e.g. the above-mentioned establishing of landscape features or tillage methods, soil cover in winter, methods of manure application, water consumption for irrigation, etc.).

The abovementioned legislation states that the survey shall cover (i) agricultural holdings¹ where the agricultural area utilised for farming is one hectare or more; (ii) agricultural holdings where the agricultural area utilised for farming is less than one hectare, if those holdings produce a certain proportion for sale or if they exceed one of the physical thresholds. Member States can use a survey threshold above one hectare but this threshold shall be fixed at a level that excludes only the smallest agricultural holdings which together contribute 2% or less to the total utilised agricultural area and 2% or less to the total number of livestock units. In the Czech Republic the following threshold values were set down for Agricultural census 2010:

- Acreage above 5 ha of utilised agricultural area (own or rented), or
- More than 1 ha of orchards, or
- 3,500 m² of vineyards, or
- Sum of acreages for vegetable, strawberries and flowers above 2,500 m², or
- Breeding of 5 heads of cattle, or
- 10 heads of pigs, or
- 10 heads of sheep and goats, or
- 100 heads of poultry including ostriches.

Out of the total number of 26 908 agricultural holdings surveyed, threshold values were reached in 22 684 holdings (i.e. 85.0%); less than 9% of holdings surveyed ceased their activity temporarily or definitively. From various reasons 2.1% of agricultural holdings did not participate at the survey. Remaining 4% are represented by holdings that did not reach threshold values. The data presented for 22 684 agricultural holdings meets the condition of covering at least 98% of utilised agricultural area and 98% of the total number of livestock units.

In Agricultural census 2000 lower threshold values were applied than in 2010 (at least 1 ha of utilised agricultural area plus additional criteria). To enable comparison of both censuses' results, data for 2000 were recalculated according to the threshold values defined for 2010 census.

With effect from 1 May 2009 the legal form "private farmer" recorded in Agricultural census 2000 has been repealed. Natural persons formerly registered under this category who continued in their agricultural activities had to re-register as agricultural entrepreneurs according to the Law No 252/1997 Coll., on agriculture, as amended. Legal forms "Incorporated agricultural entrepreneur" and "Unincorporated agricultural entrepreneur" were established instead. In the tables these are reported as "agricultural entrepreneurs – natural persons". Natural persons dealing with growing crops or raising animals on a small scale or selling unprocessed products are not subject of registration and they are reported as "natural persons not classified yet", i.e. with no identification number.

¹ Agricultural holding means a single unit, both technically and economically, which has a single management and which undertakes agricultural activities based on the common statistical classification of economic activities (CZ-NACE), either as its primary or secondary activity. Among these activities belong: growing of non-perennial crops (01.1); growing of perennial crops (01.2) including wine production from self-produced grapes; plant propagation (01.3); animal production (01.4); mixed farming (01.5); support activities to agriculture and post-harvest crop activities (01.6). Agricultural holdings raising other animals (01.49) are excluded, except ones raising and breeding ostriches, emus and rabbits, and dealing with bee-keeping and production of honey and beeswax. Furthermore, all agricultural holdings carrying out activities under 01.6 of CZ-NACE are excluded, except holdings exclusively maintaining agricultural land in good agricultural and environmental condition.