

## **STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE CZECH STATISTICAL OFFICE FOR 2018–2022**

The crucial mission of the Czech Statistical Office (CZSO) is providing of consistent and trustworthy information on the status and development of the society. Current conditions of continuing global economic integration and general digitisation significantly affect the Office activity in an important manner and simultaneously are connected with numerous challenges for the State Statistical Service.

Economic development of the Czech Republic, as well as those of other countries, is, first of all, markedly connected to the phenomenon of globalisation. The influence of international chains, activities of which are de facto not bound to national borders, has been growing due to a loosening of international trade conditions. Relations within often very complex ownership structures change the content and importance of international flows of goods and services, which affect the content of traditional indicators of economic performance.

The aforementioned may bring important impacts on information capability and value of conventional economic statistics. This way demand for both new statistical information and greater details in the current outcomes is generated. The global development, however, accentuates issues of development sustainability, content of which goes beyond the economic performance itself and emphasises also aspects of social and environmental nature. Thus in these fields the need to create new indicators, both at national and international levels, has been growing.

In parallel to the aforementioned fields, information technologies, that have been changing the content of numerous processes in economy as well as in the society, have seen a very dynamic development. One of the digitisation results is a fast creation and improved availability of new data sources. Yet the easier availability of information at the same time transforms the data importance and also the way the data are handled, which in certain cases may even put their value in doubt. The CZSO must respond to these conditions either by using new information, which leads to reduced administrative burden on respondents, or by providing of outcomes, which in their forms and availability must correspond to requirements of the users in the 21st century.

All the aforementioned challenges require responses, horizon of which, certainly as a rule, stretches often beyond several years. Therefore they have to be solved within a multiyear strategic plan. Financial resources, which are available to cover ever-growing demand for the statistics processing, are, of course, limited. So the strategic plan plays an important role in setting up priorities for the further development.

When compiling the multiyear plan the CZSO takes into account requirements of users from the Czech Republic as well as from abroad. The State Statistical Service of the Czech Republic makes a part of the European Statistical System, which besides the duty to comply with European legislation requirements, brings a number of options to employ experience of other countries and to contribute in an active manner to joint solutions of current issues. The fact the Czech Republic is anchored to international statistical structures at the same time needs a planned coordination with requirements of the national legislation on statistics and on non-statistical matters. These activities also must be planned over a longer horizon due to their complex nature.

Yet the official statistics may stand up to conditions and needs of the current information market solely in the case it would use its major advantages. These are a highly professional approach, which combined with independence and mandate to collect necessary data, enables to create an objective and trustworthy description of the current social and economic environment. I believe that the multiyear strategic plan will help us to be able to follow the current challenges and respond to them in a thorough manner, and it will contribute to fulfilling of the Czech Statistical Office mission.

Prof Ing Iva Ritschelová, CSc  
President of the Czech Statistical Office

## POSITION OF THE CZECH STATISTICAL OFFICE

The Czech Statistical Office is a central body of public administration pursuant to the Act No 2/1969 Sb establishing ministries and other bodies of public administration of the Czech Republic, as amended. The Office competence, its mission, rights and duties are set in detail by the Act No 89/1995 Sb on the State Statistical Service, as amended (hereinafter as the Act).

The **main goal** of the CZSO is to **create an objective** and comprehensive **picture** of economic, social, demographic and environmental **developments of the Czech Republic** and respective components thereof, in accord with the Act. For these purposes the CZSO continuously develops and applies statistical methods and instruments to measure the current as well as new phenomena and processes in the society, including their mutual relations. An important assignment is to provide for factual, methodological and intertemporal comparability of statistical data both on the national and international scale.

The State Statistical Service may be performed by ministries and other bodies of central government (hereinafter as the ministries) under conditions and at the extent as determined by the Act. They may carry out statistical surveys following a prior discussion on methodology applied with the CZSO, either within the Programme of Statistical Surveys or out of the Programme. This way the CZSO coordinates the State Statistical Service of the Czech Republic.

Furthermore, the CZSO provides for harmonization of methodological instruments and tools, principles, and regulations with regulations of the European Union for the whole State Statistical Service. The CZSO activities are based on fundamental principles of the official statistics adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission. The Office adheres to the principles of independence and impartiality of the statistical service, ensures in full confidentiality of individual data, which the Office acquired within its own statistical surveys, from surveys carried out by other authorities of the State Statistical Service, or from administrative data sources. The Office collects the statistical data exclusively for statistical purposes. Last but not least, the Office, as the administrator of the Administrative Business Register, provides for the work and development of the Register as one of the basic registers of public administration.

The CZSO plays an active role at the international level, especially as a part of the European Statistical System, in which the Office participates in a wide spectrum of working bodies and this way contributes to the objective, which is to produce reliable, comparable, relevant, and utilisable statistics by means of common standards, harmonised indicators, classifications, and methods. Compliance with requirements following from membership to the European Union has been an essential factor affecting both everyday practice and overall development of the statistics. The CZSO is the sole contact point for the European Commission/Eurostat concerning matters of statistics and the body responsible for coordination of statistical activities of all national authorities, which are responsible for development, production, and dissemination of the European statistics in terms of the regulation on the European statistics<sup>1</sup>, which is the fundamental framework of the statistics production in the European Union.

The European statistics is defined by the European Statistical Programme which determines its main objectives and priorities for the period of a multiyear financial framework of the European Union. Principles for the production and dissemination of statistics as well as conditions of the institutional environment are determined by the European Statistics Code of Practice. The application of the European Statistics Code of Practice and implementation of recommendations following from a professional external assessment how the Code principles are complied with (so-called peer review) makes an integrated part of the Czech Statistical Office activities.

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2009 as amended by the Regulation (EU) 2015/759 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2015 amending Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 on European statistics.

## **MISSION, VISION, AND STRATEGY OF THE CZECH STATISTICAL OFFICE**

The Czech Statistical Office is a highly professional and modern institution with rich and long traditions and heritage. The Czech Statistical Office has determined its mission, vision and a system of fundamental professional values, which the Office adheres to in its activities.

### **Mission**

The Office established components of its mission as follows:

- On the basis of data acquired to provide consistent and trustworthy picture of the status and development of the society;
- Follow and satisfy developing needs of users of the official statistics under conditions of changing social and economic environment; and
- Provide an umbrella for and coordinate the State Statistical Service of the Czech Republic.

### **Vision**

The CZSO is a continuously developing, up-to-date, and user-oriented institution, which:

- adheres to and respects fundamental ethical values such as professional approach, independence, impartiality, and openness;
- provides always high quality services to a wide spectrum of users on the principle of equal access to information, and this way strives for permanent respect, trust, and recognition of the domestic and international public;
- provides basis for the development of the national system of the State Statistical Service, makes an integrated part of the international network of statistical institutions and of the European Statistical System;
- constantly reduces the administrative burden on respondents of statistical surveys by implementing innovative mathematical-statistical procedures, utilising a modern electronic data collection, as well as by means of measures in the coordination of the State Statistical Service;
- has highly qualified experts, for whom it creates appropriate working conditions; and
- contributes to the development of statistics as a scientific discipline by means of professional journals published by the Office and by professional lecturing and consultancy activities of its employees at universities, scientific institutions, and statistical workplaces, both in the Czech Republic and abroad.

In order to fulfil the CZSO mission and vision the Office defines a clear **strategy** as follows:

- Maximising benefits and comfort of users while adhering to the fundamental principles of statistical information production as accessibility, relevance, accuracy, timeliness, clarity, comparability, and completeness;
- Enhancing effectiveness of processes and labour productivity and innovating the Statistical Information System using knowledge management, process optimisation and continuous improvement of processes and procedures;
- Optimising the administrative burden on respondents while maintaining quality of outputs by means of using principles and options of e-government, sharing of available administrative data, improving up-to-date statistical methods, and promoting active dialog with stakeholders;
- Motivating the Office key employees and developing their professional skills permanently by means of education, training, quality internal communication, and enabling them to find their self-fulfilment;
- Increasing the Czech Statistical Office prestige at the national and international level by means of support to statistical awareness and by proactive and targeted communication.

## **MISSION, VISION, AND STRATEGY OF THE CZECH STATISTICAL OFFICE**

For the five-year period the Strategy is further worked out into areas of strategic interest, which, inter alia, reflect priorities established in the multiyear European Statistical Programme<sup>2</sup>. Every year the CZSO declares **priority tasks** from selected areas of strategic interest which the Office management considers of utmost importance in the given year and fulfilling of which the management pays increased attention to. The CZSO informs the public on the fulfilling of the priority tasks as well as of other important tasks in the Office **Annual Report**.

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<sup>2</sup> Regulation (EU) No 2017/1951 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2017 amending Regulation (EU) No 99/2013 on the European statistical programme 2013-17, by extending it to 2020.

## QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN THE CZECH STATISTICAL OFFICE

In the Czech Statistical Office quality management processes are directed by means of a system of bylaws encompassing internal standards both for the whole Office (policies, rules, regulations, decisions, statutes) and regulations which do not cover all organisational bodies of the Office (first of all, technology projects, methodologies, instructions of managers of respective organisational bodies, etc.). Control and coordination of activities related to enforcing principles of total quality management in accordance with the European Statistics Code of Practice fall under the activities of the Office Vice-President division.

General principles of quality control in the CZSO are described in documents as follows:

- CZSO Quality Commitment, and
- Quality Policy of the Czech Statistical Office.

Additional documents, which set the general principles in more concrete terms for particular fields of activity, are:

- Dissemination Policy of the Czech Statistical Office,
- CZSO Data Revision Policy,
- Internal Communication Policy of the Czech Statistical Office,
- The CZSO Framework Security Policy, and
- Ethical Code of Employees of the Czech Statistical Office.

**Methodology audits**, carried out by external bodies, make important element of the quality assessment of the Office core activities, which are the collecting, processing and providing of statistical data. The methodology audit primary objective is to verify compliance of respective statistics with requirements of national and international standards, accord with the existing best practices and with needs of institutional users. Audits of key statistical outcomes are carried out within several-year periods. In order to ensure the necessary objectivity, quality, and comprehensiveness the aforementioned audits are implemented by audit task forces members of which are external and internal professionals and which are led exclusively by external specialists. Conclusions and recommendations of the auditors are taken into account by the Office management within the communication on quality aspects of respective statistics to the public and in planning measures for continuous improvements. Final reports of methodology audits are produced at meetings of internal advisory bodies of the President and at meetings of the Czech Statistical Council.

A **set of indicators is regularly measured to evaluate the Office activities**. The indicators are directly or indirectly related to the activities quality and characterise the institution's prestige, product offer, demand and satisfaction of users, quality of outcomes, or the burden on respondents.

How the public perceives the Office is measured by means of an opinion poll, which is carried out by an external institute approximately biannually. The main measured indicators include trustworthiness of the CZSO, its impartiality, and independence. In two-year period the CZSO arranges a poll on user satisfaction, which focuses on the perception of the Office products and services.

Reports on providing of statistical information, which contain numerous continuously monitored indicators as the number of queries, time necessary to deal with the queries, focus of queries, number of statistical outcomes issued, meeting of publishing terms, visitor rate of the Office website, etc., that characterise the level of services provided, are produced and discussed annually.

The administrative burden on respondents related to statistical surveys is also evaluated every year. The response rate is calculated for every respective survey. It is the return rate of completed forms of the total number of all forms sent out within a sample expressed as percentage. For selected statistical indicators other quality attributes, which show their accuracy and reliability, as, for instance, variation coefficients, or revision rate, are evaluated as well.

## **FIELDS OF STRATEGIC ISSUES OF THE CZECH STATISTICAL OFFICE TILL 2022**

Major assignments in **methodologies and registers** in the aforementioned period shall be the providing for administration, maintenance and development of the information system of the System of Statistical Registers that means the Statistical Business Register (RES), Register of Census Districts and Buildings, Agriculture Register, and the Database of Natural Persons. Providing for functionality of the system of the registers and up-to-date data thereof is an inevitable condition for the preparation and implementation of the CZSO statistical surveys and for implementation of the statistical registers' integration within the European Union. The Office activities shall concentrate on the implementation of the currently discussed Framework Regulation Integrating Business Statistics (FRIBS) by implementing a new type of statistical units into the RES, modifying certain surveys, and defining appropriate metadata.

In order to reinforce coordination of statistical activities at the level of the Member States of the European Union, the CZSO, in accord with requirements of the amended Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2009 on European statistics, shall provide stronger support to ministerial workplaces of the State Statistical Service.

Activities following from the implementation schedule of the Directive 2007/2/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 March 2007 establishing an Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE) shall continue. By 2020 at the latest, data sets of two themes (population distribution and statistical districts) shall be harmonised and published, including appropriate browsing and downloading services thereof.

Besides providing for continuous flawless work of the Administrative Business Register the Office shall provide for its development following changes to legislation and adjusting the Register to the general development in information systems of public administration, including processes of Smart Administration and e-government. This is narrowly tied to the provision of required revamping of infrastructure.

Reducing of the administrative burden on respondents of statistical surveys shall still belong to the CZSO priorities. One of the ways to reduce the burden shall be the creating of simple and easy-to-work-with electronic questionnaires by upgrading obsolete technologies of certain applications of metadata administration. These shall be namely tools for registrations of variables, classifications, nomenclatures, and for describing content and processing of statistical tasks. Concerning other applications their development and implementation shall be completed. Data from the data warehouse shall be gradually automatically transmitted into the Public Database while data confidentiality shall be ensured. Other sources of administrative data shall be continually embedded into the process of statistical information creation and mathematic-statistical methods shall be further developed. Other activities shall concentrate on optimisation of the central processing and implementation of new applications to perform analyses and compile output sets.

In **macroeconomic statistics** the priority for the next years shall be, first of all, improving the internal consistency of statistics and responding to new European legislation and data sources. In 2020 a revision of national accounts shall be carried out that shall ensure full compliance with Eurostat requirements for the national income and for measuring deficit and debt as well. Issues of the classification of reporting units to respective sectors shall be solved. The calculation of fixed capital consumption shall be updated according to an inventory taking carried out and new procedures for estimating of financial receivables and payables shall be implemented. These activities shall be performed in a close cooperation with the Czech National Bank.

The indispensable position among priorities shall be occupied by the continuous intensive cooperation with other crucial partners as the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of industry and Trade, and academia. An active dialog with data users shall form an integral part of priorities with the objective to explain to

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them reasons and extent of potential changes to macroeconomic statistics as expected in the planned time frame. In national accounts, the CZSO shall in an active manner get involved in preparations of new regulations, especially in developing of a new standard of national accounts (ESA) which shall be launched in the planned time frame.

In the price statistics traditional data sources shall be replaced by other sources in a more active manner. This means namely the utilisation of scanner data, usage of which shall expand significantly till 2022. This shall enable to make inflation rate assessments of higher quality, for instance. Related to that the network of interviewers shall be reorganised within the Office and the capacities freed this way shall be concentrated to improve quality of the price statistics of services.

In the external trade statistics a very demanding transition to a new system of data collection on trade among the European Union Member States shall be implemented within the project of SIMSTAT, which shall be a follow-up to the current Intrastat. The change will bring stricter requirements for capturing goods exports (sending out) and an essential reduction in demands for data on goods imports (receiving). In this context it is expected a duty on microdata exchange with other Member States shall be introduced which shall bring a reduced administrative burden on respondents. The CZSO shall seek such strategy of the data collection to be able to meet requirements of respondents and Eurostat for a reduced administrative burden and at the same time to satisfy the ever-growing demands of the users for data after 2020.

In **business statistics** one of the main assignments in the planning time frame shall be implementation of requirements of new European legislation based on a system of lesser number of framework regulations. Following to the currently discussed Framework Regulation Integrating Business Statistics, which shall become effective within the planning time frame, modifications shall be carried out to related statistical surveys and to the processing methodologies, new outcomes shall be provided, and new necessary surveys shall be introduced. The most important change shall be the introduction of a survey on global value chains, expanded coverage of short-term statistics for wholesale, and introduction of a services production (volume) index pursuant to the EU methodology.

When viewed in a broader perspective, however, legislation under current preparation shall be an instrument how to retain business statistics relevant, namely in the environment of ongoing globalisation. These objectives can be achieved, for instance, by creating new outcomes, especially by means of microdata interconnecting, improving information value of used statistical units, and by utilising procedures developed within the European Statistical System, as the EuroGroups Register (EGR), for instance.

In statistics of agriculture and forestry the principal assignment shall be implementing of the Integrated Farm Survey (IFS), which assumes microdata from Agrocensuses are interconnected with microdata from other surveys of permanent crops and expands measuring of ecological and environmental variables. In order to provide for these data the CZSO shall carry out inevitable measures in organisation and technology, including necessary modifications to questionnaires and their processing.

Priority areas shall encompass the development of issues of environmental accounts, including introduction of other modules, dealing with issues of foodwaste, and coordination of fulfilling inputs of indicator frameworks for monitoring sustainable development (2030 Agenda and its national version ČR 2030). In energy statistics quality of the data basis of energy consumption shall be further improved which shall include, inter alia, a next round of the household energy consumption survey is performed. Concerning tourism works on expanding information in the Tourism Satellite Account for regional views shall continue.

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In **demography and social statistics** the main assignment shall be the preparations and implementation of the 2021 Population and Housing Census. The 2021 Census shall be based on the maximum use of current administrative data sources, which combined with an exhaustive field survey of reduced content and with data collection preferred by means of electronic channels while using modern technologies, shall lead to a reduced burden on respondents. Over a long-term after 2021 then, it will be the development of a strategy for future censuses emphasising progress in and continuous use of administrative data sources in relation to international trends and anticipated international obligations in future towards continuous every-year approach to the population censuses.

The main tasks of the demographic statistics shall include the development of a report on the expected trends in mortality, fertility, and migration in the Czech Republic (demographic prognosis) as a crucial background document for the Report on the State of the Pension System of the Czech Republic and on its expected further trends as developed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

Tools and procedures for data collection in the field and for the work of the network of interviewers of sample surveys in households shall be technologically innovated by introducing lightweight mobile devices with contact control, preparations of their integration with the parallel CAWI surveys by means of internet-based questionnaires. As an integral part thereof electronic questionnaires shall be overall innovated and all surveys shall be integrated into a unified structure based on a unified basic questionnaire supplemented with theme-focused module for respective surveys.

In the field of **statistical information providing** publishing of data from all areas of the statistics in open data formats shall be further developed. Further area of strategic interest shall be the development of the Public Database and its interconnection to the CZSO Internet presentation.

Within the **communication with users** the CZSO shall in a proactive way pursue novel ideas as well as trends in technology in media communication, develop forms of communication in an active manner, and implement new tools and channels for statistical information dissemination. The Office shall also, in an active manner, develop general statistical awareness and promote the use of statistics for the decision-making at various levels. Within these activities the Office shall provide thorough and consistent denying of misuses or purposeful interpretation of statistical data as a defence against the abuse of statistics.

In order to fulfil all the aforementioned assignments it is necessary to provide for stable and regularly upgraded environment of ICT technologies of capacity high enough while emphasis is put on data security and safety. One of the crucial assignments for the next period is therefore to implement principles of the European General Data Protection Regulation into routine activities of the Office.