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Processing of scanner data is no “Big Brother”

The Czech Statistical Office (CZSO) objects to Mr Martin Fendrych’s commentary on the website Aktualne.cz that introduction of a duty to provide so-called scanner data is an initiative of another body of the state administration than the CZSO.

It is a trend all over the Europe to obtain and use data from cash registers of retailers for statistics; it is part of a process of modernisation of statistics and ways to obtain relevant information more efficiently. The necessity to use scanner data for statistics has been discussed on European statistical forums for a long time and in many Member States of the EU it has been already implemented.

*“The data will serve to modernisation of calculation of inflation and trade statistics, i.e. solely for statistical purposes. They cannot be and will not be further provided to other bodies of the state administration, which is guaranteed and required by independency of the CZSO and its duty as it is laid down in the legislation,”* Vice President of the CZSO, Jaroslav Sixta, underlined.

Data obtained directly from systems of cash registers contain information on sales (revenues from sale) and physical volumes of goods sold, on the most detailed level. Processing of [scanner data](http://www.statistikaamy.cz/2018/09/scanner-data-zvysuji-kvalitu-vypoctu-miry-inflace/) thus in an important way enhances quality of inflation rate calculation and it approximates us to the practice used in countries of Western Europe. Moreover, it is a very effective way to obtain information, which will replace other administrative duties of the CZSO and the respondents, while additional costs will be low.

The CZSO concurrently intensively communicates the introduction of the duty to the relevant entities and finds their understanding for the matter. Even more so, as it applies to ready data. Moreover, relevant retail chains were perceiving the up-to-now cooperation on a voluntary basis positively.

Published data will change their structure as of January 2019. Due to gradual implementation of administrative scanner data from retail chains in the calculation of the consumer price index, only nationwide average prices for a shortlist of representatives will be newly published.

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