

Dear Reader,

*the Statistical Yearbook of the Czech Republic has always been a perennial star of official Czech statistics and remains to be so despite the rapid technological shift. Since 1993, it is already the 30th volume of the edition, which brings you substantial information about all the important spheres of life of the society. Nevertheless, its historical roots are, naturally, much deeper and stem from work of many generations of statisticians before us.*

*Advancing innovation also applies to the Statistical Yearbook itself. Starting this year, you will therefore find its printed version in a larger format and you can find new graphic elements and more colours in it. We believe that you will find this change attractive and you will certainly also appreciate the fact that we succeeded not only to decrease costs for its preparation but that it is also more environmentally friendly.*

*This year's edition of the Statistical Yearbook brings a comprehensive view of the year 2021, which was, similarly to the previous one, affected by the pandemic of the COVID-19 disease. The year 2021 was also influenced by an important and special statistical event – the Population and Housing Census – which has been taking place in the Czech Republic in modern form in regular cycles already since 1869.*

*What was the year 2021 like? In its beginning, the Czech Republic had 10.494 million inhabitants and during the year, their number increased by 21.9 thousand to 10.517 million. All the increase was owing to the positive external migration balance in an amount of 50.0 thousand persons, whereas the balance of natural change was negative. The number of live-born children (live births) was by 28.1 thousand lower in 2021 than the number of deaths, which was the deepest natural (population) decrease in the history of the modern Czech statehood since the end of the World War One. In terms of the economy, the process of economic recovery following the pandemic slump continued in 2021 and the gross domestic product increased by 3.5%. Nevertheless, in the aftermath of restrictions in the area of trade and services, problems with lack of components occurred, which were slowing down industry, mainly production of motor vehicles, especially in the second half of the year. However, other branches of industry were usually successful and most of services were developing favourably, too. In the second half-year, price growth increased in the whole economy. Consumer prices increased by 3.8% in 2021, which was the most since 2008. During the year, the following contributed the most to the price growth acceleration: prices of transport, housing, and energies, mainly costs of owner-occupied housing. Price growth of food was strengthening, too, mainly in the end of the year.*

*As already mentioned above, the basis of data of the Czech Statistical Office (CZSO) was enriched in 2021 with the results of the Population Census, which was also reflected in the content of the Statistical Yearbook. You will find there a comparison of the population development by sex, basic age group, mean age of the population, their marital status, or educational attainment. Besides novelties stemming from the Census, for example, data on training of employees, tables on innovating enterprises, or rather extensive information on the health sector were added to the Statistical Yearbook. Results of the elections to the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, which the CZSO was processing in autumn 2021, cannot be missing either.*

*Last of all, I would like to thank the employees of the Czech Statistical Office, collaborating partner organisations, and our respondents – without their work and effort it would not be possible for the Statistical Yearbook to come into existence. To you, our readers, I mainly wish happiness brought by trustworthy data of good quality that you use for your work and responsible decision-making.*

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President of the Czech Statistical Office