

FOREWORD

Dear Readers

What you are holding in your hands is an extraordinary publication of the Czech Statistical Office capturing results of a twenty-year long history of compilation of the national accounts in the Czech Republic.

The national accounting system uses an internationally recognized statistical standard for measuring of performance of a national economy. At the same time, the system is an important instrument for decision-making on the macroeconomic level for management of national economies. Many important changes in the society in the first half of the 20th century pointed out the risks of decision-making processes that result from insufficient knowledge of the economy. Gradually, it has become more and more obvious that without reliable and consistent macroeconomic aggregates it is impossible to make competent decisions about the direction of the society's development. It stimulated both - active development of a macroeconomic theory and also the practice in the area of national accounting.

The Czech system of national accounts is a practical application of the SNA 1993 and the ESA 1995 international methodological standards; it covers all their areas except for social views. A complex application of the aforementioned standards enables to compare development of macroeconomic indicators in space and time. National accounts have thus become during the past twenty years an indispensable instrument for many analysts who can describe with it the state and development of the economy of the Czech Republic.

The history of the national accounts compilation started in 1992 at the former Federal Statistical Office, Czech, and Slovak Statistical Offices. The publication is thus brought out on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of commencement of works on the compilation of the national accounts; however, it is at the same time also a completion of the national accounts extraordinary revision. Together with this revision, long time series have been made of methodologically comparable indicators since the commencement of existence of the Czech Republic as an independent state. An absolutely unique part of the publication consists of reconstructed and methodologically comparable data about the level and development of basic macroeconomic indicators of the successor states of the former Czechoslovakia since 1990. Presented data are added by commentaries explaining important changes in time series, especially from the point of view of methodology or availability of information.

The Historical Yearbook as such is not an analysis of the past economic development; however, it can certainly serve as a starting base of data for such analyses. A user has the possibility to understand the content and comparability of respective data in coherent time series to a deeper extent.

The authors also aimed to provide as complex view on the development of the economy as possible, yet a limited scope of the printed version of the publication does not allow showing deeper breakdowns of indicators by structure, economic activity, and sector. Therefore, more detailed data are available to users on the web pages of the CZSO and can be, as the case may be, provided to experts upon request.

All the current and former staff of the national accounts departments of the Czech Statistical Office contributed to elaboration of the national accounts long time series. Unfortunately, some of our colleagues have not lived long enough to see the publication brought out. Construction of methodologically comparable data for the Czechoslovakia has been made in co-operation with experts from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic. I would like to express my thanks to all who have contributed to the common work.



Iva Ritschelová

President of the Czech Statistical Office