

7<sup>th</sup> May 2012

## CZECH REPUBLIC: THE FINAL CENSUS RESULTS TO BE RELEASED IN THE THIRD QUARTER OF 2012

In 2011, Population and Housing Census was carried out in the Czech Republic. Compared to the previous census in 2001, some processes had been adjusted. Administrative data sources were extensively used. Main changes were: (i) field operations provided by contractor; (ii) option to complete census forms online and (iii) multiple ways of collecting census forms.

The census was performed by the Czech Statistical Office (CZSO) and followed the Recommendations of Commission of European Statistics (CES) for census round 2010 and Regulation (EC) No 763/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 July 2008 on population and housing censuses. The 2011 Census Project in the Czech Republic is based on Act No. 296/2009 Coll., on the 2011 Census. Participation in the census was obligatory for all inhabitants.

The census was performed by traditional method of enumeration combined with the use of administrative data sources (used for pre-filling of the census forms and also in data processing). There were three types of forms used in census – for individual persons (SLO), for dwellings (BL) and for houses (DL). Where possible, the census forms were pre-filled by available identifiers – an address of place of enumeration from the Register of census districts (2.2 million DL and 4.3 million BL) and a name of a person from the Population register (almost 10 million SLO). Also, some of the data on the buildings census forms were pre-filled from administrative sources. Remaining census forms were not pre-filled and thus universally usable, so-called “*bianco*” forms. The census forms were distributed to households and collected by enumerators in defined census districts. It was also possible to complete the forms online or send it by mail free of charge.

All census operations were tested in pilot census in April 2010 realized on 0.5% sample of population, dwellings, and buildings in all regions of the Czech Republic. The most important subject of the pilot census was the field operations provided by the contractor, electronic collection of census forms, general understanding of census forms, and validity of administrative data.

The Czech Post was the partner of the CZSO for the field operations in 2011 Census. Its infrastructure was used for census organization and logistics and most enumerators and back-office census personnel were its employees working on special contract. A special approach was used in collective living quarters (hotels, hospitals, hostels, homes for seniors etc.) where enumeration was carried out mostly by employees of these facilities. Special census districts were also defined in responsibility of the Ministry of Defense (e.g. armed forces located abroad), Ministry of the Interior (police lodging houses, asylum facilities), Ministry of Justice (prisons and custody facilities), and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Czech diplomatic personnel working abroad). There were 12 thousands census districts defined in the Czech Republic. Each enumerator was assigned to one census district with 300 – 400 households on average.

The phase of the distribution and the collection of the census forms took place between 7 March and 19 April 2011. The data were recorded in the census forms as of the reference date on 26 March 2011.

Each census form included a unique bar code, which allowed monitoring the life cycle of the form (from generating pre-filled records and files, printing, distribution and collection both paper and electronic forms, scanning, and storing records in database).

During May 19 – 30, the supplementary survey was performed. The enumerators visited households that did not return any completed forms.

Altogether 17.3 million completed census forms entered data processing – 13.0 million paper based forms (2.2 million forms collected by enumerators – 12.7% and 10.8 million forms mailed back – 62.2%) and 4.3 million electronic census forms (25.1%). The major advantage of using electronic-based forms was in minimizing respondents' and enumerators' burden as well as from higher quality of collected data. The Internet application automatically notified unfilled answers and checked selected logical links between answers. To complete the form electronically, it was necessary to use the access codes found on the paper forms.

Among positive features of preparation and implementation of the census was information campaign for the public and appearances of the CZSO high representatives in the media. Well-prepared campaign reduced negative response in media.

The completed paper census forms (13.0 million) were scanned (scanning ended in mid-July 2011); entries were recognized by OCR method, then validated and saved in the database (4.3 million electronic census forms were entered the database directly). Next step was automatic coding of recognized items; in some cases manual coding had to be applied.

The return rate of disseminated census forms was 97%.

In mid-December 2011, the Czech Statistical Office released preliminary census results based on the place of permanent residence of enumerated persons. The preliminary results include information about population and its structure (by administrative units, age, educational attainment, economic activity, ethnicity, religious belief etc.), as well as main characteristics of houses and dwellings. Tables of preliminary results are available at the official census web pages:

[http://scitani.cz/slodb2011/eng/redakce.nsf/i/census\\_results](http://scitani.cz/slodb2011/eng/redakce.nsf/i/census_results)

According to preliminary results of the census, as of 26 March 2011, 10.56 million inhabitants lived in the Czech Republic, i.e. 3% increase compared to 2001. The increase of total population was caused mostly by increase in number of foreigners living permanently in the Czech Republic. The population and housing census revealed many new trends that started during the past ten years. Also, some long-lasting trends were confirmed. Respondents often chose the option not to answer the voluntary questions concerning ethnicity and religious belief.

The data for final results are being currently processed and will be published by the place of usual residence according to UN and Eurostat recommended definition. The expected date of first part of final census results release is the third quarter of 2012. More information about Population and Housing Census 2011 is available at the official census web pages:

<http://scitani.cz/slodb2011/eng/redakce.nsf/i/home>