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## The digital disadvantage



"A crisis is an opportunity," said PM Andrej Babiš in his [New Year's address](#). "We made a leap in digitization in a few months that otherwise could have taken a few years." Among the big digital winners are the government, which got access to all kinds of personal data, banks that were able to close branches, and online retailers that have benefited from covid restrictions that discriminate against their brick-and-mortar competitors. Part of the [EU Commission's digital strategy](#) is to "Ensure that all companies compete in Europe on fair terms," but this has been tossed out the window in the name of curbing covid, just as the [hallowed right to free movement](#) has been. Czech stores that don't sell "essentials" are closed, yet there is no evidence that they pose a greater risk to health than online rivals and couriers with dozens or even thousands of employees. The CR and EU are achieving their digital goals by violating their fundamental principles. A crisis is indeed an opportunity.

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