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Tomáš TLUSTÝ*

CZECHOSLOVAK PHYSICAL EDUCATION UNION: THE CENTRAL CZECHOSLOVAK PHYSICAL EDUCATION ORGANIZATION IN 1946–1948

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Czechosłowacki Związek Wychowania Fizycznego: Centralna czechosłowacka organizacja wychowania fizycznego w latach 1946–1948

Streszczenie

Czechosłowacki Związek Wychowania Fizycznego został założony w Pradze w 1946 roku, zastępując pierwotnie planowany Centralny Narodowy Komitet Wychowania Fizycznego. Jego członkami były centralne związki wychowania fizycznego funkcjonujące na terenie Czechosłowacji, których działalność obejmowała wychowanie fizyczne, sport, turystykę lub skauting, a także Czechosłowacki Komitet Olimpijski. Każda dyscyplina sportowa mogła być reprezentowana w związku wyłącznie przez jedno centralne stowarzyszenie. Poszczególni członkowie dobrowolnie współpracowali w ramach propagowania swoich programów. Celem stowarzyszenia była troska o rozwój wychowania fizycznego w najszerszych warstwach społeczeństwa, jego doskonalenie oraz ochrona interesów w Czechosłowacji i za granicą. Przy realizacji tych zadań uwzględniano odpowiednią reprezentację Czechów i Słowaków. Związki członkowskie i ich niższe struktury organizacyjne zachowywały jednak swoją prawną niezależność, zgodnie ze swoimi statutami i regulaminami. Jednocześnie miały obowiązek przestrzegania zasad i regulaminów wydanych przez Czechosłowacki Związek Wychowania Fizycznego. Związek ten miał stać się podstawą organizacyjną dla federacyjnego zjednoczenia wychowania fizycznego. Faktyczne zjednoczenie czechosłowackiego wychowania fizycznego nastąpiło dopiero po komunistycznym przewrocie w 1948 roku, po którym potrzeba istnienia Czechosłowackiego Związku Wychowania Fizycznego przestała istnieć.

Słowa kluczowe: Czechosłowacki Związek Wychowania Fizycznego; wychowanie fizyczne, sport i turystyka; zjednoczenie czechosłowackiego wychowania fizycznego.

* <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6571-9161>; doc. PhDr. Ph.D.; University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice, Faculty of Education, Department of Sports Studies; e-mail: tomlustly@pf.jcu.cz (corresponding author)

Abstract

The Czechoslovak Physical Education Union was established in Prague in 1946, replacing the originally planned Central National Physical Education Committee. Its members included central physical education unions operating in Czechoslovakia, which focused on physical education, sports, tourism, or scouting, as well as the Czechoslovak Olympic Committee. However, each sport could only be represented in the Union by one central organization. Individual members voluntarily cooperated in promoting their own programs. The Union's purpose was to promote the expansion of physical education among the broadest segments of the population, to improve its quality, and to protect related interests in Czechoslovakia and abroad. In pursuing these objectives, attention was paid to ensuring adequate representation of both Czechs and Slovaks. Member unions and their affiliated lower organizational units retained their legal independence according to their statutes and regulations. At the same time, they were obliged to adhere to the rules and regulations issued by the Czechoslovak Physical Education Union. The Union was intended to serve as the organizational foundation for unifying physical education at a federal level. However, the actual unification of Czechoslovak physical education occurred only after the communist coup in 1948, after which the need for the existence of the Czechoslovak Physical Education Union ceased.

Keywords: Czechoslovak Physical Education Union; physical education, sports, and tourism; unification of Czechoslovak physical education.

Introduction

After the liberation of Czechoslovakia in May 1945, the primary issue for Czechoslovak physical education became its unification and the elimination of pre-war fragmentation, which had been partly caused by the influences and interests of various political parties. The necessity of unifying Czechoslovak physical education was already expressed in the government's declaration in April 1945. In the first half of May 1945, the ÚNTV (Ústřední národní tělovýchovný výbor – Central National Physical Education Committee) was established, with the aim of preparing the organic unification of Czechoslovak physical education and sports. This was, therefore, more of a preparatory body rather than an association with formal statutes.

On December 18, 1945, a meeting was convened for representatives of all physical education organizations and unions to determine which of them supported the organic unification of Czechoslovak physical education. The following organizations expressed their support: ČOS (Československá obec sokolská – Czechoslovak Sokol Community), SDTJ (Svaz dělnických tělocvičných jednot – Union of Workers' Gymnastic Associations), FPT (Federace proletářské tělovýchovy – Federation of Proletarian Physical Education), the Czechoslovak Ski Federation, ČAAU (Česká amatérská atletická unie – Czech Amateur Athletic Union), the Volleyball and Basketball Union, the Mountaineering Union, the Swimming Union, the Rugby Union, trade union physical education under the ÚRO (Ústřední rada odborů – Central Trade Union Council), and SČM (Svaz české mlá-

deže – Union of Czech Youth).¹ Subsequently, a meeting of these unions was convened for January 10, 1946, to discuss the formation of a unified organization.

At this meeting, however, representatives of ČOS declared—referring to the resolution of their Committee from December 16, 1945—that they favored a federative union. The resolution stated that “if the complete unification of physical education is not achieved by the end of 1945, ČOS will commence independent activities.”² The partial unification of only some physical education and sports organizations did not suit the Sokol organization. Therefore, a meeting was convened for January 14, 1946, involving ČOS, SDTJ, FPT, representatives of athletes, Junák,³ the Czechoslovak Football Association, and Czechoslovak Orel, which, however, sent its apologies for being unable to attend.

The outcome of this meeting was an agreement to establish a preparatory committee, which consisted of two representatives each from ČOS, SDTJ, FPT, Czechoslovak Orel, and Junák, as well as four representatives from the ČVV (Československý všesportovní výbor – Czechoslovak All-Sports Committee). This preparatory committee was tasked with addressing the situation further.⁴

The ÚNTV, whose goal was to organically unify all Czechoslovak physical education into a single organization, failed to fulfill its purpose. For this reason, the principles for building a new unified organization—later named ČSTS (Československý tělovýchovný svaz – Czechoslovak Physical Education Union) — were adopted at the committee’s presidium meeting on February 4, 1946.⁵

Public interest in this new organization increased due to an initiative by the MŠO (Ministerstvo školství a osvěty – Ministry of Education and Enlightenment), which sent questionnaires to all municipalities. These instructed local national committees to convene plenary meetings of gymnastic, sports, scouting, and tourist organizations, with the general public also invited in large numbers. At these meetings, votes were taken on the stance regarding the unification of Czechoslovak physical education.

However, Czechoslovak physical education, sports, scouting, and tourist organizations struggled for a long time to find common ground for unification. It was not until April 2, 1946, at their joint meeting, that the establishment of the ČSTS was agreed upon. This organization was to be

¹ On the other hand, the Czechoslovak Football Union, Junák, and the Czechoslovak Orel opposed organic unification.

² National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 3, Sg. 12, Korespondence 1946 (I-VI), Zemský národní výbor v Praze XVI.-Smíchov, dne 19. února 1946.

³ Junák was and still is the Czechoslovak/Czech scouting organization.

⁴ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 3, Sg. 12, Korespondence 1946 (I-VI), Zemský národní výbor v Praze XVI.-Smíchov, dne 19. února 1946.

⁵ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 1, Sg. 4, Valná hromada 1946, Zásady pro vybudování jednotné tělovýchovné organizace. Návrhy ze schůze předsednictva ÚNTV dne 4. února 1946.

the highest supervisory and decision-making authority in all fundamental matters, particularly in issues of military training, state-political education, unified health and social care, amateurism, participation in international physical education events, issuance of fundamental guidelines for physical education relations abroad in terms of state interests, and in deciding all matters of a national or collective significance for the entire realm of physical education.⁶

It was meant to be a new organization based on the federative principle. These principles were also presented at the preparatory committee meeting of the ČSTS, where the majority of those present (representatives of more than 30 unions) expressed their agreement. The only opposers were SDTJ, FPT, SČM, and corporate physical education under the ÚRO.⁷

Research Problems and Methods

The aim of this paper is to provide a detailed account of the history of the ČSTS, to describe its functioning and purpose, and to outline the events that led to its establishment and subsequent dissolution.

This is a standard historical study focusing on modern Czechoslovak history, specifically the history of physical education and sport. The methodological approach of this paper is primarily based on content analysis of documents found in archival collections, printed sources, periodicals, and scholarly literature.

One of the fundamental methods used in this study is the direct method. By applying this classical historical research method, the historical origins, develop-

⁶ Government officials emphasized from the beginning of the unification efforts that it was to be a voluntary merger agreement. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 3, Sg. 12, Korespondence 1946 (I-VI), Dr. Antonín Hřebík, předseda ÚNTV a předseda Přípravného výboru Čsl. tělovýchovného svazu: O sjednocení tělesné výchovy.

⁷ SDTJ, like FPT, insisted on the organic unification of all Czechoslovak physical education. One of the reasons for FPT's stance was that this organization did not possess much property, which it could have gained through organic unification (primarily property belonging to ČOS). For this reason, the FPT central office sent written instructions to its members regarding the formation of the ČSTS, which were to be destroyed after being read. The instructions stated, among other things, "...It is well known to all of you the position of our central office, and it is crucial that this vote be carried out in line with the latest FPT declaration. All FPT organizations, even those in areas where they are not yet established, will declare in favor of the organic unification of physical education and will make every effort to ensure that other organizations, especially sports organizations and Sokol, make the same declaration...". National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 3, Sg. 12, Korespondence 1946 (I-VI), Svaz dělnických tělocvičných jednot československých Ústřednímu národnímu tělovýchovnému výboru, dne 25. dubna 1946. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 3, Sg. 12, Korespondence 1946 (I-VI), Blíže neoznačený dokument FPT. S pokynem „Po provedení zničit“, dne 24. dubna 1946. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 1, Sg. 4, Valná hromada 1946, Zápis o poradě přípravného výboru Československého tělovýchovného svazu, konané dne 2 dubna 1946 o 16.hod. v zasedací síni Tyršova domu v Praze III.

ment, and dissolution of the ČSTS are described based on the study of primary sources. The manner in which historical facts were examined and recorded largely aligns with the progressive method, as events were presented in chronological order, moving from earlier to later periods.

The primary sources for this research were archival documents. Additional sources, including various reports and statements from different physical education associations, were used mainly to supplement information and provide insights into their perspectives on the functioning of the ČSTS and the unification of Czechoslovak physical education.

The Establishment of the ČSTS

On June 30, 1946, the offices of the ÚNTV in Prague were dissolved, and their employees were transferred to the newly forming ČSTS, which also took over all the agenda from its predecessor.⁸ By this time, discussions about the upcoming inaugural general assembly were already in full swing, and it was scheduled for July 12, 1946. However, some organizations, such as Junák, requested its postponement, wanting to wait for the outcome of government discussions concerning the ČSTS.⁹

In Slovakia, meanwhile, a Preparatory Committee for the Unification of Slovak Physical Education was established in July 1946. This committee consisted of representatives from all sports associations, tourism and physical education departments, Sokol, RTJ (*Robotnická tělocvičná jednota – Workers' Gymnastic Union*), and SSM (*Svaz slovenské mládeže – Union of Slovak Youth*). Its task was to unify all physical education, sports, and tourism organizations in Slovakia. This organization was the only one in Slovakia authorized to negotiate the unification of all physical education, sports, and tourism in Czechoslovakia. The unified physical education in Bohemia and Slovakia was then to create a joint central body headquartered in Prague.¹⁰

The preparatory inaugural general assembly of the ČSTS took place on November 16, 1946, at Tyrš's House in Prague III,¹¹ with representatives of 16

⁸ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 3, Sg. 12, Korespondence 1946 (I-VI), ČSTS Úřadu práce v Praze, dne 4. července 1946.

⁹ Junák was incorporated into the SČM by government directive, and the SČM, as previously mentioned, opposed the establishment of the ČSTS. Consequently, Junák reportedly felt obliged to wait for the outcomes of the government discussions. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 3, Sg. 12, Korespondence 1946 (I-VI), Junák, ústředí skautské výchovy bratrskému Československému tělovýchovnému svazu, dne 21. června 1946.

¹⁰ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 4, Sg. 12, Korespondence 1946 (VII-XII), Přípravný výbor čl. tělovýchovného svazu, k rukám Dr. Hřebíka, dne 20. července 1946.

¹¹ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 1, Sg. 3, Přípravná jednání 1946, Zápis o předporadě valné hromady Československého tělovýchovného svazu v Praze dne 15. listopadu t.r.

Czechoslovak physical education, sports, and tourism associations in attendance. The following day, the agreement on the establishment of the ČSTS and its founding charter was signed. A total of 37 organizations (see Table 1), collectively comprising around two million members, signed the document. Antonín Hřebík, the chairman of the most prominent organization, ČOS, was appointed as the head of the ČSTS.

The undersigned organizations, through a voluntary agreement, establish the Czechoslovak Physical Education Union, whose ultimate goal is to achieve the greatest possible development and improvement of physical education in all its branches – i.e., in gymnastics, sports, scouting, and tourism – so that the physical health, mental fitness, and moral integrity of the broadest segments of the population may be enhanced, and so that the Czech and Slovak nations may honorably compete in international and interstate events and appearances.

To this end, the undersigned organizations aim to achieve their goals through the closest mutual cooperation.¹²

Table 1. Signatories of the Founding Charter of the ČSTS

Czechoslovak Sokol Community (Československá obec sokolská)	Czechoslovak Table Tennis Union (Československý svaz stolního tenisu)	Czechoslovak Yachting Association (Československá yachetní asociace)
Czechoslovak Orel (Československý Orel)	Czechoslovak Rugby Union (Československý svaz rugby)	Czech Fencing Union – Slovak Fencing Union (Český šermířský svaz – Slovenský šermovnický sváz)
Union of Czechoslovak Workers' Gymnastic Units (Svaz dělnických tělovýchovných jednot čsl.)	Golf Union of the Czechoslovak Republic (Golfový svaz Č.S.R.)	Czech Rowing Union – Slovak Rowing Union (Český veslařský svaz – Slovenský veslářský sváz)
Club of Czech Tourists (Klub českých turistů)	Czechoslovak Auto Club (Autoklub R.Č.S.)	Czech Amateur Athletic Union – Slovak Athletics Union (Česká amatérská atletická unie – Slovenský lehoatletický sváz)
Czechoslovak Tourist Community (Československá obec turistická)	Czechoslovak Canoeing Central Office (Československé ústředí kanoistiky)	Czech Basketball Union – Slovak Basketball Union (Český basketbalový svaz – Slovenský basketbalový sváz)
Mountain Association "Radhošť" (Pohorská jednota „Radhošť“)	Czechoslovak Mountaineering Union (Svaz československých horolezců)	Czech Archery Union (Český svaz lukostřelecký)

v Tyršově domě v Praze III. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 1, Sg. 4, Valná hromada 1946, Vládě republiky Československé!, dne 3. prosince 1946.

¹² National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 1, Sg. 4, Valná hromada 1946, Společné prohlášení k založení ČSTS.

Table 1. Signatories of the Founding Charter of the ČSTS (cont.)

Czechoslovak Olympic Committee (Československý olympijský výbor)	Czechoslovak Walking Union (Československý chodecký svaz)	Czechoslovak Ski Federation (Svaz lyžařů R.Č.S.)
Czechoslovak Amateur Boxing Union (Československý unie boxerů amatérů)	Czechoslovak Amateur Swimming Union (Československý amatérský plavecký svaz)	Czechoslovak Handball Union (Československý svaz házené)
Czechoslovak Cycling Central Office (Československé ústředí cyklistů)	Czechoslovak Football Association (Československá asociace fotbalová)	Czechoslovak Skating Union (Československý bruslařský svaz)
Czechoslovak Bowling Sports Association (Československá asociace kuželkářského sportu)	Czech Field Hockey Union (Český svaz pozemního hokeje)	Czechoslovak Jiu-Jitsu Union (Československý svaz jiu jitsu)
Czechoslovak Lawn Tennis Association (Československá lawntenisová asociace)	Czechoslovak Volleyball Central Office (Československé volejbalové ústředí)	Czechoslovak Heavy Athletics Union (Československý svaz těžké atletiky)
Czechoslovak Ice Hockey Central Office (Československé ústředí ledního hokeje)	Czechoslovak Equestrian Union (Československý jezdecký svaz)	Slovak Scout (Slovenský junák)
Slovak Tourist and Ski Club (Klub slovenských turistů a lyžařů)		

Source: National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 1, Sg. 4, Valná hromada 1946, Zakládající listina ČSTS.

The ČVV did not become a member of the ČSTS.¹³ Its chairman, Rudolf Kaiser, announced that after the establishment of the ČSTS, the organization had lost its significance and would cease operations after settling all financial obligations.¹⁴ Conversely, during 1946, the Union of Czech All-Sports Referees applied

¹³ It was an organization established in the late 1920s, tasked with overseeing all physical education and sports within the republic and representing them abroad. Tlustý T., Československý všesportovní výbor: Vrcholný orgán meziválečného československého sportu, "Česká Kinantropologie" 2022, vol. 26, no. 1–2, pp. 119–134.

¹⁴ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 9, Presidiální rada 1947, Zápis o schůzi presidiální rady ČSTS, dne 14. ledna 1947 o 18 hod. v Tyršově domě v Praze. Along with the ČVV, the Slovak Central Sports Council was to be dissolved in Slovakia, and in its place, the Slovak Physical Education Council was to be created. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 8, Předsednictvo 1946-1948, Předlohy pro schůzi předsednictva ČSTS dne 21. ledna 1947 v Praze.

for membership. However, the ČSTS presidium unanimously decided to reject the application, reasoning that it was not a physical education organization.¹⁵

The statutes were sent to the Ministry of the Interior for approval on November 23, 1946. A formal founding general assembly was then held on December 16.¹⁶ It was not until May 10, 1947, that the Ministry of the Interior returned the statutes with a positive endorsement. This officially authorized the operation of the ČSTS.¹⁷

The purpose of the ČSTS was to serve as a unifying body for its individual members, resolve disputes between them, represent Czechoslovak physical education in matters common to all members during negotiations with authorities, acquire and manage property and funds allocated for all Czechoslovak physical education purposes, contribute to the drafting of fundamental guidelines and organizational principles for emerging sports disciplines, monitor all branches of physical education, compile relevant data, publish professional literature, and maintain a specialist library. It also aimed to organize lectures, exhibitions, performances, and ČSTS congresses, secure financial support for members, and participate in initiatives beneficial to Czechoslovak physical education.¹⁸

Program and Organization of ČSTS

The path taken by the ČSTS was fully aligned with the Košice Government Program, which in Article 5 stated that “the people shall have the right to create voluntary organizations of various kinds—political, trade union, cooperative, cultural, sports, and others—and to exercise their democratic rights through them.”¹⁹ Additionally, the direction of the ČSTS corresponded to the building program of Gottwald’s government, which in Section IV declared that the government aimed to “democratically unify Czechoslovak youth and physical education into unified, nationwide, and nonpartisan organizations based on a national, state-building, and democratic program.”²⁰

¹⁵ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 8, Předsednictvo 1946-1948, Zápís o poradě předsednictva Československého tělovýchovného svazu dne 3. prosince 1946 v Tyršově domě.

¹⁶ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 4, Sg. 12, Korespondence 1946 (VII-XII), Ustavení Československého tělovýchovného svazu, dne 14. prosince 1946.

¹⁷ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 6, Ministerstvo vnitra 1946-1947, Ministerstvo vnitra dr. Antonínu Hřebíkovi, dne 10. května 1947.

¹⁸ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 1, Sg. 3, Přípravná jednání 1946, Stanovy Československého tělovýchovného svazu. In addition, it managed tasks such as the distribution and allocation of scarce sports equipment, such as ball bladders, which were in short supply at the time. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 3, Sg. 12, Korespondence 1946 (I-VI), ČSTS Josefu Fejtkovi, dne 8. července 1946.

¹⁹ National archives in Prague, Fund KSČ-ÚV-KG, Box 172, Sg. 1532, Program nové československé vlády Národní fronty Čechů a Slováků.

²⁰ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 4, Sg. 12, Korespondence 1946 (VII-XII), Československý tělovýchovný svaz.

According to the statutes, members of the ČSTS were central physical education unions operating within Czechoslovakia whose fields included physical education, sports, scouting,²¹ or tourism, as well as the ČOV (Československý olympijský výbor - Czechoslovak Olympic Committee).²² However, each type of sport could be represented in the ČSTS by only one central organization.²³ Slovak members of the ČSTS Committee were simultaneously members of the Slovak Physical Education Council,²⁴ through which the ČSTS operated in Slovakia. The committee consisted of 36 members, nine of whom were Slovak representatives.²⁵

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- ²¹ The Central Council of Junák decided at its meeting on November 10, 1946, that the organization would not join the ČSTS, stating that "Junák, as a supplementary youth educational organization, does not belong in physical education." However, in March 1947, it acknowledged the possibility of establishing cooperation, specifically "...in the fields of health, defense education, and others...". National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 1, Sg. 4, Valná hromada 1946, JUNÁK, ústředí skautské výchovy, dne 15. listopadu 1946. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 11, Porady 1947-1948, Zápis o poradě zástupců ČSTS se zástupci Junáka, dne 18. 3. 1947 v Praze.
- ²² The ČOV, on the other hand, had no voting rights, as it was not a physical education union. The agreement between the ČSTS and the ČOV specified that the selection of athletes for the Olympic Games fell under the jurisdiction of the ČSTS. The ČOV then verified whether the selected athletes met the conditions set by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and arranged their participation. Thus, the ČOV functioned as a mediator between the ČSTS and the IOC. The mutual agreement between the ČSTS and the ČOV stipulated that only athletes performing at an international level would be sent to the Olympics. The selection was not to be made solely for gaining experience. Conversely, the ČOV determined the number of official delegates. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 11, Porady 1947-1948, Návrh dohody mezi Československým tělovýchovným svazem a Československým Olympijským Výborem.
- ²³ Member unions and their subordinate "lower units" retained their legal autonomy in accordance with their own statutes and regulations.
- ²⁴ The Slovak Physical Education Council was a subsidiary association of the ČSTS, based in Bratislava. Its founding General Assembly took place on June 15, 1947, presided over by the chairman of its preparatory committee, Konštantín Čársky. Simultaneously, the Slovak Central Sports Council operated in the same space, with its staff playing a significant role in the establishment of the new institution. On that day, the attending delegates approved the statutes and appointed the presidium. Konštantín Čársky was unanimously elected as the chairman of the Slovak Physical Education Council. The Slovak Physical Education Council was the highest non-political physical education organization in Slovakia and the sole subsidiary association of the ČSTS. It held exclusive authority in matters of Slovak physical education while implementing ČSTS decisions in nationwide physical education matters. Its purpose closely mirrored that of the ČSTS. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 10, Slovenská tělovýchovná rada 1946-1947, Zápisnica z ustavujúceho valného zhromaždenia Slovenskej telovýchovnej rady. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 10, Slovenská tělovýchovná rada 1946-1947, Stanovy Slovenskej telovýchovnej rady.
- ²⁵ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 1, Sg. 3, Přípravná jednání 1946, Stanovy Československého tělovýchovného svazu.

Membership fees provided the ČSTS with financial resources for its activities. Additional income sources included donations, bequests, organized events, fundraising, lotteries, and subsidies.²⁶

Matters of the association were overseen by the General Assembly, the Committee, the Presidium, and economic and accounting supervisors. The ČSTS held both regular and extraordinary General Assemblies. Their responsibilities included approving minutes from previous assemblies, examining and approving the activities and reports of the Committee, electing the chairman, vice-chairmen, and Committee members, determining membership fee amounts, and deciding on amendments to the statutes.

Representatives of member unions with voting and decision-making rights participated in the General Assemblies. For every 25,000 members (or fraction thereof), a member union could send three representatives, one of whom had to be from Slovakia. Regular General Assemblies were convened annually by the chairman, while extraordinary assemblies could be called as needed.

The committee consisted of 100 members, including 25 from Slovakia, alongside the chairman, five vice-chairmen,²⁷ a secretary, a treasurer, an accountant, a recording secretary, and other officials as necessary. The committee met as needed, but at least four times a year. It was responsible for deciding about all matters binding for the entire ČSTS membership, establishing principles, regulations, and rules, and reviewing and approving the activities of the presidium. Additionally, it established departments and commissions (e.g., educational, health, technical) and adjusted procedural rules and the responsibilities of individual committee members within the bounds of the statutes.

The presidium comprised 39 members, nine of whom were from Slovakia. Its members included the chairman, five vice-chairmen, two secretaries, an international secretary, the chairman of the men's technical committee, the chairwoman of the women's technical committee,²⁸ a treasurer, two accountants,

²⁶ For example, the MŠO granted the ČSTS a subsidy of 100,000 Kčs for 1946. Additionally, the ČSTS was to receive 30% of the net profits from betting operations, as proposed by the Ministry of Finance (initially, a 40% share was discussed, but the reduction was met with resistance from the ČSTS). These funds were earmarked for developing sports facilities—stadiums, playgrounds, swimming pools, and similar infrastructure. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 8, Předsednictvo 1946-1948, Předlohy pro schůzi předsednictva ČSTS dne 21. ledna 1947 v Praze. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 5, Sg. 12, Korespondence 1947-1948, Blíže neoznačený dopis Ministerstvu financí Československé republiky.

²⁷ The chairman or the first vice-chairman served as Slovakia's representative. The remaining four vice-chairmen always represented one of the following branches: physical education, sports, scouting, and tourism.

²⁸ Initially, the meetings of the two technical commissions were organized separately. However, on February 28, 1947, it was agreed that they would convene jointly as they addressed similar issues. Their responsibilities included tasks such as creating a calendar of physical education

two recording secretaries, and other members. The presidium convened monthly and managed the internal and external operations of the ČSTS, oversaw the association's assets, and decided on all matters not assigned to the general assembly or the committee.²⁹

On December 17, 1946, during a meeting of the ČSTS presidential council,³⁰ it was agreed that 10 commissions would be established.³¹ Each commission would have a chairman and three vice-chairmen, ensuring representation from all branches of physical education. One of the four presidium members of each commission had to be a representative from Slovakia. The following commissions and proposed chairmen were planned:

1. Organizational Commission: L. Vaverka
2. Defense Commission: Fr. Leiner
3. Men's Technical Commission: M. Kavalír
4. Women's Technical Commission: M. Patočková
5. Economic and Financial Commission: Dr. Beneš
6. Complaints Commission: K. Popel
7. International Commission: Fr. Bertl
8. Press and Propaganda Commission: O. Bureš
9. Health Commission: E. Mathé
10. Personnel Commission: Dr. Drábek³²

In addition to commissions, ČSTS established departments to manage the tasks arising from its activities. These departments served as advisory and initiative bodies for the ČSTS presidium and committee. Each federation affiliated

events, organizing training sessions for instructors, managing member recreation and outdoor activities, developing physical education curricula for both youth and adults, and fostering collaboration among those interested in using physical education facilities. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 7, Výbor 1946-1947, Zpráva odboru žen ČSTS. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 7, Výbor 1946-1947, Technický odbor mužů.

²⁹ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 1, Sg. 3, Přípravná jednání 1946, Stanovy Československého tělovýchovného svazu.

³⁰ According to a proposal by Antonín Hřebík on December 3, 1946, the presidential council consisted of ČSTS presidium officials. Its members included the chairman, vice-chairmen, three secretaries, an international secretary, the chairmen of the technical commissions, the treasurer, two accountants, and two recording secretaries. The council met biweekly. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 8, Předsednictvo 1946-1948, Zápis o poradě předsednictva Československého tělovýchovného svazu dne 3. prosince 1946 v Tyršově domě.

³¹ The original proposal presented by Antonín Hřebík at a ČSTS presidium meeting on December 3, 1946, initially envisioned only three commissions: an organizational commission, a men's technical commission, and a women's technical commission. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 8, Předsednictvo 1946-1948, Zápis o poradě předsednictva Československého tělovýchovného svazu dne 3. prosince 1946 v Tyršově domě.

³² Later, these ČSTS commissions were reorganized into larger departments. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 9, Presidiální rada 1947, Zápis o schůzi presidiální rady Československého tělovýchovného svazu dne 17. prosince 1946 v Tyršově domě v Praze.

with ČSTS appointed a representative to every department, except for departments with very specific competencies whose members were elected by the ČSTS presidium. Federations also had the right to replace their representatives in departments if needed.

Departments also included representatives from ministries,³³ the Defense Association,³⁴ and other national organizations cooperating with ČSTS. The tenure of the departments lasted until the next general assembly, which re-established the departments. Each department's activities were led by a chairman elected by the ČSTS presidium. The chairman was supported by three vice-chairmen and a recording secretary, elected by department members using the same procedure as for commissions.

Departments convened as needed, but at least once every two months.³⁵ A department could deliberate and adopt resolutions only if at least one-third of its members were present. Resolutions required a majority vote from those present, with the chairman casting the deciding vote in case of a tie.³⁶

All governing bodies of ČSTS required the presence of at least half of their members to be considered quorate. Members who authorized a representative in writing were also counted as present. Resolutions needed a majority of votes from those present. For nationwide matters, a majority was required from both the Czech lands and Slovakia.

³³ On December 3, 1946, it was agreed that Miroslav Klinger, Head of Sector C of the MŠO, and Dr. Chovan would be invited to join the ČSTS presidium and committee. This was intended to establish close cooperation with this sector. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 8, Předsednictvo 1946-1948, Předlohy pro schůzi předsednictva Československého tělovýchovného svazu, dne 3. prosince 1946 v Tyršově domě v Praze III.

³⁴ The Defense Association (Svaz brannosti) was founded by a decree of President Edvard Beneš on October 27, 1945, through the merger of the Union of Czechoslovak Officers, the Union of National Shooting Guards, the Union of Czechoslovak Warrant Officers, and the Union of Czechoslovak Reservists. It consisted of military-organized units that could be used as guards, patrol units, combat groups for auxiliary military services, and air defense. During 1946–1947, considerable resources were invested in establishing defense education inspectorates, where all defense education and civilian preparedness training were to be carried out. However, after two years of activity, the Defense Association was unable to demonstrate any significant organized achievements aside from participating in various public celebrations and organizing a few events that were more sports-oriented than defense-focused. By the end of 1947, it had not succeeded in unifying the activities of its military-organized units. At the end of November 1947, discussions began about incorporating its Sports Shooting Section into ČSTS. Svaz brannosti, <https://www.svaz-brannosti.cz/historie/> [accessed: 10th September 2024]. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 8, Sg. 13, Schůze org. odboru, 1947, Zápis o schůzi organizačního odboru ČsTV, konané dne 28. 11. 1947 ve Svazu dělnických tělovýchovných jednot v Praze II., Hyberské ul. 7.

³⁵ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 9, Presidiální rada 1947, Řád odborů a komisi Československého tělovýchovného svazu.

³⁶ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 8, Předsednictvo 1946-1948, Řád odborů a komisi Československého tělovýchovného svazu.

Disputes between ČSTS members were resolved by a five-member arbitration court, whose decisions were final. Honorary disputes between officials were settled by an honorary court, also composed of five members, whose rulings were equally final.³⁷

The ČSTS also had lower-level bodies. Its plan was for representatives of Sokol, Czechoslovak Orel, Junák, and sports and tourist clubs in each town to form a local physical education council of the ČSTS. Each association or club was to send two representatives. In smaller municipalities with 2-3 active clubs, three representatives were sent, while in larger towns, multiple local physical education councils could be formed as needed. At their inaugural or annual meetings, these councils elected a chairman, along with two vice-chairmen, a secretary, a treasurer, and an auditor. The officials' term lasted one year.

These councils were advisory, initiative-based, and operational bodies, governed by the statutes issued by the ČSTS committee. However, they were not authorized to interfere in the internal activities of individual affiliated associations or clubs or compromise their independence. Their tasks included maintaining a yearly calendar of local physical education events, encouraging participation and cooperation among physical education associations in these events, organizing joint physical education events, fostering collaboration among affiliated associations and clubs, providing medical care at physical education events, and working with local school authorities to enhance physical education for youth in schools. They also aimed to persuade municipalities to secure land for physical education purposes, propose the establishment of recreational facilities, and advocate for physical education interests with local national committees and other public administration bodies.

Local physical education councils could hold meetings and make decisions only if two-thirds of the members were present and all associations were represented. Decisions required a majority vote of the members present. When organizing joint events, the council shared financing among all participating associations, while any profits were divided between the council's treasury and the participating associations.³⁸

In October 1947, during a ČSTS presidium meeting, it was decided that new roles would be established in public care for physical education at local and district national committees. These included a physical education and defense education officer and a corresponding committee. Their task was to assist in expanding and deepening physical and defense education within the jurisdiction

³⁷ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 1, Sg. 3, Přípravná jednání 1946, Stanovy Československého tělovýchovného svazu.

³⁸ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 8, Předsednictvo 1946-1948, Místní tělovýchovné rady Československého tělovýchovného svazu.

of the national committee. The national committee elected the officer from among its members for the duration of its term.³⁹ This officer automatically became a member of the national committee's council and was required to have sufficient expertise and experience.

The committee for physical and defense education, formed by the local or district national committee, served as an advisory body. Its members were generally specialists in physical and defense education working within the area governed by the national committee. The committee's size depended on the population: 10 members for populations up to 100,000, 12 members for larger areas, and 16 members for provincial cities. The physical education and defense officer also chaired the committee, which met as needed, typically before council meetings of the national committee.

The officer and the committee were tasked with working closely with public officials and institutions related to physical and defense education, promoting and supporting the development of physical and defense education initiatives. Their activities were divided into promotional activities and organizational and economic tasks:

1. Public care for all branches of physical and defense education, as well as the development of physical education facilities.
2. Moral and material support for physical and defense education, along with preparing budget proposals for material support by local and district national committees.
3. Maintaining records of all physical education associations and defense centers within the jurisdiction of local and district national committees.
4. Supervising all physical education and defense education facilities owned or managed by municipalities, districts, or the state.

Promotional activities included organizing and directing the promotion of physical and defense education through lectures, radio broadcasts, and printed materials in collaboration with individual physical education associations.⁴⁰

On October 9, 1947, the ČSTS presidium approved the creation of a recreation department, which was to include two representatives from each of the ČSTS's physical education and tourist associations. Representatives from sports associations were to be added later. This department was tasked with address-

³⁹ However, the Slovak Physical Education Council disagreed with this arrangement, asserting that the officer should under no circumstances be a member of the National Committee. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 5, Sg. 12, Korespondence 1947-1948, Slovenská tělovýchovná rada, dne 30 června 1947.

⁴⁰ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 8, Předsednictvo 1946-1948, Dodatek k předlohám pro schůzi předsednictva ČSTS, konané dne 9. října 1947 v Praze III., Tyršově domě v 18. hod.

ing youth recreation, an area claimed by the Ministry of Social Welfare, as reported by Marie Provazníková to the ČSTS presidium.⁴¹

At a subsequent meeting on January 21, 1948, the ČSTS presidium appointed Marie Provazníková, one of its members, as head of the new department. However, by that time, the department had not begun its activities yet, and its first meeting was still being planned. Provazníková was also appointed to the recreation committee operating under the Provincial School Council, which oversaw the Czech region. An equivalent body for Brno was still in preparation.⁴²

Activities of the Czechoslovak Physical Education Union

On November 22, 1946, physical education and sports associations received information from the MŠO that they could apply for property confiscated under the presidential decree of October 25, 1945. Initially, physical education associations, clubs, and headquarters were not included in the decree as eligible applicants because they were not public-law organizations. However, the MŠO recognized the importance of physical education for the development and defense of the state. It therefore sought to ensure that confiscated physical education facilities continued to serve their original purpose. Members of the ČSTS began submitting their requests for confiscated real estate and movable property to the association's central office. The deadline for submitting these requests was January 15, 1947. The ČSTS subsequently compiled comprehensive lists of the requested confiscated properties and was tasked with submitting them to the MŠO by January 31, 1947, which then reviewed the applications.⁴³

On January 1, 1947, the ČSTS issued a declaration regarding the "Two-Year Reconstruction Plan of the Republic." The declaration stated that

... the activities of all physical education organizations will now primarily focus on addressing the damage to the physical and moral health of our people and youth caused by the war, on establishing a new morally responsible relationship to work, and on the full development of national defense education so that all our people can grow again into a capable collective prepared to face any dangers that might threaten our freedom and democracy...⁴⁴

⁴¹ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 8, Předsednictvo 1946-1948, Zápis o schůzi předsednictva ČSTS, konané dne 9. října 1947 v Praze III., Tyršově domě.

⁴² National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 8, Předsednictvo 1946-1948, Zápis o schůzi předsednictva ČSTS, konané dne 21. ledna 1948 o 18.- hod. v Praze III., Tyršově domě.

⁴³ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 4, Sg. 12, Korespondence 1946 (VII-XII), Ministerstvo školství a osvěty všem tělovýchovným a sportovním svazům, dne 22. listopadu 1946.

⁴⁴ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 4, Sg. 12, Korespondence 1946 (VII-XII), Československý tělovýchovný svaz k dvouletému budovatelskému plánu republiky, dne 1. ledna 1947.

The success of these efforts was to be demonstrated at upcoming major physical education events, including the Olympic Games, the XI All-Sokol Gathering, preparations for the III Orel Gathering, the IV Workers' Olympics, and various international competitions and matches.⁴⁵

On February 25, 1947, the inaugural meeting of the ČSTS Defense Committee was held. František Leiner (Czechoslovak Orel) was elected as chairman, with L. Veverka (SDTJ) and H. Šulák (ČAAU) as vice-chairmen. During this inaugural meeting, the committee discussed issues related to national defense education⁴⁶ and the demands it sought to include in the legislation on defense education and its overall implementation.⁴⁷ Its primary task was to establish the closest possible cooperation with the MNO (Ministerstvo národní obrany – Ministry of National Defense). This was because the ČSTS aimed both to advocate for its demands⁴⁸ during the drafting of the defense education law and to secure significant representation in the organizational structure of the Defense Union. Therefore, the committee proposed to the ČSTS Presidium that delegates from the MNO, MŠO, and Defense Union be appointed as members of the ČSTS Defense Committee.⁴⁹

At the ČSTS presidium meeting on February 25, 1947, it was agreed that the KSTL (Klub slovenských turistů a lyžařů – Slovak Tourist and Ski Club) was primarily an economically-oriented organization and, therefore, not suitable for membership in ČSTS.⁵⁰ However, KSTL expressed a desire to incorporate only some of its groups into ČSTS, specifically those with a stronger focus on physical education. Simultaneously, discussions continued in Czechoslovakia about establishing a unified tourism organization that would later be integrated into ČSTS.⁵¹

⁴⁵ Ibidem.

⁴⁶ National defense education played a relatively minor role in Czechoslovakia until the end of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Nevertheless, in 1937, a law on national defense education was successfully enacted, although it was repealed two years later. A new law on national defense education began to be drafted after the liberation of Czechoslovakia but did not come into effect until 1951.

⁴⁷ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 8, Předsednictvo 1946-1948, Zápis o poradě předsednictva ČSTS, dne 25. 2. 1947 v Praze.

⁴⁸ Key discussions focused on the number of mandatory hours of national defense education per year, valid reasons for exemption from participation—such as attending physical education courses or preparing for physical education events—the methods of appointing and selecting instructors for national defense education, and the procedure for nominating the commander of a training center.

⁴⁹ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 7, Výbor 1946-1947, ČESKOSLOVENSKÝ TĚLOVÝCHOVNÝ SVAZ, Branný odbor.

⁵⁰ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 8, Předsednictvo 1946-1948, Čsl. tělovýchovný svaz, Praha III., Tyršův dům, Předlohy pro schůzi předsednictva ČSTS, dne 25. 2. 1947 v 18. hod v Tyršově domě v Praze.

⁵¹ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 8, Předsednictvo 1946-1948, Zápis s schůzi předsednictva ČSTS, dne 1. dubna. 1947 v Praze.

ČSTS also addressed the issue of union-based physical education. For the time being, member associations were advised not to enter into agreements with trade unions, as ČSTS aimed to address the matter as a whole. It argued that union-based physical education was not a sports federation and could not be placed on the same level as organized physical education. Therefore, it was proposed to request that the MŠO convene a consultation between representatives of ČSTS and the ÚRO.⁵²

From March 1947, consultations between ČSTS and ÚRO regarding shared issues in physical education began under the organization of MŠO, where physical education was managed in Sector C. Union organizations primarily focused on their members' "corrective gymnastics" and recreation. Typically, they lacked sufficient capable individuals with appropriate expertise to expand their activities beyond this framework. Thus, if unions sought to extend their activities, sports officials at the time believed they needed to negotiate agreements with ČSTS through contracts with individual sports associations.⁵³

To address the situation and conclude an agreement, a commission was established, consisting of three members from each side.⁵⁴ Over time, however, trade unions increasingly began organizing physical education independently, which ČSTS opposed. The primary reason was that this enabled participation by players and officials who had been permanently disqualified by member associations and excluded from the ranks of athletes. Additionally, ČSTS objected to certain players competing for factory clubs receiving, in its view, excessive benefits. ČSTS also protested that basic medical care was not adequately ensured at these competitions.⁵⁵

⁵² National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 8, Předsednictvo 1946-1948, Předlohy pro schůzi předsednictva ČSTS dne 21. ledna 1947 v Praze.

⁵³ In the factory clubs, football was particularly popular, and members of these clubs generally wanted to compete in organized competitions. However, they lacked an agreement with the sports federation that would allow them to participate in such events. Even if these clubs intended to compete solely in "union competitions," reaching an agreement with ČSTS would likely be still necessary, as the current regulations prohibited clubs from lending their fields for such purposes. Additionally, they would likely face challenges in securing referees and ensuring the participation of registered players, who, under ČSTS rules, were not permitted to compete in factory competitions as these did not qualify as recreation.

⁵⁴ Union organizations operated outside the ČSTS framework because they were not considered sports clubs but merely factory organizations. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 11, Porady 1947-1948, Porada zástupců Československého tělovýchovného svazu a Ústřední rady odborů o společných otázkách tělesné výchovy v ministerstvu školství a osvěty, sektor C, Praha III., Budečská 6, dne 12.3.1947. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 11, Porady 1947-1948, Druhá porada zástupců Československého tělovýchovného svazu a Ústřední rady odborů o společných otázkách tělesné výchovy v ministerstvu školství a osvěty, sektor C, Praha III., Budečská 6, dne 19.3.1947.

⁵⁵ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 10, Sg. 20, Protesty 1947, ČsTS Ministerstvu školství a osvěty, dne 13. října 1947.

In May 1947, the ČSTS leadership praised the smooth cooperation and mutual agreements among all members of the organization during a board meeting. However, it was noted that the sole dark spot was the ČOV. The issue stemmed from the coexistence of ČOV and the Slovak Olympic Committee,⁵⁶ which also had officially approved statutes and its own agenda. Thus, it could not be said that ČOV was the sole apex organization managing Olympic affairs in the country at that time.

A call was made to create a unified organization. The main problem was that some Slovak representatives did not recognize ČOV and asserted that only the Slovak Olympic Committee was a member of the IOC. They intended to issue a statement through the Slovak Physical Education Council.⁵⁷

In 1947, the ČSTS also discussed the possibility of establishing a so-called “*Victory Badge*” to

...stimulate the performance of individuals and teams in the field of physical education and to further promote the name of ČSTS... The badge would be awarded annually to winning individuals, teams, or associations for achievements made during the preceding year, either during the ČSTS Congress or at a ceremonial meeting of the Central Committee.⁵⁸

The badge was to be divided into three categories: gold, silver, and bronze. Individuals, teams, and associations could compete for the gold badge, while only individuals and associations were eligible for the silver and bronze badges. However, the creation of the “*Victory Badge*” faced resistance from the MŠO, which was, at the time, preparing its own “*Badge of Fitness*.” Concerns arose that the “*Victory Badge*” might interfere with the MŠO initiative. The ČSTS Sports Commission, however, believed the two badges were of a different nature and recommended continuing with the ČSTS proposal.⁵⁹

The ČSTS communicated its activities and developments in Czechoslovak physical education, sports, tourism, and scouting through its weekly magazine, *Ruch v tělesné výchově* (*Movement in Physical Education*). The publishing was handled by the *Práce* publishing house.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ The Slovak Olympic Committee was established as a result of the formation of the independent Slovak State and was subsequently accepted as a member of the IOC.

⁵⁷ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 7, Výbor 1946-1947, Zápis o schůzi výboru Československého tělovýchovného svazu, konané v sobotu dne 3. května ve 14,30.

⁵⁸ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 14, Sg. 26, Schůze techn. odboru mužů 1947, Návrh na založení pamětního Odznaku vítězství.

⁵⁹ National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 14, Sg. 26, Schůze techn. odboru mužů 1947, Zápis o poradě sportovní komise technického odboru mužů, konané dne 7. října 1947 o 18.-hod. v Praze III. Tyršově domě.

⁶⁰ The first issue of this periodical was published on October 20, 1945, even before the establishment of the ČSTS. At that time, it was still a pictorial magazine of the ÚNTV. On November 18, 1946, the Ministry of Information authorized its transfer to the ČSTS through an official decree.

As of December 16, 1947, the assets of the ČSTS included cash holdings totaling 463,472.5 Kčs (Koruna československá – Czechoslovak crown) and inventory valued at 62,729.5 Kčs. The ČSTS's income for 1947 came from various sources (see Table 2).⁶¹

Table 2. Income vs. Expenses of ČSTS for the Year 1947

Income		Expenditures	
Donations	100,000 Kčs	Administrative costs	447 572,90 Kčs
Membership Fees	346,201.80 Kčs		
Revenue from the "Ruch" Magazine	146,526.80 Kčs		
Sales of Forms	76,778.80 Kčs		
Miscellaneous Income/Interest	118.60 Kčs		
Total	669,626.0 Kčs		

Source: National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 2, Sg. 9, Presidiální rada 1947, Zázpis o schůzi presidiální rady ČSTS, konané dne 18. 12. 1947 v Bratislavě.

In 1948, a number of trips for member federations to foreign competitions were approved by ČSTS. Among them were the athletes' trip to Austria and the canoeists' trip to Sweden. In contrast, football and basketball teams from Hungary were expected to visit Czechoslovakia.⁶² However, the organization of these events, from the perspective of individual federations, clubs, or the entire ČSTS, ceased to exist after February 1948.

From February 17–25, 1948, Czechoslovakia experienced a communist coup. The subsequent events in Czechoslovak physical education gained rapid momentum. The communists were suddenly able to implement major changes and interventions in the organization of Czechoslovak physical culture with little resistance. On February 27, 1948, the Presidium of the so-called Central Action Committee of the National Front (Ústřední akční výbor Národní fronty) decided that the only physical education organization would be Sokol, into which other physical education, sports, and tourist organizations, federations, associations, and clubs would merge, along with their assets and membership.⁶³

Řanda T., Jak se změnila sportovní žurnalistika v československém tisku po roce 1948? Srovnání období let 1945-1948 a 1953-1958 (Master's thesis), Charles University, Prague 2017, p. 63.

⁶¹ Therefore, ČSTS managed a surplus of 222,053.10 Kčs for the year 1947.

⁶² National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 13, Sg. 25, Mezinárodní odbor 1947-1948, Ministerstvo školství a osvěty, prostřednictvím Československého tělovýchovného svazu, Praha dovoluje si požádati o povolení uspořádati zájezd do ciziny. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 13, Sg. 25, Mezinárodní odbor 1947-1948, Ministerstvo školství a osvěty, prostřednictvím Československého tělovýchovného svazu, Praha dovoluje si požádati o povolení uspořádati mezinárodní utkání v Československu.

⁶³ Kössl J., Štumbauer J., Waic M., Vybrané kapitoly z dějin tělesné kultury, Karolinum, Prague 2006, p. 142.

For this purpose, an action committee of the ČOS was created, which supported the policy of Klement Gottwald and called for the establishment of action committees in Sokol districts and units. In Slovakia, an action committee of the Slovak Physical Education Council was established, which, on March 2, 1948, was transformed into an action committee of the unified Sokol physical education organization. The action committees then worked on the unification, which was declared on March 31, 1948.⁶⁴ This marked the definitive end of the need for ČSTS in Czechoslovakia.

Conclusion

After the liberation of Czechoslovakia in May 1945, the unification of Czechoslovak physical education, sports, and tourism became a priority, attracting significant attention from political parties and figures. In particular, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia began to promote the necessity of unification, driven both by its ambition to seize full control over the country and by the fact that its closely affiliated organization—the Federation of Proletarian Physical Education—had played only a minor role in pre-war Czechoslovakia. Moreover, the Federation of Proletarian Physical Education had failed to accumulate any substantial property up to that point. Through organic unification, it could easily gain access to the assets of other organizations.⁶⁵

The first attempt at the organic unification of Czechoslovak physical education was made by the ÚNTV. However, its goal was not fulfilled, and for this rea-

⁶⁴ The opinions of individual sports federations or organizations regarding the forced unification of Czechoslovak physical education, sport, and tourism into a single organization varied. For example, the Czechoslovak Orel, which had always opposed organic unification with other associations, was initially only prohibited from activity, but its de facto dissolution did not occur. Its membership thus adopted a wait-and-see approach (attempting to avoid unnecessary provocative actions) and hoped for an improvement in the situation. In contrast, on March 26, 1948, the Czechoslovak Tourist Community called on all its local branches, groups, and representatives to immediately begin negotiations with the relevant Sokol units and actively participate in them. It emphasized that it welcomed the inclusion of all physical education, sport, and tourism into Sokol, as it fulfilled its long-standing decision – the unification of all Czechoslovak physical education, sport, and tourism into the ÚNTV. The unification was also praised by, for example, the Czechoslovak Amateur Swimming Union, which presented itself by attempting to engage as intensely as possible in the planned unification, as well as the Czechoslovak Ski Federation. Vejvar S., *Dějiny tělovýchovné organizace Orel v Čechách v letech 1909–1948* (Dissertation thesis), Charles University, Prague 2014, pp. 392–393. National archives in Prague, Fund ČSTS, Box 6, Sg. not specified, Čs. obec turistická 1948, ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ OBEC TURISTICKÁ všem místním odborům, skupinám a jednatelským místům, dne 26. března 1948. “Plavectví” 1948, no. 4, p 1. Oběžník č. 23, Svaz lyžařů republiky Československé, Prague 1948.

⁶⁵ Štumbauer J., *Historie tělesné výchovy a sportu v Československu v letech 1945–1956. Od omezené demokracie k tuhému stalinismu, “Česká Kinantropologie”* 2019, vol. 23, no. 1–2, pp. 43–61.

son, the ČSTS was established in November 1946, aiming to unify Czechoslovak physical education, sports, and tourism on a federative basis.

This organization, led by Antonín Hřebík, was more successful in its efforts. Its founding charter was signed by 37 organizations representing a total of around two million members. The only notable organization that refused to join ČSTS for a long time was the Czech Junák, as it did not consider itself a physical education organization. The mission of ČSTS was to oversee all physical education, sports, and tourism activities, as well as all related matters.

Each type of sport was represented in this national organization by only one central governing body. Slovak members of the ČSTS executive committee were also members of the Slovak Physical Education Council, through which ČSTS operated in Slovakia. Cooperation among ČSTS members was generally smooth, with one exception being the ČOV, which coexisted with the Slovak Olympic Committee. Some members of the latter claimed that only their organization was the legitimate member of the IOC.

For better organization, the ČSTS established committees responsible for various aspects of its activities. In addition to committees, ČSTS created departments to handle the tasks arising from its operations. To improve the care of physical education, new positions were later introduced at the local and district levels of national committees. These included the roles of Physical and Military Education Officers and the Committees for Physical and Military Education. Their purpose was to assist in expanding and deepening physical and military education within their respective jurisdictions. Additionally, lower-level bodies were formed within ČSTS to oversee physical education, sports, and tourism. These bodies were designed so that representatives of Sokol, Czechoslovak Orel, Junák, and sports and tourism clubs in each town would form a local physical education council under the ČSTS. These councils followed the guidelines of ČSTS and acted as advisory bodies for local clubs and organizations, but they were not permitted to interfere with their activities.

The ČSTS communicated its activities and developments in Czechoslovak physical education, sports, tourism, and scouting through its magazine titled *Ruch v tělesné výchově*. This magazine eventually became one of the main sources of financial income for ČSTS, alongside membership fees and various donations.

ČSTS operated in this manner until February 1948, when a communist coup took place in Czechoslovakia. Following the coup, it was decreed that Sokol would become the sole physical education organization in the country, absorbing all other physical education, sports, tourism, and scouting organizations, along with their memberships and assets.

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Tomáš Tlustý: Conceptualization; Methodology; Investigation; Writing - Original Draft; Writing - Review and Editing.

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