

Sport and Physical Activities in Czech Republic

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To contribute to increasing the knowledge of the present-day position of sport in the Czech Republic it is useful to search a relevant relations of municipalities and their policies to various levels of sport. From the perspective of the situation in sport delivery at the municipal level it must be kept in mind that there are diverse voluntary sports organizations in existence within the municipality, and, naturally, there is also the private sector. The Czech Republic is also on the level of mass sport strongly influenced with the existence of new development of the city structure with plenty administrative buildings and shopping facilities, including fitness centers, cyclo paths, roller skates stadium, beach volleyball playing fields, golf courses. The national support of sport is, nowadays, divided into the support of top sports, performance sports and new waves in sports (e.g. sports for everyone - for all), sports for school, which are then on the regional level (and by the various sport organizations) subsidized from other sources and, moreover, not coordinately.

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General situation

The transformation from industrial to an information society since the 1960s and fueled big advances in computer technology cause “the great wave of change“. Significant changes in the composition of the workforce transferred the economic and the social roles of men and women, but also affected matters of health, attitudes to physical activities and sport. As a result of political and economic changes which occurred in the Czech Republic two decades ago, all areas of society started to be restructured. Naturally, this process also included public administration having responsibilities for many areas of the people’s lives, including sport.

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This new way of “public matters provision” started at the beginning of the 1990s and culminated in the period of 2000-2002.

Together with this process, public administration at lower territorial levels started to constitute rapidly as a basis of democratic, and even more, civic society. The public policy process, therefore, became a subject of thorough investigation both for purely scientific reasons and also to provide theoretical knowledge as a support for the new processes in progress in the life of society. The area of sport, in relation to the public sector, has gone through great changes both in structural and process terms. The relations between the sphere of sport and the public sector are naturally mutual undergoing gradual changes.

The study of sport and public administration was approached also from the point of view of a relatively new scientific discipline, public policy theory, which studies diverse spheres of social life. The area of sport, however, has not been subject to this type of monitoring so far. To try to contribute to increasing the knowledge of the present-day position of sport in the Czech Republic it is useful to search a relevant relations of municipalities and their policies to various levels of sport. The task is to explain how the situation has developed and which position sport has gained in the Czech public administration. And of course, to discuss the situation of sport, means to present position and role of sport activities in different societal and demographic parts of society too.

With respect to the development of the Czech administration and sport during the past two decades, some ultimate facts must be stressed. This helps to understand the changes implemented and the reasons for their initiation. The year 1989 brought about the disintegration of a uniform voluntary sports organization, Czechoslovak Sport Association (ČSTV), which had also been responsible for sport within the whole of the former Czechoslovakia. This role of state supervision, however, was not newly delegated to any other body. The territorial structure of the state had changed (by dissolving regions) adopting the structural model: Czechoslovakia – Czech Republic and Slovak Republic – counties – municipalities. In this structure, only municipalities had a self-governing status. Other levels represented state administration. The same structure persisted even after the split of Czechoslovakia into two separate states – the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic.

With respect to sport, the year 1989 marked the disintegration of a uniform sports organization – the Czechoslovak Sports Association. All

sports associations, federations, and sports clubs, which had originally been its members controlled directly from the organization's centre, gained independence and became legal entities. Besides, large associations which had been dissolved after the Second World War (e.g. Sokol) and whose members had to merge with all their property with the Czechoslovak Sports Association at the end of the 1950s, renewed their activity. The voluntary sector started to follow the path towards a status that had existed for many years in the West European countries or in the former Czechoslovakia before 1948. The bodies in this sector became non-government, non-profit making, independent voluntary organizations with the status of legal entities.

The emancipation process of sports bodies at the beginning of the 1990s, however, also resulted in the necessity of tackling numerous problems related not only to these entities themselves, but to their relation to the all-society environment. At that time, there was no code specifying the role of the state and its components in relation to their support for sport, even though the Ministry for Education, Youth and Sport existed and was working. Still, however, advisory bodies as well as professional sections gradually started to work there dealing with the national representation of sports, sport for all, research etc. Sport, as it was, was not regulated by any legal code, not even in relation to the municipalities. It was up to the municipalities themselves whether they would integrate the sport sector into their policies at all.

At first, this situation was rather hopeless, but, in the course of time, many, mainly large municipalities, started to realize the importance of sport and searched their own ways of supporting sport. The state did not join these initiatives until a change in political orientation from the right-wing to the left-wing social policy occurred in 1998. Preparatory works on government documents were started, dealing with the evaluation of the current situation and suggesting solutions for an all-national sport policy in the Czech Republic, an implementation of the system of national sports representation and support for talented youth, and the development of sport for all. The voluntary sector, which until then had stabilized and was looking for partnership and cooperation within its own ranks, also participated in these activities taking the role of a partner. The activities went in parallel with the preparations for the Czech Republic's accession to the EU and public administration restructuring. The most important reasons for this restructuring, given in a material of the Ministry of the Interior elaborated in 1999, tried to get over high level of centralization and insufficient number of administration levels enabling implementation of

subsidiarity principles (Slepičková, Staněk, 2007). But continual deficiency of conceptual work on the field of balanced position of leisure and top levels of sport is still typical for relevant politics in Czech Republic.

At the time being the administration of sport reflected Czech accession to the EU and in such the state represents the highest state administration level, regions are a combination of state and public administration, municipalities function as self-governing bodies with their own decision-making concerning their affairs being, of course, regulated by the current legislation. Subsidiarity principles in such a way affected the sport sector in the existence of voluntary (third) sector of independent highly segmented organizations. The voluntary sector is the sole owner of the largest Czech betting agency SAZKA. Sport is not incorporated in laws concerning regions and municipalities, but is only mentioned as one of the many areas that a municipality “may” deal with. The latter fact, in particular, initiated numerous research projects entitled Public Administration versus Sport (e.g. Slepičková, 2000, 2001)

Sport policy and its evaluation

From the perspective of the situation in sport delivery at the municipal level it must be kept in mind that there are diverse voluntary sports organizations in existence within the municipality, and, naturally, there is also the private sector. The Czech republic is also on the level of mass sport strongly influenced with the existence of new development of the city structure with plenty administrative buildings and shopping facilities, including fitness centres, cyclo paths, roller skates stadium, beach volleyball playing fields, golf courses. The authority for the implementation of the decisions with reference to sport policy and its evaluation is usually delegated onto municipal Department of Education and Culture with one specialized staff person responsible for sport, and onto the Department of the Environment, which is in charge of the reconstruction and maintenance of sports facilities owned by the municipality. In the area of support for sports organizations active on the administered territory, municipalities most often choose the possibility of awarding grants and the possibility of the utilization of school sports facilities. The conditions for gaining such support, however, show considerable differences. In some cases are supported single sportive activities, sometimes and somewhere open activities accessible for all, or only for members of individual sports associations. It is accented the municipalities to try to support all types of sporting activities.

The criteria for the selection of supported sports organizations or individual events are not firmly laid out, and it is mainly up to the members of the grant committee – which is also in charge of awarding grants in the sector of culture and other leisure time activities – which organizations or projects they will choose. The projects more likely to be supported are those that want to use the resources for purchasing material items rather than for the activity itself. The utilization of the resources spent is checked in a similar way: on the basis of annual accounts that the sports organizations winning the grants are obliged to submit to them. As far as the evaluation of the quality of these sports organizations' activity and their contribution to the inhabitants of the municipality is concerned, no rules or criteria have been set in any of the city quarters. The activity of sports organizations is assessed mostly only during public events held by them to which representatives of the local administration are invited as well. Their participation, however, is only voluntary.

In some city districts in Czech cities the strategy in relation to sports facilities focuses mainly on the reconstructions of those situated by primary schools, which are considered as the major basis for the development of sport. The utilization of these facilities applies the same rules set by the local administration, preferring long-term hiring contracts by local sports organizations. In multi-purpose facilities sporting on currently unused fields is also allowed to other people not belonging to sports organizations. All this is subject to agreement with the facility caretakers, whose wages are partly paid from the school funds and partly subsidized by the municipality. The possibilities of sporting activities available for the city quarter inhabitants are repeatedly advertised on the Internet and in the local newsletter. The chief deficiency acutely felt by the local administrations in Czech republic in general, is the absence of a swimming pool whose construction is planned usually within three years.

Playgrounds of the city districts are usually administered by the Department of the Environment through an authorized staff person, who monitors the condition of these playgrounds in terms of their physical condition and functionality. The city police are also engaged in the protection against vandalism, as a crucial problem of Czech society. The local administrations also relies on the people from the immediate vicinity and their interest in keeping the areas in good condition (reports of wrong doings and vandalism) or makes sports facilities situated by primary schools accessible for the public. Their regime is individual, fully under the decision of the school headmasters. Outdoor facilities are all provided to the public for free. In indoor spaces, the schools must respect the local

administration regulations concerning the calculation of the prices for hire – their costs and resulting prices for hire calculated on their basis are submitted for approval by the Council on a half-a-year basis. The needed personnel – school caretakers, keepers – are remunerated from the school budget. The municipality does not subsidize their wages in any way.

In general, the approaches of municipalities in Czech Republic to sport show many differences. The causes of the identified differences and, in particular, of a totally different approach to policy making, therefore, must be sought elsewhere. In the different approaches to sport the political bias of elected and decision-making bodies of the municipality is reflected as well the degree of personal enthusiasm for sport of the persons who have decision-making authorities in the municipality. Of importance is also the level and specialization of their professional qualifications and their willingness to take advantage of objective data (from researches and surveys) on the situation in the municipality, i.e. also in the area of sport. The involvement of the voluntary sector as well has a significant share in the situation. It is evident that in municipalities differing by their geographical position and appearance, the number of inhabitants and their social-economic characteristics and economic development: There are also a number of additional factors which are very likely to affect the approaches to solutions in the area of sport life. But the evident is: The sport policy making is not yet a common standard. (Slepičková, Staněk, 2007).

To summarize situation of sport versus local authorities in Czech republic the financial limitations and political priorities play very important role, as well as professional competence and personal preferences of particular councilors. The approach of the individual town areas to sport is very different and there are often original public policies in this field. A very diverse approach is also seen in the field of maintenance and development of the sports infrastructure and its utilization. In almost all of parts of Czech republic,, the great importance is on renovation of school facilities. However, the access of the general public to the sport facilities often collides with the clearly commercial use of the facilities (Staněk, Flemr, 2007, 294-297).

Some research data on physical and sportive activity of Czech population

We live in the cultural setting adoring youth, beauty, healthy and sexy body a physical performance. Unfortunately, images of fit and healthy attractive personalities and widely circulated health messages have not translated effectively into increased physical activity for most Czech people. Findings from number of large- scale surveys point to the aversion or

the inability of most Czech people to participate in regular amounts of physical activity. Sportive activities are more less rather the manifestation of „up to date“ style of life, then to be integral part of everyday life. It is for more and more financially prospering people in good social position the expression of the prosperity and the ability to freely spend and choose independently their leisure.

People prefer, in general, passive form of leisure, watching sport rather than doing sport. Overweight adults being deficient in good physical condition are putting themselves at risk for disease and disability. Medical expert predicted properly that the declines in physical activity the current generation of Czech children will grow into the most obese generation of adults in Czech history: The sedentary living beset contemporary Czech society, as identically U.S. and plenty of European societies too. In such situation we are more and more confronted with pressing questions: „ Why do people who know they should be more physically active still fail do so? What form the obstacles to achieving a more physically active lifestyle? And very pragmatic question is brought up to date: Is it in sedentary postmodern virtually oriented life possible to transform contemporary people into a more physical active society? What is the real prospect of our endeavour to create a social structure more conducive to a healthier society? Is it possible to overcome persistently questioned limitations found in many of the traditional approaches to promoting physical activity? Are we able to work effectively on the way of innovative strategy to increase physical activity at home, at school, and within the community?

The existing whirlwind of changes associated with way of life and standard of living regarding working activities, nutrition, housing, environment, transport, leisure, travelling etc. have with no doubt strong impact at a physically active lifestyle. And we must face very crucial fact: Some problems in this field are more-less under our control, but some barriers to improve active lifestyle are not. Anyway, enhancing the legitimacy of physical activity as a topic of systematic research would indeed be very gratifying.

The situation in the Czech Republic regarding obesity is reported as alarming: 21 % of men and 31 % of women are obese (obesity and overweight = 68 % of women and 72 % of men), 66 % of men and 54 % of women in the age group 20-65 are overweight or obese, while „only“ obese 17 % men and 21 % of women. In children the overweight rates 7-8 % and obesity 6-7 % (overweight and obesity in total 13-15 %). A specific phenomenon of Czech population is the obesity occurrence in all social

groups with no strong differences in some social strata (Šeráková, 2007, p. 814-815., Fořt, 2004). Whatever results on obesity in Czech Republic are given by the authors, all of them agree on fact that the obesity prevalence grows enormously, despite the fact that situation need not to be as critical as it is often presented in media and press.

Regarding systematic representative sociological research of physical activity – and consequently a social analysis of inactivity and patterns of sedentary living – in Czech Republic we can summarize: Besides some partial surveys of leisure activities of young generation exists some representative researches of a position of sport and sportive activities of Czech population. One of the very representative with random sample of 952 respondents older 18 years of age organized Charles University in Prague. Research confirmed very high level of prestige of sport and sportive activities in Czech society (Slepička, Slepičková, 2002). But at the same time was confirmed generally known fact that the significant part of population its positive attitude to physical activities does not realize in practical personal everyday life in the form of regular sport activities. Only one third of respondents declared regular sportive activity at least one time during a week, irregularly and by chance is involved in sport one fifth of respondents. Seventy percent of Czech people is not associated in sport organizations. On the decline is also positive opinion accenting an importance of mass sportive activity. Presented research has not been interested only in an opinion of Czech population on the role of sport for contemporary people, but was also searching for existing interests in alternative sports, prevailing barriers of active sporting, an accessibility to sport facilities, level of passive and active interests regarding sport. Fundamentals topic, general importance of sport and physical activities for Czech population is here reflected in following answers:

Not important	2,4 %
Important only for someone	17,5%
Important, particularly for youth	21,6%
Important for all generations	58,3%
No answer	0,1%

A distribution of answers reflects very high level of positive importance of sport for individuals and the society too: People are in the course of their life confronted with rational evaluation of sport for practical life. The highest importance is connected with positive contribution of sportive activities for the health, fitness, well-being, social prestige. Such

attitude reflects also high value acknowledgment and a credit of health for all generations of population. At the same time the impact of sport as an indispensable factor of socialization is growing, notably as a form of meaningful way of leisure.

Pivotal problem of opinions relating to desirable level of mass sport activities reflects this set of answers:

We need more active sport	62%
Meeting the proper requirements	25%
We have too much sport	3,2%
No opinion	9,1%
No answer	0,1%

Also such table reflects existing discrepancy between positive attitudes to sport and the conviction to be more intensively involved in active sport (Slepička, Slepičková, 2002, p.15).

Very interesting data offer responds to question: „What is the main reason of prevailing sport inactivity of today’s people?“

	Agreement %	Disagreement %
People are too lazy	86,3	13,7
People are too busy	81	19
People face the lack of sport facilities	34	66
Too expensive for most people	52	48
Absence of proper party or team	38	62
People have another cares	83	17
Absenting effective promotion	37	63

Presented structure of attitudes to sport activities reflects given social and cultural situation in Czech post-reformation setting: People are not consistent enough to overcome their laziness, are too much busy, too much involved in everyday economic problems, not properly appreciated and enjoying refreshing impact of regular physical activities compensating many-sided stress of societal life. But we also take into account the fact, that people are prone to declare an absence of leisure as substitution reason.

Regarding research problem of „an opinion to future development of mass sport“ respondents declared:

	Yes%	No%	No opinion%
People will be more involved in sport activities	36,6	29,1	34,1
Stronger gap between top and mass sport	70,4	9,9	19,4
Increasing importance of sport as a show	44,3	19,7	35,5
Increasing costs for active sport	88,4	2,8	8,3
Some sports will be only for very rich people	81,4	6,6	11,6

Prevailing widely skeptical opinions reflects existing process of growing disparity between top elite professional sport and mass recreational sport. Such process also supports consumerist nature of contemporary sport in general. Most frequent reason for sportive activities of men is building up physical condition, body shape and societal prestige. Women are more skeptical in reference to their chance to practice recreational sport regularly: They complain of absence of leisure, financial potentials and organizational obstacles.

Research data relative to physical fitness demonstrate following picture:

I am in good physical condition	27,7%
Generally good fitness	41,7%
Not very good	20,7%
I feel physically very bad	12,9%

Relatively positive perception of physical condition of respondents is reflected in declaration of frequency of sport activities:

Vigorously and regularly	33,1%
Occasionally	20,7%
Only in the past	18,5%
Never, but I would like	5,6%
Never on principle	22,1%

One third of respondents declares active sport activities at least once a week (37% of men, 29% of women). Women are doing sport activities

less regular (22,7%) in relation to men (14,6%). Women are also more frequently absolutely physically inactive than men.

Presented data reflects in Czech population growing tendency of passive attitudes to sport. Physical inactivity is justified with absence of leisure, absence of meaningful motivation and an existence of healthy problems. 40% of „programmatically physically inactive“ acknowledge substantial aversion to physical activity, 28,5% declare healthy problem and 20% an absence of leisure. Only marginally is declared absence of sport facilities and financial obstacles (Slepička, Slepičková, 2002, p. 19-21).

Last representative sociological research of physical activity Czech population was conducted during 2003 – 2004 period. The aim of the research „The intensity and the volume of physical activity of the population aged 15-69 in the Czech Republic“ was to provide relevant data concerning physical activity of the inhabitants of the Czech Republic that are comparable to characteristics common in other countries. In reference to the results: Walking is the leading physical activity of the Czech inhabitants. Males and females' participation in an organized physical activity decreases in significant rate with age (Frömel, K., Bauman, S. et al., 2006, pp. 16-22).

Regular monitoring of level and tendencies of physical activity of population is integral part of monitoring of health situation and life style of population.

Relevant recommendations regarding physical activities from mentioned research are accenting: More opportunities for active sportive activities for older population men and women. To prepare and to realize self-contained programs for active recreational sport for all groups of population. Within school teaching of physical education contribute to long-life interest in active physical activities. Support in general walking as a most natural form of physical activity (Frömel, Bauman et al., 2006, p. 21).

In Czech context is necessary to mention that 2 hours of physical education per week for pupils and student is not resolutely enough. Nowadays physical education is defined as the process aiming at preparation of children and young people for participation in physical culture (tourism, recreation, sport). It is also understood as the foundation of physical culture. Physical education in its humanistic version is understood as „an education of man for the care of the body.

Another representative research of 5825 respondents monitoring physical and sportive activities „Physical activity of men and women 18 to 55 years old in the Czech Republic“ reveals that men in all age categories show more days of physical activity than women., also decrease in frequency of general physical activity with age. Only in walking the women of all age groups are more active than men., in general an apparent decrease of walking in the course of aging is evident. Sedentary way of life measured by time spent in sitting daily is more typical for women. It is concluded that Czech population is not engaged in vigorous physical activity that promotes the development and maintenance of proper physical shape. To be engaged, preferably daily, in moderate physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day, is unfortunately only recommended imperative, not reality. Higher level of intensive and moderate physical activity for both men and women and lower average period of sedentary time is for general Czech population recommended (Frömel et al, 2004, p. 173).

From the perspective of leisure time activities it is evident that in the Czech Republic physical activities are much more important in the life of children and young people than in adults: More boys than girls devote themselves to organized sports, even though in recent years the number of girls participating mainly in unorganized forms of physical activities has increased. 42% of the boys and 34 % of the girls are engaged in all the existing organized forms of sport. 30% of young people are interested in the „new sports“ including adventure activities, that are becoming more popular than the traditional ones. But the high percentage of young people who do not practise any sport is alarming because of the prognosis of the possible appearance of risk healthy factors. Participation in sport and physical activities according to gender, age and forms of sports shows that the Czech boys in all the observed age categories (9-24 years) participate in intensive and moderately intensive physical activity more days in the week than girls. These differences continue with increasing years of both gender. The average daily time for intensive physical activity for boys is 51 minutes and 33 minutes for girls. But no remarkable differences in the so called „walking days“ between boys and girls were registered (Rychtecký, 2007, p. 205).

Frequency of participation of Czech males in competitive, organized, highly intensive sport is most evident in age group 9-11 years (27 %, strong enthusiasm regarding sport career), 12-13 years old boys are most involved in intensive sports and physical activities., 9-11 years old are also non-participants in physical activities (32 %). Girls are most involved in intensive sportive activities in age group 16-19 (32 %)., most passive

attitudes regarding physical activities are typical for 9-11 old girls (Rychecký, 2007, p. 203-204) as a reflection daily and weekly habitual order and social influences.

To participate in physical activity is a complex problem. One of the most important aspects of such phenomenon is problem of motivation for a sport activity. An investigation of 956 Czech young people of 15-24 years of age with regard to their attitude to physical activities was recently conducted. The research covers both young people doing sport and those who are not doing sport.

Main reasons for going in sport for boys is sharing leisure with friends (28,4 %), to look good and to improve health, for girls to look good (25 %), to share leisure with friends and to improve health (Sekot, 2006a, 45). It is in the logic of the problem that aesthetic and healthy reasons for physical activities are more typical for girls and in sport clubs unregistered respondents.

Parallel research of health behaviour revealed the risk factors of young people's life style. From the point of view of frequency of physical activities, only one third of Czech students spend 3 times a week with demanding physical activities, whilst on the contrary one fourth of respondents spend sitting 10-14 hours daily (28,6 % nursing school students) and the same number walks less than one hours a day (29,3 % grammar school students). „In general terms, the results confirm present way of spending free time of young people – with the lack of motion and with a number of syndromes of organism insufficiently loaded or overloaded in the wrong direction (pains in a back, joints etc). Activities for healthy promotion have to be implemented informally that means to move from filling in forms at schools to concrete health supporting activities. These activities must not be only single ones: they must have long term and continuous character“ (Ríhová, 2007, p. 137-138).

In Czech context higher level of decentralization and competence transmission on region autonomy is needed. To keep such task, we need to monitor of interest of physical activities in different age groups, evaluation of physical fitness level not only in children and youth, but also in adult population and elderly people. It means to improve chances and amenities for regular whole life physical activities, material outfit, preparation of specialists, realization of long-term education among coaches and instructors and fundamental increasing of financial support for mass sport from the state. Sport for all must by integral part of future

relation of sport to health, education and socialization. Recommendations to sport organizations for the systematic promotion of physical activities needs full support of local, regional and national public authorities:

1. To develop a membership strategy to include physically passive persons to sportive activities.
2. To specify the profile target of sport clubs with accordance to focus on elite and competitive sport or recreational leisure sport activities.
3. To improve coach and trainer standards of an inclusive social and pedagogical climate.
4. To accent natural outdoor activities as grass roots centres for mass involvement in physical activities.
5. To ensure and to enable high educational and pedagogical standards of voluntary and (semi)professional staff in sport clubs.

Although prospects for revitalization of physically active society are questionable, we are obliged to change or modify a long standing resistance to exercise among our contemporaries. Post industrial (or) post-modern society characterized in involvement in momentary short term experience, refusing traditional values and long term values, is not good place for a transformation to physical activity both at the societal and individual level. Such transformation will be filled with false stars and obstacles, facing innumerable barriers. These barriers (except general one's inborn individual laziness and indolence) range from political and legislative opposition to struggle for limited resources with other health concerns and media indifference to social explanations for our physical activity problems. Public policy makers have not sufficient attention to public and health preventive medicine and healthy lifestyles. We live in situation when most people agree that healthy lifestyles are a fundamental good for individuals and society. But sedentary lifestyles, impose many various another subjects, costs and negative impacts also on people not themselves directly engaged in risky health behaviours: Strong smoking and sedentary life style of one member of the family could induce emotional stress for rest of the family or may cause individual financial hardship related to loss of job or overwhelming medical costs. From strictly economical point of view, sedentary lifestyles costs billions of health care and lost wages are contributing to economic drain on society as a whole. Another problem is related to the question how far the national physical activity agenda can

go in regulating personal behaviours: People do not want to be told what to eat, what to drink, and how much to exercise. Anyway, our chance to achieve a physical active society could be improved if we can overcome the challenges of truly healthy lifestyles available to all members of society, or at least for most part of society.

Urbanization versus sport facilities

Phenomenon of physical and sport is closely related to urbanization of sports facilities. In such context it is useful to describe and analyze the most important milestones in the history of city-planning (urbanization) in the area of sport facilities. Comparing with the development of sport facilities of ancient times the current comparable status seems to be rather negative. Further, it is the paradox that low quality of urban-planning nowadays is reflected particularly in the suburb areas of Prague, whereas the public infrastructure (sport facilities included) does not reach a sufficient level. The rapid housing and industrial development especially in these parts of the city has unfortunately overtaken the local development framework, which is resulting in numerous urban-architectural and moreover sociological issues. Sport facilities planning, creating, developing and managing should be considered to be one of the strategic points in public (administration) on both the local and state level (Flemr, 2007, pp. 93-105).

The very beginning of the modern sport facilities – formerly the playgrounds – is illustrated from 18th century as a consequence of sport movement in England as well a philanthropy movement in Germany. The simple separate playgrounds had been in the context of growing spectator popularity of sport constructed also with respect of spectators, mostly for tennis and athletic and football stadiums. In Scandinavia also indoor facilities were constructed since the beginning of 18th century. In Czech background the first real gymnasium was launched in 1862 – Malypetr gymnasium, used with Gymnastic Association of Prague. The last decade of 19th century brought out strong practical incentives for school and public gymnasiums and subsequent sportive facilities. At beginning of the last decade of 19th century about 500 tennis courts were in operation in Czech countries. Late 19th and early 20th century improved public mass interest in football and biking. Strong incentives for mass sportive activities were connected with existence of Sokol movement and modern Olympic games 1896.

The formation of an independent Czech Republic in 1918 entailed strong impulse for building new sportive facilities, notably those for ice hockey, football and gymnastics. Advisory committee for physical education was established in 1920, coordinating a conception of building new sportive facilities, for youth in particular. Despite this endeavour, only 11,3 % of elementary school had their own gymnasium, 45,3 % exercising ground or courtyard. Better situation were in secondary and high school: 75 % of them possessed gymnasium (Flemr, 2007, p. 95).

Socialist planning accented unified physical education and sport. During late 1940 in Czech Republic was centrally operated 1250 gymnasiums, only four indoor 25 meters swimming pools and one indoor ice hockey stadium. Growing accent on mass physical educational activities and sport brought around building new sportive complexes, some of them of very low technological quality. Czech association of physical education since its launching in 1957 had been a chief agent for purposefulness of sportive facilities. Up to early 1990th the theoretical urban value of sportive site for one single inhabitant was 17 m², nowadays exercise site for one inhabitant is 5,09 m² (1,99 m² for an organized sport, 1,79 m² for a school physical education, 1,31 for unorganized sport), usable exercise site for one inhabitant is 7,24 m² (2,88 m² for organized sport, 2,22 for school physical education, 2,14 for unorganized sport). Municipal sportive institutions are basically non profitable – no wonder that investors prefer to invest in commercial sportive facilities. It is reflected in rather neglected situation of mass recreational and leisure time sport activities in Czech Republic.

It is generally accented, and in Czech context too, that the municipal policy must support active lifestyle of very colorful broad spectrum of population. Such objective is strongly accented mostly after 1989 during the process of European Union integration. Within the European priorities health issues and active lifestyle of citizens are included. Sport and physical activities represent significant features of those priorities. In such context, the relevant terminology of this area is elucidated, the terms such active lifestyle, public policy are defined. In summarizing the current situation in the Czech cities is accented the imperative of an active way of municipal sport policy. But in fact unfortunately rather closely reactive policy has been implemented in Czech context: Mostly existing problems are solved, but future complex interventionist programs are rather ignored. Voluntary field must compensate public boards and managements (Slepičková, Staněk, 2007., Staněk, Flemr, 2007).

Sport and physical activities in Czech Republic are also supported in the form of various subventions. But being in motion decentralization policy of the state, numerous problems of given forms of the support of sport and physical activities are not completely solved. So we face some features of the absence of coordinated policy of an effective support of sport damaged with ineffective financing, high level of political and lobby decisions. All the relevant institutions on the national, regional and municipal levels should function coordinately across the Czech Republic in their subvention policies so that financial resources are not dissipated and thus sports and physical education are not negatively impacted by inefficacy. Since 2000, the distribution of subsidies for sport and physical education has been directed to municipalities that invest into development of sport and leisure time infrastructure aiming the growth of local economics, tourism and recreation. The national support of sport is, nowadays, divided into the support of top sports, performance sports and new waves in sports (e.g. sport for everyone - for all), sports for school, which are then on the regional level (and by the various sport organizations) subsidized from other sources and, moreover, not coordinately. The correspondence in subvention policies of all the subvention levels, i.e. national and regional governments and sport organizations, is thus strongly required (Hobza, Číkl, 2007, p. 79-80). A scheme of priorities in the different levels is proposed so that financially unclear and duplicate source flow to selected areas is avoided. Due to their multi-source financing, sports and physical education are then at the risk of accumulation of sources at certain areas and lack of sources in others that are not politically supported, but still of high social importance.

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