Original research article

90 YEARS OF INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION – FIEP

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SUMMARY

International Federation of Physical Education (FIEP) is the oldest organization from that area, and it gathers individuals and organizations from over 130 countries of the World. It was founded 90 years ago in Brussels titled Federation Internationale de Gymnastique Educative (FIGE), and today’s name Federation Internationale d’Education Physique (FIEP) was established in 1953, and it hasn’t been changed since. FIEP has 9 zones (areas), and the scientific work is divided in 8 international sections. It publishes the oldest journal in the area of Physical Education (PE), FIEP Bulletin, as also many other publications that contribute to the development of scientific taught in the area of PE from the beginning until nowadays. The goal of this paper is to analyze and present to readers the origins, development and main activities of International Federation of Physical Education in the last 90 years of its existence. The authors used historical method.

Key words: activities, publications, sections, cooperation.

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INTRODUCTION

International Federation of Physical Education (FIEP) is one of the oldest organizations in that area. Besides Physical Education (PE), it also includes Fitness, Sports for all, Olympic education, etc. It was founded in 1923 in Brussels named Federation Internationale de Gymnastique Educative (FIGE), and in 1953 in Istanbul the name was changed to Federation Internationale d’Education Physique (FIEP). In its structure it gathers individuals and organizations from over 130 countries around the World, it publishes the oldest international journal about PE, FIEP Bulletin, organizes international symposiums and conferences, different educations of PE experts, etc., what proves that FIEP supports and promotes intellectual work and development in the area of PE.

At the very beginning of its existence, this organization was based on the group of enthusiasts with idea and vision of international cooperation in the area of PE, and today it involves people and organizations from all over the World.

Today the structure of FIEP is divided on 9 zones (regions): Asia, Arab countries and north of Africa, Africa, Europe, South America,

Oceania, Caribbean, North America and Central America. The work is divided into 8 international sections: Scientific section, Physical Education and Sport in School Section, Olympic Education Section, Adapted PE and Sport Section, History of PE and Sports Section, PE and Sports for the aged Section, Sport for all Section, and the latest Section of Recreation and Leisure. Each of these sections by its activities contributes to development and work of this important PE organization.

The subject of this research is International federation of Physical Education, with goal to analyse and present to readers its origins, development and main activities in the past 90 years of its work.

**METHOD**

Historical method was used in this paper. Numerous publications of FIEP as also other available sources and materials were reviewed and critically analysed.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Foundation of FIEP and its work until 2013**

The idea and need for foundation of international organization for PE appeared at the very beginning of 20th century, to be exact in 1900, when it was publicly presented on PE congress in Paris. Then was formed *Permanent technical commission for PE (Comission technique internationale permanente)*, led by an Italian, D’Mosso.4

In July the following year, 1911, there was an international congress in Denmark when was formed *International institution of PE (Institution Internationale de l’Education Physique)* headed by Swede, N.F. Sellen.

These two events and these two bodies FIEP sees as the first steps “[...] towards the foundation of a greater independent international PE organisation.”5

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4 Branislav Antala at al, *FIEP 90 Years of Service for Physical Education* (Bratislava: Comenius University in Bratislava, Faculty of Physical Education and Sports in cooperation with Association of Physical Education Teachers and International Federation of Physical Education (FIEP), 2013).
Their work was interrupted in the period of WW I, and only in 1923 there was some concrete action regarding reestablishment of international work in this field.

This time the idea was launched in Belgium (Brussels) during international congress, when the president of congress Einar Nerman from Sweden defended the idea of “[...] formation of Fedération Internationale de Gymnastique Suédoise, with the aim being to integrate PE into Olympic Games (OG).” This Nerman’s decision resulted in forming of International Federation of Educational gymnastics (FIGE) (“Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique Éducative”), led by general Lefebure from Belgium. According to Antala et al., that occurred on July 11th 1923⁷, and according to the current president of FIEP, Mr. Almir Adolfo Gruhn on July 2nd 1923⁸. Based on these two information we can, with certainty, say that FIGE was established in the first half of July 1923, what is also considered as formal foundation of FIEP, considering the fact that FIGE was its forerunner in every possible way. In 1930 the organization was renamed to International Federation of Ling’s Gymnastics (FIGL) (“Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique Ling”), headed by Einar Nerman from Sweden.⁹ In 1953, or 23 years later, on suggestion of Joseph Thulin, the organization gets its final name, International Federation of Physical Education(FIEP)(“Fédération Internationale d’Éducation Physique”).

Major Joseph Thulin was at the same time the next president of FIGL, elected in 1935. He implemented certain changes in the way of body workout, keeping the influence of Ling’s or Sweden gymnastics, involving the pedagogical, physiological and psychological principles, and certain static exercises directed towards more dynamic and active way of performance.

During WW II activities of FIGL were reduced to minimum so the work could maintain in any possible way. After the war, the president Thulin invested certain effort to get the work of the organization to pre-war state. In 1951 he went to

“[...] important journey to South America, where he presented FIGL and founded branches in Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Peru, Colombia and

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⁶ Ibid.
⁷ Ibid
⁹ Branislav Antala at al, FIEP 90 Years of Service for Physical Education, (Bratislava: Comenius University in Bratislava, Faculty of Physical Education and Sports in cooperation with Association of Physical Education Teachers and International Federation of Physical Education (FIEP), 2013), p. 9.
Venezuela. He then visits USA and Canada where he is successful in starting branches. Thulin organised international courses... [...] He helped to restore international contacts, and step by step this increased the FIGL influence in making the Sweden method popular in the world."  

That is how FIGL renewed its work and starts towards the epithet of one of the biggest and most powerful international organizations in the area of PE.

As already mentioned, during the World congress held from 2nd to 9th of August 1953 in Istanbul FIGL changes the name to FIEP, and that name stays unchanged until nowadays. In 1958 during General assembly in Brussels, after 23 years of incessant leadership of this important organization, Major Joseph Thulin resigned his leadership.

His work continued, as follows:

- **Antonio Leal de Oliveira** from Portugal (1958 - 1970). During his leadership, special bloom and recognition was given to FIEP Bulletin that gathered and shared the information from the area of PE and Sports. There were organized over 14 international courses, 12 short-term attachments, First world congress of School PE in Strasbourg in 1969, and after it also congresses in 1970 in Lourenco Marquez (Mozambique) and Luanda (Angola), as also the seminar in Lisbon (Portugal).

- **Pierre Seurin** from France (1970 - 1983). In that period the FIEP gathers the representatives from 70 different countries of the world, and FIEP Bulletin was published in four world languages: English, French, Portuguese and Spanish, and for the first time ever the FIEP spreads its work to 5 continents. In 1971 *The World Manifest of Physical Education* was published. The leadership of Pierre Seurin was terminated with his death in 1983, followed, unfortunately, by the plane crash in Madrid when also died FIEP’s vice president for Europe, Jose Maria Cacigal.

- **John Andrews** from England (1984 - 2000). The main characteristic of the period under the leadership of John Andrews was "[...] characterized by consolidation and activation of FIEP especially in Latin America countries as well as expansion to Arabic
countries.”\textsuperscript{11} The Prince Faisal Award was established for researches in the field of Sports in Arabic area. The activities in PE around the world were increased, and as in the previous period, the numerous congresses, seminars and different courses were organized. Besides, it was developed “[..] an increased cooperation with the International Olympic Committee, essentially with the Sport and Olympic Education Foundation. FIEP was accepted by IOC as an ‘IOC Recognized Organisation’,\textsuperscript{12} what opened the possibility of certain financial support by IOC. Inside the FIEP structure, there was a new formed section – Olympic Education Section. The FIEP received an award during World Congress of PE held in Berlin in 1999. Another important document was adopted, \textit{The World Manifest of Physical Education 2000}. Soon after that, John Andrews end his fruitful role of FIEP president, and becomes its First Lifelong Honourable President.

- \textit{Manoel Gomez Tubino} from Brazil (2000 – 2008). For the first time, after four predecessors, the title of FIEP president leaves Europe, and transfers to the territory of South America, more precise to Brazil. Manoel Gomez Tubino set defined goals for the organization to follow, goals which confirmed, strengthened and expanded the work of his predecessors. According to Antala et al. “He was one of the key protagonists of FIEP ideas in the world.”\textsuperscript{13}, what rightly puts him, next to John Andrews, to prestigious place of Second Honourable President of FIEP. After sudden death of Manoel Tubino in 2008, his place was taken by General Secretary, Almir Ghrun.

In the following four years after Tubino’s death FIEP continues its active work. Organises congresses, publishes FIEP Bulletin as also other publications

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid, p. 14.

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid, p. 15.

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid, p. 16.
significant for PE, continues with awarding important and deserving individuals. Besides stated, already fixed activities, in this period a lot was done regarding cooperation with other organizations, such as: International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education (ICSSPE), International Committee of Sport Pedagogy (ICSP), European Association of Physical Education (EUPEA), etc. Together with EUPEA in 2010 FIEP becomes the member of “PE Alliance”. It also participates in different projects, among which also UNESCO Collaborative PE Survey Project 2011 – 2012, and many others. Attention of FIEP in this period was focused to worldwide, but also national projects and happenings, development of FIEP virtual television in Latin America, opening of “PE Houses”, etc.

In accordance to technology development and means of communication in 21st century, promotion of FIEP is done through different web-sites and social networks (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc), what inevitably leads to global recognition of this prestigious international organization, what was the vision of pioneers in the area of international cooperation in PE. On the election in 2013 in Brazil, Almir Ghrun becomes the official president of FIEP until 2016.

**FIEP Europe**

The foundations of the biggest world organization of physical education were strongly set in Europe that moment when in Belgium (Brussels), during the international congress, in the first half of July 1923, was founded the FIEP’s forerunner *Federación Internacional de Educación Física (FIGE)*, considered also as the formal foundation of FIEP. Based on the aforementioned we can say that FIEP Europe exists as long as the World organization, and therefore it is not unusual it represents one of its most active zones.

As stated in the previous text, FIEP has 9 zones (regions) of work, but, according to Antala and Sedláček, “The most active it is in South America, in Europe and in Arabic countries.”

From 1970 until nowadays, FIEP Europe was led by several significant personalities:

- Branislav Antala from Slovakia (from 2008).  

**54 Branislav Antala and Jaromír Sedláček, „International Federation of Physical Education history and the present in Europe“, FIEP Bulletin, no. 1, vol. 83 (2013): 7.**
FIEP Europe is run by President together with General Secretary and four regional Vice-presidents (Vice-president for North Europe, Vice-president for West Europe, Vice-president for East Europe and Vice-president for South Europe). Scientific work is headed by presidents of European international sections: Physical Education and Sport in Schools Section, Scientific Section, Adapted Physical Activities Section, Sport for All Section, Olympic Education Section, and Physical Education and Sport History Section. Besides, in work of FIEP Europe are also involved national delegates and their assistants from around 30 European countries.

For the last 30 years of its existence and work, FIEP Europe organised and participated in over 43 different World and European congresses, seminars, trainings, etc.16 From 2003, when was organized First European FIEP Congress in Spain, the tradition is continued until nowadays, when FIEP Europe has 8 successfully organized European congresses. Besides, we should not forget some of the most important personalities in Europe, who with their effort and devotion gave immeasurable contribution to this international organization. Some of them, who were or still are at some of the most important FIEP functions, by alphabetical order, are: John Andrews (England), Branislav Antala (Slovakia), Robert Decker (Luxembourg), Walter Dufour (Belgium), Ken Hardman (England), Pierre Parlebas (France), Airikki Pousi (Finland), Krum Rachev (Bulgaria) and Nenad Zivanovic (Serbia)17, and beside them also many other important people.

Publishing activities of FIEP

Federation Internationale d'Education Physique publishes different publication, among which also the oldest journal in the area of PE, FIEP Bulletin.18 The first number was published in 1931, named FIGL Bulletin, and has been published almost constantly until nowadays. In the past it was published “[...] mostly 4 times a year, at present it is published 2 – 3 times a year.”19 Ever since the leadership of Pierre Seurin (1979 – 1983), FIEP Bulletin is published in French, English, Portuguese and Spanish.

16 Ibid, pp. 15 – 16.
19 Branislav Antala at al, FIEP 90 Years of Service for Physical Education, (Bratislava: Comenius University in Bratislava, Faculty of Physical Education and Sports in cooperation with Association of Physical Education Teachers and International Federation of Physical Education (FIEP), 2013), p. 71
Editorial Board, traditionally led by FIEP President, keeps the high standard of publication in this journal, what gives it special value. Besides printed version which is distributed to all member-states, there is also an on-line version of journal available and open to all people of the world.

Besides FIEP Bulletin, published on world level, certain FIEP international sections publish each year one important publication. For an example, FIEP Europe, according to the words of actual FIEP Europe President, professor Branislav Antala, PhD, „[...] publish annually one scientific book – in 2010 ‘Integration and Inclusion in PE’, in 2011 ‘Healthy active life style and PE’, in 2012 ‘Volunteers and professionals in PE’, in 2013 ‘FIEP - 90 years of service for PE’, next year ‘PE - quality of management and teaching’.”

At the end we can state that World Federation of Physical Education (FIEP), together with its international sections, from the beginning of its existence gave important contribution to the development of scientific taught in the area of Physical Education, still is, and will probably do so in the future.

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20 Branislav Antala, e-mail message (correspondence) to Kristina Pantelic Babic, received on November 30th 2013.
90 ГОДИНА МЕЂУНАРОДНЕ ФЕДЕРАЦИЈЕ ФИЗИЧКОГ ВАСПИТАЊА – ФИЕП

САЖЕТАК

Међународна федерација физичког васпитања (ФИЕП) је најстарија организација у тој области, и у свом раду охвата појединце и организације из преко 130 земаља света. Основана је пре 90 година у Бриселу под називом Међународна федерација образовне гимнастике (ФИГЕ) (Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique Éducative), а назва Међународна федерација физичког васпитања (ФИЕП) (Fédération Internationale d’Éducation Physique), добијена је 1953. године, и он се до данас није менао. ФИЕП има укупно 9 зона или регија у којима делује, док је научни рад подељен у 8 међународних секција. Објављује најстарији часопис у области ФВ, FIEP Bulletin, и многе друге публикације, чиме од свог настанка до данас доприноси развоју научне мисли у области физичког васпитања. Циљ рада је да се проанализира и читаоцима прикаже настанак, развој и главне активности Међународне федерације физичког васпитања у протеклих 90 година њеног рада. У раду је коришћен историјски метод.

Кључне речи: активности, публикације, секције, сарадња.

90 ЛЕТ МЕЖДУНАРОДНОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ ПО ФИЗИЧЕСКОМУ ВОСПИТАНИЮ - ФИЕП

РЕЗИЮМЕ

Международная федерация по физической культуре (ФИЕП) является старейшей организацией в этой области, и в своей работе объединяет лица и организаций из более 130 стран во всем мире. Она была основана 90 лет назад в Брюсселе под названием Международная федерация образовательной гимнастики (ФИГЕ) Federation Internationale de Gymnastique Educative), а название Международная федерация по физической культуре (ФИЕП) (Fédération Internationale d’Éducation Physique) получила в 1953 году и оно не
изменилось по сей день. ФИЕП имеет в общей сложности 9 зон или регионов в которых она работает, в то время как научная работа делится на восемь международных разделов. Публикует старейший журнал в области Физического воспитания ФИЕП библиотекары, и многие другие публикации, и таким образом с самого начала и по сей день вносит свой вклад в развитие научной мысли в области физического воспитания. Целью данной работы является намерение проанализировать и показать читателю появление, развитие и основные направления деятельности Международной федерации по физической культуре и исследование 90 лет ее работы. В документе используется исторический метод.

Ключевые слова: деятельность, публикации, секции, сотрудничество.