

*Ph.D. in Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor,  
Associate Professor in Department of Physical Education №1,  
Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University  
(Kharkiv, Ukraine) E-mail: annaprikhodko05071963@gmail.com*

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION MOVEMENT IN UKRAINE: NATIONAL AND REGIONAL CONGRESSES IN EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY

**Article's purpose.** *The article discusses the role played by the All-Russian and Ukrainian regional pedagogical, medical and specialized congresses in the process of the formation of the physical education movement in the Ukrainian regions of the Russian Empire in early twentieth-century.*

**Methodology.** *The selection criteria for documents and printed primary sources corresponded to the subject of research, namely, congresses of different levels in a particular historical period, their genesis, the content of programs and discussions on the problem of physical education (PE). Territorial borders covered the Ukrainian region of the Russian Empire. Data collection was carried out in various historical archives of Ukraine and Russia. Additionally, articles and dissertations of modern researchers were analyzed.*

**Scientific novelty.** *The study notes that the discussion on PE, which began after the «great reforms» of the 60-70s, in early twentieth-century gained new dynamism. Disputes at pedagogical and medical congresses and calls to convene congresses of the PE public have become a new demand of the time. They contributed to the consolidation of teachers and the PE public and the solution of pressing issues of the progressive development of PE in schools, gymnastic and sports societies and the army. The initiators of the convocations of congresses and other meetings in the Russian Empire were gymnastic and scientific societies, authoritative public activists, and Educational Districts (ED). The congresses discussed proposals for improving the PE of all segments of the population: preschool PE, PE of students in primary, secondary and higher education; equipment of gym and outdoor areas; exercises of children and adults; theoretical and methodological issues of PE, hygiene and dietetics; teacher training; development of sports, etc. At the second decade of the twentieth century, the first serious attempts were made to hold specialized congresses of the PE public as independent institutions, but only the Sokols managed to hold these events.*

**Conclusions.** *In early twentieth-century, pedagogical, medical and PE congresses became a form of consolidation of Ukrainian society with the aim of solving topical problems of PE, sports, outdoor activities, pre-conscription training, teacher training, etc. These events have become the prototype of modern scientific and practical conferences.*

**Keywords:** *congress, physical education movement, physical education, early twentieth-century, Ukraine.*

**Formulation of the problem.** *Relevance of article.* Hundreds of international congresses now are held in fields ranging from the biosciences and medicine to sociology, pediatrics, sport sciences, and many other research and clinical fields [8]. They are a platform for consolidating society around progressive ideas and discussing progressive practical experience in the field of PE and sports. As history shows, in a fragmented state society is not able to solve not only strategic, but also tactical tasks [10].

Undoubtedly, the theme of holding congresses of different levels and subjects has its own history [10]. Few researchers of this topic note that congresses as public institutions attracted the best representatives of science, education, and culture of their time to collaborate on debates. The discussion platforms of the congresses were a source of innovative ideas and progressive projects [3; 6].

*Analysis of recent research and publications.* Scientific research on the experience of holding congresses at various levels, devoted to a wide range of issues related to PE, is a poorly studied problem. In the majority, these are reviews studies devoted, as a rule, to one local event. Such reviews began to be published almost

immediately after a specific event [16; 17; 18; 19; 21]. Today these publications are valuable primary sources for the study of congresses as objects of historical research.

The most significant scientific article in the context of PE is the study of R. J. Park, in which the author focuses on the activities of international congresses on hygiene and demography and other international meetings from 1867 to 1915 [7].

Congresses as a phenomenon of the consolidation of society around educational problems in the Russian Empire and on its Ukrainian lands in the second half of the twentieth – and early twentieth-century were studied in the articles of L. Haievskva (2009), E. Dneprov (1991, 2011), M. Mikhailova (1999), M. Piskunov (1976), T. Solomatina (1999), B. Stuparyk, O. Sukhomlynska (2003), A. Utkin (2011) et al [10]. Researchers note that the issues of PE of students were constantly at the centre of the debates of participants in congresses. At the same time, the content of scientific, methodological and pedagogical discussions on PE at all-Russian and Ukrainian regional congresses of the early twentieth-century, the genesis of specialized meetings were not the subject of a separate case study.

*Purpose.* The article analyzes the role played by the All-Russian and Ukrainian regional pedagogical and specialized congresses in the process of the formation of a PEM in the Ukrainian regions of the Russian Empire in early twentieth-century.

*Methodology.* The selection criteria for documents and printed primary sources corresponded to the subject of research, specifically, congresses of various levels in a particular historical period, their genesis, the content of programs and discourse on the issue of PE. Territorial borders covered the Ukrainian region of the Russian Empire. Data collection of sources was carried out in various historical Archives of Ukraine (Kyiv, Kharkiv) and Russia (St. Petersburg). Additionally, articles and dissertations of modern researchers were analyzed.

*Scientific novelty.* The research has developed the theme of the organization and conduct of pedagogical and specialized congresses of the all-Russian and Ukrainian regional level at the early twentieth-century, on which the topics were various aspects of PE and sports.

**Results of the research.** PE became one of the keywords in the international pedagogical and medical discussions debates at the end of the nineteenth – and early twentieth-century. Beginning with the 1851 London «Great Exhibition of Works of Industry» at least twelve major International Expositions had been held by 1915. These soon became venues for international congresses dealing with a wide array of subjects, one of which was PE [8].

This topic was also discussed at the international congress on hygiene, school hygiene (Nuremberg, 1904) and demography. Physicians and scientists, as well as educators gave considerable attention to health and PE. In this debate, PE is often referred to as «gymnastics» [8]. Studies show that during this period, similar issues worried the Russian and Ukrainian public. Active discussions on the issues of PE of students have become an obligatory part of all-Russian and regional and industrial educational, scientific congresses and other meetings beginning with the middle of the nineteenth century [10].

In early twentieth-century, congresses in various areas of science and education became habitual phenomena of public life in the Ukrainian regions of the Russian Empire. Various aspects of PE have become the subject of constant discussion at pedagogical congresses at various levels. September 1–5, 1903, at the Congress of Public Male Teachers and Female Teachers of *Zemsky* Schools of the Kherson County (*Uezdy*), it was decided that «*in order to prepare students for military service, it is desirable to study military gymnastics together with Swedish gymnastics and outdoor games*» [19, 132–133]. In 1909, the report «Physical Education in Secondary School» was heard and supported at the Congress of Directors of Secondary Educational Institutions of the Kyiv Educational District (*Okrug*) (*Note: administrative-territorial unit in the education system of the Russian Empire in nineteenth – and early twentieth-century – A.P.*) [18].

Sometimes PE issues were raised by congress participants outside of his official program. This indicated the particular relevance of this problem to education and society of that time. On January 2–7, 1916, at the Pedagogical Congress of Employees of Male Gymnasiums and Real Schools in the Odesa ED, questions of PE were discussed in the context of the moral education of students, the activities of classroom mentors and pre-conscription military training. In the report «On Educational Measures to Prevent the Misconduct of Students and the Moral Influence on Them», among educational measures it was proposed to hold gymnastic and sports events, organize Boy Scout squads, manual labor, etc. [21, 42]. In the speech «On the Role of Classroom Mentors», attention was focused on the feasibility of filling in the breaks between lessons in elementary school with exercises and games led by classroom mentors [21, 42].

The beginning of the First World War put forward demands for pre-conscription military training for young people. This phenomenon went down in the history of physical culture in Ukraine and Russia under the name «Sport mobilization» thanks to the document of the same name «Regulation on Sport Mobilization» adopted by the Government in 1914 [5]. At the Odesa Pedagogical Congress, the issue of «mobilization of sports» was submitted to an independent section. Congress participants discussed the experience of the Odesa District Committee for the Physical Education of Students, the content, shapes, methods and means of pre-conscription military training for young men, the problems of staffing PE in schools of the Odesa ED in wartime conditions and ways to overcome them [21, 61–65].

The noticeable event at the regional level was the Congress on the Organization of Reasonable Entertainment for the Population of the Kharkiv Province (*Guberniya*), which took place on June 7–12, 1915 in the People's House of Kharkiv. The initiator of the convocation of the Congress was the well-known in Russia Kharkiv Literacy Society. The main goal of the congress was «*to develop measures for the proper organization of reasonable entertainment for the people in order to fight for sobriety and use these measures for the economic, spiritual and physical development of the population*» [2]. The program of the Congress in the aspect of PE included: the organization of kindergartens, outdoor games and other activities with children of preschool age; creation of sports and gymnastic unit. An active discussion among the delegates of the Congress was raised by the questions about the role of the state, public self-government bodies, private societies and individuals in the organization of reasonable entertainment. During the Congress, a specialized exhibition was organized with a thematic sports department [2; 17].

The Congress on the Organization of Reasonable Entertainment for the Population of the Kharkov Province was a notable event in the life of not only the local community, but also Russian society. Many authoritative teachers, public activists from other regions of the Russian Empire took part in its activities. Ukrainian musician, writer, teacher, public activist Hnat Martynovych Khotkevych sent the organizers of the Congress a manuscript report on the PE of youth. In the report, the author recommended using Sokol gymnastics for educational purposes and referred to the experience of the Sokol societies of Galicia. But after strict censorship of materials presented in Ukrainian, the manuscript was not made public and was rejected for political reasons [17].

As a result of the Congress, a resolution was adopted which focused on the great state significance of PE for people. At the same time, the unsatisfactory state of PE in Russian schools and the insufficient support for small number out-of-school institution were criticized. It was pointed out the need to observe the correct pedagogical principles of PE, the spread of physical activity everywhere, among all social groups at all levels, as well as among teachers. In matters of PE of the population, state power, the scientific and pedagogical community, *zemstvo* and public organizations should freely interact. The Congress resolution pointed out the need for strict observance of the principle of conformity of exercises to the biological characteristics of the human body at various age periods; strict scientific monitoring of the physical development (PD) of children and verification of the effects of exercise. It was proposed to create laboratories for the PD of the population in large regional centers of Russia. Carry out mandatory medical and pedagogical control of all institutions of PE of children. For the purpose of PE of youth, the organization of playing and sports grounds was proposed, the mandatory allocation of necessary funds for practical activities on the PD of youth [17]. The resolution of the Congress was based on two reports of the authoritative Petrograd doctor V. V. Gorinevsky «On the Statement of the Case of Public Sports and Gymnastic Organizations in Foreign Countries and in Russia», «What is the Most Significant and Important in the Dissemination of Sports and Gymnastic Organizations That Aim at the Physical Development of the People?» [17].

In 1910-17, progressive ideas of Ukrainian teachers and public activists about the PE of students were discussed at professional and cultural-educational congresses at the national level. The study by M. Mikhailova draws attention to the fact that the issue of school hygiene, physical and sexual education of children was discussed at the XI Pirogov Congress (1910, St. Petersburg), at the Congress of Children's Doctors (1912, St. Petersburg) and the All-Russian Congresses on Sanitation and Medicine [6]. At the First (December 1915) and Second (December 1916 – January 1917) Scout Congresses, the experience of organizing scout squads in Kyiv was discussed. A. Anokhin made the report on the activities of the Kyiv squad of girl scouts, which was first created in Russia. In the context of the activities of scout squads, the report paid great attention to the PE of girls [1].

In early twentieth-century, the public began to put forward initiatives to convene specialized congresses on PE. The main engine of these initiatives were mainly sports and athletic societies – the leading public cells that brought together activists with ideas for improving the PD of the individual. They stated that in recent years the number of PE institutions in the country has been constantly increasing. Public activity in the field of PE and sports is increasing. However, the apparent fragmentation and lack of coordination of their actions serves as a barrier to the development of sports and gymnastic movement. Therefore, it is the convocation of the congress, along with other initiatives, that will allow the public to consolidate around the pressing problems of PE [9; 11; 14; 15; 20].

One of the first attempts to implement this idea was contained in the petition of the St. Petersburg society of «bodily» education «*Bogatyr*» (strong man – *A.P.*) to the Ministry of Public Education (MPE). The society suggested, on Christmas 1905, to convene «the first congress of persons who manage the activities of PD in and out of school». During the event, it was planned to conduct an «exhibition of *objects* (inventory and equipment) of gymnastics, athletics and sports» [11]. However, the petition was rejected «because of insufficient preparation time» [11].

In 1908, in connection with the celebration of its 25th anniversary, the St. Petersburg Gymnastic Society also proposed to convene a «Congress of All Gymnastic Societies of Russia» [20]. According to the organizers, the purpose of the planned event should be «the spread of gymnastics as a means of developing physical strength and morality» [20]. To achieve it, it was proposed: the creation of the «Union of Gymnastic Societies of Russia»

and its Council. These institutions would conduct congresses of gymnastic societies, introduce «proper gymnastics» in schools and societies; the creation of specialized schools for teaching gymnastics and an auxiliary fund for the construction of gyms and centers; the release of the gymnastic magazine; collection and publication of statistics on the state of gymnastics activities in Russia; holding gymnastic holidays and exhibitions of gymnastic and hygienic equipment. Information about the implementation of this initiative was not found in the primary sources. However, many of the above proposals were later put into practice.

The next attempt to consolidate the physical educational public of the Russian Empire was the proposal of the Moscow Society for the Advancement of Physical Development to convene the «Congress of Activists in the Field of Physical Development and Persons Interested in the Proper Organization of Physical Education». The Congress was proposed to be held in Moscow, December 27–29, 1909. The draft document addressed to the Ministry of the Interior Stated (MIS) that the purpose of the Congress is, firstly, «to clarify the attitude to PE and exercises of educational institutions, city, *zemstvo* and *eparchy* institutions and the population»; secondly, «the discussion of measures to improve the organization of the PD of youth and the physical recovery of the adults» [15].

The organizers of the Congress planned to achieve this goal by preparing and implementing large-scale collection of information throughout the country on the introduction of curricula of all types of male and female schools, regardless of departmental submission, exercises and games; the amount of training hours for gymnastics; teacher profile; the variety of exercises and games used in the PE of students; conditions and barriers in the organization of exercises and games; the importance of exercises for children with developmental disabilities. The survey suggested that if gymnastics was not taught at the school, it was necessary to indicate the reason for the Congress Organizing Committee. City, *zemstvo*, and *eparchy* institutions should inform the organizing committee of the attitude of the provincial, city, and district governments towards exercises and games of youth and adults. To answer the question, are there playgrounds in the regions, gym, are there subsidies? Are the issues of PD of the population raised and discussed at the regional level governing bodies and what decisions are made? It was necessary to provide information on the presence in the cities of gymnastic and sports societies, gymnastic organizations at universities. To determine how the population perceives the need for caring for the PD of youth and in what form this is manifested. Along with this, information about the experience of conducting various student excursions, their initiators, goals, organization, and routes aroused interest.

In an explanatory note, the initiators of the Congress focused on the need for physical training of those segments of the population that made up a potential reserve for the army: peasants, officers, etc. The document noted that a «physically strong population is provided not only by a valiant army, but also by energetic figures from all sectors of production, science and art» [15, 6].

The draft Congress proposed a list of measures for the effective organization of the PE of youth: 1) the opening of a specialized higher educational institution for the training of teachers of exercises and games with a «*general qualification*» (basic general course – *A.P.*); 2) organization of temporary courses for training leaders of outdoor games on public playgrounds; 3) opening in the cities of playgrounds for games, skating rinks, gyms at the expense of financing from the local budget; 4) methodologically correct organization of exercises and games in gymnastic societies with the active assistance of the city power; 5) organization of excursions for the purpose of PD and youth education; 6) mandatory introduction of exercises in the curriculum of schools; 7) organization of gymnastic holidays for young people; 8) independent classes in «home gymnastics» in compliance with hygiene rules; 9) familiarization with specialized literature for PE; 10) advertising companies manufacturing specialized equipment and products for exercises, exhibitions; 11) compulsory registration of specialists who teach exercises and games [15]. In the Congress, the organizers planned to hold demonstration gymnastic and game classes.

It is known from the archival document that permission to conduct the Congress was obtained from the MPE, the Police Department, the MIS, the Main Medical Directorate, and the Main Directorate for Local Economy [15, 3–7]. However, at the appointed time, for unknown reasons, the event did not take place and was postponed to April 21–23, 1910. There is no exact information about the Congress in the future.

In 1910, members of the Odesa Unit of the Imperial Russian Technical Society proposed convening the congress of the PE public during the All-Russian Industrial Exhibition in Odesa. From the name of the event, «I Congress on Physical Development and Sport», it can be assumed that previous attempts to consolidate disparate PE institutions in a form such as a congress were in vain. The organizational bureau for convening the Congress included the Trustee of the Odesa ED, professor A. I. Shcherbakov, hygiene professor I. Kiyantsin, the Director of the Fifth Odesa Gymnasium F. Vladichin, the assistant manager of the Russian Danube Shipping Company and the Commander of the Catherine Yacht Club M. P. Ermakov, Inspector of the Fourth Gymnasium A. A. Smirnov [14, 3].

The concept of the Congress is characterized by a fragment from the explanatory note to the draft Program and Regulation: «In order to disseminate the most proper organization of PD and sports in Russia, especially among students, as well as to attract the closest attention of society to PD and sports as the basis mental and spiritual development, discipline and health promotion, it is necessary as much as possible to present at the Exhibition, which opens in Odesa, not only PE subjects development and sports, but also the thoughts of

people who value the good of their homeland and care about the proper organization of PD and sports in Russia ... There is hope that in connection with the exhibiting of objects for PD and sports at the exhibition, the specialized congress will be held that will attract the proper attention of the public to such an important issue for Russia» [14, 3].

In the draft organizational documents of the Congress, attention is drawn to the similarity of the regulations and procedures with modern scientific and practical conferences. For example, the composition of the delegates included teachers, sports activists, doctors, and other interested people. The program of the Congress involved a combination of general meetings with work in sections (*groups*). The requirement of the Congress was to send preliminary applications for speeches, reports with the obligatory provision of full texts or their abstracts, printing Congress materials, etc. [14].

Participants of the event were invited to discuss the following issues: preschool PE of children; PE of students in primary, secondary and higher education; equipment of gym and open areas for exercises; exercises for people of mature age; «public gymnastics and sport» and their significance for the health of the people; the content of exercises and sports for use in educational institutions and public institutions (military exercises, exercises of the European gymnastic systems, strength exercises with objects), plastic gymnastics and dancing, exercises on the apparatus, athletics («Olympic Games»), outdoor and sports games, walks and excursions, hunting, water sports, fencing, shooting, cycling and winter sports, horse riding; theory and methodology of PE, hygiene and dietetics; teacher training.

We are convinced that even in modern conditions, the scale of the planned event, the relevance of the proposed issues for discussion, the exhibits of the Sports and Exercise Department provided the Odesa Congress with significant prospects for consolidating the public concerned. However, the MPE refused to hold this event, citing a report from the leadership of the Odessa ED, which stated that «The Sports Commission at Odessa ED considers the devices in the Odesa Congress of Physical Development and Sports to be premature» [14].

In September 1911, the Odesa Unit of the Russian Technical Society proposed resuming the activity of the All-Russian Odesa Art and Industry Exhibition and including the specialized congress in its program. The contents of the Explanatory Note, the draft Program and the Regulations of the Congress actually duplicated the documents of 1910 [13]. The organizing committee of the planned Congress included representatives of the Odesa community, the Military Ministry, the Imperial Novorossiysk University, the Odesa ED and sports societies. Composition initiative group was actually the same as before. The Committee was chaired by the Trustee of the Odesa ED A. I. Shcherbakov. The idea of convening the event was supported by the Odesa Mayor, the Office of the Chief Medical Inspector of the MIS, the Medical and Sanitary Unit of Educational Institutions of the Department of Public Education of the MPE [13]. However, probably, due to the spread of the plague and cholera epidemic in the region and the refusal of many non-residents participants to visit Odesa, many of the planned events of the exhibition did not take place, among them the First Congress on Physical Development and Sports.

The initiative to immediately convene the All-Russian Congress on Family and School Education was repeatedly made by the famous Odesa public figure I. M. Radetsky [12]. The imperative of all his speeches and appeals has always been trusteeship of the health and PD of children and youth. He called on the Russian public to support the idea of creating an «All-Russian Union for the Protection of the Younger Generation», which would «organize regional, all-Russian and international congresses and exhibitions, all-Slavic congresses and exhibitions with the aim of the progressive development of educational activities and the protection of the health and life of younger generations» [12, 27]. I. M. Radetsky believed that the question of creating this Union should be resolved at congresses of representatives of various public associations, since this is a matter of national importance and concerns all sectors of Russian society [12, 30].

In early twentieth-century, the *Union of the Russian Sokolstvo* (URS) was an active initiator of specialized sports congresses (*Slet*). Sokol as a public institution, quite popular and respected in Europe and the Russian Empire, unlike other gymnastic institutions, had a developed network of consolidated regional centers. The Ukrainian regions of the Empire, in this context, occupied leading positions. The congress of representatives of Sokol societies, according to the plan of the URS, would allow discussing key issues and giving the Sokol movement in the country a new quality. The congress as a form of public assembly was enshrined in the Charter of the URS [22, 4].

In April 1911, the First Congress of the URS was held in Moscow. 14 societies delegated their representatives to the Congress, of which 5 represented Sokol organizations of the Ukrainian cities of Odesa, Chernigiv, Kyiv, Ekaterinoslavl, Poltava. K. Popel, an active participant in the debates of the Congress, joined the Board of the URS from regional societies. The main attention of the Congress delegates was focused on the Sokolsky idea as a means of moral, spiritual and physical recovery of a person and society and the unification of Slavic peoples [9]. The delegates to the congress decided to convene the Second Congress in Kyiv two years later [9].

In April 1913, the Second Congress of the URS was held in Kiev [4]. The program of the Congress included questions on improving the methodology and organization of training in Sokol gymnastics, approval of the rules of the competition [9].

In early twentieth-century, in addition to the All-Russian Sokol Congresses, regional events took place. In June 1913, the First Sokol Congress of the South-Western Territory (*Kray*) took place in Kyiv, which was attended by delegates from Sokol societies of Ukrainian cities: Odesa, Chernigiv, Ekaterinoslav, Kam'yanets'-Podil'skiy, Poltava, Kharkiv, Zhytomyr etc. [7; 16]. The program of the Congress included traditional gymnastic events, meetings on key issues of the development of the Sokol movement in the region, and plans for organizing trips to the International All-Sokol Congresses in European cities. As a result, we note that the participants in the Sokol movement were the first to succeed in practical implementation of the initiative to hold congresses of the PE public on the territory of the Russian Empire.

In early twentieth-century, other initiatives were put forward for holding congresses and other meetings of the PE public to consolidate the efforts of society to improve the PD of people. However, most often they remained in the status of initiative proposals.

It should be noted that the progressive initiative of holding Congresses as public forums for discussing pressing educational problems, in particular, PE of people, was continued in the aftermath of the collapse of the Russian Empire. The rise of social activity aimed at convening congresses occurred during the period of the existence of the Ukrainian People's Republic and the first decade of the Soviet state. In 1917, two All-Ukrainian teacher congresses were held in Kyiv. In 1919, the First All-Russian Congress of Workers in Physical Culture, Sports and Pre-Scripture Training was held, at which the first results of PE work were summed up. The Congress set the organizations of General Military Education, the *Komsomol* and the People's *Commissariat* of Education the task of starting systematic work on the PE of children and youth, create sports clubs everywhere and increase the number of educational institutions for the training of PE teachers. In the 20s, questions of PE were discussed at many *Komsomol*, pedagogical, and special congresses. However, in the 30s, a sharp stagnation of the public activity of teachers began, as a result of which the convocations of the congresses completely stopped.

**Conclusions.** In early twentieth-century, pedagogical, medical and PE congresses became a form of consolidation of Ukrainian society with the aim of solving topical problems of PE, sports, outdoor activities, pre-scripture training, teacher training, etc. These events have become the prototype of modern scientific and practical conferences.

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Приходько Г. І.

ORCID 0000-0002-0806-3132

Researcher ID J-1182-2017

Scopus-Author ID: 57216463201

Кандидат педагогічних наук, доцент,  
доцент кафедри фізичного виховання №1  
Національного юридичного університету імені Ярослава Мудрого  
(м. Харків, Україна) E-mail: [annaprikhodko05071963@gmail.com](mailto:annaprikhodko05071963@gmail.com)

### ФІЗКУЛЬТУРНИЙ РУХ В УКРАЇНІ: НАЦІОНАЛЬНІ ТА РЕГІОНАЛЬНІ З'ЇЗДИ НА ПОЧАТКУ ХХ СТОЛІТТЯ

**Мета роботи.** У статті розглядається роль, яку відігравали всеросійські й українські регіональні педагогічні, медичні та спеціалізовані з'їзди у процесі формування фізкультурного руху на українських землях Російської імперії на поч. ХХ ст.

**Методологія.** Критерії відбору документів та друкованих першоджерел відповідає предмету досліджень, а саме, конгресів різного рівня в конкретно історичний період, їх генезису, змісту програм і дискусії з проблем фізичного виховання. Територіальні межі охоплювали український регіон Російської імперії. Збір даних здійснювався в різних історичних архівах України та Росії. Додатково були проаналізовані статті та дисертації сучасних дослідників.

**Наукова новизна.** У дослідженні зазначається, що дискусія з питань фізичного виховання, що почалася після «великих реформ» 60-70 рр., на поч. ХХ ст. набрала нового динамізму. Диспути на педагогічних та медичних з'їздах, а також заклики проведення з'їздів фізкультурної громадськості стали вимогою нового часу. З'їзди сприяли консолідації вчителів і фізкультурної громадськості, розробці заходів з вирішення актуальних питань поступового розвитку фізичного виховання в школах, гімнастичних і спортивних товариствах, армії. Ініціаторами скликань з'їздів у Російській імперії були гімнастичні та наукові товариства, авторитетні громадські діячі, навчальні округи. На з'їздах обговорювалися пропозиції щодо вдосконалення фізичного виховання всіх верств населення: дошкільне фізичне виховання, фізичне виховання учнівської молоді в початковій, середній та вищій школі; обладнання гімнастичних залів і відкритих майданчиків; фізичні вправи дітей і дорослих; теоретико-методичні питання фізичного виховання, гігієни і дієтетики; підготовка вчителів; розвиток спорту й ін. У 10-і рр. ХХ ст. були зроблені перші серйозні спроби провести спеціалізовані з'їзди фізкультурної громадськості, проте вдалося провести дані заходи тільки Соколом.

**Висновки.** На поч. ХХ ст. з'їзди педагогічної, медичної та фізкультурно-спортивної громадськості були формою консолідації українського суспільства з метою вирішення актуальних проблем фізичного виховання, спорту, активного дозвілля населення, військової підготовки, підготовки вчителів та ін. Ці заходи стали прообразами сучасних науково-практичних конференцій.

**Ключові слова:** з'їзд, фізкультурний рух, фізичне виховання, початок ХХ століття, Україна.

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