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SOLAR PHYSICS SPACE RESEARCH IN CZECH REPUBLIC. HISTORICAL SURVEY.

Abstract

Solar Physics has a long-lasting tradition in the Czech Republic (Czechoslovakia before 1993) which began shortly after the second world war. Ground-based observations in optical as well as in radio regions made at the Ondrejov Observatory during the fifties and sixties gained international reputation. Acceptance of an offer to participate in space observations in frame of (then) Soviet INTERCOSMOS program was a logical extension starting at the end of the sixties. This short survey of the following space activities describes briefly many projects where Czechoslovak instrumentation was used for X-ray observations of the Sun. Later on, when the Czech Republic originated from Czechoslovakia and Intercosmos program vanished, new contacts with the US scientists enabled to continue some solar space observations from an US satellite. Even when the Czech Republic economical and industry reconstruction after 1990 led to a partly frozen space activities, the development in this century turned out into a promising direction and the Czech Republic became a new ESA member in 2008. Now, we are involved in the ESA Science Program and participate in the ambitious Solar Orbiter project.