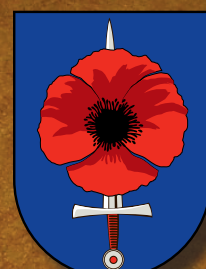




Ministry of Defence
of the Czech Republic



Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic
War Veterans and War Graves Department

Annual Report

2025

**Care for War Graves
in the Czech Republic
and Abroad**

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Foreword by Minister of Defence Jaromír Zůna

The year 2025 proved that the care for war graves and commemorative sites is more than just a formal obligation that countries have. It represents our tangible service to memory, justice, and state continuity. The Czech Republic thus manifests it remembers its fallen heroes – regardless of the place of their final rest.

One of the most significant events of the past year was the repatriation of the remains of nine World War II Czechoslovak heroes. The extraordinarily demanding exhumation, identification, and subsequent act of commemoration at the Vítkov National Memorial in Prague marked a dignified conclusion of a decades-long search.

Another significant milestone was the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II. Through the #80let (80 years) campaign, we have been able to address the public across all generations and show that respect has a firm place in our civic society.

But the day-to-day effort is just as important. In the homeland, efforts are underway to support war graves owners through grant programs and continuous modernisation of the Central War Graves Register. On the international scale, the Czech Republic proved as a reliable partner for example by hosting the prestigious *European War Heritage Working Group meeting* in Prague in September.

All these outcomes are the result of honest and often invisible effort of individuals – employees of the Ministry of Defence, representatives of regions and municipalities, experts, and volunteers. Allow me to use this occasion to express my deepest respect and gratitude to all those involved in preserving the memory of our heroes.



Introduction

In 2025, we started achieving targets of the *War Graves and Commemorative Sites Care Concept 2025–2029*. One prerequisite of its successful fulfilment was filling all ten systemised positions at the War Graves and Commemorative Sites Care Section which allowed us to dedicate more time to working with archival documents and utilising them for our agenda. After two-year effort, we are also finalising digitisation of the War Graves Register collection deposited in the Military Historical Archive.

Several years of talks yielded in August as we were able to bring back the remains of nine Czechoslovak heroes who laid down their lives for the liberation of Czechoslovakia more than 80 years ago. The entire process required cooperation of individual components of the Ministry of Defence, but also other Czech institutions, namely the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Military Office of the President. Foreign authorities were involved in the event as well.

Other successful events with international participation included the meeting of the European War Heritage Working Group in Prague on September 16-18, 2025. By organising the event and selecting its topics, we confirmed to ourselves that other European and U.S. institutions see us as a reliable partner with whom they can work on larger projects and that we can propose topics of relevance which is reflected by all member countries.

We continued with long-term projects abroad – in the Balkans, Italy, Poland, Slovakia and Central Asia. Regarding fallen World War I Austro-Hungarian soldiers, we keep on strengthening the successful cooperation with the Austrian Black Cross and our Hungarian colleagues from the MoD Military History Institute and Museum. Moreover, the dialogue with the Slovak side moved in a positive direction as well. As we have been pointing out on a regular and long-term basis, we have records of war graves commemorating fallen soldiers and airmen of Czech origin in 50 countries and on every continent (apart from Antarctica and South America). The Philippines are among those countries and in 2025, Czech MoD representatives attended a memorial ceremony for the 80th anniversary of liberation of Manila.

We are aware that our work is represented by the care for war graves in the Czech Republic. We can carry it out thanks to grants from the Ministry of Defence (CZK 15 million in 2025), but also thanks to contact with regional and municipal officials and the public through training, meetings, sessions, conferences and raising awareness on social media. Interest in our work has been increasing, and we are preparing measures that will enhance communication with the public in the years ahead.

Important events in 2025

Meeting of the European War Heritage Working Group in Prague

In September 2024, the Czech MoD War Veterans and War Graves Department (MoD WVGWD) joined the European War Heritage Working Group (EWHWG). The working group is formed by representatives of European organisations that are responsible for war graves care. The annual meeting always takes place in one of the EWHWG member states' capitals; in 2024, it was held in Berlin where MoD WVGWD representatives offered to organise the next year's event in Prague. The meeting in the Czech capital took place between September 16-18, 2025.

Prague welcomed representatives of 12 additional European countries. These included Österreichisches Schwarzes Kreuz (Austrian Black Cross, Austria), War Heritage Institute (Belgium), Ministerstwo Kultury i Dziedzictwa Narodowego (Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, Poland), Office national des combattants et des victimes de guerre sous tutelle du ministère des Armées (National Office for Veterans and Victims of War under the Ministry of the Armed Forces, France), Ufficio per la tutela della cultura e della memoria della Difesa (Office for the Protection of Culture and Memory of Defence, Italy), Commonwealth War Graves Commission (Commonwealth Nations), Honvédelmi Minisztérium Hadtörténeti Intézet és Múzeum (MoD Military History Institute and Museum, Hungary), Oorlogsgravenstichting (War Graves Foundation, the Netherlands), Det kongelige kultur- og likestillingsdepartement (Royal Norwegian Ministry of Culture and Equality, Norway), Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge (People's Alliance of the German War Graves Care, Germany), Ministerstvo vnútra Slovenskej republiky (Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, Slovakia), and Uprava Republike Slovenije za vojaško dediščino – Ministrstvo za obrambo (Department of the Military Heritage of the Republic of Slovenia – Ministry of Defence, Slovenia). As usual, a representative of the





American Battle Monuments Commission arrived from the USA as there is a high number of American war graves in Europe.

On the first day, an informal welcome dinner in the Hotel DAP was on the agenda. The main part of the programme started in the Military History Institute Prague on September 17. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Dirk Backen, General Secretary of the People's Alliance of the German War Graves Care and Chairman of the EWHWG, and co-chaired by a representative of the host country COL Robert Speychal, Director of the MoD WVGWD. The first panel introduced each organisation and discussed legislation and financing of war graves care in different countries. The second panel focused on the most successful finished projects from last year as well as future projects. A short discussion followed on the future wording of the EWHWG Charter and potential emblem of the organisation. The participants then moved to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in the Vítkov National Memorial where they laid a wreath and paid tribute to the fallen. This ceremony was accompanied by a short commentary on the history of the memorial. The day was concluded with a dinner in the Hotel DAP.

The last day's morning programme consisted of a guided tour of the Army Museum Žižkov. Overall, the meeting bore fruit, as MoD WVGWD employees made contact with others and received interesting information on the work of their foreign colleagues. We believe that this meeting will launch future collective projects concerning the care and construction of memorials to the fallen. Moreover, information on legislative definitions of war graves care in other countries will help us draft an amendment to the Act No. 122/2004 Coll., on War Graves and Commemorative Sites.

Exhumation and repatriation of remains

In 2025, an effort spanning several years to return the remains of six paratroopers of the Iridium and Bronze airdrops, one anti-Nazi resistance fighter, and two murdered members of the State Defence Guard to the Czech Republic was finally successful.

Exhumation – Perlacher Forst cemetery in Munich

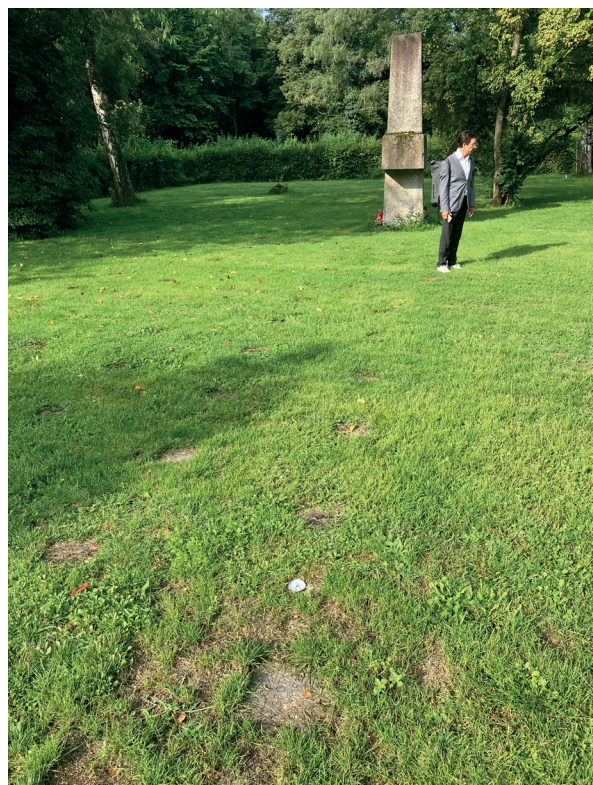
The first meeting with the Munich Cemetery Administration took place in 2006 and was attended by the representatives of the MoD War Graves Department. The objective of the meeting was finding a solution to the unsuitable burial location of Czechoslovak paratroopers at the Perlacher Forst cemetery. Two options were considered: either to exhume their remains and transport them to the Czech Republic or change the 25x25cm tombstones and inscribe them with correct names, as the paratroopers have so far been buried under their cover names. The second option was selected.

In June 2023, WWGD representatives visited the Perlacher Forst cemetery and ascertained that the graves are once again in a poor shape. The headstones were covered in overgrown weeds, and the names were barely readable. The state of the graves was not in line with the significance of the paratroopers for the Czech military and general history. It was at this point that the new War Graves and Memorial Sites Care Section was established under the WWGD, thus allowing for more effort to be dedicated to the topic. The issue was reported to the Military Office of the President of the Czech Republic, and the topic was discussed at the President's meeting with the Bavarian Prime Minister in 2023. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the General Consulate of the Czech Republic in Munich. As a result, the Bavarian Government assigned the Head of the International Relations Office, Dr. Christophe Stoeckel, to the issue of exhumation of Iridium and Bronze paratroopers' remains, as well as the remains of the resistance fighter Karel Hladeček, executed in Munich.

While the German side deemed the exhumation of the remains of Karel Hladeček unrealistic, a probe was conducted for the remains of Iridium and Bronze paratroopers and they were subsequently exhumed. In the spring of 2025, the remains of Karel Hladeček's close assistant, Josef Doskočil, who was executed in Munich in September 1944, have also been exhumed. This success is largely the result of the engagement and information provided by Karel Hladeček's granddaughter, Helena Novotná.

Once the remains from Perlacher Forst were exhumed, the employees of the WWGD contacted the ancestors of the fallen heroes to discuss the possibility of burials in family graves. In four of the cases, the burials were organised in cooperation with towns and municipalities to which the fates of the fallen were linked. Bohumír Martínek's funeral was organised by the town of Prostějov, Miroslav Kříčenský by Dašice, Vladislav Soukup by Dobříš and Josef Doskočil by Žabonosy.

A ceremony was held at the Vítkov National Memorial on September 12, 2025, after which the remains have been laid to the place of their final rest.



Part of the Perlacher Forst cemetery, holding the remains of the Iridium and Bronze paratroopers.



Original condition of the graves



*The current grave of Josef Doskočil
in Žabonosy near Kolín*



The current grave of Miroslav Kříčenský in Dašice



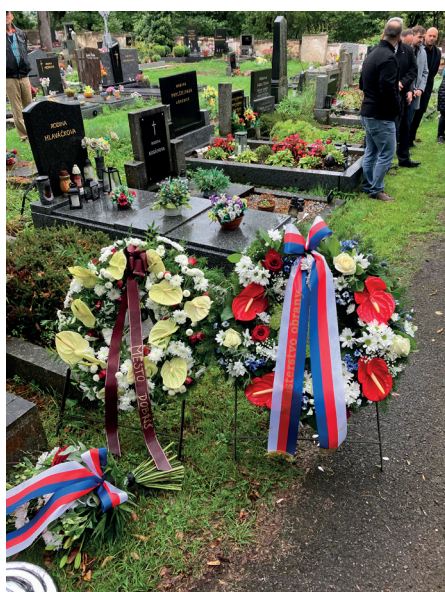
*The current grave of Bohuslav Kobyłka
in Staré Město near Uherské Hradiště*



*The current grave of Antonín Kubec
in Ústí nad Labem – Vaňov*



*The current grave of Bohumír Martínek
in Prostějov*



*The current grave of Vladislav Soukup
in Dobříš*



The current grave of Miroslav Špot in Jičín

Exhumation – municipal cemetery in Glubczyce, Poland

The first exhumation of the murdered members of the State Defence Guard took place on March 30, 1939, with the remains of Sergeant First Class Rudolf Mokřý, which were subsequently cremated on April 3, 1939, in a crematorium in the town of Moravská Ostrava. The urn was buried in a family tomb at the Frýdek cemetery. The second exhumation took place three months later, on June 30, with the remains of Finance Guard Watcher Vítězslav Hofírek, who was later buried in Římanice. On July 4, Finance Guard Watcher Inocenc Dostál was exhumed and buried in a family tomb in Konice, and on July 5, Finance Guard Watcher František Čech, who was also buried in a family tomb in Dobřínsko.

Until World War II, the Glubczyce cemetery held the remains of Finance Guard Chief Respicient Ludvík Svoboda, whose wife was not able to attain his exhumation and repatriation to the occupied homeland, and Sergeant Vilém Leher, who was disowned by his father. The issue of exhumation of the last two victims of the Liptaň massacre was not solved after the war either.

In 2019, extensive research of the tragical event was launched and families of the fallen have been contacted to gather a maximum of materials which could have been stored outside of official archives. At the beginning of 2023, the possibility of repair of the Glubczyce cemetery memorial was discussed, resulting in the visit of the WWGDD Director. The visit brought up the topic of exhumation of the last two victims and their repatriation. The necessary steps to organize the very exhumation were then taken.

After two years of preparations and nearly eighty-seven years after the victims' death, the Instytut Pamięci Narodowej (Institute of National Remembrance) commenced the exhumation on August 19, 2025. On the same day, the remains of Chief Respicient Ludvík Svoboda were found at the estimated location, followed by the remains of Sergeant Vilém Leher on the next day. Their remains were later transported on board of a military aircraft from Katowice to Prague. The aircraft also transported the remains of Josef Doskočil and members of the Iridium and Bronze airdrops, which were picked up in Munich several hours earlier. Based on the request by Ludvík Svoboda's and Vilém Leher's families, their remains have been examined by the Institute of Criminalistics to ascertain the exact cause of death. The burials in family tombs are planned for the spring of 2026. The Ministry of Defence closely cooperated with researcher Martin Vaňourek when collecting documentation.



*Exhumation of members
of the State Defence Guard*



*Recovered personal
belongings*



Josef Doskočil

* May 5, 1892 – † September 12, 1944

Josef Doskočil was born into a workman family in Žabonosy near Kolín. He trained to be a machinist but took the job of the treasurer of a district insurance company in Kolín. He also worked as an editor of the *Středočeské hlasy* local weekly and at various posts in the district and local administration. Given his leftist political orientation, he joined the Social Democrats and was also active in the Workers' Physical Education Association in Kolín. His coworkers remember him as a reliable, just, honest and agile person.

He worked together with economist Karel Hladeček in the Kolín branch of the Labour Academy and they both participated in the anti-Nazi resistance. Given their patriotic disposition, they could not tolerate the circumstances under the Protectorate. They joined the underground organisation Petition Committee "We Remain Faithful" in January 1940 which gathered like-minded resistance members, where they planned the post-war arrangements and focused on intelligence activities. They gathered economic information on the Kolín mineral oil refinery, on the manufacturing of potassium cyanide, and the construction of the new diesel pipelines. They even got information on the manufacturing of railway cars which were designated for the broad-gauge tracks in the USSR. The data was sent to the HQ in Prague. Doskočil had numerous social contacts, and he was thus tasked with selecting persons suitable for the preparation of national committees in the Kolín district. He was also charged to deputise for Hladeček, who was the head of the group.

But the Gestapo followed their trail. Karel Hladeček was the first to be arrested on October 14, 1942, and his peers, including Josef Doskočil, were arrested on October 27, 1942. They spent their custody for high treason in jails in Kolín, Kutná Hora, Mladá Boleslav, Prague Pankrác, Terezín, Nurnberg, and Munich. The People's Court in Nurnberg sentenced him to death. According to official reports, Doskočil died of physical and mental exhaustion before the execution, but his fellow prisoners who returned from prison confirmed that the execution took place in the Stadelheim prison on September 12, 1944. His remains were buried in a grave at the Perlacher Forst near Munich. In 2025, they were repatriated, cremated, and buried with honours in his hometown of Žabonosy.

By authorisation of the President, Doskočil was awarded the Czechoslovak War Cross 1939 (OV 15/46) in memoriam in 1946 and the Cross of the Minister of Defence of the Czech Republic. Doskočil is commemorated by a memorial plaque placed on the WWII victims' memorial in his hometown. Another location linked to Doskočil is the memorial to WWII victims at the Kolín cemetery. A Stolperstein was installed near his former workplace, reminding us of Josef Doskočil's sacrifice for the liberation of the nation during World War II.



Corporal Bohumír Kobylka

* September 23, 1920 – † March 15, 1943

Bohumír Kobylka was born in Česká Třebová, in a family of a conductor and a housewife. The family moved often due to his father's job, meaning he attended school in Slovakia. He began his studies at a business academy in Nitra, Slovakia, but finished it in Uherské Hradiště. He was a talented pianist and performed several public concerts. The occupation of his homeland made him leave the country to participate in the fight for its liberation. Without saying goodbye to his family, he crossed the border of the Protectorate on February 20, 1940, and travelled through Hungary and Beirut, Lebanon to France.

On March 16, 1940, he joined the Czechoslovak Foreign Army and was assigned to the command company of the 1st Infantry Regiment, and, two months later, was reassigned to the auxiliary weapons company to participate in withdrawal combat on the French frontline. After evacuation to the United Kingdom, he served with the 1st Infantry Battalion, command company. In the spring of 1942, he was assigned to training to fulfil special tasks back in his homeland. He went through numerous courses and specialized training, including a radiographic course. On October 28, 1942, he was promoted Private First Class. He then attended a conspiracy course and shooting training. After training evaluation, he was selected for tasks in the territory of the Protectorate within the Iridium operation, which was tasked with intelligence and communication assignments with area of operation in western Bohemia. Kobylka was then assigned to a standby station and was promoted Corporal on February 1, 1943.

On March 14, 1943, he was assigned for an operation which he unfortunately did not finish. On March 15, 1943, he died in the wrecked aircraft shot down over Munich. He was buried on the very same day at the Perlacher Forst



cemetery. In 2025, his remains were repatriated, cremated, and buried with honours in a family tomb in Staré Město near Uherské Hradiště.

He was awarded the Czechoslovak Military Memorial Medal with a F-VB clasp, the Czechoslovak War Cross 1939, and the Cross of the Minister of Defence of the Czech Republic, all in memoriam. In 1948, he was promoted First Lieutenant (Artillery). He is also commemorated by a memorial to the WWII victims located in Staré Město near Uherské Hradiště. His name can also be found on a memorial in Arisaig, Scotland.

First Lieutenant Miroslav Kříčenský

* April 20, 1915 – † March 15, 1943

Miroslav Kříčenský was born in Dašice, into a family of a teacher and a housewife. He attended a Volksschule and then studied at the Czechoslovak Real School in Pardubice. He enjoyed socializing and sports, and played handball, soccer and tennis. He completed studies at a grammar school in the Vyšehrad district of Prague on June 17, 1934. He then decided to pursue a military career and on July 15, 1934, he joined the 8th Cavalry Regiment Dašice. He then attended a school for reserved cavalry officers in Pardubice and was promoted cadet Corporal. He joined the Military Academy in Hranice as Second Lieutenant (Cavalry). In 1938 through 1939, he served with the cavalry in Prešov, Košice, and in Turja Bystra in Carpathian Ruthenia. On April 18, 1939, he was let go from the armed forces after German occupation.

In this situation, he was ready to leave the country and join the fight for its liberation abroad. Alongside his friends Miroslav Špot and Václav Kindl, they crossed the border to Poland. Those who wished to fight had no other option than joining the French Foreign Legion. Miroslav Kříčenský did exactly that. He travelled to France, from where he was deployed to Tunisia as a Sergeant of the First Regiment of the Foreign Legion.

After the start of the war, he left for Agde, France, where he was assigned to the Czechoslovak units on September 21, 1939, serving with the 2nd Infantry Regiment. Due to the rapid development of the situation, he did not participate in the withdrawal battles. After France fell, he and hundreds of Czechoslovak soldiers and airmen were evacuated to the United Kingdom, where he was assigned to a machinegun company of the Czechoslovak Brigade as an officer of the command reserve. On October 28, 1941, he was promoted First Lieutenant (Cavalry).

In February 1942, he joined special training for fulfilling tasks in his homeland and attended several specialised courses, including a paratrooper course. Based on the request of his friend Špot, he was designated his deputy in the Iridium paratrooper group which was tasked with intelligence and communication missions with area of operation in western Bohemia. From December 1942, he stayed at a standby station in London, where he finished his training in encryption and microphotography.

Like Bohumír Kobylka, Miroslav Kříčenský died in the wreckage of the aircraft shot down over Munich. He was buried at the Perlacher Forst cemetery, and in 2025, his remains were repatriated and buried with honours in a family tomb at the cemetery in Dašice.

He was awarded the Czechoslovak Military Memorial Medal with a F-VB clasp, the Czechoslovak War Cross 1939, and the Cross of the Minister of Defence of the Czech Republic, all in memoriam. In 1945, he was promoted Staff Captain (Infantry) and in October 1948, he was promoted Major in memoriam. The Perštýnská street in his hometown was renamed to the Mirek Kříčenský street to honour his memory. The retired officers' house in Dašice holds a memorial plaque and he is also commemorated on a memorial in Arisaig, Scotland.



Sergeant Antonín Kubec

* March 21, 1911 – † March 15, 1943

Antonín Kubec was born in Lukavec into a family of a construction worker and a housewife. He attended school in Lovosice, where his family moved shortly after his birth. He trained to be a butcher and worked as one until the beginning of his military service on October 1, 1931, with the 103rd Artillery Regiment in Terezín. He served at the signal corps, and after graduating NCO reserve school, he was promoted Private First Class, and a year later, Corporal. Although his request for further voluntary service was approved, he decided to leave active duty due to personal reasons. As a civilian, he worked as a butcher in a shop in the Václav square in Prague. He was of adventurous character, and the military environment was still enticing to him, so in autumn of 1934, he left for France and joined the Foreign Legion. As he wished to participate in the fight for the liberation of his country, he managed to get released from duty. On April 2, 1940, he was assigned in Agde



to the Czechoslovak Foreign Army, serving at the 2nd Infantry Regiment. After France was defeated, he was evacuated to the United Kingdom and assigned to the signal company of the 2nd Infantry Battalion. In the summer of 1941, he joined training for fulfilling special tasks in his homeland, attended several courses and specialized training. The training also included preparation at the Czechoslovak radio centre. He was promoted Sergeant on December 24, 1942.

In January 1943, he was assigned to the Bronze airdrop as a radiotelegraph operator. Kubec was charged with intelligence and signal tasks, with area of operation in the Bohemian-Moravian Highlands. Due to this, he went through advanced radiotelegraphy training and shooting training. Before deployment, he suffered a severe middle-ear infection but did not relent.

Antonín Kubec died on March 15, 1943, alongside his peers in the fall of the shot down aircraft. His remains were repatriated in 2025 and buried with honours into a family tomb at the cemetery in Ústí and Labem – Vaňov.

He was awarded the Czechoslovak Military Memorial Medal with a F-UK clasp, the Czechoslovak War Cross 1939, and the Cross of the Minister of Defence of the Czech Republic, all in memoriam. In 1948, he was promoted First Lieutenant (Artillery). He is commemorated on a memorial in Arisaig, Scotland.

First Lieutenant Bohumír Martínek

* March 21, 1916 – † March 15, 1943

Bohumír Martínek was born into the family of a machinist and a seamstress. After finishing primary school, he attended and later graduated from the grammar school in Prostějov and decided to become a military professional. He had all the necessary qualities; he was hardworking, had a keen eye and did athletics and mid-range runs. As a hobby, he enjoyed cycling and hiking.

On October 1, 1935, he enlisted and was assigned as Private to the 108th Artillery Regiment in Hranice. He was then reassigned to the heavy artillery officers' school in Bratislava, which he graduated on May 13, 1936, ranked Private First Class. He returned to his unit and continued his service. He attended a signal course for artillery officers in Olomouc and was promoted cadet Sergeant. He furthered his military education at the Military Academy in Hranice, which he graduated in August 1938. He was dismissed from service after the beginning of Nazi occupation in 1939.

From September 1939 to January 1940, he was employed in the Wikov company in Prostějov as a clerk of the export office. He then worked as a clerk at the District Office in Litomyšl until February 1940. He never reconciled with the German occupation and decided to leave the country to join the fight for national liberation. He bid farewell with his family, and, on February 10, 1940, he crossed the Protectorate's border to Slovakia. He travelled through Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Beirut, Lebanon, to Marseille, France, where he joined the Czechoslovak Foreign Army on March 28, 1940. He was assigned as movement control officer to the 3rd Battery of the 1 Artillery Regiments. Given the precipitous development on the frontline, he did not participate in the retreat fighting.

He was evacuated to the United Kingdom and was assigned to the Commissioned Officers Battery of the 1st Artillery Battalion. After serving with the commander platoon, he was reassigned as a Signal Officer of the 4th Battery. On October 25, 1941, he was promoted First Lieutenant (Artillery) and, as a suitable candidate, he was assigned for training for special tasks in his homeland. He attended several courses, as well as specialized training, which included sabotage, signal and intelligence courses, but also paratrooper training. After having finished his training, he was put on standby. In December 1942, he was appointed commander of the Bronze airdrop, which was assigned intelligence and signal tasks in the area of the Bohemian-Moravian Highlands.

Bohuslav Martínek also died on March 15, 1943, in the crash of the aircraft downed over Munich. In 2025, his remains were repatriated, cremated, and buried with honours at the Pelhřimov cemetery.

He was awarded the Czechoslovak Military Memorial Medal with a F-VB clasp, the Czechoslovak War Cross 1939, and the Cross of the Minister of Defence of the Czech Republic, in memoriam. In 1945, he was promoted Staff Captain (Artillery) in memoriam. He is commemorated at a memorial in Arisaig, Scotland, and a memorial plaque dedicated to the fallen Sokol members of Prostějov.



Sergeant First Class Vladislav Soukup

* February 8, 1913 – † March 15, 1943

Vladislav Soukup was born in Obořiště in Central Bohemia, into a family of a coach driver and a housewife. He went to school in Svaté Pole and later in Dobříš. He trained as a mason. He enjoyed cycling and did not shy away from hard labour, as he made his living as a façade mason.

He started his active military duty on October 1, 1934, with the 38th Infantry Regiment in Beroun. He served with the engineering company as a sapper. After graduating the reserve junior NCOs' school, he was promoted Private First Class. He retired ranked Corporal on October 16, 1936. He applied for further service, his application was

approved and, starting from April 9, 1937, he served at units in Beroun and Kladno. He was dismissed from active duty after the occupation in March 1939 ranked Sergeant.

He did not reconcile with the situation and decided to leave the country to fight for national liberation. On June 8, 1939, he crossed the Protectorate's borders in Michálkovice to Poland. For a short period of time, he stayed in Krakow and Bronowice Male, and later continued by sea to France, where he joined the Foreign Legion. He trained in Algeria and after the war broke out, he applied for the Czechoslovak Foreign Army which he joined on September 26 in Agde. He served with the sapper platoon of the 2nd Infantry Regiment. On January 1, 1940, he was promoted Staff Sergeant. He and his unit participated in the withdrawal battles, and he was later evacuated to the UK, where he was assigned to the 2nd Infantry Battalion. He attended the Sergeant First Class of the Infantry course and on March 7, 1941, he was promoted Sergeant First Class (Infantry). In the spring of 1942, he applied for training for fulfilling special tasks in his occupied homeland. He attended numerous courses and specialized training, including paratrooper training, marksmanship and sabotage training. After finishing the intelligence course, he was assigned as assistant to the Iridium airdrop commander, which was tasked with intelligence and signal activities, operating in western Bohemia. In 1942, he was sent to his standby post, where he finished his encryption and micro photography training.

Vladislav Soukup did not finish the task assigned to him on 14 March 1943. On the next day, he died in the wrecked aircraft downed over Munich and was buried in the Perlacher Forst cemetery the very same day. In 2025, his remains were repatriated, cremated, and buried with honours at the Dobříš cemetery.

He was awarded the Czechoslovak Military Memorial Medal with a F-VB clasp, the Czechoslovak War Cross 1939, and the Cross of the Minister of Defence of the Czech Republic, memoriam. In 1948 was promoted First Lieutenant (Artillery). He is commemorated on the memorial in Arisaig, Scotland.



First Lieutenant Miroslav Špot

* July 2, 1915 – † March 15, 1943

Miroslav Špot was born in Kublov, Central Bohemia, into a family of a teacher and a housewife. The family soon moved to Jičín, where Miroslav attended primary school. He was a talented athlete and excelled in ice hockey and soccer, and he still had enough time to study. In June 1934, he graduated from the Jičín grammar school and went on to become a military professional. After voluntary drafting, he was assigned to the 11th Cavalry Regiment in Bratislava. He was gradually promoted and he entered the Military Academy in Hranice as a Second Lieutenant. He then moved to the 8th Cavalry Regiment, where he served as a platoon commander. From September to December 1938, he stayed with his unit in Prešov. On January 1, 1939, he was suspended with pay. On March 30, 1939, after the beginning of the Nazi occupation, he was dismissed from service.

He was determined to leave the country and join the fight for its liberation abroad. He and his friends Miroslav Kříčenský and Václav Kindl crossed the borders to Poland. Those, who wanted to fight, had no other option than to join the French Foreign Legion, and that is what Miroslav Špot did. He left for France and, as a Sergeant of the First Regiment of the Foreign Legion, he was reassigned to Tunisia.

After the war broke out, he was able to leave for Agde, France, where he joined the Czechoslovak forces on September 28, 1939. He served with the 1st Infantry Regiment. Given the fast development of the situation, he did not participate in the withdrawal battles. After France fell, he and hundreds of other Czechoslovak soldiers and airmen were evacuated to the United Kingdom, where he was assigned to the brigade machine-gun company as officer of the command reserve. On October 28, 1941, he was promoted First Lieutenant (Cavalry).

In February 1942, he applied for training to fulfil special tasks in his homeland. He attended several courses and specialized training, including paratrooper training. From December 1942, he was assigned to the standby post in London, where he finished his training in encryption and micro photography. He was assigned to the Iridium group which was assigned intelligence and signal tasks, operating in western Bohemia.

On March 14, 1943, Miroslav Špot died in the crash of the aircraft shot down over Munich and was buried at the Perlacher Forst cemetery. His remains were repatriated and buried with honours into a family grave in the cemetery in Jičín.

He was awarded the Czechoslovak Military Memorial Medal with a F-VB clasp, the Czechoslovak War Cross 1939, and the Cross of the Minister of Defence of the Czech Republic, all in memoriam. In 1945, he was promoted Staff



Captain (Infantry) in memoriam. On June 17, 1991, he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in memoriam. He is commemorated by the memorial in Arisaig, Scotland, and by a memorial plaque, which was unveiled in his former grammar school in Jičín in 2018.

Gendarme Sergeant Vilém Leher

* May 29, 1912 – † September 22, 1938

Vilém Leher was born in Újezdec in Silesia. He joined the Gendarmerie in 1935. He attended the gendarme school and went through regular training and on-the-job training in Fryštát and was assigned to the Gendarmerie in Skřečůň. In his free time, he enjoyed riding the motorcycle. Unfortunately, he suffered a severe injury on one of his rides, due to which he was hospitalized for one month. After the Skřečov station was shut down, he was reassigned to the Gendarmerie station in Liptaň, Silesia, as of January 1, 1938. At this point in time, he had a daughter and a fiancée, but due to the quick development of events, was never able to marry her.

He maintained good relationships with the local German population but was unsettled by anti-state activities of the Sudeten German Party. The Sudeten crisis was especially visible in the border regions, where Leher worked. The events in the region copied the development in western and northwestern Bohemia, with armed quarrels between the Sudeten German Party members, Sudeten combat groups, and service members of law enforcement and financial authorities, which were symptomatic for the Sudeten German Uprising in Czechoslovakia. On September 22, 1938, an uprising broke out in Liptaň's vicinity and Liptaň joined in as well. The immediate impulse for anti-state activities in the region was the development of international situation and diplomatic meetings, which gave the Sudeten German Party the premature idea that the border regions will be joined to Germany. In the evening, local Nazis and other inhabitants surrounded the gendarmerie station and demanded that weapons be distributed. The gendarmes and service members of the financial authority surrendered. In the following hours, a conflict broke out between the arriving State Defence Guard and the insurgents, which cost the Party three victims. One of the armed rebels, Alfred Selig, returned to the building and as revenge, he shot the unarmed gendarmes which were held captive. In the following fights, further SDG service members died. Gendarme Sergeant Vilém Leher was murdered in the gendarme station. On the following day, the remains of the fallen Czechoslovaks were transported to the German town of Glubczyce, where they were secretly buried in wooden caskets into graves marked only with a number. While some of the remains were repatriated, it was not possible to return the remains of Vilém Leher to his homeland after the war. His grave was merely updated as a place of commemoration. In 2025, his remains were repatriated and he is to be buried with honours in a family tomb at the cemetery in Vrbno pod Pradědem.

As recognition of his contribution to the liberation of the Czechoslovak Republic, he received in memoriam the Czechoslovak War Cross 1939 (OV 47/1947) and the Cross of the Minister of Defence of the Czech Republic. He is commemorated at the Liptaň memorial, a memorial plaque in the National Memorial to the victims of WWII in Hrabyně, and on the memorial plaque to the victims from the ranks of law enforcement in Ostrava. The six victims of the Liptaň massacre are commemorated by a memorial plaque near the former gendarmerie building.



Finance Guard Chief Resipient Ludvík Svoboda

* April 6, 1899 – † September 22, 1938

He was born in Horní Heřmanice in the district of Velké Meziříčí. As a member of the Finance Guard, he was assigned to be platoon commander of the State Defence Guard. He was stationed at the Gendarmerie in Liptaň in Silesia. He maintained good relationships with the local German population but was unsettled by anti-state activities of the Sudeten German Party. The Sudeten crisis was especially visible in the border regions, where Svoboda worked. The events in the region copied the development in western and northwestern Bohemia, with armed quarrels between the Sudeten German Party members, Sudeten combat groups, and service members of law enforcement and financial authorities, which were symptomatic for the Sudeten German Uprising in Czechoslovakia. On September 22, 1938, an uprising broke out in Liptaň's vicinity and Liptaň joined in as well. The immediate impulse for anti-state activities in the region



was the development of international situation and diplomatic meetings, which gave the Sudeten German Party the premature idea that the border regions will be joined to Germany. In the evening, local Nazis and other inhabitants surrounded the gendarmerie station and demanded that weapons be distributed. The gendarmes and service members of the financial authority surrendered. In the following hours, a conflict broke out between the arriving State Defence Guard and the insurgents, which cost the Party three victims. One of the armed rebels, Alfred Selig, returned to the building and as revenge, he shot the unarmed gendarmes which were held captive. In the following fights, further SDG service members died. Chief Inspector of the Finance Guard Ludvík Svoboda and Gendarme Sergeant Vilém Leher were murdered in the gendarme station. On the following day, the remains of the fallen Czechoslovaks were transported to the German town of Glubczyce, where they were secretly buried in wooden caskets into graves marked only with a number. While some of the remains were repatriated, it was not possible to return the remains of Ludvík Svoboda to his homeland after the war. His grave was merely updated as a place of commemoration. In 2025, his remains were repatriated and he was buried with honours in a family tomb at the cemetery in Horní Vilémovice in the Vysočina Region.

As recognition of his contribution to the liberation of the Czechoslovak Republic, he received in memoriam the Czechoslovak War Cross 1939 (OV 47/1947) and the Cross of the Minister of Defence of the Czech Republic. He is commemorated at the Liptaň memorial, a memorial plaque in the National Memorial to the victims of WWII in Hrabyně, and on the memorial plaque to the victims to the victims from the ranks of Finance Guard in the Infantry Cabin K-S 14 in Králíky. The six victims of the Liptaň massacre are commemorated by a memorial plaque near the former gendarmerie building.

Ceremony at the Vítkov National Memorial

On August 22, a Czech Air Force Airbus A-319 CJ with remains of nine Czechoslovak heroes who died during WWII landed at the military airfield in Kbely. They belonged to members of SOE Iridium and Bronse groups, to Resistance fighter Josef Doskočil and to two murdered members of the State Defence Guard who were dragged to Głubczyce, then a German town, now a part of Poland. The Czech Air Force brought their remains home from Katowice, Poland, and Munich, Germany.

Apart from the MoD War Veterans and War Graves Department (more precisely the War Graves and Commemorative Sites Section), a wide array of researchers and historians took part in locating, exhuming and transporting the bodies. They also received help from the Office of the President of the Czech Republic, Bavarian Government and the Polish Institute of National Remembrance.

On September 12, the Minister decorated the fallen in memoriam with the State Defence Cross at the Vítkov National Memorial. Almost 70 family members of these heroes attended the ceremony, and the remains were then returned to their families and cities for burials. By the end of 2025, every member of Iridium and Bronse groups as well as the Czechoslovak Resistance fighter Josef Doskočil was buried, and their burials were attended by MoD representatives.



United Kingdom

On Sunday September 7, 2025, a memorial dedicated to First Lieutenant František Hekl was unveiled by Loch Doon in Scotland. The ceremony was preceded by a symbolic flypast of a historical Avro Lancaster bomber over the lake.

The construction of the memorial was initiated by Martin Žour and Benedikt Žour, and it was sculpted by Mr. Kevin Roberts based on the design of academic painter Pavel Holý. The memorial consists of three slabs of light colour granite depicting a Supermarine Spitfire Mk. II wing sinking into Loch Doon. The left stone features the emblem of the No. 312 (Czechoslovak) Squadron RAF and text in English, the one on the right contains the double-tailed lion, the symbol of Czechia, and a text in Czech; the loch's surface is visible through gaps between the stones. The staging area and memorial's foundation were finished in July 2025, and the slabs were installed on September 3. The Czech MoD donated CZK 690,000 for the construction of the memorial.

Concluded with a memorial mass, the ceremony was attended by Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies Markéta Pekarová Adamová and Minister of Defence Jana Černochová who arrived in Scotland in the company of Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the United Kingdom Václav Bartuška. British MPs E. Steward and J. Cooper as well as RAF officers and local representatives of Ayrshire administration were in attendance. After decades, First Lieutenant František Hekl is finally commemorated in his last resting place.

In October 2025, Minister Černochová paid tribute to Czechoslovak RAF pilots and together with Milada Kuttelwascherová, niece of the most successful Czechoslovak RAF pilot BG Karel Kuttelwascher, placed a wreath by the memorial plaque on Golders Green Crematorium in London. The plaque commemorates two pilots of the No. 311 (Czechoslovak) Squadron RAF, Otto Mandler a Zdeněk Launer, who died during an anti-submarine patrol on January 1, 1945.



War grave by Loch Doon

Memorial plaque
on the Golders Green
Crematorium in London



Philippines

In February 2025, as the Philippines celebrated the 80th anniversary of liberation of Manila, a Czech MoD delegation paid tribute to both killed and surviving Czechoslovaks who fought against Japanese occupation of the Philippines between 1941–1945, who served at the Honorary Consulate of Czechoslovakia and worked in the Bata Shoe Company.

The trip was planned in cooperation with our partners from the American Battle Monuments Commission, Philippine Department of National Defense, Embassy of the Czech Republic in Manila and several local historians specialising in the activities of Czechoslovaks in Southeast Asia during World War II. One of the principal stops was the memorial Capas National Shrine dedicated to victims of the Death March and POW camp. A new memorial plaque was installed in the shrine in 2023.



War grave in the Capas National Shrine



Edna Binkowski receives the MoD plaque for the care for war graves.

By the new memorial plaque installed in 2023, we paid tribute to the Czechoslovak citizens. The Minister of Defence also awarded MoD plaques for upkeeping war graves there to Mr. Pavel Zvolánek (documentalist settled in Indonesia) and Ms. Edna Binkowski (Filipino researcher) who wrote and published the book *Karel Aster... Last Czech: True story of the Czechs who served on Bataan during WWII*.

The journey then continued to the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial where we visited graves of Leo Hermann and Paul Fuchs, Czechoslovaks fighting in Philippines, and honoured their memory.

The visit of the MoD delegation and the fact that it also focused on historical events attracted attention of significant part of the Filipino public. Still in 2025, the Philippines built a memorial plaque at its own expense in the complex of the national memorial Mount Samat and dedicated it to Czechoslovaks fighting against Japan between 1941–1945.



Ceremony in the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial

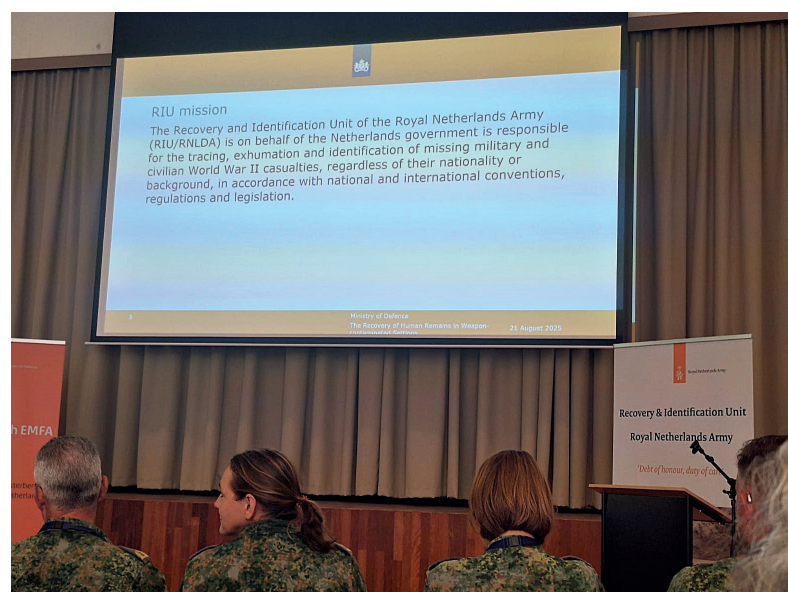
13th European Meeting on Forensic Archaeology in Soesterberg

On August 21-22, 2025, representatives of the War Graves and Commemorative Sites Section, together with H.E. René Mika, Czech Ambassador in the Netherlands, attended the 13th European Meeting on Forensic Archaeology (EMFA) in the town of Soesterberg. The meeting's theme was "Conflict Archaeology and Victim Identification", and it was hosted by the Recovery and Identification Unit of the Royal Netherlands Army (RIU/RNLDA, BDKL) that also celebrated its 80th anniversary on this occasion.

The first day presented 13 papers on a wide range of topics — from philosophical themes to specific empirical cases of recovering bodies from areas of military conflicts of the past but unfortunately also the present. The meeting was opened by Prof. Pier Matteo Barone, European chair of Forensic Archaeology Group, CAPT Geert Jonker, Commander of RIU/RNLDA, and BG Roland de Jong, Commander of the Education and Training Command of the Royal Netherlands Army. Presented by LT Els Schiltmans, the first paper talked about history and evolution of the RIU/RNLDA, covering the search for thousands of persons lost on battlefields and the identification of individuals on the national cemetery or on famous aircraft crash sites, such as the case of the T2990 bomber's Czechoslovak crew.

The second block of papers included for example the contribution of Emily Walton describing the past and current work of the Air Historical Branch of the RAF which shed light on some blind spots of the British RAF archives. During the third, historical, block, Marieke Aalders (Stockholm University) dealt with the recovery and examination of remains found on the ship Kronan which sank in 1628, and Dr Patrick S. Randolph-Quinney (Uppsala University) spoke of the efforts to identify the fallen in the Battle of Visby which took place in 1361.

The paper of maritime archaeologist Dr Svenja Weise on the extraordinary recovery of remains of pilots from the American aircraft TBM-1C Avenger stood out in the block presenting individual cases concerning the search for modern conflicts' victims as their remains were recovered near Palau from the depth of 32 meters. Dr Nicholas Márquez-Grant from the Recovery and Identification of Conflict Casualties team of Cranfield University (UK CRICC) talked about benefits of cooperation between archaeologists and psychologists when managing expectations of the bereaved in the initial phase of projects but also when returning belongings found by the fallen. The last Thursday block focused on multiple discoveries of remains in a single location. Simon Verdegem presented the DigHill 80 project which used a WWI location on the Western Front to demonstrate the evolution of the system of trenches and surrounding buildings but also different time periods and the number and type of casualties. Dr April Pijpelink from the CRINA Fysische Antropologie organisation gave a talk on the accidental discovery of a mass grave in a field hospital by the Dutch city of Vianen which dates to the War of





*Czech Ambassador René Miko
with CPT Geert Jonker*



the First Coalition (1792–1797). Research of the skeletal remains corresponded to the British Army's composition at that time and highlighted the possibility that bodies of the fallen soldiers might have been used for medical training. The day was concluded with the paper of Sandor Verkerk, specialist of the RIU/RNLDA, on recovering remains from ammunition-contaminated sites which foreshadowed one part of the Friday programme.

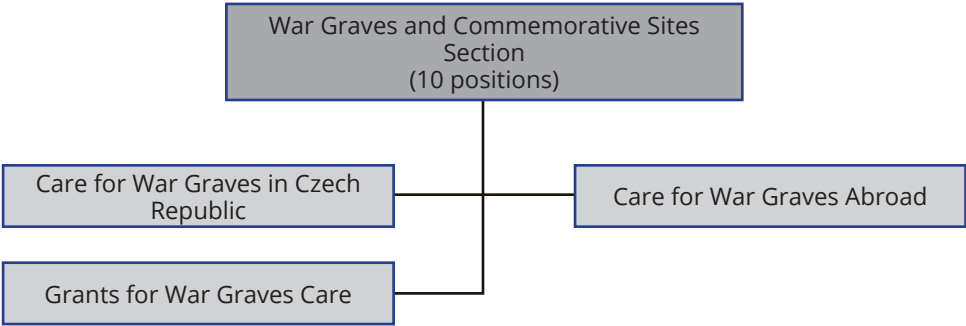
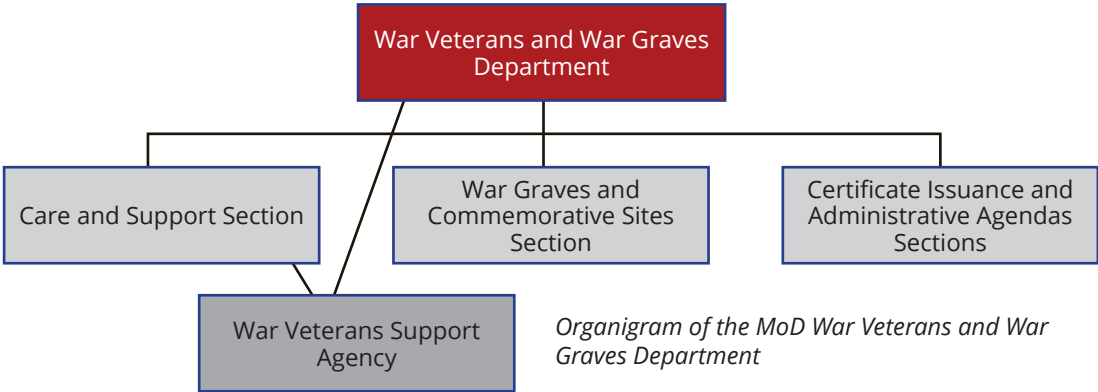
The second day of the meeting was dedicated to a practical workshop which took place in the training area of the Royal Netherlands Army and demonstrated effects of smaller quantities of explosives, explosive detection with a metal detector, identifying standard military projectiles, carriers, grenades and explosive devices, leading research teams, and gathering data from researched localities using an on-line management app. The best-received field course was the training led by Hayley Mickelburgh, University of Amsterdam, which focused on creating fast, cheap and efficient 3D models of sites where remains of the fallen were discovered with the help of photogrammetry. Another part of practical demonstrations constituted a visit to the osteoarchaeology lab of the RIU/RNLDA where LT Els Schiltmans presented three ongoing cases where efforts to identify the fallen based on their skeletal remains, discovered personal and service belongings, and DNA testing are underway.

The meeting provided both theoretical knowledge and experience from the field which we will use both for work in our Section and outside.

The Department's structure and agenda

The War Graves and Commemorative Sites Section was expanded to 10 positions in 2025. We also cooperate with external co-workers – architects, stonemasons, scannerists and graphic designers.

Personnel sourcing makes it possible for us to achieve the Section's primary objectives, which include the expansion of local and international cooperation and provision of high quality care for all war graves in the territory of the Czech Republic and abroad.



Organigram of the War Graves and Commemorative Sites Section

Social media

The Válečné hroby – Ministerstvo obrany ČR (The War Graves – Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic, facebook.com/valecne.hrobymo) Facebook page has been launched on May 15, 2023, with the objective to commemorate the heroism of those who sacrificed their lives for our freedom. From January 1 till December 31, 2025, some 240 posts have been shared on our Facebook page, most of which contained links to the 178 mostly original articles on our website. We have also posted 8 videos (or rather reels).

The web posts are created by a collective composed mostly of WWGD employees. Regular articles can be divided into several sections – the MoD grants, commemorative ceremonies and international pilgrimages, educational articles on the history and present of war graves in the homeland and abroad, and a calendar dedicated to the respective war victims.

One of the ways to engage followers are campaigns which call for fans and followers to participate on the creation and sharing of the page's content. From April to May 2025, the #80let campaign was held with the objective to share photographs of war graves or commemorative sites with the relevant hashtag on Facebook and Instagram. Its goal was to spread awareness of WGs and CSs related to WWII in our followers' surroundings. The campaign was ineffective due to the inconveniently chosen hashtag and the visual merging with other parties' events. The hashtag's non-specificity led to some posts being omitted. Difficulties in dealings with the Public Relations Department caused delays in the official start and end of the campaign. On August 28, an appeal for the search for the relatives of 16 Austro-Hungarian soldiers from the Czech lands who are buried at the Valbruna cemetery in Italy has been posted. During the next week, the post engaged the attention of 132.2 thousand users. Compared to last year, our Facebook posts reached four times as many people with the total of 1,423,592 users who saw our posts at least once.

During the period from January 1 till December 31, 2025, we registered 750 new followers and users who liked our pages, and we have reached the total of 2,133 followers.

The most successful interactions include the post regarding the repatriation of the WWII victims from Munich, Germany and Glubczyce, Poland (485 interactions), the campaign to find the descendants of the service members buried in Valbruna, Italy (400 interactions), the article summary on the burial of the airdropped soldiers repatriated from Munich (303 interactions), the article on those who died during the transport of the Czechoslovakian legion from Russia (189 interactions), and the post about the commemoration service honouring those repatriated from Munich and Glubczyce which took place at the Vítkov National Memorial (163 interactions).

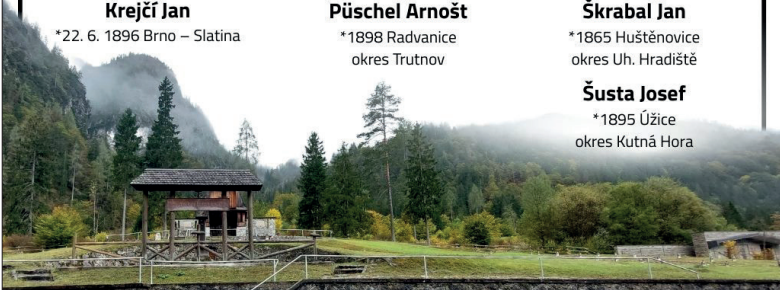
The following posts received the most likes and response: the post on repatriation of the WWII victims from Munich and Glubczyce (378 likes), the article summary on the burial of the airdropped soldiers repatriated from Munich (253



**Hledáme příbuzné vojáků pohřbených
na rakousko-uherském vojenském hřbitově ve Valbruně.
Pomozte nám dokreslit jejich osobní příběhy.**

Pokud nám v pátrání můžete pomoci, ozvěte se nám prosím do zpráv nebo na mail valecne.hroby@mo.gov.cz.

Böhm Josef *1889 Starý Šaldorf okres Znojmo	Maršálek František *1873 Tasovice okres Blansko	Řeháček Josef *1866 Dětenice okres Jičín
Hippmann Jan *1886 Ostrov okres Karlovy Vary	Matula Josef *1896 Hnanice okres Znojmo	Rösner Jan *1895 Šternberk okres Olomouc
Kamenec Jan *1877 Holešov – Količín okres Kroměříž	Nedwed Franz *1894 Zvoleňves okres Kladno	Scaffran Karl *1891 Hlinná okr. Litoměřice
Keprda Antonín *1874 Hoštice okres Kroměříž	Pilčík František *1872 Vizovice okres Zlín	Schalludek Otto *1887 Žatec okres Louny
Krejčí Jan *22. 6. 1896 Brno – Slatina	Püschel Arnošt *1898 Radvanice okres Trutnov	Škrabal Jan *1865 Huštěnovice okres Uh. Hradiště
		Šusta Josef *1895 Úžice okres Kutná Hora



likes), the post about the commemoration service honouring those repatriated from Munich and Glubczyce place at the Vítkov National Memorial (141 likes), and the article on those who died during the transport of the Czechoslovakian legion from Russia (141 likes).

The following individual posts reached the largest audience: the campaign to find the descendants of the service members buried in Valbruna (67,733 persons), the post on repatriation of the WWII victims from Munich and Glubczyce (17,635 persons), and the introductory post for the #80let campaign (12,724 persons).

The most viewed posts were the campaign to find the descendants of the service members buried in Valbruna (132,206 views), the post on repatriation of the WWII victims from Munich and Glubczyce (29,994 views), the introductory post for the #80let campaign (24,026 views), the article on the Battle of Austerlitz (12,811 views), the article on those who died during the transport of the Czechoslovakian legion from Russia (12,482 views), and the article summary on the burial of the airdropped soldiers repatriated from Munich (11,138 views).

The overall performance of the Facebook page increased three to fourfold with a slight decrease in the number of published posts.

Posted videos

Our most successful video was the fifth episode of the Místa padlých – příběhy válečných hrobů (Places of the Fallen – Stories of War Graves) series about the Černovír cemetery (8 h 59 min of watch time, 44 likes, 4,640 views, and the reach of 1,068 persons), followed by the third episode about the legionaries' honorary burial site and ossuary at the Olšany cemetery (6 h 13 min of watch time, 31 likes, 2,771 views, and the reach of 971 persons), the reel about the repatriation of the WWII victims from Munich and Glubczyce (4 h 55 min of watch time, 46 likes, 2,722 views, and the reach of 883 persons) and the fourth episode about the Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God at the Olšany cemetery (4 h 6 min of watch time, 21 likes, 2,512 views, and the reach of 589 persons). Compared to last year, no video stood out significantly among others; overall, they were equally successful.

Number of posts on the Válečné hroby – Ministerstvo obrany ČR Facebook page

	1/2025	2/2025	3/2025	4/2025	5/2025	6/2025	7/2024	8/2025	9/2025	10/2025	11/2025	12/2025	Total
Number of posts	16	21	22	34	26	15	16	17	21	16	22	13	239
Reach (in thousands)	69.2	103.5	100	179.7	141.4	89.9	64	199.8	134.1	82.4	103.6	156	1,423.6
Interaction (in thousands)	2.6	3.9	4.2	6.9	5.5	3	2.3	5.1	4.2	2.8	3.4	3.7	47.7

The End of WWII Anniversary

The #80LET Campaign

On the 80th anniversary of liberation and the end of WWII in Europe, the MoD War Veterans and War Graves Department launched a popularisation campaign on social media titled #80let (#80years). The campaign aimed to intelligibly and with dignity draw public attention to the existence of war graves and commemorative sites and highlight the value of freedom, bravery, and personal sacrifice which are closely related to the topic.

The campaign took place mostly on Facebook, Instagram, and X and was based on active public involvement. The participants were invited to visit war graves, commemorative plaques, memorials, and smaller commemorative sites, to tacitly remember and share photos and personal stories. Emphasis was also put on the less prominent areas which often tend to be overlooked even though they constitute a significant part of collective memory.

Individuals and local communities from all over the Czech Republic engaged in the campaign. The received photos captured border commemorative sites, commemorative plaques located on houses, the graves of unknown soldiers as well as small acts of respect such as lit candles or flowers. The public's submissions significantly helped to spread awareness of the issue of war graves and emphasise the fact that freedom cannot be taken for granted. Selected submissions were regularly shared on official social media profiles as well as on the website dedicated to war graves.



The Commemorative and Remembrance Events Calendar

One of the activities executed on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the end of WWII was the launch of the commemorative and remembrance events online calendar, aiming to concentrate all information on upcoming events all over the Czech Republic in one place. The calendar was published on the MoD War Graves and Commemorative Sites Section website and was regularly updated in cooperation with the respective regions, municipalities, societies, and other partners.

The calendar served not only as an overview of the upcoming commemorative acts but also as an open platform for the sharing of exhibitions, lectures, commented walks, commemorative marches, combat demonstrations, concerts, and other cultural or educational events aiming to dignifiedly commemorate the liberation of Czechoslovakia and the way the legacy of WWII shapes the present. The public had the opportunity to propose events on their own using a simple form, thus actively participating on the calendar's form and content.

Overall, 341 events taking place all over the Czech Republic were published in the calendar. The project demonstrated the effort and respect with which the local governments, civil initiatives, and individuals care for remembering the fallen and preserve the collective memory – often in cooperation with the Czech Armed Forces or under the auspices of the Minister of Defence.



War graves registered in the Czech Republic as of December 31, 2025

Region	WGs with remains	Commemorative sites	WGs total	Yearly increase of records	Not WGs	Not WGs %	Records total	Region's share in records in %	MAE in the Region	Average records of MAE in the Region
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Prague capital	3,681	2,408	6,089	68	133	2.18	6,222	15.29	22	283
South Bohemia	618	1,083	1,701	11	48	2.82	1,749	4.30	17	103
South Moravia	9,157	1,416	10,573	2	321	3.04	10,894	26.78	21	519
Karlovy Vary	1,610	226	1,836	5	18	0.98	1,854	4.56	7	265
Hradec Králové	1,287	1,411	2,698	270	170	6.30	2,868	7.05	15	191
Liberec	349	484	833	14	63	7.56	896	2.20	10	90
Moravia-Silesia	441	1,049	1,490	6	235	15.77	1,725	4.24	22	78
Olomouc	2,124	874	2,998	2	123	4.10	3,121	7.67	13	240
Pardubice	604	839	1,443	1	68	4.71	1,511	3.71	15	101
Pilsen	447	954	1,401	50	147	10.49	1,548	3.81	15	103
Central Bohemia	816	2,217	3,033	4	225	7.42	3,258	8.01	26	125
Ústí nad Labem	464	735	1,199	2	137	11.43	1,336	3.28	16	84
Vysočina (Highlands)	1,057	1,082	2,139	3	99	4.63	2,238	5.50	15	149
Zlín	537	834	1,371	22	91	6.64	1,462	3.59	13	112
Total	23,192	15,612	38,804	460	1,878	4.84	40,682	100	227	179

MEP – Municipality with Extended Powers represent the basic level for registering war graves located in their administrative territories.

Comments on the table:

- Compared to the previous year, the number of registered war graves grew by 460 (column 4) from original 38,344 to 38,804 war graves.
- The data on the growth of the number of registered WGs is distorted by the fact that the Central Register also includes structures that are not war graves in the sense of the law. In total, there are 1,878 such structures (column 6), which is 4.84% of all records in the Central Register. All those records are denoted with "This structure is not a war grave in the sense of Section § 2 of the Act No. 122/2004 Coll., on War Graves".
- The comparison of percentages of structures that are not war graves (column 7) in the registers of individual regions shows a disproportionate quantity of such structures in the Moravian-Silesian Region (15.7 %).
- In the Hradec Králové Region, there was a major rise in the number of registered war graves by 270 (column 5), which occurred thanks to the progressive processing of digitalised War Graves Register from the period of the First Republic.
- The majority of war graves is registered in the South Moravian Region and in Prague (columns 8 and 9). More than a fourth of all registered war graves (26.78%) is situated in the South Moravian Region.
- An overwhelming majority of the 10,885 records in the South Moravian Region account for Brno, a municipality with extended powers, which registers a total of 9,160 records (data not included in the table).
- The coordination of care for war graves in the regions places uneven demands on relevant officers in the regional authorities. The most difficult situation is in the Central Bohemian and Moravian-Silesian Regions and in Prague, whose administrative territories comprise the majority of municipalities with extended powers (column 10).
- Registers of war graves are kept at 227 municipal authorities and 14 regional offices.

Government functions by the Ministry of Defence

The MoD cares for war graves in accordance with the law.

Pursuant to the law, the MoD performs government functions in the following scope:

- a. In case of doubt, determines what is a war grave;
- b. Coordinates the care for war graves in the Czech Republic and abroad;
- c. Keeps the Central War Graves Register;
- d. Awards grants according to a dedicated regulation on the care for war graves to the war grave's owner. If the owner is unknown, the grant is given to the owner of the property, and;
- e. Provides refunding for restricted use of property and reimburses the owners in buyout of properties or parts thereof.

Care for war graves in the Czech Republic

Administrative procedures connected to the care for war graves

In accordance with the law, the decision-making process is covered by the Rules of Administrative Procedure, and the Ministry usually initiates administrative procedures after a request of the war grave's owner.

Care for War Graves Abroad

By caring for Czech war graves located abroad, we are not only making a vital contribution to maintaining the fighting traditions of the Czech Armed Forces, but we are also striving for those who laid their lives for their country to not be forgotten and for their descendants to be able to commemorate their sacrifice at the respective commemorative sites. Based on the Czech Republic's international treaties and specifically the bilateral agreements with United Kingdom, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine, Serbia, and Romania, it should be the country in whose territory the war graves are located who takes care of them. But this is not always the case. While within Czech law the term "war grave" also includes a "commemorative site" which commemorates a war victim even though it does not hold any remains, international treaties and bilateral agreements only consider a site a war grave if it holds the remains of fallen servicemembers. Therefore, the Czech MoD often cares for such sites on their own.

The total of 4,161 Czech war graves located in 49 countries with 20,286 commemorated victims as stated on the Czech MoD CWGR

Country	WG	Victims	Country	WG	Victims
Slovakia	1,107	4,093	Yemen	7	10
France	591	983	Singapore	5	8
Poland	562	2,163	Kyrgyzstan	4	33
Italy	469	1,690	Greece	4	9
United Kingdom	400	643	Portugal	4	4
Russia	237	3,454	China	3	57
Ukraine	201	3,299	Republic of North Macedonia	3	7
Slovenia	163	531	Panama	3	3
Belgium	61	62	Tajikistan	2	119
Montenegro	57	57	Albania	2	11
Germany	36	271	Philippines	2	9
Hungary	32	73	Japan	2	6
Netherlands	29	58	Lebanon	2	2
Bosnia and Herzegovina	24	61	Australia	2	2
Uzbekistan	17	965	India	2	2
Austria	16	125	Syria	2	2
Serbia	14	810	Moldova	1	32
Croatia	14	48	Belarus	1	15
Izrael	14	14	Afghanistan	1	10
Libya	13	15	Kosovo	1	2
Romania	11	388	Türkiye	1	2
Kazakhstan	10	94	Luxembourg	1	1
Canada	10	15	Georgia	1	1
Bahamas	7	12	Vietnam	1	1
Egypt	7	12			

Montenegro

(57 WGs; 57 victims)

During a reconnaissance journey through Montenegro, we focused on tracing back the WWI Austro-Hungarian military cemeteries based on archive sources from the Military Historical Archive and an archive in Vienna.

We did a reconnaissance of the cemeteries in Rožaje, Berane, Tomaševo, and Kolašin. We selected some cemeteries here but did not find anything. For Tomaševo, which was called Sahovici in the WWI period, we even had a map of the cemetery marked with prominent points of orientation that should still exist today. The sketch, however, did not correspond with reality. In Berane, the military cemetery was supposed to be located near the local monastery where the city cemetery can still be found today but we were not able to find the specific location.

In the former Montenegrin capital of Cetinje, based on the archival sources and photographs from Vienna, we were able to find the exact location of a large military cemetery where 394 fallen Austro-Hungarian soldiers (some of which came from our territory) and several war prisoners were buried. All that remains of the original cemetery, which adjoins the local municipal cemetery, is a fragment of the central memorial. Some of the soldiers were also buried in an adjacent cemetery where we even found an original iron cross marking one of their graves. The writing on it is sadly no longer legible.

From Cetinje we moved to the nearby Rijeka Crnojevića where we again managed to locate the military section of a small local cemetery thanks to a surviving metal gravestone. There were 19 soldiers of the Austro-Hungarian army buried there, three of which certainly did come from our territory and two most likely did as well.

In the following days, we set out for those parts of Montenegro which used to be a part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in the WWI period. In larger cities, there were military garrison cemeteries where fallen soldiers were being buried even during WWI. We were able to find these cemeteries in Budva, Škaljari, and Tivat, mainly thanks to the surviving gravestones of the Austro-Hungarian soldiers who died here before the war. Their gravestones were very well made and remain legible even today. Some were even written in Czech. The garrison cemetery in Budva is basically located in the city centre next to the catholic cemetery which surrounds the St Thomas church. This cemetery is overall neglected and there are only a few remaining gravestones left. In the municipality of Škaljari, which is basically the outskirts of



Cetinje military cemetery during World War I and today



Former Tivat garrison cemetery



Preserved war grave in civilian cemetery in Cetinje



Preserved gravestone in the military section of Škaljari community cemetery



Former garrison cemetery Budva

Kotor, the garrison cemetery merged with the local municipal cemetery, however, many gravestones of the Austro-Hungarian army soldiers who died here during their military service still survive. Most of them can be found in the vicinity of the St Michael's catholic church. The last garrison cemetery in the municipality of Tivat has already been fully transformed into a local municipal cemetery and we were only able to localise it thanks to a sole surviving gravestone with Czech writing, belonging to Imperial and Royal non-commissioned officer Oldřich Hübner.

The last reconnaissance took part in the city of Nikšić where a military section with 89 fallen soldiers of the Austro-Hungarian army was supposed to be located at the city cemetery. However, we did not succeed there and therefore we will try to acquire more archival sources.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

(24 WGs; 61 victims)

Our reconnaissance trip to the Balkans focused on finding the graves of our soldiers from the Austro-Hungarian Army in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These did not only include graves from WWI, but also graves from 1878, when the country was besieged by Austria-Hungary, based on the decision of the Congress of Berlin. The advance of Austro-Hungarian Army was accompanied by losses, with several clashes with the Ottoman troops and local armed groups (such as battle of Maglaj, Doboj, and Jajce).

The first locations where we carried out reconnaissance was the near the border with Montenegro, towns of Trebinje and Bileća, which hosted Austro-Hungarian border fortifications, as well as garrison cemeteries. We found remains of the cemeteries in both locations. In Trebinje, the central memorial was conserved, but without the inscriptions. Remains of exhumed soldiers have been buried under the memorial in the 80's, while the rest of the cemeteries has been filled with civilian graves. The military section of the cemetery in Bileća has been neglected, but a part of it including the central memorial has recently been repaired by Hungary.

We then continued to Mostar, which hosts the Austro-Hungarian garrison cemetery which was partially reconstructed three years ago thanks to Austrian EUFOR service members and the Austrian Black Cross. At this cemetery, we found

War grave in cemetery in Trebinje



Garrison cemetery Mostar



numerous tombs originating mainly before WWI. The catholic cemetery in Goražde also has preserved graves of Austro-Hungarian soldiers.

In the towns of Kalinovik, Mesići, Travnik, Doboj, Visoko and Rogatica, we identified specific cemeteries (especially catholic ones), which most likely used to hold the remains of our soldiers. However, we found no preserved tombstone which would help us determine the specific locations. We will continue the research in archived documentation to identify them. Rogatica is the home of an ossuary or fallen Serbian and Montenegrin soldiers of WWI on the alleged location of an Austro-Hungarian cemetery. It is quite likely that the remains of our soldiers have been exhumed alongside Serbs and Montenegrins or left on a nearby meadow.

We were able to find military sections of cemeteries in Maglaj, Tuzla and Jajce, thanks to older tombstones which were preserved thanks to the use of better materials than tombstones (and crosses) made during the war.

The capital Sarajevo hosts a former Austro-Hungarian military cemetery which has been fully converted to a civilian one. In its centre, you can however still find a statue of a lion which was reconstructed in 2005 and a memorial to the soldiers of the No. 49 Imperial-Royal Infantry Regiment. There is also plaque stating that 2,456 Austro-Hungarian soldiers have been buried here.



Serbian ossuary in Rogatica



Preserved graves of Austro-Hungarian soldiers in Maglaj



Central monument in the military cemetery in Sarajevo



Catholic cemetery in Goražde

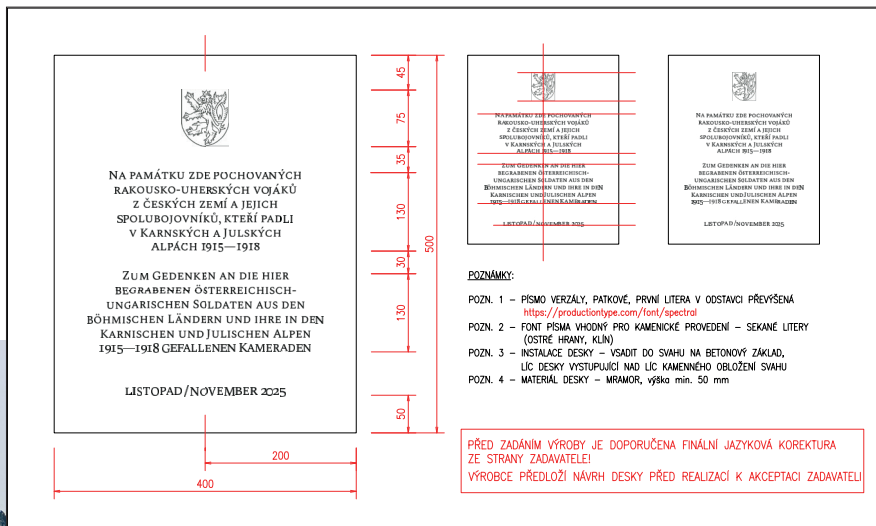
Italy

(469 WGs; 1,690 victims)

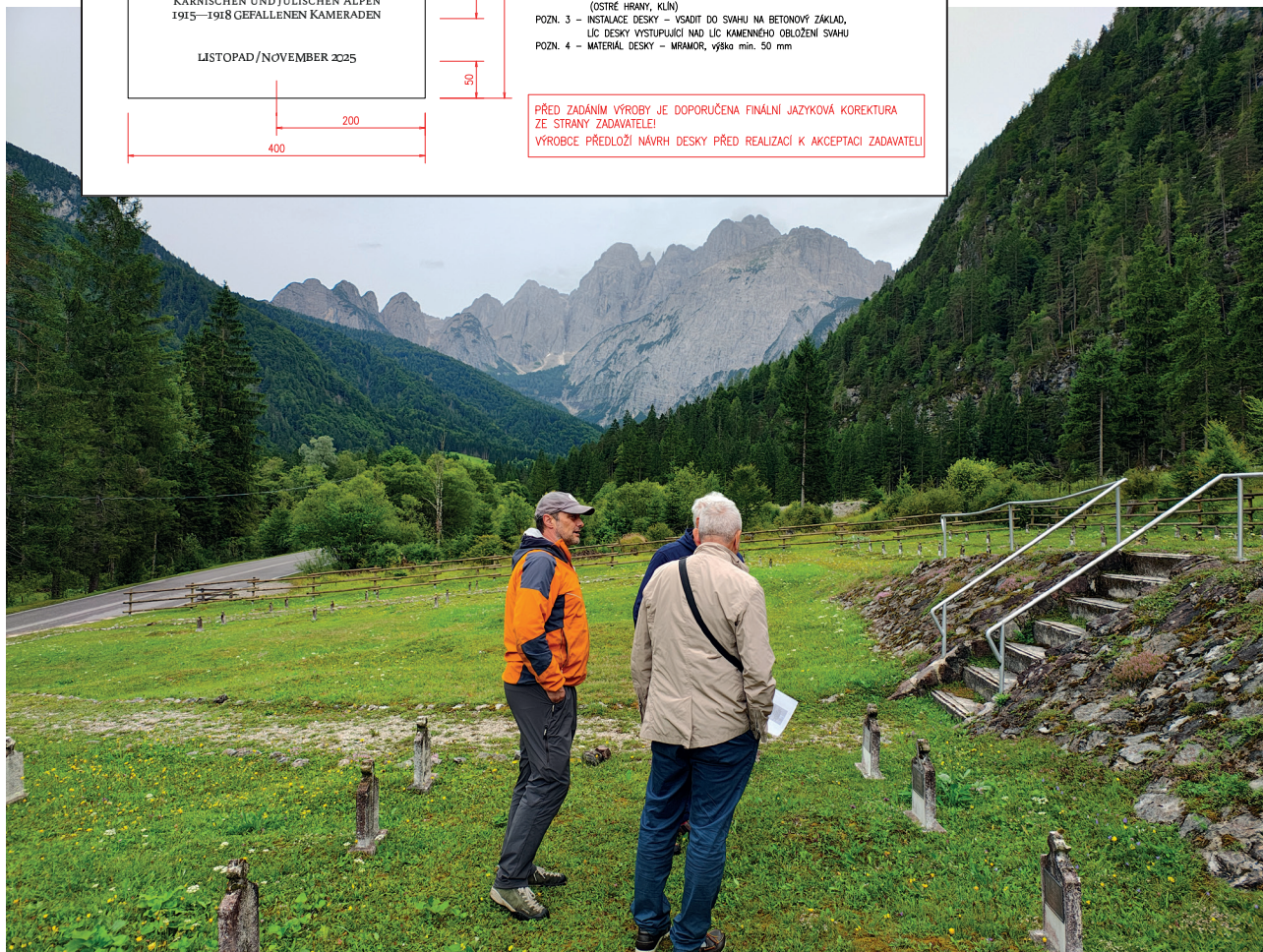
Thanks to reconnaissance efforts, the number of identified WGs has increased since the previous year (by 54 WGs and 145 victims). This trend shall continue, given continuous research in archives and adding of victims' data into the database.

From July 28 till August 3, 2025, we travelled to northeastern Italy for the reconnaissance of cemeteries (Vado, Torre di Mosto, Ceggia, Croce, Fossalta di Piave, Oderzo, Pieve di Soligo, Quero, Castello di Godego, Ossana, Merano, Bolzano, Ora, Vigo di Fassa, Pordoi, Croda Bagnata, Bressanone, Brunico), as well as meetings with the local representatives. The objective of these meeting was to discuss the construction of memorials to fallen Austro-Hungarian soldiers born in the territory of the now Czech Republic. As usual, vital support was provided to us by doctor Sergio Petiziol, who accompanied us throughout the journey.

In the morning hours of Tuesday July 29, 2025, we met local researcher David Tonazzi and representative of the Malborghetto – Valbruna municipality at the cemetery in Valbruna. A total of 16 Czechoslovak victims have so far been identified at the piedmont cemetery. The councillor, representing the mayor, promised us full support in the construction of a simple memorial (in the form of a plaque). By the end of 2025, the project reached the stage of selection of contractor.



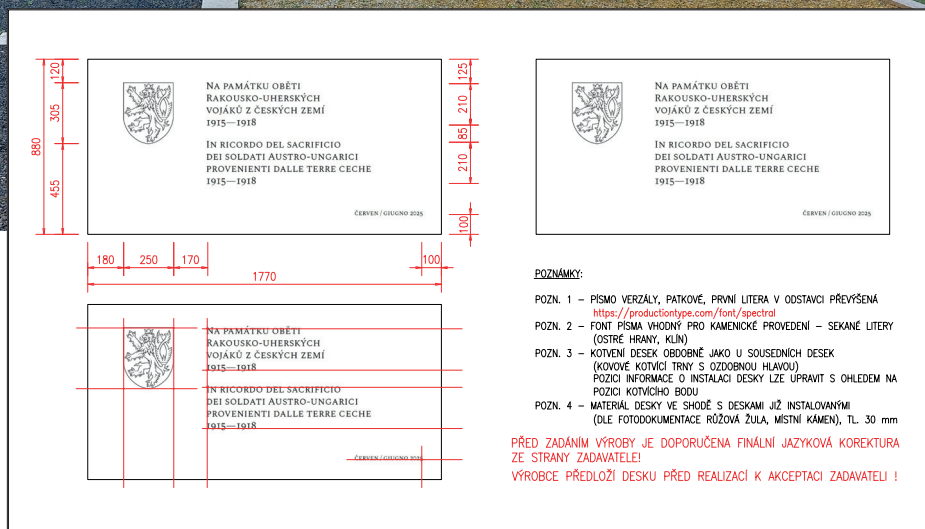
Austro-Hungarian cemetery in Valbruna



On the very same day, we continued to another, very productive, meeting in Fogliano Redipuglia with mayor Cris-
tiana Pisano. The mayor promised us support of the project of construction of a memorial plaque to remember our
fallen on the wall of the local Austro-Hungarian cemetery. We have prepared a design proposal in cooperation with
an architect, which was then sent to our Italian partners. In November 2025, the relevant authorities of the Italian
MoD (Ufficio per la Tutela della Cultura e della Memoria della Difesa) sent us a request for further information, which
is to become the bases of the upcoming approval process.



Fogliano Redipuglia



San Michele al Tagliamento



In the following two days (July 30-31, 2025), we continued (side from reconnaissance of further cemeteries) mainly with meetings in the towns of San Michele al Tagliamento and Bondo. In San Michele, we met with mayor Flavio Maurutto to discuss the possibility to construct a small memorial to Czechoslovak victims, whose design would be inspired by that of an existing Austrian memorial. On December 16, 2025, we received approval of the Austrian Black Cross (Österreichisches Schwarzes Kreuz) to launch the project.

Another meeting was held with mayor Franco Bazzoli, Frank Salvatori, and representatives of Ufficio per la Tutela della Cultura e della Memoria della Difesa of the Italian MoD. Given the significance of the Bondo cemetery due to a high number of victims from the rank of “Czech regiments” of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, we plan to construct a larger memorial, whose final form will be determined in the upcoming meetings with the participation of the Austrian Black Cross. Direct talks are planned in Vienna for 2026.



Bondo

Germany

(36 WGs; 271 victims)

In cooperation with the Consulate General of the Czech Republic in Dresden and the Association of Czechoslovak Legionnaires, we went on a memorial journey to Germany in March. Almost 900 persons with Czech origin were executed in Dresden during WWII and buried in two local cemeteries where we paid tribute to them.

In Leipzig, Czechoslovak Resistance fighters were executed at the end of the war, in April 1945. We also paid tribute to those buried in Ostfriedhof where 11 persons in six war graves are recorded (Fig. 10). We will look for more details on graves of the Resistance fighters and identify others in cooperation with the Consulate General and German historians.



Neuer Katolischer Friedhof – We have records of three war graves containing three victims



Johannisfriedhof – For now, we have records of five war graves with nine victims



Ostfriedhof in Leipzig

Poland

(562 WGs; 2,163 victims)

We continued in registering a more precise number of fallen Czechoslovak service personnel who died in Poland during the Carpatho-Dukla operation in 1944 and who will be commemorated at a new memorial site by the Dukla cemetery. Their number totals 623 heroes (Fig. 1).

Our Polish partners approved the final look of the memorial in summer (Fig. 2). In November, we established a schedule for each step of the project during meetings with the mayor so that the project is successfully completed by the end of 2026.



Location for the new monument and its approved design



After our meeting in Dukla, we carried out a recon journey of war graves of Austro-Hungarian soldiers in:

- Ropica Górna – Cemetery No. 78 with nine soldiers from today's Czech Republic buried in nine graves
- Sękowa – Cemetery No. 80 with 107 soldiers from today's Czech Republic buried in 25 graves
- Gorlice – Cemetery No. 91 with 132 soldiers from today's Czech Republic buried in 59 graves



Ropica Górna



Sękowa



Gorlice

Ukraine

(201 WGs; 3,299 victims)

In March, we successfully completed a memorial to Czechoslovak legionnaires in Boratyn near Lutsk (Fig. 6 and 7). We've been discussing its construction with the village officials since 2013 as we wanted to commemorate the 67 fallen volunteers who died in today's Western Ukraine and the border area of Belarus, mainly in Volhynia and Polesia, while fighting against the Austro-Hungarian and German armies during WWI (between January 11, 1915, and January 16, 1917); they belonged to the Czech Druzhina and later to the Czechoslovak Rifle Regiment and the Czechoslovak Rifle Brigade. However, none of their graves was found. Boratyn was chosen as the place of commemoration as it was established by Czech settlers in the 19th century. One of the killed soldiers, corporal Bohuslav Albrecht, was even born there in 1893. A place by the entrance of the church which was also built by Czech settlers at the turn of the 20th century was chosen as the memorial's location. The construction of the memorial was at first conditioned by building a parking lot (the mayor's condition) and then by renovating the church (the parish priest's condition).

During a handover of an ambulance and other medical supplies by the joint delegation of the Region of Vysočina (Highlands), charitable fund ViZa and War Veterans and War Graves Department in June 2023, we commenced talks on the memorial's construction once again as the village officials changed their stance (Fig. 8). Subsequently, all required permits were obtained and the memorial was constructed despite the ongoing and escalating Russian aggression towards Ukraine. The total costs of the war grave's construction came up to UAH 310 thousand (CZK 155 thousand).



Monument to Czechoslovak legionnaires in Boratyn at Luck



Handover of ambulance car

Romania

(13 WGs; 375 victims)

Between April 14-19, 2025, we went on a recon journey which confirmed that the situation concerning war graves of Czechs in Romania is not unified and often chaotic. Former military burial sites in several locations were closed or integrated into civilian cemeteries without their original layout during the 20th century. That is why the identification of specific graves is possible only with the use of archival materials in most cases.

Fully or partially preserved graves were discovered for example in Cluj-Napoca, Miercurea Ciuc, Reditu by Iași or Bucharest's military cemetery Pro Patria where four graves of soldiers with Czech origin were identified. In other places, such as Bacău, Bârlad, Măstăcani or Arad, graves of Austro-Hungarian soldiers were not identified in field, or their exact location remains unknown. We were not able to visit other locations due to time constraints and the distance between the places; these places primarily include the well-known columbarium of POWs from the Șipote camp by Reditu or the locations in Pitești and Ciocănești, newly discovered in registers.

Medgidia provides a positive example as a memorial to Czechoslovak volunteers has been unveiled there recently. Overall, it has been confirmed that the majority of WWI war graves are commemorated only indirectly or not at all, and requires additional archival research, improvements to the accuracy of records and possible designation as graves with historical value.



No-name monuments in cemetery in Bârlad



Copou cemetery in Reditu at the city of Iași

Talks in Romania

As part of the recon journey on war graves in Romania between April 14-19, 2025, we held talks with local authorities, cemeteries' administrations and partner institutions on identifying, recording and taking care of burial sites of the WWI fallen from the Czech Lands. A key point of the programme was a meeting in Bucharest with representatives of the National Office for the Cult of Heroes (ONCE) which is a contract partner of the Czech Republic based on an intergovernmental agreement from 2015.

The meeting focused on fulfilling this agreement, exchanging archival materials, improving localisation of visited burial sites and laying down principles of future cooperation. The Romanian side also declared its interest in developing mutual relations when it comes to commemorating the involvement of the Romanian army in the liberation of Czechoslovakia at the end of WWII and confirmed that its representatives will take part in commemorative ceremonies in the Czech Republic.

Additional talks were held with employees of cemetery authorities and local institutions and primarily concerned the topics of accessibility of historical materials, current legal standing of burial sites and the possibility of being labelled as commemorative in the future. This journey helped to build personal relations on a level that has been missing up to that moment and to create conditions for future systematic cooperation in filling in the War Graves Register with respect to war graves in Romania.



*Pro Patria military cemetery
in Bucharest*

Kazakhstan

(11 WGs; 106 victims)

Between July 12-18, 2025, the situation concerning war graves and burials of persons with Czech origin was assessed in several regions of Kazakhstan. A recurrent theme was the closure of cemeteries and repurposing the land for parks, sport or transport facilities, in many cases without any direct form of commemoration.

Closed burial sites of legionnaires and POWs with only general or completely missing labelling were identified in Petropavl, Semey and Pavlodar. A Czechoslovak Red Army soldier's grave in Petropavl's square met a similar fate as the cemetery was replaced by a WWII memorial in the 1970s. On the contrary, a unique memorial to WWI POWs with Czech texts was preserved in Öskemen; it is the only known preserved memorial of this type (with Czech texts) in the area.

Preserved war graves are also located in Fort-Shevchenko's cemetery which features a stone obelisk commemorating Austro-Hungarian POWs, including three men from the Czech Lands. In Kazaly, the situation is a bit complicated – its memorial to POWs from 1915 is considerably damaged and the effort of local authorities is not sufficient. The former Czech village Borodinovka, today Kayraky, includes a big monument to victims of WWII; however, its name plaques are incomplete or damaged. The War Graves Register still contains some unidentified burial grounds around Shymkent and Astana that require additional archive and field research. In total, it applies to three war graves with remains, two commemorative sites and six recorded sites in Kazakhstan.

The former POW camp Spassk near Karaganda, with approximately 100 Czech WWII POWs, is supposed to become a new commemorative site as well.



Railway station in Petropavl, the location for the considered monument to Czechoslovak legionnaires in the fore



The remnants of honorary burial ground of Bolsheviks in the centre of Petropavl. The grave of Josef Sedláček has not been preserved.



Monument to the deceased in the closed cemetery in Petropavl



Stele built by Czechs in Öskemen cemetery



Inscription on the stele in Öskemen in close-up



Monument to the defunct cemetery and the buried in the city park in Pavlodar



Spartak stadium in Semej is situated on former burial ground



Memorial to deceased Czechs in Spassk

Talks in Kazakhstan

Between July 12-18, 2025, representatives of the War Graves and Commemorative Sites Section went on a business trip to the Republic of Kazakhstan as a part of an official delegation led by Jan Bartošek, Deputy Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic. Its principal objective consisted of meetings with state institutions, museums and remembrance institutes' representatives with whom they spoke about identifying, protecting and commemorating war graves of persons from the Czech Lands.

The talks were on the level of local authorities, cultural institutions and specialized workplaces. Most attention was given to terminated burial sites, to the option of labelling them as commemorative in the future, and to exchanging archival data. Technical and legal side of the care for preserved war graves and memorials was also discussed.

Part of the programme was a round-table discussion on Czech and Kazakh soldiers and POWs in the world wars of the 20th century. The Czech side presented its work in recording and caring for war graves and its findings concerning the research in Kazakhstan. The meetings solidified the interest of both sides in ongoing cooperation, primarily in documenting unidentified locations and protecting preserved commemorative sites.



Round table discussion in the National Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan



Presentation of plaque to General Mukhtar Altynbaev in recognition of care for war graves



Family portrait of the round table

Conference “New Perspectives on 1945” (May 20-21, 2025)

On May 20-21, 2025, Czech MoD representatives participated in an international conference called “New Perspectives on 1945” which took place in the Army Museum Žižkov on the 80th anniversary of the end of WWII in Europe and liberation of Czechoslovakia. It was organised by the Military History Institute Prague in cooperation with the Czech Commission of Military History.

The two-day scientific meeting welcomed both Czech and foreign historians and researchers and concentrated on new methodological approaches to researching the year 1945, diplomatic and military context of liberation, postwar migration, seeking justice, rebuilding the military, political and economic life, and the topics of collective memory and commemoration. In total, there were more than three dozen presentations dealing with commonly known but also less frequent themes of that turning point in history.

The War Veterans and War Graves Department of the Czech MoD was represented by two speakers. Mr. Adam Hájek presented a paper called “Burial of the Others” which focused on burials of German soldiers and civilians who died in Prague during the May Uprising of Czech people. Mr. Vlastimil Křišťan dealt with record keeping, identifying and commemorating fallen Czechoslovak soldiers in his paper called “Location of the Grave: Burials, Record Keeping and Commemorating Fallen Members of the Czechoslovak Unit in the USSR”.



VOJENSKÝ
HISTORICKÝ
ÚSTAV PRAHA



Mezinárodní vědecká konference

Nové pohledy na rok 1945

**Konference k 80. výročí konce druhé světové války v Evropě
a osvobození Československa**

International Scientific Conference

New Perspectives on 1945

**Conference on the 80th Anniversary of the End of World War II and
the Liberation of Czechoslovakia**

20. - 21. 5. 2025

Vojenský historický ústav Praha

Armádní muzeum Žižkov

U památníku 2

Praha 3

Conference “Cemetery, cemetery, garden green...” (November 5-6, 2025)

On November 5-6, 2025, Czech MoD representatives took part in an international interdisciplinary conference “Cemetery, cemetery, garden green...”, subtitled “Cemeteries as Part of the Landscape Through the Centuries”. The conference was organised by the Institute of Art History of the Czech Academy of Sciences and continues the long-term tradition of expert meetings on funerary culture.

The conference focused on cemeteries and burial landscape as important elements of cultural memory and historical landscape, starting from the Middle Ages and continuing to the present day. Its programme combined historical, archaeological, architectural and anthropological approaches with digital technologies and environmental thinking. More than 60 experts from ten European countries and the USA presented latest research and examples of care for sepulchral monuments.

Representatives of the Czech MoD presented their papers in the block called The Memory of War. Mr. Adam Hájek's paper Military Burial Grounds and War Graves in Czech Cemeteries focused on the evolution of military burial grounds in the course of the 20th century, their legal standing and the issues connected to their closure or transformation. Mr. Vlastimil Kříšťan presented a paper called Czech Military Graves and Memorial Sites: From the Gulf War to the Present which analysed the form and importance of memorial sites that are being founded because of modern foreign missions.

5.—6. listopadu

Hřbitovy jako součást krajiny v průběhu staletí

HŘBITOVE, HŘBITOVE, ZAHRADO ZELENÁ...

Cemeteries as Part of the Landscape
Through the Centuries...

November 5–6, 2025

CEMETERY, CEMETERY GARDEN GREEN...

Akademické konferenční centrum / Academic Conference Centre
a Zasedací místnost Ústavu dějin umění AV ČR /
Meeting room of the Institute of Art History,
Czech Academy of Sciences, Husova 4a, 110 00 Praha 1

 ÚSTAV DĚJIN UMĚNÍ
AKADEMIE VĚD
ČESKÉ REPUBLIKY, v.v.i.

Conference “Between Victory and Disaster”, Wroclaw

In June, we accepted an invitation of the Polish Institute of National Remembrance to participate in the conference “Between Victory and Disaster. World War II and its Consequences for the States and Nations of Central and Eastern Europe”. Mr. Pavel Kugler presented his paper on the care for war graves in the Czech Republic and cooperation with Poland in this area. He introduced a project of memorial construction to commemorate the fallen in Dukla and a project concerning the exhumation of remains of two State Defence Guard members who were buried in a cemetery in Głubczyce, Poland. We started cooperating with our Polish colleagues in identifying burial sites and exhuming soldiers of the Polish Home Army who were killed in Europe after WWII and buried in the Czech Republic.

Mr. Adam Hájek talked about results of his work at the Ďáblice Cemetery for the Ďáblice Cemetery Mass Graves Commission when it comes to burials of victims of the Nazi and Communist regimes.



Conference “Between Victory and Disaster. World War II and its Consequences for the States and Nations of Central and Eastern Europe”.

Awards for war graves care

In 2025, the Memorial Plaque for War Graves Care has been awarded to 33 persons (of which 12 were foreigners), eight towns and municipalities in the Czech Republic, and two non-governmental organisations in the United Kingdom.

An award ceremony was held at the Regional Office in Jihlava on April 8, 2026, to honour those who dedicate extraordinary and long-term effort to the care of historically significant locations and monuments, which commemorate victims of wars. The memorial plaques have been handed over by Deputy Regional President in charge of culture Lucie Kozlová and Pavel Kugler of the Ministry of Defence.

"I wish to wholeheartedly thank you for the love and care you dedicate to war graves and places of commemoration, often in your free time. As a token of our gratitude, please accept this memorial plaque, whose form was not chosen randomly. It includes a flame – symbol of both destruction brought by war, and candles lit upon tombs of the fallen. The plaque also reminds of a tear – tear of pain, sorrow, and quiet gratitude. Your work is deeply valuable. It prevents the decline of memory, loss of dignity, and oblivion of those, who made the greatest sacrifice. You remind us that peace cannot be taken for granted," said the Deputy in her speech.

Maintaining the legacy of our ancestors is vital, as they represent both our past and our experience for the future. This was also mentioned by Mr. Pavel Kugler, Deputy Director of the WWGDMoD. He also mentioned the quantity of war graves the MoD cares for. "In the Czech Republic, we have registered over 38,000 war graves, another 4,000 abroad in a total of 49 countries and all continents but the Antarctica and South America," said Kugler and added that south Bohemia hosts almost 1,700 war graves. They are a reminder of various time periods from the 18th century, Napoleonic Wars, Prussian-Austrian War, and both World Wars.



The awardees:

Mr. Bohumír Ctibor – Municipal Office Soběslav

The award is discerned for extensive research activity and contribution to the War Graves Register beyond the scope of his work duties. In his work, he uses the digitalised archives of the Ministry of Defence, Central Military Archive in Prague, and chronicles of the municipalities in the Soběslav area. He consistently adds data of the fallen into the database and documents places of commemoration.

Mrs. Eva Janochová – Municipal Office Strakonice

The award is discerned for documentary and research activity in the project of reconstruction of the memorial to the victims of WWI by the Saint Wenceslas cemetery in Strakonice, which is classified as cultural heritage. The reconstructed plaques contain a total of 167 names of fallen citizens of the town.

Mr. Peter Kurek – Municipal Office Strakonice

The award is discerned for specialized preparation and administrative provision of the reconstruction of a war grave, cultural heritage in front of the Saint Wenceslas cemetery. The reconstruction took place in 2024. The project was financed from the municipal budget and the funds of the Ministry of Defence in the total value of almost CZK 1.8 million.

Mr. Milan Nagy – Municipal Office Kaplice

The award is discerned for the search for the fallen and discovery of unregistered war graves in the region of Kaplice and Nové Hradky. He focused on border municipalities which have vanished, for example Pohoří na Šumavě and Terčí Ves. His work contributed significantly to the precision of MoD's Central War Graves Register.

Mrs. Lenka Nagyová – Municipal Office Kaplice

The award is discerned for research activity and contribution to the war graves register with data of the fallen of the Nové Hradky region and the vanished border settlements, such as Kuří and Stieglhäuser. Mrs. Nagyová helped identify new graves and enter them into the database.

Municipality Omlenice – mayor Petr Drayer

The award is discerned for the complex reconstruction of the premises of the common grave of victims of the so-called transport of death of January 1945. The works included the construction of a new asphalt road of 325 metres, planting of trees along a parkway, and park-like treatment of the place of commemoration. The memorial was designed by sculptor František Kratochvíl.

Municipality Soběnov – mayor Josef Čábelka

The award is discerned for continuous care of war graves and overall reconstruction of the memorial to the victims of world wars. The memorial is located in the centre of the municipality and went through complete reconstruction, including the greenery, tiling, and cross. The costs of the reconstruction amounted to CZK 185,000 which was covered by the municipal budget in full.

Municipality Benešov nad Černou – mayor Veronika Zemanová Korchová

The award is discerned for the reconstruction of the memorial to the victims of WWI in Hartunkov and the continuous care of places of commemoration in the administrative district. The memorial commemorates 18 victims and is located on a triangular plot with a stone wall and a stream – a unique place of commemoration in the region.

Municipality Strakonice – mayor Břetislav Hrdlička

The award is discerned for the extensive reconstruction of the war grave by the Saint Wenceslas cemetery and exemplary continuous care of war graves. The reconstruction was finished in 2024 and financed by both the municipality and the MoD. The memorial got new technical infrastructure including lightning and an expansion of the name section which could not fit in originally.

Mrs. Jindřiška Maršíková

The award is discerned for the renewal of the tomb of doctor František Kotek, who died in WWI, at the Saint Wenceslas cemetery in Strakonice. The tomb was reconstructed in 2022. The overall cost amounted CZK 50,000 of which CZK 15,000 were paid by Mrs. Maršíková herself, who also arranged the entirety of the repair works.



Grants

The Ministry of Defence provides financial support for war graves care through the subsidies program Maintenance and renewal of historic values I for 2020 – 2029 in the total worth of CZK 170 million. The Ministry intends to use 120 million for the care of war graves in the Czech Republic. The remaining 50 million were dedicated by the Ministry for donations for the care of war graves abroad.

The Ministry provides financial support through purposeful subsidies to eligible applicants in accordance with the War Graves Act. The claim to subsidies is not automatic.

The program is set to permanently accommodate no less than 60% of applications.

The Ministry evaluates the applications in two aspects:

1. Points for how much the application meets the defined criteria
2. Preferential points given to selected applications by the members of the War Graves Care Committee

The score given to an application depends on the predefined priorities. The highest number of points is given to the application which meets most of the criteria:

- a. The Ministry favours the repair of existing war graves which are in a bad condition due to their age and weather conditions over other objectives.
- b. The Ministry favours the care of war graves which document the activity of persons who died in a specific resistance operation or military operation during the World War II over other objectives.
- c. The Ministry favours the care of war graves containing the remains of persons who died as a result of active participation in and military operation, as war prisoners, as a result of participation in resistance or military operation during war over war graves whose main objective is to serve as and symbol to commemorate war events and their victims.
- d. It is necessary to use the financial resources efficiently to divide the subsidies to as many war graves as possible. The process of granting subsidies helps to guide rightful applicants through their use.
- e. It is necessary to support smaller municipalities for whom it is difficult to find sufficient resources to take care of war graves, as well as to support owners in towns which have a larger budget at their disposal.
- f. It is necessary to keep the general public informed about the financial participation of the Ministry in the care of individual war graves.
- g. If possible, the war graves are to be located in public spaces which have a high frequency of visitors even outside of commemorative ceremonies.

An application can get a maximum of 300 points.

The points are also awarded by the members of the Intergovernmental Coordination Committee for the Care of War Graves (hereinafter "the Committee"). Each of its members has 50 preferential points which they can award to a maximum of three applications as follows; 25, 15 and 10 points to one of the three applications respectively.

Based on the 6th call for applications for war grave care subsidies, we have received a total of 100 applications through the RISPF system in the total value of CZK 43,374,050. Two of the applications did not fulfil the definition of a war grave according to legislation, two applications were eliminated due to formal aspects and three applications were not submitted in writing.

Altogether, 93 applications in the total value of CZK 39,747,494 have been included in the process.

The MoD budget for 2025 allocated a total of CZK 15 million for purposeful grants. Based on the presented applications for grants for war graves care abroad, a total of CZK 1.15 million was allocated of the CZK 5 million total in 2025. The funds left over from 2024 and aggregated funds amounted to CZK 940,321.32.

The applications were evaluated and allocated points, on the bases of which a proposed order of grant beneficiaries was created, which was subsequently approved by the Committee on May 29, 2024.

The Committee proposal was then submitted to the Department Director who decided to provide war graves care funding in 2025 to 56 projects of total value of CZK 12,282,324.

In 2025, the 107D291002508 Chrudim project was approved – revitalisation of the burial grounds of victims of WWI. The Roman-Catholic parish – Chrudim was asked to rectify the defects of the application and added the investment purpose of the project. Given the military character of the burial grounds, the grant limit was raised by unused funds from 2024 by CZK 41,430.

Given the gradual return of unused 2024 grants, the VVWGD Director approved the next application in line, which was originally refused for a lack of funds. This is the 107D291002557 Hříškov project – repair of the memorial to the victims of the world wars, which amounts to CZK 594,494.

Review of the granted and used funds in 2025

No.	Grant beneficiary	Event	Parameters		Funds awarded	Funds used	Funds returned	Note
			WG	PC				
1	Town Suchdol nad Odrou	Suchdol nad Odrou – repair of the war grave of the victims of WWII – plot no. 31	1	0	94,911.00	94,911.00	0.00	
2	Municipality Počenice-Tetětice	Počenice-Tetětice – repair of the memorial to the victims of world wars	0	2	163,649.00	147,817.00	15,832.00	Costs of implementation lower than estimated
3	Town Suchdol nad Odrou	Suchdol nad Odrou – repair of the war grave of the victims of the WWII – plot no. 821/1	1	0	68,316.00	64,328.24	3,987.76	Cracked slab repaired, not replaced
4	Municipality Olešná	Olešná – repair of the war grave and memorial to the victims of world wars	1	1	94,433.00	94,433.00	0.00	
5	Municipality Svatoslav	Svatoslav – repair of the memorials to the victims of world wars	0	2	199,912.00	199,912.00	0.00	
6	Municipality Velké Karlovice	Velké Karlovice – repair of the war grave of the victims of WWII	1	0	130,416.00	130,416.00	0.00	
7	Municipality Hrádek	Hrádek – repair of the war graves of the victims of the Prussian-Austro War r. 1866 – II. Phase	4	0	168,651.00	168,650.00	1.00	Price lowered through rounding down
8	Oman-Catholic parish Chrudim	Chrudim – revitalisation of the burial grounds of the victims of WWI	108	1	304,932.00	304,932.00	0.00	
9	Municipality Šonov	Šonov – repair of the memorial to the victims of WWII	0	1	71,292.00	71,292.00	0.00	
10	Municipality Slopné	Slopné – repair of the memorial to the victims of WWI	0	1	92,000.00	92,000.00	0.00	
11	Municipality Jinačovice	Jinačovice – repair of the memorial to the victims of world wars	0	1	96,877.00	96,877.00	0.00	
12	Municipality Měrotín	Měrotín – repair of the war grave of the victims of WWI	1	0	125,543.00	124,209.00	1,334.00	Lower price achieved through tender
13	Municipality Nové Town	Nové Town – repair of the memorial to the victims of WWI	0	1	99,920.00	99,920.00	0.00	
14	Municipality Úhlejov	Úhlejov – repair of the memorial to the victims of WWII	0	1	79,588.00	73,659.20	5,928.80	Lower price achieved through tender
15	Municipality Štarnov	Štarnov – repair of the memorials of the victims of world wars	0	2	235,030.00	179,632.00	55,398.00	Lower price achieved through tender
16	Town Jilemnice	Jilemnice – repair of the war graves and memorials of the victims of world wars	3	4	174,312.00	174,312.00	0.00	
17	Municipality Břest	Břest – repair of the war grave and memorial of the victims of WWII	1	1	358,400.00	292,064.26	66,335.74	Lower price achieved through tender
18	Municipality Bochoř	Bochoř – repair of the memorial to the victims of world wars	0	1	66,792.00	66,792.00	0.00	
19	Municipality Bzová	Bzová – repair of the memorial to the victims of WWI	0	1	90,400.00	90,400.00	0.00	
20	Municipality Moravské Knínice	Moravské Knínice – repair of the memorial to the victims of WWII	0	1	84,960.00	84,960.00	0.00	
21	Town Zákupy	Zákupy – repair of the war grave of the victims of WWI	1	0	147,200.00	122,162.54	25,037.46	Price lowered through selection of supplier
22	Municipality Jestřábí Lhota	Jestřábí Lhota – repair of the memorial to the victims of WWI	0	1	70,520.00	70,520.00	0.00	
23	Municipality Liberk	Liberk – repair of the memorial to the victims of WWI	0	1	70,567.00	70,567.00	0.00	
24	Town Česká Skalice	Česká Skalice – repair of the war graves and memorials of the victims to the Prussian-Austro War 1866 – III. Phase	6	8	744,071.00	713,482.00	30,589.00	Lower price achieved through tender
25	Municipality Brandýsek	Brandýsek – restoration of a war grave of the victims of WWI	1	0	193,600.00	180,290.00	13,310.00	Presentation of a lower offer
26	Municipality Šlapanov	Šlapanov – restoration of a war grave of the victims of WWI	1	0	314,600.00	314,600.00	0.00	
27	Municipality Křelov-Břuchotín	Křelov-Břuchotín – repair of the memorial to the victims of world wars	0	2	219,303.00	219,303.00	0.00	
28	Municipality Jindřichovice pod Smrkem	Jindřichovice pod Smrkem – repair of the memorial to the victims of WWI	0	1	179,676.00	179,676.00	0.00	

No.	Grant beneficiary	Event	Parameters		Funds awarded	Funds used	Funds returned	Note
			WG	PC				
29	Municipality Haňovice	Haňovice – repair of the memorial to the victims of WWI	0	1	149,749.00	149,749.00	0.00	
30	Municipality Dobrkovice	Dobrkovice – repair of the memorial to the victims of WWI	0	1	172,024.00	172,024.00	0.00	
31	Municipality Blšany u Loun	Blšany u Loun – repair of the memorial to the victims of world wars	0	1	201,430.00	201,430.00	0.00	
32	Prague-Královice district	Prague-Královice – repair of the memorial to the victims of WWI	0	1	120,000.00	120,000.00	0.00	
33	Town Bučovice	Bučovice – repair of the memorial to the victims of the world wars	0	1	100,000.00	100,000.00	0.00	
34	Town Veselí nad Lužnicí	Veselí nad Lužnicí – repair of the memorials to the victims of world wars	0	5	233,675.00	233,675.00	0.00	
35	Town Měcholupy	Měcholupy – repair of the memorial to the victims of WWII	0	1	131,648.00	131,648.00	0.00	
36	Town Čáslav	Čáslav – repair of the ossuary of the victims of WWI – II. Phase	1	0	120,400.00	120,400.00	0.00	
37	Municipality Vřesník	Vřesník – repair of the memorial to the victims of WWI	0	1	155,200.00	130,200.00	25,000.00	Lower price achieved through tender
38	Municipality Vážany	Vážany – reconstruction of the memorial to the victims of WWI	0	1	158,400.00	158,400.00	0.00	
39	Town Nechanice	Nechanice – repair of the war grave and memorial of the victims of the Pruian-Austro War 1866	3	1	324,891.00	324,891.00	0.00	
40	Municipality Drslavice	Drslavice – renewal of the memorial plaque to the victims of WWII	0	1	99,907.00	99,907.00	0.00	
41	Statutory City Brno	Brno – repair of the burial grounds of the victims WWII	1	0	349,351.00	349,351.00	0.00	
42	Municipality Věrovany	Věrovany – repair of the memorial to the victims of world wars	0	1	163,498.00	144,900.00	18,598.00	Lower price won tender
43	Municipality Dětrichov u Moravské Třebové	Dětrichov u Moravské Třebové – reconstruction of the memorial to the victims of WWII	0	1	314,400.00	9,400.00	305,000.00	Limitation of the restoration works
44	Municipality Klášter Hradiště nad Jizerou	Klášter Hradiště nad Jizerou – repair of the memorial to the victims of the world wars	0	1	361,064.00	361,064.00	0.00	
45	Statutární Town Olomouc	Olomouc – repair of the mausoleum of the victims of WWI – III. phase – 1. sub-phase	1	0	2,000,000.00	0.00	2,000,000.00	Implementation extended to 2026
46	Town Třebenice	Třebenice – repair of the memorials to the victims of WWI	0	3	313,922.00	286,193.80	27,728.20	Price lowered through market research
47	Municipality Kotvrdovice	Kotvrdovice – repair of the memorial to the victims of WWI	0	1	164,840.00	164,840.00	0.00	
48	Municipality Melč	Melč – repair of the memorial to the victims of WWI	0	1	178,160.00	178,160.00	0.00	
49	Municipality Račice	Račice – renewal of the memorial to the victims of world wars	0	1	140,069.00	140,069.00	0.00	
50	Prague-Zbraslav district	Prague-Zbraslav – repair of the war grave of the victims of WWII	1	0	795,696.00	795,696.00	0.00	
51	Statutory City of Brno, Ořešín district	Brno – renovation of the memorial to the victims of WWII	0	1	106,592.00	106,592.00	0.00	
52	Municipality Rusava	Rusava – renewal of the memorial to the victims of world wars	0	1	207,031.00	207,031.00	0.00	
53	Municipality Chomutice	Chomutice – repair of the memorial to the victims of world wars	0	1	219,836.00	105,946.00	113,890.00	Lower price achieved through tender
54	Town Sedlice	Sedlice – repair of the memorial to the victims of world wars	0	4	55,624.00	55,624.00	0.00	
55	Municipality Pohledy	Pohledy – repair of the memorial to the victims of WWI	0	1	194,476.00	121,831.00	72,645.00	Lower offer won tender
56	Municipality Vranovice	Vranovice – repair of the memorial to the victims of world wars	0	3	52,000.00	52,000.00	0.00	

No.	Grant beneficiary	Event	Parameters		Funds awarded	Funds used	Funds returned	Note
			WG	PC				
57	Municipality Hříškov	Hříškov – repair of the memorial to the victims of world wars	0	1	594,494.00	594,494.00	0.00	
					12,918,248.00	10,137,633.04	2,780,614.96	

Based on the decision of the Committee, the grants provider further approved the following grants:

- CZK 200,000 for the construction of a memorial to the fallen of WWII. The funds for the project were available in 2023, but the implementation was suspended due to the new position of the memorial.
- CZK 3 million for the reconstruction of a WWI prisoners cemetery owned by the Czech MoD. Given the scope of preparation, the project will be implemented in 2026.
- CZK 1,592,131 for the construction of a commemorative site to the fallen service members of the 43rd Airborne Regiment Chrudim. The project's documentation was issued in 2025 and will be implemented and financed in 2026.

The funding of the above projects is governed by Article 6 of the 10729 Maintenance and renewal of historical values I program, which enables the funding of war graves care within the MoD. The projects will be implemented through the Immovable Property Management Agency.

Unused funds from the 10729 Maintenance and renewal of historical values I program amounted to CZK 15,866.32 in 2025.

Multi-year activities

No.	Grant beneficiary	Event	Parameters		Funds awarded	Funds used	Funds returned	Note
			WG	PC				
1	Municipality Orlík nad Vltavou	Orlík nad Vltavou – repair of the memorial to the victims of WWI	0	1	273,538.00	0.00	273,538.00	Beneficiary requested to close the case
2	Town Měcholupy	Měcholupy – repair of the memorial to the victims of WWII	0	1	250,431.00	250,431.00	3,039.00	Returned on 7 Jan 2026 – lower price achieved through tender
3	Town Krásná Lípa	Krásná Lípa – repair of the memorial to the victims of WWI	0	1	52,800.00	52,800.00	0.00	
					576,769.00	303,231.00	273,538.00	

Unused funds from the 107D291002428 Měcholupy project – repair of the memorial to the victims of WWII were returned on January 7, 2026, to the central account and were remitted back into the state budget.

Financial donations for Czech war graves care abroad

The MoD chapter of the state budget for 2025 allocated a total of CZK 3,850,000.00 for donations for Czech war graves care abroad.

Review of financial donations for Czech war graves care abroad in 2025:

No.	Country	Purpose of the grant	Approved	Used
1	Poland	Czech World War II graves in the Dukla Pass – reconstruction and building of WGs and commemorative sites	1,200,000.00	1,199,999.97
2	Italy	War graves of Austro-Hungarian troops from the current Czech Republic – reconstruction and building of WGs and commemorative sites	600,000.00	599,999.88
3	Serbia	War graves of Austro-Hungarian troops from the current Czech Republic – reconstruction and building of WGs and commemorative sites	1,000,000.00	999,995.61
4	Kazakhstan	War graves of Austro-Hungarian troops from the current Czech Republic – reconstruction and building of WGs and commemorative sites	500,000.00	0
5	United Kingdom	WGs of Czechoslovak RAF pilots F. Hekl and A. Vašátko – building of a commemorative site	300,000.00	299,999.76
6	Austria	Memorial plaque Mauthausen – building of a commemorative site	250,000.00	249,999.91
			3,850,000.00	3,349,995.13

Based on the Resolution of the Government No. 390 of May 28, 2025, five donations were made in the total value of CZK 3,349,995.13. The donation to Kazakhstan amounting to CZK 500,000.00 has not been granted due to

complications in the communication with the local municipality. Kazakhstan requires for the war grave to be registered as a commemorative site in the register of the Ministry of Culture before reconstruction can begin.

Technical upgrade of APE WGCR

The program 10729 Maintenance and renewal of historical values I included in 2025 the activity 107V291008024 – technical upgrade of the application program equipment of the Central War Graves Register. The activity was line with above-mentioned program documentation. The purchase was organised through the Department of Armaments of the Land Forces and Communication and Information Systems of the MoD Armaments and Acquisition Division. The price offer for the tender presented by Z. L. D., spol. s r. o. was CZK 5,336,622.72 including VAT. The funding was allocated to the project within the program.

No.	Service	Price breakdown	Used	Note
1	Technical upgrade of APE WGCR	5,199,786.24	5,199,786.24	
2	Exit strategy activities	136,836.48	0	Not necessary to use exit plan as contract was fulfilled
		5 336 622.72	5 199 786.24	

Outlook for 2026

In 2026, we seek to keep on pursuing the activities and goals that we set when we established the Section in July 2023. The War Graves and Commemorative Sites Care Concept 2025–2029 presents a basic framework for their attainment. We are expecting the process of amendment of the Act No. 122/2004 Coll., on War Graves and Commemorative Sites, modification of the Act No. 256/2001 Coll., on Funeral Services to soon begin as well as the changes in some other laws, as amended. The current act is now over 20 years old, thus, in the amendatory act we will focus on the yet unclear matters of war graves care – family tombs, the graves of the Czech servicemen who fell during the contemporary international peace missions abroad, of the victims of the WWII racial repression, the death-march victims, the victims of the so-called wild expulsion of German inhabitants and others.

In connection with war graves care financing, a new funding programme will most likely be created in order to further provide the war graves owners, i.e. mostly cities and municipalities, with financial resources for war graves care in the form of subsidies. In comparison to the previous programmes, the new one shall take into consideration the financial requirements regarding archaeological research and exhumations and should also solve situations when quick repair of a war grave is needed due to its being damaged by the elements, by accident, or due to other unforeseen reasons. The new programme should ensure the increase in donations for war graves care abroad from the current CZK 5 million to CZK 8 million.

Currently, the modernisation of the Central War Graves Register Public Portal is underway. Its new version will be made available to our colleagues at regional governments and in municipalities with extended powers for testing. We are planning on launching the new version in mid-2026, enabling the public greater involvement in war graves care.

In the first half of the year, we are launching a pilot project aiming at the installation of QR codes on war graves, when almost 500 QR codes shall be distributed among our colleagues in the Sokolov, Náchod, and Prague 3 areas as well as in Slovakia. Marking war graves with QR codes linking to our Central War Graves Register should gradually lead to the addition of various factual details to the individual war graves and especially the fallen, whose names are written on them.

The project of complete digitisation of the War Graves Register Collection stored at the Military Historical Archive overran by two months. After the digitisation is finished at the end of February, we will start digitising the files of WWI victims (the so-called coloured card register).

The European War Heritage Working Group meeting in Prague helped us to establish new contact with key organisations all over Europe. Together with the Austrian Black Cross and the Hungarian representatives of the Military History Institute and Museum, we agreed on the necessity of cooperation in the care of WWI war graves of the Austro-Hungarian soldiers in Italy and the Balkans. An intergovernmental agreement, the first draft of which has been sent to us by the Italian party at the end of 2025, should largely contribute to the progress in the care of not only these Italian war graves. Apart from the intergovernmental agreement with Italy, we are also working on the contents of an intergovernmental agreement with Kazakhstan. Based on the experience with adherence to the previous signed international agreements, we are seeking to enhance the new proposals with unequivocal rules of cooperation based on the establishment of joint inspecting committees which will meet on a regular basis. In 2026, the European War Heritage Working Group meetings will be organised by our partners from the Slovenian Ministry of Defence.

The unfinished projects of the reconstruction of the war grave in Fort-Shevchenko, Kazakhstan, the war grave in Hanoi, Vietnam, the war grave in Start Point, United Kingdom, and the complete reconstruction of the war cemetery in Chodský Újezd in the Karlovy Vary Region have moved into 2026. The funds for the war graves in Vietnam and United Kingdom have already been transferred. The transfer for Kazakhstan has been stalled due to administrative operations required by the Kazakhstan party. Apart from the reconstruction of an existing war grave in Fort-Shevchenko, we have a keen interest in building a central war grave in the central-Asian Tashkent, Uzbekistan. In the case of Chodský Újezd, the documents required to put the project out to tender are still being prepared.

In spite of the ongoing war conflict in Ukraine, we successfully obtained all authorisations necessary for the realisation of a project at the Uzhhorod Na Shakhti military cemetery. It is unique in uniting soldiers from the Czech lands who fell in WWI, Czechoslovak legionaries, and those who fell in the years 1938 and 1939. In autumn 2026, we plan to reveal a war grave in the Polish town of Dukla dedicated to the fallen Czechoslovak soldiers in the Carpatho-Dukla operation, who do not have even a symbolic grave yet. We will also financially support the restoration of the WWI cemetery in the Polish Zubeńsko where 58 soldiers of the “Czech” 74th Infantry Regiment are buried.

In Serbia, the restoration of the Novo Groblje central military cemetery in Belgrade will continue with the help of our partners from Hungary and Austria. Initial negotiations with the representatives of the city of Tirana have commenced regarding the building of a central war grave dedicated to the fallen Austria-Hungarian soldiers coming from the Czech lands and falling in Albania. In the first phase, we want to support the realisation of the war grave with a donation of CZK 400,000. In Slovakia, a war grave should be finished in Banská Štiavnica, possibly even in other places related to the fight for the borders with Hungary during the years 1918–1919. In northern Italy, we still focus on military cemeteries where Austria-Hungarian soldiers fallen during WWI are buried.

It is clear from our abovementioned plans for 2026, that our interest in war graves care extends to many different areas. We shall further continue in this trend in the following years.

Acknowledgements

We wish to wholeheartedly thank our faithful colleagues from the regional governments and municipalities with extended powers for their meticulous and often self-sacrificing work in the field of coordination of war graves care.

Furthermore, we want to express our gratitude to defence attachés, ambassadors, honorary consuls and other cooperating representatives of the diplomatic corps. Finally, we wish to thank our partners from associations, private initiatives and volunteers, simply all those who have contributed to fulfilling our mission.

We believe we will continue developing our successful cooperation productively in the future, as our mission never ends.

This Annual Report was prepared with the contribution of:

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