

The development of vocational schools in Gdynia and the context of their foundation in the Second Polish Republic – a sketch for a portrait of education in Gdynia

Summary

The educational situation in Gdynia in the period between the two wars was exceptionally challenging. A fast growing sea port and the demographic growth of young Gdynia was not matched by the pace of development of the urban infrastructure. The problem concerned the entire educational system which, until September 1st, 1939 when the Second World War started, struggled with a lack of not only space, but also qualified teachers and funding. The situation was particularly difficult in vocational schools. The early ones were set up in 1929 and more were built until 1937. The majority of vocational middle or high schools in Gdynia were focused on trade, mainly training sea-born or international merchants or businessmen. There were also schools training craftsmen and highly qualified shipyard workers, manpower for port, construction and communal services or, in the case of women, seamstresses.

Shortly before the war private or community run schools started to prepare labourers for other professions. Most of these were funded and supervised by the Industry and Trade Chamber. The schools had good infrastructure, but faced problems with attracting enough qualified instructors and funding for their growth, which was interrupted by the Second World War.

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