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Construction of public schools in the wileńskie voivodship in the Second Republic of Poland. Results of preliminary research

Budownictwo szkół powszechnych w województwie wileńskim w latach II RP. Wyniki wstępnych badań

Abstract

Introduction. Between 1918 and 1939, the issue of building schools, above all universal schools, became a priority task for the state, local authorities, and local communities. The introduction of statutory compulsory education resulted in the need to build schools in

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numerous localities, overcoming a number of problems primarily of a financial nature. The aim of this article is to present the process of building schools, their increasing size, and sources of funding.

Aim. This article presents the development of the construction of public schools in the Vilnius province during the years of the Second Republic. The research included an analysis of various documents concerning legislative solutions at the state level, local activities, as well as support of local activities by national organisations and societies.

Method. The research was conducted using the method of qualitative document analysis. The diverse source material was collected both during an archival search in Vilnius and a search of commonly applicable legal acts made through the Internet System of Legal Acts.

Results: The article provides an indication to the number of schools built in the Vilnius district during the years of the Second Republic and attempts to reconstruct their financing.

Conclusion. The effect of the construction (expansion and renovation) of schools in the Second Republic was: 1) the development of the educational network neglected during the Partitions and destroyed during the actions of World War I and in the years 1918–1920; 2) to create conditions for the increasingly full implementation of compulsory schooling; 3) organising a centre for the cultural and educational life of the local community; 4) activating and integrating the inhabitants of the locality.

Keywords: school construction, Second Republic, reconstruction of the Polish state, eastern borderlands.

Abstrakt

Wprowadzenie. W latach 1918–1939 zagadnienie budownictwa szkół, przede wszystkim powszechnych, staje się priorytetowym zadaniem dla państwa, samorządów i lokalnych społeczności. Wprowadzenie ustawowego obowiązku nauki skutkowało koniecznością budowy szkół w licznych miejscowościach, pokonując przy tym szereg problemów przede wszystkim o charakterze finansowym. Celem artykułu jest zaprezentowanie przebiegu procesu budowy szkół, ich wzrastającej liczebności oraz źródeł finansowania.

Cel. W artykule zaprezentowano rozwój budownictwa szkół powszechnych na terenie województwa wileńskiego w latach II RP. Badania obejmowały analizę zróżnicowanych dokumentów w zakresie rozwiązań legislacyjnych na poziomie państwa, działalności lokalnej, a także wsparcia działań lokalnych przez organizacje i towarzystwa ogólnopolskie.

Metoda. W prowadzonych badaniach wykorzystano metodę jakościowej analizy dokumentów. Zróżnicowany materiał źródłowy został zgromadzony zarówno podczas kwerendy archiwalnej w Wilnie, jak i kwerendy powszechnie obowiązujących aktów prawnych dokonanej za pośrednictwem Internetowego Systemu Aktów Prawnych.

Wyniki. W artykule wskazano liczbę wybudowanych szkół w okręgu wileńskim w latach II RP oraz podjęto próbę zrekonstruowania ich finansowania.

Wnioski. Efektem budowy (rozbudowy i remontów) szkół w II RP było: 1) rozwijanie sieci szkolnictwa zaniedbanego w czasach zaborów oraz zniszczonego w czasie działań I wojny światowej i w latach 1918–1920; 2) tworzenie warunków dla coraz pełniejszej realizacji obowiązku szkolnego; 3) organizowanie centrum życia kulturalno-oświatowego lokalnej społeczności; 4) aktywizowanie i integrowanie mieszkańców danej miejscowości.

Słowa kluczowe: budownictwo szkolne, II RP, odbudowa państwa polskiego, kresy wschodnie.

The inception of the independent state of Poland in 1918 and the subsequent fighting for its borders presented a number of challenges in, among others, the area of schooling. The diverse level of schooling, including elementary schooling, in the lands of the three partitions caused the education and self-government authorities to focus particularly on the questions pertaining to elementary education. Their interest in the lowest level of education resulted from the high level of illiteracy, especially in the so-called “Eastern Borderlands”, and the way to address this problem was the popularization of elementary schools (also for adults). The interest of the national government in the education of children was reflected in the Decree of the Head of the State of February 7, 1919, on school duty, which made it obligatory for school authorities to provide all children aged 7 to 14 with sufficient conditions to fulfil the duty.

In the context of the provision of the proper conditions for education, the situation in the previous Russian-occupied areas was much more difficult than in the regions formerly occupied by Prussia or Austria¹ (Walasek, 2015). First and foremost, the weak network of elementary schools and the destruction caused by the First World War presented Polish society with serious challenges. Construction of schools needed to be undertaken in numerous towns and villages, and a number of difficulties, including financial ones, had to be overcome.

The task was not easy for the poor local urban and rural administrations which required government help.

One should note that having “one’s own” school meant that apart from educational functions, they would also be obliged to serve cultural and social functions to the local communities.

Numerous documents in the archives inform of the effort to build public schools in the wileńskie voivodship. They are stored in the Lithuanian Central National Archive in Wilno [Vilnius]. The documents include correspondence on the subject of construction, design plans and hand-drawn maps of the locations of the schools, construction plans, accounts, reports of the undertaken and completed projects, and photographs of the constructed buildings, registering the work in progress. This above-rich material is dispersed among different archival collections and requires a meticulous research.

A significant supplement is to be found in articles, notes, and notices that were published in the general and pedagogical press in the years 1918–1939. The texts document the discussion on the subject of the construction of schools, the difficulties of the local communities as well as their achievements that were a proof of their success in this area.

¹ In Galicia, the issue of school construction was often mentioned in the press of that time, in which the authors reported on the terrible learning conditions and local initiatives aimed at building a new school.

The government authorities recognised the severe difficulties that the construction of public schools encountered. In February 1922, two acts were published: “On the construction and maintenance of public schools” (Act, 1922, no. 18, pos. 143) and “On the construction of public schools” (Act, 1922, no. 18, pos. 144), which outlined the problems of the financing of the construction of schools. The above acts were accompanied by detailed regulations such as the decree of the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment of April 5, 1922, on the subject of the size and number of rooms in the buildings of public schools, and teachers’ living quarters (Act, 1922, no. 45, pos. 383). In 1930, a Decree of the President of the Republic was issued amending the Act of 17 February 1922 on the construction and maintenance of public schools was published (Act, 1930, no 86, pos. 662).

Unfortunately, each subsequent legal act would present the local societies with new obligations, including financial ones, in the construction of schools. This led to the building projects being drawn out over years, and, in the implementation of the policy of savings poor quality construction materials were purchased and frequently unskilled labour was employed.

The Act of February 1922 (“On the construction and maintenance of public schools”) went into effect in the Lands of Vilnius with the decree of the Council of Ministers of July 11, 1922 (Act, 1922, no. 60, pos. 537). The first year of the functioning of the schooling system in wileńskie voivodship within the borders of Poland (1922) marks the duty of the numerous local self-government authorities for the issues of securing proper conditions for the education of children. One can mention the projects and the applications for, e.g., a brick-built seven-grade school with four parallel departments and a gym and living quarters of the principal and a janitor for 450 children in Oszmiana (*Projekty i wnioski w sprawie budowy szkół powszechnych* [Projects and applications pertaining to the construction of public schools], 1922) or for a 6-grade, brick-built school with teachers’ quarters in the town of Murowana Oszmianka (in Oszmiański Powiat) (*Projekty i wnioski w sprawie budowy szkół powszechnych*, 1922). At the same time, settlements within the radius of 3 km which were assigned to a planned school location were mentioned in the application.

At the beginning of the 1920s, the initiatives pertaining to the construction of schools were erratic. It can be stated that each local community had decided to take action for this aim. These were to result in schools being built.

The aforementioned act of 1922 did not define the sources of financing for schools. In accordance with the Act of the *Ministerstwo Wyznań Religijnych i Oświecenia Publicznego* (hereinafter MWRiOP) [Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment] issued a Circular of April 6, 1922 (Act, 1922, no. 12, pos. 113), in which it was stated that 50% of the cost of the construction of public schools was to

be covered by the boroughs and the remaining 50% by the State Treasury. The reality turned out to be less favourable to the initiators of the construction. The boroughs did not have sufficient funds to cover 50% of all the costs of raising new buildings and the resources of the State Treasury were soon exhausted due to lack of financing from the budget.

What was added to the financial difficulties were the different questions regarding sufficient building plots in the particular localities.

As a result of the agricultural reform of 1920 (Act, 1920, no. 70, pos. 4620) and the act of December 28, 1925, on the execution of the agricultural reform, the plots for the construction of schools were defined (Act, 1925, no. 1, pos. 1). Enumerations from the particular Poviats of the wileńskie voivodship also include information on the subject of building plots outlined before the First World War, which in a few cases were enlarged by land added through the reform. In theory in the defined plots, schools could be raised, however, it would frequently turn out that the plots were being rented by private individuals or institutions. It would also turn out that the plots were located too far from the settlements intended to be connected with the school location, which was why the land could not be used for education.

By the end of 1922, the School Authority of the Oszmiański Powiat informed the School Authority of Vilnius of the decision of the Praedial Office on lands earmarked for parcelling and the dedication of building plots to the construction of schools. The plots were parcelled out of farms: Plebańce and Kajecienięta (Holszańska borough), Niewiaryszki (Krewska borough), and Hawłańce (Polańska borough) (Inspektor Szkolny powiatu Oszmiańskiego do Kuratorium Okręgu Szkolnego Wileńskiego w sprawie przydziału gruntu szkolnego [School Authority of the Oszmiański Powiat to the School Authority of Vilnius on the granting of land for schools], 1922). On the parcelled land the school authorities planned to construct three 3-grade schools and one 7-grade public school. In addition to school buildings it was also planned to build living quarters for teachers and in one case for the school principal.

A letter from the Head Praedial Office to the School Authority includes a list of 32 state farms situated in the wileńskie voivodship intended for parcelling in 1923 (*Pismo Głównego Urzędu Ziemskiego do Kuratorium Okręgu Szkolnego Wileńskiego z 23 XI 1922 r.* [Letter of the Head Praedial Office to the Vilnius School Authority of November 23, 1922], 1922). In reply to the above letter on the parcelling of the lands for the Oszmiański Powiat, the local School Authority indicated three localities in which building plots were to be dedicated to the construction of schools. They were to come from farms Tańszczyzna (Krewska borough), Kamienica (Krewska), and Kurpowo (Bienicka). In the listed localities, it was planned to build 3-grade pub-

lic schools along with quarters for teachers. The listed plots lay fallow (they had been near the front line), and they were not rented.

According to the enumeration of 1923 (*Pismo Głównego Urzędu Ziemskiego do Kuratorium Okręgu Szkolnego Wileńskiego z 23 XI 1922 r.*, 1922) schools in the following Poviats in the lands of Vilnius were listed for renovation: Wileńskotrocki 17 schools; Oszmiański – 9; Święciański – 8; Braślawski – 10; Dziśnieński – 20; Duniłowicki – 22; Wilejski – 35. Numerous schools were undergoing bigger or smaller repairs or were in the course of an overhaul. The latter were prevalent in the assessment of the technical state of the buildings. Two schools had been completely destroyed: in Dryświaty (Braślawski Powiat) and in Postawy (Duniłowicki Powiat).

The situation of the destruction of post-war school buildings and restoring them to the desired state making it possible to conduct classes in them was urgent.

At the beginning of 1923, the Ministry of Public Works issued a letter to, among others, the Delegate of the Cabinet in Vilnius, in which they explained the procedures for submitting applications for financial help in the construction of schools (*Pismo Ministerstwa Robót Publicznych do województw: Okr. Dyr. Robót Publ. W Warszawie, Lublinie, Białymstoku, Kielcach, Krakowie, Lwowie, Tarnopolu, Stanisławowie, Nowogrodku, Łucku i Brześciu n/B; B. Pana Delegata Rządu w Wilnie; C. General. Dyrekcji Odbudowy Okr. Dyr. Odbudowy w Białymstoku, Lwowie, Brześciu i Wilnie, Warszawa 26 stycznia 1923 r.* [Letter of the Ministry of Public Works to the voivodships: District Directors of Public Works in Warsaw, Lublin, Białystok, Kielce, Kraków, Lwów, Tarnopol, Stanisławowo, Nowogródek, Łuck, and Brześć n/B; B. Sir Delegate of Cabinet in Vilnius C. General Reconstruction Management, District Reconstruction Management in Białystok, Lwów, Brześć, and Vilnius, Warsaw January 26, 1923], (1923).). It was stated that the sequence of the reconstruction of public schools was to be defined by District Reconstruction Management offices in cooperation with the respective District School Authorities. In order to achieve this the Management offices and the School Authorities were to produce a list of the damaged schools and assess their condition. The plan of renovation or minor works was to be accepted by District Management. The plans for bigger reconstruction or renovation “ought to be priorly accepted by the MWRiOP” (*Pismo Ministerstwa Robót Publicznych do województw...*, 1923). Additionally in the document, the required documentation taking into account not only the type of the school before it was damaged but also the proposals of raising its organizational level as well as extension are discussed.

As it turned out it was not always feasible to start the reconstruction and renovation of the schools damaged in the war. In March 1924 the Head of the School Authority of the Duniłowicki Powiat informed the Vilnius School Authority (*Inspek-*

tor Szkolny powiatu duniłowickiego do Kuratorium Okręgu Szkolnego Wileńskiego w Wilnie, 30 marca 1924 r. [Head of School Authority of the Duniłowicki Powiat to the Vilnius School Authority March 30, 1924], 1924) of the situation of the building in Dokszyce that had been used as a bakery by a customs battalion and which was subsequently owned by the state border police. As was emphasized in the document, that “[...] in the largest part of the building there are no floors or ceilings and the walls and the doors are damaged. There are no windows or heating furnaces” (*Inspektor Szkolny powiatu duniłowickiego do Kuratorium Okręgu Szkolnego Wileńskiego w Wilnie...*, 1924, p. 9). In the largest room, the previous owners had built a baking oven, and their successors a smithy, which thoroughly ruined the building. The local 7-grade school, which did not have a school building, rented four rooms, which did not meet the needs of the students. This is why it was decided to teach in shifts.

In spite of the difficulties in the years 1922-1925, the boroughs and the councils of the wileńskie voivodship commenced the construction of schools. In the successive three years (1926-1929) no new investments were undertaken and the focus was placed on those previously initiated.

In 1928 in the wileńskie voivodship 54 school rooms were built, and in the following year 57. According to statistical data of November 1, 1929, 93 classes were in various stages of construction (*Budowa szkół powszechnych [Construction of public schools]*, 1930). The number of the constructed rooms did not inform of the constantly increasing shortage of buildings. This fact resulted from the hike in the number of children of school age attending school.

The press would inform of the disastrous conditions for education. The recalled description is not a unique case. “A dozen or so square meters, sixty children, the walls dripping with condensation, the teacher stands in the door all day because there is no place for a chair or a table for her; she is forced to live in a box room, a pigsty if you excuse the expression” (*Prądy w nauczycielstwie [Currents in teaching]*, 1940, p. 6). The teachers also made complaints about the lack of living quarters, and that renting rooms from farmers did not improve their living conditions (Walasek, 2006).

In spite of the limited funds, some of the units of local self-government initiated construction of schools. For example, in 1928 in Dokszyce it was decided to build a 7-grade wooden school but because of the economic necessity there was no intention of fitting the building with any hygiene equipment. No gym or changing rooms were constructed. What was the result of construction on a budget? “The furnaces are already collapsing, the floor is crooked, there is sand falling down from the attic, and the entire structure is clamped together with bars of wood on the inside and the outside for fear of a collapse” (*Wil. Kol.*, 1929, p. 299). In the savings program, cheap materials were used and unskilled labour, who were often performing intervention work was employed.

On the one hand, the drive of the local communities to build schools, and on the other the growing number of school-age children, and constant financial problems, resulted in the MWRiOP allowing the construction of schools out of timber. In those voivodships which were rich in this resource, this made it possible to greatly reduce the costs. Such was the case with wileńskie voivodship. In 1931, the Educational Authority of the Vilnius School District published a Circular on the construction of public schools (Act, 1932, no. 6, pos. 68), which could be made of brick, hollow blocks, wood and clay. The last resource, the cheapest one, was allowed for use in the building of schools of the lower levels: 1- and 2-grade schools.

At the beginning of the 1930s, the discussions about the construction of schools were becoming increasingly intense. The participants would demand greater participation by the state in the financing of this effort. However, these were the times of economic crisis and this fact was reflected in the funds dedicated to this aim in the country's budget. In the budget for the year 1931/32 the amount of PLN 1,000,000 was allocated (currency is *złoty*), and in 1932/33 the funds disappeared. The crisis also influenced the finances of the local administration, furthermore, "boroughs received a new burden in the form of the duty to provide teachers' quarters" (A.b., 1932, pp. 2–3).

Table 1

Funding sources for public state schools in the Poviát of Świąciany in the school year 1930/1931

Świąciański Poviát			
		10000	Loan from State Treasury
Daugieliszki	Construction of school in Budniki	10000	Non-returnable grant from State Treasury
		4600	In the estimated budget of the borough
Dukszty	construction of school in the borough of Dukszty	18169,9	Grant from the School Authority of the School District of Wileńskie
		25536,12	Loan from the National Farmers' Bank
Hoduciszki	Construction of school in Hoduciszki	90,86	Loan
		19512,16	In the estimated budget of the borough
Kołtyniany	Construction of school in in the village of Łusznia	6000	Loan in the estimated budget of the borough
		5000	In the estimated budget of the borough

		44841,59	In the estimated budget of the borough
Mielegiany	Construction of school in Cejziny	35000	Grant of State Treasury; in the estimate budget
		17500	Long-term loan included in the commune budget
Podbrodzie	Construction of school in Ormiany	7809,11	Loan from a private individual (Grygas Androfej)
Święciany	construction of school in the borough of Święciany	5000	Grant from the poviat legislative authority, in the estimated budget of the borough
		84000	In the estimated budget of the borough
Świr	Construction of school in Świr	35000	Grant from the School Authority of the School District of Wileńskie
		12500	Loan for construction of school in Świr
		40000	Grant from State Treasury for construction of school in Świr

Source: Lithuanian Central State Archive in Vilnius (LCVA) f. 51, op.5, no. 543.

The construction of public schools combined the issues of the fulfilment of school duty. According to statistical data in the year 1919/20 50% of the children in the Russian-occupied partition did not attend school. At the same time, it was noted that the prevalent number of schools – 82.9% – were the lowest in the structure, the 1- and 2-grade schools. In accordance with the guidelines in the former Russian partition there needed to be 50 thousand school rooms. In reality, there were only 15 thousand, typically small and rented, which was far from satisfactory.

The question of the fulfilment of the school duty and the necessity to construct schools was recognised by the outstanding pedagogue Marian Falski (1929), who dedicated numerous works to this problem. He wrote about the increasing number of students and the necessity to build new schoolrooms. One of his works, “The needs of public schooling in the times of the intense growth of the number of children” (Falski, 1929), was presented in detail in *Samorząd* [Local government] (Gajzler, 1929). In the same year, there was an article published about the book written by M. Falski in *Przyjaciel Szkoły* [Friend of the School] signed by Sławomir Czerwiński² who wrote: “the work of Mr Falski, compiled with great thoroughness and meticulousness, on the basis of undoubted, trustworthy data is divided into two parts”

² S. Czerwiński – contemporary the Minister of Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment, wrote the introduction to the work of M. Falski.

Table 2
Expenditures for construction of public state schools were found in budget spending reports of the Poviats in the school year 1930/1931 in the wileńskie voivodship

		Brasławski Powiat				Total
Dryświaty 2000	Jody 2700	Miory 6000	Smolwy 1000			11700
Dokszycy 3000	Głębokie 4000	Hołubcze 7103	Jazno 49000	Dziśnieński Powiat		77246
				Mikołajów 2980	Porpliszczę 2997	
				Mołodeczański Powiat		
Krasne 900					Plissa 4240	900
					Szarkowszczyzna 3481	
Dziewieniszki 5000	Soly 2000			Oszmiański Powiat		7000
				Postawski Powiat		
Postawy 34000	Woropajewo 9000	Zośnia 15000				58000
				Święciański Powiat		
Hoduciszki 10000	Kołtyniany 5000	Mielegiany 52500	Święciany 5000	Świr 4000		76500
				Wilejski Powiat		
none				Wileńsko-Trocki Powiat		0
				Olkieniki 6000	Turgiele 1000	
Gierwiaty 2000	Mejszagola 10000	Mierzwińska 5000		Rudziska 6000		30000

Source: Lithuanian Central State Archive (LCVA) f. 51, op. 5, no. 543; LCVA f. 51, op. 5, no. 558; LCVA f. 51, op. 5, no. 560.

(St. C., 1929, pp. 775–776): in the first part calculations of the needs of schooling are presented, and the second part contains detailed tables, with their content connected with the first part.

In 1936 M. Falski published an article in *Oświata i Wychowanie* [Education & Upbringing] in which he defined the number of 46 thousand school rooms in all of Poland while stating that “the shortage presents itself quite differently in various parts of the country: in the central regions and in the east it reaches 75–80%” (Falski, 1936), taking into account the school rooms which were not rented.

In 1935 in an article published in *Oświata i Wychowanie* (B., 1935) the author points out that the “minimum programs for the construction of public schools developed by the MWRiOP only organized the question at its basis” (B., 1935, p. 502) and he adds that “counting on the help of the State Treasury, in laudable enthusiasm frequently buildings were constructed without consideration for their location within the network” (B., 1935, p. 503).

Starting in the second half of the 1930, the situation of the construction of schools was beginning to improve. The Polish economy was recovering. One can also see the increased interest of the government and school authorities in the problem. This tendency was reflected in the meetings and discussions with the representatives of the highest structures of the government. What was of greatest importance, however, was that the funding allocated to the construction of schools was increased.

Results of the undertaken actions were regularly published in, among others, the journal *Oświata i Wychowanie*, which was published by MWRiOP. Data pertaining to the increase in the number of classrooms was published, and the needs pertaining thereto were defined.

The recurring issue of financial difficulties led to society taking the initiative (Walasek, 2016). The idea of the support of the project of the construction of schools was the main aim of the work of the *Towarzystwo Popierania Budowy Publicznych Szkół Powszechnych* (hereinafter TPBPSP) [Association for the Support of the Construction of Public Schools] which was established in 1933.

The efforts of the Association concentrated on financial support for the construction works was met with general acceptance which was reflected in donations from the society to help the schools as well as a number of individuals directly involved in the work of the Association. By the end of 1936, the number of the clubs in the Vilnius District of the TPBPSP was 1,081, and there were 14,582 regular members (*Sprawozdanie z działalności Towarzystwa Popierania Budowy Publicznych Szkół Powszechnych za rok 1937 i plan pracy na rok następny* [Report on the work of the Association for the Support of the Construction of Public Schools for the year 1937 and the plan for next year], 1938).

In 1934 the Association dedicated PLN 225 thousand to the construction of schools and school equipment in the wileńskie district in the form of loans and subsidies. The sum did not cover all the needs, but the charity and the effort need to be appreciated. “Only in concrete circumstances can one see what it means to move a small amount of money to an area of poverty or an area uncoordinated by the state, what social help means for people too weak to carry the burden they have undertaken” (B., 1935, p. 504).

Applications for loans and subsidies that were submitted to the Association for the year 1935/36 exceeded the budget by 100%. PLN 766,000 was allocated to the wileńskie voivodship, which covered 37% of the amount needed for the construction of schools. In the successive years, the amount of the loans and subsidies was not as high. In 1937 the Association granted the Vilnius District of TPBPSP interest-free loans for the construction of schools and, purchasing school equipment and teaching aids, in the amount of PLN 289,800 and PLN 18.213 in subsidies (*Sprawozdanie z działalności Towarzystwa...*, 1938). These funds allowed for the completion of the building of 36 schools (including 8 brick-built and 38 wooden ones) and the beginning of the construction of 42 schools (15 brick-built and 27 wooden)³ (*Sprawozdanie z działalności Towarzystwa...*, 1938).

As it was emphasized since the second half of the 1930s the financial situation of the state and, thus, that of the boroughs, improved significantly. The help of the TPBPSP fulfilled the financial needs of the construction effort. That is why one could observe the increasing activity of the particular localities in undertaking the initiative to organize their own schools. It was often that the construction plans required a correction of the assignment of the villages to the particular schools.

The building of the school in Woroncza (Cyryn borough, Nowogródzki Powiat) which was initiated in 1938 may serve as an example (Inspektor Szkolny w

³ The construction of schools was completed in the districts: Dziśnieński (4 wooden schools), Oszmiański (1 wooden school), Postawski (1 wooden school), Święciański (1 brick-built school), Wilejski (3-wooden), Wileński-miejski [Vilnius-urban] (1-brick-built), Baranowicki (3-wooden), Lidzki (1-brick-built and 2-wooden), Nieświeski (3-wooden), Nowogródzki (2-wooden), Słonimski (1-brick-built and 4-wooden), Szczuciński (2-wooden), Wołczyński (1-wooden), Grodzieński (2-wooden), Suwalski (1-brick-built) and Wołkowyski (3-brick-built). The construction of schools was initiated in the districts: Braślawski (1-wooden), Oszmiański (1-brick-built and 1-wooden), Postawski (2-brick-built), Wilejski (1-wooden), Wileńskim-miejski (1-brick-built), Wileńsko-Trocki (1-brick-built and 1-wooden), Baranowicki (3-wooden), Lidzki (1-brick-built and 1-wooden), Nieświeski (2-brick-built and 2-wooden), Nowogródzki (1-brick-built and 3 – wooden), Słonimski (1-brick-built and 1-wooden), Szczuczyński (2-wooden), Wołczyński (5-wooden), Grodzieński (4-brick-built and 1-wooden) and Suwalski (1-brick-built and 4 – wooden).

Nowogródka do Kuratorium Okręgu Szkolnego Wileńskiego w Wilnie [Head of the School Authority in Nowogródek to the District School Authority in Vilnius], 1938). In a letter, the location for the school was described as a square of 2 ha in Woroncza at the crossing of Woroncza-Tuhanowicze and Woroncza-Rowiny roads. The future school was to provide the children from the villages included in the plan with a relatively short journey to school of no more than 3 km. As it was added in the letter, “the school in this location will serve as a focal point from which education shall radiate far and wide” (Inspektor Szkolny w Nowogródka do Kuratorium Okręgu Szkolnego Wileńskiego w Wilnie, 1938). The borough council also made a decision to include the villages, settlements, and farms mentioned in the document in the planned area. It was stated that the local population was enthusiastic about the construction of the level III school and they would be happy to have their children attend the classes. The aforementioned resolution of the borough authorities in Cyryn on February 5, 1938, was unanimously accepted by the Poviát Department in Nowogródek. The plan of the financing of the construction included PLN 8,200 in resources, PLN 1,000 in donations from the inhabitants of Woroncza and its vicinity, as well as a PLN 34,750 subsidy from the State Treasury. The entire construction cost was PLN 43,950 (Inspektor Szkolny w Nowogródka do Kuratorium Okręgu Szkolnego Wileńskiego w Wilnie, 1938). The square indicated by the borough located in Woroncza near the parish church was changed by the Poviát Department to a square of the same size which was the property of Izabela Lobańska. A minor correction was introduced to the list of the villages within the school area.

The placement of a school area in a village and the increase in the number of students required the construction of a new building. The boroughs would increasingly often underline the duty to take care of hygiene in schools and attention was drawn to how the schools were still too small and lacked facilities. The local communities would not accept dispersed and rented classrooms in which the conditions hardly resembled a modern school. At the beginning of 1939 at the meeting of the Council of the Lubcz Borough (Nowogródzki Poviát) a plan to build a school in Weresków and raise its organizational level was submitted to school authorities. The argument in favour of the project was the fact the school building as well as the rented classrooms were too small and that was why it was impossible to meet the requirements of the guidelines for schools. Furthermore, the small classrooms could not accommodate all those who wished to study and the bad conditions had a negative impact on the health of children and teachers. It was decided, therefore, that the community of the village Wereskowo would initiate the construction of a new school. The decision was accepted unanimously at the sitting of the Borough Council on August 25, 1939.

The history of a minute part of the effort of the schooling in wileńskie voivodship presents the problems school and self-government authorities had to face. These were chiefly the problems of the north-eastern borderlands: the implementation of the school duty and the place where it was to be carried out, i.e., the schools. The wartime destruction and the general lack of schools led to the works being conducted in two directions. The first was reconstruction, the second was the construction of new schools and the organisation of a proper network of schools. The common issue for the two approaches was the difficulty with financing, which would slow down or render impossible the carrying out of the construction plans. In spite of these problems it was possible to realize the plans, thanks to the efforts of the self-government authorities, the Association for the Support of the Construction of Public Schools, and the state. A network of new and modern schools was built in the wileńskie voivodship.

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