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## **Personnel policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the period of formation of the foreign service of the Second Polish Republic – posts and official ranks, remuneration, dismissal of the staff**

### **Introductory remarks**

Poland regained independence and became the subject of the international law in November 1918. It was made possible by the course and results of the World War, and the efforts of Polish patriots. The foreign service was formed in the intricate internal circumstances, and Polish diplomatic and consular experience was modest. It was the need of specific legal regulations, sufficient funds, and adequately prepared personnel. The staff and management of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were shaped up to mid-1919, therefore, it was the most difficult time, when existing foreign missions submitted to the Polish National Committee in Paris were subordinated to the Government in Warsaw, and new foreign missions were settled<sup>1</sup>. The recruitment of the staff for the ministry was a two-way process. It was due to the operation of two centers implementing Polish foreign policy that time: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Warsaw (hereafter: MFA) and the Polish National Committee in Paris (hereafter: PNC)<sup>2</sup>. Both centers were guided by different criteria referring to the selection of the staff. It was standardized after the PNC has been

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<sup>1</sup> See more in J. Słyszewska, *The history of Polish diplomacy. The Supreme National Committee in the period of 1914–1918 and some unofficial efforts to recognize the Polish sovereignty*, „Studia Prawnoustrojowe” 2022, No. 58, pp. 505–512, DOI: 10.31648/sp.8204.

<sup>2</sup> About the recruitment of the staff and requirements for candidates to work at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Polish diplomacy see more in eadem, *Personnel policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the period of formation of the foreign service of the Second Polish Republic. Recruitment of the staff and requirements for candidates to work in the department*, „Studia Prawnoustrojowe” 2023, No. 62, pp. 459–474, DOI: 10.31648/sp.9283.

staffed<sup>3</sup>. The legal criteria for admission to work in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were not raised and framed until 1922, or more precisely – 1 April 1922, when *Ustawa o państwowej służbie cywilnej* (Act on the State Civil Service) came into force<sup>4</sup>.

The present article is a part of a wider research and a series of articles concerning the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the interwar period<sup>5</sup>. The main purpose of this article is to present some major aspects of the personnel policy (posts and official ranks, remuneration, dismissal of the staff) pursued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs starting since 1918. Up to 1926, the basic normative acts had been drafted, and the network of foreign diplomatic and consular had been created. Unfortunately, because the modest scope of this article does not allow for an exhaustive treatment of the subject, the present work is contributory in nature, and only the first few years of independence are taken into closer consideration.

The main questions the present study aims to answer are: What were the posts and official ranks in the newly created Polish foreign service? What were the remuneration determinants and practices? What was the politics concerning the staff reduction? In this study the historic-descriptive method of theoretical analysis and legal methods (including formal legal method) were applied in order to address the research questions and to reach the conclusions. The work consists of three parts. At first, there is a short exposition of the categories of officials (posts and ranks). Then, the rules of the pay of diplomatic and consular staff are taken into closer consideration.

The activities of the Polish foreign service in the interwar period have been the subject of the rich scientific literature. Particularly noteworthy are

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<sup>3</sup> See, e.g. AAN, KNP, sygn. 170, Pismo kierownika Wydziału Konsularnego MSZ Władysława Mazurkiewicza do KNP z 28 stycznia 1919 r. [The letter of the head of the Consular Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Władysław Mazurkiewicz, to the PNC, 28 January 1919]; AAN, Archiwum Paderewskiego, sygn. 822, List szefa biura Sekretariatu Generalnego KNP Tadeusza Romera do Stanisława Plessow-Pol z 5 marca 1919 r. [The letter of the head of the office of the General Secretariat of the PNC Tadeusz Romer to Stanisław Plessow-Pol, 5 March 1919]; W. Skóra, *Rekrutacja kadr do służby konsularnej w Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej (1918–1939)*, [in:] W. Hładkiewicz, M. Szczerbiński (eds.), *Nadzieje, złudzenia, rzeczywistość. Studia z historii Polski XX wieku. Księga dedykowana profesorowi Tadeuszowi Wyrwie*, Gorzów Wielkopolski 2004, pp. 84–85.

<sup>4</sup> *Ustawa z dnia 17 lutego 1922 r. o państwowej służbie cywilnej* [Act of 17 February 1922 on the State Civil Service], (Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland RP 1922, No. 21, item 164). Previously, the provisions of *Reskrypt Rady Regencyjnej z 20 czerwca 1918 r.* [Rescript of the Regency Council of 20 June 1918, containing temporary service regulations for public servants, had been applied in matters of personnel policy], (Journal of Laws of the Polish State 1918, No. 6, item 13), *Tymczasowe przepisy służbowe dla urzędników państwowych* [Temporary service regulations for public servants].

<sup>5</sup> See, e.g. J. Słyszewska, *Polityka kadrowa Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych w kształtowaniu się służby zagranicznej w II RP*, [in:] E. Hull, E. Sokalska (eds.), *Państwowość konstytucyjna XIX i XX wieku*, Olsztyn 2015, pp. 27–54.

the synthetic studies devoted to Polish diplomacy in the mentioned period, which present many aspects of the activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' headquarters, diplomatic and consular posts, and diplomatic and consular staff<sup>6</sup>. As far as the most important published sources are concerned, there should be noticed *Dziennik Ustaw RP* (Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland), *Dziennik Urzędowy MSZ RP* (Official Journal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), and *Dziennik Praw Państwa Polskiego* (Journal of Laws of the Polish State). Very important documents are preserved in Archiwum Akt Nowych in Warsaw (the Archive of New Files in Warsaw, hereafter: AAN). Particularly important seem to be the sets of files gathered in Archiwum Akt Nowych in Warsaw, i.e. Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych 1918–1939, Komitet Narodowy Polski, Kancelaria Cywilna Naczelnika Państwa, the sets of Polish diplomatic and consular representations, as well as Archiwum Ignacego Paderewskiego (Ignacy Paderewski Archive), and Akta Leona Wasilewskiego (The files of Leon Wasilewski).

## Posts and official ranks

In the period before 1926, Poland had established 34 diplomatic posts, including two embassies and 118 consular posts (consular departments

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<sup>6</sup> About the activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (headquarters, diplomatic and consular posts, and diplomatic and consular staff) see, e.g. P. Łossowski, *Dyplomacja Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej. Z dziejów polskiej służby zagranicznej*, Warsaw 1992; idem, *Dyplomacja polska 1918–1939*, Warsaw 2001; E.J. Palyga, *Stosunki konsularne Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, Warsaw 1970; P. Łossowski (ed.), *Historia dyplomacji polskiej*, Vol. 4: 1918–1939, Warsaw 1995; W. Skóra, *Służba konsularna Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej. Organizacja, kadry i działalność*, Toruń 2006; idem, *Czy resort spraw zagranicznych II Rzeczypospolitej był zdominowany przez arystokrację i ziemiaństwo?*, [in:] R. Wapiński (ed.), *Polacy i sąsiedzi – dystanse i przenikanie kultur*, part 3, Gdańsk 2002; idem, *Rekrutacja kadr do służby konsularnej w Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej...; Jana Drohojowskiego wspomnienia dyplomatyczne*, Kraków 1972; J. Gawroński, *Dyplomatyczne węgry*, Warsaw 1965; idem, *Moja misja w Wiedniu*, Warsaw 1965; idem, *Wzdłuż mojej drogi. Sylwetki i wspomnienia*, Warsaw 1968; W. Günther, *Pióropusz i szpada. Wspomnienia ze służby zagranicznej*, Paris 1963; T.G. Jackowski, *W walce o polskość*, Kraków 1972; A. Wasilewski, *Polska Służba Konsularna 1918–1939 (akty prawne, organizacja, działalność)*, Toruń 2004; K. Szczepanik, *Dyplomacja Polski 1918–2005: struktury organizacyjne*, 2 edn., Warsaw 2005; K. Morawski, *Wczoraj: pogadanki o niepodległym dwudziestolecu*, London 1967; idem, *Wspólna droga z Rogerem Raczyńskim. Wspomnienia*, Poznań 1998; idem, *Tamten brzeg. Wspomnienia i szkice*, Warsaw 1996; A. Wysocki, *Tajemnice dyplomatycznego sejfu*, ed. W. Jankowerny, Warsaw 1988; idem, *Na placówce dyplomatycznej w Sztokholmie 1924–1928. Wspomnienia*, ed. P. Jaworski, Toruń 2004; P. Wandycz, *Aleksander Skrzyński – minister spraw zagranicznych II Rzeczypospolitej*, Warsaw 2006; M. Gmurczyk-Wrońska, *Stanisław Patek w dyplomacji i polityce (1914–1939)*, Warsaw 2013; W.T. Drymmer, *Wspomnienia*, part 2–4, „Zeszyty Historyczne” 1974, Vol. 28–30; P. Długolecki, K. Szczepanik (eds.), *Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych II Rzeczypospolitej. Organizacja, polityka, ministrowie*, Warsaw 2014; cf. J. Słyszewska, *Personnel policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs...*, pp. 460–461.

at embassies, full-time consulates, honorary consulates or consular agencies). The basic division of the Ministry headquarters and the network of foreign missions were established during the first three years of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs operation, and they were perfected in the following years<sup>7</sup>.

According to Ustawa z dnia 17 lutego 1922 r. o państwowej służbie cywilnej (Act of 17 February 1922 on the State Civil Service)<sup>8</sup>, the state functionaries were divided into civil servants and lower state functionaries. Based on Articles 11 and 17 of the Act, the Council of Ministers issued Rozporządzenie z dnia 26 czerwca 1924 r. o ustanowieniu tabeli we władzach i urzędach państwowych (Ordinance of 26 June 1924 on the establishment of tables of the state authorities and offices)<sup>9</sup>, according to which the respective positions, titles and official ranks (from I – the highest, to XII – the lowest) were established for the individual authorities and offices of the Republic of Poland.

The first category included officials belonging to ranks I to VIII; the second – from IX to X; and the third – from XI to XII. Appointment to the posts of the first four ranks was reserved for the President of the Republic of Poland, above rank VI – the consent of the Prime Minister was required, and for the remaining ranks – appointment depended on the relevant supreme authorities. The position of Minister was an out-of-category position in the second rank, while the following positions and titles and ranks were assigned to the first rank of officials: at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs headquarters: Undersecretary of State – III official rank; Department Director – II–IV official rank; Director of Diplomatic Protocol – IV–V official rank; Head of Department – IV–VI official rank; Ministerial Counsellor and Deputy Director of Diplomatic Protocol – V–VI rank; Legal Secretary – VI–VIII official rank, and in diplomatic and consular representations: Ambassador and Extraordinary Envoy and Minister Plenipotentiary First Class – Third Grade of Service; Commissioner General of the Republic of Poland in Gdańsk – Third – Fourth Grade of Service; Extraordinary Envoy, Minister Plenipotentiary Second Class, and Consul General First Class – Fourth Grade; Extraordinary Envoy and Minister Plenipotentiary Third Class and Minister Resident – Fifth Grade; Deputy Commissioner General of the Republic of Poland in Gdańsk, Legation Counsellor First Class, Consul General Second Class – V service rank; Legation Counsellor Second Class, Secretary of the Post, Consul First and Second Class – VI service rank; Secretary of the Post Second Class, Vice Consul First

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<sup>7</sup> J. Słyszewska, *Personnel policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs...*, p. 471.

<sup>8</sup> Ibidem, amendments to the Act: Act of 28 July 1922 (Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland 1922, No. 67, item 606); Act of 21 March 1924 (Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland 1924, No. 29, item 286); Act of 31 March 1925 (Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland 1925, No. 43, item 294).

<sup>9</sup> Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland 1924, No. 64, item 63.

and Second Class – VII service rank; Attaché of the Post and Consular Attaché – VIII service rank.

The following officials were classified in the second category: at headquarters: chief accountant – VI–VII service grade; assessor and accountant – VII–VIII service grade; treasurer and controller – VIII–IX service grade; secretary – X–IX service grade; accounting assistant – X service grade, while at foreign missions: Chief Accountant – VII service rank; Consular Secretary First Class and Accounting Assessor – VII–VIII service rank; Treasurer and Controller – VIII–IX service rank; Consular Secretary Second Class – IX–X service rank; Accounting Assistant – X service rank.

The third category included, at the head office: head of the registry – VI I–VIII official rank; intendant and assistant registrar – VIII–IX official rank; registrar – IX–X official rank; accountant – X–XI–XII official rank; cashier – XI–XII official rank; and at overseas posts: head of registry – VIII–IX service rank; assistant registrar – IX–X service rank; registrar – X–XI service rank; accountant – XI–XII service rank; registrar – XI–XII service rank.

## Remuneration

The amount of the remuneration related to the position and rank. In some way it also depicted the official's career. The official hierarchy of MFA employees was quite complicated, and it was established based on three determinants: education (three categories), positions, titles, and ranks assigned to them (twelve). The status of diplomatic staff was also held by the heads of military attachés. The post of military attaché corresponded to the rank of legal counsellor, acting as chargé d'affaires, and his assistant - to the rank of secretary of the ministry of the appropriate rank<sup>10</sup>. The amount of remuneration received depended on the assignment to the relevant emolument category, which strictly defined the upper limit of the salary rate for ministry officials. The remuneration to which officials were entitled corresponded to the position and post occupied and could not have exceeded this rate (it could only be lower)<sup>11</sup>. As an official was promoted and moved to a higher category, his or her remuneration category automatically increased.

In December 1918, the Ministry drew up a table and rules of the pay of diplomatic and consular staff<sup>12</sup>. Officials were included in pay categories from

<sup>10</sup> W. Michowicz, *Organizacja polskiego aparatu dyplomatycznego w latach 1918–1939*, [in:] P. Łossowski (ed.), op. cit., p. 28.

<sup>11</sup> Instrukcja biurowa Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych [Office instructions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs], Official Journal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1922, No. 12, item 85.

<sup>12</sup> AAN, Akta Leona Wasilewskiego [The files of Leon Wasilewski], sygn. 67, k. 15–18; Okólnik MSZ nr 33 z dnia 12 grudnia 1918 r. Tabela i zasady płac w MSZ [MFA Circular No. 33 of 12 December 1918. Table and salary rules in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs]; AAN, MSZ, sygn.

I to XI. The Minister of Foreign Affairs was classified in pay category II, with a basic salary of 1,500 marks plus allowances: representation expenses (500 marks) and a 500-mark war allowance for the city of Warsaw. Undersecretary of State (salary category III) received 1,200 marks in basic salary plus 200 marks in representation allowance plus 400 marks in war allowance; heads of sections (salary category IV) – 1,050 marks in basic salary and 350 marks in war allowance. Heads of departments constituted pay category V a with a basic salary of 900 marks and 300 marks of war allowance; ministerial councillors – pay category V b (basic salary of 750 marks plus 250 marks of war allowance; pay category VI included senior clerks and the head of accounts (with a basic salary of 600 marks plus 200 marks of war allowance); desk clerks, lecturers and confidential case handlers constituted category VII; junior desk clerks, translators, diplomatic couriers, spark deposition control agents, and stenographers – VIII; and categories IX–XI included other personnel: secretaries, clerks, typists, archivists, and telephonists (in these categories the monthly wage was between 150 and 300 marks per month).

In foreign posts, in addition to the basic salary, employees were entitled to a foreign allowance (of the same amount), a local and high-cost allowance (up to a set amount depending on the rank of the pay category) and, for some, a representation allowance, the amount of which depended on the employee's rank and the location of the mission (there were 3 classes of location). For example: the salary of a 1st class deputy (3rd pay category) was 1,200 marks, plus 1,200 marks for the foreign allowance, plus a maximum of 1,000 marks for the local and dearness allowance and between 1,600 and 4,000 marks for the representation allowance (a total of 4,000 to 7,400 marks per month). The remuneration of a 1st class legal counsellor (pay category – Va) ranged from 1,800 marks to 2,550 marks (salary 900 marks, foreign allowance 900 marks, up to 750 marks of dearness allowance). The secretary of a class II deputation (pay category VII) received a maximum salary of 1,050 to 1,550 marks (525 basic salary, 525 foreign allowance, up to 500 marks local and high-cost allowance).

Consequently, in the consular service, the salary of a consul-general (pay category V a) was 900 marks, the foreign allowance 900 marks, the local and dearness allowance up to 750 marks and the representation allowance from 600 to 1,050 marks (a total of 2.4 thousand to 4,050 marks per month). Consul 1st class (pay category V a) received a total of 1,980 to 3,450 marks (750 salary, 750 foreign allowance, up to 750 local and foreign allowance and 480 to 1.2 thousand representational allowance). Consul 2nd class (pay category VI)

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12490, k. 3, Preliminarz budżetowy za I półrocze 1919 r. [Budget estimates for the first half of 1919].

received a total of 1520 to 2750 marks (600 marks salary, 600 foreign allowance, up to 750 local and foreign allowance and 320 to 800 marks representation allowance). A class II secretary (wage category VIII) received 375 marks of salary, 375 foreign allowance, up to 500 marks of local and high-cost allowance (a total of 750 to 1,250 marks per month).

The amount of the foreign allowance (in 1921 it was divided into five categories) and the high-cost allowance depended on the cost of living in the country, and the nature of service in the foreign office. In addition, officials starting work were entitled to an installation allowance equivalent to one salary. This was only available to permanent officials (contract and probationary staff were not eligible). Since January 1923, an entertainment allowance was granted to heads of diplomatic missions and counsellors-in-waiting (the budgets of diplomatic offices included a special item – the ‘entertainment fund’). They received it to cover all expenses of a representational nature<sup>13</sup>.

Salary at the ministry was very modest, especially in the early years. Edward Ligocki, chargé d'affaires of the embassy in Bern, recalls that in “those days diplomacy was inaccessible to people of more modest means. It forced one to be in high society, to associate with rich idlers, to be constantly invited to each other’s dinners and lunches (...)”<sup>14</sup>. At the turn of 1921 and 1922, due to inflation, wages were paid twice a month: on the first day of the month – the full amount of the wages received in the previous month, and on the 20<sup>th</sup> – an adjustment<sup>15</sup>. In order to save money, salaries were further reduced. There were some protests of the officials – e.g. on 22 April 1922, the chargé d'affaires in Kharkiv, Franciszek Pułaski criticized the reduction of the salaries of the legation and commercial councillors of the Ukrainian embassy, saying that ‘this was morally detrimental to these officials’ – and sarcastically added: “I don’t think the Ministry is giving us any special privileges. We have had enough of these privileges in the form of typhoid, tight lives, and lack of the most elementary cultural needs. We only want fair treatment”<sup>16</sup>. In 1923,

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<sup>13</sup> During the vacation leave or a business trip outside the country lasting less than 10 days, the official was entitled to  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the allowance to which he was entitled ( $\frac{1}{3}$  accrued to the replacing official and the remaining  $\frac{1}{3}$  constituted a budgetary saving). In the event of prolonged leave and business travel, the official lost the right to the allowance, and the remaining  $\frac{2}{3}$  constituted a budgetary saving – see: Okólnik w przedmiocie dodatku reprezentacyjnego do poborów urzędników podległych MSZ urzędów zagranicznych z dnia 10 stycznia 1923 r. [Circular on the representation allowance to the remuneration of officials of foreign offices subordinate to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 10 January 1923], Official Journal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1923, No. 1, item 10. However, according to Wojciech Skóra, the issue of the representation fund for consular officials was not settled until four years later – W. Skóra, *Stuzba konsularna...*, p. 258.

<sup>14</sup> E. Ligocki, *Dialog z przeszłością*, Warsaw 1970, p. 202.

<sup>15</sup> S. Schimitzek, *Drogi i bezdroża minionej epoki. Wspomnienia z lat pracy w MSZ (1920–1939)*, Warsaw 1976, p. 46.

<sup>16</sup> Cit. after P. Łossowski, *Dyplomacja Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej...*, p. 47

inflation made wages downright symbolic. Jan Drohojowski recalls that “a monthly salary was a one-off tip in the cloakroom of a European or Bristol”<sup>17</sup>.

Compared to the remuneration of officials employed at headquarters, salaries at overseas posts were considerably higher. On the one hand – going to an outpost was considered a material advancement, on the other hand – being recalled to headquarters was considered a punishment and a demotion. One of Jan Drohojowski’s conclusions after working at headquarters was: “(...) Only those with personal property can work at headquarters. So I considered getting out to an outpost as a plank of life (...)”<sup>18</sup>. We read similar words in Alfred Wysocki’s memoirs: “Since the ministry paid starvation wages and most of the officials did not have their flats and wandered with their families in the suburbs, therefore going to an outpost was a liberation from poverty, it was a reward, and the peak of dreams for each of our colleagues”<sup>19</sup>.

Employees paid part of their remuneration into a pension fund. Under Article 7 of the Law on Pension Emoluments of State Officials and Professional Military Officers of 11 December 1923, all state officials and professional military officers were obliged to pay 3% or 5% of their remuneration for pension purposes. Referring to this article, the MFA instructed the MFA’s foreign service officers to pay the pension levy from 1 October 1923. The rate was paid in the currency in which emoluments were paid according to the current exchange rate of the zloty<sup>20</sup>.

## Dismissal of the staff

The first major reduction took place after *Ustawa o państwowej służbie cywilnej* (State Civil Service Act) came into force. Officials previously accepted for service in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were then verified. Redundancies occurred at the beginning of 1923 and mainly affected foreign posts. They were caused not only by austerity policies or staff verification. The reasons were also local conditions – caused, for example, by the reduction in the number of cases handled (options, re-emigration, etc.). Wojciech Skóra compared the staffing levels at consular posts in January and March 1923 – out of 252 full-time officials employed at consular posts, only 162 remained in March 1923, so the staffing level decreased by 35.7%<sup>21</sup>. The reductions also included contract staff (although not to the same extent as full-time staff). By the re-

<sup>17</sup> *Jana Drohojowskiego...*, p. 43.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>19</sup> A. Wysocki, *Na placówce dyplomatycznej...*, p. 176.

<sup>20</sup> Okólnik z dnia 25 maja 1924 r. w sprawie opłaty emerytalnej od urzędników służby zagranicznej [Circular of 25 May 1924 on the pension levy on foreign service officials], *Official Journal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1924*, No. 61, item 61.

<sup>21</sup> W. Skóra, *Służba konsularna...*, p. 240.



duction of the staff, civil servants were made redundant, some were sent on unpaid leave or transferred to disposable status (during which time civil servants had time to find other work).

Under Article 54 of the State Civil Service Act of 17 February 1922, the Council of Ministers issued *Rozporządzenie z dnia 28 grudnia 1923 r. o przenieszeniu w stan rozporządzalności urzędników Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych* (Ordinance of 28 December 1923 on the transfer into disposable status of officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs)<sup>22</sup>. The Ordinance concerned permanent officials of the Foreign Ministry of the first category of foreign service from rank VII inclusive, who, by order of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, could be transferred to disposable (available) status<sup>23</sup>. The number of such officials could not exceed 25. Transfer into disposable status could take place when, as a result of a change in the organisation of a foreign post or a situation of recall to the country, an official could not be provided with a suitable position of the same service rank at another foreign post, possibly in the internal service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During this period, the official received remuneration following his/her service rank in the internal service of the MFA and could have been called back into active service at any time. If, within six months of his or her reassignment<sup>24</sup>, he or she was not transferred to active service, he or she had to be dismissed from national service (the procedure for dismissal of MFA officials was regulated in a circular of 12 January 1922)<sup>25</sup>.

In December 1924, to find savings in the ministry, a special commission was set up to grade the MFA posts for 1925. The commission was chaired by the Extraordinary Savings Commissioner, Stanisław Moskalewski, and comprised representatives of the MFA, the State Savings Council and the Treasury. The commission was to determine how many and at what rank officials should work in the foreign offices of the MFA. The reduction was considerable, and even some consular posts were closed down<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> Official Journal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1924, No. 1, item 1.

<sup>23</sup> According to Article 54 of the State Civil Service Act, the officials of the Foreign Service were officials of the Polish Missions and Consulates, the Polish Delegation to the League of Nations, the Polish Commissioner General in Gdańsk, and his deputy. All other officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who were on duty abroad were officials of the internal service.

<sup>24</sup> In exceptional situations, with the approval of the Council of Ministers, that period could have been extended but only up to one year.

<sup>25</sup> *Okólnik w sprawie zwalniania ze służby urzędników Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych* [Circular on the dismissal from service of officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs], Official Journal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1922, No. 3, item 20.

<sup>26</sup> AAN, PRM, rkt. 1, t. 8, k. 22–75. Minutes of the Commission's meetings on the grading of posts in the MFA for 1925, dated 18 December 1924, 9 and 21 January 1925. For example, the grading in consular posts was lower than the posts' budgets provided for (e.g. at the Consulate General in London, only two out of three envisaged posts of the first category were filled; in Prague – only two out of four; in Bucharest – one out of three; in Montreal – two out of three).

## Concluding remarks

Significantly, the basic division of the Ministry headquarters and the network of foreign missions were established during the first three years of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs operation. They were perfected in the following years. An assessment of the personnel policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the early years is difficult due to the fact of the fluidity of staff, the frequent changes of ministers, and the constant reorganization of the structure. However, a substantive and competent team was created despite many difficulties because detailed instructions were drafted to regulate personnel matters<sup>27</sup>.

The amount of remuneration related to the position and rank, and salary at the ministry was very modest, especially in the early years. The effective functioning of diplomatic and consular posts depended not only on staff with diplomatic or consular status. A large amount of work was carried out by administrative staff: secretaries, clerks, typists, accounting staff and auxiliary staff of diplomatic and administrative staff: ushers, chauffeurs, messengers, telephone operators, footmen, etc. This category of staff had no legal status. In the event of dismissal, after a one-month notice period, they received no benefits or pension.

Unfortunately, to find some savings, there was a considerable staff reduction at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the 1920s. Political influence usually played a significant part in the filling of senior positions and promotions<sup>28</sup>. Personnel changes made in isolation from the criterion of expertise and under the influence of political groups were not viewed positively. In terms of the number of full-time employees, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was one of the smallest ministries in Poland.

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<sup>27</sup> For more about the Polish officials of foreign service see: *Urzednicy służby zagranicznej Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej 1918–1945. Przewodnik biograficzny*, Vol. 1, prepared by K. Smolana, Warsaw 2020.

<sup>28</sup> S. Schimitzek, op. cit., pp. 54–55.

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## Summary

### **Personnel policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the period of formation of the foreign service of the Second Polish Republic – posts and official ranks, remuneration, dismissal of the staff**

**Keywords:** diplomatic law, foreign politics, personnel, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, diplomatic missions, consular missions.

In the interwar period, the Polish Foreign Service was formed in intricate internal circumstances. Polish diplomatic and consular experience was modest. Specific legal regulations, sufficient funds, and adequately prepared personnel were needed. Significantly, the basic division of the Ministry headquarters and the network of foreign missions were established during the first three years of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs operation. They were perfected in the following years. The main purpose of this article is to present some major aspects of the personnel policy (posts and official ranks, remuneration, dismissal of the staff) pursued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs starting in 1918. The amount of remuneration related to the position and rank, and the salary at the ministry was very modest, especially in the early years. To find savings, there was a considerable staff reduction in the 1920s. However, a substantive and competent team was created despite many difficulties. Detailed instructions were drafted to regulate personnel matters.

## **Streszczenie**

### **Polityka kadrowa MSZ w okresie kształtowania się służby zagranicznej II RP – stanowiska, płace, zwolnienia kadry**

**Słowa kluczowe:** prawo dyplomatyczne, polityka zagraniczna, kadry, Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych, placówki dyplomatyczne, placówki konsularne.

W okresie międzywojennym polska służba zagraniczna kształtowała się w skomplikowanych uwarunkowaniach wewnętrznych. Polskie doświadczenie dyplomatyczne i konsularne było skromne. Potrzebne były konkretne regulacje prawne, wystarczające fundusze i odpowiednio przygotowane kadry. Znamienne, że podstawowy podział centrali resortu i sieć placówek zagranicznych powstały już w ciągu pierwszych trzech lat funkcjonowania Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych. Były one doskonalone w kolejnych latach. Głównym celem niniejszego artykułu jest przedstawienie kilku najważniejszych aspektów polityki kadrowej (etaty i stopnie służbowe, wynagrodzenia, zwalnianie pracowników) prowadzonej przez MSZ, począwszy od 1918 r. Wysokość wynagrodzenia była związana ze stanowiskiem i rangą, a pensje w ministerstwie były bardzo skromne zwłaszcza w pierwszych latach. W celu znalezienia oszczędności w latach 20. nastąpiła znaczna redukcja personelu. Mimo wielu trudności udało się jednak stworzyć merytoryczny i kompetentny zespół. Opracowano szczegółowe instrukcje regulujące sprawy personalne.

