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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 – recruitment of the staff and requirements for candidates to work in the department

Introductory remarks

The efforts of Polish patriots and the course and results of World War I enabled the restoration of the independent Polish state. In November 1918, Poland as a sovereign state became the subject of international law with full legal capacity. Formation of the foreign service took place in some complicated internal circumstances and an extremely intricate international situation. Poland had neither its own diplomatic and consular experience, nor treaty links with other states, nor adequately prepared personnel, adequate legal regulations, or sufficient funds¹. Due to the lack of own traditions and regulations, the experience of other countries should have been taken into closer consideration. The most difficult period was the time up to mid-1919 when the staff and management of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were shaped, and existing foreign missions submitted to the Polish National Committee in Paris were subordinated to the Government in Warsaw. New foreign missions were also settled².

The main purpose of this article is to present some major aspects of the personnel policy pursued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs starting in 1918.

¹ For example, Konstanty Buczyński, appointed in the summer of 1919 by Ignacy Paderewski as Polish Consul in New York, purchased the headquarters of the Polish representation by means of his own funds. See: A. Jaxa-Dębicka, D. Lis-Staranowicz, *Profesor Marek Dębicki – polski prawnik w Kanadzie (1940–2011)*, [in:] P. Majer, et al. (eds.), *Polska myśl prawnicza w XIX i XX wieku*, Olsztyn 2012, p. 108.

² 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.

The starting point is marked by Poland's regaining independence and the establishment of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Significantly, the year 1926 closed a certain stage in the history of Polish diplomacy, during which the most functional organisational shape of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was sought, a network of foreign diplomatic and consular posts was created, and basic normative acts were drafted. Unfortunately, because the modest scope of this article does not allow for an exhaustive treatment of the subject, the present work is contributory, and only the first few years of independence are taken into closer consideration³.

The main questions the present study aims to answer are: What were the criteria to recruit the staff at the newly established Ministry of Foreign Affairs? Was it determined by the appropriate education or by previous experience in the foreign service in other countries, patronage or political influence, and if so, to what extent was the current balance of political power reflected in the personnel policy of the Ministry? In this particular study, the historic-descriptive method of theoretical analysis and legal methods (including the formal legal method) were applied to address the research questions and to reach conclusions. The work consists of two parts. At first, there is a short exposition of the recruitment of the staff during the period of formation of foreign service personnel. Then, the requirements for applicants to work in the foreign service are taken into closer consideration.

The literature review shows that the most important published sources include "Dziennik Ustaw RP", "Dziennik Urzędowy MSZ RP", and "Dziennik Praw Państwa Polskiego". A significant part of the source material can be found in Archiwum Akt Nowych in Warsaw (the Archive of New Files in Warsaw, hereafter: AAN), and it is spread over several dozen sets. Particularly important seems 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 the files of Leon Wasilewski. The activities of the Polish foreign service in the interwar period have also been the subject of rich scientific literature. Particularly noteworthy are 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 staff⁴.

³ About the later period before 1926 see: eadem, *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.

⁴ See, e.g. E.J. Palyga, *Stosunki konsularne Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, Warsaw 1970; P. Łossowski (ed.), *Historia dyplomacji polskiej*, Vol. IV: 1918–1939, Warsaw 1995; P. Łossowski, *Dyplomacja Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej. Z dziejów polskiej służby zagranicznej*, Warsaw 1992; idem, *Dyplomacja polska 1918–1939*, Warsaw 2001; W. Skóra, *Służba konsularna Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*.

Recruitment of the staff in the period of formation of foreign service personnel

At the time of the creation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the recruitment of the staff for the ministry was a two-way process, which was due to the operation of two centres implementing Polish foreign policy that time: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Warsaw (hereafter MFA) and the Polish National Committee in Paris (hereafter: PNC). Both centers were guided by different criteria referring to the selection of the staff. It was standardized after the PNC has been staffed⁵. Among the applicants interested in working in the foreign service, there were few candidates with the right and appropriate education for this type of service (disregarding the personal predispositions so necessary in diplomacy). Władysław Günther recalls that during the first period of its operation, the MFA recruited the staff from three main groups: from former officials in the Austro-Hungarian service, from national activists from the Russian partition (especially those trained in the Petersburg Liquidation Commission under A. Lednicki), and from volunteers from all parts of Poland⁶.

The first recruits of the Ministry of External Affairs (Foreign Affairs) were the men of Józef Piłsudski, those who had previous experience in foreign

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*, cz. III, Gdańsk 2002; idem, *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; A. Wasilewski, *Polska Służba Konsularna 1918–1939 (akty prawne, organizacja, działalność)*, Toruń 2004; K. Szczepanik, *Dyplomacja Polski 1918–2005: struktury organizacyjne*, 2 ed., Warszawa 2005; *Jana Drohojowskiego wspomnienia dyplomatyczne*, Warsaw 1972; J. Gawroński, *Dyplomatyczne wagary*, Warsaw 1965; idem, *Moja misja w Wiedniu*, Warszawa 1965; idem, *Wzdłuż mojej drogi. Sylwetki i wspomnienia*, Warszawa 1968; W. Günther, *Pióropusz i szpada. Wspomnienia ze służby zagranicznej*, Paris 1963; T.G. Jackowski, *W walce o polskość*, Kraków 1972; K. Morawski, *Wczoraj: pogadanki o niepodległym dwudziestoleciu*, London 1967; idem, *Wspólna droga z Rogerem Raczyńskim. Wspomnienia*, Poznań 1998; idem, *Tamten brzeg. Wspomnienia i szkice*, Warsaw 1996; A. Wysocki, *Tajemnice dyplomatycznego sejfku*, ed. W. Jankowerny, Warsaw 1988; idem, *Na placówce dyplomatycznej w Sztokholmie 1924–1928. Wspomnienia*, ed. P. Jaworski, Toruń 2004; M. Gmurczyk-Wrońska, *Stanisław Patek w dyplomacji i polityce (1914–1939)*, Waraw 2013; W.T. Drymmer, *Wspomnienia*, cz. 2–4, „Zeszyty Historyczne” 1974, Vol. 28–30; P. Wandycz, *Aleksander Skrzyński – minister spraw zagranicznych II Rzeczypospolitej*, Warsaw 2006.

⁵ W. Skóra, *Rekrutacja kadr...*, pp. 84–85; see, e.g. AAN, KNP, sygn. akt 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].

⁶ W. Günther, op. cit., p. 24.

service (mostly professionals from the former Austro-Hungarian service, with a few from the Tsarist and German services), those who had worked before for the Polish National Committee, the Supreme National Committee, and the State Department. Senior positions in the ministry (deputies, consuls, department directors at headquarters, etc.) were also bestowed to people who played a significant role in politics, academics – usually without relevant education in diplomacy, law, or other related sciences required to work for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs⁷.

In the foreign missions, mainly in the consulates in the Entente countries, the managerial and lower-level staff were appointed by the PNC. The criteria for recruitment were rather vague; mainly, the appointees were local Polish activists, often citizens of foreign countries, with the knowledge of Polish and the language of the host country and. They replaced the lack of appropriate education and qualifications with experience and knowledge of the problems of Polish exiles. These included the head of the consulate general in Königsberg – Stanisław Srokowski (a geographer and expert on East Prussia), consul in Curitiba – Kazimierz Głuchowski (an editor of Polish-American magazines in the USA before the war), consul general in Olsztyn – Zenon Lewandowski (a pharmacist by profession), consul in Essen Leon Barciszewski (a locksmith by profession), and many others. Despite the difficult beginnings, over time the staff of the foreign service gained experience and routine, and stood at a level similar to other European experienced foreign services⁸.

The leadership of some more important diplomatic missions, due to the contacts established locally and the greater knowledge of local conditions than others, was entrusted to former PNC members. Envoy nominations were signed for: Maurycy Zamoyski (in Paris), Erazm Piltz (in Belgrade), Konstanty Skirmunt (in Rome), Władysław Sobański (in Brussels), Jan Modzelewski (in Bern)⁹. A few were employed in consulates (there was less interest in working in the consular service than in diplomacy): Jan Czaplicki was appointed consul in Zurich; Czesław Andrycz (the head of the Committee's Administrative and Technical Department) was appointed consul in Paris; Tadeusz Garszyński became consul in London¹⁰. The above-mentioned personnel of foreign missions

⁷ P. Wandycz, *MSZ w okresie...*, p. 123.

⁸ Ibidem, p. 128. Kajetan Morawski in his memories confirms the high status of Polish foreign service. Cf. K. Morawski, *Tamten brzeg...*, p. 88.

⁹ P. Wandycz, *MSZ w okresie...*, p. 126.

¹⁰ AAN, KNP, sygn. akt 171, k. 126, Pismo Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych z nominacją C. Andrycza z 6 maja 1919 r. [The letter of the Minister of Foreign Affairs with the nomination of C. Andrycz, 6 May 1919]. Czesław Andrycz did not accept the proposed position – ibidem, sygn. 172, k. 2–3, Pismo Czesława Andrycza, szefa Departamentu Administracyjno-Technicznego KNP do Sekretariatu Generalnego KNP z 1 czerwca 1919 r. [The letter of Czesław Andrycz, Head of the Administrative and Technical Department of the PNC to the General Secretariat of the PNC, 1 June 1919]; ibidem, sygn. akt 171, k. 127, Pismo Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych z nominacją Tadeusza Garszyńskiego na konsula w Londynie z 5 maja 1919 r. [The letter of the Minister

caused dissatisfaction among some members of the public. The press, among others, accused the PNC and Endecja of having too much influence over the staffing the Polish missions and consulates.

The second large group among those employed at the MFA were persons from the former Austro-Hungarian service (not only diplomatic and consular)¹¹. The highest in the hierarchy of the Polish MFA was dr Karol Bertoni (former Austro-Hungarian consul in Brazil), who had held the post of the Director of the Administrative Department¹². Work in the administration of the former Austro-Hungarian monarchy was a recommendation for those applying for a job in the emerging ministry. Appointment to a particular post of envoy or consul was justified in nomination decisions as follows: "He has more than twenty years experience in the Austrian consular service" [trans. J.S.]¹³. He has worked nineteen years in the Austrian consular service, and he passed three Austrian state examinations and an Austro-Hungarian diplomatic examination, and has held the post of sectional counsellor at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Vienna for seven years.

The influence of officials from the former Austro-Hungarian service became apparent during the foundation phase of the Ministry, when some norms and techniques of the office were introduced (e.g. Kazimierz Dunin-Max, a former employee of the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, developed the first diplomatic ciphers and trained a group of co-workers)¹⁴. Initially, the rest of the Ministry's staff treated the former Austrian employees with the evident reserve¹⁵.

of Foreign Affairs appointing Tadeusz Garszyński as consul in London, 5 May 1919]. Garszyński stayed in London up to July 1919. He was replaced by Leon Goldstand – the person who had not been previously associated with the KNP. See: AAN, Ambasada RP w Bukareszcie, sygn. akt 493, k. 234. Okólnik MSZ nr 170 z 11 grudnia 1919 r.: „Skład Poselstw i Konsulatów Rzeczypospolitej z dnia 20 października 1919 r.” [MFA Circular No. 170 of 11 December 1919: “Composition of the Deputies and Consulates of the Republic as of 20 October 1919”].

¹¹ For example, dr Alfred Wysocki, dr Władysław Wróblewski, Aleksander Skrzyński, Władysław Skrzyński, Konstanty Rozwadowski, Zdzisław Okęcki, Stefan Ludwik Grotowski.

¹² E. Raczyński, *Rola Dyplomatów*, „Kultura” 1974, Vol. 11, pp. 72–73. For example, in the General Consulate of the Republic of Poland in Berlin, most the senior staff of the Consulate worked in the former Austrian offices [consul of II-class dr Roman Lazarski, vice-consul Ludwik Rozmysłowski, vice-consul Samuel Feniger, consular secretary Edward Tułasiewicz], see: AAN, AB, sygn. 2993, k. 271–272, Pismo Konsulatu Generalnego RP w Berlinie do Poselstwa Polskiego w Berlinie z 13 października 1921 r., z wykazem urzędników etatowych i kontraktowych urzędu [The letter from the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Berlin to the Polish Embassy in Berlin, 13 October 1921, listing the full-time and contractual officials of the office].

¹³ AAN, KCNP, sygn. 71, k. 3, Wniosek nominacyjny o mianowanie Karola Bertonię na stanowisko Posła Nadzwyczajnego ad personam w Ministerstwie Spraw Zagranicznych [Nomination request for the appointment of Mr Karol Bertoni as an Extraordinary Member ad personam at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs].

¹⁴ For further reading: D. Popławski, *Stosunki bilateralne między Polska i Austrią w dwudziestolecu międzywojennym*, „Stosunki Międzynarodowe – International Relations” 2018, Vol. 54(4), pp. 9–22, DOI: 10.7366/020909614201801.

¹⁵ It should be taken into account that, e.g., the employees of the Berlin embassy did not have a good opinion on their superior. Cf. J. Gawroński *Dyplomatyczne...*, p. 81.

There were made elicited comments on their working methods transferred from their former service¹⁶.

The employment of former Austro-Hungarian officials, especially after several of them had taken up leading positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, raised many objections, both at home and abroad. In March 1919, Józef Ziabicki, the head of the Technical and Communication Section of the MFA, sent a memorandum on the organisation of the ministry to Prime Minister Ignacy Paderewski: “as for the qualifications of officials, here we must confine ourselves to minimal demands. Good intentions and a lack of work are bringing in candidates; qualified individuals are scattered through the offices and represent the necessary element to train the rest. Former officials from the Austrian partition are unsuitable to fill the Ministerial offices completely, for while they possess routine, it is foreign and cannot replace knowledge of local conditions and a willingness to train” [trans. J.S.]¹⁷. Władysław Skrzyński, who willingly accepted them to serve in the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was blamed for such a situation. However, these opinions were exaggerated. Jozef Łaptos, citing by B. Michel, who based his calculations on data from foreign service yearbooks, was of the opinion that former officials from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy were not in the majority in the ministry – in relation to the entire staff, Galicians accounted for only 36% of the 52% of officials coming from the former Kingdom of Poland, and 12% from Poznań.

The requirements imposed on candidates interested in working for the ministry meant that the first officials and diplomats came mainly from the landed gentry and aristocracy (including ks. Eustachy Sapieha, hr. Konstanty Skirmunt, ks. Kazimierz Lubomirski, hr. Maurycy Zamoyski). The work in diplomacy required familiarity, good manners, education, knowledge of foreign languages (French in particular). Moreover, frequent travels and extensive family contacts justified the fact that aristocrats fulfilled perfectly the conditions¹⁸. This is confirmed by the words of the French envoy in Warsaw –

¹⁶ Kajetan Morawski wrote: „The newcomers began henceforth to exert considerable influence not so much on the content as on the form and order of our improvised doings. We sometimes mocked their Galician dialect and formalism brought in the boot, and rebelled against the deluge of circulars [...]. In the end, however, we had to admit that our new colleagues were no less good than us Poles, that they fulfilled the valuable role of technical instructors, and that, with few exceptions, they tried not to hamper our initiatives” [trans. J.S.] – K. Morawski, *Wspólna droga...*, p. 57.

¹⁷ AAN, Archiwum Paderewskiego, sygn. 820, k. 26, Memoriał w sprawie organizacji MSZ J. Ziabickiego z 6 marca 1919 r. [Memorial on the organisation of the MFA by J. Ziabicki, 6 March 1919].

¹⁸ Aristocrats most often held high-ranking posts in the diplomatic service, rarely in the consular service (the only consul was hr. Ignacy Skarbek – in Winnipeg, and from 1923 in Detroit, hr. Stefan Przeździecki (vice-consul in Paris before he moved to headquarters in 1920.), hr. Zenon Belina-Brzozowski (Polish consul in Odessa from 1918), ks. Jeremi Henryk Korybut-Woroniecki (the head of the consulate general in Olsztyn), hr. Stanisław Sierakowski (consul general in Kwidzyn). About the importance of family connections in a diplomatic work see J. Gawroński, *Dyplomatyczne...*, passim; *Jana Drohojowskiego wspomnienia...*, passim.

E. Pralon: “Deprived of professional diplomats, the Polish government was forced search for less skillful people who could, in view of their material situation, their habits of staying abroad, represent Poland with dignity”¹⁹.

In the Sejm, there was criticized the employment in diplomacy of members of landed gentry and aristocratic families, for whom the only qualification for getting a job was aristocratic background. Kajetan Morawski, a member of the committee on admissions to work at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, when asked by one of the members of parliament whether the officials they took on accurately reflected the social cross-section of the Polish nation, answered truthfully that “only Jews and counts were admitted [...] in 90% of cases, only candidates belonging to these two categories met the basic requirements established by the Minister, i.e. in addition to a degree in law or economics, they could speak and write two foreign languages [...] the influx from the West of collaborators of the National Committee subsequently changed the structure of our service”²⁰.

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on 1 January 1920, there were 123 officials employed in various foreign missions, 20 held aristocratic titles – count, baron or duke; of the 23 missions, 17 were headed by aristocrats or landowners (including the three most important: London, Paris and Washington). Each first-class post employed one count (three in Brussels, four in Paris)²¹. As far as the foreign ministers were concerned, one held the title of duke (Eustachy Sapieha), two held the title of count (Maurycy Zamoyski and Aleksander Skrzyński), and two came from the old Lithuanian landowning families (Konstanty Skirmunt and Gabriel Narutowicz)²².

¹⁹ *Raport Eugène Pralona do S. Pichona o organizacji polskiej służby zagranicznej z 8 czerwca 1919 r.*, [in:] J. Łaptos, *Dyplomaci II RP w świetle raportów Quai d'Orsay*, Warsaw 1993, pp. 52–53. „For these reasons, the young Eustachy Sapieha would go to London. His wealth, his knowledge of the English language and his links with the best English families serve as a sufficient recommendation. [...] His good personal situation and considerable estates in Italy decided in turn to retain Count Konstanty Skirmunt as Poland's representative at the Quirinal, where he had hitherto represented the Polish National Committee. [...] One member of the great Polish family, ks. Kazimierz Lubomirski, will be going to New York” [trans. J.S.]. There were also mentioned hr. Maurycy Zamoyski as a candidate for an envoy extraordinary in Paris, hr. Aleksander Skrzyński, hr. Władysław Sobański, hr. Józef Potocki, hr. Ksawery Orłowski.

²⁰ K. Morawski, *Tamten brzeg...*, pp. 87–88. According to Kajetan Morawski the main reason for this was the indigent nature of Polish society. The partitioning authorities did not grant scholarships, and only richer classes (predominantly of Jewish origin) had sufficient means to pay for their children to study abroad. Cf. *ibidem*, p. 59.

²¹ For more detailed data see W. Skóra, *Czy resort spraw zagranicznych...*, pp. 150–175. Data concerning people employed in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with aristocratic backgrounds comes from the first years after independence. According to the letter of the March Constitution (Article 96), all privileges associated with high birth were abolished. In official lists and publications, family titles were later omitted from the names (they appeared, among other things, in unofficial lists and notes made by representatives of foreign countries accredited in Poland. See: P. Wandycz, *MSZ widziane oczami amerykańskiego dyplomaty*, „Zeszyty Historyczne” 1975, Vol. 32, *passim*.

²² W. Skóra, *Czy resort spraw zagranicznych...*, p. 155.

There are also opinions in the literature that there were many members of Masonic lodges in the Polish foreign service²³. However, the data concerning this subject are not fully confirmed. It is true that, still during the period of the Partitions of Poland, many prominent Poles deliberately joined the ranks of freemasonry abroad. Some wanted to widen their circle of contacts abroad in this way, others did it in the hope of supporting greater benefits to the Polish cause²⁴.

Requirements for candidates to work in the department

Initially, any systematic personnel policy was not established. In line with the principle of uniformity in the foreign service, there was no separate recruitment for the head office, consular service, or diplomatic service. Candidates were accepted to work at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and then, they were assigned to individual divisions of the MFA or foreign missions²⁵. From the outset, high requirements were set for candidates interested in a job at the Ministry – in November 1918, the interim head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tytus Filipowicz, appointed a three-person selection committee to take on candidates for work in the foreign service. The prerequisites for admission to full-time service were a degree in law, a consular academy, an export academy, or a school of political science, and knowledge of at least two foreign languages²⁶.

However, the reality was a little different. Józef Łaptos maintains that connections, patronage or at least recommendations were decisive²⁷. In his memoirs, Władysław Günther cites the statement of Władysław Mazurkiewicz, the head of the Personnel Department of the MFA, who said that it was a miracle that there were so few rascals and drapes in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, because in the early days, anyone who was at hand was taken²⁸. Waclaw A. Zbyszewski describes the circumstances and details of the employment of the first foreign correspondent and press attaché at the newly formed Mi-

²³ The members of the Masonic lodge were, e.g. Szymon Askenaz (W. A. Zbyszewski, *Gawędy o ludziach i czasach przedwojennych*, ed. A. Garlicki, Warsaw 2000, p. 166); Stanisław Patek (L. Hass, *Masoneria polska XX wieku. Losy, loże, ludzie*, Warsaw 1993, pp. 61–62); and many others (see: L. Chajni, *Polskie wolnomularstwo 1920–1938*, Warsaw 1984, p. 267; L. Hass, *Liberalowie, ezoterycy, piłsudczycy. Z dziejów polityki w Polsce w latach 1924–1928*, „Dzieje Najnowsze” 1973, Vol 3, pp. 56, 63).

²⁴ Stanisław Patek attempted to introduce the Polish cause in the international forum through freemasons. See: L. Hass, *Ambicje, rachuby, rzeczywistość. Wolnomularstwo w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej 1905–1928*, Warsaw 1984, pp. 85, 116–117.

²⁵ W. Skóra, *Rekrutacja kadr...*, p. 81.

²⁶ See more in *Z pierwszych lat Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych*, „Przegląd Współczesny” 1932, Vol. XL, No. 119, pp. 297–298. In 1919, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs launched several-month diplomatic and consular courses at the School of Political Science in Warsaw.

²⁷ J. Łaptos, *Dyplomaci II RP...*, p. 11.

²⁸ W. Günther, *Piuropusz i szpada...*, p. 24.

nistry. In November 1918, Roger Raczyński, secretary of Tytus Filipowicz, was approached by a French press correspondent in Warsaw, Stéphane Aubac. In fact, this ‘correspondent’ turned out to be a Jew from Warsaw, his name was not Aubac but Auerbach, and in addition he did not speak French in a good manner. He had a lot of cheek, thanks to which he managed to wormed his way into the Foreign Office. He went to Paris as the press attaché of the embassy and correspondent of “Kurier Warszawski” in Paris²⁹.

Protection took place not only in the case of employment in the ministry, but also in sending to foreign scholarships on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, e.g. to the École des Sciences Politiques in Paris, the graduation from which opened the way to a diplomatic career. A number of candidates applied for the few vacant places, including many protégés, such as the son of Ignacy Biliński, the president of the Warsaw City Council, the son of General Adam Nawotny Lachowicki, Jakub Kołodziej – a protégé of the Sejm deputy dr Władysław Kiernik³⁰. However, the protection was not always effective – Biliński’s case was referred to Minister Skirmunt for consideration, while the other candidatures had been rejected³¹.

The attempts to secure a post thanks to protection were understandable for some reasons, as it was very difficult to get a job in the foreign service by the ‘normal route’. There was a constant shortage of posts for young employees, and for this reason, meeting the expected conditions did not always guarantee acceptance. One of those interested in a job in the ministry – Zygmunt Zawadowski – who applied on 6 March 1922, received a negative reply: “the lack of a suitable post does not allow the Ministry to take advantage of your offer at the present time. It would be possible to take you on as an unpaid trainee” [trans. J.S.]³².

The criteria for admission to work in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were not raised and framed in law until 1922, or more precisely – 1 April 1922, when Ustawa o państwowej służbie cywilnej (the Act on the State Civil Service)³³

²⁹ W.A. Zbyszewski, *Gawędy o ludziach...*, pp. 187–188. According to W. Zbyszewski, e.g. Aubac has no serious connections in France – *ibidem*, p. 189.

³⁰ AAN, MSZ, sygn. akt 12590, k. 2–5. List I. Bilińskiego do ministra spraw zagranicznych z czerwca 1922 r. [The letter of I. Bilinski to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of June 1922]; List gen. A. Nawotnego-Lachowickiego z 8 kwietnia 1923 r. [The letter of General A. Nawotny-Lachowicki, 8 April 1923]. See also P. Łossowski, *Dyplomacja Drugiej...*, p. 49.

³¹ AAN, MSZ, sygn. 12590, k. 1, 6–10, Listy K. Bertoni do I. Bilińskiego, A. Nawotnego-Lachowickiego i Wł. Kiernika [Letters of K. Bertoni to I. Bilinski, A. Nawotny Lachowicki and W. Kiernik]. The refusal was justified by granting the scholarships only to employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to improve their qualifications.

³² P. Łossowski, *Dyplomacja Drugiej...*, p. 49.

³³ Previously, the provisions of the Rescript of the Regency Council of 20 June 1918, containing temporary service regulations for public servants, had been applied in matters of personnel policy, *Dziennik Praw Królestwa Polskiego* 1918, No. 6, item 13, Tymczasowe przepisy służbowe dla urzędników państwowych [Temporary service regulations for public servants].

came into force. Under Article 6 of the Act, a civil servant could only be appointed as “a Polish citizen, with an impeccable record, having the capacity to act in law, and physically and mentally capable of performing the relevant duties, as well as having a fluent knowledge of the Polish language in speech and writing” [trans. J.S.]³⁴.

Depending on the level of education (Article 11), official positions were divided into three categories. Civil servants were required to have: category I – higher education, confirmed by appropriate examinations; category II – secondary education, general or vocational; category III – completion of general school or lower grades of secondary school³⁵. In order to maintain continuity of work, two separate procedures were introduced, relating to previously employed officials and newly recruited employees. Rozporządzenie Rady Ministrów z dnia 7 marca 1923 r. o służbie przygotowawczej kandydatów na stanowiska służbowe I kategorii w MSZ oraz egzaminie dyplomatyczno-konsularnym (the Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 7 March 1923 on preparatory service for candidates for first-category service positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the diplomatic-consular examination, hereinafter: r.o.s.p.)³⁶ established the course of preparatory service and the scope of the diplomatic-consular examination for candidates for first-category service positions: first, candidates had to pass an entry exam, which allowed them to enter preparatory service, and upon completion of the preparatory service they took the diplomatic-consular examination (§ 1 r.o.s.p.)³⁷. Applications for admission to preparatory service were accepted only in the case of persons with higher

³⁴ Ustawa z dnia 17 lutego 1922 r. o państwowej służbie cywilnej [Act of 17 February 1922 on the State Civil Service], Dziennik Ustaw RP of 1922, No. 21, item 164. It is interesting to consider that transitional provisions stipulated that knowledge of the Polish language would not be strictly required until eight years after the date of entry into force of the Act; for five years, the Minister of Foreign Affairs could authorise the appointment of officials from categories II and III who did not meet the educational criterion (in the case of category I officials, the Prime Minister's consent was required). For example, the requirement of proficiency in spoken and written Polish was not met by the consul general in Opole, Daniel Kęszyński – born in England, a long-serving sailor in the English service (his mother was English). He was the only Polish diplomat in the 20th century who wrote reports to the MFA headquarters in French. See: T.G. Jackowski, *W walce...*, p. 272.

³⁵ All officials employed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were required to send certificates confirming their education. Okólnik z dnia 6 marca 1922 r. w przedmiocie nadesłania do Wydziału Osobowego MSZ świadectw szkolnych i uniwersyteckich [Circular of 6 March 1922 on sending of school and university certificates to the Personnel Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs], Dziennik Urzędowy MSZ of 1922, No. 9, item 64.

³⁶ Dziennik Ustaw RP of 1923, No. 31, item 190; Komunikat o przyjmowaniu na służbę do Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych [Announcement on admission for service at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs], Dziennik Urzędowy MSZ of 1923, No. 11, item 135.

³⁷ The entrance examination took place on 15 November 1923 at the MFA building (oral examinations were held the following day), and the diplomatic and consular examination on 1 December 1923.

education (the list of domestic and foreign higher education institutions was contained in the Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 27 February 1922).

The entrance examination consisted of two parts: written and oral. The written part consisted of: an essay on some topic in Polish, French, and translation of a designated Polish text in French. In the oral part, the examination took the form of colloquium on contemporary political, social and economic issues, or a 10-minute lecture on any given topic (§ 4 r.o.s.p.). The result of the examination was determined by the examination board by majority vote, giving a pass or fail result. A candidate who obtained a positive mark from the commission started as a trainee in the preparatory service successively in all departments of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (§ 5 r.o.s.p.). He received emoluments according to rank X (§ 6 r.o.s.p.). The apprenticeship lasted one year – 3 months in the Administrative Department, 4 months in the Political and Economic Department and 5 months in the Consular Department. After its completion with a satisfactory result (the opinion was given by the Selection Committee on the basis of the reports of the heads of departments), the apprentice could take the diplomatic-consular examination. He was granted a 6-week paid leave for preparation (§ 7 r.o.s.p.)³⁸. In case of a negative result of the preparatory service, there was a possibility to extend the apprenticeship for another year. If the candidate again received a negative assessment, he was dismissed from the service (§ 6 r.o.s.p.).

The diplomatic-consular examination was an oral examination which included: English or German, diplomatic and political history since 1715, economic and social sciences, political and economic geography, comparative constitutional law, private and public international law and consular theory and practice³⁹. The examination in history or public international law was conducted in French (§ 8 r.o.s.p.). On the basis of the answers in the individual subjects, the commission assessed the result of the examination: if the candidate demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the examination subjects, he or she was awarded a grade of 'good'; if he or she demonstrated outstanding knowledge and preparation, he or she was awarded 'good with distinction'; sufficient answers were considered 'sufficient'; and in the case of insufficient answers, the commission assessed the result as 'inadequate', and set a date for repeating the examination. The resit examination was repeated in its entirety. In the event of a negative result, a repeat was no longer possible (§ 9 r.o.s.p.). It was an option for the candidate to be exempted from parts of the examination on economic and social sciences, political and economic geography and comparative constitutional law – if the candidate showed that

³⁸ A. Wasilewski, *Polska Służba...*, p. 53.

³⁹ About the detailed programme of the subjects to be taken at the diplomatic and consular examination see: Okólnik z dnia 26 sierpnia 1923 r. (Circular of 26 August 1923), *Dziennik Urzędowy MSZ* of 1923, No. 12, item 137.

these subjects were part of his university studies, and had been completed by examination. Any exemption from the examination in these subjects had to be notified to the candidate at the beginning of the leave.

The chairman and examiners of the commissions (preliminary and diplomatic-consular examinations) were appointed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The chairpersons of the commissions were appointed from among the directors of the Departments of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Industry and Trade or, with the approval of the competent minister, from among officials of 'other departments of state management', or alternatively from among professors of universities with the approval of the Senate (§ 11 r.o.s.p.). § 13 of the r.o.s.p. was of a transitional nature was, according to which, until 1 March 1924, all officials without higher education (including grade V who were serving in category I posts) had to take the diplomatic-consular examination.

The procedure for civil servants employed before the entry into force of the State Civil Service Act was laid down in a decree of the Council of Ministers of 26 June 1924 (*Rozporządzenie Rady Ministrów z 26 czerwca 1924 r.*)⁴⁰. They were obliged to pass a practical examination. Some employees were exempted from the examination under § 2 of the same regulation (points a-f). These were civil servants who, inter alia, had passed the practical examination on the basis of the preceding regulations; civil servants of the 4th, 5th, and 6th grades of service, who possessed higher education completed with the required examinations and had remained without interruption for at least two years, counting from 1 April 1924, in the state civil service, and had their qualifications confirmed by a qualification commission (6th grade civil servants) or by a superior authority (4th and 5th grades). In exceptional situations, the Council of Ministers, at the individually motivated request of the competent minister, could exempt from the examination certain officials occupying a position of 1st and 2nd rank, to whom the provisions of §2 did not apply.

In practice, the decision on continued employment depended on the decision of the supervisor or the selection committee. This enabled a wide range of possibilities to superiors, who decided which officials to dismiss and which to keep. In addition to knowledge and competence, an additional criterion imposed on candidates for work in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was good health and physical aptitude. Detailed regulations on the health requirements for work in the ministry were regulated by the *Okólnik w sprawie badania lekarskiego kandydatów do służby państwowej* of 17 August 1925 (*Circular on the Medical Examination of Candidates for National Service*)⁴¹.

⁴⁰ Dziennik Ustaw RP of 1924, No. 64, item 630.

⁴¹ Dziennik Urzędowy MSZ of 1925, No. 8, item 94. Diseases that precluded work as a civil servant included: diabetes, chronic skin diseases, heart disease, epilepsy, myopia exceeding 5 dioptries.

Concluding remarks

The assessment of the personnel policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the first years of its operation is difficult because of the fluidity of personnel, frequent changes of ministers, and constant reorganization of the structure. Although, there were some mistakes and errors in the department that was set up from scratch, in the absence of relevant experience, models and traditions, some gaffes might be justified. In the matter of the fact, from the very beginning of the reborn state, the appropriate personnel were selected, and detailed instructions were drafted to regulate personnel matters. It seems that despite many difficulties, a substantive and competent team was created. In the period before 1926, Poland had established 34 diplomatic posts, including two embassies, and 118 consular posts (consular departments 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.

Polish diplomats played an invaluable role in the course of events. With their dedication and devotion to their work they made a major contribution to strengthening Poland's international position. Many officials at diplomatic and consular missions took a very emotional approach to their tasks. They were assisted in their work by a whole staff of higher and lower ranked officials (messenger counsellors, secretaries, attachés, and others), contract staff (clerks, desk officers). They were the people well prepared for the tasks entrusted to them, with experience, education obtained from renowned universities, and knowledge of several languages. Because of the character, nature, and working conditions, foreign service employees had a comfortable position in the state service, they were perceived as the members of the elite. They represented the state looking after its prestige, they conducted negotiations, observed economic, social and political life in the country of residence.

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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 – recruitment of the staff and requirements for candidates to work in the department

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

The main purpose of this article is to present some major aspects of the personnel policy pursued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs starting from 1918. The starting point is marked by Poland's regaining independence and the establishment of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is significant that the year 1926 closes a certain stage in the history of Polish diplomacy, during which the most functional organisational shape of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was sought, a network of foreign diplomatic and consular posts was created, and basic normative acts were drafted. The assessment of the personnel policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the first years of its operation is difficult because of the fluidity of personnel, frequent changes of ministers, and constant reorganization of the structure. From the very beginning of the reborn state, the appropriate personnel were selected, and detailed instructions were drafted to regulate personnel matters. It seems that despite many difficulties, a substantive and competent team was created. 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.

Streszczenie

Polityka kadrowa MSZ w okresie kształtowania się służby zagranicznej II RP – rekrutacja kadr i wymagania stawiane kandydatom do pracy w resorcie

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

Głównym celem artykułu jest przedstawienie kilku najważniejszych aspektów polityki kadrowej prowadzonej przez Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych począwszy od 1918 r. Punktem wyjścia jest odzyskanie przez Polskę niepodległości i utworzenie Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych. Znamienne, że rok 1926 zamyka pewien etap w dziejach polskiej dyplomacji, w trakcie którego dążono do jak najbardziej funkcjonalnego kształtu organizacyjnego MSZ, tworzono sieć zagranicznych placówek dyplomatycznych i konsularnych oraz opracowywano podstawowe akty normatywne. Ocena polityki kadrowej MSZ w pierwszych latach jego funkcjonowania jest trudna ze względu na płynność kadr, częste zmiany ministrów i ciągłą reorganizację struktury. Od początku istnienia odrodzonego państwa dobierano odpowiednie kadry, opracowywano szczegółowe instrukcje regulujące kwestie personalne. Wydaje się, że mimo wielu trudności udało się stworzyć merytoryczny i kompetentny zespół. Podstawowe jednostki organizacyjne resortu oraz sieć placówek zagranicznych powstały w ciągu pierwszych trzech lat funkcjonowania MSZ i były doskonałe w kolejnych latach.