



Introduction

When General Józef Haller incorporated Pomerania to Poland in 1920, Gdynia was an agricultural and fishing village inhabited by two hundred families. At the time, no one imagined it would soon boast a seaport.

The Treaty of Versailles stipulated that Poles would be able to use the port in the Free City of Danzig. However, in practice, Polish trade was discriminated against, so the Polish government decided to begin work on the design and construction of a new Polish port. This task was entrusted to engineer Tadeusz Wenda. After personally inspecting the coast, he suggested the Chylonka River valley near Gdynia as the investment site.

Officially, the act on the construction of the port was promulgated on 23 September 1922, but in reality, work had begun earlier. The investment was financed primarily from the state budget. In turn, Gdynia, which received its city charter on 10 February 1926, was being built largely with private capital.

Despite difficulties, in less than twenty years Gdynia, with 127,000 inhabitants, became the sixth largest city of the Second Polish Republic, and its port was the most modern investment of this kind in the Baltic Sea basin.