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ASSESSMENT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IMPACT ON THE CHANGES IN THE OPERATION AND STRUCTURE OF POLISH VOIVODESHIP PEDAGOGICAL LIBRARIES

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research was to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the operations and structure of the voivodeship pedagogical libraries in Poland. In the course of the investigation, information on the operations of these over that period was collected as well as the opinions of the users and the administrators of these libraries. The discussion focuses on the actions of the National Library of Poland (BN) and of the Polish Librarians Association (SBP) both of which significantly facilitated the organization of the libraries by releasing appropriate guidelines and recommendations for all types of libraries, and by consolidating the coming together of the various groups of librarians and supporting

them in their adoption of remote working. It was observed that between March 2020-March 2022, the libraries were restructured, and the impact of the pandemic on the diagnosed situation was assessed. In order to provide answers to the research questions, the following data gathering methods were used: bibliographic and document analysis as well as a critical analysis of literature. Then, heuristic, and deductive methods were applied in order to identify the reasons for the changes that occurred in the organizational structures of the libraries and to assess their effectiveness.

KEYWORDS: pedagogical libraries, pandemic, COVID-19, voivodeship pedagogical libraries, organizational structure of pedagogical libraries

INTRODUCTION, METHODOLOGY, AND STATE OF RESEARCH

The COVID-19 pandemic broke out in December 2019 in the Chinese town of Wuhan, Hubei Province, and on 11 February 2020 the disease was called ‘COVID-19’. Three days later, the pathogen that causes it was named ‘SARS-CoV-2’¹. Not fully a month later (5 March 2020) the presence of the virus was detected in 84 countries around the world, and by 5 September 2020, cases of COVID-19 were discovered in all the countries worldwide². This occurrence made it important for libraries to quickly and effectively introduce changes to their organization and operations. The pedagogical libraries, like other libraries, entirely suspended their on-site operations in March 2020³ and did not resume them until May

1 J. Duszyński, et al., 2020. *Zrozumieć COVID-19. Opracowanie zespołu ds. COVID 19 przy prezesie Polskiej Akademii Nauk*. Polska Akademia Nauk, pp. 67, [online:] https://informacje.pan.pl/images/2020/opracowanie-covid19-14-09-2020/Zrozumiec-Covid19_opracowanie_PAN_interactive.pdf, [accessed 6 April 2022].

2 Ibidem.

3 The decision to gradually suspend the on-site operation was first made by local authorities, which were later reflected in generally valid legal acts. Initially, e.g., in Lodz ‘projects connected with a group presence of students’ were suspended. The next step was to close pedagogical libraries to in-situ users and to introduce so-called remote work for librarians’ teachers employed and for the majority of

2020⁴. The National Library (BN) played a significant role in reshaping the organization of operation of the libraries during the pandemic threat. Numerous initiatives aimed at the groups of librarians and the readers were also undertaken by the Polish Librarians Association (SBP).

As justly observed by BN's Director, Tomasz Makowski, its recommendations were complied with by over 30,000 libraries within Poland⁵. By the 16th of March 2020, the library's website published the *National Library's opinion on restrictions in public libraries' operations*⁶. Due to the pandemic threat within the country, this document contained the operation, limitations, and commitments resulting from the legal regulations introduced. These guidelines helped to identify the list of activities which librarians could undertake when working remotely and they also defined the optimum range of their responsibilities for maintaining social distancing. Subsequent BN's recommendations and guidelines issued

the administrative staff. These actions were introduced upon the agreement between library directors and the running organizations. See J. Jędrzych, 'Biblioteki pedagogiczne w czasie pandemii: wywiad', *Biuletyn EBIB*, 2020, no. 4 (193), p. 2, [online:] <http://ebibojs.pl/index.php/ebib/article/view/688/724>, [accessed 6 April 2022].

- 4 K. Figurska, M. Wachowicz, 'Działalność Pedagogicznej Biblioteki Wojewódzkiej im. prof. Tadeusza Kotarbińskiego w Łodzi w czasie pandemii', *Acta Universitatis Lodzianensis. Folia Librorum*, 2021, no. 2 (33), p. 53; 'Cen-admin. Uwaga! Biblioteka Pedagogiczna CEN w Suwałkach wznowiła wypożyczenia książek dla czytelników. Centrum Edukacji Nauczycieli w Suwałkach' [official website], [online:] <https://cen.suwalki.pl/biblioteka-pedagogiczna-cen-w-suwalkach-wznawia-wypozyczenia-ksiazek-dla-czytelnikow-od-18-maja>, [accessed 25 April 2022]; A. Stańczyk. 'Biblioteka Pedagogiczna wznowia działalność'. ePiotrków.pl, [online:] <https://epiotrkow.pl/news.php?url=Biblioteka-Pedagogiczna-wznawia-dzialalnosc,39679> [accessed 18 May 2020]; 'Uwaga! Od 6 maja 2020 r. Biblioteka wznowiła działalność 2020'. Facebook Pedagogicznej Biblioteki Wojewódzkiej im. prof. Tadeusza Kotarbińskiego w Łodzi [post], [online:] <https://www.facebook.com/pbwlodz/posts/10157144329770779>, [accessed 25 April 2022].
- 5 T. Makowski, 'The National Library of Poland during the Coronavirus pandemic: A brief history of the first nine months of the state of emergency', *Przegląd Biblioteczny*, 2020, special issue, p. 38, [online:] <http://ojs.sbp.pl/index.php/pb/article/view/771/665>, [accessed 30 May 2022].
- 6 *Opinia Biblioteki Narodowej dotycząca ograniczenia działalności bibliotek publicznych*, [online:] <https://www.bn.org.pl/aktualnosci/3930-opinia-biblioteki-narodowej-dotyczaca-ograniczenia-dzialalnosci-bibliotek-publicznych.html>, [accessed 30 May 2022].

constituted the policy for the operation of various types of libraries during the pandemic⁷. The announcements made by the BN staff were informative not only for librarians, but also for library users. On 23 March 2020, BN published the first version of the ‘epidemic safety principles in libraries’ which were frequently updated and adjusted based on the current knowledge of the virus and the actual restriction level⁸. The BN received numerous queries from sanitary inspectors via its email counselling service concerning the recommended re-opening hours for lending as well as stationary libraries⁹. It should be noted that the operations of Polish libraries during the pandemic were positively assessed on the international arena by The Conference of European National Librarians, CENL, and The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)¹⁰.

As emphasized by Barbara Budyńska, acting SBP President, the main challenges librarians faced included a lack of operation stability (alternating loosening and re-tightening of restrictions), fear of cost cuts due to reducing of financing for libraries, and the necessity to maintain communication with users¹¹. Trying to lessen these concerns, SBP decided in the first pandemic phase (by the end of June 2020) to insist on initiatives aimed at maintaining communication with readers using online technologies and tools, and on supporting in-service training and career development for the librarians. SBP conducted a number of remote (in some cases free of charge) training workshops for librarians, and they disseminated interesting projects done by library staff throughout the

7 B. M. Morawiec, ‘Funkcjonowanie bibliotek w Polsce w czasie epidemii COVID-19 - rekomendacje, działania i pomoc Biblioteki Narodowej - raport’, *Rocznik Biblioteki Narodowej*, 2021, vol. 52, p. 210, [online] [https://rocznik.bn.org.pl/upload/pdf/73982_Rocznik_52_\(8_Morawiec_rec\).pdf](https://rocznik.bn.org.pl/upload/pdf/73982_Rocznik_52_(8_Morawiec_rec).pdf), [accessed 30 May 2022].

8 Ibidem, pp. 211-212.

9 Ibidem, p. 213.

10 Ibidem, p. 220.

11 M. Cyrklaff-Gorczyca, ‘2021 Biblioteki w obliczu pandemii - rozmowa z dr Barbarą Budyńską, kierującą pracami SBP’, *Zarządzanie Biblioteką*, 1 (13), p. 183, [online:] <https://czasopisma.bg.ug.edu.pl/index.php/ZB/article/download/6781/6030/10357>, [accessed 25 April 2022].

country. This was done by making use of various digital tools (e.g., through a www.sbp.pl for the national library service), social media platforms, academic and trade periodicals, and through their own local structures¹².

Since the paper focuses exclusively on pedagogical libraries, it should be underlined that they play a special role in the Polish educational system by serving the needs for the needs of schools and tertiary institutions in the development of education. Pedagogical libraries have been listed as an element of the education system in Poland on the Eurydice website, the Information Network on Education in Europe¹³. There is currently the following legislation called the *Act on Libraries of 1997* which was extended to list the tasks and responsibilities of pedagogical libraries and can be found under the section titled *Regulation of the Ministry of National Education of 28 February 2013 on detailed principles of the operations of pedagogical libraries*. As part of their stated responsibilities, they are expected to organize and provide support to the schools and educational institutions in executing their educational tasks, including the use of IT. They are also expected to do this for school libraries, particularly with respect to the organization and management of various types of bibliographic and information activities. Publishing, organizing and running educational and cultural projects, (in particular open educational classes), library classes, and sessions with authors are all considered to be part of the service to be provided by these pedagogical libraries.

The operation and organization of pedagogical libraries before the COVID-19 pandemic has been documented by practitioners in many publications, including periodicals: *Zarządzanie Biblioteką*,

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- 12 A. Grzecznowska, 'Initiatives of the Polish Librarians' Association for libraries and readers in the first phase of the pandemic'. *Przegląd Biblioteczny*, 2020, special issue, pp. 122-124, [online:] <http://ojs.sbp.pl/index.php/pb/article/view/771/665>, [accessed 30 May 2022].
 - 13 Poland. Organisation of the education system and its structure' in: Eurydice. European Commission, [online:] https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/organisation-education-system-and-its-structure-56_en, [accessed 6 June 2022].

paper by Bogumiła Celer (A. Parczewski Pedagogical Library Public Pedagogical Libraries in Kalisz)¹⁴; *Biblioteka i Edukacja*, paper by Anna Walska Golowska (Hugon Kołłątaj Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Krakow)¹⁵, by Elżbieta Wyrzykowska (Pedagogical Library in Toruń)¹⁶, by Lucyna Kurowska-Trudzik and Urszula Tobolska (Pedagogical Library of Lower Silesia in Wrocław)¹⁷. Articles have also appeared in other publications written by representatives of teacher in-service training (, e.g. paper by Bożena Boryczka (Computer Assisted Education and Information Technology Centre, OEIZK, in Warsaw)¹⁸ and those published in collective works dedicated to selected aspects of library operations, e.g., a paper by Kornelia Choryńska and Katarzyna Michalska appearing in the monograph *Mobile Library*¹⁹. Publications on the topic were also included in the proceedings of national conferences like the ‘Polish Forum of Pedagogical Libraries’ (2013-2015), the *Forum Bibliotek Pedagogicznych* series of publications produced by the cooperation

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- 14 B. Celer, ‘Wystawy wirtualne jako nowe narzędzie działalności kulturalnej i edukacyjnej bibliotek pedagogicznych’, *Zarządzanie Biblioteką*, 2013, no. 1, pp. 31-41, [online:] <https://depot.ceon.pl/bitstream/handle/123456789/17449/Bogumi%20Celer.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>, [accessed 1 June 2022].
- 15 A. Walska-Golowska, ‘Zarys współczesnej działalności bibliotek pedagogicznych na przykładzie Pedagogicznej Biblioteki Wojewódzkiej w Krakowie’, [online:] <https://bibliotekanauki.pl/articles/555120>, [accessed 11 June 2022].
- 16 E. Wyrzykowska, ‘Finansowanie bibliotek pedagogicznych’, *Biuletyn EBIB*, 2009, no. 8(108), [online:] <http://ebib.pl/2009/108/a.php?wyrzykowska> [accessed 25 April 2022].
- 17 L. Kurowska-Trudzik, U. Tobolska, ‘Biblioteka pedagogiczna... nie tylko wypożyczenie’, *Biuletyn EBIB*, 2020 no. 190, pp. 1-7, [online:] <http://ebibojs.pl/index.php/ebib/article/view/660/698>, [accessed 12 June 2022]. Interestingly, no. 190 of *Biuletyn EBIB* from 2020, released on the eve of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic (29 February 2020) was a theme-focused issue ‘2019 in Libraries in Brief’. See *Biuletyn EBIB* no. 190 from 2020 [full] in: *Biuletyn EBIB: Archiwum*, [online:] <http://ebibojs.pl/index.php/ebib/issue/view/75>, [accessed 12 June 2022].
- 18 B. Boryczka, ‘Wykorzystanie mediów społecznościowych w bibliotekach pedagogicznych’, *Biuletyn EBIB*, 2018, no. 1 (178), pp. 1-14, [online:] Widok Wykorzystanie mediów społecznościowych w bibliotekach pedagogicznych (ebibojs.pl) [accessed 25 May 2022].
- 19 K. Choryńska, K. Michalska, ‘„Nauka dla wszystkich”. Rola bibliotek pedagogicznych i bibliotek naukowych w Polsce - zarys zagadnienia’, in: ed. M. Wojciechowska, *Mobilna biblioteka*, Warszawa, Wydaw. SBP, 2021, [online:] <https://depot.ceon.pl/bitstream/handle/123456789/19713/Kornelia%20Chory%20ska.pdf?sequence=1>, [accessed 11 June 2022].

of the Hugon Kołłątaj Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Krakow with the Pedagogical University of Krakow²⁰. In addition were the papers from the New Forum of the National Forum of Pedagogical Libraries organized by the Krakow Library since 2016²¹ which is a conference which brings together theoreticians and practitioners interested in issues relative to pedagogical libraries.

As mentioned at the beginning of the present paper, the assumption made was that the first stage of the COVID-19 pandemic took place in March 2020, and although at the moment when this paper is being written it is hard to predict the level of future threats related to the virus, it seemed that the limitation dates of March 2020 and March 2022 for the chronological range of the investigation were justified. This period covers a two-year span and many articles were found on the topic in the library literature for this time both within Poland²² and abroad²³. This was also the time when many debates on the state and future of pedagogical libraries were being conducted. In 2021, after a year's break, the Hugon Kołłątaj Pedagogical Library resumed the organization of the New Forum of Pedagogical Libraries. The fifth edition of the

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- 20 The following were published in the series: eds. A. Fluda-Krokos, W. Dudek, A. Piotrowska, *Miejsce biblioteki pedagogicznej w zmieniającej się przestrzeni edukacji i informacji*, Kraków, Wydaw. Nauk. Uniwersytetu Pedagogicznego, 2014; A. Fluda-Krokos, B. Janik, *Kolekcje w zbiorach bibliotek pedagogicznych*, Kraków, Wydaw. Nauk. Uniwersytetu Pedagogicznego, 2015; A. Fluda-Krokos, B. Janik, *Nauczyciel w bibliotece pedagogicznej - klient wyróżniony*, Kraków, Wydaw. Nauk. Uniwersytetu Pedagogicznego, 2016.
 - 21 The earlier Conference editions were named the National Forum of Pedagogical Libraries and were hosted in cooperation with the Institute of Scientific Information and Library Studies (Institute of Information Science) at the Pedagogical University in Krakow. See E. Andrysiak, E. Obała, 'Nowe Ogólnopolskie Forum Bibliotek Pedagogicznych „Czytelnictwo - nowa jakość” (Kraków, 16-17 czerwca 2016 r.)', [online:] <https://czasopisma.uni.lodz.pl/librorum/article/view/2064/1688> [accessed 30 May 2022]; IV [czwarte] Nowe Ogólnopolskie Forum Bibliotek Pedagogicznych [report], [online:] <https://www.pbw.edu.pl/4-nofbp-sprawozdanie>, [accessed 30 May 2022].
 - 22 See e.g., bibliographical comparisons: M. Kowalska, 'Biblioteki i media w czasie pandemii COVID-19 Bibliografia selektywna', *Acta Universitatis Lodzianensis. Folia Librorum*, 2021, no. 2 (33), pp. 164-170.
 - 23 See I. Osłowska. 'Biblioteki w dobie pandemii. Przyczynek do badań', [online:] <https://apcz.umk.pl/TSB/article/view/31817/30938>, [accessed 25 April 2022].

event was conducted online with the use of the Cisco Webex Meetings platform. Representatives from all areas of interest in the activities of pedagogical libraries participated, among whom were staff from the National Library of Poland, academic groups, employees of pedagogical libraries, local government representatives, and others²⁴. From among the papers published by the staff of pedagogical libraries over that period, mention must be made of that by Jarosław Jędrych²⁵ in the no. 193 of *Biuletyn EBIB* titled 'COVID-19: Library Closed Librarian Open', as well as those by Agnieszka Jaworska²⁶, Róża Pomiecińska,²⁷ Monika Wachowicz and Katarzyny Figurska²⁸, and Aldona Zimna²⁹. They were all published in the special issue of *Acta Universitatis Lodzianensis. Folia Librorum* from 2021.

In the course of the research, a special focus was on voivodeship pedagogical libraries with the question investigated being whether the pandemic which took place over the designated two-year period investigated had an impact on their operation and organizational structure, and how effectively they were able to cope in those unfriendly times and still manage to survive and continue operating. Within this context, the following research questions were posed:

24 V [piąte] Nowe Forum Bibliotek Pedagogicznych [sprawozdanie], [online:] <https://www.pbw.edu.pl/5-nofbp-sprawozdanie>, [accessed 30 May 2022].

25 J. Jędrych, op.cit.

26 A. Jaworska, 'Działalność Pedagogicznej Biblioteki Wojewódzkiej w Łodzi Filii w Pabianicach w roku szkolnym 2020/2021 w trakcie trwania pandemii COVID-19', *Acta Universitatis Lodzianensis. Folia Librorum*, 2021, no. 2 (33), pp. 133-141, [online:] <http://www.czasopisma.uni.lodz.pl/librorum/article/view/13039/12626>, [accessed 30 May 2022].

27 R. Pomiecińska, 'Wirtualne escape roomy jako nowy sposób promocji czytelnictwa na przykładzie działań Książnicy Pedagogicznej w Kaliszu'. *Acta Universitatis Lodzianensis. Folia Librorum*, 2021, no. 2 (33), pp. 75-87.

28 M. Wachowicz, K. Figurska, 'Działalność pedagogicznej biblioteki wojewódzkiej im. prof. Tadeusza Kotarbińskiego w Łodzi w czasie pandemii', *Acta Universitatis Lodzianensis. Folia Librorum*, 2021, no. 2(33), pp. 51-63

29 A. Zimna, 'Działania Książnicy Pedagogicznej im. A. Parczewskiego w Kaliszu w czasach pandemii roku 2020/2021'. *Acta Universitatis Lodzianensis. Folia Librorum*, 2021, no. 2 (33), pp. 65-74.

- 1) How many voivodeship pedagogical libraries underwent organizational changes and to what extent during the COVID-19 pandemic for the period March 2020 - March 2022)?
- 2) If so, how did the COVID-19 pandemic affect the operation and organization of these voivodeship pedagogical libraries?

To find the answers to the above questions, the following methods were used: bibliographic and documentary analysis, and a critical analysis of the literature to identify the reasons for the changes in the organizational structure of libraries, and for assessing the effectiveness, heuristic and deductive methods were applied.

When planning the research, the following research goals were established:

- To identify the number of libraries which should be regarded as voivodeship pedagogical libraries (prior to, in the course of, and following the COVID-19 pandemic (research question 1);
- To identify the facts about the operation and restructuring of the voivodeship pedagogical libraries in Poland during the COVID-19 pandemic (research question 2);
- To ascertain whether the COVID-19 pandemic affected the operation and restructuring of voivodeship pedagogical libraries (research question 2).

1. THE STATE AND OPERATIONS OF VOIVODESHIP PEDAGOGICAL LIBRARIES BEFORE THE PANDEMIC (PRIOR TO MARCH 2020)

In order to investigate the state of voivodeship pedagogical libraries for the study, there was the need to first identify them. It was expected that there would have been at least 16 of them, equalling the number of voivodeships in Poland, with one for each voivodeship. However, it was not so and it became a challenge to identify them, depending on the chosen source of information. Prior to attempting to identify them, we had to firstly define the term 'voivodeship pedagogical library'. It was decided that such a library should comply with the following criteria:

- 1) It should be a pedagogical library run by a voivodeship local government as based on Art. 8.22 of the Act of 14 December 2016 on Educational Law³⁰; and
- 2) It should be registered as a pedagogical library in the Register of Schools and Educational Institutions (RSPO)³¹.

The data analysis demonstrates that from 1999, that is, from the time when pedagogical libraries were taken over by voivodeship local governments, their number began to decrease. After 2003, a systematic fall in their number was observed, mainly because of the winding down of their branches. In 2003-2012, the number of pedagogical libraries diminished by 28³². Based on the subsequent Kultura reports (2012-2018), in Poland there were 318 pedagogical libraries in 2012, then for each year 2013-2019, there were 297, 269, 272, 272, 257, 258, 256, respectively³³ (see Fig. 1 below). Following

30 Whose provisions specify that the tasks of a voivodeship local government include, among others, founding and running public pedagogical libraries of regional or supra-regional reach. Act of 14 December 2016 on Educational Law, Journal of Laws, 2021, item 1082 with amendments.

31 The obligatory character of the entry into RSPO and of the update of the information on schools and educational institutions (including voivodeship pedagogical libraries) stems from the Act of 15 April 2011 on Education Information System, Journal of Laws 2022, item 1116.

32 A. Krawczuk, 'Biblioteki pedagogiczne i ich zasoby w kontekście nowych zadań', [online:] file:///C:/Users/Acer/Desktop/a.krawczuk_biblioteki_pedagogiczne_ich_zasoby-w-kontekscie-nowych-zadan.pdf, s.4-5, [accessed 28 April 2022].

33 Culture in 2012. XLS files, [online:] <https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/kultura-turystyka-sport/kultura/kultura-w-2012-r-,2,10.html>, [accessed 28 April 2022]; Culture in 2013. XLSX files, [online:] <https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/kultura-turystyka-sport/kultura/kultura-w-2013-r-,2,11.html>, [accessed: 28 April 2022]; Culture in 2014. XLSX files, [online:] <https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/kultura-turystyka-sport/kultura/kultura-w-2014-r-,2,12.html>, [accessed 28 April 2022]; Culture in 2015. XLSX files, [online:] <https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/kultura-turystyka-sport/kultura/kultura-w-2015-roku,2,13.html>, [accessed 28 April 2022]; Culture in 2016. XLSX files, [online:] <https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/kultura-turystyka-sport/kultura/kultura-w-2016-roku,2,14.html>, [accessed 28 April 2022]; Culture in 2017. XLSX files, [online:] <https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/kultura-turystyka-sport/kultura/kultura-w-2017-roku,2,15.html>; Culture in 2018. XLSX files, [online:] https://stat.gov.pl/download/gfx/portalinformacyjny/pl/defaultaktualnosc/5493/2/16/1/kultura_w_2018_roku.zip, [accessed 28 April 2022]; Culture in 2019. XLSX files, [online:] https://stat.gov.pl/download/gfx/portalinformacyjny/pl/defaultaktualnosc/5493/2/17/1/kultura_w_2019.zip, [accessed 25 April 2022].

that period, over the next six years their number fell by 41. The conclusion was that the number of pedagogical libraries has been decreasing, irrespective of the pandemic, and this phenomenon is not only characteristic of recent years. In 2003-2019, the number of such libraries also dropped in total by 69.

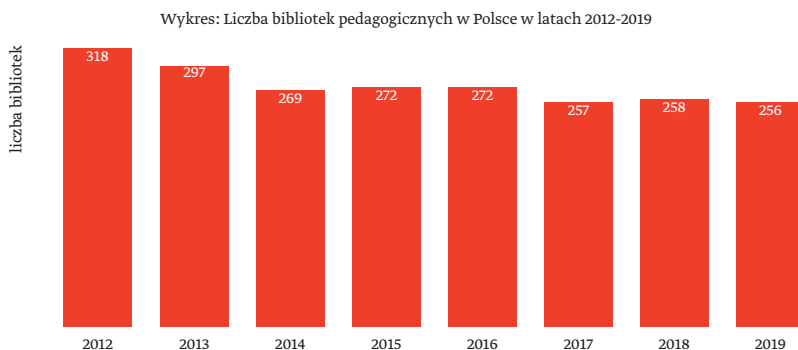


FIG. 1. THE AUTHORS BASED ON THE DATA PROVIDED IN THE KULTURA REPORTS: STAT. GOV.PL [TITLE: NUMBER OF PEDAGOGICAL LIBRARIES IN POLAND IN 2012-2019, VERTICALLY: NUMBER OF LIBRARIES, HORIZONTALLY: YEARS]

It was observed that voivodeship pedagogical libraries did not operate within an orderly hierarchical library network. They took on various organizational forms, such as:

- 1) autonomous pedagogical libraries with or without branches where in the latter case the library was and organizationally and financially part of the parent library,
- 2) libraries with or without branches within educational institution complexes³⁴,
- 3) in-service teacher training centres with or without branches³⁵.

34 A. Krawczuk, Biblioteki pedagogiczne i ich zasoby w kontekście nowych zadań, [online:] file:///C:/Users/Acer/Desktop/a.krawczuk_biblioteki_pedagogiczne_ich_zasoby-w-kontekscie-nowych-zadan.pdf, s.4, [accessed 28 April 2022].

35 It is the Pedagogical Library operating within the structures of the Voivodeship Methodological Centre in Gorzów Wielkopolski that operates as a division. See respective Resolution No. XXII/315/20 of the Lubusz Voivodeship Assembly of 7 September 2020 on Assigning the Status to the Voivodeship Methodological Centre in Gorzów Wielkopolski, [online:] <https://womgorz.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Statutu-WOM-Gorzow-7-IX-2020.pdf>, [accessed 2 June 2022].

When verifying the number of pedagogical libraries in Poland, the following sources were identified:

- Annual reports of Statistics Poland (below: GUS) available online,
- National Library's reports on the state of libraries in Poland covered by GUS research,
- Register of Schools and Educational Centres (below: RSPO),
- Bulletin of Public Information (below: BIP),
- Library websites.

The report of the National Library on the state of libraries in Poland recorded by the investigation of GUS in 2017 included 27 voivodeship pedagogical libraries³⁶. The data were gathered via the GUS K-03 form which annually collects self-reported data for various types of libraries³⁷. It is filled in by the library staff and sometimes have discrepancies in the provided data depending on the knowledge and understanding of the person filling out the form regarding the kind of information requested on it³⁸. By consulting the records of RSPO, it could be seen that in the same year there were 17 libraries in Poland designated as 'voivodeship' that were located in 11 voivodeships. In four voivodeships, there were more than one institution that had the word 'voivodeship' in their name [sic!]³⁹.

36 'Stan bibliotek w Polsce - objętych badaniem Głównego Urzędu Statystycznego - 2017 r.' in: Raporty BN, Biblioteka Narodowa, p. 23, [online:] <https://www.bn.org.pl/download/document/1554115920.pdf>, [accessed 2 June 2022].

37 Ibidem, p. 1.

38 K-03 Sprawozdanie biblioteki za 2017 r [GUS library reporting form for 2017], [online:] <http://form.stat.gov.pl/formularze/2018/passive/K-03.pdf>, [accessed 25 April 2022].

39 The libraries were located in the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship: Marian Rajewski Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Bydgoszcz, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/49929>, [accessed 5 May 2022]; Lublin Voivodeship: KEN Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Lublin, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/42908>, [accessed 5 May 2022]; Lubusz Voivodeship: Maria Grzegorzewska Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Zielona Góra, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/70888>, [accessed 5 May 2022]; Lodz Voivodeship: Prof. Tadeusz Kotarbiński Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Lodz, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/14754>, [accessed 25 April 2022]; Lesser Poland Voivodeship: Hugon Kołłątaj Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Krakow, [online] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/19644> [accessed 30 May 2022]; Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Nowy Sącz, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/18846>, [accessed: 25 April 2022]; Mazovian Voivodeship: KEN Voivodeship Pedagogical

The voivodeship local government is the most reliable source for determining if a library belongs to the voivodeship group because it is the designated organization responsible for administering these kinds of facilities. This was established in compliance with the *Act of 14 December of 2016 on Educational Law* where it is the responsibility of the local government to establish and administer public regional and supra-regional pedagogical libraries. The Act also sets out the network plan for these pedagogical libraries within a voivodeship⁴⁰. Therefore, the identification of the list of voivodeship pedagogical libraries administered by the voivodeship local government was accomplished by consulting the RSPO, official library websites, and BIP. By comparing the data from all three sources, it was discovered that in March 2020, there were 44 such libraries among which 34 were autonomous budgetary units in a total of 13 voivodeships⁴¹. Only six of them did not have any

Library in Warsaw: RSPO, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/28033> [accessed 25 April 2022]; Opole Voivodeship: Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Opole, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/55538>, [accessed 25 April 2022]; Subcarpathian Voivodeship: Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Krosno, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/92374>, [accessed 25 April 2022]; J. G. Pawlikowski Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Przemyśl, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/92386>, [accessed: 5 May 2022]; Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Rzeszów RSPO, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/92368>, [accessed 25 April 2022]; Pomeranian Voivodeship: School Motherhood Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Gdansk, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/9619>, [accessed 25 April 2022]; Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Słupsk RSPO, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/9620>, [accessed 25 April 2022]; Silesian Voivodeship: Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Bielsko-Biała, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/14886>, [accessed 25 April 2022]; J. Lompa Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Katowice, [online:] link; Pedagogiczna Biblioteka Wojewódzka w Rybniku, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/127667>, [accessed 30 May 2022]; Holy Cross Voivodeship: Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Kielce, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/6753>, [accessed 25 April 2022].

- 40 Act of 14 December 2016 on Educational Law (Journal of Laws 2021, item 1082) consolidated text with amendments, in: *Internetowy System Aktów Prawnych*, [online:] <https://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/download.xsp/WDU20170000059/U/D20170059Lj.pdf>, [accessed 25 April 2021].
- 41 Importantly, the identification of the actual number of organizationally autonomous voivodeship pedagogical libraries required looking through all the records concerning pedagogical libraries and functioning in RSPO. Searching through the records with advanced criteria: 'running organ': 'voivodeship local government', 'type of school/institution': 'pedagogical libraries', 'position within the structure': 'autonomous', with the option: 'cover closed down schools/institutions' permits to find 31 records. Results of the RSPO search https://rspo.gov.pl/?rsc%5Bregion%5D=&rsc%5Brsop%5D=&rsc%5Bwojewodztwo%5D=&rsc%5Bop_

branches in their structure⁴². The remaining libraries formed part of the educational institution complexes in 4 voivodeships. Nine of them preserved a certain organizational identity, and one was reduced to the status of a division. Apart from this, two operated as departments of in-service teacher training institutions located within the Western Pomerania Voivodeship and were not included in RSPO.

The number of pedagogical libraries run by voivodeship local governments varied in different regions of Poland. An orderly network of pedagogical libraries was found in Lower Silesian, Opole,

typ%5D=133&rsc%5Bop_wojewodztwo%5D=&rsc%5Borgan%5D=&rsc%5Bortyp%5D=&rsc%5Bor_wojewodztwo%5D=&rsc%5Brejestracyjny%5D=&rsc%5Btyp%5D%5B%5D=58&rsc%5BrodzajPlacowki%5D%5B%5D=1&rspo_added%5Bzawod%5D=&rsc%5Bnieaktywne%5D=1&rsc%5Bsearch%5D=. This number included 29 of independent currently operating institutions, the figure, however, missing 5 pedagogical libraries which in March 2020 were independent organizational units, and presently form part of educational institution complexes. The libraries in question are: the pedagogical library run the local governments of the Lodz Voivodeship and the Rzeszów one run by the local government of the Subcarpathian Voivodeship. On 1 September 2021, the voivodeship pedagogical libraries in the Lodz Voivodeship were incorporated into educational institution complexes (the libraries in Piotrków Trybunalski, Sieradz, Skierniewice) or schools and educational institutions (the Lodz Pedagogical Library). See Pedagogical Library in Piotrków Trybunalski, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/12703>, [accessed 25 April 2022]; Pedagogical Library in Sieradz, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/12847>, [accessed 25 April 2022]; Pedagogical Library in Skierniewice, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/12806>, [accessed 25 April 2022]; Prof. T. Kotarbiński Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Lodz, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/23222>, [accessed: 25 April 2022]. RSPO features an erroneous record of the Pedagogical Library in Zamość, branch in Hrubieszów, marked as an autonomous unit closed down in 2013. Interestingly, the branch continues to operate and has another record reflecting its current status. See Pedagogical Library in Zamość. Branch in Hrubieszów [Closed down], [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/84853>, [accessed 25 April 2022]; Pedagogical Library in Zamość. Branch in Hrubieszów. RSPO features as an autonomous unit the division of a pedagogical library run by the Voivodeship Methodological Centre in Gorzów Wielkopolski. See Voivodeship Methodological Centre Pedagogical Library, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/88394>, [accessed 25 April 2022].

- 42 These were: the Pedagogical Library in Chełmno, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/41049>, [accessed 25 April 2022], Gen. Elżbieta Zawacka Pedagogical Library in Toruń, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/52081>, [accessed 25 April 2022]; Marian Rajewski Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Bydgoszcz, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/49929>, [accessed 25 April 2022]; Maria Grzegorzewska Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Zielona Góra, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/70888>, [accessed 25 April 2022]; Karol Wojtyła Warmian-Masurian Pedagogical Library in Elbląg, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/103461>, [accessed 25 April 2022]; Prof. Tadeusz Kotarbiński Warmian-Masurian Pedagogical Library in Olsztyn, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/103454>, [accessed 25 April 2022].

and Holy Cross Voivodeships. In the Silesian Voivodeship, there was one library, Lower Silesian Pedagogical Library in Wrocław⁴³, administered by the voivodeship local government. In Opole, there was also the Voivodeship Pedagogical Library⁴⁴ and another in Holy Cross in Kielce⁴⁵.

According to the data from RSPO, there was no pedagogical library in the West Pomeranian Voivodeship operated by the local voivodeship government in 2019 and 2020⁴⁶ and this remained un-

- 43 Search in RSPO following the criteria: 'voivodeship': 'Lower Silesian', 'running organ': 'voivodeship local government', 'type of school/ institution': 'pedagogical libraries', using the criterion: 'cover closed down schools/institutions. Search results. RSPO, [online:] https://rspo.gov.pl/?rsc%5Bregon%5D=&rsc%5Brspo%5D=&rsc%5Bwojewodztwo%5D=1&rsc%5Bpowiat%5D=&rsc%5Bop_typ%5D=133&rsc%5Bop_wojewodztwo%5D=&rsc%5Borgan%5D=&rsc%5Bor_typ%5D=&rsc%5Bor_wojewodztwo%5D=&rsc%5Brejstrujacy%5D=&rsc%5Btyp%5D%5B%5D=58&rspo_added%5Bzawod%5D=&rsc%5Bnieaktywne%5D=1&rsc%5Bsearch%5D= [accessed 25 April 2022].
- 44 Search in RSPO following the criteria: 'voivodeship': 'Opole', 'running organ': 'voivodeship local government', 'type of school/ institution': 'pedagogical libraries', using the criterion: 'cover closed down schools/ institutions. Search results. RSPO, [online:] https://rspo.gov.pl/?rsc%5Bregon%5D=&rsc%5Brspo%5D=&rsc%5Bwojewodztwo%5D=8&rsc%5Bpowiat%5D=&rsc%5Bop_typ%5D=133&rsc%5Bop_wojewodztwo%5D=&rsc%5Borgan%5D=&rsc%5Bor_typ%5D=&rsc%5Bor_wojewodztwo%5D=&rsc%5Brejstrujacy%5D=&rsc%5Btyp%5D%5B0%5D=58&rsc%5Bnieaktywne%5D=1&rsc%5Bsearch%5D=&rspo_added%5Bzawod%5D=&sort=dzialalnosc.nazwa&direction=asc&page=1 [accessed 30 May 2022].
- 45 Search in RSPO following the criteria: 'voivodeship': 'Holy Cross', 'running organ': 'Voivodeship local government', 'type of school/ institution': 'pedagogical libraries', using the criterion: 'cover closed down schools/institutions. Search results. RSPO, [online:] https://rspo.gov.pl/?rsc%5Bregon%5D=&rsc%5Brspo%5D=&rsc%5Bwojewodztwo%5D=13&rsc%5Bpowiat%5D=&rsc%5Bop_typ%5D=133&rsc%5Bop_wojewodztwo%5D=&rsc%5Borgan%5D=&rsc%5Bor_typ%5D=&rsc%5Bor_wojewodztwo%5D=&rsc%5Brejstrujacy%5D=&rsc%5Btyp%5D%5B%5D=58&rspo_added%5Bzawod%5D=&rsc%5Bnieaktywne%5D=1&rsc%5Bsearch%5D=.
- 46 Search in RSPO following the criteria: 'voivodeship': 'West Pomeranian', 'running organ': 'voivodeship local government', 'type of school/ institution': 'pedagogical libraries', even using the criterion: 'cover closed down schools/ institutions' yields no results. Search results. RSPO, [online:] https://rspo.gov.pl/?rsc%5Bregon%5D=&rsc%5Brspo%5D=&rsc%5Bwojewodztwo%5D=16&rsc%5Bpowiat%5D=&rsc%5Bop_typ%5D=133&rsc%5Bop_wojewodztwo%5D=&rsc%5Borgan%5D=&rsc%5Bor_typ%5D=&rsc%5Bor_wojewodztwo%5D=&rsc%5Brejstrujacy%5D=&rsc%5Btyp%5D%5B%5D=58&rspo_added%5Bzawod%5D=&rsc%5Bnieaktywne%5D=1&rsc%5Bsearch%5D=.

changed even after search of all types of organizations registered in RSPO⁴⁷. Actually, the register records contradicted the status quo as well as the data included in the GUS *Kultura w 2017 roku* (Culture in 2017) Report which stated that there were almost seven such libraries in West Pomeranian Voivodeship⁴⁸. Identifying institutions which could be potentially regarded as pedagogical libraries run by the West Pomeranian local government required looking through the structure of each of the educational institutions registered in RSPO and administered by the local government. It was ascertained that there were two ‘centres for in-service teacher training’, namely, the Centre for Teacher Education in Koszalin and the West Pomeranian Centre for Teacher In-service Training⁴⁹ and both were limited to the status of departments in these institutions. These facilities were the West Pomeranian Centre for Teacher In-service Training in Szczecin – H. Radlińska Pedagogical Library Department⁵⁰, and the Centre for Teacher Education CEN Pedagogical Library in Koszalin – Department of Pedagogical Information – Pedagogical Library⁵¹. Considering the issue from

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- 47 Search results. https://rspo.gov.pl/?rsc%5Bregion%5D=&rsc%5Brspo%5D=&rsc%5Bwojewodztwo%5D=16&rsc%5Bpowiat%5D=&rsc%5Bop_typ%5D=&rsc%5Bop_wojewodztwo%5D=&rsc%5Borgan%5D=&rsc%5Bor_typ%5D=&rsc%5Bor_wojewodztwo%5D=&rsc%5Brejestracja%5D=&rsc%5Btyp%5D%5B%5D=58&rspo_added%5Bzawod%5D=&rsc%5Bnieaktywne%5D=1&rsc%5Bsearch%5D=
- 48 Culture in 2017. XLSX files, [online:] <https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/kultura-turystyka-sport/kultura/kultura-w-2017-roku,2,15.html>, [accessed 25 April 2022].
- 49 RSPO results for the criteria: ‘school or institution location’: ‘West Pomeranian’, ‘running organ’: ‘voivodeship local government’, including the criterion ‘cover closed up schools/institutions. https://rspo.gov.pl/?rsc%5Bregion%5D=&rsc%5Brspo%5D=&rsc%5Bwojewodztwo%5D=16&rsc%5Bpowiat%5D=&rsc%5Bop_typ%5D=133&rsc%5Bop_wojewodztwo%5D=&rsc%5Borgan%5D=&rsc%5Bor_typ%5D=&rsc%5Bor_wojewodztwo%5D=&rsc%5Brejestracja%5D=&rspo_added%5Bzawod%5D=&rsc%5Bnieaktywne%5D=1&rsc%5Bsearch%5D=.
- 50 Statute of the West Pomeranian Teacher In-service Training in: *Biuletyn Informacji Publicznej Zachodniopomorskiego Centrum Doskonalenia Nauczycieli w Szczecinie* <http://bip.zcdn.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/uchwala.pdf>, [accessed 25 April 2022].
- 51 Statute in: *Biuletyn Informacji Publicznej Centrum Edukacji Nauczycieli w Koszalinie* http://www.cen.edu.pl/uploads/publiczne/cen_bip/Uchwala_nr_XIV-186-20_sejmiku_wojewodztwa_zachodniopomorskiego_statut_CEN.pdf, [accessed 25 April 2022].

the RSPO perspective, the West Pomeranian Voivodeship does not have a voivodeship pedagogical library [sic!].

In summary, the research results showed that the number of pedagogical libraries at the voivodeship level was closer to 49, equalling the number of administrative divisions into which of Poland was divided from 1975-1998. The main reason for the difficulty with identifying the actual number of voivodeship pedagogical libraries stemmed from the fact that each voivodeship had its own method of handling the matter and the respective local governments could, at their discretion, administer, transform, and modify the organizational structure of such libraries⁵². Depending on the selected source of information, the actual number of voivodeship pedagogical libraries before the pandemic was as follows:

- 17 which were classified as ‘voivodeship’ owing to the fact that the term ‘voivodeship’ was featured in their name;
- 27 registered in the BN’s report,
- 44 mentioned in the main RSPO register.

Based on this data, it was concluded that, before the pandemic in Poland, there were 44 voivodeship pedagogical libraries operating.

In the articles appearing before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the authors emphasized the strong potential of pedagogical libraries to act as centres for academic purposes, culture-creativity, for the dissemination of information, the promotion of knowledge, and for facilitating the use of digital tools in education. Their highly qualified staff was identified as their major asset who were well-equipped for involvement in creative (also bibliotherapeutic) work with readers in response to their customized needs (see Wanda Matras-Mastalerz⁵³). As quoted by Hanna Batorowska,

52 See E. Wykrzykowska, ‘Finansowanie bibliotek pedagogicznych’, *Biuletyn EBIB*, 2009, no. 8(108), [online:] <http://ebib.pl/2009/108/a.php?wykrzykowska> [accessed 25 April 2022].

53 W. Matras-Mastalerz, ‘Biblioteka pedagogiczna miejscem biblioterapeutycznych inicjatyw twórczych’, in: eds. A. Fluda-Krokos et al, *Miejsce biblioteki pedagogicznej w zmieniającej się przestrzeni edukacji i informacji*, Kraków, Wydaw. Naukowe Uniwersytetu Pedagogicznego, 2014, pp. 68-76, [online:] https://www.pbw.edu.pl/images/stories/Konferencja/IOFBP/IOFBP_miejsce_biblioteki_pedagogicznej.pdf, [accessed 6 June 2022].

pedagogical libraries support the activities of educational institutions with respect to the in-service training of teacher librarians who were active and fully integrated among the groups of librarians. Moreover, these professionals usually undertook projects aimed at improving the IT and media competencies of in teachers and students operating in the modern educational environment⁵⁴.

2. THE STATE AND OPERATION OF VOIVODESHIP PEDAGOGICAL LIBRARIES DURING THE PANDEMIC

During the course of the second stage of the investigation, the objective was to establish whether the number of pedagogical libraries changed during the pandemic as can be seen in Table 1 below. The categories and number of libraries were arrived at depending on their organizational structure and also based on the classification method used by Anna Krawczuk. Her divisions were: 1) autonomous pedagogical libraries with or without branches; 2) libraries with or without branches which are part of educational institution complexes; and 3) divisions of the institutions of in-service teacher training with or without branches.

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF VOIVODESHIP PEDAGOGICAL LIBRARIES BEFORE AND AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Detailed list	Number of voivodeship pedagogical libraries before the COVID-19 pandemic	Number of voivodeship pedagogical libraries after the COVID-19 pandemic
Autonomous libraries without branches	6	6
Autonomous libraries with branches	28	23
Libraries within educational institution complexes without branches	3	3
Libraries within educational institution complexes with branches	6	12
Divisions within the in-service teacher training centres without branches	0	1
Divisions/departments within the in-service teacher training centres with branches	1	0
Total	44	45

Source: The authors based on RSPO.

54 H. Batorowska, 'Biblioteka ośrodkiem pedagogiki informacyjnej', in: eds. A. Fluda-Krokos et al, *Miejsce Biblioteki Pedagogicznej W Zmieniającej Się Przestrzeni Edukacji I Informacji*, Kraków, Wydaw. Naukowe Uniwersytetu Pedagogicznego, 2014, p. 16, [online:] https://www.pbw.edu.pl/images/stories/Konferencja/IOFBP/IOFBP_miejsce_biblioteki_pedagogicznej.pdf, [accessed 6 June 2022].

In March 2020, there were 44 voivodeship pedagogical libraries operating in Poland. Among them, 34 were autonomous budgetary units and the majority (28) of these facilities were located in the capital cities with one or several branches in each voivodeship. A few of them (6) had no branches and a significantly smaller number (9) consisted of libraries operating within educational institution complexes, six of which had branches. Interestingly, RSPO had an autonomous pedagogical library, Voivodeship Methodological Centre Pedagogical Library, in Gorzów, Wielkopolski. However, based on their Charter included in BIP, the library in question operated as a unit within the division.

Currently (as of 31 March 2022), there were 45 voivodeship pedagogical libraries in Poland with the majority (36) being autonomous budgetary units with branches and with only three not having branches. Since some of them had changed their organizational form, an increase in the number of libraries forming part of educational institution complexes was observed (15) with 12 of them having one or more branches in their structure⁵⁵.

55 Search in RSPO according to the criteria: 'running organ': 'voivodeship local government' and 'type of school/institution': 'pedagogical library' yielded 201 records which encompassed also branches of the central libraries. Having deducted the branches, we received 45 institutions. In compliance with the names uses in RSPO, they were as follows (for greater transparency, the institutions' name is given in their Polish form): Pedagogiczna Biblioteka Wojewódzka w Kielcach, Pedagogiczna Biblioteka Wojewódzka im. Gdańskiej Macierzy Szkolnej w Gdańsku, Pedagogiczna Biblioteka Wojewódzka w Słupsku, Biblioteka Pedagogiczna w Piotrkowie Trybunalskim, Biblioteka Pedagogiczna w Skierniewicach, Biblioteka Pedagogiczna w Łomży, Pedagogiczna Biblioteka Wojewódzka im. prof. Tadeusza Kotarbińskiego w Łodzi, Pedagogiczna Biblioteka Wojewódzka w Bielsku Białej, Pedagogiczna Biblioteka Wojewódzka w Nowym Sączu, Biblioteka Pedagogiczna w Tarnowie, Pedagogiczna Biblioteka Wojewódzka im. J. Lompy w Katowicach, Pedagogiczna Biblioteka Wojewódzka im. Komisji Edukacji Narodowej w Warszawie, Biblioteka Pedagogiczna im. Heleny Radlińskiej w Siedlcach, Publiczna Biblioteka Pedagogiczna Książnica Pedagogiczna im. A. Parczewskiego w Kaliszu, Publiczna Biblioteka Pedagogiczna w Koninie, Publiczna Biblioteka Pedagogiczna w Poznaniu, Biblioteka Pedagogiczna w Zamościu, Biblioteka Pedagogiczna w Chełmie, Biblioteka Pedagogiczna w Białej Podlaskiej, Pedagogiczna Biblioteka Wojewódzka im. KEN w Lublinie, Pedagogiczna Biblioteka Wojewódzka imienia Mariana Rejewskiego w Bydgoszczy, Biblioteka Pedagogiczna im. gen. bryg. Prof. Elżbiety Zawackiej w Toruniu, Pedagogiczna Biblioteka Wojewódzka w Opolu, Dolnośląska Biblioteka Pedagogiczna we Wrocławiu, Pedagogiczna Biblioteka Wojewódzka im. Marii Grzegorzewskiej w Zielonej Górze, Pedagogiczna Biblioteka Wojewódzka w Rzeszowie, Pedagogiczna

In the Lodz Voivodeship, the change observed in the course of the pandemic was that all four operating voivodeship pedagogical libraries were incorporated into the newly established institution complexes. These were the Centre for Education Development of the Lodz Voivodeship in Lodz - Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Lodz⁵⁶; the Centre for Education Development of the Lodz Voivodeship in Piotrków Trybunalski - Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Piotrków Trybunalski⁵⁷; the Centre for Education Development of the Lodz Voivodeship in Sieradz - Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Sieradz⁵⁸; and the Centre for Education Development of the Lodz Voivodeship in Skierniewice - Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Skierniewice⁵⁹. Pedagogical libraries and in-service training cen-

Biblioteka Wojewódzka w Krośnie, Pedagogiczna Biblioteka Wojewódzka im. Józefa Gwalberta Pawlikowskiego w Przemyślu, Biblioteka Pedagogiczna w Tarnobrzegu, Warmińsko-Mazurska Biblioteka Pedagogiczna im. prof. Tadeusza Kotarbińskiego w Olsztynie, Warmińsko-Mazurska Biblioteka Pedagogiczna im. Karola Wojtyły w Elblągu, Publiczna Biblioteka Pedagogiczna Regionalnego Ośrodka Doskonalenia Nauczycieli „WOM” w Częstochowie, Publiczna Biblioteka Pedagogiczna w Pile, Publiczna Biblioteka Pedagogiczna w Lesznie, Wojewódzki Ośrodek Metodyczny Biblioteka Pedagogiczna, Biblioteka Pedagogiczna w Sieradzu, Biblioteka Pedagogiczna w Suwałkach, Biblioteka Pedagogiczna w Białymstoku, Pedagogiczna Biblioteka Wojewódzka w Rybniku, Pedagogiczna Biblioteka Wojewódzka im. Hugona Kołłątaja w Krakowie, Biblioteka Pedagogiczna w Ciechanowie, Biblioteka Pedagogiczna w Ostrołęce, Biblioteka Pedagogiczna w Płocku, Biblioteka Pedagogiczna w Radomiu, Biblioteka Pedagogiczna w Zgierzu. Results of the search in harmony with the criteria: ‘running organ’: ‘voivodeship local government’ and ‘type of school/institution’: ‘pedagogical libraries’, in: RSPO, [online:] https://rspo.gov.pl/?rsc%5Bregon%5D=&rsc%5Brspo%5D=&rsc%5Bwojewodztwo%5D=&rsc%5Bop_typ%5D=133&rsc%5Bop_wojewodztwo%5D=&rsc%5Borgan%5D=&rsc%5Bor_typ%5D=&rsc%5Bor_wojewodztwo%5D=&rsc%5Brejestrujacy%5D=&rsc%5B-typ%5D%5B%5D=58&rspo_added%5Bzawod%5D=&rsc%5Bsearch%5D= [accessed 31 April 2022].

- 56 Resolution no. XXXIV/450/21 of the Lodz Voivodeship Assembly of 27 August 2021 on founding the Centre for Education Development of the Lodz Voivodeship in Lodz, [online:] <https://bip.lodzkie.pl/files/u450.pdf>, [accessed 11 June 2022].
- 57 Resolution no. XXXIV/451/21 of the Lodz Voivodeship Assembly of 27 August 2021 on founding the Centre for Education Development of the Lodz Voivodeship in Piotrków Trybunalski [online:] <https://bip.lodzkie.pl/files/u451.pdf>, [accessed 11 June 2022].
- 58 Resolution no. XXXIV/449/21 of the Lodz Voivodeship Assembly of 27 August 2021 on founding the Centre for Education Development of the Lodz Voivodeship in Sieradz, [online:] <https://bip.lodzkie.pl/files/u449.pdf>, [accessed 11 June 2022].
- 59 Resolution no. XXXIV/452/21 of the Lodz Voivodeship Assembly of 27 August 2021 on founding the Centre for Education Development of the Lodz Voivodeship in Skierniewice, [online:] <https://bip.lodzkie.pl/files/u452.pdf>, [accessed 11 June 2022].

tres ended up within the structures of three of them, while the one in Lodz became a school and an educational institution complex. The Lodz pedagogical library was incorporated into the complex currently comprised of the Centre for Lifelong Learning of the Lodz Voivodeship Local Government together with the M. Skłodowska-Curie Post-Secondary School of the Lodz Voivodeship Local Government; Prof. Tadeusz Kotarbiński Voivodeship Pedagogical Library; Voivodeship Centre for In-Service Training; and the Local Government Post-Secondary School⁶⁰.

Interestingly, the Zgierz branch of the Prof. Tadeusz Kotarbiński Voivodeship Library in Lodz became a new one based on the definition of the term in this paper. At the time of the study, it operated as the pedagogical library in Zgierz and was located within the complex of educational institutions operating as the Centre for Education Development of the Lodz Voivodeship in Zgierz⁶¹. Therefore, currently in the Lodz Voivodeship, there are 5 pedagogical libraries administered by the local government and present in RSPO. Thus, in keeping with the assumptions made for this paper, they can all be called ‘voivodeship’ pedagogical libraries. In the Subcarpathian Voivodeship, the second one in which changes during the pandemic were observed, the Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Rzeszów was incorporated into the structure of the newly established Subcarpathian Complex of Voivodeship Centres in Rzeszów⁶².

60 Resolution no. XXXIV/450/21 of the Lodz Voivodeship Assembly of 27 August 2021 on founding the Centre for Education Development of the Lodz Voivodeship in Lodz, [online:] <https://bip.lodzkie.pl/files/u450.pdf>, [accessed 11 June 2022].

61 Pedagogical Library in Zgierz, in: RSPO, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/279288>, [accessed 5 June 2022].

62 Annex 2 to Resolution no. XXXVI/579/21 of the Subcarpathian Voivodeship Assembly of 26 April 2021. Statute of the Subcarpathian Complex of Voivodeship Centres in Rzeszów, in: *Biuletyn Informacji Publicznej Podkarpackiego Zespołu Placówek Wojewódzkich w Rzeszowie*, [online:] https://bip.pcen.pl/images/file/statut/Statut_PZPW.pdf, [accessed 30 May 2022]; Annex 1 to Resolution no. XXXVI/579/21 of the Subcarpathian Voivodeship Assembly of 26 April 2021 with the Statute of the Subcarpathian Centre for Teacher Education in Rzeszów, in: *Biuletyn Informacji Publicznej Podkarpackiego Zespołu Placówek Wojewódzkich w Rzeszowie*, [online:] https://bip.pcen.pl/images/file/statut/Statut_PCEN.pdf, [accessed 30 May 2022].

There are no direct assumptions allowing for the connection of the organizational changes affecting the pedagogical libraries in the Lodz and Subcarpathian Voivodeships with the COVID-19 pandemic. In the Lodz Voivodeship, the implemented changes were justified by the need to combine institutions ‘representing a similar or a complementary scope of operations’⁶³. The tendency to incorporate pedagogical libraries into complexes of educational institutions had been observed before the pandemic where, for example, the Pedagogical Library in Białystok became part of the Centre for Teacher Education in 2020⁶⁴, the Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Rybnik was incorporated into the ‘WOM’ Regional Centre for Teacher In-service Training and Pedagogical Information in 2006⁶⁵; the Public Pedagogical Library in Konin formed part of the Centre for Teacher In-service Training in Konin in 2013; the Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Opole was included in the Regional Complex of Education-Supporting Institutions in Opole in 2016⁶⁶; while the Pedagogical Library in Łomża became a part of the Centre for Teacher Education in Łomża in 2018⁶⁷.

During the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, pedagogical libraries tried to maintain communication with their users in many different ways, including developing library websites, and social media and digital lending via platforms like IBUK Libra or Legimi

63 G. Nowak, ‘Za nami 34. Sesja Sejmiku Województwa Łódzkiego’ [31 August 2021] Radio ZW Radio Ziemi Wieluńskiej, [online:] <https://www.radiozw.com.pl/za-nami-34-sesja-sejmiku-wojewodztwa-lodzkiego/>, [accessed 29 April 2022].

64 Pedagogical Library in Białystok, in: RSPO, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/17419>, [accessed 30 May 2022].

65 Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Rybnik, in: RSPO, [online:] <https://rspo.gov.pl/rspo/127667>, [accessed 30 May 2022].

66 Resolution no. XVII/187/2016 of the Opole Voivodeship Assembly of 21 May 2016 on merging the Regional Centre for Education Development in Opole and the Voivodeship Pedagogical Library in Opole to form the Regional Complex of Education-Supporting Institutions, in: *Biuletyn Informacji Publicznej Regionalnego Zespołu Placówek Wsparcia Edukacji w Opolu*, [online:] <http://bip.rzpwe.opolskie.pl/download/attachment/2/rzpwe-uchwala.pdf>, [accessed 30 May 2022].

67 Resolution no. XLIX/458/2018 of the Podlaskie Voivodeship Assembly of 28 May 2018 on formation of the Centre for Teacher Education in Łomża, in: *Biuletyn Informacji Publicznej Centrum Edukacji Nauczycieli w Łomży*, [online:] http://bip.cenl.wrotapodlasia.pl/statut_prawny_cen/, [accessed 30 May 2022].

with whom the libraries continued or established cooperation. They also did this via the universally accessible resources of libraries and digital services, e.g., Polona, Wirtualne Lektury, which allowed readers to use the digital or audio versions of resources over the periods of severe restrictions⁶⁸. It can be concluded that pedagogical libraries promptly adapted to the restrictions and requirements by working in a digital cancellation of many on-site projects and events as reflected in the GUS statistical reports. For example, in 2020, a significantly lower number of events were held by the pedagogical libraries for their users as seen here where with 3,124 such events in 2020; 5,220 in 2019; 5,085 in 2018; 4,915 in 2017; and 5,218 in 2016)⁶⁹. The same applied to conferences and seminars with 194 in 2020; 457 in 2019; 462 in 2018; 484 in 2017; and 485 in 2016)⁷⁰. Before the pandemic, the number of cultural and educational events were kept at a stable level but dropped substantially only in 2020. Since at the moment of this paper being written a new report for 2021 has not been released, it is hard to state whether the decrease has continued and will be observed in the future, or whether it will stop now that the pandemic has abated⁷¹.

L3. IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON THE RESTRUCTURING OF VOIVODESHIP PEDAGOGICAL LIBRARIES: CONCLUSIONS.

One of the most important research goals established to for this study was to find out whether the COVID-19 pandemic affected

68 See K. Figurska, M. Wachowicz, 'COVID-19 nam niestraszny-działalność Pedagogicznej Biblioteki Wojewódzkiej im. prof. Tadeusza Kotarbińskiego w Łodzi z koronawirusem w tle', *Biuletyn EBIB*, 2020, 4(193), p. 3; J. Jędrych, op.cit., p. 4.

69 Culture in 2020. ZIP file with XLSX files, [online:] [ZIP.https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/kultura-turystyka-sport/kultura/kultura-w-2020-roku,2,18.html](https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/kultura-turystyka-sport/kultura/kultura-w-2020-roku,2,18.html); Culture in 2019. ZIP file with XLSX files, [online:] <https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/kultura-turystyka-sport/kultura/kultura-w-2019-roku,2,17.html>; Culture in 2018. ZIP file with XLSX files, [online:] <https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/kultura-turystyka-sport/kultura/kultura-w-2018-roku,2,16.html>, [accessed 25 April 2022].

70 Ibidem.

71 The analysis of the papers authored by employees of different libraries seems to demonstrate that pedagogical libraries coped with the crisis of mounting on-site cultural and educational events, transferring most of them to the Internet, or by applying hybrid solutions to organizing them.

the operation and the organizational structure of the voivodeship pedagogical libraries in Poland. In the course of data analysis, resorting to heuristic and deductive methods, it was ascertained that over the period of the pandemic, five pedagogical libraries were incorporated into the structures of school and educational institution complexes, and only one was established based on the adopted criteria as found in Zgierz. This meant that at the end of the pandemic outbreak, there were 45 such libraries indicating a minor change in the number. However, the data showed that many of them were restructured in a more complex way. The number (6) of autonomous libraries without branches remained unchanged and those with branches decreased from 28 to 23. Similarly, the number of libraries without branches within educational institution complexes remained unaltered (3), but libraries with branches increased from 6 to 12. A division at the centre for in-service teacher training lost its branch. Nevertheless, the restructuring processes revealed no direct connection with the pandemic. Already, before the pandemic outbreak, the number of units of pedagogical libraries had been falling as demonstrated through the analysis of the data for the earlier years beginning with 2012.

These findings justified the need to ask the seemingly awkward question as to whether there was an operating voivodeship pedagogical library in every voivodeship. It was revealed one such library was not present in every voivodeship, although some could have more than one, and that in the West Pomeranian Voivodeship, in compliance with RSPO, there were no records showing the operation of a pedagogical library of a voivodeship status. The findings show that pedagogical libraries, as they did before the pandemic, conducted training workshops and provided assistance for in-service trainings for individuals employed in education. Furthermore, they integrated their services by providing a platform for educational and cultural events which brought individuals together. The availability of advanced technology combined with the pandemic proved to be a change generator over the period, despite the fact that the role of pedagogical libraries was defined

much earlier⁷². The comprehensive support which those libraries provide to teachers and schools cannot be reduced to only making their collections available⁷³.

This said, however, it does not change the fact that the subsequent pandemic restrictions forced the staff of the pedagogical libraries to limit their direct contacts with readers and to search for new means of communicating with them. Agnieszka Jaworska wrote about this challenging process in the context of the operation of the Lodz pedagogical library branch:

A pedagogical library is 'the third venue' for education, space for inspiration, for exchange of good practices, and also a partner in the education covering readership, the media, health, or culture. It co-creates the local educational reality, while the success of its activities stems from the direct contact with the public. Therefore, not only did the COVID 19-pandemic and subsequent restrictions introduce a different work organization in the libraries, but more importantly separated them from the local community within which they operate. The library lost the context for its actions, while any planning of further work, its character and course, as well as the current assessment of those actions required a change of the perspective and tools. New means of reaching the public and activating the community under the new realities unfriendly to the library operations had to be found.⁷⁴

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- 72 Lucyna Kurowska-Trudzik and Urszula Tobolska discussed the educational activity of the Lower Silesian Pedagogical Library in Wrocław in the area of supporting teachers, pedagogues, and school librarians, e.g., within the cooperation network and in-service training for teachers operating at the Library. In 2019, the following such networks operated at the Wrocław Pedagogical Library focused on the following topics: 'Developing digital competences in children', 'Teachers bibliotherapeutic activity: developing reading competences in students', 'The way to encourage reading: forms and tools used in promoting reading'. L. Kurowska-Trudzik, U. Tobolska, 'Biblioteka pedagogiczna... nie tylko wypożyczanie', *Biuletyn EBIB*, 2020, no.190, pp. 1-7, [online:] <http://ebiboj.s.pl/index.php/ebib/article/view/660/698>, [accessed 12 June 2022].
- 73 See e.g., S. Czacharowska, 'Czy biblioteka pedagogiczna jest (jeszcze) potrzebna nauczycielom? - głos w dyskusji', in: eds. A. Fluda-Krokos et al., *Miejsce biblioteki pedagogicznej w zmieniającej się przestrzeni edukacji i informacji*, [chyba op. cit, bo już w dwóch wcześniejszych przypisach], pp. 97-103, [online:] https://www.pbw.edu.pl/images/stories/Konferencja/IOFBP/IOFBP_miejsce_biblioteki_pedagogicznej.pdf, [accessed 6 June 2022].
- 74 A. Jaworska. 'Działalność Pedagogicznej Biblioteki Wojewódzkiej w Łodzi Filii w Pabianicach w roku szkolnym 2020/2021 w trakcie trwania pandemii

The activity of branches of pedagogical libraries in the context of disseminating science and readership in a local environment was the topic tackled by Kornelia Choryńska and Katarzyna Michalska in 2021 in their report of an example of the activities of the Swarzędz Branch of the Public Pedagogical Library in Poznan. They praised the recently implemented organizational structure of the many voivodeship pedagogical libraries which consisted of one main parent entity with branches in the counties. They commented that such a method of structuring provided an opportunity for an 'even and free access to academic and specialized literature throughout the whole voivodeship'⁷⁵ and which provided a 'level the playing field for residents of smaller towns'⁷⁶. The authors also emphasized the importance of meetings and conferences participated in by academics, specialists which were held at the Swarzędz branch⁷⁷, the cooperation network it controlled, and the in-service training for teachers as well as of the educational activities for children and adolescents⁷⁸.

To conclude, let us reiterate the role the National Library of Poland and the Polish Librarians Association played through the pandemic, the point tackled more extensively in the introduction to the present paper.

Translated by Magdalena Iwińska

COVID-19', *Acta Universitatis Lodzianis. Folia Librorum*, 2021, no. 2 (33), pp. 133-141, [online:] <http://www.czasopisma.uni.lodz.pl/librorum/article/view/13039/12626>, [accessed 28 April 2022].

75 K. Choryńska, K. Michalska, op.cit., p. 185.

76 ibidem.

77 Ibidem., p. 184.

78 Ibidem.