Częstochower Cooperatives

With the establishment of an independent Poland, the number of cooperatives increased strongly. The Popular Bakery, which during the First World War baked “popularka” (with plenty of potato skins and little flour), was the first cooperative in Częstochowa. At the time, like in other cities, we had a “Provisions Committee”, which had branches throughout the entire city, where essential food products were distributed for coupons according to a designated norm. After the War, the Provisions Committee was liquidated and the cooperatives took over the distribution of food products. As a consequence, practically every party and organisation established a cooperative for its members.

In 1921-22, the following cooperatives were operating:

- **Jedność** [Unity],
- **Wyzwolenia** [Liberation],
- **Naprzód** [Forward],
- **Vereinigte**,
- **Selbsthilfe** [Self-Aid] (craftsmen),
- **Workers’ Home** (Poalei Zion),
- **Zukunft** [Future] (Bund, tenants),
- **Beamte** [Civil Servants],
- **Handlowces** [Merchants],
- **Achdus** [Unity],
- **Shutfus** [Partnership] (retailers),
- **Tusia** [Resilience],
- **Przyjaźń** [Friendship],
- **Postęp** [Progress] and
- **Robotnik** [Worker].

The **Vereinigte** and **Zukunft** cooperatives later merged. The branches of these two cooperatives were on the [following] streets:

- the bakery - Garncarska 34;
- the first branch - Ogrodowa 27;
- the second - Senatorska 1;
- the third - Nadrzeczna 78;
- the fourth - Strażacka 16 (formerly **Zukunft**) and
- the fifth - Piłsudskiego 19. The cooperative’s bookkeeping was also there, and later the branch of the Workers Emigration Union.
- The Central Bureau was on ul. Spadek, in Szlezinger’s building.

In 1927, once the złote had stabilised and the mad jumps in prices no longer existed, the majority of these cooperatives ceased to exist, except for the **Vereinigte**, which had already liquidated a couple of branches and led a worn-out life. Then, with the aid of the Joint, a new Workers’ Cooperative was established, managed by the Bund. During the times of inflation, the cooperatives held the prices of the most essential food products to a certain extent, and they mostly served the poorer population.