

**THE CHILDREN'S SUMMER
COLONY OF THE KAUNAS SOCIETY
FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
JEWISH CHILDREN'S COLONIES
IN THE RESORT OF LAMPĒDŽIAI,
EASTERN FACADE, 1934.
DESIGN BY ENGINEER BORISAS
HELGERMANAS**

DETSKÝ LETNÝ TÁBOR
KAUNASKÉHO SPOLKU PRE
ZAKLADANIE ŽIDOVSKÝCH
DETSKÝCH TÁBOROV V LETOVISKU
LAMPĒDŽIAI, VÝCHODNÁ FASÁDA,
1934. NÁVRH INŽINIERA BORISASA
HELGERMANASA

Source Zdroj: LSCA

Healthcare and Recreation: The Infrastructure of Summer Colonies for Children in Lithuania in 1918 – 1940

Zdravotná starostlivosť a rekreácia:
infraštruktúra letných táborov pre deti
v Litve v rokoch 1918 – 1940

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Po obnovení litovského štátu 16. februára 1918 čelila krajina nielen administratívnym výzvam, ale aj sociálnej katastrofe spôsobenej následkami prvej svetovej vojny. Na litovskom území, na ktorom sa priamo odohrali boje, boli zničené celé mestá, obce a dediny, obyvateľstvo bolo rozptýlené a mnoho ľudí zavraždených.

Ako sa štát postupne spamätával a hospodárstvo nadobúdalo na sile, sociálnu starostlivosť začali vo zvýšenej miere organizovať miestne dobrovoľnícke organizácie. Z iniciatívy litovskej spoločnosti a filantropov začali vznikať dobrovoľnícke združenia a rôzne zariadenia sociálnej starostlivosti. Činnosť dobrovoľníckych združení bola z roka na rok organizovanejšia a systematickejšia a štát a samosprávy vyčleňovali na sociálnu starostlivosť čoraz viac finančných prostriedkov. Detské letné tábory boli väčšinou len jednou z mnohých aktivít spolkov a štátnych inštitúcií v oblasti sociálnej starostlivosti o deti, no svedčili najmä o zmene postoja spoločnosti a štátu k deťom ako perspektívnej budúcnosti.

Detské letné tábory, ktoré v Litve začali vznikať začiatkom dvadsiatych rokov 20. storočia, boli zriadené v nevhodných budovách, hoci sa od začiatku uvažovalo o letoviskových lokalitách. Napriek sporadickým pokusom úradov tábory zakladali najmä rôzne dobrovoľnícke združenia, ktoré na ne dostávali časť finančných prostriedkov od obcí.

Hlavnou myšlienkou detských letných táborov bolo poskytnúť v rozmedzí niekoľkých týždňov až mesiacov krátkodobé podmienky na lepší odpočinok a stravu pre deti, ktoré trpeli rôznymi zdravotnými problémami alebo podvýživou. Do táborov sa zvyčajne posielali deti, ktoré potrebovali oddych, no nie liečbu. Deti do letných táborov vyberali lekári na základe posúdenia ich zdravotného stavu, sociálnej situácie a pravdepodobného vplyvu pobytu. Na liečenie sa snažili posieľať deti do iných špeciálnych zariadení – sanatórií. Toto pravidlo však nebolo prísne dodržiavané. Niektoré dobrovoľnícke združenia, ktoré organizovali letné tábory, mali úzke kontakty so zdravotníctvom – zriadili nemocnice, ambulancie a lekárske ordinácie a vybudovali sanatóriá – takže deti s tuberkulózou alebo inými chorobami boli posielané do táborov.

Vedomie skutočnosti, že deti potrebujú nielen lekársku starostlivosť, ale aj rekreáciu, znamenalo kvalitatívny prelom v rozvoji infraštruktúry pre detskú rekreáciu. Situácia sa zmenila v tridsiatych rokoch, keď sa do zakladania táborov okrem

spolkov aktívne zapojili aj štátne inštitúcie. Toto desaťročie znamenalo nielen kvantitatívny, ale aj kvalitatívny skok v zakladaní letných táborov. Širšiu infraštruktúru detských letných táborov po celej Litve doplnili moderné budovy, ktorých projektovanie a výstavba vychádzali nielen z myšlienok architektonickej moderny, ale aj z kritérií hygieny a ochrany zdravia. Budovy boli navrhnuté tak, aby lepšie rešpektovali okolité prírodné prostredie, a tým pozitívne vplývali na zdravie detí.

V roku 1934 postavil Kaunaský spolok pre zakladanie židovských detských táborov podľa projektu inžiniera Borisasa Helcermanasa budovu pre detský letný tábor v letovisku Lampėdžiai neďaleko Kaunasu. Asymetrickú štruktúru jedno-dvojpodlažnej drevenej budovy zvyrazňuje rizalit na východnej fasáde, pričom charakteristický modernistický štýl jej dodávajú pásové okná. Na južnej a západnej strane budovy sa nachádza presklená veranda s výkladnými oknami a otvoreným balkónom nad ňou.

V roku 1935 bol schválený ďalší projekt podobného typu od B. Helcermanasa pre detský letný tábor, ktorý organizovala komunita Jeshurun. Tento tábor v letovisku Kulautuva pri Kaunase bol zriadený na sociálnu starostlivosť o chudobné deti na náklady komunity a ministerstva vnútra. Dvojposchodový dom sa ukrýval v hustom borovicovom lese. Izby boli slnečné, priestrané, s vysokými stropmi. Na dvore bolo špeciálne ihrisko. Statok a kuchyňa boli vo vzornom stave: boli tu dve samostatné kuchyne na mäsové a mliečne výrobky.

Jedným z prvých spolkov, ktorý v Litve zorganizoval detský letný tábor v medzivojnovom období, bol OZE. Po celej Litve existovala rozsiahla sieť táborov tohto spolku. V roku 1930 bol otvorený detský letný tábor v Kėdainiai. Nachádzal sa v lese šesť kilometrov od mesta na odľahlej usadlosti ďaleko od ostatných miestnych statkov v najsuchšej časti lesa. Tábor zaberá dve jednoposchodové budovy so šiestimi izbami a kuchyňou. Jeden dom mal spálne s objemom viac ako 250 metrov kubických, stredne veľké okná a slnečné svetlo zo všetkých strán. V druhej budove bola jedáleň, miestnosť na hranie a izolačná izba.

Dňa 31. mája 1936 bol otvorený ďalší tábor spolku OZE v Pagelave v župe Šiauliai. Bol obklopený krásnym mladým borovicovým lesom a neďaleko sa dalo kúpať. Samotná budova postavená z masívneho dreva bola priestraná, slnečná a v jej blízkosti sa nachádzala hlboká studňa s pitnou vodou. Na prízemí sa nachádzala priestraná jedáleň a lekárska ordinácia so

samostatným vchodom pre prípad, že by nejaké dieťa ochorelo. Na druhom poschodí bola šatňa, učiteľská miestnosť a tri spálne.

V roku 1934 dostal Spolok pre boj proti tuberkulóze neďaleko mesta Kėdainiai v borovicovom lese Babėnai pozemok s rozlohou 1,5 ha. Inžinier Jonas Jasiukaitis pre spolok zdarma vypracoval projekt budovy tábora. Jednopošchodová drevená budova so symetrickou konštrukciou bola postavená v roku 1935. Vo vstupnej hale bola zriadená jedáleň. V dvoch krídlach sa nachádzali spálne, každá pre 20 osôb. Na strane hlavného priečelia sa nachádzala zastrešená otvorená veranda, ktorá sa tiahla po celej dĺžke budovy. Stĺpy podopierajúce strechu akoby vertikálne rozdeľovali fasádu a stali sa centrálnym prvkom budovy. Spolok plánoval, že každé leto sa tu budú konať tri turnusy po 40 detí.

V roku 1937 dostala Kaunaská zdravotná poisťovňa pozemok s rozlohou viac ako tri hektáre v letovisku Kačerginė. Vo februári 1938 bol schválený projekt tábora, ktorý vypracoval inžinier Antanas Navickis. Výstavba trvala tri mesiace a detský letný tábor bol uvedený do prevádzky 9. júna 1938. Hlavná dvojpodlažná budova s dĺžkou 57 m a šírkou 8,6 m mala fasádu orientovanú na juh so širokými oknami. Prízemie bolo určené pre chlapcov a prvé poschodie pre dievčatá. Budova pozostávala zo 6 izieb po 25 lôžok a 4 menších izolačných jednotiek po 4 lôžkach, ako aj z ošetrovne, lekárskej ordinácie, čakárne a miestnosti pre sestry. Na jednom konci budovy boli zriadené toalety

a sprchy. V novom letnom tábore sa mohlo ubytovať 150 až 170 detí na jeden turnus a približne 500 detí za celé leto. V pravom uhle k hlavnej budove bola postavená jednopodlažná jedáleň s kuchyňou dlhá 42 m a široká 10 m. Kuchyňa bola vybavená podľa vtedajších moderných štandardov zabudovanými sporákmi, novým riadom, vodovodnými kohútikmi atď.

Šiauliaiská okresná zdravotná poisťovňa začala uvažovať o vybudovaní vlastného tábora už v roku 1931. V roku 1933 si prenajala 0,5-hektárový pozemok v lese pri obci Padubysys neďaleko jazera Pagelava 22 km od mesta. V tom istom roku bola podľa projektu inžiniera Vladasa Biteho postavená dvojpodlažná drevená budova tábora. V betónovom suteréne budovy bola zriadená práčovňa a umyváreň. Na prízemí sa nachádzala kuchyňa, jedáleň a päť izieb, na prvom poschodí boli dve spálne a ďalšie dve izby. Tábor mal vodovod s kohútikmi, vaňami a špeciálnymi rúrami na umývanie nôh detí. Keďže v budúcnosti sem malo prísť stráviť leto viac detí, v izbách boli nainštalované vykurovacie rozvody.

V roku 1937 vybuodovala Vikaviškiská okresná zdravotná poisťovňa v borovicovom lese v Osiji letný tábor pre 40 detí. Bola postavená dvojpodlažná budova s plochou 5000 m² a oddelenými spálňami pre chlapcov a dievčatá, jedálňou, rozľahlými chodbami, verandou a miestnosťami pre správcu a kuchára. Priestranná budova bola dobre osvetlená slnečným svetlom.

Introduction

The sphere of social care for children experienced a qualitative change after the First World War, when the ideas of modernity permeated the political discourse of states and children were increasingly seen as the future of society. According to Friederike Kind-Kovács, it was the war and its aftermath that brought a crucial change in the attitude toward children's care and welfare, generating a new responsiveness towards those children who had been placed in impoverished circumstances by the effects of war. During and after the war, states perceived that orphans "had great ideological potential to draw attention to the destructiveness of war and express the need to envision and invest into a new future for the respective children and their home countries".¹

The need to deal with the consequences of the war additionally led to an increase in the activities of various philanthropic organisations in the field of child care.² Even during wartime, the work of international and foreign humanitarian actors and organisations had helped not only to tackle existing care problems, but also to develop long-lasting practices for transforming poor children into new citizens.³ Referring to the establishment of Jewish institutions for the care of orphans in Eastern Europe, Natan Meir argues that they marked the transition of Jewish charitable and philanthropic institutions from pre-modern communal charity to modern "scientific philanthropy" and national welfare policies in the interwar period.⁴

The recognition of children as the future potential of society similarly led to an increased focus on the development of health facilities for them.⁵ Alongside children's health facilities, another important aspect of children's welfare had evolved – children's rest – which had been addressed through the development of infrastructure for rest and recreation. Children's summer colonies started to be developed as one of the measures to improve their health. The American Red Cross, which ran long-term health projects in Europe after the war, ran so called "fresh air camps" based on the US model, with the aim of improving children's physical wellbeing by spending time outdoors, eating healthily and exercising.⁶

Such colonies were not just a product of the American system, nor were they entirely new in Europe, where educators or medical professionals had been sending poor children from the city to summer colonies since the end of the 19th century. In Central Europe, after the First World War, a Polish paediatrician, Dr Anna Braude Heller, was the first to establish a Jewish children's summer colony near Warsaw, and this model of children's recreation was later adopted throughout Central

Eastern Europe.⁷ Children's summer colonies were used in various countries to combat tuberculosis through the therapeutic effects of climate, health education, nutrition and recreation. In 1924, The Marine Colony was founded in Rijeka, Croatia, specialising in the treatment of children with clinical tuberculosis or who were at higher risk of developing it.⁸ Similarly, the Jewish philanthropic organisation OZE organised such summer colonies in various European countries for Jewish children.⁹

The establishment of the social security system in interwar Lithuania is seen as an innovative step for the young state, and its development marked Lithuania's transformation into a modern political entity that in its policies, assumed a large share of the responsibility for the socially vulnerable members of society.¹⁰ The social security system in Lithuania was divided into three fields: labour protection, social insurance and social care.¹¹ Although Lithuanian and foreign historiography focus on all of these fields, the physical and architectural infrastructure of the various child-care institutions, and in particular of the children's summer colonies, remains outside the scope of research. The aim of this paper is to analyse the infrastructure of children's summer colonies in Lithuania, which over time became one of the most important parts of the country's social care and recreational facilities.

Social Care of Children in Lithuania in 1918–1940

After the restoration of the independent state of Lithuania on 16 February 1918, it was not only faced with administrative challenges, but also with the social catastrophe caused by the aftermath of the First World War. Entire cities, towns and villages had been destroyed across the territory, which had become a theatre of war, and the population had been scattered and many murdered.¹² In order to cope with the consequences, the Lithuanian authorities had to think about applying definite social security mechanisms for the population. Social security was understood as the protection and care of those people who, due to their social situation, were incapable of taking care of themselves and creating suitable living conditions. The main fields of social care were the protection of infants and mothers, the care of children and the care of the poor, the sick and other individuals in need.¹³

The first decisions of the Lithuanian government in the field of social care in 1919–1921 were oriented towards a short-term and concrete perspective, towards solving immediate post-war welfare problems rather than a long-term strategy of social security.¹⁴ Although local governance authorities had tried to take over some of the work of social care, it had so far fallen mainly on the shoulders of voluntary associations to save other groups in society in need of social help.

After the war, there was practically no strong state structure to provide social care for children, so voluntary associations became the active players. In 1919, facing large-scale economic deprivation for the war-affected populations in Lithuania, foreign humanitarian organisations entered the field of social care: the American Red Cross and the American Relief Administration. In 1922 the English Lady Paget Mission started in Lithuania.¹⁵ At around the same time, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee developed social care activities in Lithuania.¹⁶

As the state gradually recovered and its economy strengthened from 1919 until 1925, social care work became more frequently organised by local voluntary organisations. On the initiative of Lithuanian society and philanthropists, voluntary associations began to establish themselves and set up various social care institutions. Each year, the activities of voluntary associations grew more organised and systematic, and the state and municipalities increasingly allocated funds for social care.¹⁷

Children's summer colonies, as one of the forms of children's social care¹⁸ and as a means to children's recreation and improving health, were introduced in Lithuania after the First World War when various voluntary associations became concerned about the situation of children suffering from social deprivation.

The main idea behind the children's summer colonies was to provide short-term conditions, lasting from a few weeks to months, providing better rest and nutrition for children who had various health problems or suffered from malnutrition.

Usually, it was children who needed rest but not treatment who were sent to the colonies. Candidates for the children's summer colonies were selected by doctors after assessing the children's health, social situation and the likely impact of their stay. For treatment, efforts were made to send children to other special institutions – sanatoriums.¹⁹ However, this rule was not strictly

enforced. Some of the voluntary associations organising children's summer colonies had close links with the medical field – established hospitals, dispensaries and doctors' surgeries, or built sanatoriums – so that even children with tuberculosis or other diseases could be sent to the colonies.

In the early 1920s, re-established or newly-established local voluntary associations also started activities in the field of social care for children. Probably on the basis of the Kaunas Jewish Children's Colony Society (founded in 1910²⁰), the Kaunas Society for the Establishment of Jewish Children's Colonies was founded on 8 June 1920.²¹ From its inception, this voluntary association started organising summer colonies for children.

Soon afterwards, the activities of another voluntary association, which had started operating in Kaunas before the First World War, were similarly renewed. The Kaunas branch of the Society for the Protection of the Health of the Jewish Population²² (hereafter OZE), which was founded in St Petersburg in 1912, had opened in 1913.²³ After the war, the Society expanded its activities to Poland (TOZ), Romania, Latvia, Germany, France, England, USA and Lithuania.²⁴ In December 1921, a group of Jewish experts of various specialities gathered in Kaunas and re-established the OZE.²⁵ This society soon developed a wide range of activities in the field of children's care – providing medical assistance to the poor, children suffering from tuberculosis etc.²⁶

Over time, social care for children became more than a matter for voluntary associations, as state institutions increasingly contributed to child maintenance and support. From the central level, the issue of social care gradually spread to the local level, in which each municipality set up a social security division to work on aid for society. Social Security Divisions cared for the elderly, the disabled, beggars, the sick and orphans, or the children of poor parents.²⁷ Municipalities established nurseries, shelters for children and the elderly, kindergartens, and health centres and organised children's summer colonies for care purposes.²⁸ After both the state and the societies had begun to carry out organised charity activities, by 1925 about 80 municipal authorities and public societies were active in the field of charity, which was seen as a general objective of social security policy.²⁹

The Health Insurance Fund Act was passed in 1926 and implemented in 1928, making health insurance compulsory for those in public service or in private employment.³⁰ The first seven Health Insurance Funds were established in 1928, and in 1934 there were 10 District Health Insurance Funds in Lithuania.³¹ Although the main function of the Health Insurance Funds was to take care of insured members, their scope of activity extended to children's social security. All the Health Insurance Funds were part of the Union of the Lithuanian Organisations for the Protection of Mothers and Children, and also set up children's and mothers' health centres and cared for children by setting up children's summer colonies for the children of workers.³²

A network of children's and mothers' institutions was formed through the efforts of voluntary associations, municipalities, and the Health Insurance Funds. This network included infant and children's shelters, kindergartens, summer playgrounds, children's and mothers' health centres and children's summer colonies.³³

In the 1930s, there was a growing debate about who should contribute most to social security in Lithuania. Ideas expressed in the public discourse justified the increasing role of the state in social security: "Whereas in the past, 'to feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty, to cover the naked' was the concern of individuals of good heart and religious organisations, nowadays we cannot remain satisfied with that. Private initiative alone is no longer enough. The modern state must not fail to take care of social care issues, while at the same time recognising that we are no strangers to the social question. But what has been done and is being done is still not enough."³⁴

State and municipal authorities played an active role in this field, both in organisational and financial terms. Expenditure on social security continuously increased, with the state and the municipalities allocating almost equal amounts of funds to social security. Municipal expenditure on social security amounted to between 15 and 25 % of total expenditure. In addition, they also covered part of the expenditure of the voluntary associations on social care purposes.³⁵

The development of children's summer colonies is closely linked to efforts to contain the spread of tuberculosis. The Sanatorium Movement led to the creation of sanatoriums in various countries to combat this disease.³⁶ As the exteriors of the sanatorium buildings came under the influence of the ideas of architectural modernism, the buildings' interiors, architecture and surroundings were linked to the principles of patient care. The well-lit interiors, using large areas of glazing, were intended to free the spaces from darkness and possible bacterial growth. The buildings also feature balconies, terraces and accessible flat roofs for use as spaces for patient rehabilitation.³⁷

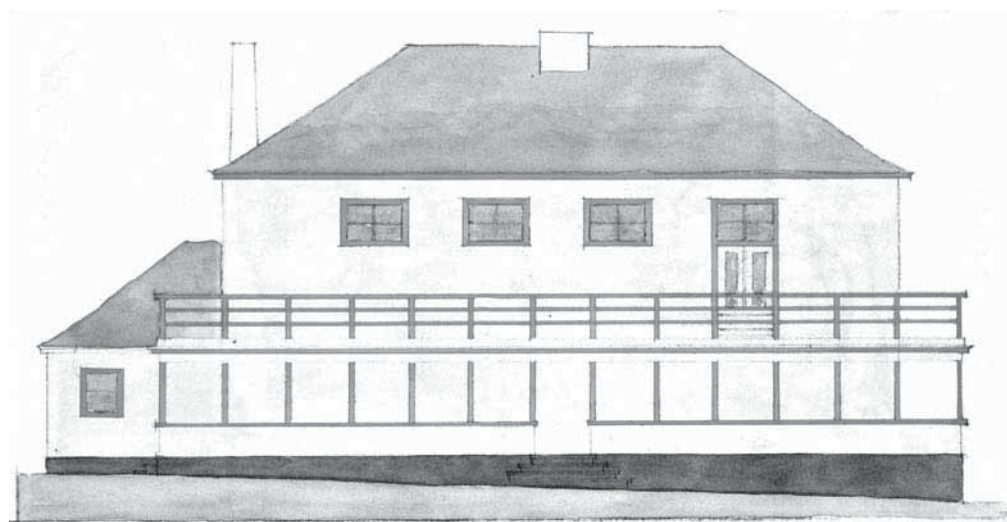
As elsewhere in Europe, the sanatoriums built in Lithuania for this disease reflected modernist features. These buildings were constructed in hilly, wooded areas to provide a sterile environment for patients' rehabilitation. Almost all the buildings had balconies or open terraces on the south, east and west facades, while inside the buildings there are plenty of open spaces to let in sunlight and fresh air.³⁸ Although the children's summer colonies were closely linked to the sanatoriums and the fight against tuberculosis, their function in Lithuania was essentially focused on health prevention rather than active treatment. This orientation fundamentally differed from some of the children's summer colonies organised in other countries, of which there were several types - the healing summer camp for children with active tuberculosis, the holiday settlements for healthy but weak children and the summer play preventive centres, as the cheapest option for healthy children's activities.³⁹

In Lithuania, the architectural typology of the buildings of children's summer colonies did not become identical to that of sanatoriums, the purpose of which was both treatment and rehabilitation. Considering that the children's summer colonies were closely linked to the improvement of children's general health and behavioral education, their architectural solutions could not be too similar to those of sanatoriums. The summer colonies usually accommodated children who were underweight, weak, anaemic or recovering from illness, while children with active tuberculosis or mental illness were excluded. In line with the priorities of the summer colonies, children were fed 4-5 times a day, with the rest of the time allocated for walks, games, outdoor exercise, air or sun treatments.⁴⁰ Priority was given to providing better living conditions that children did not normally have at home, so in addition to physical and spiritual education, the buildings of the summer colonies had to meet the criteria of cleanliness, light and pure air.⁴¹

The Infrastructure of Children's Summer Colonies by Voluntary Associations

In the first decade after the war, few voluntary associations had the capacity to construct buildings suitable for children's summer colonies, so they often settled in ill-adapted former manor houses, military barracks, or other types of buildings. However, from the very beginning of the summer colonies, voluntary associations began to look for opportunities to obtain plots in resort areas surrounded by nature.

The Kaunas Society for the Establishment of Jewish Children's Colonies had the aim of "improving the health of poor Jewish children".⁴² Towards this goal, the society had been organising children's summer colonies since the beginning of its activities in 1920. The first colony was organised in Veršvai, near Kaunas, and in 1921–1923 the colony was located in Aukštoji Panemunė, also near Kaunas.⁴³ In 1934, the society built a house, from a design by engineer Borisas Helcermanas, for a children's summer colony in the resort of Lampėdžiai, near Kaunas.⁴⁴ The asymmetrical structure of the one–two-storey wooden building is emphasised by an avant-corps on the



THE CHILDREN'S SUMMER COLONY OF THE KAUNAS SOCIETY FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF JEWISH CHILDREN'S COLONIES IN THE RESORT OF LAMPĖDŽIAI, WESTERN FACADE, 1934. DESIGN BY ENGINEER BORISAS HELCERMANAS

DETSKÝ LETNÝ TÁBOR KAUNASKÉHO SPOJKU PRE ZAKLADANIE ŽIDOVSKÝCH DETSKÝCH TÁBOROV V LETOVISKU Lampėdžiai, západná fasáda, 1934. Návrh inžiniera Borisasa Helcermanasa

Source Zdroj: LSCA

CHILDREN'S SUMMER COLONY
HELD BY THE COMMUNITY OF
JESHURUN IN THE RESORT OF
KULAUTUVA, 1935

DETSKÝ LETNÝ TÁBOR KOMUNITY
JESHURUN V LETOVISKU
KULAUTUVA, 1935

Source Zdroj: LSCA



eastern façade, while the characteristic modernist style is given by the ribbon windows. The south and west sides of the building have a glazed porch with display windows and an open balcony above it. In 1935, 87 poor children, supported by the Society's funds, were already on recreation in this summer colony.⁴⁵

In 1935, another project of a similar type by Helcermanas was approved for the children's summer colony held by the community of Jeshurun. This colony in the resort of Kulautuva, near Kaunas, was set up for the social care of poor children at the expense of the community and the Ministry of the Interior.⁴⁶ In the summer of 1936, a journalist who had visited the colony wrote: "The two-storey house is hidden in a dense pine forest. [...] The rooms are sunny, spacious, high. [...] The children spend a significant part of their time in the woods, outdoors, by the water. There is a special playground in the yard."⁴⁷ Later, the press noted with praise that "the building is very well planned, with large porches, and everything is furnished with good taste, precision, and cleanliness. [...] The farm and the kitchen are in an exemplary state: there are two separate kitchens for meat and dairy products, which even pedants can enjoy."⁴⁸ Jeshurun hosted over 300 children during several shifts in the summer.⁴⁹

One of the first groups to organise a children's summer colony in Lithuania during the inter-war period was the OZE. In June 1922, the first children's summer colony of this society was opened in Veršvai. The colony operated in two shifts, during which 55 children received recreation opportunities after recovering from illness and treatment for anaemia and tuberculosis.⁵⁰

Until 1924, the colony was open in summer and winter, but from 1924 it became a summer colony due to a lack of funds. Although the children's summer colony in Veršvai was planned to be permanent, it was moved every few years because it lacked property of its own. In 1926–1927 the colony was moved from Veršvai to Kazlų Rūda, and from 1928 to Birštonas.⁵¹ Finally, the society received a plot of land from the Ministry of Agriculture in Karmėlava, 14 kilometres outside Kaunas, with construction financed by the philanthropic brothers Oizer and Yankev Finkelstein. On 30 June 1932, the colony was inaugurated. According to the press, "the building has been built with great care and is perfectly suited to its purpose: large, tall, sunny rooms with up to 13 cubic metres of air per child. The buildings are set in a dense young pine forest near the river Neris."⁵²

In addition to the main children's summer colony of the OZE, there was a large network of colonies of this society throughout Lithuania. In 1924 the OZE opened a summer colony in Kulautuva, while in the summer of 1927, a district colony was established in Padedgliai, 20 kilometres from Šiauliai, where 65 children from Šiauliai, Plungė, Radviliškis, Telšiai and Mažeikiai were admitted. In 1927, the division of Ukmergė organised a so-called semi-colony (where the children would spend only the days and go home at night) in the buildings allocated by the town council in the Pivonija forest. A colony of the same type also was established in Panevėžys.⁵³

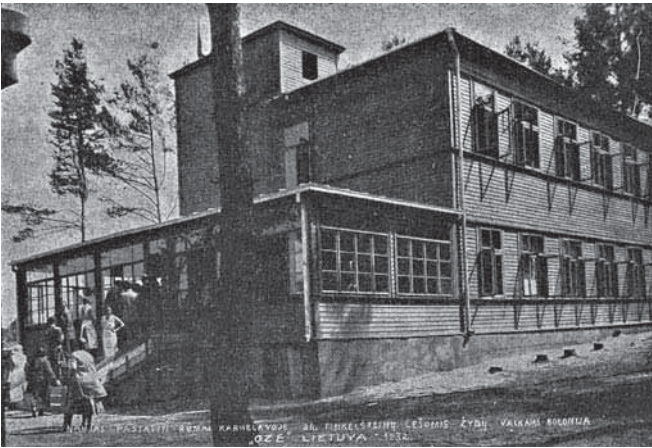
In 1930, a children's summer colony was opened in Kėdainiai. The colony was located in the forest, six kilometres from the city, in a secluded homestead, far away from other buildings, in



**OZE CHILDREN'S SUMMER COLONY
IN BIRŠTONAS, 1928**

DETSKÝ LETNÝ TÁBOR OZE
V BIRŠTONASE, 1928

Source Zdroj: YIVO archives



**OZE CHILDREN'S SUMMER COLONY
IN KARMĚLAVA, 1932**

DETSKÝ LETNÝ TÁBOR OZE
V KARMĚLAVE, 1932

Source Zdroj: OZE calendar, 1933



**OZE CHILDREN'S SUMMER COLONY
IN KARMĚLAVA, 1935**

DETSKÝ LETNÝ TÁBOR OZE
V KARMĚLAVE, 1935

Source Zdroj: YIVO archives

the driest part of the forest. The colony occupied two single-storey buildings with six rooms and a kitchen. One house had bedrooms with more than 250 cubic metres of space, medium-sized windows and sunlight on all sides. The other house had a dining room and a games room, along with an isolation room for contagious diseases.⁵⁴

On 31 May 1936, another OZE colony was opened in Pagelava, Šiauliai county. According to the press release, the location, construction and interior design of the colony building impressed everyone who observed it. The colony was surrounded by a beautiful young pine forest and close to a bathing area. As for the building itself, it was made of solid timber, and was spacious, sunny, and close to a deep well with drinkable water. On the ground floor there was a spacious dining room and a doctor's office, with a separate exit in case a child fell ill. On the second floor there was a cloakroom, a teachers' room, and three bedrooms.⁵⁵

In 1940, the OZE's network of summer colonies consisted of the main children's summer colony in Karmėlava, as well as colonies in Telšiai, Utena, Šiauliai and Ukmergė, and the so-called semi-colonies in Panevėžys, Mažeikiai and Lampėdžiai.⁵⁶

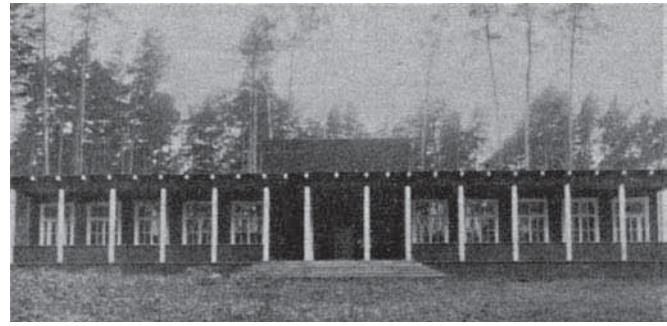
Another organisation that was active in children's health care was the Society for the Fight Against Tuberculosis, founded in 1924 with divisions in many Lithuanian cities. The society's main focus was, understandably, to fight against tuberculosis and to construct of sanatoriums for this



**OZE CHILDREN'S SUMMER COLONY
IN KARMĖLAVA, 1938**

DETSKÝ LETNÝ TÁBOR OZE
V KARMĖLAVE, 1938

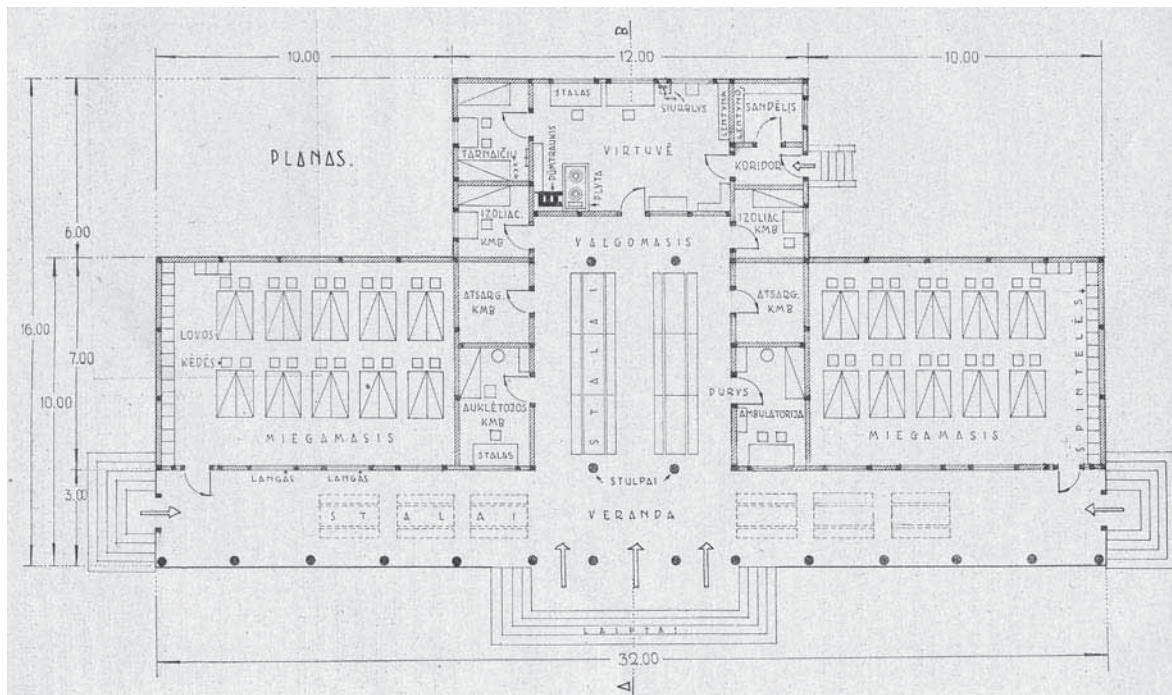
Source Zdroj: YIVO archives



**CHILDREN'S SUMMER COLONY
OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE FIGHT
AGAINST TUBERCULOSIS IN
KĖDAINIAI, 1935**

DETSKÝ LETNÝ TÁBOR SPOLKU
PRE BOJ PROTI TUBERKULÓZE
V KĖDAINIAI, 1935

Source Zdroj: Kova su džiova, 1935



**PLAN OF THE CHILDREN'S SUMMER
COLONY OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE
FIGHT AGAINST TUBERCULOSIS IN
KĖDAINIAI, 1935**

PŪDORYS DEITSKĖHO LETNĖHO
TĀBORA SPOLKU PRE BOJ PROTI
TUBERKULŖZE V KĖDAINIAI, 1935

Source Zdroj: Kova su džiova, 1935

purpose. As a preventive measure against childhood tuberculosis, the society also set up children's summer colonies,⁵⁷ a process that intensified in the 1930s.

The Kėdainiai division of the society was one of the first to start operating in this field. In 1934, near Kėdainiai, in the Babėnai pine forest, the society received a 1.5 ha plot, while engineer Jonas Jasiukaitis prepared the design of the colony building free of charge. A single-storey wooden building with symmetrical structure was built in 1935. Its dining hall was set up in the lobby, while the two wings each contained bedrooms for 20 people. On the side of the main façade, there was a roofed open porch that ran the full length of the building. The columns supporting the roof seem to vertically divide the façade and become the main visual focus. As the society originally planned, there would have been three shifts of 40 children per summer.⁵⁸

Although the other divisions of the society lacked their own buildings, several of them also organised summer colonies. In 1937, the Grinkiškis division, expanding its activities, organised its first children's summer colony for 21 children suffering from tuberculosis.⁵⁹ In the same year, a children's summer colony was organised by the Panevėžys division, which, lacking premises for this

purpose, sent some of the children to a local farmer's homestead, and others to colonies of other organisations.⁶⁰

The Infrastructure of Children's Summer Colonies by State and Municipal Authorities

In 1920, the Social Security Division was organised under the Kaunas City Municipality, which was responsible for various children's social care institutions. The division also financed a children's summer colony for the children of poor people.⁶¹ The idea of organising a children's summer colony was launched on 15 February 1923, at a meeting of the Social Security Division of the Kaunas City Municipality. According to the city's medical-sanitary department, some 6,000 children in Kaunas' primary schools were suffering from lung disease or anaemia. It was therefore decided that after finding a suitable place on the banks of the Nemunas river or in the Palanga or Birštonas resorts, a 4-month children's summer colony should be set up to improve the health of the children.⁶² A subsidy of 5,000 litas was allocated from the city budget for the establishment of the colony, which only partially covered the costs.⁶³ After consultation with the Lithuanian Red Cross, it became clear that it would contribute part of the funds needed to the colony if the management and maintenance of the colony were delegated to the organisation.⁶⁴

In 1923, this colony was organised, on the farm of the Lithuanian Red Cross situated in the pinewood of Aukštoji Panemunė. Every summer, 200 children of the city's poor inhabitants would spend the summer here.⁶⁵ It was also the first children's summer colony organised on the initiative and with subsidies from the municipality, with the Lithuanian Red Cross being entrusted with the running of the colony.⁶⁶ However, in the early 1930s, the Kaunas City Municipality started looking for a new location for the children's summer colony and took the colony's activities completely into its own hands. In 1933, the Kaunas City Municipality moved the children's summer colony to Alytus, where it used a building in a former barracks surrounded by a pine forest.⁶⁷

As the state's social system grew stronger, in the late 1920s it began to undertake more activity in the field of children's health care, which until then had been concentrated mainly in the hands of voluntary associations. The newly created Health Insurance Funds started organisation of children's summer colonies. In 1929, the Kaunas Health Insurance Fund established two children's summer colonies, in Birštonas and Gelgaudiškis, for the children of its members in poor health, where 60 children had recreation.⁶⁸

In 1930, the Child Health Care Centre, which was under the Kaunas Health Insurance Fund, drew up rules for the organisation of children's summer colonies. According to these rules, summer colonies were to be set up for sick children of the members of the fund deprived of suitable housing, of good food and hygiene conditions, or the chance to go to the countryside for a summer holiday at the expense of their parents. The colonies were to be for children aged three to 10 years, lasting up to three summer months.⁶⁹

CHILDREN'S SUMMER COLONY OF THE KAUNAS HEALTH INSURANCE FUND IN GELGAUDIŠKIS, 1935

DETSKÝ LETNÝ TÁBOR KAUNASKEJ ZDRAVOTNEJ POISŤOVNE V GELGAUDIŠKISE, 1935

Source Zdroj: Sveikata ir darbas, 1935(5)





**CHILDREN'S SUMMER COLONY OF
THE KAUNAS HEALTH INSURANCE
FUND IN KAČERGINĖ, 1938**

DETSKÝ LETNÝ TÁBOR KAUNASKEJ
ZDRAVOTNEJ POISŤOVNE
V KAČERGINĖ, 1938

Source Zdroj: Sveikata ir darbas, 1938,
41(6–7)

The Kaunas Health Insurance Fund rented premises for a children's summer colony in Gelgaudiškis from the Lithuanian Women's Assistance Committee. This committee had purchased the former Gelgaudiškis manor and established an orphanage in it, as well as creating a farm where the children of the orphanage worked. The produce and livestock produced on the farm were used to feed the children and to improve their health, as children from poorer families who were lacking food were brought here.⁷⁰ For a time, the Gelgaudiškis children's summer colony became the central colony of the Kaunas Health Insurance Fund, though children from other funds were also sent there. In the mid-1930s, the children's summer colony in Gelgaudiškis would regularly host about 300 children each summer during three shifts.⁷¹ Additionally, the Kaunas Health Insurance Fund sent some Jewish children to the OZE children's summer colony in Birštonas (later in Karmėlava) and the Jeshurun children's summer colony in Kulautuva.

Over time, children's summer colonies grew in popularity among Lithuania's citizens, and there had been a shortage of places, which led to the need to expand existing colonies or to set up new ones. The colony in Gelgaudiškis became too small to accommodate all the children, and moreover was too humid. For this reason, as early as 1935, the idea of building a colony of its own was conceived by the Kaunas Health Insurance Fund.⁷² A site in the Kačerginė Forest was chosen for the new colony building and a request was made to the Forestry Department to allocate a plot for this purpose.⁷³

In 1937, the Kaunas Health Insurance Fund received a plot of more than three hectares in the Kačerginė resort. In February 1938, the colony's plan, prepared by engineer Antanas Navickis, was approved. The construction lasted three months and the children's summer colony started operating on 9 June 1938. In the press of that time was written: "About one kilometre away from the river Nemunas, in a dry coniferous forest, two large and beautiful buildings arose up in a triangular shape, flanked by a smaller house, a stone warehouse, an icehouse and a woodshed."⁷⁴ The main

two-storey building, 57 m long and 8.6 m wide, had a south-facing façade with wide windows, with the ground floor for boys and the first floor for girls. The building consisted of 6 rooms with 25 beds each and 4 smaller isolation wards with 4 beds each, as well as an infirmary, a doctor's room, a waiting room and a nurses' room. Bathrooms and showers were installed at one end of the building. The new summer colony would be able to accommodate between 150 and 170 children per shift and around 500 children during the summer.⁷⁵ A single-storey canteen with a kitchen, 42 m long and 10 m wide, was built at right angles to the main building. The kitchen was equipped according to modern standards of the time, with bricked-in stoves, new utensils, running water, etc, and the press appreciated that all technical possibilities had been exploited: "It is almost unbelievable to have water and sewerage in the forest, far from the city. However, the children's colony does have these facilities: tasty and pure water is drawn from three wells into appropriate tanks, from where it is used by taps throughout the building; the sewage system is piped into a septic tank, which chemically and biologically recycles all the impurities into clean, odourless water."⁷⁶ There were flower gardens and two natural playgrounds next to the buildings.

The Šiauliai District Health Insurance Fund, in part due to the lack of places and equally due to the long distance, was unable to use the children's summer colony in Gelgaidiškis, so it started to consider building its own colony as early as 1931. In 1933, a 0.5-hectare plot was rented in the Padubysys forest, near Pagelava lake, 22 kilometres from the city. In the same year, a two-storey wooden building for a children's summer colony was constructed according to a design by engineer Vladas Bite. A laundry and washing facilities were installed in the concrete basement of the building. On the ground floor there was a kitchen, a dining room and five rooms, and on the first floor there were two bedrooms and two more rooms. The colony could accommodate 40 children at a time.⁷⁷ By 1936, the colony had to be enlarged by building a separate building for the canteen and kitchen.⁷⁸ The colony had its own water supply, equipped with taps, bathtubs, and special baths for washing children's feet. As more children were to be welcomed for the summer in the future, heating pipes were installed in the rooms, making it possible to start the summer earlier and finish later.⁷⁹ With the expansion of the colony, the area grew to 1400 m², and 66 children were able to stay there at a time.⁸⁰

In 1937, the Vikaviškis District Health Insurance Fund built in the pinewood of Osija a summer colony for 40 children.⁸¹ A 5000 m² two-storey building was constructed with separate boys' and girls' bedrooms, a canteen, wide corridors, a porch and rooms for the manager and cook. The spacious building was well lit by the sun. The impressions of the children who came to the colony

CHILDREN'S SUMMER COLONY OF THE ŠIAULIAI DISTRICT HEALTH INSURANCE FUND, 1933

DETSKÝ LETNÝ TÁBOR ŠIAULIAISKEJ OKRESNEJ ZDRAVOTNEJ POIŠŤOVNE, 1933

Source Zdroj: Sveikata ir darbas, 1933, 36(5)

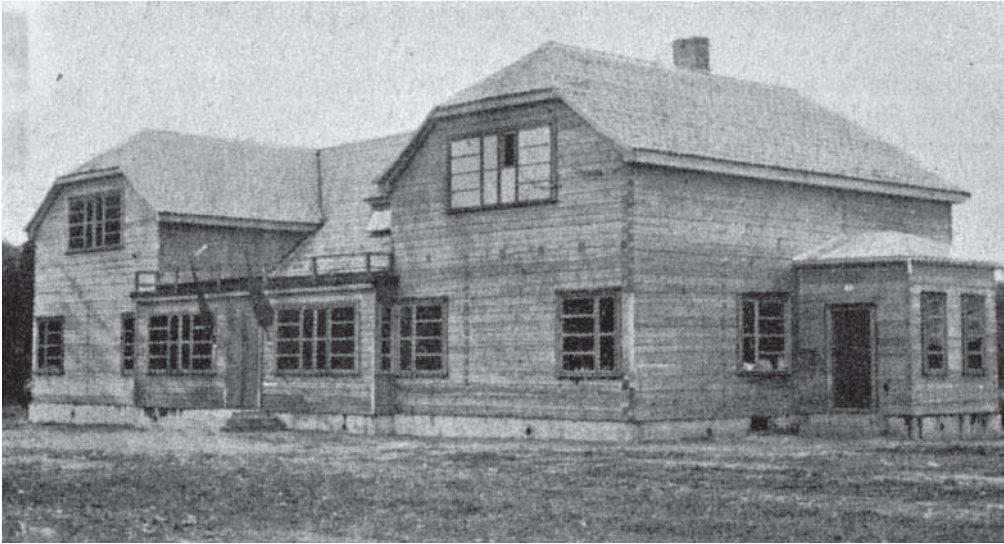


CHILDREN'S SUMMER COLONY OF THE ŠIAULIAI DISTRICT HEALTH INSURANCE FUND, 1936

DETSKÝ LETNÝ TÁBOR ŠIAULIAISKEJ OKRESNEJ ZDRAVOTNEJ POIŠŤOVNE, 1936

Source Zdroj: Sveikata ir darbas, 1936, 39(7)





CHILDREN'S SUMMER COLONY OF THE VILAVIŠKIS DISTRICT HEALTH INSURANCE FUND, 1937

DETSKÝ LETNÝ TÁBOR VIKAVIŠKISKEJ OKRESNEJ ZDRAVOTNEJ POISŤOVNE, 1937

Source Zdroj: Sveikata ir darbas, 1937, 40(9)

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were described in the press in an illustrative way: "The children of the poor workers who came to the colony, who lived in poor flats, found themselves at once in a huge summer house with windows as big as doors (such buildings are rare in provincial towns), and they felt like they were in church. Clean and spacious, and it just sounds resonant."⁸²

Conclusions

On balance, children's summer colonies were merely one of the many activities of societies and state institutions in the field of child social care, but most tellingly, they demonstrated a change in the attitude of society and the state towards children as a promising future. The realisation that children needed not only medical care but also recreation marked a qualitative breakthrough in the development of infrastructure for children's recreation.

Children's summer colonies in Lithuania, which began to be established in the early 1920s, were initially set up in unsuitable buildings, although resort-type locations were looked at from the beginning. Despite sporadic attempts by the authorities, the colonies were mainly created by various voluntary associations, which received part of the funds for the colonies from the municipalities. The situation changed in the 1930s, when, in addition to the societies, state institutions became actively involved in establishing colonies. This decade marked not only a quantitative but also a qualitative leap in children's colony establishment. The expanded infrastructure of children's summer colonies throughout Lithuania was supplemented by modern buildings, the design and construction of which was not only based on the ideas of architectural modernism, but also on hygiene and health protection criteria. In turn, the buildings were designed to better absorb the natural environment and thus have a positive impact on children's health.

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