

Corporate social responsibility of the Ports of Szczecin and Świnoujście

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Abstract

Seaports are not only transport nodes but they are also important links in the land-sea transport chains and global supply chains. Due to the nature of their activities, seaports have a significant impact on both their internal and external environment. This necessitates the implementation of the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). This concept focuses on, to a large extent, considering the positions of all the stakeholders when planning and implementing company strategies. Pursuant to the Act on Seaports and Harbours, the seaports in Szczecin and Świnoujście are ports of primary importance to the national economy. A great challenge for the ports is to simultaneously balance their development with caring for the environment. The aim of this article is to determine whether the seaports in Szczecin and Świnoujście are socially responsible and what the result of their impact on the natural environment and society are. This article uses the case study method, which analyses the activities undertaken by the port management as well as the enterprises that are part of the port service supply centres in Szczecin and Świnoujście, and assesses the effects of these activities. From the results, it can be stated that the Ports Authority, through its business, pro-environmental, pro-social and pro-employee activities, implements the goals of CSR and is a socially responsible entity, although more could be done.

Introduction

The ecological and social boundaries of economic growth were first recognised in the mid-20th century. Attention was then paid to the need to integrate the activities of industries on three levels: social, economic, and environmental. At that time, the concepts of sustainable development and corporate social responsibility began to spread; the goals of which largely coincide with each other. Most often, enterprises implementing a comprehensive policy of corporate social responsibility develop it sustainably; i.e. taking into account the needs of the environment, both close by and farther away.

Due to the very specific and high-emissions nature of their activities, economic functions, and

their large number of stakeholders, seaports (the management of the ports as well as the industry as a whole) have also begun to implement a policy of social responsibility. The effects of these actions may be internal (e.g., improvements in the organisational culture, increased competitiveness, attracting and retaining the best workers, increased motivation among managers and employees, improvements in the quality of management, encouraging regulatory compliance, attracting new customers, increased interest of investors, revenue growth and cost reduction) and external (e.g. enhanced public image, increased customer loyalty, improved understanding of the external stakeholders' business decisions, increased media interest, sustainable development of the city and region, improving the conditions for

running a business, resolving certain conflicts and social problems and their impact on government policies). To date, the research indicates that CSR is becoming the subject of keen interest for seaports; which is an industry with an increasing awareness of the need for responsible business practices and, at the same time, building a positive public image.

The unit of analysis in this study was the Szczecin-Świnoujście port complex, one of the largest facilities of this type in Poland and the Baltic Sea Region (thanks to throughput at a level of 32.1748 million tonnes in 2019 alone). By taking the example of the port complex in Szczecin and Świnoujście, the authors hope to illustrate which areas of the port, and the activities that are undertaken within, are in accordance with the CSR concept and what impact these activities have on the natural environment and society.

The structure of the article is as follows: the first section presents a historical outline and a review on the literature on CSR in seaports. Next, there's an explanation of the research method followed by a presentation of the seaport complex in Szczecin and Świnoujście as the unit of analysis. The final section presents a description of the CSR-based activities that are undertaken by the Szczecin and Świnoujście Seaports Authority SA (SŚSA) and the largest commercial port enterprises. The conclusions of the study have been given at the end of the article, demonstrating the public outcomes of the socially responsible activities of the port group.

Corporate social responsibility background and literature review

The roots of corporate social responsibility and sustainable development are most often searched for in ancient times. Although contemplations regarding society and its economic systems go back to the distant past, the public's interest in the subject of the environment, and in particular the need to protect it, is a relatively new concept and only appeared in the 20th century.

In the relevant literature, the social responsibility of seaports is most often considered in the context of their impact on the natural environment and their pro-ecological activities (Bateman, 1996; Liao et al., 2010; Berechman & Tseng, 2012; Dinwoodie, Tuck & Knowles, 2012; ESPO, 2012). Some authors focused on the externalities of maritime transport (Berechman & Tseng, 2012; Dinwoodie, Tuck & Knowles, 2012; Goulielmos, Lun & Lai, 2012) while others analysed the emissions caused

by transport in the port's hinterland (Roso, 2007, Liao, Tseng & Lu, 2009; Bergqvist & Egels-Zandén, 2012). The need to protect the interests of not only the port-city communities and its regions, but society in general is emphasized (Acciaro, 2015). Very few publications have been devoted to the economic and social responsibility of seaports (Denktas-Sakar & Karatas-Cetin, 2012; Acciaro, 2015), especially the integration of various aspects of CSR (Haralambides & Gujar, 2012; Lam & Gu, 2013). There have been very few publications that present the actual scope of the implementation of CSR in seaports (Verhoeven, 2011; Santos, Rodrigues & Branco, 2016; Płoska & Próchniak, 2017; Klimek & Dąbrowski, 2018; Klimek, Michalska-Szajer & Dąbrowski, 2019).

In 2015–2016, ESPO studied 86 seaports in 19 EU countries, as well as Norway and Iceland. The results showed that more than half of the surveyed ports had a formal CSR policy, and its premise, as well as the results of the prosocial activities, are published (usually annually) in the form of CSR reports that are available online. The employees and the local community are the primary beneficiaries of the social responsibility programs of ports (ESPO, 2016).

The current publications devoted to the social responsibility of Polish seaports have mostly been related to environmental issues (Kuźma, 1978; Misztal, 2008), although the port of Gdynia's CSR activities has been studied comprehensively by K. Gromadowski, J. Żurek, H. Klimek and J. Dąbrowski (Gromadowski, 2013; Żurek, 2016; Klimek & Dąbrowski, 2018); these papers concluded that the port of Gdynia is socially responsible. The issue of the social responsibility of the port of Gdańsk was taken up by M. Terebińska (Terebińska, 2017) and H. Klimek, A. Michalska-Szajer and J. Dąbrowski (Klimek, Michalska-Szajer & Dąbrowski, 2019), who positively assessed the prosocial and pro-ecological activities of the Port of Gdańsk Authority SA and the largest operating companies in the port of Gdańsk.

Research method

For the Szczecin-Świnoujście port complex, the researchers used the case-study analysis method. Using this example, the study will show if, and in what areas, the concept of CSR has been implemented in the relevant seaports. The extensive analysis included the activity of the entity that manages the infrastructure and port grounds, as well as the enterprises that operate in and shape the service offerings

of the port complex. At the data collection stage, secondary sources were used in the form of scientific publications; documents from the Szczecin and Świnoujście Seaports Authority SA, and materials published on the websites of the companies that make up the Szczecin-Świnoujście port services supply centre. Additionally, an in-depth, non-standardised interview with the spokesperson of the port management was used. An analysis of the data from these sources allowed the area and scope, as well as an assessment, of the activities undertaken as part of the social responsibility initiatives of the ports in Szczecin and Świnoujście to be identified.

The primary research question in this study is: do the seaports of Szczecin and Świnoujście engage in socially responsible actions. The first specific research problem is the question of what are the areas of social responsibility of these ports, and what is the scope of the activities undertaken in these areas by the port authority and the operators of port facilities. The second distinct question is: what are the public effects of the socially responsible actions undertaken by the port complexes in the areas of protection of the natural environment and stakeholder relations.

The primary hypothesis that was adopted in the study is that the seaports in both Szczecin and Świnoujście are socially responsible. The first additional hypothesis is the statement that the main areas of socially responsible activities are those related to environmental protection, good business practices, concern for the safety of the port's areas and its surroundings, customer satisfaction, responsibility to the local community, as well as good relations with the employees. The second additional hypothesis is the assumption that the activities related to the implementation of the CSR concept in these ports bring about positive effects in terms of both the state of the natural environment in the ports and the relationships with the stakeholders.

Unit of analysis

The Szczecin-Świnoujście port complex, located in the western part of the Polish coast of the Baltic Sea, is made up of two seaports situated about 68 km apart, operating under the same management. The port of Świnoujście is directly located on the seafront (at the estuary of the Świna river, which is suitable for vessels with a draft of up to 13.5 m) while the port of Szczecin (located along the Oder River, which is accessible by vessels with a draft of up to 9.15 m) is 68 km inland. Both ports support the hinterland located in the territories of western

and south-western Poland, where the most important industrial regions in Poland are found, along with eastern Germany, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia (for which they have served as important sea transit ports for many years). Both ports have favourable navigational conditions, because they do not freeze in the winter and they do not experience tides, although the problem of hampered navigational access to the port of Szczecin and the too shallow depth of its waters, compared to the expectations of shipowners, still remain. Both ports have regular short sea shipping and feeder service connections with ports in the Baltic Sea Region and the North Sea, but they lack transcontinental connections. Additionally, they offer irregular shipping connections; enabling cargo transport to various global ports, depending on the needs of the shippers. The ports are quite well connected to the hinterland by road and rail lines as well as inland waterways.

The ports of Szczecin and Świnoujście belong to the Polish port community that is of fundamental importance to the national economy and are part of the Baltic-Adriatic corridor in the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T). These are universal ports, which support both bulk (dry and liquid) and general cargo (including unitised) loads. The Szczecin and Świnoujście Seaports Authority SA is the entity that manages the areas and infrastructure within the administrative borders of the ports in Szczecin and Świnoujście. The Authority is a public utility entity, and its shareholders are: the State Treasury (91.13%), Szczecin borough (0.55%), Świnoujście borough (0.16%) and individual shareholders (8.15%) (Port Szczecin-Świnoujście, 2019). The SSSA's objective is to manage the seaports in Szczecin and Świnoujście under the terms specified in the *Act on Seaports and Harbours from December 20, 1996*, that are consistent with the *port-management* landlord model (Journal of Laws, 1997). Apart from SA, many businesses have their operations within the administrative borders of the ports in Szczecin and Świnoujście, forming a port service centre under the name The Szczecin-Świnoujście Port Complex.

Various companies reside and operate in the premises of the ports, offering services for ships and cargo as well as transport services, along with departments and institutions supervising and inspecting port activities; both ports have free zones. There are also other service and industrial entities, including three shipyards. In total, approximately 150 enterprises comprise the port service supply centre, the activities of which take place at the interface of economic,

social, and environmental interests. The interactions of the port complex and its surroundings are clear; therefore, a large number of stakeholders must be taken into consideration.

Results

Szczecin and Świnoujście Seaports Authority SA

At the Szczecin and Świnoujście Seaports Authority SA, no document has yet been adopted to specify the company's CSR policy (e.g., the Port of Gdańsk Authority SA, where the *CSR Good Business Practices Policy in force at the Port of Gdańsk Authority SA* applies) (Port Gdańsk, 2016), to determine the applicable set of rules regarding corporate social responsibility which the company might follow in its operations. However, the management board has declared that the purpose of its activities is to build a positive image of the port complex by implementing the concepts of corporate social responsibility. It should be added that, since 2011, the company has implemented quality and environment management systems that comply with the requirements ISO 9001 and ISO 14001. The Szczecin and Świnoujście Seaports Authority SA is the first (and so far, the only) port management entity of fundamental significance to the national economy in Poland that has obtained certificates which confirm compliance with the requirements of the ISO standards in the field of, among others, high levels of service quality, customer and environmental care, as well as the company's commitment to continual improvement in all areas of business (Port Szczecin-Świnoujście, 2019).

In connection with the implementation of an integrated quality and environment management system in SA, the so-called organisational context has been indicated and the stakeholders identified, they are as follows: internal and external clients (domestic and foreign, including cargo managers, shipowners, agents, port operators and other functioning companies, leaseholders, including tenants and investors and other clients), suppliers, governing bodies within the company, governmental and non-governmental organisations, government control entities and the media. The company's management board has declared that their needs and expectations are fulfilled by meeting the legal and statutory requirements, adjusting services to their requirements and by providing access to information. Communication with stakeholders takes place in the form of direct conversations, electronic and traditional mail, or by phone, and all of their arrangements with their

customers are strictly specified in contracts, orders and requests. The company's management board has declared that its activities comply with all applicable legal regulations.

From the point of view of the implementation of the ideas of CSR, the management policy adopted by SSSA is of particular importance. In it, the management states that together with their employees, the company strives to provide the highest quality of service in all areas of its business, and the performance of its tasks is guided by the expectations of the economic and social environment as well as the environmental requirements (Port Szczecin-Świnoujście, 2017). It should be added that the SSSA (as the management of the ports in Gdańsk and Gdynia do) does not publish reports on their activities in the context of the implementation of CSR. However, it does provide information about certain types of activities that demonstrate their application of CSR principles in their annual reports (in 2003–2007) and handbooks (from 2011), available on the company website (Port Szczecin-Świnoujście, 2018b). However, these materials don't report the actions of the management board of the ports or the port complex, but they do include basic and comprehensive promotional materials, a compendium of knowledge about the activities of the two ports. In addition, the company prepares annual sponsorship plans (in accordance with the formal requirements set out in *Good Practices in the field of sponsorship activities by companies with the participation of the Treasury* (Sponsoring Expert, 2016), which describe their actions for the benefit of their non-business stakeholders; mainly sports clubs, children's and youth clubs, and the local community undoubtedly, these are activities that can be called socially responsible. Their aim is to build the image of SSSA as a modern, expansive enterprise that is in good economic standing and, above all, socially responsible.

The company's sponsorship activities are carried out in accordance with the *Strategy for the development of seaports in Szczecin and Świnoujście until 2027*. Sponsorship is understood as a conduit to communicate information about the ports and their problems to the surrounding community, to elicit a positive association between the sponsored entities/events and the sponsor, and to foster a positive opinion about the sponsor and its services by donating funds to the sponsored entities and participating in their events (Port Szczecin-Świnoujście, 2018a). The results of the sponsorship activities of SSSA are expected to be, among others, a positive image of the company, maximum recognition and strengthening

of the brand, heightened customer loyalty, outreach to company-relevant environments and promotion of the appeal of the West Pomeranian region.

The company's management is convinced that long-term sponsorship activities bring benefits in the form of a positive image of the company (sponsorship is more reliable and better perceived by both customers and the local community than advertising) and also create the right atmosphere around SA, which is why the management have decided to continue working with the entities that are operating for the benefit of the communities in the region. The management directs its involvement towards events, thanks to which the positive image of the company, which has been developed over the years, will be imprinted in the consciousness of the local and regional community (which is undoubtedly a marketing objective and is intended to bring positive economic effects). The company supports, in a mainly financial way, children's and youth clubs, sporting events and social and educational campaigns as well as charity events taking place in the West Pomeranian region (which bring about positive social outcomes). It has been concluded that the SA, through its activities, wants to actively participate in the life of both cities, i.e., Szczecin and Świnoujście, as well as "to help, to provide joy and to support and educate" (Port Szczecin-Świnoujście, 2018a, p. 8).

The company's sponsorship plans contain forecasts for its effectiveness and cost predictions as well as a description of the impact each initiative has on the customers; including its objectives, and performance measures. The entities sponsored by the company include, among others, youth sports clubs, associations, and community centres, while each year, dozens of athletic, culturally informative, and educational initiatives are financially supported by the SSSA as part of activities undertaken for the benefit of the local and regional community. In cooperation with Szczecin's universities, SSSA employees are involved in the development of educational programs and enrol students in company training and internship programs. Along with engaging in educational activities, the company has initiated the implementation of the projects "School Port Days" and "Maritime Economy – Tradition and Development". The port complex organises regular educational visits for school children and university students. Some activities in the social area are undertaken on an ad hoc basis and are financed from the sponsorship reserve (e.g. the company supports meetings and trips for war veterans). As mentioned, the company's management board views its sponsorship activities

positively (reports from SSSA's sponsorship activities from recent years clearly point to the positive reception of the socially responsible actions of the company and their high economic efficiency). At the same time, the sponsored parties are satisfied with the collaboration, therefore, the partnerships are set to continue (each year, 80 sponsorship contracts are signed, and in 2019, there were over 100) (Port Szczecin-Świnoujście, 2019).

In terms of dialogue with stakeholders, surveys are regularly conducted to determine customer satisfaction and identify areas that are in need of improvement. The respondents to these surveys include infrastructure and port area tenants (lessees and investors), as well as shipowners, agents and cargo managers. The analysis of the results of the customer satisfaction surveys and the reports provided by the organizers of various SA-sponsored events have led to the conclusion that the company is perceived as modern, expansive, in good economic condition, and above all, socially responsible. Undoubtedly, these types of consultations can be used to build lasting and positive relationships with clients.

The Ports Authority is also taking measures aimed at the professional development of its employees, by organizing various types of training (in the years 2017–2019, there were more than 150 training schemes). Company workers have the opportunity to further their studies in a variety of fields and to participate in vocational courses. The company also offers a broad social package for their staff (including, among others, vacation pay assistance, holidays-New Year gatherings, carnival parties), finances an employee retirement program, and pays for additional medical care if needed. Annual two-day team-building trips, along with the "Two hours for family" project, help in the integration of a professional environment at the company, increase and streamline productivity, motivate the employees, improve the quality of internal communication, and, most importantly, aid in building a positive organisational culture. It should be added that the most distinguished employees of both ports are awarded Gold and Silver Anchors and departmental decorations.

The port board is also consequently taking action to protect the natural environment, monitor its condition and informs the relevant authorities about the results, as well as measure its emissions, its consumption of utilities and generation of waste. The testing of sewage, rainwater and port waters is conducted by the Research Laboratory of Environmental and Occupational Health (the laboratory is

accredited and meets the PN-EN ISO/IEC 17025:2018-02 standards), and the analysis of the results is passed on to the authorities. The port laboratory is equipped with the necessary equipment and employs highly qualified staff.

The company's extensive activities in the field of environmental protection include: combating the port's water pollution (water purity tests are carried out twice a year at 21 control points; the port's waters are cleaned of solid and petroleum substances several times a week), sewage tests (the lab examines treated industrial wastewater entering the surface water six times a year and rainwater twice a year), sewage treatment, waste management including cargo residue from ships (ensuring a system for collecting waste from ships), control of greenhouse gases and dust emissions, measurements of the level of noise emissions (at 15 measuring points). The results of these tests have proved that the company does not exceed the emissions limits for gases and dust or the amount of waste generated, including hazardous waste. Furthermore, in recent years, the emissions of some compounds, e.g. CO₂, CO and SO_x, have decreased; there has also been a reduction in the water and heat energy consumption and the amount of sewage produced. The company's management board includes significant environmental aspects as part of the required environmental reporting, as well as reports related to the operation of both ports.

In connection with the implementation of the environmental management system that is consistent with the ISO 14001 standard, 93 environmental aspects have been identified, including four significant ones (sewage emissions, potential fire hazards, potential explosion hazards and potential soil and water pollution); these issues are the main interest and concern for the company. One of these environmental aspects (insufficient treatment of wastewater discharged into the surface waters) was classified as an unacceptable risk. As a result of this, the company prepared an investment project, "Development and modernisation of the technical infrastructure in the ports of Szczecin and Świnoujście" to be realised in the 2017–2020 period; the goal of which is to eliminate the discharge of sewage into the port waters, ensure the possibility of sewage sanitation for 100% of ferries, and ensure a reduction in the air pollution from ships during stops at the port of Świnoujście for 100% of ferries. Unarguably, the Ports Authority's pro-environmental undertakings ensure safe and environmentally friendly operations in the port's facilities.

SŚSA have received various awards and prizes for its undertakings, including The Pearl of Business for its investment activities in 2014, *The one that changes Polish industry*, shipowners transporting dry bulk cargo named the Szczecin port as the best in terms of quality for customer service (according to the BIMCO report), the award from the Minister of Economy "for the innovative use of ICT in the economy", the *Digital Business Leader* award in the Digital Transformation category and the Digital Excellence Award for "special achievements in the field of innovation and digital transformation".

Port Operators

In the ports of Szczecin and Świnoujście, actions proving their environmental responsibility are also taken by enterprises in the sphere of port operations, which was demonstrated by a survey conducted in January 2020 among the largest operators of transshipment terminals. The data that were analysed, concerned companies that are based in the port of Szczecin: Alfa Terminal Szczecin Sp. z o.o., Andreas Sp. z o.o., Baltchem SA Chemical Plant in Szczecin, Bulk Cargo Port Szczecin Sp. z o.o., CEMEX Polska Sp. z o.o., Centrum Logistyczne Gryf Sp. z o.o., CRONIMET PI Sp. z o.o., DB Port Szczecin Sp. with z o.o., Elewator Ewa Sp. z o.o., Euro Terminal Real Estate Co. Ltd, Fast Terminals Sp. z o.o., Fosfan SA Port nad Odrą, Orlen Paliwa Sp. z o.o. Liquid Gas Terminal, Szczecin Bulk Terminal Sp. z o.o., and companies with headquarters in the port of Świnoujście: LNG Terminal President Lech Kaczyński in Świnoujście (Polskie LNG SA), Terminal Promowy Świnoujście Sp. z o.o., Świnoujście Fuel Depot (PKN Orlen Fuel Terminal in Świnoujście), OT Port Świnoujście SA. The companies' activities, declarations, received awards, and acquired certificates, allow for the most critical areas of CSR in which they are active to be identified and, most importantly, they report it on their websites. It must be admitted, however, that not all of the operators publish this type of information, while in some cases, the presented records are cursory, and have been provided with little care to the company's image, or only apply to certain types of activities in selected areas of CSR.

The analysis of the collected data has determined that the port operators in Szczecin and Świnoujście are active in the following areas of CSR: broadly understood good business practices and responsibility towards business partners (ISO 9001 certificates,

declarations of ethical business practices), environmental protection (ISO 14001 certificates, declarations of emissions reduction, preserving the natural environment, monitoring of the environment), safety in port areas and safety in handling various cargo (GMP+B3, confirmation of the port facility's compliance with ISPS, OHSAS, PN-EN 18001, publication of information about hazards and emergency instructions, which leads to the conclusion that the results of these activities minimise the risk of a serious industrial accident), concern for customer satisfaction, declarations of ensuring high quality services and flexibility in adapting the services offered to the expectations of customers (the increase in the cargo handled in the SSSA ports demonstrates the positive assessment of the activities of the operators), declarations of dialogue with external stakeholders, responsibility towards the local community (sponsoring of educational, cultural and sporting events, charitable assistance, hospital and retiree support, cooperation with, among others, universities, schools and cultural institutions – these activities attract an increasing number of people each year), as well as relationships with employees (declarations of taking care of employee development, improving their qualifications and job satisfaction, information on organizational culture). It should be added that similar declarations have also been made on the websites of other enterprises with operations in the port complex.

Conclusions

The analysis of the data collected in this paper has enabled the most vital areas of CSR activities in the Szczecin-Świnoujście port complex to be identified. They include good business practices, distinct concern for customer satisfaction and responsibility towards business partners, as well as concern for safety, environmental protection, responsibility towards the local community and activities to improve the region and good relations with employees.

The Szczecin and Świnoujście Seaports Authority SA has not yet adopted a document setting out their own CSR policies, or even a documented collection of the so-called good practices in this area. A report or a batch of information about the most important socially responsible activities of the company could not be found on its website. The management of two other Polish ports that are of fundamental importance to the national economy shares information about this area with the public. It seems that this kind of practice would be most desirable, especially since,

as indicated by the ESPO report, more than half of the largest ports in the EU and Norway already have a formalized CSR policy, with websites, reports, and promotional materials to inform stakeholders about the policy's goals, areas, and results/effects (according to the ESPO report, over 60% of ports publish information about the results of their pro-environmental activities). The primary beneficiaries of the ports' social responsibility programs are their employees and the local community, but additionally, the condition of the natural environment will also improve or at least will not deteriorate further. Admittedly, SSSA publishes handbooks (formerly annual reports) that contain general information about its activities in different areas of CSR on its website; however, these are not reports, but rather promotional materials. The company's unpublished annual sponsorship plans and reports on their implementation contain their goals, descriptions of their socially responsible activities, and their expected effects. In addition, various types of activities, consistent with the scope of CSR, have been implemented and reported by various departments in the company, independent of each other and without coordination. Therefore, it seems advisable for the SSSA to take steps to formalize their CSR activities in the form of a document that describes the company's policy in this respect and publish annual reports on its implementation. This would undoubtedly serve the purpose of achieving the objectives set out in the annual sponsorship plans (discussed in the *Results* section) and could be developed into an additional form of communication with the stakeholders. Such a solution seems particularly necessary since the effects of the socially responsible actions undertaken by SSSA are certainly positive, in terms of the impact on the natural environment (as evidenced by the results of studies showing good environmental conditions and the port not exceeding the emissions limit; it can be added that some rare, protected birds, e.g. eagles and herons, set up their habitat near the reloading terminals), the relationships with customers and the local community (customer survey results and sponsorship reports show that the company is perceived as socially responsible) as well as relationships with employees (for whom the company tries to ensure a friendly working environment).

The analysis of the data on the socially responsible activities of the port operators has led to the conclusion that they are also taking actions that qualify in the scope of CSR. These are generally and broadly understood good business practices as well as responsibility towards business partners,

environmental protection, fostering safety in ports and their surroundings, including striving for customer satisfaction, high quality of services and responsibility towards the local community, as well as good relations with employees and ensuring their career development. From the analysis of the data from the websites of these businesses (in some cases comprehensively presenting the activities, and in others, very selectively), it could be concluded that the scope of the projects undertaken by individual entities operating in the examined ports varies; as does their experience and their level of advancement of CSR activities. Some entities provide information about the awards and distinctions that they received in various competitions, while few have a formalized CSR policy, but many have implemented management systems in accordance with the requirements of various international standards, including ISO standards; the vast majority declare good business practices and their concern for the environment and safety. The effects of the activities undertaken by these entities are undoubtedly positive, as evidenced by the relevant certificates, awards, the results of environmental studies, media interest in ports, the rise in understanding by the external stakeholders of the business decisions undertaken by the ports (there have been no protests), as well as the interest of the local population in the community outreach programs and their benefits.

Summing up the considerations to date, it can be stated that the Ports Authority, through its business, pro-environmental, pro-social and pro-employee activities, the positive effects of which (internal and external) have been discussed above (despite the lack of reports that have been subjected to external verification and created under the guidelines of the Global Reporting Initiative G4), implements the goals of CSR and is a socially responsible entity. The assessment of the activity of the vast majority of businesses that operate in both ports is likely to be similar. It can be concluded that, since the managing entity and the other enterprises that make up the port services supply centre in Szczecin and Świnoujście undertake various types of activity in the most important areas of CSR, they are socially responsible entities, and, therefore, the community of seaports on the west coast of Poland can be deemed to be socially responsible. Therefore there is no basis for the rejection of the hypothesis that was adopted in the introduction of this paper. In the future, however, it would be expected that all of the port operators should adopt a uniform strategy in key CSR areas for the entire port complex.

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