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## Identification of Areas of Corporate Social Responsibility Based on the Example of Polish and German Seaports in the Baltic Sea Region

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**Abstarct:**

**Purpose:** The main purpose of this text is to identify active areas of Corporate Social Responsibility in Polish and German ports of the Baltic Sea Region and to subject them to a comparative analysis in order to point out differences and identify their causes.

**Design/Methodology/Approach:** The publication employs research methods characteristic for social sciences, including comparative analysis, analytical methods relating to different types of reports and source material, and a dogmatic method focusing on the analysis of legal text.

**Findings:** Polish and German seaports, despite their proximity and location within the same water basin, differ in their CSR policies.

**Practical Implications:** The results of this study can be used as a starting point for further analysis in the area of Social Responsibility of seaports and as a basis for developing existing and implementing new CSR activities.

**Originality/Value:** The research focused on selected ports located in the Baltic Sea Region. It is important that each port, despite many apparent similarities, is considered separately. This gives a clear picture of the development of public awareness, as it indicates that geographically and economically similar ports are in fact very different from each other.

**Keywords:** Corporate Social Responsibility, seaport, management, security, development.

**JEL codes:** M14.

**Paper type:** Research article.

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## **1. Introduction**

Today's turbulent environment forces enterprises to introduce specific changes in their modes of operation and management concepts. These changes relate mainly to widely understood social responsibility. Responsibility in terms of environmental protection and building their advantage on sustainable, rational activities. Moreover, changes in the market structure, including the predominance of employee power, have resulted in greater concern for employee rights and employment standards. Employees, apart from being a direct part of the company's functioning, are also an indirect part of it, as they are also the local community, which requires certain standards of functioning. In today's market reality, an enterprise's competitive position is no longer determined solely by its financial performance, but also by the dialogue with its environment and respect for human rights, both in the context of its employees and rights to equal access to natural resources in general. One particular enterprise that has had a huge impact on the quality of life of local people for centuries is the seaport. They are a kind of gateway to the State, concentrating many operations in one place and contributing to economic growth. Seaports are highly complex enterprises.

The aim of the article is to identify and compare areas of social responsibility in Polish and German ports of the Baltic Sea. The analysis focused on practical aspects of identifying and formulating areas of social responsibility in seaports. The article assumes that the specificity of seaports' activities determines the manner and scope of identifying the areas of social responsibility.

The study was conducted on three strategic Polish seaports: Szczecin-Świnoujście, Gdynia and Gdansk, and two of the largest German seaports located on the Baltic Sea Region: Lübeck and Rostock. The limitation to a selected comparison is justified by similar economic conditions. The other German ports on the Baltic Sea do not achieve similar transshipment results. The analysis was conducted in late 2020 and early 2021 based on information made public by the ports, both in the form of formalised CSR policies or reports and in other forms (e.g. articles in the press, social media, information on certificates, sections on the website, etc.).

## **2. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) - Theoretical Aspect**

As a result of the many years of progressive globalisation of economies, there is a gradual transformation of economic entities. This transformation includes not only technological changes, but more and more often it touches the mental issues, referring to changes in the awareness of the managerial staff. As a result of many years of pro-environmental activities, especially those that make the public aware of the negative consequences of economic activity, consumers are increasingly emphasising their rights to a safer, healthier and more just society (Hąbek, 2009). This means that a business should not be a completely separate entity, but on the contrary be a part of society. Each organisation should take full responsibility for its impact, both on the local community and on the environment in which it operates.

Changes in society's consciousness require non-business interests to be considered and that enterprises' strategies are reoriented at the stage of development. Society expects companies to take some responsibility for possible environmental impacts that may worsen their livelihoods. There is also an expectation of openness and making the actors' main lines of business public. Companies that want to achieve a high level of competitiveness should consider external costs resulting from their activities already at the decision-making phase (Adamczyk, 2009).

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become such an important issue that in 2010 the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) developed a specially dedicated standard ISO 26000. The standard takes the form of certification and its aim is to structure the knowledge on CSR. According to this standard, CSR is a specific management strategy in which companies voluntarily consider the interests of society in their activities. They consider environmental aspects and relations with various stakeholder groups, with employees being one of the most important issues. Therefore, it can be said that being socially responsible means, among other things, investing in human resources and environmental protection, the relationship with the company's environment and, in general, taking actions that will contribute to increasing the competitiveness of the company by creating the right conditions for sustainable economic and social development (PAED, 2020).

Currently, companies attach different importance to CSR. This is caused, among other things, by experience or cultural traditions and norms, but also by the legal system and education. It should be emphasised here that the sensitivity of enterprises to the public well-being is not only dictated by external social pressure. It is also linked to the value system of the enterprise, its owners and management (Jakubów, 2008). In the literature, we can encounter many doubts about the sense and relevance of the implementation of CSR ideas by enterprises (Dembińska, 2018). This is mainly caused by the fact that the main goal of every enterprise's activity is profit maximisation. Therefore, if the application of CSR principles can contribute to its enlargement, then this ideology will be well-argued and right to implement (Dembińska, 2014).

As a result of the process of globalisation and liberalisation of markets, the number of both large and smaller enterprises has increased. This means that the level of competition in the market has increased. Consumers can choose from a wide range of companies vying for their attention. Companies that do not keep up with global trends may unfortunately lose their reputation and this may result in their demise. Therefore, it may be concluded that an enterprise's orientation towards CSR may positively influence its success in business. Therefore, it is so important to formulate the enterprise's objectives more broadly, not only in terms of profit and economic interest, but also to imply social aspects into business operations. Strategies of enterprises that want to be socially responsible should also take into account ecological considerations or building dialogue with both stakeholders and the immediate community (Lewicka – Strzałecka, 2006).

Corporate Social Responsibility can be considered from many angles. The ISO 26000 standard points to 7 main areas, organisational governance, human rights, labour relations, environment, fair market practices, consumer relations, community engagement (PAED, 2020). Similar detailing can be found in the literature. In the study by Dagmara K. Zuzek entitled "Corporate social responsibility and sustainable development of enterprises" (Zuzek, 2012). We can find a narrower division, however, encompassing all the issues listed by ISO. In the first place, there is the Market Environment, which includes all co-operators of the enterprise. In this case, CSR refers to ethics and fair competition. The second point is the public environment, both offices and organisations, as well as society.

Here, reference is made to public-private cooperation in its broadest sense, but also to supporting initiatives and organising multiple undertakings for the benefit of the local community. Another area is employment. It includes both internal and external factors of the company. First, it focuses on human resources management in its broadest sense. Beginning with the form and legality of employment, through conflict resolution, social and employee relations, development opportunities, security guarantees. The next area indicated by the author, which is fully convergent with the ISO standard is environmental protection. It is, first of all, rational management of all-natural resources in an enterprise. Environmental protection and compliance with the principles of sustainable development of enterprises is regulated by legal standards, which should be observed by the company. Nevertheless, it should invest in pro-environmental development and, as an entity with influence on society, promote appropriate behaviour. The last area of CSR is investor relations. Here, particular attention is paid to the transparency of all activities conducted by the enterprise.

Science offers numerous studies dealing with Corporate Social Responsibility in general, but there is still a lack of literature discussing the issue, focusing on seaports. Among those few publications, the study by Vanelslander T., dealing with the presence and functioning of CSR in enterprises in the port sector, deserves attention. Dinwoodie, J., Tuck, S., Knowles, H., Benhin, J. and Sansom, M., focused on CSR as one of the factors influencing the sustainable development of port operations. Dragan D. and Mulej M., in turn, point to the consequences of socially irresponsible and unsystematic behaviour.

Polish researchers also conducted a study focusing on CSR in major Polish seaports. Ports in Gdańsk, Gdynia and Szczecin-Świnoujście were analysed. On this basis, a series of three articles was written, one for each port, by Klimek, H., Michalska-Szajer, A., and Dąbrowski, J. In each publication, documents of companies operating in the port area were analysed, and activities in each area of social responsibility were indicated.

Adherence to CSR principles is mainly a result of environmental pressure, and it is for this reason that business entities should seriously consider it in the process of creating a strategy and image of an environmentally friendly enterprise. It is an unquestionable

statement that the application of these principles, apart from competitive advantage, also brings many benefits both for the local community and all stakeholders, but also for the natural environment. CSR can therefore be a huge development stimulus, creating the desired image of a modern and responsible enterprise.

### **3. Specificities of the Functioning of Modern Seaports in the Context of Social Responsibility**

In order to properly conceptualise the specificities of seaports, it is first necessary to analyse the legal standards that define their functioning. The most important of these is Regulation EU 2917/352 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for the provision of port services and common rules on the financial transparency of ports (EU 2917/352, 2017). It defines a seaport as an area of land and water made up of infrastructure, including channels, port basins, roads, railways and port equipment enabling port services to be provided. In the Regulation, port services are defined as public services, provided or enabling them to be provided in the public interest, they are, inter alia, bunkering, cargo-handling, mooring, passenger services, collection of ship-generated waste and cargo residues, pilotage and towage (EU 2917/352, 2017).

Analysing the above provisions of the Regulation, it can be concluded that port services are public services, provided in the public interest. According to the legislators, the public interest is to "ensure the accessibility of the port service to all users, the availability of the port service all year long, the affordability of the port service to a certain category of users, the safety, security or environmental sustainability of port operations and territorial cohesion" (EU 2917/352, 2017). In this view, seaports are public utilities as their task is to provide public services while using public infrastructure. It should be borne in mind here that individual EU member states have their own individual regulations, which should be.

Thus, Polish law also includes a special act regulating issues related to ports, i.e., Act of 20 December 1996 on Sea Ports and Harbours (Polish: Ustawa z dnia 20 grudnia 1996 roku o portach i przystaniach morskich), which constitutes the principles for creating entities managing seaports and their organisation and functioning. It defines the provision of access to port operator services through the management of public assets, including infrastructure and suprastructure (Journal of Laws, 1997).

Seaports are the dominant link in an integrated transport infrastructure network. This is confirmed by numerous international reports indicating that this branch of transport accounts for nearly 80% of the volume of world trade, and even 90% in some developed countries (UNCTAD, 2014). Moreover, according to European Commission reports, around 400 million passengers use port services each year. Employment in them reaches nearly 1.5 million people, and at least as many people work in sectors around ports (EU, 2015). In view of this, seaports, in addition to their

strategic importance in the transport infrastructure network, are also significant value generators for national, local or regional economies.

In order to consider a seaport in terms of CSR, it is also necessary to know their complex structure. This analysis should begin by indicating the seaport management model. In Poland, it is a decentralised public model. Here, the public sector is the owner of port property and assets, but with a strong position and autonomy of the management board, where some of the auxiliary functions are carried out by private entities. The port authority is the State Treasury and is only marginally involved in port operations.

In case of Germany, the leading model for port management is the local government model, where the port management is usually not separated from the structures of the local government, except for operational functions. This means that the managers are largely the municipal governments in whose territory the port is located (Grzelakowski and Matczak, 2012). It is therefore necessary to distinguish between the managing institution of a port, and a port as a whole is a configuration of many entities operating within its territory and is managed by the respective managing institution. Indeed, pointing to the CSR of ports as one complex institution may prove problematic as it is composed of many entities operating within its territory. It would then seem appropriate to enforce appropriate behaviour on all entities operating in a port. .

The evolving role of port authorities is also worth noting, as they are gradually moving away from the role of regulator towards that of administrator, carrying out tasks such as the optimisation of port processes and infrastructure, supporting co-operation among stakeholders, promoting and maintaining an efficient sustainable transport system, creating relations with the hinterland and the local community. The move away from the role of the regulator may be due to the greater involvement of the private sector in port activities, especially in infrastructure financing issues (Płoska and Próchniak, 2017).

Given the strategic importance and location of seaports, as the gateway to the country from the sea, their operation and the care of the surrounding environment play an important role. The European Sea Ports Organisation (ESPO), an organisation which brings together EU seaports and represents the common interests and values of its members vis-à-vis the European institutions, has been publishing since 1996 the top 10 environmental priorities of the port sector, which are, air quality, climate change, energy efficiency, noise, relationship with the local community, ship waste, water quality, garbage/port waste, dredging operations and port development. Analysing the pattern of values set by ESPO, it should be noted that air quality and energy efficiency have been on the podium as the most important environmental objectives since 2013.

In addition, noise and climate change (ESPO, 2020) is also high on the list. Ports that are members of ESPO aim to optimise in these 10 areas. It is worth noting that immediately after the environmental objectives is the CSR-related objective of relationship with the local community. It can therefore be concluded that the social

responsibility of seaports, which is not specifically regulated in EU legislation, is nevertheless of great importance for the overall development of seaports. Cooperation with surrounding stakeholders and the local community, due to the location of seaports, often takes place in city centres or in their immediate vicinity.

Therefore, a skilful and mutually beneficial cooperation has a huge impact on the functioning and development of ports. It is becoming essential to focus on the human factor, i.e., current, potential and future employees of the port, but also on the residents located in its immediate vicinity. The main area of cooperation should be development-related sectors, e.g., education or higher education, but equally important is the concern for the environment surrounding ports, which should focus on minimising the negative impact of port activities on the local community (Code of Practice, 2010).

Another important issue relating to the operation of seaports, which is relevant from the point of view of CSR, is security in its broadest sense. This is a complex issue which includes the safety of workers or other persons in port areas, environmental safety and security with a defence dimension. In terms of the first issue mentioned, a seaport should be considered as a multimodal transport hub, hence the need for safety due to the large number of large cargo handling facilities, routes and means of transport, often dangerous cargoes stored within the port area. Environmental safety results from economic activities that are often negative for the environment. As mentioned, various substances, often with a hazardous status, are handled in ports.

Compliance with procedures related to their handling is a fundamental step to minimise their negative impact. In addition, environmental issues can include noise nuisance to which close residents of port areas are exposed. Other environmental safety issues include ship waste, water pollution, air pollution, excessive energy consumption, increased traffic in the port area, release of dust or other harmful substances during cargo handling, etc.

Seaports are important multimodal transport hubs, and their operation is broadly defined by EU legislation. EU law, however, does not impose a specific model for managing ports. It does not impose a CSR model explicitly. However, it regulates issues related to the way port activities are carried out. All activities should be carried out in a safe and sustainable manner, also bearing in mind environmental considerations (EU 2917/352). It should also be noted that port activity is regulated by separate legal standards in the specific countries on whose territory the port operates. Seaports are treated as organised and complex undertakings and therefore must comply to established legal standards of environmental protection just like other economic operators.

#### **4. Methodology**

The article discusses the results of a study on the extent of implementation of CSR in selected Polish and German seaports located in the Baltic Sea Region. Source materials

for the analysis were obtained from official websites of the ports and documents (reports) concerning Corporate Social Responsibility activities. The ports of Gdynia, Gdańsk, Szczecin-Świnoujście, Lübeck and Rostock were chosen for the analysis due to their geographical proximity, presented in Figure 1, and similar socio-economic levels.

**Figure 1.** Location of the analysed ports in the Baltic Sea Region



*Source:* Own elaboration based on maps.google.com [Accessed: 07.04.2021].

The initial stage of the research was to identify and analyse areas of social responsibility in the main Polish seaports, based on documents from individual ports. On this basis, the type and scope of activities were selected. The same pattern was replicated for selected German seaports.

In the second stage of the study, a comparison of active CSR areas for previously selected Polish and German seaports was compiled and analysed to identify differences in the approach to Social Responsibility and name their possible causes.

## 5. Results

### 5.1 Social Responsibility Areas of Polish Seaports in the Baltic Sea Basin

This part of the article will present the results of the analysis of the application of CSR practices in strategic Polish seaports, for which the Gdynia Sea Port Authority, the Gdańsk Sea Port Authority and the Szczecin and Świnoujście Sea Port Authority (ZMPSiŚ) are responsible. Since 2014, the Gdynia Sea Port Authority has been collecting and then providing information on CSR activities in the form of a periodic report. The most recent report concerns 2018. The Port of Gdansk Authority has made the 2016 report available. Since 2009, ZMPSiŚ has made available a summary of activities in the port, both commercial and social, in the form of an annual report.

All ports additionally publish much information about their activities on their official websites and social media profiles. Based on the analysis of the above-mentioned sources of information on the social responsibility of Polish seaports, a table has been prepared, indicating activities of ports in given CSR areas. The ISO 26000 standard indicates 7 areas, and they are: 1 - organisational governance, 2 - human rights, 3 -

labour relations, 4 - environment, 5 - fair market practices, 6 - consumer relations, 7 - social engagement.

However, in CSR reports of seaports there is a different division, which is in accordance with the one indicated by ISO. The Port of Gdansk indicates the following areas, organisational governance and employee aspects, contractors and social development, environment, protection and monitoring of pollution limits, business ethics (Port of Gdansk, 2016). Whereas the Port of Gdynia such, responsible business practices, environmental responsibility, good relations with the local community, friendly working environment (Port of Gdynia, 2018). It can be noted that the indicated ports consolidated several points resulting from the standard into one point. To unify the analysis criteria, the points were also consolidated in the article. The new criteria look as follows:

1. Friendly working environment (combining points 1, 2 and 3 from ISO 26000).
2. Responsible business practices (points 5 and 6 from ISO 26000 have been merged).
3. Environmental responsibility.
4. Security.
5. Social commitment.

The first category analysed is the friendly working environment. From a social point of view, seaports are industrial centres that provide many jobs for the local community. This increases the wealth of the local population. As a result, there is an increase in monetary turnover and the number of private enterprises in the area. The management boards of Polish seaports employ on average over 300 people. Nearly 90% of them have permanent employment contracts. This provides employees with greater job security. An important issue is also the average age of employees. Both in the Port of Gdynia and the Port of Gdansk it is 48 years. This means that the experience of people over 50 is a valuable asset for ports. Due to the large number of employees in Polish seaports, there are various labour unions that take care of the relationship between workers and managers.

Seaport managers care for the health of their employees and offer employee group insurance, or additional benefits encourage them to be physically active and support all sporting initiatives, such as creating sports teams among their staff. They also make it possible to train in specialised centres or sports halls.

In addition, to standardise procedures and to treat all employees equally, the Seaport Boards have developed several different regulations, codes and other documents that represent a significant simplification and transparency of all activities related to employment issues (Port of Gdynia, 2018, Port of Gdansk, 2016, [www.port.szczecin.pl](http://www.port.szczecin.pl)).

The second CSR area analysed is responsible business practices. The analysis of available sources shows that all Polish seaports are very active in business life. First of all, they are members of many national and international organisations, e.g., National Chamber of Maritime Economy, Polish LNG Platform, European Sea Ports Organisation (ESPO), Polish Maritime Cluster. In addition, as an important body for the development of regions, they actively participate in many business and industry events, such as conferences, meetings, forums. Polish seaports undertake various activities and investments for the development of port infrastructure and suprastructure, thanks to which they improve working conditions for entities operating in their areas, but also create opportunities to increase the business attractiveness of the region. The internal policy of Port Authorities is also of great importance for this attractiveness. Above all, transparent operations, adherence to the canons of business ethics, fair competition, employee safety and effective cooperation with stakeholders gives evidence of a reliable company (Port of Gdynia, 2018; Port of Gdańsk, 2016; Handbook, 2018-2019).

An extremely important issue, in terms of CSR, is caring for the environment. This is the third area of analysis. There are many different operations taking place in seaports, starting with those related to transport, both sea and land, transshipment, waste collection, but also basic operations related to the natural use of goods located in the port area. All these activities can generate many harmful environmental effects. Polish seaports are State-owned companies and operate on the same principles as other enterprises. As such, they are obliged to study and report on pollution emissions. This obligation results from a number of legal conditions, e.g., the Environmental Protection Law, which defines the principles for the protection of the environment and the conditions for using its resources, considering sustainable development. This act obliges entrepreneurs to continuously measure water, soil and air pollution, but also to measure noise, energy or vibration emissions (Environmental Protection Law). All Polish seaports carry out the required measurements and in the vast majority the level of pollution or emissions does not exceed acceptable environmental standards.

However, environmental responsibility in Polish seaports goes much further. To reduce the emission of harmful particles into the air resulting from coal handling, the Port Authority has taken several measures and applied a number of innovative solutions, i.e., a system for sprinkling coal heaps, a system for cleaning traffic routes, and a car wheel wash was installed for vehicles leaving the terminal area (Port of Gdynia, 2018). In addition, many modernisation works related to thermal insulation of buildings or replacement of the water and sewage network were carried out, what significantly reduced energy and water consumption. Similar investments have also been carried out in the Port of Gdansk. One of them is the modernisation of the heating system. As a result, the number of pollutants emitted into the air was reduced by as much as 98.9% (Port of Gdańsk, 2016).

The Szczecin and Świnoujście Sea Ports Authority should also be commended, as it has introduced environmental management within its port, and as a result has obtained

the ISO 14001 certificate, which certifies the highest standards related to environmental protection in the company ([www.port.szczecin.pl](http://www.port.szczecin.pl)).

The fourth analysed area of activity of Polish ports in terms of CSR is security. This is a multidimensional concept, as it may refer to employee safety, environmental safety, financial safety, secure communication and contacts with stakeholders or data security. The issues related to employee safety have already been discussed. Other security areas are largely driven by external and internal regulations. As multimodal transport hubs, seaports bring together in one place most modes of transport, each with its own rules related to security of the transport itself, means of transport, infrastructure, etc.

Therefore, to ensure safety within their operation, seaports should comply with all regulations. Each port also has a number of warehouses for different types of cargo, general cargo, liquid cargo, foodstuffs, but also dangerous cargo. Any cargo classified as dangerous has detailed instructions for handling it. Due to the large capacity of ships, large quantities of these cargoes are usually stored. A good example of the possible consequences of non-compliance with port security rules is the recent tragedy that occurred on 4th August 2020 in Beirut. This is Lebanon's most important seaport. It handled about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the country's imports. It stored a significant proportion of the country's food stocks (BBC, 2020).

Unfortunately, dangerous cargo was stored there in contravention of basic safety regulations. Recent investigation results indicate that ammonium nitrate, tyres and fireworks, all of which are flammable and explosive, were inappropriately stored in one warehouse (Forensic architecture, 2020). The failure to observe basic safety rules resulted in a massive explosion that had more than 7% of the explosive power of the nuclear bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945 (The New York Times, 2020). The explosion destroyed buildings within a radius of up to 10 km. A seismic wave of magnitude 3.3 on the Richter scale was triggered, according to the United States Geological Survey. A crater more than 120 metres in diameter was formed at the site of the explosion (CNN, 2020).

The above example of a tragedy makes us aware of the high necessity of observing safety principles. Preventive actions in this area are absolutely right and necessary. Therefore, Polish seaports have developed a number of internal rules and procedures designed to prevent unwanted, dangerous events. In addition, there are Rescue Centres, Port Security Guards, Port Fire Brigade and other security watchdogs in ports (Port of Gdynia, 2018, Port of Gdansk, 2016, [www.port.szczecin.pl](http://www.port.szczecin.pl)).

The final area of analysis is community involvement. Polish seaports are mostly located in city centres, which makes them strongly connected with the city authorities and its inhabitants. They undertake cooperation with the local community, e.g., by co-organising or sponsoring various events, conferences, forums or national and international meetings. Seaports try to support all industry initiatives organised by

friendly educational centres. They also facilitate student internships and placements on their premises. Port staff also share their experience and knowledge through thematic lectures and meetings at nearby universities. In addition, seaports support various social and charitable activities. They sponsor the development of local teams and sports centres. They also try to organise attractions for city dwellers, e.g., by organising open days or enabling the viewing of various important events taking place in the port area, such as the entry of tourist-attractive ships or ship launches.

In addition, to maintain the highest level of transparency, seaports publish a lot of information and news on their official website, such as reports on environmental studies, information on tenders, new initiatives and investments, etc. All these activities are aimed at building good relations with the local community (Port of Gdynia, 2018; Port of Gdańsk, 2016; [www.port.szczecin.pl](http://www.port.szczecin.pl)).

## **5.2 Areas of Social Responsibility of German Seaports in the Baltic Sea Region**

Rostock is undoubtedly one of the most important German ports in the Baltic Sea region. The management of this port does not publish CSR reports, but publishes a lot of information in this area on its official website. From there, we can learn, among other things, that it is active in the area of sustainable development (Nachhaltigkeitsbericht, 2020). Like Polish seaports, it has special bylaws and a management plan for waste and other pollutants (Waste management plan of ROSTOCK PORT GmbH). In the published materials we can also find information concerning fair policy and transparent actions during cooperation with entities operating on its premises.

Moreover, the organisational structure of the Port is made public. The Port's ISO 9001 and 14001 certificates are proof of its efforts towards quality and continuous development in many spheres of its operation. Additionally, from the information brochures we can learn that the reloading and storage facilities are of high quality and thus safety considerations related to cargo handling are met (Port of Rostock). The authors could not find any detailed information on employment policy or cooperation with the local community.

The Port of Lubeck is a German port complex on the Baltic Sea. Like Rostock, the port does not publish official CSR reports but publishes a lot of information on its official website. These include general terms and conditions, tariffs, and information on hazardous goods handling and waste disposal. The ownership and organisational structure of the port is also made public. Furthermore, the Lübeck port complex is one of the largest employers in the region. On its website it states that it has a policy of guaranteeing good customer relations, ensuring efficiency and reliability. This is achievable through well-chosen employee competencies. The port's employees are committed to promoting quality and protecting labour, the environment and health. The Port of Lübeck also offers internships for pupils and students. In addition, we can find declarations relating to development efforts and commitment to environmental

and social protection. The ISO 9001 and 14001 certificates can attest to this, and we learn that the principles of quality and environmental management are deeply rooted in the company's policy and form an indispensable basis for all its activities.

On the other hand, the relationship with all stakeholders of the port is very important for its managers. In terms of safety, we can note that the port of Lübeck declares that only trained people work with dangerous goods. In addition, all terminals have special equipment to prevent various risks. In addition, employees regularly hold emergency drills, thus increasing safety when handling dangerous goods (www.lhg.com).

## 6. Conclusions

Five seaports located in the Baltic Sea were selected for the analysis - three Polish (Gdynia, Gdańsk and Szczecin-Świnoujście) and two German (Rostock, Lübeck). The selection was based on geographical location and similar economic parameters. An examination of the literature and official documents and information provided by the actors showed that Polish and German ports in the Baltic Sea basin are to a large extent similar economically. However, their governance and internal strategies and policies differ. Corporate Social Responsibility is not legally imposed on entrepreneurs, however modern organisations realise the advantages of its implementation. Based on the analysis of Polish and German ports in the Baltic Sea, active areas of CSR have been identified, as presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Comparison of CSR instruments in Polish and German seaports located in the Baltic Sea Region

Port	Country	Friendly working environment	Responsible business practices	Environmental responsibility	Security	Social commitment
Lübeck	DE	x	x	x	x	
Rostock	DE		x	x		
Szczecin - Świnoujście	PL	x	x	x	x	x
Gdynia	PL	x	x	x	x	x
Gdańsk	PL	x	x	x	x	x

**Source:** Own elaboration.

The areas listed in the table result from a pre-established CSR classification specifically dedicated to seaports. The results of the analysis are as follows:

- The Port of Lübeck acts in four of the five specified areas - friendly working environment, responsible business practices, environmental responsibility and security,

- Port Rostock acts in two of the five specified areas - responsible business practices and environmental responsibility,
- The ports of Szczecin-Świnoujście, Gdynia and Gdańsk act in all five of these areas - friendly working environment, responsible business practices, environmental responsibility, security and social commitment.

From the analysis of active CSR areas, we can see that German ports disclose their pro-social activities to a much lesser extent. Polish seaports systematically publish their social responsibility achievements in the form of reports, paying special attention to ethical, safety and employment issues. On the other hand, the official websites of German seaports show only perfunctory information in this regard.

German Seaports are based on a different management model. Their managers are largely municipal governments and other companies with a stake in the company. The lack of information in employment-related areas may be due to this division. The managements of Polish seaports are state-owned companies, which means that there is one main manager, a state body, which also imposes a high degree of transparency on them. This is not the case for German ports.

Moreover, the official websites of the German ports analysed do not mention cooperation with the local community. Regardless of the country, seaports are important drivers for the development of entire regions. A large part of the local population works in ports and port-related services. The presence of a port in each region also creates favourable conditions for the development of maritime education and identity courses. In addition, detailed information on safety rules is not made available to the public. German ports do not publish reports or regulations indicating high safety standards, but this does not mean that they are not implemented and enforced. It can be deduced that the quality and environmental management certificates held certify in themselves the maintenance of all basic standardised safety, quality and environmental rules and thus the local community.

The analysis shows that geographical and economic similarities do not translate directly into organisational and managerial similarities. Polish seaports regularly publish reports describing active measures taken in terms of Social Responsibility, while such measures are not present in German ports. This does not mean, however, that such activities do not occur in German entities, it only differs in the form in which they are presented - through quality management certificates and membership in associations of ports meeting certain standards, which in itself certifies that they are socially responsible entities.

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