Control of economic processes at polish seaports

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Abstract

Control of economic processes comes as a key factor in activities undertaken by all companies, regardless of their ultimate economic objectives that may include development of entities and achievement of positive economic outcomes or operation oriented towards public benefits. Management authorities of seaports can be defined as entities operating based on the public benefit. Their operation is based on the Act of 20 December 1996 on Sea Ports and Harbours. A fundamental challenge that must be faced by such entities is to adopt a particular model of organisational and legal solutions that affect the scope of economic process control. The aim of this study is to present a model of economic process control applied at Polish seaports of fundamental significance for national economy, with consideration of the requirements set by legal regulations. The research methods assumed for the achievement of the research aim are system analysis – the system theory – and economic cybernetics – observation of the models of economic process control applied at seaports in the world.

Keywords: seaports, maritime shipping,

1 Operation of seaports

Maritime transport is particularly significant for the world economy because it comes as the main method of transferring raw materials and products on the global scale. Maritime transport allows interested parties to transfer large amounts of cargo, and it is limited only by the accessibility of seaports. Operation of the maritime transport system requires cooperation of two elements:

- maritime shipping – which includes entities shipping cargo by sea;
- seaports – transport hubs, where it is possible to change transport modes and to continue transporting cargo.

Maritime shipping involves transportation of various cargo and passengers by sea, with the use of sea-going vessels (Szwankowski, 2005). Sea routes form the linear infrastructure of maritime transport, combining natural and man-made shipping routes. Sea routes may be of various significance for maritime navigation; they can be frequently used routes that link places where resources are acquired, regions where such resources are consumed and regions where industrial plants are located along with the markets where products can be sold; they can also be marginal routes of little use. At present, maritime navigation handles more than 80% of the total global trade. This fact results from high cargo transportation capabilities and higher efficiency of processes involving transporting cargo for far distances, in comparison to other transport modes. Sea-going vessels are constructed to travel across the sea and to transport cargo as their business operation; however, they can also be used for non-commercial operation (Kujawa, 2015, \; UKM, Art. 2 §1). Implemented with the use of commercial vessels, business operation involves, first of all, maritime transport of cargo and passengers, fishing, search and rescue

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services and exploitation of sea and underwater resources (located under the sea bottom) (UKM, Art. 3 §2). The variety of sea-going vessels is related to their specialisation in handling particular types of cargo, their construction solutions, drive types and additional equipment.

Seaports are elements of the nodal infrastructure of sea transport, and they also form transport links that allow passengers and cargo to change transport modes (Szwankowski, 2000; Misztal, 2010). Located at places where sea and land meet, ports come as complex business facilities that are well adjusted to processes implemented in

- a technical and technological field, including proper technical equipment, applied technologies and labour resources (Klimek, 2010);
- an organisational and administrative field, including implementation of regulations referring to economic functions within the administrative borders of seaports (Młynarczyk, 1997);
- a legal and economic field, including current legal regulations that define principles referring to the operation of port markets and to the scope of economic freedom granted to port management authorities (Grzelakowski, Matczak, 2012; Misztal, Szwankowski, 1999; Szałucki, 1999).

Seaports play an important role in the economic development of countries and regions. They make trade possible on a global scale. Relocation of production from North America and Europe to the Far East has resulted in an increasing demand for sea transport services and in a necessity faced by ports and shipping companies to provide the respective supply of required services. The development of maritime transport is related to the implementation of more and more modern and efficient methods of cargo transportation, such as, the container system applied to handle general cargo or transport chains applied to handle transport of liquefied methane (liquefied natural gas [LNG]). The implementation of new technologies involves high investment expenditure and must take place simultaneously for cargo handling port facilities and for sea carriers who specialise in shipping various types of cargo.

Considering their high cargo capacity, commercial vessels are used – first of all – in transport of bulk cargo, usually non-processed mineral raw materials that account for 76% of the total transport of goods. Containerised general cargo and project cargo accounted for 24% of the total amount of transported cargo in 2015 (UNCTAD, 2015).

Operation of seaports involves performing economic and political functions. The transport function is the most often identified one, which is related to the change in transport modes imposed by various types of natural environment. Apart from transport operations, ports also perform a commercial function that has been developed since ancient times. At present, it is related to entering transactions that involve sales of goods, transit of goods or/and operation of free zones and procurement of supplies for sea-going vessels. Frequently, ports are locations for industry operation that fosters development of ports, and it can generate significant economic benefits – these are examples of an industrial function performed by ports (Kuźma, 2003). The concept of cargo flows in sea–land transport chains (logistic chains) has resulted in a definition of a new role performed by seaports operating as transport links, which take over logistic and distributional functions (Szwankowski, 2000; Grzelakowski, Matczak, 2012; Nowosielski, 2010). Apart from typical transport and transport-related operations, another significant group is formed by functions related to the development of close environment and distant environment of seaports. They are often referred to as urban-forming functions – as a centre, a port initiates development of a town – and region-forming functions – a port becomes a factor initiating the development of a region and cooperation between the port and the region (town). The political character of seaport operation is related to the fact that it is possible to use ports for achieving independence of domestic trade from transit through the neighbouring countries, for developing foreign trade (import and export) and for running military operations.

ere introduce the paper, and put a nomenclature if necessary, in a box with the same font size as the rest of the paper. The paragraphs continue from here and are only separated by headings, subheadings, images and formulae. The section headings are arranged by numbers, bold and 10 pt. Here follows further instructions for authors.

2 Identification of models of economic process control at seaports

Seaports are complex systems in which various economic processes are implemented. These are the processes of informative, control, operational and auxiliary nature. A characteristic feature of a complex system is the existence of interrelated elements that allow the interested parties to achieve the synergy effect (Gomółka, 2000; Abt, 1998; Flakiewicz, 2002). Business entities are complex economic systems that consist of sub-systems, which, in turn, consist of material parts and labour resources; they are oriented towards manufacturing material goods or/and providing services (Brzeziński, 2002). All companies operating on the market (competitive environment) are open systems (relatively isolated), which means that they form relations with the market through inputs and outputs used for information and material flows. Connecting the system of production inside companies with control information flows and labour resources results in transformation of materials into final products, namely,

goods or services. The systemic analysis of the particular ports as economic entities allows interested parties to identify components, process relations and their specificity.

Processes that are implemented at seaports involve operations required to achieve a desired state of the system (Gomółka, 2000; Blaik, 2001). Definitions of a process often specify the following features: efficiency and ability to create logistic added value (Szwankowski, 2000; Grzelakowski, Mateczak, 2012; Fałda, 2010). The ability to create the added value comes as a reference to basic processes that are necessary for transformation; they involve all the activities related to production of port services (Brzeziński, 2002).

All processes related to the operation of seaports can be divided into basic processes – production, auxiliary and control processes. Considering seaports, basic processes include a number of activities that allow interested parties to provide port services, such as (Kuźma, 2003):

- cargo handling in various transport relations (vessel-warehouse; vessel-railway car; vessel-truck);
- storing cargo in port warehouses and storage yards;
- cargo quality and quantity control;
- internal transport in the port area;
- cargo manipulation operations (arranging cargo for customs clearance, repackaging, consolidating, deconsolidating, repairing packaging units, etc.);
- cargo stowage and trimming;
- pilotage, towage and mooring;
- supplies of fuel, materials and food for vessels;
- current and scheduled vessel repairs.

The role related to auxiliary operations is performed by processes involving power supply, organisational information flows, maintenance of telecommunication and IT systems. A significant role also involves the availability of waste management processes, such as collection of oily water, rubbish and organic waste from sea-going vessels. Furthermore, in the area of seaports or in their vicinity, there are entities that operate in the field of technical maintenance of trucks, railway cars, production and maintenance of transport facilities such as cranes, containers and pallets.

Seaports are elements of the nodal infrastructure of international, regional and domestic transport systems that are publicly accessible and offer transport and port services. Seaports and sea navigation together with land transport can form various transport chains to handle particular types of cargo.

Seaports are economic systems of an open character; it means that there is a connection of information feedback of a controlling character with distant macro-economic environment and close micro-economic environment (Figure 1).

Fig. 1. A model of economic process control at seaports

The influence of distant environment can be observed, first of all, in multi-level formation of systems for regulating seaport operation, both in the field of management systems and in the field of establishing market relations – management models. Control takes place through conveying regulation standards from distant environment, which is a regulation system, to close environment, which is a system under regulation. The connection that can be observed amongst all the elements of distant environment refers to three levels:

- a global level, referring to the influence of world economy;
- an international level, referring to continental influence or influence observed in several or a dozen countries;
- a domestic level, referring only to a particular country and sometimes to some particular seaports.

The global control level is a factor that indicates the condition of world economy, where the volumes of production and global consumption are the significant parameters. An increase in the volume of international commercial transactions results in an increase in the demand for transport services that are implemented mainly by maritime transport. The influence of global factors on the systems of economic process regulation is the weakest, and it comes as information about the condition of future international economic environment.

The international level of regulating seaport operation is formed by a set of standards established by international institutions that are entitled to develop and to enforce control (regulating) standards binding for ports located in the countries that accept the authority of these institutions. Such a situation is related to activities

undertaken by agencies of international organisations, such as the European Union, the United Nations and their auxiliary bodies, such as: the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), commercial General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) agreements and the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Regulation of economic processes provided by the above-mentioned institutions includes principles of international market operation, based on market competition and non-discrimination of particular market participants.

The national level of regulation is related to distant environment of the countries where the state administration regulates the forms of the goods and service markets, principles of business activities and standards that particularly refer to the operation of seaports. Frequently, providing services at seaports is regulated based on a legal act that includes regulations referring to the preferred management model and tools applied in economic process control, which are given to the disposal of management authorities and which indicate principles for the implementation of port services. Legislation of particular countries cannot infringe international standards that are often implemented in order to sustain principles referring to the operation on the market (e.g. the market of the European Union) (Miształ, 1994).

All the above-mentioned levels of distant environment regulation are interrelated and this fact affects particular solutions applied in the field on international and domestic standards (Klimek, 2010). The connections observed amongst the components of environment are of informative nature and they include

- reflection of the actual form of the maritime transport market on the global scale;
- operations that orientate the maritime transport market towards the direction required by international regulative institutions that provide standards and recommendations for national legislative bodies;
- legal regulations established by parliaments and ministries of the particular countries.

The hierarchical structure of distant environment is a source of regulative standards for close environment, where economic relations between seaports and their customers can be identified.

Close environment is an economic system, which is a relation between the supply of port services and customers' demand for such services, providing that the market equilibrium is maintained, namely, that the transaction prices are set. The components of close environment are the following: a particular seaport, its suppliers of resources indispensable for providing port services, its customers and other seaports that come as inter-port competition. Inter-port competition takes place not only amongst seaports of various countries but also amongst domestic seaports where customers can choose from a wide range of service providers.

A characteristic feature of the open market is a competition that takes place amongst its participants who represent service suppliers. Whilst analysing the specific character of port operation, it is advisable to mention two types of competition:

- inter-port competition, which refers to competition taking place amongst various seaports located in various countries or competition taking place amongst domestic seaports (the key factor is a particular geographical location, navigation routes and a network of seaports);
- intra-port competition, which refers to a mechanism involving competition amongst business entities (port operators) who provide services in the area of the same seaport.

A seaport is a system that consists of two interrelated elements: port owners and the system of providing port services. The implementation of economic priorities defined by the port owners results in a necessity of selecting a port management system that will guarantee efficiency in the achievement of the defined objectives. Hence, the selected management system provides some particular tools applied in economic process control of business entities in the field of port service supply (the market).

Relations amongst the particular elements of close environment are of feedback nature and they are characterised by various levels of intensity, depending on the particular market entities. The least significant relations can be observed amongst the particular seaports and they refer to information monitoring of competitors; the most significant relations can be observed amongst seaports, their resource suppliers and customers.

The closest regulative relations can be observed inside seaports, where the port owners are limited by regulative standards implemented by distant environment; the port owners try to implement mechanisms of economic process control through the port authorities in order to achieve the expected aims. Regulations issued by the port authorities refer mainly to port operators, that is, to business entities that provide port services (other non-commercial entities may be also subject to such regulations).

As an economic entity, a seaport is subject to processes of control that refer to all the operation levels and that affect the implementation of business activities. The management of such an enterprise comes as a system involving complex information and decision-making, and it is characterised by a hierarchical structure in which the following elements can be observed:

- legal conditions;
- ownership rights;
- the form of the port management system;
- the model of economic process control – a form of an intra-port market;
- characteristics of the distant environment of a seaport – inter-port markets.

In various countries, their legal systems define market principles and the scope of freedom granted for business activities. Considering business activities that are particularly significant to the economy of a given country, legal acts may implement some specific organisational and legal solutions. It can be observed for business activities related to administration and providing services at seaports. Furthermore, the state administration often considers seaports to be objects of high importance to national economy, considering their capabilities in handling cargo flows in international relations. Hence, specific legal acts are issued in order to regulate in detail the way in which seaports operate and in order to define the scope of freedom granted to investment and business operations run by private (foreign) business entities.

Depending on economic systems applied in various countries and on some particular economic regulations, there are solutions that define market relations, starting from free market solutions and ending with some limitations in the accessibility of seaports. The most common solution is following the principles of competitive market that guarantees public accessibility of transport services.

A seaport is a set of assets usually characterised by the size and value of port infrastructure and suprastructure. The above-mentioned assets have been developed as a result of investment processes implemented by the port owners who can make profit on the operation of the port, based on their personal involvement in business activities or leasing port area to some external entities.

Operation of seaport management systems is related to the identification of specific entities interrelated by control processes. There are five components (Szwankowski, 2000; Misztal, Szwankowski, 1999; Dąbrowski, Klimek, 2014):

- public administration represented by state—central, regional and local administration institutions;
- owners of port areas or port facilities who have incurred some expenditures related to the acquisition of port infrastructure and suprastructure and who are interested in a proper level of economic rent;
- port authorities who are responsible for the administration (management) of seaports, including administration of the land and water areas and the infrastructure of a seaport;
- business entities (port operators) who come as a group of enterprises that run their business operations in the field of exploitation and service providing;
- control and supervision institutions that perform tasks of maritime administration and control institutions that perform tasks related to the security of basic operation and to the border guard services (a seaport is also a state border).

The management systems regulate principles followed by owners of port areas, infrastructure and suprastructure (seaport owners) and seaport administration/management authorities. The most common concepts of seaport management in the world are the following: autonomic management systems, municipal, private and state systems. Seaport management includes operations related to process control in the field of development, current operation and provision of regulative tools for seaports (Szwankowski, 2000).

Control of economic processes is implemented by port management authorities (administrator), and it involves establishment of the market orders, namely, assuming a particular model of relations amongst port business entities (port operators). Port management authorities define the order for the port internal market where port operators offer their services to customers (Misztal, Szwankowski, 1999).

The form of an intra-port market depends on the principles adopted to control the business field. It is possible to observe the following (Turpin, 2013; Szwankowski, 2000):

- a model providing port management authorities with full control over operations (services) and an exclusive possibility to provide services (comprehensive port authorities/private service port);
- a model that passes the initiative in the operational field to port management authorities, with a possibility to follow the strategy of the management body and partial opening of the intra-port market to independent entities (public service port);
- a model in which port management authorities provide all the necessary port infrastructure and suprastructure facilities; the operational field is handled by business entities that are independent from port authorities; such entities operate in accordance with commercial principles; however, it is possible to exclude some services in favour of port management authorities (pilotage, towage, technical maintenance of vessels, etc.); this model is referred to as a tool port;
- a model that radically separates the field of intra-port market management from operational activities, involving mainly service supply; such a solution limits the range of activities undertaken by port management authorities, giving them a role of an entity that regulates the conditions of market entry – licensing business operations (or sale of shares, leasing); port management authorities act as hosts of the port (landlord port);

The selection of the model applied to control business operations depends on the current law, economic aims defined by port owners and a specific role of seaports that often come as facilities performing general economic and social functions. Depending on the solution adopted by port management authorities, the intra-port market of services may take various forms (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Participation of port management authorities in the field of providing port services

Apart from the above-mentioned solutions, there are also mixed models that combine various solutions in the supply field of the intra-port market. They allow business entities to provide some port services or they leave significant services (such as pilotage, towage or mooring) to entities that are fully dependent on port management authorities. Full participation of port management authorities can be observed at seaports where state and private management systems are applied, where owners of port infrastructure are directly interested in an increase in efficiency of service-providing operations, which is related to the capabilities of return-on-investment expenditures incurred for the development of a seaport.

Considering ports with autonomic and municipal management systems, independent economic entities are allowed to participate in the intra-port market and to enrich the range of services. Such entities are most often allowed to provide services in the field of transport operations, such as cargo stowage and cargo trimming and in the field of cargo handling and cargo storage. At present, a solution related to a model of economic process control, which is very often applied at seaports, is liberalisation of intra-port markets. It means that port management authorities take over a role of port administrators only (a landlord model) (Szwankowski, 2000; Grzelakowski, Matczak, 2012). Seaport management authorities should provide public accessibility of port services because it is in the interest of port customers as well as port service providers.

A model of economic process control at seaports shows features characteristic to complex systems focused on purposeful operations. Seaports are meant to implement various economic tasks that are defined by legislation bodies (domestic and international distant environment) and port owners (close environment). The above-mentioned tasks can be of purely commercial nature or of a social character, providing accessibility of the global transport system (it facilitates economic development of regions and of the whole country).

3 Characteristics of models related to control of economic processes at Polish seaports

A functional solution that is most frequently applied at seaports is the separation of administrative (regulative) activities from business activities, defined as operational activities that are related to providing port services. Port administration involves adoption of a particular management model that will allow interested parties to implement their strategy for development and to control the intra-port market (Szwankowski, 2000).

Polish seaports are subject to some particular regulations included in the Act of 20 December 1996 on Sea Ports and Harbours, which regulates all operations undertaken by such economic entities (the Act on Sea Ports and Harbours, 1996). Statutory regulations refer to the provisions of establishing seaport or sea harbour management bodies, their internal organisation and principles of their operation (the Act on Sea Ports and Harbours, Art. 1.1., 1996). The legislators divide seaports into two groups:

- seaports of primary importance to national economy; these are the largest facilities located in Gdańsk, Gdynia, Szczecin and Świnoujście;
- other seaports of a local character; these are of secondary importance to maritime trade.

The division of seaports into groups involves differentiation of statutory regulations on the principles of establishing port management authorities and conditions of economic process control. Considering seaports of primary importance to Polish economy, a special procedure is applied, in which a joint-stock company is established, with at least 51% of shares owned by the State Treasury and the rest of the shares was owned by the municipalities of Gdańsk, Gdynia, Szczecin and Świnoujście (Table 1).

Il tables should be numbered with Arabic numerals. Every table should have a caption. Headings should be placed above tables, left justified. Only horizontal lines should be used within a table, to distinguish the column headings from the body of the table, and immediately above and below the table.

Table 1. The structure of shares in the management bodies of the seaports of primary importance to national economy (in accordance with the Act of 1996)

Port	Seaport management authorities	Shareholders and shares (%)		
		State Treasury	Municipality	Other shareholders
Port of Gdańsk	The Port of Gdańsk Authority, Joint Stock Company	95.06 (51)*	2.31 (34)*	2.63
Port of Gdynia	The Port of Gdynia Authority, Joint Stock Company	99.483 (51)*	0.0436 (34)*	0.4734
Ports of Szczecin and Świnoujście	The Szczecin and Świnoujście Seaports Authority, Joint Stock Company	86.89 (51)*	Szczecin: 0.52 (24.5)* Świnoujście: 0.16 (24.5)*	12.43

* The shares of the municipalities suggested in the Act of 1996 (Journal of Laws, 1997, No. 9, item 44).

For seaports of primary importance to national economy, the Act implements a management system that can be identified as state-municipal (he Act on Sea Ports and Harbours, 1996; Dąbrowski, 2014; Grzelakowski, Matczak, 2012). The implementation of such a legal solution was once supposed to effect the transformation of the state system, considered to be highly inefficient, into the synergy of interests of central and municipal administration and port customers. In 1990s, riding the wave of legislative changes intended to facilitate the decision-making competence of the whole local administration system; the state administration implemented a number of legal regulations that delegated some authority to self-government bodies. In that way, some seaports adopted such a management system to implement their new development strategies based on the relations between the port and the municipality; the above-mentioned relations resulted, first of all, from the local labour markets and from the necessity to coordinate the development of urban transport infrastructure and seaports capacities to provide services. In 1989, Polish seaports entered their transformation era and went through various developmental stages, including commercialisation and privatisation of port operator companies, which were implemented in various ways at the particular seaports. Finally, the Act on Sea Ports and Harbours was established. It resulted in the stabilisation of operational conditions for the administration of the largest seaports, and it provided an opportunity to undertake actions aimed at

- stabilisation of the principles for seaport operation;
- an increase in the efficiency of economic process control;
- possibilities for seaport administration to plan and to implement their development strategies;
- infrastructural investment;
- accessibility of port services.

The authorities of four largest seaports have adopted the form of joint-stock companies, in which the State Treasury and the municipalities hold a block of shares, depending on their capital participation or in-kind contribution they have made in the form of the property ownership rights. Since the moment when the Act became effective, the share of the municipalities in the seaports of primary importance to national economy has reached the levels from 0.043% up to 2.31%, where the maximal shares are expected to reach the levels between 24.5% and 34% (Table 1). The above-mentioned Act of the 1990s, which delegated authority to self-government bodies, also affected the forms of seaport management bodies, particularly a large share of municipality representation, unproportioned to the level of the shares they held. At present, there are three joint-stock companies, the Port of Gdańsk Authority–Joint Stock Company, the Port of Gdynia Authority–Joint Stock Company and the Szczecin and Świnoujście Seaports Authority–Joint Stock Company, that operate in an efficient way; however, the

temporary character of the statutory solution can be observed along with a necessity to adjust the current solutions to actual current conditions. The main problem results from too broad a scope of authority granted to self-governments in relation to their minimal capital participation or in-kind contribution in the form of the real estate or land ownership rights. Obviously, the present situation distorts the initial concept of passing some responsibility for current operation and strategies for the development of the ports.

The model of economic process control adopted in the Act establishes port management authorities as entities that regulate internal systems of providing services and that cannot be directly engaged into providing services, except for providing port infrastructure (Art. 7 of the Act). Such a solution is popular in highly developed countries, where it is important to provide a proper level of service quality, based on intra-port competition where it is possible, and where no particular legal requirements are established. Seaport management authorities also avoid acting as service providers in the field of cargo handling and transport, which may be a reason for some monopolist practices that have been observed (fighting competition by port management authorities). It has been assumed that the largest Polish seaports will evolve towards the solution in which their port management authorities are the host of the port infrastructure (the port), namely, the model of landlord port authority.

At seaports of secondary importance to national economy, management systems are established by the municipalities in which the particular seaports or harbours are located. All decision-making competence is delegated to the self-government or if there is not any seaport management authority, the entities responsible are the Maritime Office, in the field of maintenance and development of port infrastructure, and municipality offices, in the field of supervision over current operation of the port and development strategies. The adopted solution can be considered to be optimal because smaller seaports act as local service centres that mainly affect close environment – towns and municipalities. Passing competence to the municipal authorities offers an opportunity to combine development of ports and regions where they are located.

Regulation of the principles applied to control of economic processes depends on the concept of seaport operation. If a seaport is expected to provide a range of services to external customers, its management authorities should act as a supervising body, without any participation in providing services. If a seaport or a sea harbour specialises in services provided to fishing vessels or sea-going yachts, the simplest solution is possible, in which it is possible to combine management and providing basic services.

4 Conclusion

Statutory regulations define principles applied in control of economic processes, including modelling management systems and forms of intra-port markets. These standards particularly refer to four largest seaports in Gdańsk, Gdynia, Świnoujście and Szczecin, as they are of primary importance to Polish foreign trade and international transit operations.

Seaport management authorities act as administrators who are responsible for the achievement of aims defined by port owners, and they also act as entities regulating conditions for business operation on the intra-port market. At Polish seaports, the state–municipal system of management is applied; however, it is a solution that limits possibilities for port infrastructure development.

Introduction of municipalities to port management authorities has been intended to establish strong economic relations between cities and ports, but, in fact, municipal authorities have neither financial capabilities nor concepts for the development of port-municipality relations. Moreover, it is possible to observe some conflicts between the municipal authorities and the seaport management authorities in the field of spatial development of the areas in the vicinity of the port in Gdynia and in miscalculated property taxes in Gdańsk.

Changes in the management system applied at seaports of primary importance to national economy should result in a more coherent method of management that would allow interested parties to achieve their fundamental aims: providing port services to all customers – public interest – and making developmental investment. A solution that offers the highest developmental opportunities is a situation in which the State Treasury holds all the shares in management companies. So far, the State Treasury has been holding the largest block of shares and is able to implement infrastructural investment projects. Transferring more shares from management companies to municipalities will result in stoppage of investment processes and slow decapitalisation of ports.

In accordance with the statutory regulations, port management authorities should act as hosts of port infrastructure – the concept of landlord port authorities – which means that they should provide only some services of high significance to port operation (pilotage and towage). The adoption of such a solution indicates a liberal attitude that eliminates harmful competition amongst entities represented by port authorities and other participants of the intra-port market. The current solution, however, seems appropriate because it reduces possibilities of market abuse and monopolistic practices of port management authorities.

New legal regulations referring to the operation of seaports should take current solutions into consideration because these solutions have already been positively verified. They should also eliminate misplaced regulation that have brought some problems.

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