

Summary

Since the dawn of history, competition has been a phenomenon that occurs in all areas of human and social activity. Currently, the competitiveness has a broader dimension than initially, because it applies not only to organizations, but also extends to larger socio-economic organisms, such as countries, regions, cities and communes.

Seaports have become a natural connection between sea and land over the centuries. Where there are harbors equipped with wharves, localities are larger and have most often developed urban structures.

The main purpose of this dissertation was to identify key port functions that positively affect the competitiveness of coastal communes in Central Pomerania. The implementation of the research goal of the work consisted of two stages, which included assessing the competitiveness of coastal communes of Central Pomerania in 2009-2018 and identifying the impact of port functions on the competitiveness and components of the communes' competitiveness. Analyzed port functions included the tourist and recreational functions, the function of the Baltic fishing base, as well as the trade and transport function. Variables characterizing social, economic and natural aspects were used to evaluate the competitiveness of coastal communes in Central Pomerania.

The results of the analysis confirm the existence of significant relations, both positive and negative, between the economic functions of small seaports and the competitiveness of coastal communes.

The tourist and recreational function is now the basic and long-term economic function of small seaports. What is more, it contributes to the greatest extent to the competitiveness of coastal communes in Central Pomerania. The impact of the tourist and recreational function on the competitiveness of coastal communes in Central Pomerania is greater in relation to other functions, such as the function of the Baltic fishing base:

- according to the comparison of standardized regression coefficients - by 28.5%,
- according to the comparison added by variable values of R^2 - by 64.6%.

The conducted research also confirmed the significant and positive impact of the tourist and recreational function on the components of the competitiveness of communes, including social and economic aspects, such as the migration balance per 1,000 population, the number of apartments per 1,000 population, the number of employees per 1,000 population and employment. Moreover, the positive influence of the tourist and

recreational function on the number of entities per 1000 inhabitants was partially confirmed.

The dominant share in the economy of small seaports in Central Pomerania has the tourist and recreational function, and then the function of the Baltic fishing base. Fishing is the oldest area of the maritime economy which has been the main economic activity of small seaports for decades. Unfortunately, as a result of declining fish stocks and fishing quotas, as well as competition from imports, the fishery service function began to regress. Nevertheless, the research confirmed the significant and positive influence of the Baltic fishery function on the components of competitiveness, including social aspects and natural values, such as: birth rate per 1,000 population, net migration per 1,000 population and forest cover. Moreover, the research partially confirmed the positive influence of the Baltic fishery function on the economic aspect, such as number of people employed per 1000 population and employment.

As a result of the change in the activity profile of ports, the trade and transport functions are losing the tourist and recreational function. Moreover, the results of the analysis confirmed that the trade and transport functions are not among the significant factors of competitiveness of coastal communes in Central Pomerania. Nevertheless, these functions remain significant factors in the economic activation of coastal communes. This is due to the fact that with the development of the trade and transport functions, the number of economic entities increases. Moreover, the impact of the trade and transport functions depend on the relationships between the economic entities.

This dissertation is a contribution to research on economic development resulting from building the competitiveness of regions. The conducted research allowed the observation of the actual importance of small seaports, based on internal resources and strategies of local authorities, for the competitiveness of Central Pomeranian communes.

It seems that the issues discussed in the dissertation are still important and up-to-date. Moreover, the obtained results may contribute to the development of knowledge about the economy at the local level and the competitiveness of municipalities and regions.

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