

Seaports Infrastructure in Poland for Handling Cruise Ships

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In accordance with the report from 2013 of the Cruise Lines International Association Europe “the Baltic Sea is the largest segment in the Northern Europe market, generating capacity of around 4.85 million passenger nights in 2012 and around 5.14 million in 2013”¹. In the Baltic Sea region, carriage of passengers on cruise ships take 10,2% share of the EU market.² For several years, it has begun to detect the role and importance of cruise ship tourism in the Baltic Sea Region, what is seen in a number of initiatives for international cooperation within the framework of the projects of the European Union, such as i.e.: *Seaside Project* or *Enjoy South Baltic*, and associations as: *Baltic Sea Tourism Commission* or *Cruise Baltic Northern Europe*. The European Commission also supports the activities for development of cruise ship industry, for example thanks to organization of annual celebrity of the European Maritime Day dedicated to maritime and coastal tourism development, or even for creation of the program entitled *European Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region*. However, in Poland, it has been registered a noticeable decline in the number of cruise ships calling at Polish seaports for several years³. There are lots of reasons of this phenomenon, but the lack of the infrastructure of dedicated terminals to handle cruise ships is one of the most essential. Moreover, a range of services delivered at these ports have also a huge influence upon the development of the cruise ship tourism market. The objective of this article is to evaluate the state of infrastructure of the seaports in Poland to handle of cruise ships and also presentation of investment objectives planned by seaports authorities. A little space was also dedicated to present the tourist offers prepared for cruise passengers visiting Polish seaports. The article also shows the results of surveys made in: Port of Gdansk Authority, Szczecin and Świnoujście Seaports Authority and also Port of Gdynia Authority. In addition, the ongoing and planned investments, having an impact on raising attractiveness and competitiveness of the seaports in Poland on the cruise ship tourist market of the Baltic Sea, have also been analyzed. A few

Keywords: cruise ship tourism, cruise ports, port infrastructure.

1. INTRODUCTION

The owners of cruise ships while planning cruise routes usually take into consideration several key factors: tourist attractiveness of a

region, an analysis of the needs of potential customers and market trends, climatic conditions, the distance between the sea ports, but mostly the state of port infrastructure to support cruise ships. “The sea ports handling cruise ships are generally divided into three main kinds called: home-ports, ports of call (transit ports) and hybrid ports. The home-ports (*base ports*) are the units where cruise ships start and end cruises and for these reasons they are prepared to deliver a full range of reception services for hundreds of thousands of tourists such as: accommodation, catering, shopping, tourist amenities and also a rich offer of supporting services. These ports have perfect communication accessibility by: air, rail and

¹ *Cruise Industry, Contribution of Cruise Tourism to the Economies of Europe 2013 Edition*, CLIA Cruise Line International Association Europe, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 2013. p. 11.

² *Cruise passengers, Coastal region statistics*, EUROSTAT 2013.

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Coastal_region_statistics, [access 2013.05.14].

³ B. Larsen: *Baltic Passenger Numbers, 2013 and est. 2013*, Cruise Market Review 2013, Cruise Baltic One Sea – Oceans of adventures, Cruise Baltic, Copenhagen 2013. p.1.

road”⁴. According to F.M. Collison „a base port is the point that a cruise ship uses as its home-port of call. This is typically where passenger initial embarkation and final debarkation take place. The base port often is used for the provisioning of the ship, including fuel, food and beverages, and other consumable and non-consumable stores”⁵. Some seaports are multifunctional and are both the base ports and call ports. The base and hybrid ports have a significant economic impact on development of economies of cities and regions, in which they are located i.e. create numerous job places, generate huge incomes for private industry, port authorities and local budgets, affect development of infrastructure and services. “On the other hand, the ports of call deliver mainly shopping and tourist services for cruise ship passengers”⁶. In Poland, cruise ships are handled in four seaports of strategic importance to the country's economy which are considered typical ports of call, i.e.: the Port of Gdynia, the Port of Gdańsk and also the Ports of Szczecin and Świnoujście.

The main objective of the research in this article is to evaluate preparation of the strategic seaports in Poland for handling cruise ships and the investment objectives of the seaports authorities in Poland especially in the field of building dedicated cruise ship terminals. The research was carried out in the period from January 2013 to July 2013. The research was conducted using a survey method combined with a standardized interview among the authorities of all strategic seaports in Poland. In addition a critical analysis, a comparative analysis and literature research of the available Polish and foreign literature and also law regulations and reports were used.

⁴ J. Kizielewicz: *The Mediterranean Sea Region – the leader in the cruise ship tourism in Europe*, [in:] Scientific Journals 2013, 36 (108) z. 2., Zeszyty Naukowe / Akademia Morska w Szczecinie, Szczecin 2013. p. 81-82.

⁵ E. Cater, D.A. Fennell, P.Forestell, R. A. Klein, M.L. Miller, M. B. Orams: *The Encyclopedia of Tourism and Recreation in Marine Environments*, edited by M. Lück, CAB International, Oxford 2008. p. 52.

⁶ J. Kizielewicz: *The Mediterranean Sea Region – the leader in the cruise ship tourism in Europe*, [in:] Scientific Journals 2013, 36 (108) z. 2., Zeszyty Naukowe / Akademia Morska w Szczecinie, Szczecin 2013. p. 81-82.

2. CRUISE SHIP TOURISM IN THE POLISH SEAPORTS

Cruise ship tourism market ”provides significant economic benefits to ports in many countries, but reception of large cruise ships require capital-intensive investments in the port infrastructure”⁷, which unfortunately, as the study showed, it is a great problem for sea ports authorities. Cruise tourism destinations are places with "a high level of port infrastructure to support visitation from large cruise ships, a high level of destination awareness among the cruise industry, a high degree of industry capacity and port infrastructure to support around visits, a high level of tourism destination infrastructure to support cruise ship visitation as: attractions, accommodation, activities, access and amenities”⁸.

In some countries, despite the access to the sea, there are no dedicated terminals for cruise passengers, but only in the case of demand the seaport authorities indicate berths where occasionally cruise ships can be handled. Nevertheless, there are usually the industrial areas of ports with landfill of scrap, coal, biomass and other raw materials, where containers are stored and loaded on cargo ships. Polish sea ports are an excellent example of this phenomenon. Polish seaports have excellent hydrographical conditions to handle the largest ships in the world both in terms of the draught at quays and the length of quays. Nevertheless, standard of berths in Polish seaports that are rented for supporting cruise ships require much improvements. There are no cruise passenger terminals with facilities and amenities for tourists in Poland. B.E. Ramos distinguishes four various generations of the passenger terminals⁹. The cruise terminal of the first generation delivers only basic services to satisfy passengers’ needs, but the fourth

⁷ Ch. Loper: *Overview of the socioeconomic impacts of cruise tourism, Proceedings of the 14th Biennial Coastal Zone Conference*, New Orleans, Louisiana 2005. p. 2.

⁸ Western Australia Cruise Shipping Strategic Plan 2012-2020, The Government of Western Australia 2012. s. 14.

⁹ B.E. Ramos: *Cruise Terminal Development*, America Association of Port Authorities, Coral Gables, Florida. http://www.aapa-ports.org/files/SeminarPresentations/05_Cruise_Ramos_Bruno.pdf [access: 15.01.2014]

generation - is a kind of a luxurious terminal with a wide range of services of high standard.

The port of Gdańsk is the largest seaport in Poland, which thanks to convenient physico-geographical conditions, is an important transport centre of Europe, makes the corridor connecting Scandinavian countries with South-Eastern Europe in the framework of the VI Trans-European TEN-T Corridor. The port of Gdańsk has also huge possibilities for development of technical infrastructure for handling cruise ships. There is also the greatest number of berths, so the

largest cruise ships that are on the Baltic Sea could be suped here (table 1.). Unfortunately, no seaport in Poland has quays dedicated to handle cruise ships. i.e. berths with cruise passenger terminals equipped with facilities and amenities for passengers, with catering services, shopping centres, tourist information centres, exchange offices, travel agencies but also car, yacht and bike rental offices, and sanitary-hygienic facilities. In recent years, it is observed a gradual decline of interest of cruise shipowners in calling at the Polish seaports, what can attest to the difficulty of this segment of the market. Fig. 1.

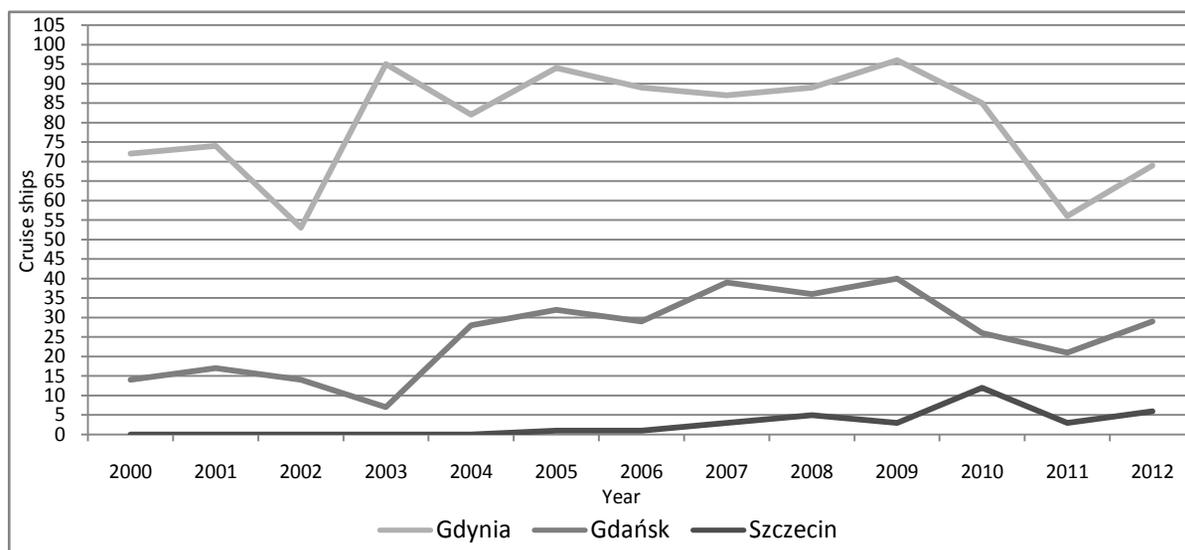


Fig. 1. The number of cruise ships calling at seaports in Poland from 2000-2012

Source: Own elaboration on the base of: B. Larsen: *Baltic passenger numbers and est. 2013*, Market Review 2013, *CRUISE BALTIC One Sea – Oceans of adventures*, Copenhagen 2013 and An interview carried out in the Ports of Szczecin & Świnoujście Authorities Joint Stock Company with Mr M. Trojnar, the Ports of Szczecin & Świnoujście Authorities Joint Stock Company, Szczecin 2013.05.08;

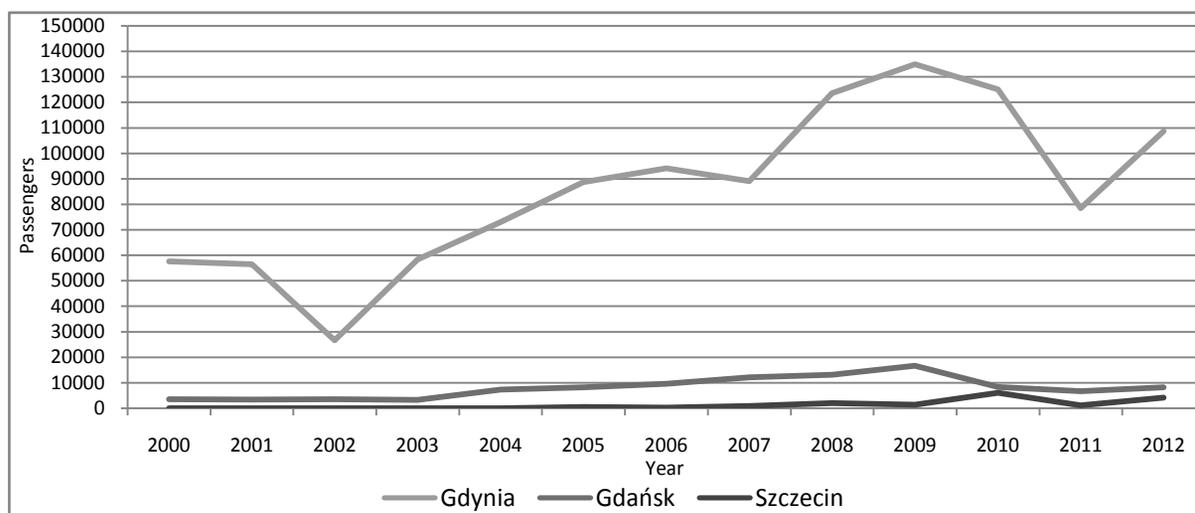


Fig. 2. Number of cruise passengers visiting seaports in Poland from 2000 to 2012

Source: Own elaboration on the base of: B. Larsen: *Baltic passenger numbers and est. 2013*, Market Review 2013, *CRUISE BALTIC One Sea – Oceans of adventures*, Copenhagen 2013 and An interview carried out in the Ports of Szczecin & Świnoujście Authorities Joint Stock Company with Mr M. Trojnar, the Ports of Szczecin & Świnoujście Authorities Joint Stock Company, Szczecin 2013.05.08

In 2009, the port of Gdynia was visited by 96 cruise ships and 134 884 passengers, but in 2012 - 69 units and 108 628 passengers only, what gives the decrease about 28 percentage points in the number of cruise ships calls and the decrease about 19 percentage points in visiting passengers.

In the port of Gdańsk, it is a quite similar phenomenon, because in 2009, Gdańsk was visited by 40 cruise ships and 16 753 passengers, but in 2012 - 29 units with 8 294 passengers on board only, what makes the decrease about 27 percentage points in the number of cruise ships and the decrease about 50 percentage points in visiting passengers (Fig. 1. and 2.).

At each seaport in Poland, port authorities rent berths (table 1.), where cruise ships can be safely moored and where communication accessibility is guaranteed, both by bus, taxi and shuttle buses. Unfortunately, it happens that cruise ships with large dimensions and a deep draught are handled at berths, where container ships, cargo ships and oil tankers are supported. These port areas are not attractive for tourists and not prepared to support cruise ships. For example, in Gdynia, cruise ships are handled at the French Quay (Fig 3. and 4.) where scrap, coal and also biomass emanating unpleasant odours are stored. The port authorities has already broken the agreement with

Table 1. Technical parameters of the main seaports in Poland

The name of a port	The port of Gdańsk	The port of Gdynia	The port of Szczecin	The port of Świnoujście
Technical characteristics of the port				
The area of the port on the mainland	652 ha	508 ha	2 145 ha	919 ha
The surface of water in the port	412,56 ha	247,4 ha	127 ha	9,4 ha
Length of quays for the operation ¹⁰	19 489 m	13 021 m	13 717 m	6 246 m
Length of quays rented to handle cruise ships	1 900 m	1 934 m	574 m	268 m
Max draught of vessels	15 m	13 m	9,15 m	13,2 m
Draught of the vessels in the inner port	10,2 m	7,4 m	6,5 m	6,7 m
Maximum length of vessels	350 m	300 m	215 m	270 m
Max length of vessels in the inner port	225 m	145 m	195 m	150 m
Max draught at a quay for cruise ships	WOC ¹¹ II Quay < 8,5 m	French Quay < 12,5 m	Polish Quay < 9,15 m	Władysław IV Quay < 6,7 m
	Westerplatte Quay < 9,3m	Pomeranian Quay < 7,4 m	Waly Chrobrego Quay < 6,5 m	
		United States Quay < 8 m		
Max length of a quay for cruise ships	WOC Quay 600 m	French Quay - 512 m	Polish Quay 260 m	Władysław IV Quay 268 m
	Westerplatte Quay 1300 m	Pomeranian Quay 626 m	Waly Chrobrego Quay 314 m	
		United States Quay 796 m		

Source: own elaboration on the base of survey: *An interview in the Ports of Szczecin & Świnoujście Authorities Joint Stock Company*, Szczecin 2013.05.08; *An interview in the Port of Gdańsk Authority Joint Stock Company*, Gdańsk 2013.03.22; *An interview in the Port of Gdynia Authority Joint Stock Company*, Gdynia 2013.07.11.; J. Kowalewska: *Szczecin coraz bliżej nabrzeża przy Walach Chrobrego*, *Gazeta Szczecin*. 07.04.2011; *Długość nabrzeży do eksploatacji w portach morskich, VIII Porty morskie*, *Transport w działalności 2011 r., Informacje i opracowania statystyczne*, GUS, Warszawa 2012. p. 227. Atlas Zanurzeń, Urząd Morski w Gdyni, Gdynia 2013.<http://www.umgdy.gov.pl> [access: 2013.06.26].

¹⁰ *Długość nabrzeży do eksploatacji w portach morskich, VIII Porty morskie*, *Transport w działalności 2011 r., Informacje i opracowania statystyczne*, GUS, Warszawa 2012. p. 227.

¹¹ WOC – “Wolny Obszar Celny”, it means “Duty Free Zone”.

the company which is responsible for storage of the scrap and this area will soon be tidied up. The French Quay in Gdynia has a long tradition and since 1993 the greatest trans-atlantic cruise ships have been supported here. This quay has got a large investment potential but, unfortunately, at the

moment its entourage discourages and is the reason why cruise tourists and cruise shipowners complain.

The local authorities in the city of Gdynia have planned to renovate the historic building of marine station in the period from 2014 to 2015 and open the Museum of Emigration here.



Fig. 3. Landfill scrap at the French Quay (Gdynia)
Source: author's photo, 2013.



Fig. 4. Wood storage at the Pomeranian Quay (Gdynia)
Source: author's photo, 2013.

In Gdynia, cruise ships are also occasionally targeted to the United States Quay that is much cleaner but it is also located in the area of the port where, among the others, the ro-ro and container ships are supported. Cruise ships also call at the Polish Quay, which is soon to be rebuilt into a modern ferry terminal. It is necessary to underline that the Pomeranian Quay, located in the heart of the city of Gdynia, is the most desired quay by tourists and cruise shipowners. This quay is equipped with souvenir shops, tourist information centre, lots of cafeterias, restaurants and fish bars etc. It has also excellent communication accessibility to the city centre. So far, however, this quay has been occasionally

used to support cruise ships for the reason of the technical barriers.

Cruise ships visiting Gdańsk moor at the clean and modern quays. Smaller units with a length of up to 170 m and draught of up to 8,3 m shall be addressed to the WOC¹² II Quay, while the larger units with a length of up to 280 m and draught of up to 9,3 m moor at the Westerplatte Quay. Occasionally, cruise ships are also handled at Oliwskie Quay that has the worst conditions. It sometimes happened that cruise shipowners resigned from calling at the Polish seaports for the reason of insufficient infrastructure facilities for passengers on the berths, as in the case of Seaborn Cruise Line that resigned to visit with "Słaboń Sojourn" to the Ports of Świnoujście-Szczecin in 2013. In the world, cruise passenger terminals are located in the tourist centres, and, as far as it is possible, even in the historical areas of the cities, making an access to a wide range of tourist services easier and serving as a great tourist attraction.

Gdynia is a city which has been visited by the most luxurious cruise ships for years. Most often these are units with a length of over 200 m and a draught of up to 8.5 m. This type of vessels can be handled at the French Quay in Gdynia, Westerplatte Quay in Gdańsk and at Polish Quay in Szczecin. The biggest cruise ships visited seaports in Poland in 2008 and they were: Queen Victoria (Cunard Line) with a length of 294 m, width 32.3 m and a draught of 7.9 m (900 members of the crew and 2014 passengers) and Constellation (Celebrity Cruises) with a length of 294 m, width 32 m and draught of 8.3 m (999 members of crew and 2038 passengers)¹³. Such large cruise ships, due to the technical conditions of seaport infrastructure and berths, can only be supported in Gdynia. Shoals at waterfronts in the seaports, the length and width of water tracks guarantee the safety of maneuvering of such units. The port of Gdańsk and the port of Szczecin, due to the less depth of the water tracks and shoal at the waterfront, and also because of the navigational conditions and lack of appropriate

¹² It is a short name in Polish language of the words "Wolny Obszar Celny". In translation into English language, it means "Duty Free Zone"

¹³ *Zestawienie statków turystycznych, które zawinęły do portu Gdynia w 2008 roku*, ZMP Gdynia, S.A. 2008. <http://www.port.gdynia.pl/pl/wydarzenia/wycieczkowce> [access: 2013.06.26].

berths for supporting large units, are able to handle much less cruise ships per a year.

In the seaports in Poland, cruise ships are supported by several shipping agencies, i.e.: Marbalco Shipping Co. Ltd., Polsteam Shipping Agency Ltd., Inter-Marine Ltd., Baltic Shipping Agency Ltd, Polfracht Shipping Agency Ltd. and Marine Gdynia Agency Ltd., but also Inchcape Shipping Services Poland Ltd.. "The owners of cruise ships also cooperate with stakeholders of the tourism industry, who organize stays of cruise ship passengers in popular destinations. Cruise ships frequently stay in the seaports in Poland for the period from 8 to 12 hours. At that time, passengers are picked up on organized trips to tourist destinations around the region"¹⁴. One word, "passengers have the opportunity to visit a variety of places in a short period of time without the problems of other modes of travel"¹⁵. In Poland, Baltic Gateway Poland is a leader travel office that cooperates with various cruise lines. Services in this field are also delivered by: "Sanus Travel" A. Ossowski from Sopot, *Mazurkas Travel Office Ltd.* from Warsaw and Sport Tourist Ltd. from Gdańsk. They offer "organization of various tourist packages for groups and individuals at tourist destinations, regular sightseings and day tours as well as arrangements for evening entertainment, restaurant reservations, private guide-assistance, English-speaking tour escort assistance and an air-conditioned motor coach/minibus/car/vans (depending on the group size) and qualified multilingual guides or any other services in response to clients request"¹⁶. The offers proposed by above mentioned travel offices fully satisfy needs and preferences of cruise ship passengers visiting Polish seaports."The tour operators offer a wide range of tourist products, but unfortunately, ship-owners decide, which of them will be offered in packages to cruise ship passengers. It is worth to point out that, a determining criterion is an economic aspect. The ship-owners usually impose high margins to prices of tourist packages that were prepared by

tour operators and these are sources of high incomes for them"¹⁷.

It is worth to underline that local authorities in the coastal regions in Poland are also engaged in preparing attractive tourist packages addressed to cruise ship passengers. "For example, Agency for Gdynia Development Ltd. prepared such products as: Culinary Trail of Gdynia Center, Gdynia Modernism Route and the Maritime Legend of the City of Gdynia, and in turn, Gdansk Tourism Organization, in cooperation with local tourist companies, organized special offers for cruise ship passengers e.g.: Exploration of the Historical Reconstruction in Pruszcz Gdański, "In the Footsteps of Solidarity", In Pursuit of the Amber – City game", "In the Land of Amber", City Tour Gdańsk (...), and e.g. An interactive exhibition in the centre of Hewelianum in Gdańsk "Energy, Sky and Sun" etc. Tourists arriving to Tri-City Agglomeration (...) have possibilities to choose a few of the flagship products of the Pomeranian region, such as: a guided sightseeing of Gdańsk – a city with 1000-year's tradition, the medieval castle of the Teutonic Knights in Malbork, Hel Peninsula, Szymbark and Wdzydze Kiszewskie or e.g. golf courses in Postołowo"¹⁸.

In conclusion, it should be noted that Polish seaports in terms of hydrotechnical infrastructure are adequately prepared to handle even the largest cruise passenger ships in the world. Unfortunately, when it comes to reception amenities which are offered for cruise ships at berths in the seaports, there is still much to be done in this regard. In the world, cruise passenger terminals are situated just in the centres of the cities with an easy access to the wide range of tourist and recreational services, cultural and entertainment events and catering services etc. In Poland, preparation of such infrastructure is also possible, but the cooperation between all stakeholders is the key to success, it means between: seaport authorities, local and regional authorities, tourist industry, private investors and the others.

3. INVESTMENTS PROJECTS IN THE POLISH SEAPORTS

"The port may be considered a business system that operates within a highly competitive market and requires investment projects to be selected with efficiency. (...) Investment is carried out by a

¹⁴ J. Kizielewicz: *Cruise ship tourism – a case study Poland*, Zeszyty Naukowe/ Akademia Morska w Szczecinie 35 (107), Akademia Morska w Szczecinie, Szczecin 2013. p. 71.

¹⁵ R. K. Dowling: *Cruise Ship Tourism*, CAB International, Oxfordshire. 2006. p.3.

¹⁶ Ibidem. p. 73.

¹⁷ Ibidem. p. 74.

¹⁸ Ibidem p. 73-74.

port business in order to have the desired level of throughput capacity at its disposal. Investing in ports, therefore, has a direct impact on overall port capacity and supply"¹⁹. In the world "to facilitate (handle) the increasing demand, many ports developed or upgrade their infrastructures in order to host cruise ships"²⁰

In Poland there are currently organized the environmental debates over the shape of the State Maritime Policy until 2020 with the perspective until 2030. In addition, in 2013, Ministry of transports, Constructions And Maritime Economy prepared the document entitled: *Programme for the development of Polish seaports until 2020 (with the perspective until 2030)* where, as the main objective outlined "improving the competitiveness of the Polish seaports and increasing of their share in the socio-economic development of the State and the rank of seaports in the international transport network"²¹. In addition, two major targets were also indicated, i.e. "Objective 1.- *Adjustment of the range of seaport services to the market trends and needs* and Objective 2. - *The creation of a safe and environmentally friendly port system*. The specific objectives are assigned to the priorities resulting from them in the field of investment, which include, among others: Priority 1. *The development of port infrastructure and communication accessibility from sea to the seaports*"²².

In view of the fact that, in the world, the trend of building larger cruise ships is observed, the investments in quays infrastructure are necessary in Poland. The port of Gdańsk has a huge investment potential, because it has a significant area of investment that is located at outer port. The port authority in Gdańsk also plans to lead the investment policy in the seaport by gaining new areas thanks to investments in the waters of the Bay of Gdańsk.

The port of Gdynia is in a difficult situation in terms of free space on land for the development

of investments. The last piece of free space with a direct access to the docks has just been occupied (The Bulgarian Quay)"²³. The development of infrastructure investments in the port of Gdynia requires the acquisition of new areas and revitalization of the industrialized areas or making the capital intensive investments to reach new territory by so called "leaving behind the breakwater"²⁴. For this reason, the Gdynia Maritime Authority created a projection of construction of a cruise passenger terminal at the Kościuszko Square close to the Pomorskie Quay and the breakwater, but preliminary hydrographical and terrestrial investment cost valued at about 2 billion zlotys, which unfortunately far exceeds financial opportunities both the authorities of the port of Gdynia and local authorities of the City of Gdynia. Therefore, the project is not likely to be realized.

The situation of the port of Szczecin is much more complicated because an attractive waterfront at the Wały Chrobrego does not belong to the port authorities as this area has three owners i.e.: Polsteam Shipping Agency, Żegluga Szczecińska Ltd. and Maritime University of Szczecin, which makes the modernization and renovation impossible"²⁵. Local authorities of the city of Szczecin have negotiated with Żegluga Szczecińską Ltd. on taking over the waterfront in order to modernize and declared that investment on the quay is a priority for them and can become a showcase of the city of Szczecin. However, the port of Szczecin have large areas for potential investments in port infrastructure in the future"²⁶. In the port of Świnoujście, after founding of a new port area – the external port, in spite of the LNG terminal, there will some possibilities for gaining new areas about 20 ha with the former East breakwater that could be direct facilities for new port quays"²⁷.

¹⁹ K. Cullinane, W. K. Talley: *Research in transportation economics, Volume 16, Port Economics*, Elsevier, Oxford 2006. p. 171.

²⁰ M. B. Lekakou, A. A. Pallis, G. K. Vaggelas: *Which homeport in Europe: The Cruise Industry's Selection Criteria*, [in:] *Tourismos: An International Multidisciplinary Journal of Tourism*, Aegan 2010. p. 5.

²¹ *Program rozwoju polskich portów morskich do roku 2020 (z perspektywą do 2030 roku)*, Ministerstwo Transportu, Budownictwa i Gospodarki Morskiej, Warszawa 2013. p. 49 – 50.

²² *Ibidem*. p. 49 – 50.

²³ *Ibidem*. p. 9-10.

²⁴ *Ibidem*. p. 9-10.

²⁵ J. Nejder: *Rozwój polskich portów morskich*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, Gdańsk 2013. s.61.

²⁶ *Program rozwoju polskich portów morskich do roku 2020 (z perspektywą do 2030 roku)*, Ministerstwo Transportu, Budownictwa i Gospodarki Morskiej, Warszawa 2013. p. 9-10.

²⁷ *Ibidem*. p. 9-10.

The surveys carried out in the port of Gdańsk and the ports of Szczecin-Świnoujście showed that

not affect the increase of the number of cruise ships calls at Gdynia.

Table 2. The selected infrastructural investment projects in the Polish seaports supporting the development of cruise tourism

The name of a project	The bodies responsible for the implementation of the project	The period of a project
“Rebuilding of the port channel in the port of Gdynia”	The authority of the Port of Gdynia	2009-2011
“The development of infrastructure at the quay and road accessibility to the Westerplatte ferry terminal”	The authority of the Port of Gdańsk	2004-2008
“Ports of the Szczecin Bay –improvement the quality of infrastructure as an opportunity for the development ”	Maritime Authority in Szczecin	2010-2012
“Modernization of infrastructure providing access to ports in Świnoujście i Szczecin – navigation mark”	Maritime Authority in Szczecin	2009-2011

Source: own elaboration on the base of: A. Galor, B. Wiśnicki, Z. Józwiak, W. Galor, *Aktualizacja ...* op. cit.. pp. 136-156; *An interview in the Port of Gdańsk Authority Joint Stock Company*, Gdańsk 2013.03.22.; *An interview in the Port of Gdynia Authority Joint Stock Company*, Gdynia 2013.07.11.; *An interview in the Ports of Szczecin & Świnoujście Authorities Joint Stock Company*, Szczecin 2013.05.08

port authorities did not register significant economic benefits from handling of cruise ships. Incomes generated from fees and services provided in the ports (pilotage, towing and mooring), delivered by cruise shipowners, represent only hundredth percent of revenues of the total port incomes per year. This fact causes the port authorities are not convinced to invest in development of infrastructure dedicated to cruise ships. In any of the ports in Poland, there are no plans to build cruise passenger terminals. The port authorities have no ambition to build the base ports for cruise ships and declare they are enough satisfied with renting berths only in the season.

The authorities of the ports of Szczecin - Świnoujście plan to prepare a project of building a dedicated terminal for cruise passengers in the future and want to submit an application for financial support from the European Union funds. The authorities of the port of Gdańsk would like to build a cruise passenger terminal but now there is only a future declaration. Moreover, the authority of the port of Gdynia proved that incomes generated by supporting the cruise ships represent a few percent of the port's total revenues and, on average, a cruise ship leaves at the port from 11,000 to 20,000 Euros (depending on the size of a unit) including all port charges for services provided in the port. For this reason, the authorities of the port of Gdynia are opened for cooperation with cruise ship-owners and consider that handling cruise ships have a positive economic impact on them. However, they say there is no economic explanation for investment in building of a cruise passenger terminal because in their opinion, it does

Of course, it is hard to agree with the port authorities' opinion, that the state of the port infrastructure to handle cruise ships does not have an important influence upon the number of cruise ship calls. Just a properly prepared organizational and technical facilities of the seaports for cruise ships in Poland could significantly influence upon improvement of the image of Polish seaports as the marine tourist destinations.

The port authorities in Poland are really involved in gaining external sources of financing for realization of infrastructural investments in the ports.”Currently, the most important activities related to improvement of the competitive position of the ports are focused on improving the efficiency and quality of port service and accessibility to the ports, both from the backend and from the foregrounds”²⁸. In partnership with local authorities and Maritime Offices in Gdynia and Szczecin, the seaports authorities participate in numerous investment projects aimed at improvement of the accessibility to the ports from the land and the sea. The project entitled. “*Rebuilding of the port channel in the port of Gdynia*” is an excellent example (table 2). ”The primary goal of the project was to increase the permissible draught for vessels and to improve the navigation conditions in the port of Gdynia. Finally the six quays were rebuilt and improved

²⁸ *Polski rynek usług transportowych, Funkcjonowanie – przemiany – rozwój*, red. nauk. D. Rucińska, PWE, Warszawa 2012. p.286.

draught at the quays to the target depth - 13,5 m²⁹.

The authorities of the port of Gdańsk in cooperation with Maritime Authorities in Gdynia, also created the project titled "Modernization of the entrance to the Inner Harbour". The purpose of the investment was to obtain the possibility of safe operation of ships with a length of 250 m, a width up to 36 m and a draught of 10.6 m³⁰. Moreover, the authorities of the port of Gdańsk also completed the implementation of the project entitled "The development of infrastructure at the quay and road accessibility to the Westerplatte ferry terminal" (table 2), the goal was to "create a baseline of the port infrastructure to support parallel three ro-ro vessels, ferries and cruise passenger ships"³¹.

An overview of investments realized by the seaports authorities in Poland in recent years indicates that the port authorities extensively modernizing and expanding port and support infrastructure. Although these are not investments geared to improving the conditions of handling cruise ships, However, certainly they play an important role to improve the safety of navigation for large cruise ships.

4. SUMMARY

All authorities of seaports in Poland declare their willingness to cooperate and are open to new investments. However, economic benefits determine which ones can be implemented. "Seaports, like other operators, must permanently adapt in terms of organisational, technical and economic conditions to requirements of the market. In particular, this refers to those ports which operate in competitive conditions. The vast majority of European ports, including the Polish ones, is under the strong pressure of the market"³². It has not been noted yet, the seaports

in Poland were particularly crowded by cruise passenger ships. That is why seaport authorities do not see the need to adapt the infrastructure in this respect. In addition, they claim that the construction of modern cruise passenger terminals is not the main factor that decides about the fact, that the cruise destination is selected by cruise shipowners and it will not affect the increase in the number of cruise ships calls, because the reasons are quite different. The problem is, according to the port authorities, in a properly prepared offer of a region and its promotion. Tourist destinations that have unique tourist attractions and favourable climatic conditions are most often entered in the tourist routes of sea voyages. In addition, the second important factor which is highlighted by the port authorities, who decide about a small number of ships calling at Polish ports is the fact that they are situated far away from the main tourist cruise routes in the Baltic. Cruise ships begin sea voyages in Copenhagen or Rostock most frequently and by Klaipeda, Riga, Tallinn, go to St. Petersburg and Helsinki. A decision about visiting seaports in the South Baltic Sea is associated with the rise of cruise costs for shipowners. Thirdly, the seaport authorities indicate a strong seasonality of passenger traffic in Polish ports, What causes that only a few months in the year the cruise passenger terminals would be used, what does not guarantee a return from investments. Some ports, as for example, Gdynia, do not have any free areas that could be intended for investment activities and would have to gain new territories from the municipalities or private owners for development, which are associated with huge additional costs.

The Polish Government provides that in "in the perspective until 2020 one can expect further increase in passenger cruise ships calls in Polish seaports, thanks to:³³

- an increase in tourists' demand for cruise ship voyages in the regions that so far have a small importance in cruise tourism (in the Baltic Sea region);
- a great potential of Polish coastal cities and regions resulting from the convenient

²⁹ Projekt UE: inwestycje, ZMP Gdynia S.A. <http://www.port.gdynia.pl/kanal/index.php> [access 2013.07.09]

³⁰ Modernizacja wejścia do portu wewnętrznego, Urząd Morski w Gdyni, <http://www.umgdy.gov.pl/pium/fundusze/podglad?kod=qswv8v7lz2.2ibr2r7lz1> [access 2013.07.09]

³¹ Inwestycje zrealizowane » Projekty w ramach SPO-T, Rozbudowa infrastruktury nabrzeżowej i drogowej Terminalu Promowego Westerplatte, ZMP Gdańsk S.A. <http://www.portgdansk.pl/o-porcie/spot> (2013.06.25)

³² K. Misztal, S. Szwankowski: *Organizacja i eksploatacja portów morskich, zarządzanie, organizacja,*

eksploatacja, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, Gdańsk 1999. p. 129-130.

³³ Program rozwoju polskich portów morskich do roku 2020 (z perspektywą do 2030 roku), Ministerstwo Transportu, Budownictwa i Gospodarki Morskiej, Warszawa 2013. p. 46.

geographic localization in the Baltic Sea, reach cultural heritage and developed tourist infrastructure;

- favourable navigating conditions enabling efficient and safe operation even the largest cruise ships operating in the Baltic Sea and the low level of port charges for supported units”.

In the world “an increasing number of cruise terminals is managed or partially managed by the cruise line companies, so the possible partnerships between private and public actors (port authorities, cruise terminals, cruise line companies) play a significant role in the management decisions and in the level of efficiency and performance of cruise terminal operations”³⁴.

According to the seaport authorities, the state of infrastructure does not determine that shipowners take into account the seaports in sailing schedules of the cruise ships. In their opinions there are quite different factors which were mentioned above. Basically, the port authorities are right that there are numerous factors influencing upon the development of the cruise ship tourism, but the lack of investment objectives aimed at improving the ports infrastructure dedicated to cruise ships is not an appropriate solution. However, the fact is that preparation of the appropriate facilities for cruise ships in the seaports can be important factors in gaining a competitive advantage over other Baltic seaports. This may be a distinguishing factor of Polish coastal regions at the background of the Baltic, since tourist offers in the Baltic states are comparable as far as the attractiveness of them are concerned. It is worth considering how to encourage numerous stakeholders in Poland i. e.: seaport authorities, local authorities, private investors and the others, for cooperation to modernize and develop the infrastructure dedicated to support cruise ships.

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³⁴ A. D. Vaio, F. Medda, L. Trujillo: *Public and private management and efficiency index of cruise terminals*, Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria p.1.

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