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## Introduction

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Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej [bazhum.muzhp.pl](http://bazhum.muzhp.pl), gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

## Introduction

This issue of “The Journal of Economic Problems of Services” refers to the considerations taken for the first time at No. 49/2010 of this journal entitled *The Baltic Europe. Past, Present, New Challenges*. The dynamic changes in the socio-economic environment of maritime transport encourage the continuing and deepening of the discussion commenced five years ago.

The first part of the journal has been devoted to the problems of the shipping market, with particular emphasis on the Baltic Sea Region. The development of land transport connections as an alternative to ferry connections as well as the 2015 entry into force of the Sulphur Directive has significantly impacted the operating conditions of shipowners, including, in particular, the ferry operators in the Baltic Sea. These conditions had an impact on shipowners’ decisions concerning the development of the maritime fleet, including the applied solutions related to the fuel used for ships. This part of the journal has also demonstrated a very topical issue – a handling of perishable cargo in sea ports.

The second part of the journal presents issues of the sea ports, with particular emphasis on problems of their functional transformation. These transformations occur both within the sector of basic services (handling and storage services) and within other economic functions of seaports. Some of these transformations have an inter-functional character. The changes do not act evenly over individual ports or individual cargo-handling companies.

In the third part of the journal the selected, current issues relating to the functioning of these transport branches that can compete (air transport), or cooperate (inland shipping) with maritime transport have been presented. This part of the journal has also been devoted to the issue of seaport hinterland. In the presented articles, particular attention has been paid to the socio-economic changes which follow in Belarus, an attractive hinterland for sea ports of the Southeastern Baltic Sea.

We hope that the articles collected in the publication will form the basis for the development of the further research in this area.

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