

Small and Medium-Sized Seaports on the Digital Track: Tracing Digitalisation across the South Baltic Region by Innovative Auditing Procedures

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Abstract. Digitalisation and the steady increasing wide range of related novel technologies are currently and in the next years of high topicality in policy, business and research landscape. This rising interest evolved over the last decade and resulted into different use cases of these data-enabled technologies in distinct industries like manufacturing, IT and logistics. Thereby, digitalisation is often regarded as the saviour for managing the challenges in further growing globalisation, competition and environmental issues as well as customer-oriented supply chain focus.

In order to keep pace with the fast changing market environment and customer needs, especially small and medium-sized ports have to take action now, since their bigger counterparts are already heavily investing in digital technologies, as they have recognised the added value. First empirical results from the EU-project Connect2SmallPorts have shown that small ports in the South Baltic Sea Region have a common and high interest in digitalisation, but often do not know about the already existing wide range of digital technologies and the arising benefits. Accordingly, in accordance with the INTERREG project Connect2SmallPorts, the present research aims to develop a digital auditing tool in order to discover the digital status of small and medium-sized seaports. The research builds upon on an extensive literature review and further utilises innovative approaches and combines theoretical concepts as well as project-gathered practical insights. The research results will showcase a target-group-oriented (here: small and medium-sized ports) digital auditing tool that will be applied in the further course of the EU-project Connect2SmallPorts.

Keywords: Small and Medium-Sized Seaports, Digitalisation, Auditing, Key Performance Indicators.