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Sweden as a creator of an eco-innovative market

Szwecja kreatorem ekoinnowacyjnego rynku

Abstract

Constantly advancing globalization processes and degradation of the natural environment force us to constantly respond to emerging opportunities and threats. Importantly, consumer awareness is changing, to which manufacturers are also trying to respond, creating eco-innovative products and services. In the face of many difficulties and turbulences, it is necessary to have a kind of role model. And just as the Swedish economy and the economic entities operating within it are world leaders in innovation, the same is true for ecological innovating. Moreover, the modern Swedish consumer is increasingly aware of eco-innovation and is increasingly focusing on buying smaller quantities, making conscious purchasing choices that suit their needs, but with sustainability in mind. The Swedes, as leaders of eco-innovation in the world, set the paths that the rest of the world is trying to follow. The aim of the article is to draw attention to the role of eco-innovation and the eco-innovative potential of the Swedish economy, which is considered to be an innovation leader in the international arena. And through this, it may turn out to be a signpost for other economies and economic entities and citizens operating within them.

Keywords

innovation, eco-innovation, Sweden

Streszczenie

Stale postępujące procesy globalizacyjne i degradacja środowiska naturalnego wymuszają ciągłe reagowanie na pojawiające się możliwości i zagrożenia. Co ważne, zmienia się świadomość konsumentów, na co starają się też reagować producenci, tworząc ekoinnowacyjne produkty i usługi. W obliczu wielu trudności i zawirowań, niezbędnym jest posiadanie swego rodzaju wzoru do naśladowania. I tak, jak szwedzka gospodarka i funkcjonujące w jej ramach podmioty gospodarcze są światowymi liderami innowacyjności, tak samo wygląda sytuacja w przypadku innowacji ekologicznych. Co więcej, współczesny szwedzki konsument jest coraz bardziej świadomy ekoinnowacji i coraz bardziej skupia się na kupowaniu mniejszych ilości, dokonując świadomych wyborów zakupowych, które odpowiadają jego potrzebom, ale mając na uwadze założenia zrównoważonego rozwoju. Szwedzi jako liderzy ekoinnowacji na świecie wyznaczają drogi, którymi stara się podążać reszta świata. Celem artykułu jest zwrócenie uwagi na rolę ekoinnowacji i potencjału ekoinnowacyjnego szwedzkiej gospodarki, która jest uważana za lidera innowacji na arenie międzynarodowej. A poprzez to może się okazać drogowskazem dla innych gospodarek i działających w ich ramach podmiotów gospodarczych i obywateli.

Słowa kluczowe

innowacje, ekoinnowacje, Szwecja

JEL: O1, O2, O3, O4

Introduction

With global environmental challenges such as climate change, pollution, and the depletion of natural resources, the market for eco-innovation is becoming a key element in the pursuit of sustainable development. Eco-innovation, i.e. new products, processes, services and technologies that contribute to the protection of the environment and the efficient use of resources, are essential for the future of our planet.

The market for eco-innovation is growing rapidly, driven by growing environmental awareness among consumers, regulatory and government initiatives and international organisations supporting the green economy. Companies that invest in sustainable technologies gain a competitive advantage by opening up new markets and creating new business opportunities.

It is safe to say that from smartphones and tablets to electric vehicle batteries and wind turbines, modern society constantly needs and

expects innovative, sustainable and recyclable products and materials. All this to achieve our climate goals and pave the way for a future circular economy powered by new industries. Swedish eco-innovation seems to be aware of the challenges and opportunities brought by ongoing globalization and technological progress, leading in development on all fronts of the eco-innovation market in the world. (Scheibenpflug, 2022).

The modern Swedish consumer is increasingly aware of eco-innovation and is increasingly focused on buying smaller quantities, making conscious purchasing choices that meet his needs, but keeping in mind the assumptions of sustainable development. Swedish producers are also guided by an attitude focused on eco-innovation, meeting the constantly changing expectations and needs of customers. Therefore, as eco-innovation leaders in the world, they set the paths that the rest of the world tries to follow. The aim of this article is to highlight the role of eco-innovation and the eco-innovative capacity of the Swedish economy, which is considered an innovation leader in the international arena.

The essence of ecological innovations (eco-innovations)

At the very beginning, it would be worth mentioning the concept of innovation, which is understood and considered extremely broadly. It refers to all spheres of life, from new solutions regarding economic or social life to new thought and cultural trends. In common understanding, innovation means something new and different from existing solutions. Quite often it can be associated with a needed change for the better. Generally speaking, it can be said that innovation is the introduction of something new, a newly introduced thing, a novelty, a reform. This translation of this concept is valid both in the terminology of the Polish language and in other countries. This is due to the strong influence of Latin sources, because the word "innovation" in Latin is *innovatio*, i.e. "renewal" (Prystrom 2008, p. 153). The phenomenon of innovation is inextricably linked to the concept of change, novelty, reform or an idea perceived as new. Various facts and processes are considered innovations and phenomena of a technical, organizational, social or psychological nature.¹

Importantly, innovations play a very important role in relation to economic growth. It is extremely interesting that in modern economies the importance of innovation is increasing compared to traditional factors of economic growth, such as land, capital and labour. Economists estimate that

as much as 2/3 of the economic growth of developed countries should be associated with the use and implementation of innovations.²

It is worth noting that already in 2013 it was assumed that innovation is a priority in the European Union's agenda for growth and jobs. Member States are encouraged to invest in research and development activities (R&D) 3% of its GDP by 2020 (1% from public funds and 2% as part of private sector investments). It is estimated, that this would enable the creation of 3.7 million jobs and an increase in annual GDP by nearly EUR 800 billion.³

Unfortunately, according to the latest Eurostat data, the average expenditure on R&D in the European Union amounted to 2.2% of GDP.⁴

As noted, the aspect of innovation has many explanations and references. Over the last quarter of a century, there has been a significant increase in the importance and impact of innovation. Therefore, it should not be surprising that nowadays, in addition to environmental protection, the issue of ecological innovations is becoming extremely important (Prystrom, 2013, p. 84).

Ecology is a biological science that studies the mutual relations between organisms or groups of organisms and their surrounding environment. It deals with ecosystems, their internal structure, functioning and evolution, i.e. examines the place of residence and the adaptation of an organism to the natural environment. Ecology creates the theoretical foundations of the science of shaping the natural environment. The subject of ecology is also the impact of human activity on the environment, the search for methods to prevent environmental devastation, i.e. it also includes environmental protection issues. Ecology (so-called environmental biology) combines all fields of biology and creates the basis for understanding phenomena and processes occurring among organisms. There are many branches of ecology that deal in detail with various issues, e.g. autecology (studies the relationships of an organism with the environment, the so-called ecology of organisms), synecology (ecology of ecosystems, communities, populations), zoology (deals with the basics of protecting nature and its resources and ensuring durability of their use). Many sciences bordering on ecology have been developed, e.g. ecological genetics, ecological geography, environmental parasitology. Ecological research is used for rational management and protection of natural resources. Its practical application is visible in agriculture and forestry. The appearance of pests in agricultural fields and forests is predicted and biological methods of pest control are being developed. Ecology is an extensive field of knowledge related to all fields of

biology as well as chemistry, physics, geography, climatology, mathematics, and environmental protection.⁵

Ecological innovations are all forms of innovations aimed at significant impact and visible progress towards achieving the sustainable development goal, by reducing environmental impact or achieving greater efficiency and responsibility in the use of resources, including energy. Eco-innovation is an evolving concept and must therefore be able to respond to changes.⁶ Ecological innovation can be understood as innovation that serves to prevent or reduce destructive human impacts. Moreover, this type of innovations restores, to some extent, the damage done to the environment and monitors ecological problems. Environmental innovations cover many areas of knowledge and many industrial sectors. These types of innovations also include all modifications in processes and products that reduce their negative impact on the environment (Vinnova, 2001, p. 11).

Ecological innovation means changing consumption and production patterns and developing technologies, products and services that reduce the impact on the environment. Business and innovation together create sustainable solutions that make better use of valuable resources and reduce the negative impact of the economy on the environment.⁷ Therefore, this innovation consists of new or modified processes, techniques and technologies, systems

and products that avoid harmful effects on the environment (Horbach, 2008, p. 163).

Contemporary eco-innovations are perceived as an important element of ecological policy because they are necessary to meet environmental protection requirements and build economic competitiveness. Their use improves the performance of SMEs by reducing costs and increasing sales, and helps to adapt to increasingly stringent legal requirements regarding environmental protection. At the same time, they create the attitudes of entrepreneurs and consumers. Selected examples of ecological innovations are presented in Figure 1.

It is safe to say that eco-innovation is currently at the centre of European policy. By reducing environmental impact, increasing resilience to external pressures and using resources more efficiently, eco-innovations are crucial to supporting the transition to a circular economy and achieving the goals of the European Green Deal. The 8th EU Environment Action Program supports the environment and climate objectives of the European Green Deal by accelerating the transition to a regenerative economy that gives back to the planet rather than taking away, in particular "through continuous innovation, adapting to new challenges and co-creation". Eco-innovations in companies lead to lower costs, improved ability to take advantage of new development opportunities and improved their reputation among customers. Eco-innovations are

Figure 1. Examples of eco-innovations

- Buildings and construction (mainly the use of environmentally friendly, recycled materials and water treatment and saving technologies)
- Developing solutions for a closed or circular economy
- Development of low- or zero-waste production technologies
- Green business and smart purchasing (EMAS in clusters, GPP, building a market for ecological products, appropriate labelling of these products and promoting the development of ecological consumer behaviour)
- Integrated plastic recycling installation used in agriculture
- Management of mining industry waste
- Recycling of materials (improvement of the sorting process of industrial and household waste, development of new solutions in the field of recycling and innovative products using recycled materials)
- Reducing or eliminating non-renewable raw materials from the production process and replacing them with recycled raw materials or waste
- Reducing the energy consumption of the production process by developing process solutions
- The food sector will be supported by innovative processes that reduce the negative impact on the environment and maximize the use of unprocessed materials
- The use of agricultural products and waste to produce electricity, which directly reduces CO₂ emissions into the atmosphere
- The use of modern powder coating technology, which eliminates the emission of harmful diluents
- Waste management in the wine industry

Source: own elaboration the basis: Walczyk-Matuszyk, 2010, pp. 8, 9; http://www.kape.gov.pl/iee/docs/konferencja10122008/Sesja_ogolna/10122008_1_KMatuszczyk.pdf (access: 19.07.2012); Jabłoński, n.d., p. 24, 65, 67; Talbierz, 2023.

therefore a powerful environmental protection instrument with a positive impact on the economy and society (European Commission, n.d.-a).

Eco-innovativeness of Sweden

Sweden has been an innovation leader in the world for decades. Moreover, Sweden is the homeland of many innovators who are successful on a global scale, changing the lives of millions of people, opening new horizons of possibilities. Various rankings classifying individual economies as leaders in terms of innovation confirm the strength of the Swedish economy. One of them is the European Innovation Scoreboard, which every year classifies EU economies in terms of their innovativeness. Moreover, the ranking provides a comparative assessment of the research and innovation performance of EU Member States, other European countries and regional neighbours. Based on the results obtained, EU countries are divided into four groups: innovation leaders, strong innovators, moderate innovators and emerging innovators (European Commission, n.d.-b). The Swedish economy is, of course, in the first group, and Table 1 will show exactly what it is.

Table 1. Innovativeness of Sweden over the last twenty years

Year	Rank	Year	Rank
2004	2	2014	1
2005	1	2015	1
2006	1	2016	1
2007	1	2017	1
2008	1	2018	1
2009	1	2019	1
2010	1	2020	1
2011	1	2021	1
2012	1	2022	1
2013	1	2023	2

Source: own elaboration on the basis: European Commission, n.d.-b.

Sweden is one of the eco-innovation leaders. Importantly, although the advantage over other countries has been weakening recently, the Swedish economy is the undisputed winner of eco-innovation rankings in the EU. Sweden's relative strength is eco-innovation products, while its weakness is resource efficiency. Sweden performs best in academic terms (research, projects and

publications). Swedes score the worst in terms of productivity and the government environmental and energy sectors. Outlays allocated to R&D activities are worth noting. In addition, Sweden can distinguish itself with a wide range of eco-labelled products and services. As already mentioned, Sweden is implementing a number of initiatives supporting eco-innovation and the circular economy. National strategy for circularity defines overall objectives and measurement methods. The key emphasis is on sustainable production and design, sustainable consumption, non-toxic and cyclical materials and the promotion of eco-innovative business models. Various strategies and concepts of action aimed at eco-innovation of entities have been introduced in various sectors. On the one hand, this is due to the innovative activities of Swedish economic entities, and on the other hand, from the fact that Swedish consumers demand sustainable and eco-innovative products. What is very important, the main challenge for Sweden turns out to be the lack of knowledge about financing possibilities, a large consumer market and industries that are difficult to understand, such as forestry or mining (Rosenberg Johansen, 2022, p. 3).

One of the most dynamic segments of the eco-innovative marketing Sweden is the energy sector. The development of renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind, geothermal and biomass, contributes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing energy security. Moreover, innovations in energy storage, such as modern batteries and storage systems, enable more efficient use of renewable energy.

The eco-innovation of the Swedish economy also includes the development of green technologies in transport, construction and agriculture. Electric vehicles, intelligent energy management systems in buildings, as well as farming methods that minimize environmental impact are just some of the examples that show how innovation can contribute to sustainable development.

Sweden's position and reputation as a leader and pioneer in the field of environmental protection and eco-innovation began more than half a century ago. This is illustrated in more detail in Figure 2.

It can be openly stated that the modern consumer is increasingly aware of the problems of sustainable development, which makes them want to buy less and make sure that it is permanent. Sustainable products that have been made with care for the environment, from the materials from which they are made, through the processes used in their production, to the packaging in which they are delivered, are what more and more Swedish entrepreneurs are betting on.

Figure 2. Milestones of sustainability and eco-innovativeness of Sweden

1967
Sweden as the first country to establish an environmental protection agency, Naturvardsverket
1972
Sweden hosts the first UN Environment Conference, where the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was established, which is still the world's leading environmental body
1998 and 2002
Sweden was one of the first countries to sign and ratify an international treaty on climate change, the so-called Kyoto Protocol. Sweden was one of the first countries to introduce a carbon tax, which aims to reduce the dependence of the economy and society on fossil fuels
2001
The Stockholm Convention, which was largely an initiative of Sweden. It was a global treaty that aimed to phase out the production and use of persistent organic pollutants
2017
Sweden was among the leaders, ranking third in the Global Cleantech Innovation Index (GCII)
2020
Sweden ranked second in the Global Innovation Index and topped the Global Sustainable Competitiveness Index
2021
The Swedish economy ranked second in the UN Sustainable Development Report and the Global Innovation Index (GII) and topped the Global Sustainable Competitiveness Index (GSCI)
2022
More than 60 per cent of Sweden's electricity comes from renewable sources
2023
Sweden as the second economy in the Global Innovation Index (GII)
Target for 2030
Sweden's fossil-free transport sector
Target for 2045
Sweden is a fossil-free and therefore climate-neutral country

Source: own elaboration on the basis: *Sweden and sustainability*,
<https://sweden.se/climate/sustainability/sweden-and-sustainability> (access: 10.09.2024).

Table 2 provides a summary of selected examples of Swedish eco-innovative entrepreneurs with their products and services which seem to be worth mentioning, because the actions of – certainly – some of them stimulated eco-innovative activity among other units.

Sweden is considered a world leader in eco-innovation, which may be due to its consistent pro-ecological policy, high expenditure on research and development, and social awareness of sustainable development. However, despite its impressive achievements, the Swedish economy also faces challenges and limitations related to eco-innovation. Eco-innovation, especially at an early stage of development, requires significant investments. Sweden, as a highly developed country, can afford to finance expensive research and development projects, but for companies, mainly small and medium-sized ones, cost barriers can be a significant limitation. High taxes and labour costs additionally increase the financial

burden related to the implementation of new, more ecological technologies.

The Swedish economy is based on advanced industry, including sectors such as automotive (Volvo, Scania), mining (LKAB) and paper and pulp production. The transition to more ecological technologies requires significant transformation of these sectors, which may affect their competitiveness on international markets. Companies operating in countries with less stringent environmental regulations may gain a cost advantage, which may force Swedish companies to look for additional sources of financing or move production abroad (Liegenzowska, 2016, p. 390).

Although Sweden is a pioneer in the use of renewable energy (hydropower, biomass, and wind power), dependence on these types of energy sources can be a problem in the face of climate change. For example, long-term droughts can limit hydropower production, forcing the need to

Table 2. Examples of eco-innovators from Sweden

Company	Short description
Bark of Sweden	Bark of Sweden mobile phone covers are made from 100% Swedish hardwoods left over from forestry in parks and green spaces. The company has developed an innovative method to recycle wood into impact-resistant, durable and attractive mobile phone cases
Climeon	The company specializes in converting low-temperature waste heat into clean electricity and thus contributes to energy efficiency and sustainability
H&M Conscious Collection	As one of the largest clothing retailers in the world, the company has taken significant steps towards sustainability. The Conscious collection includes clothing that has been made from organic and sustainable materials, and this is a true reflection of the brand's commitment to sustainable fashion
H2 Green Steel	The startup is working on producing steel using hydrogen instead of carbon, which is expected to significantly reduce carbon dioxide emissions in the steelmaking process
Loose Knot	The company's offer includes dresses and accessories whose production is based on sustainable development and reducing the negative impact on the environment as much as possible. The offered items are made from already produced materials, such as goods from overproduction. More specifically, loose dresses are made from these leftover textiles. Moreover, they are one size dresses, they are fully adjustable, can be tied and worn in different ways for a versatile look. Accessories, on the other hand, are made from marine and ocean waste. This includes recycled plastic, which is hand-picked waste from our oceans. The company obtains new goods and at the same time protects the seas and oceans. Moreover, it operates in a sustainable chain of organization, contributing to a cleaner and better environment, and works only with certified producers with high certification requirements, striving for ethical production and maintaining the designated social status
Northvolt	A Swedish design and manufacturing company that specialises in lithium-ion battery technology for electric vehicles
Oatly	The company known for its oat milk, the company focuses on sustainable food production, which has made it a global leader in plant-based alternatives to dairy
Renewcell	This company recycles textile waste into new, high-quality textile fibers. Through these activities, it promotes circular fashion and reduces waste
Volvo	The Volvo Group strives to work towards sustainable development in all areas of its activities, focusing on climate neutrality, circular economy and responsible business

Source: own elaboration on the basis: Lundquist, 2023; Mendez Polo, 2023; Smith & Symons, 2023; <https://oatly.com/en> (access: 10.09.2024); <https://www.h2greensteel.com> (access: 10.09.2024); <https://climeon.com/the-company/> (access: 10.09.2024); <https://volvogroup.com> (access: 11.09.2024).

supplement the energy balance with imports or less ecological solutions.

Despite the high ecological awareness of Swedish society, not all eco-innovations are met with full acceptance. Examples include the controversy over eco-taxes, which increase consumption costs, or restrictions on individual transport in cities. Additionally, the development of technologies such as waste recycling or the circular economy requires citizens to change their consumption habits, which is not always easy to achieve (Halilia & Rundquist, 2011, p. 300).

Despite these challenges, Sweden remains one of the most innovative countries in the world when it comes to ecology and sustainability. This is due to several key factors:

1. Strong state policy – the Swedish government consistently promotes pro-ecological solutions through legal regulations, tax incentives and subsidies for companies investing in green technologies.
2. Investments in research and development – Swedish universities and research institutes are conducting advanced work on new technologies, e.g. production of steel without CO₂ emissions (Hybrit project).
3. Social ecological awareness – Swedes have been accustomed to waste segregation, energy-saving solutions and sustainable transport for years.
4. Strong cooperation between the public and private sectors – companies are eager to engage

in eco-innovation projects, seeing them as an opportunity for long-term competitive advantage and the development of a circular economy – Sweden focuses on recycling, reusing materials and reducing waste, which reduces the negative impact on the environment.

In summary, the eco-innovation of the Swedish economy is an example of success, but also a challenge. The costs of implementing new technologies, international competitiveness, dependence on renewable sources and social acceptance are key constraints that may affect the further development of the ecological transformation. However, thanks to the strong commitment of the state, the private sector and society, Sweden remains at the forefront of countries implementing innovative, sustainable economic solutions.

The Swedish creators of the eco-innovative market

Sweden, as one of the world's most important precursors of eco-innovation in the world, can boast a wide range of various products or services that have innovatively conquered ecological markets around the world and turned out to be the direction of activities undertaken by other entities around the world.

In Sweden, ecology combines with technology and innovation. For example, in Stockholm's "Ecodistrict" Norra Djurgårdsstaden, an old gasworks was used to build eco-friendly houses, electric car chargers were installed and a new tram line was planned. Such initiatives show how ecology can be an integral part of urban life and the future of transport.⁸

Referring to the above-mentioned hydrogen eco-innovations, it is worth mentioning that Sweden is adopting hydrogen as a key element of its energy transition. Worth mentioning here is Ovako, the Swedish steel company that launched the country's largest electrolyzer⁹ with a capacity of 20 MW in Hofors. It aims to produce green hydrogen for use in the steel production process. Thanks to this project, the company plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50% or even more.¹⁰

For decades, Sweden has been renowned for its commitment to protecting the environment and promoting sustainable development. Importantly, the country is setting new standards in terms of ecology, which is reflected in the growing hydrogen sector and other innovative ecological projects. In Sweden, one of the leading leaders in ecological innovation, there is a dynamic development of the hydrogen sector. It should be

emphasized that Sweden is not the only one joins the group of countries that adopt hydrogen as a key element in the energy transformation, but also sets new standards in terms of sustainable development. Last year's opening of the country's largest electrolyzer plant is a clear signal of a change in the approach to energy production and industry.¹¹

Sweden has some of the most productive mines in the world and the strictest environmental regulations governing mining activities. This country produces no less than 90% of all iron ore produced in Europe and is a leading producer of base metals such as zinc, copper and lead. Sweden's deposits also include cerium, graphite, yttrium and terbium. As a result, the Swedish mining sector has played a key role for decades, developing and disseminating innovative changes in mining practices. More specifically, it is about using environmentally friendly methods of extracting and processing both traditional and non-traditional resources. Moreover, by working closely with domestic mining companies, Swedish equipment suppliers such as Epiroc and Sandvik have proven to be pioneers of deep mining technologies using automation and other digital solutions, while building a global reputation for safety and energy efficiency. Today, they account for 60 percent of the global underground mining machinery market (Scheibenpflug, 2022).

Conclusions

It seems obvious that the market for eco-innovation has a great potential to transform the economy and society into an increasingly sustainable and green one. It is important to note that investing in green technologies and supporting innovative solutions is essential today to ensure a healthy future for our planet. It is also obvious that with technological progress and growing environmental awareness, this market will continue its dynamic development, bringing benefits to both the environment and the economy.

To make things not too pretty, despite the positive trends highlighted, the eco-innovation market faces various challenges, such as the adaptation of legal regulations, the need for further infrastructure development or financial barriers. It should be emphasized here that cross-sectoral cooperation, environmental education and support from financial institutions and governments are key to accelerating the transition towards a green economy.

It is safe to say that Sweden continues its role as a leader in eco-innovation. Scandinavian

companies are leaders in sustainable innovation. They do this by focusing on projects that aim to reduce emissions and promote sustainability, among other things. It is worth noting here that the development of the hydrogen sector and other

environmental initiatives are crucial for the future of the country. What is more, they can serve as a model or a signpost for other countries striving for sustainable development, creating the development of an eco-innovative market in the world.

Notes/Przypisy

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- ⁸ *Ekologia w Szwecji – technologia i zrównoważony rozwój*, <https://doszwecji.pl/szwecja-i-zrownawazony-rozwoj/> (access: 13.06.2024).
- ⁹ Electryzer is the base component of a hydrogen boiler, providing hydrogen necessary in the heat generation process.
- ¹⁰ *Rozwój sektora wodorowego w Szwecji*, https://www.feri.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Sektor_wodorowy_Szwecja_FERI_PL.pdf (access: 12.06.2024).
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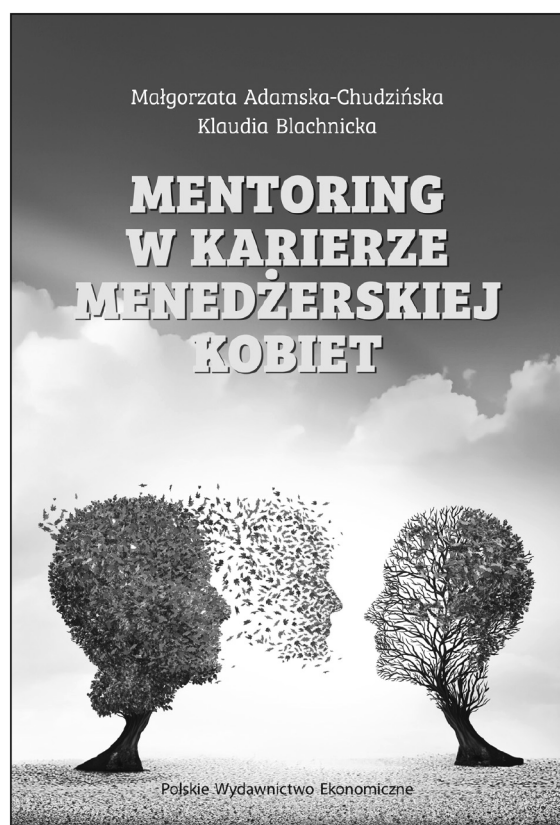
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**Małgorzata Adamska-Chudzińska
Klaudia Blachnicka**

MENTORING W KARIERZE MENEDŻERSKIEJ KOBIET

Pomimo wieloaspektowych korzyści biznesowych płynących z obejmowania przez kobiety stanowisk menedżerskich wciąż obserwowana jest wyraźna niedoreprezentacja kobiet w zarządzaniu. Autorki prezentowanej monografii wykazały, że uczestnictwo menedżerek w relacji mentoringowej ma potencjał stymulujący wieloaspektowy rozwój kariery. Właściwie realizowany mentoring stwarza możliwości niwelowania organizacyjnych i indywidualnych barier utrudniających pokonywanie kolejnych etapów zaawansowania kariery, u źródeł których leżą stygmatyzujące stereotypy i narzucane kulturowo role płciowe. Mentoring został w książce ujęty w szerszym wymiarze różnorodnych działań mentora sklasyfikowanych w postaci wsparcia zawodowego i psychospołecznego. Zaprezentowano też wyniki badań nad zależnością między mentoringiem a karierą menedżerską kobiet, w których uwzględniono aspekt samoświadomości menedżerek w obszarze zawodowym oraz moderującą rolę zdominowania środowiska zawodowego przez jedną z płci.

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