

## A COUNTRY'S GREEN BRAND AND THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF BUSINESS

*Yevheniia Ziabina and Mariola Dzwigol-Barosz*

**Abstract.** Recently, the topic of carbon neutrality has been gaining momentum. Such trends are mainly related to the adoption of important global agreements, such as the European Green Deal, as well as the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Such trends have a positive effect on countries, but in such situations, states must quickly respond to the challenges and needs of the world and have an understanding of how to respond to these trends. To date, there are many ratings that can be used to form a portrait of a country (investment, social, environmental, etc.), but currently the rating of the green brand of a country is becoming more relevant. There are problems regarding its improvement and filling, yet this is a new evaluation of a country for this period of time. It is relevant today to study the nature and architecture of the concept of a green brand, as well as the search for the main determinants of its impact. The purpose of the article is to analyse publications in order to identify patterns in the development of the green brand and the social responsibility of business. The article provides a bibliometric analysis of research in the field of green branding and corporate social and environmental responsibility. The authors selected more than 10,000 works published in 2000–2021 indexed by the scientometric databases Scopus, Web of Science and Google Scholar. Using VOSviewer, the results of the bibliometric analysis were visualized on the definition map. This made it possible to identify seven clusters that combine 58 terms. As a result of the research, using the constructed bibliographic map, the connection between the terms 'green brand' and 'corporate social responsibility' was revealed.

**Keywords:** green brand, corporate social responsibility, country brand, greenwashing

**JEL Classification:** M14, M31, M38

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## 1. Introduction

The state of the social and economic (Lyulyov et al., 2021a; Hussain et al., 2021; Kwilinski et al., 2022a; Moskalenko et al., 2022), ecological (Dźwigol et al., 2019; Kharazishvili et al., 2021; Kostyrko et al., 2021) and energy problems (Banasik et al., 2022; Miśkiewicz, 2018; 2022; Miśkiewicz et al., 2022; 2021), which the whole world has encountered today, require further research and the search for new alternatives to influence the ecological consciousness of the population (Chen et al., 2021; Chygryn et al., 2020; Drożdż et al., 2021). To date, one of the relevant areas of research is the development of a green brand of a country (company) through the improvement of corporate social and environmental responsibility of the population (employees) (Kharazishvili et al., 2020; 2021b). According to statistical agencies, by the end of 2021, the TOP-10 countries in shaping their sustainable green image include the following states (Table 1).

**Table 1.** TOP-10 leading countries in the context of a sustainable green image, 2021

Rating	Country	Characteristics
1	Sweden	A country that comprehensively implements the Sustainable Development Goals in management and improvement.
2	Switzerland	The country has a high level of social and environmental responsibility of the population, which allows effective implementation of innovative environmental ideas for the development of the country's green brand.
3	Norway	The country is actively investing in the ocean clean-up and research. At the same time, it is a leader in providing itself with alternative energy, primarily hydroelectric power.
4	Japan	The country is a leader in processing secondary raw materials. Plans to increase the use of zero-emission cars and the greening of public transport are ambitious.
5	Finland	In the country, all forest areas and water bodies are actively protected and cleaned if necessary. The country is forming its own green brand focused on following the key conditions of social and environmental responsibility.
6	Denmark	The country is actively working on the development of a green brand. Copenhagen has become a leader among the green cities of the country, while the plans of the city management include the capital becoming a city fully equipped with an alternative energy.
7	New Zealand	The country has a high level of social and environmental responsibility among the population and businesses. The country is a leader in sustainable agriculture.
8	Germany	A country that has one of the most powerful recycling programs. At the same time, Germany is a leader in sustainability in the industrial sector, but at the same time it is quite dependent on Russian energy resources. The priority goals are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 55% by 2030.
9	Canada	The country's government is working on increasing the level of sustainability and aims to reduce the level of greenhouse gas emissions by 30% by 2030.
10	Netherlands	Today, the country is working on promoting a green image of the country. It develops the use of alternative sources at enterprises and the search for new types of energy

Source: devised by the authors.

Considering the data presented in Table 1, it is possible to conclude that the issue of a country's green brand in the context of enhancing corporate social responsibility of business is topical in the ongoing economic development.

## 2. Literature Review

In the process of analysing joint research in the field of green branding and corporate social responsibility, a sample was formed based on the search words "green brand" and "corporate social responsibility" in the scientometric databases Scopus and Web of Science. The results of the search confirmed the availability of 14 publications displayed in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Field-Weighted Citation Impact of Top-10 Cited Articles in Scopus

No	Title	Authors	Year	Source	Citations	FWCI*
1	CSR and organizational citizenship behaviour for the environment in hotel industry: The moderating roles of corporate entrepreneurship and employee attachment style	Luu T.T.	2017	International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	73	3.28
2	Sustainable fashion supply chain management: From sourcing to retailing	Choi T.-M., Cheng T.C.E.	2015	Sustainable Fashion Supply Chain Management: From Sourcing to Retailing	17	1.38
3	A model of green bank marketing	Lymperopoulos C., Chaniotakis I.E., Soureli M.	2012	Journal of Financial Services Marketing	16	–
4	Does one bad apple ruin a firm's green brand image? Examining frontline service employees' environmentally irresponsible behaviours	Zhang L., Wu J., Chen H., Nguyen B.	2020	European Journal of Marketing	7	0.6
5	Effect of green attributes transparency on wta for green cosmetics: Mediating effects of CSR and green brand concepts	Lee Y.-H., Chen S.-L.	2019	Sustainability (Switzerland)	6	0.53
6	Perceptions on the strategic value of corporate social responsibility – some insights from global rankings	Claudia O.	2014	Journal of International Studies	6	0.57
7	Green banking initiatives: a qualitative study on Indian banking sector	Sharma M., Choubey A.	2021	Environment, Development and Sustainability	4	5.62
8	Green paradox in emerging tourism supply chains: Achieving green consumption behaviour through strategic green marketing orientation, brand social responsibility, and green image	Khan M.I., Khalid S., Zaman U., José A.E., Ferreira P.	2021	International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health	4	1.23
9	Is it all for show? Environmental brand identification on skin care and cosmetic websites	Seelig M.I., Sun R., Deng H., Pal S.	2021	Journal of Marketing Communications	4	1.09
10	Corporate Social Responsibility in Modern Central and Eastern Europe	Kopp H.	2015	CSR, Sustainability, Ethics and Governance	2	–

\*FWCI – field weighted citation impact

Source: developed by the authors based on Scopus (2022).

The article with the highest number of citations (Luu, 2017) aims at determining the influence of corporate social responsibility and corporate green branding on the environment using the example of the Vietnamese hotel business. The results of the study indicate the necessity to influence not only the formation of eco-oriented products and services, but also to form the environmental behaviour of employees. Choi et al. (2015) consider the topic in the context of the sustainable fashion development. Thus, the authors raise the issue of green brand evolution against the background of the fashion industry due to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (Goals 9, 12 and 13) and the formation of corporate social and environmental responsibility of employees (Abazov, 2021; Arefieva et al., 2021).

The third place in terms of citations is occupied by the study of the impact of corporate social responsibility and green marketing on shaping and improving the green image brand of banking institutions (Lymperopoulos et al., 2012). It should be noted that the paper was published in 2012, while today it has a significant relevance and prospects for further research.

The fourth work by the number of citations is based on an experiment that is aimed at evaluating the impact of a client on a company's brand (Zhang et al., 2020). The authors proved that a company's green brand image can have a negative impact on a client if the latter notices a low level of corporate social and environmental responsibility and non-compliance with the relevant environmental branding standards. At the same time, a client's negative reaction is possible even if the level of corporate social responsibility matches their expectations, but it also negatively affects their perception of the company's environmental irresponsibility. Accordingly, based on the results of two experiments, the scientists drew the main conclusions that emphasize the need for comprehensive development of a green brand image and corporate social and environmental responsibility of employees.

Publications in Google Scholar were analysed using the search terms "green brand" and "corporate social responsibility". Accordingly, more than 300,000 publications were selected based on the given parameters. Having systematized the papers closer to the topic of this research, the key aspects were summarised. Thus, active attention is paid to considering corporate social responsibility in managing labour resources (Tenytska et al., 2020; Voegtlin et al., 2016) as well as national scientists (Syhyda et al., 2020; Ziabina et al., 2021). The authors consider the main aspects of corporate social responsibility evolution in the context of implementing environmental management at industrial enterprises (Chigrin et al., 2011). Scholars are also actively investigating the impact of corporate social responsibility on the financial performance of businesses (Al-Khonain et al., 2020; Fadyeyeva, 2019; Khadidja et al., 2021; Tommaso, et al., 2019; Cyfert et al., 2021).

The bibliometric analysis revealed thirteen clusters, while the "innovation" cluster and the "corporate social responsibility and environmental management" cluster (Bilan, 2020; Kuzior & Kwilinski, 2022; Kuzior et al., 2022; Kwilinski, 2018;2019; Kwilinski et al., 2020c; 2021a; 2021b; Miśkiewicz, 2021a; Rajjani et al., 2018; Shafait et al., 2021; Szczepańska-Woszczyna & Gatnar, 2022) have a strong close relationship, which proves the impossibility of effective implementation of corporate social and environmental responsibility without an established

innovation system at an enterprise (Szostek, 2021; Bogachov et al., 2020; Borodin et al., 2021). The authors (Celma et al., 2012; Husnain et al., 2020; Chygryn et al., 2018; Coban et al., 2022a; 2022b) found that corporate social irresponsibility is a powerful factor that negatively affects consumer loyalty and brand value in general (Oláh et al., 2021; Stuss et al., 2019; Vaníčková & Szczepańska-Woszczyzna, 2020; Wróblewski et al., 2018), while the scientific community considers the possibility of a positive impact of corporate social responsibility in the management of labour resources for the image (Dacko-Pikiewicz, 2019; Dzwigol, 2020b; 2021b; Dzwigol-Barosz & Dzwigol, 2021; Dzwigol et al., 2020b), corporate sustainability and reputation of a company (Advantage, 2020; Balaraman, 2017; Yang et al., 2021).

Research on the corporate social responsibility evolution in managing labour resources under the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic and its possible transformations in all spheres of activity are relevant today (Alkubaisy, 2020; Buhaisi et al., 2021; Lyulyov et al., 2022). Scientists also consider the theory of the effective influence of corporate social and environmental responsibility measures on shaping a company's competitive potential under conditions of globalization processes (Celma et al., 2014; Hakobyan et al., 2019; Pimonenko, 2011; Dzwigol et al., 2020a; Miśkiewicz, 2019; 2021b; Nawawi et al., 2022). The vast range of researchers consider corporate social responsibility as an integral tool in ensuring sustainable development both at the level of companies and at the level of countries (Biewendt et al., 2020; Kurian, 2021; Miller, 2020; Soudi, 2020; Czyżewski et al., 2019; Dementyev & Kwilinski, 2020; Dementyev et al., 2021; Drożdż et al., 2020a; 2020b; Dzwigol & Dzwigol-Barosz, 2020).

### 3. Methods

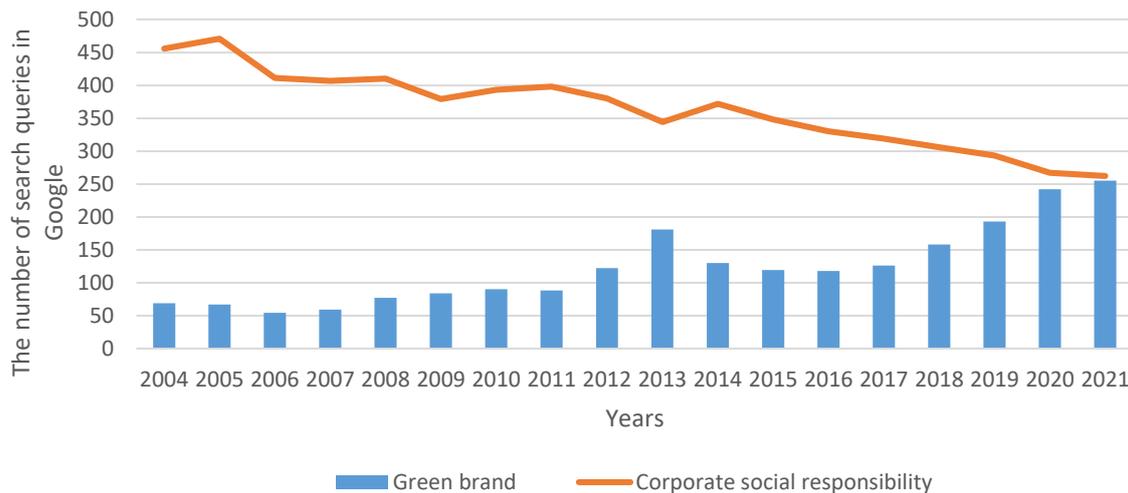
The study of a green brand evolution in the context of corporate social responsibility took place in several stages. The methodology of the research took into account the experience that proved relevant in the existing publications in the domain (Kwilinski et al., 2022a; Kwilinski et al., 2022b; Polcyn et al., 2022; Soliman et al., 2021; Us et al., 2021a; Us et al., 2021b; Zhang et al., 2022; Dzwigol, 2021a).

At the first stage of searching for relevant information, more than 22,000 publications were processed using the keywords "green brand", "corporate social responsibility" in the Scopus and Web of Science databases. At the second stage, the data set was ranked according to the criterion of scientific fields: "Economics, econometrics and finance", "Multidisciplinary", "Business, management and accounting", and "Social sciences". According to the second stage results, about 10,000 documents were received, in which the development of a green brand, ecological image in the context of corporate social responsibility of business were investigated. All data were saved and processed using the Excel program.

At the third stage, a bibliographic map was created based on the relevant Scopus and Web of Science data using VOSviewer, a research visualization and clustering analysis tool. VOSviewer is a software designed to build and visualize bibliometric references. Bibliometric analysis using VOSviewer identified 58 out of 983 keywords which meet the threshold and the minimum number of repetitions in the title, keywords and abstract accounted for 6.

#### 4. Results

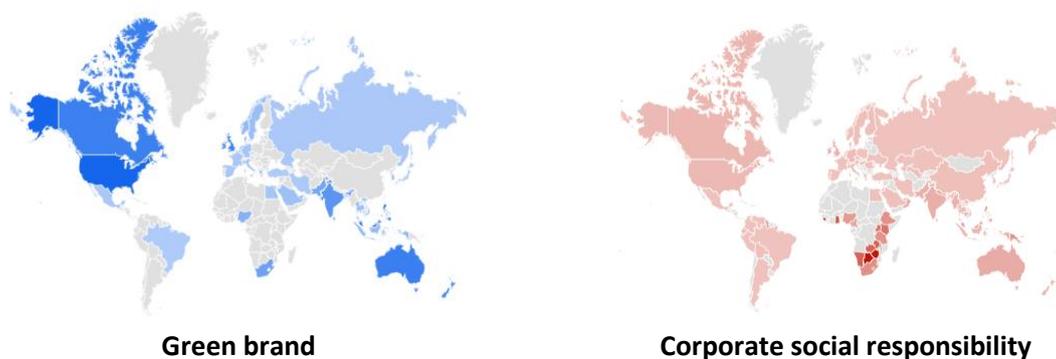
Before starting the bibliographic analysis, it was decided to find out the level of interest in this topic not only on the platforms of scientometric databases Scopus, Web of Science and Google Scholar, but also to trace the dynamics of queries in Google on the topic under research (Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** The results of a trend synchronization analysis for the search queries “green brand” and “corporate social responsibility” in the Google search engine, 2004-2021

*Source: compiled by the authors based on Google Trends data*

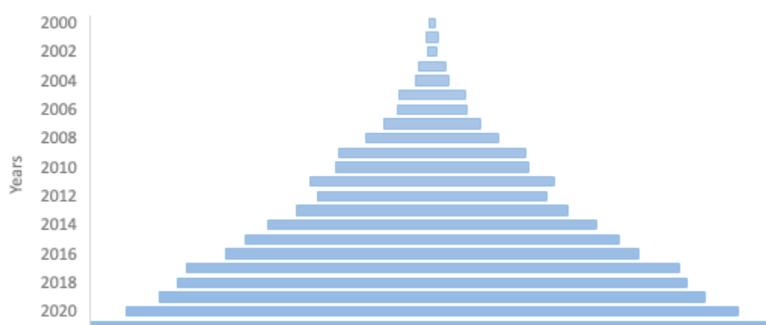
The obtained data indicate that interest in the search query "green brand" has been increasing since 2014, while it bears noting a negative correlation between the search queries in the period 2004-2013, while in the last ten years this trend has changed radically. In our opinion, this indicates the expansion of views on the green brand evolution and possible determinants of influence on this phenomenon. Moreover, the study took a closer look at the geographic structure of Google queries (Figure 2).



**Figure 2.** A geographical structure of requests “green brand” and “corporate social responsibility” in the Google search engine

*Source: devised by the authors based on Google Trends data.*

A geographic structure of searches for "green brand" is concentrated more in the countries of North America, Australia, and the European Union, while the search for "corporate social responsibility" is the most popular in African countries. The main purpose of this research was to conduct a bibliometric analysis of a green brand evolution in the context of corporate social responsibility. There was formed an array of publications on the researched topic. The results revealed that the first publications indexed by the scientometric databases Scopus and Web of Science in the field of green brand research date back to 2000.



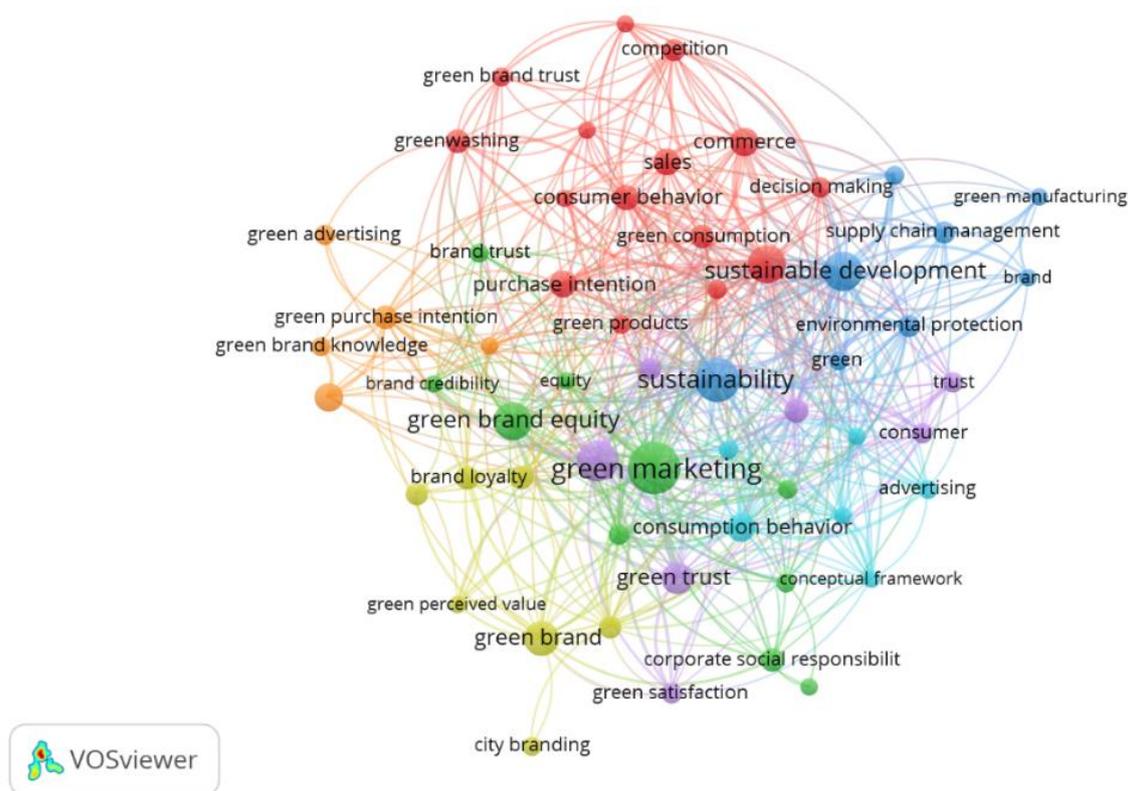
**Figure 3.** The Dynamics of Publishing Documents in the Period of 2000-2022

Source: developed by the authors based on the Scopus database (2022).

This, in turn, indicates the relevance of the studied phenomenon and the determinants of its impact. It bears mentioning that the number of studies is increasing every year. Examining the subject area of the formed array of publications, it can be concluded that the greater share falls precisely on "Business, Management and Accounting" (16,145), "Social Sciences" (10,557), "Economics, Econometrics and Finance" (7,125), "Environmental Science" (4,062), "Arts and Humanities" (2,237), "Energy" (1,837), "Engineering" (1,154), and "Decision Sciences" (1,101).

A visualization map (Figure 4) was constructed using VOSviewer, a research visualization and clustering analysis tool. A bibliometric map was constructed based on the results of the formed selection of articles by key words. 58 keywords were used as a basis, which were clustered according to the relevant topics. Here is a closer look at each cluster:

1. Cluster No 1 (red). In total, the cluster includes 15 keywords, from which it is necessary to single out the marker words: marketing (links: 39; total link strength: 82; occurrences: 24); consumer behaviour (links: 32; total link strength: 52; occurrences: 11); purchase intention (links: 24; total link strength: 35; occurrences: 12); greenwashing (links: 14; total link strength: 23; occurrences: 10); green consumption (links: 11; total link strength: 13; occurrences: 10);



**Figure 3.** A Bibliometric Map of the Keywords in the Investigated Articles, 2000-2022.

Source: developed by the authors based on VOSviewer (2022).

2. Cluster No 2 (green). In total, the cluster includes 10 keywords, from which it is necessary to single out the marker words: green marketing (links: 31; total link strength: 72; occurrences: 44); green brand equity (links: 26; total link strength: 57; occurrences: 24); green economy (links: 17; total link strength: 22; occurrences: 6); corporate social responsibility (links: 13; total link strength: 16; occurrences: 10); environmental economics (links: 23; total link strength: 33; occurrences: 7);

3. Cluster No 3 (blue). In total, the cluster has 8 keywords, from which it is necessary to single out the marker words: sustainability (links: 38; total link strength: 74; occurrences: 31); sustainable development (links: 38; total link strength: 88; occurrences: 25); supply chain management (links: 16; total link strength: 24; occurrences: 8); environmental protection (links: 24; total link strength: 31; occurrences: 8); brand (links: 10; total link strength: 16; occurrences: 5);

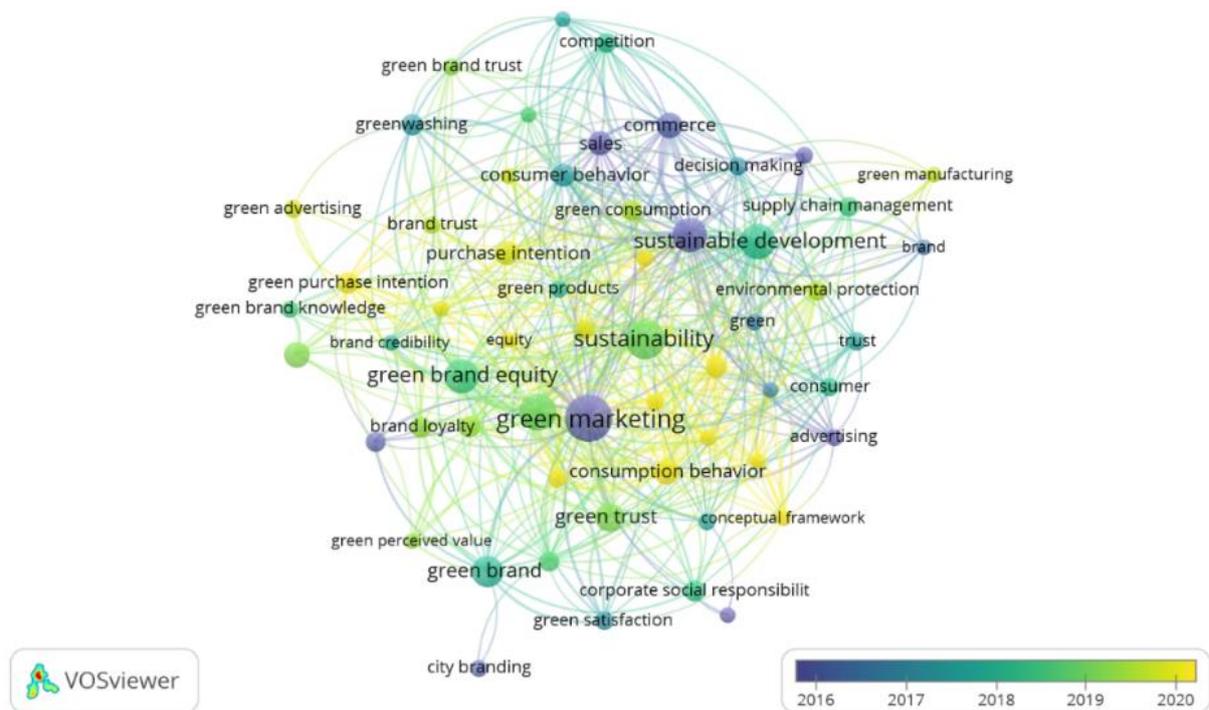
4. Cluster No 4 (yellow). In total, the cluster has 7 keywords, from which it is necessary to single out the marker words: green brand (links: 18; total link strength: 31; occurrences: 20); brand loyalty (links: 17; total link strength: 23; occurrences: 9); green brand loyalty (links: 18; total link strength: 31; occurrences: 20); perception (links: 24; total link strength: 31; occurrences: 8); brand equity (links: 8; total link strength: 10; occurrences: 8);

5. Cluster No 5 (purple). In total, the cluster has 7 keywords, from which it is necessary to single out the marker words: green brand image (links: 33; total link strength: 72);

occurrences: 28); green trust (links: 21; total link strength: 41; occurrences: 16); human (links: 30; total link strength: 52; occurrences: 9);

6. Cluster No 6 (turquoise). In total, the cluster has 6 keywords, from which it is necessary to single out the marker words: consumption behaviour (links: 28; total link strength: 54; occurrences: 15); advertising (links: 16; total link strength: 22; occurrences: 6); sustainable consumption (links: 21; total link strength: 27; occurrences: 5);

7. Cluster No 7 (orange). In total, the cluster has 5 keywords, from which it is necessary to single out the marker words: green brand positioning (links: 10; total link strength: 16; occurrences: 13); green purchase intention (links: 23; total link strength: 32; occurrences: 10); green advertising (links: 5; total link strength: 6; occurrences: 7).



**Figure 4.** A Bibliometric Map of the Keywords Evolution in the Researched Articles (2000-2021)  
Source: developed by the authors based on VOSviewer (2022).

Based on the results of the formed bibliometric map of the keywords evolution, it can be concluded that the research topic is quite new and relevant. This proves the average year of use of the keywords "green brand" and "corporate social responsibility" in the scientometric databases Scopus and Web of Science. Having considered the keywords evolution in more detail, it is necessary to highlight the following key points and their average year of publication: branding and environmental management (avg. pub. year 2013); green marketing and sustainable (avg. pub. year 2015); green brand, greenwashing, and consumer behaviour (avg. pub. year 2017); sustainability, green brand equity, corporate social responsibility (avg. pub. year 2018); green trust, green brand loyalty, environmental protection, green manufacturing (avg. pub. year 2019); green purchase intention, green economy (avg. pub. year 2020).

The results of the bibliometric map of the keywords evolution indicate the active development of ecological production and a green brand in the mix with ecological management. In our opinion, such phenomena are caused by the implementation and research of the Sustainable Development Goals and the European Green Deal adopted in 2019, which has been supported by many countries around the world.

## 5. Conclusions

Having conducted research on the green brand evolution in the context of corporate social responsibility, the following conclusions could be made. In particular, taking into account the results of the trend analysis, it could be concluded that interest in both studied concepts is growing. It bears mentioning that not only developed countries are interested in these concepts, which emphasizes the relevance of this issue. The results of publication activity indicate a positive dynamics of research in the field of green branding and corporate social responsibility, and the number of citations of these studies also emphasizes this. According to the results of the research of the terminological map, it can be concluded that the main studied terms are green marketing, sustainability, sustainable development, green brand and corporate social responsibility, as evidenced by the lengths of the connecting lines, although the keywords belong to different clusters. It is necessary to attract attention to the fact that all clusters are tightly connected with each other, and the circles of keywords are quite large, which is evidence of the positive dynamics of the used keywords and their symbiosis in the studied topics.

The finding allowed concluding that there exists a necessity to study a green brand and corporate social responsibility both in a complex and separately. There is a scientific need for research on the impact of corporate social and environmental responsibility of business on a country's green brand and, in general, on the country's sustainable development strategy. It should be noted that green brand depends on social, economic and political climate in the country (Kuzior et al., 2021b; Kwilinski et al., 2022c; 2020b). Considering the studies (Drożdż & Mróz-Malik, 2017; Kotowicz et al., 2022; Kuzior et al., 2021a; Kwilinski et al., 2020a; Miskiewicz, 2020) the green energy and technologies, green knowledge (Saługa et al., 2020; 2021; Tkachenko et al., 2019; Trzeciak et al., 2022; Lyulyov et al., 2021b) and energy security of the country could decline or reduce the country's green brand. In this case, the further investigations should incorporate the energy dimensions within analysis of country's green brand. At the same time, it is advisable to formulate one of the key problems of further research – the lack of established and proven sustainable indicators of the effectiveness of a green brand and fixed values and determinants of the corporate social responsibility impact. These shortcomings can be resolved only under the conditions of constant testing and the search for new mathematical models for further research.

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