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## Supporting Ukrainian entrepreneurs abroad – A project of students of the University of Notre Dame and UCU

WEDNESDAY, 27 MARCH, 2024

Students of the MBA program of the **Mendoza College of Business** of America's University of Notre Dame together with the UCU Foundation in Wrocław, Poland and the UCU Business School worked on a research and consulting project for the Ukrainian business community – entrepreneurs who re-located their businesses abroad or opened their own businesses in Poland.

UCU's center in Wrocław, among other tasks, intends to be an informational and educational center for Ukrainians who want to open a business in Poland and also to support entrepreneurs who have re-located their businesses.

*"With the start of the full-scale invasion, many Ukrainians have found refuge in Poland and started their own businesses. According to data from Poland's central registration and information about business, in 2023 one-tenth of new enterprises in Poland were registered by Ukrainians. These people need support and a community of peers. We are striving for the UCU center in Wrocław to become a center which will create a business community for Ukrainians."*— So explained **Roksolana Voronovska**, head of the UCU Foundation in Wrocław.

The UCU Foundation was created in 2022 to serve the Ukrainian community in Poland and develop academic cooperation and foster Ukrainian-Polish dialogue. Today part of the focus of the center is also cooperation with entrepreneurs and economic expertise.



A consulting project to develop the business community in Poland was prepared by students of the MBA program of the **Mendoza College of Business** of the University of Notre Dame in cooperation with students of the UCU Business School. This is already the second joint project of the UCU Foundation in Poland. Last year they worked on the strategic development of the foundation and researched social challenges and obstacles to employment for Ukrainians who try to establish their lives in Poland. This time, the American and Ukrainian students studied the entrepreneurial experience of Ukrainian immigrants to Poland.

*“For us, cooperation with the University of Notre Dame, a long-time partner of UCU, is of great value. Joint projects provide new knowledge, experience, and the potential for development. In addition, through such research our American colleagues can learn more about Ukraine and the war from direct witnesses, for they interact with Ukrainian entrepreneurs and hear about their pains and stories of success. The war in Ukraine becomes closer to them. On the other hand, our American colleagues became immersed in the questions of the immigration of Ukrainians and re-located businesses and saw interesting and quality examples of businesses. In particular, one of the best restaurants now operating in Wrocław was opened by a restaurateur from Kyiv. In this way, through educational projects and Ukrainian business, we bring Ukrainian narratives to the world.”* So explained Yaryna Boychuk, head of the UCU Business School, who also took part in the consulting project.



For a week, the student team from the **Mendoza College of Business** and the UCU Business School did research and conducted deep interviews with Ukrainian entrepreneurs who work in Wrocław, in particular with owners and managers of restaurants, stores, and cafes. They also analyzed the city's business market and prospects for development, taking into account its historical and mental context. Based on the data received, the researchers created a roadmap for the UCU Foundation in Poland, which, in particular, foresees the university's involvement in events in Wrocław, providing services in expertise and education, quality communication and feedback.

Among upcoming plans of the UCU Foundation are meetings with entrepreneurs who already have significant experience of introducing a business into Poland and can share their experience with other Ukrainians.





Together with the Union of Ukrainian Entrepreneurs, last year the foundation's team organized a meeting with Ukrainian businessmen in Poland. The event was interesting and useful for the Ukrainian community. Roksolana Voronovska explained: "We have a demand for Ukrainians who want to become entrepreneurs in Poland, for expertise, to build communities, a forum for sharing experience. So, in partnership with the UCU Business School, we plan to offer a menu of possibilities and services for our citizens in Poland."

Ukrainian Catholic University has wide horizontal connections, thanks to graduates and a network of partners throughout the world. "*Our community is our strength*" — emphasized the head of the business school, Yaryna Boychuk. "*Our graduates are united, both in Ukraine and*

*the world, to share knowledge and experience. Ukrainian entrepreneurs have gone into the European market; they became members of world business associations. UCU's role is to get them together, to create a network, and to support them. It's important that people remember that they are Ukrainians and that they don't lose close contacts with their homeland."*

For the more than two years of the full-scale invasion, Ukraine has more than once surprised the world with its endurance, creativity, and service. Today our entrepreneurs influence the economics of western governments and become competitive players in the European business environment. In particular, in the economy of Poland alone, in the last two years the portion of Ukrainian entrepreneurs has grown to 10%. Ukrainian business now has a window of opportunity for development in Europe.

*"The world is now talking about Ukraine, in particular thanks to our business. We have to work on our value and offers for the world. We have to talk about advantageous cooperation with Ukrainian companies as with dependable partners. Ukraine, even in wartime, can offer many good products, services, and interesting projects."*— So sums up Sophia Opatska, UCU Vice-Rector for Strategic Development.

For partners:

*The UCU Foundation in Wrocław is ready to work together with Ukrainian entrepreneurs. If you have a business which has re-located or you established your own business in Poland and need expertise, write us at [rvoronovska@ucu.edu.ua](mailto:rvoronovska@ucu.edu.ua)*



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