



# The opening of the Community Center in Galați

These days the Community Center for Ukrainian people support was opened in Galați (Romania), where approximately 33 MDEM employees with 70 members of families are currently staying. The Center is among initiatives of the Damen Helpt foundation, managed by Annelies Damen. The purpose of this foundation is to help Damen colleagues in need.

It raises funds in order to facilitate financial and operational support to Damen employees and their identifiable families, which are in or are affected by a crisis. The first project is to help those affected by the crisis in Ukraine: "We want to help because our colleagues at Marine Design Engineering Mykolayiv (MDEM) in Ukraine are highly valued in the Damen Shipyards group and have been a member of the Damen family since 2006. More than 200 employees work mostly on engineering services, but the MDEM portfolio has grown during these years."

Among honored guests of the festive opening were Annelies Damen (Non-Ex Board Member Damen Shipyards Group / foundation Damen Helps), Jitte Milder (Global Marketing Communication), Olena Zhukova (MDEM Director) and group of partners. Since the opening of the Community Center, many friends and partners who care about the fate of Ukraine and Ukrainian families have come to us. Among them are

Mark Van Heyningen (Chief Operations Officer of Damen), Mark Vermeulen (Managing Director of MSV Division), Dirk de Bruin (HR Director, Damen), Dave Adams (HR Director of MSV Division), Eduard Radu (HR Director of Galați Shipyard).

The opening ceremony was full of touching speeches, dancing and musical performances, including young Ukrainian talents.





Annelies Damen opened Community Center and made significant efforts in running this project. In her welcome speech, she told about Damen Helpt foundation and donation initiatives, which helped to open Community Center in Galati. Among initiatives is an ability for Damen colleagues to contribute by donating one or more days' holiday leave or donate an amount. Up to now Damen Helpt donations are continuing that will help to perform announced and further by the Foundation initiatives.

Olena Zhukova made a grateful speech for Romanian colleague and Damen at whole for all assistance including opened Community Center, highlighting the possibility to come back in Ukraine in safe Uzhhorod where MDEM location was organized: "It is a very difficult for each of us to choose between priorities which different locations have. Some of our people are still in Mykolaiv with a lot of humanitarian problems, and we are encouraging them to move to a safe Ukrainian location. There are people in West Ukraine, who are working and, firstly, try to establish their life there and, secondly, really understand the value of freedom of living in Ukraine and continue the work environment.

I would like to thank very much to Romanian colleagues, to all Romanian community, to your families for care and worry about of us from the first days of the war, for your work during nights, we will be always very grateful for this.

We want to thank to Damen family for all it has being doing for us from the war begun, for support in evacuation, and provided assistance with humanitarian needs. It is very good that Damen community, our shipyard colleagues made such special activity as Community Center with focus on people and their needs

outside the workspace. And thanks a lot for everyone who donate to Helpt Association. We will learn this example Romanian Community Center for ourselves in order in organizing Social Center in Uzhhorod because our people here currently need support. We hope that we will do the same, but some will be different because we'll do that on our native land. And in the future we invite you to visit Uzhhorod, we hope it will safe enough for all people to come back. So thanks for being with us, and we are sure that a lot of us soon will come to Ukraine. Welcome home and thanks Romanian colleagues and Damen for support!"



[Association for helping Ukrainians](#)'s mission is to guide every Ukrainian in need to a safe environment to become a part of a self-sustaining Ukrainian community. Now together with Community Center they realise the next projects:

- ▶ **Emergency Evacuation:** providing evacuation assistance and a 30 days safe place to stay when arriving in Galati (Romania);
- ▶ **Accommodation:** assist in finding a place to live in Galati and receiving municipal compensation for the rent;
- ▶ **Kids Club:** organize fun and developing activities for kids and partner with kindergartens to help mothers have time for themselves or work;
- ▶ **Language Classes:** organize Romanian and English classes (online and offline) to get employment and integrate into the community;
- ▶ **Employment:** assist finding jobs, together with our partners and friends of our associations;
- ▶ **Family Doctor and Dental Care:** find family doctors and sponsor emergency dental care;
- ▶ **Information and Legal Support;**
- ▶ **Happy Ladies. Hand-mades for a living:** help ladies to create crafts and interior products and sell them in Romania, Germany and Poland.

All MDEM team and their dearest ones are so deeply grateful to Damen family for all, that has been doing for each of us, for strong support in difficult for Ukraine time. Hope, we will have an opportunity to gather on the native Ukrainian ground in the safe location as soon as possible. <<



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