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# CEE economies

## Political, economic and managerial perspectives

Immersive Program at Kozminski University

6-9 May 2026



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# About Poland and Warsaw



# Poland

- widely known as "Europe's Growth Champion"
- remarkable, uninterrupted economic expansion since 1989
- one of the fastest-growing EU's large economies



# WARSAW: A PLACE TO BE



# INTERNATIONAL RANKINGS

## WARSAW ON THE RISE



### Dynamic economic growth

According to Oxford Economics, Warsaw is projected to be one of the fastest-growing cities in Europe between 2024 and 2028, with an average annual GDP growth of around 3%.



### City of the Future

Warsaw ranked 3rd in the European Cities & Regions of the Future 2024 by fDi Intelligence (Financial Times Group), recognized for its investment potential, business-friendliness, and human capital.



### Alpha City Status

In the 2024 classification by the Globalization and World Cities Research Network, Warsaw achieved Alpha City status – marking strong integration with the global economy.



### Top Investment Destination

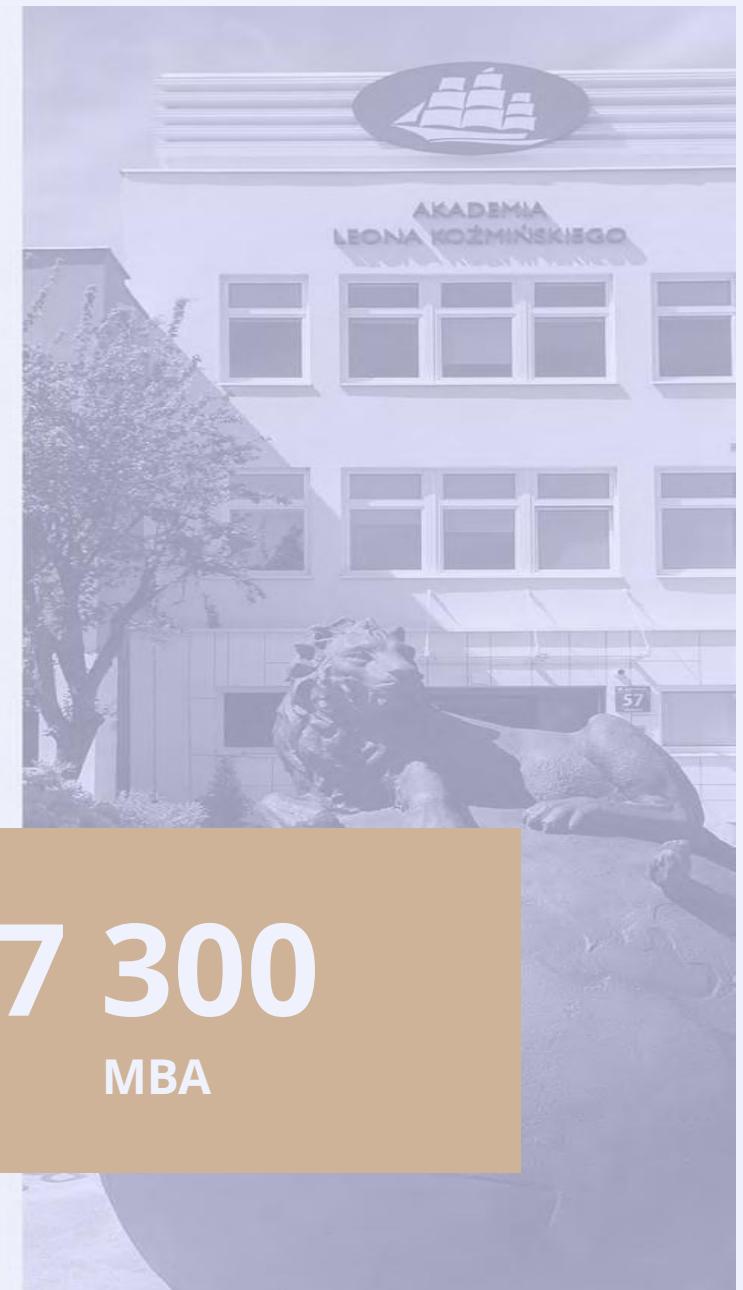
Warsaw was named one of Europe's most attractive cities for foreign direct investment, ranking 12<sup>th</sup> in Europe in terms of overall investment appeal.

# About Kozminski University



## WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION IN THE HEART OF EUROPE

- internationally renowned and accredited private business school, located in the very heart of Europe
- the quality of education confirmed by the most important international accreditations, Financial Times and national rankings
- a bridge between academic world and the professional business environment



**78 500**

Graduates

**40 500**

Executive education

**7 300**

MBA



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# TRIPLE CROWN



London Business School  
IMD  
ESCP Business School

1999



HEC Paris  
INSEAD  
London Business School

2008



Harvard  
Yale University  
Berkeley  
Stanford  
University of California

2011



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#  
IN CEE

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FT EXECUTIVE  
EDUCATION  
2025 RANKING



# CEE economies

## Political, economic and managerial perspectives

### About the program





Business is never located in a bubble. Let's meet in Poland, **Europe's growth champion**, at Kozminski University, **best business school in CEE according to FT** and explore **the current circumstances and what they can mean to companies, entrepreneurs and managers**.

## Program's overview

Let's examine the economies of Central and Eastern Europe from the perspective of their place on the global economic map. Until recently, our region was a backward, centrally planned economy, many of which were part of the Soviet Union. Thirty-five years later, we find **Poland**, which has recorded **the highest growth rate in Europe**; Estonia, a leader in the digital transformation of successive areas of the state and economy; and the Czech Republic, whose Skodas are increasingly seen on the roads of Europe and the world

Are these successes the result of:

- a combination of **geopolitical circumstances**?
- **wise economic policy**?
- or the **exceptional skills of entrepreneurs** from our region?



# OUTLINE

## Day 1 THE WORLD WE LIVE IN

Geopolitical Changes and Their Implications; CEE Economies – Achievements, Perspectives and Current Challenges

## Day 2 THE REALITY WE CREATE

Competing and Expanding from the Heart of Europe; competitive realities and growth trajectories

## Day 3 THE LESSONS WE CAN LEARN

Polish Business History  
How can one protect a business against overwhelming historical forces

## Day 4 THE WORLD CONTINUES TO EVOLVE

CEE in global economy - strategic choices for policy makers and managers; new challenges for economy and companies



# TIMETABLE

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4
9:00-9:30 Opening	09:00-12:15 Competing and Expanding from the Heart of Europe: - prof. Mariola Ciszewska-Mlinarič, prof. Piotr Wójcik	09:00-12:15 Polish Business History - prof. Tomasz Olejniczak	09:00-12:15 CEE in global economy - prof. Jacek Tomkiewicz
9:30-11:00 Geopolitical Changes and Their Implications for Economic Development – prof. Grzegorz Kołodko			
11:15-12:45 CEE Economies – Achievements, Perspectives and Current Challenges – prof. Jacek Tomkiewicz	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
Lunch	13:15 – 14:45 Competing and Expanding from the Heart of Europe - prof. Mariola Ciszewska-Mlinarič, prof. Piotr Wójcik	13:15-16:00 Polish Business History - Case study	13:15 – 14:00 Summary, reflections and wrap-up
14:00-16:30 Company visit	15:00-16:30 interactive session with a senior executive(s) from a Polish company		Farewell drink
		Dinner	

\*timetable might be subject to minor changes



## Geopolitical Changes and Their Implications for Economic Development

**prof. Grzegorz W. Kołodko**

Opening lecture by former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of Poland.

## CEE Economies – Achievements, Perspectives and Current Challenges

**prof. Jacek Tomkiewicz**

The aim of the lectures and discussions will be to **highlight the dynamic environment the global economy** has become in recent years and what this means for managers and entrepreneurs. A confluence of political, economic, demographic, and social factors is causing traditional leaders in the global economy to lose their importance, while **a new order continues to emerge**. This is accompanied by **dramatic events** such as the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East, ongoing climate change, and **challenges to public finance systems** stemming from an aging population.



# prof. Grzegorz W. Kołodko

Grzegorz W. Kołodko is a distinguished professor of economics and a **key architect of Polish economic reforms**. He has been a university lecturer, researcher, and author of numerous academic books and research papers. As **Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of Poland** from 2002 to 2003, he played a leading role in **Poland's entry into the European Union**.

He is the founder and director of TIGER – Transformation, Integration, and Globalization Economic Research at Kozminski University in Warsaw. He has served as a **consultant to international organizations** such as the **IMF, World Bank, UN, and the OECD**. Kołodko is a member of the European Academy of Arts, Sciences and Humanities, Academia Europaea. He is also a **non-resident senior fellow** at the Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies, Renmin University of China in Beijing, and a distinguished professor at the Emerging Markets Institute, Beijing Normal University, Beijing.



# prof. Jacek Tomkiewicz

Lecturer with many years of experience, conducts classes at graduate, post-graduate (including MBA) and doctoral studies, he is also a **visiting professor at several European universities**. He has completed several **research internships** in foreign institutions, including **Stanford University** in the USA, **Columbia University** in the USA, **Harvard University** in the USA, OECD in Paris and Brighton University.

An **expert in the field of economics, economy and public finances**. Author of studies and **expert opinions** in the field of macroeconomics and public finance prepared for the **Ministry of Finance, Chancellery of the Prime Minister, National Bank of Poland** and commercial companies. In 2002-2003 he served as an **advisor to the Vice President of the Council of Ministers, Minister of Finance**, and was a member of the team responsible for structural reforms within the public finance system. Author of publications in the field of macroeconomics, economic policy and public finance.



# Competing and Expanding from the Heart of Europe: Insights from Polish and CEE Companies

## prof. Mariola Ciszewska-Mlinarič, prof. Piotr Wójcik

Let's immerse in the **competitive realities and growth trajectories of companies from Poland and CEE**. The session explores **how regional champions are reshaping industries, expanding internationally**, and building **business models** in an evolving global environment.

Participants will gain a **rich understanding of the strategic capabilities and institutional contexts that distinguish CEE firms** - from entrepreneurial small and mid-sized innovators to established market leaders. The discussions will bridge cutting-edge **academic insights with real-world firm experience in international expansion**.

A highlight of the module is an **interactive session with senior executive(s)** from Polish companies operating in two different industries – **Edutainment** and **high-tech (AI-related)**. They will share their practical perspectives on building international competitiveness, and the participants will have the **opportunity to engage directly with business practice, strategic decision-making processes**, and leadership challenges specific to the **CEE context**.



# prof. Mariola Ciszewska-Mlinarič

Doctor habilitated in **economic sciences**. Lecturer in doctoral studies, EMBA, postgraduate and graduate studies, also at foreign universities in **France, Austria and Slovenia**.

Specializes in the **theory of strategy and internationalization** of enterprises from emerging economies, decision making processes and the role of distance in foreign expansion. **Consultant** in the area of strategic consulting in the field of corporate growth strategy and implementation of a balanced scorecard for leading chemical and energy companies and non-profit organizations.

Member of several scientific organizations, including the **Academy of International Business, Strategic Management Society and European International Business Academy (EIBA)**. She is the author of several dozen publications in the field of international strategy and management, publishing in recognized foreign journals.



# prof. Piotr Wójcik

Associate Professor in the Department of Strategy and International Business at Kozminski University with **over 10 years of research experience**. Program Director for Master in Management at Kozminski University and former Deputy Dean. Deputy Director of the **Research Center for Innovative Growth Strategies** at Kozminski University.

Leader of research projects financed by the **National Science Centre**, focused on **internationalization strategies of Polish firms**, business model innovation and 'resilient' strategies. Member of **international academic societies** (e.g. Academy of Management, Strategic Management Society Academy of International Business). His articles were published in Journal of Business Research, International Marketing Review, European Business Review, Journal of Organizational Change Management, Baltic Journal of Management, Journal of East European Management Studies.

Visiting professor at ESCP, Hebei Finance University and University of Belgrade. Winner of the **Verba Veritatis award for the best doctoral thesis in the field of business ethics and social innovation**. Co-founder and **CEO of a company delivering IT solutions for sustainability issues**. Recipient of the scholarship for **Young Researchers** awarded by the **Minister of Science and Higher Education** (2018) and the ALK Rector's Award for research work (2019-2023).



# Polish Business History

## How to survive in the age of technological revolution?

### prof. Tomasz Olejniczak

- What does it mean to do business in a country “cursed by discontinuity”?
- How can **a company remain resilient** for 200 years?
- Why would an entrepreneur start a business knowing that it might be lost within their lifetime?
- And how can one **protect a business against overwhelming historical forces**?

These are some of the questions explored in *Polish Business History*. The course introduces participants to Poland's history from a **unique micro perspective** — that of **individual businesses** and **entrepreneurs struggling for survival amid dramatic political, economic, and social transformations**. Participants will not only gain insight into the historical foundations of business in Poland but also develop the ability to **critically reflect on the relevance of history to contemporary business challenges**.



## Polish Business History – Case study

prof. Tomasz Olejniczak

Hands-on case study: the participants will have the opportunity to focus on the history of Ericsson in Poland and its female telephone operators in the age of technological revolution. In a wider perspective we will discuss, how one can use social capital in the age of automation.

Unique location: the legendary building in the center of Warsaw PAST building - the first skyscraper of the XIX century in Warsaw. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PAST\\_\(Poland\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PAST_(Poland))



# prof. Tomasz Olejniczak

Associate professor at the Department of Management, Kozminski University, Director of Center for Business History and **Director of the Doctoral Studies**. He is a graduate of **Japanese studies** at the University of Warsaw and management at the **University of Tokyo**.

In 2012, he started working at the Department of Management at Kozminski University, where he obtained his PhD in 2014 and habilitation in 2021.

He is a fellow of the **Japanese Ministry of Education** and the **Japan Foundation**. His research interests include organizational longevity, continuity, business history, and business archives. .



# CEE in global economy - strategic choices for policy makers and managers

## prof. Jacek Tomkiewicz

Many of us thought that fundamental political, economic, and social changes had already occurred in Central and Eastern Europe, as we witnessed the collapse of the Soviet Union, the transformation to a market economy, and most CEE countries becoming EU members. However, **the world continues to evolve**, and we are witnessing **further revolutions**. During our workshop, we will consider the **challenges AI, demography, macroeconomic stability**, and increasingly **complex global politics** pose for **economic policy, entrepreneurs, and managers**.



THANK YOU!



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