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**"European Spirit of Entrepreneurship and the role Poland's
young generation can play so Europe regain its leadership in the
economy and social matters in the globalised world"**

- an essay -

The European Union, though once recognised as one of the most promising global markets, is now believed to reach some kind of an impasse. The process, given the name of eurosclerosis, is a source of a great concern of all the fellow Europeans. It becomes more and more clear that Europe will not manage to overtake the United States by 2010 as it was stated in the Lisbon Strategy, nor is it to do so in the near future.

On the first of May 2004 ten new countries have joined the Union. At that particular moment many people asked whether these countries were to bring forth new ideas and set new ways for the development. Among them the biggest and having the largest population was Poland. It has remained so even after the enlargement of 2007. By taking under scope its youngest generation we might see whether Europe could be positively influenced by its new members.

One of the main problems with modern Europe is that there are less and less people who risk to set up their own businesses. Without it the free market cannot work efficiently, ceding to the monopolised and "statised" economy. This should be avoided if we want to match the US. Unfortunately, it can be observed that more and more young Poles are afraid of becoming entrepreneurs. This phenomenon concerns especially the elites who in vast majority would prefer to get employed in large corporations. A well-determined path of career and high expected value of future earnings tempts with a sense of stability. This is an upsetting constatation, as those young elites will remain a point of referance for other people's aspirations. Eventually, we might end up with a society believing that the biggest success one can achieve is to work in a huge, multinational entreprise and that only fools could come up with an idea of setting up one of their own.

But there exists another sort of young Poles. There are those who emmigrate to foreign countries to earn a decent money, to learn laguages, and to learn new skills. Among those people many are students with technical knowledge, many having finished informatics, many

engineers, young doctors, but also people with various types of trainings, like nurses, electricians, mechanics and so on. They proved themselves courageous in their decision to leave the country and to work abroad. And after some years they tend to come back to Poland, many of them with money and ideas for starting their own businesses. They are flexible and aware of what could be their way to success on the globalised market. Of course not all of them will become entrepreneurs. Still, they have indeed possessed most of the skills that make a common man an entrepreneur. These people resemble the 19th century migrants, those skilled and crafty Europeans crossing the ocean, who enriched the American society and laid foundations for the American wealth and development. It is vital for Europe to keep them; otherwise we will never experience a "European Dream", and Europe will become only a part-time stop for those young and skillful people who will strive to find their fortune elsewhere.

Another big advantage of Poland's young generation is its persistent ideological reluctance to the deceptions of marxism. The history has learned them a lesson. Some of them still lived under the communism, others were given a thorough account on it by their families and older friends. It is important that they exchange this knowledge with their peers from the western countries. Over there, this ideology is spreading within the elites. Many of Polish students who take part in international exchanges find it bizarre that the people they meet, professors and students of the most excellent European universities, keep on believing that the world is infested by the raging capitalists, the oppressors of the common man. "A spectre is haunting Europe – the spectre of Communism", once said Marx, and we should be deadly serious about these words that do reverberate in the minds of many young people. Europeans should discuss it, but not on the governmental level. The enlargement of Europe has facilitated the discussion, as more and more common people from different countries can meet each other and exchange their points of view.

The spirit of entrepreneurship cannot be devoid of the European values. Those values might be found in the above-mentioned discussion. In my opinion, the *entrepreneur* should be a person who is above all dedicated to the creation and is driven by the idea of development and progress for the sake of them. Max Weber regarded the protestant ethic as a source of capitalism, and I think he was right in saying so. Because what can be sometimes observed in Poles is a lack of an ethical background in their enterprises. In other words, capitalism can incite egoism and an overwhelming pursuit of money, which is morally and socially incorrect. These principles are somewhat lost to Poles, but not only to them.

All in all, there are still many advantages of Poland's young generation. It has still many traits of a good entrepreneur: flexibility, knowledge and experience. It can surely enrich the EU and in a way remind her how an entrepreneur should look like. But of course it has many weaknesses as well and could be enhanced by other nations' experiences. By means of discussion and debate, Europe might find its way out of the impass.