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New impulse for European economy? Comparison of entrepreneurship in Turkey and Poland

Abstract

The paper analyses entrepreneurial attitudes, activity and aspirations in Turkey and Poland on the background of other European countries. The research is based on Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) project and uses independent sample t-test as a main analytical tool. The main conclusion is that Polish and Turkish entrepreneurial profiles are similar in some respects and different in other. Turkey has higher level of opportunity recognition, entrepreneurial intentions, Poland has high fear of failure and both countries have similar level of entrepreneurial activity. In both countries there is a considerable gender gap, businesses are innovative, in Turkey more entrepreneurs declare high growth expectations.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, start-ups, Global Entrepreneurship Monitor.
JEL Classification: L26, N10, O44.

Introduction

The European economy has experienced a serious slowdown during last couple of years [Connolly 2012]. Whilst not neglecting the academic efforts to investigate the antecedents of the economic crisis and it is crucial to find a path forward. It is also important to notice that some countries proved to be at least partially immune against the continental and global slowdown and their economies did not suffer any drop in GDP [Connolly 2012]. Among those very few countries were two of which one is a member of European Union and the other is strongly aspiring to become one – Poland and Turkey. What is therefore the secret of the ability to perform more effectively than others in current, more difficult times? One obvious explanation would be the size of the internal market –

both countries have populations of considerable size (Poland – 38.5 million, Turkey – 75.6 million). However, a closer inspection demonstrates that both countries also have strong entrepreneurial capacity. The purpose of the paper is to present the entrepreneurial profiles of Poland and Turkey at the background of other European countries and to look for some similarities and differences in venturing identities of both countries.

1. Poland and Turkey – similarities and differences

Both Poland and Turkey have undergone serious economic changes during last two decades and experienced periods of considerable growth [Connolly, 2012]. It is important to compare social and economic potential of both countries before going to comparing entrepreneurial profiles. Turkey is almost exactly two times bigger than Poland in terms of population and two and a half times bigger in terms of size (Table 1).

Table 1. Comparison of demographic, social and economic potentials of Poland and Turkey

Specification	Poland	Turkey
Population	38.5 m	75.6 m
Size	312.7 km^2	783.6 km^2
Average age	38.2	29.2
Demographic growth	–0.05%	1.16%
Births per woman	1.29	2.1
GDP nominal	517 bn USD	820 bn USD
GDP PPP	897 bn USD	1,422 bn USD
GDP per capita PPP	23.275 USD	18.975 USD
GDP growth	1.3%	3.8%
R&D expenditures (% of GDP 2009)	0.68	0.85

Source: Based on World Bank, International Monetary Fund and CIA Factbook sources.

The closer look allows to see even more differences, especially in terms of demography. Turkish society is on average a whole nine years younger than Polish (29.2 years compared to 38.2 years), in Turkey there is a considerable demographic growth while in Poland there is a slight decline. Moreover, the fertility of Turkish women is much higher than of Polish ones which provides a base for demographic growth (International Monetary Fund). Therefore, it can be said that demography is the first important factor that should contribute to the entrepreneurial activity in Turkey, as younger people more often start-up and growing society should provide an impulse for economic activity in the future. I therefore hypothesize:

H1: Entrepreneurial intent in Turkey is higher than in Poland and most EU countries.

And

H2: Entrepreneurial activity in Turkey is higher than in Poland and most EU countries.

Hypothesis H2 is supported by the findings of prior research [e.g. Baycan 2013] that entrepreneurship among Turkish immigrants is very high. However, the contradictory impact on hypothesis H2 might come from the informal entrepreneurial activity. Kus [2014] points out that the size of the informal economy in Turkey is relatively large and is a result of neoliberal reform. Therefore, part of the entrepreneurial activity might be difficult to capture as respondents might be reluctant to admit to the activity in this grey area.

The Turkish economy has been growing relatively quickly during recent years (International Monetary Fund), therefore the economic potential of those two countries are comparable with the Turkish economy being larger in a nominal scale, but with a slightly lower GDP per capita (International Monetary Fund). The fact that the Turkish economy is growing quickly, but has not reached the level of GDP per capita of Poland and other EU countries provides the following hypothesize that:

H3: Opportunity recognition in Turkey is higher than in Poland and most EU countries.

Surprisingly, despite the geographical, historical and religious differences, the cultures of Poland and Turkey are similar to each other in some respects (Table 2). Among six dimensions of culture recognized by Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov [2010] three place Poland and Turkey in the same group. Both countries have similar levels of power distance (69 and 66, respectively for Poland and Turkey), uncertainty avoidance (93 and 85) and pragmatism (38 and 46). Taking this to the level of business and entrepreneurship that would mean that both countries should produce the companies of similar structures in terms of relations between supervisors and subordinates, also their organizational cultures should be similar in terms of codes of values.

Table 2. Comparison of cultures of Poland and Turkey

Specification	Poland	Turkey
Power distance	68	66
Individualism	60	37
Masculinity	64	45
Uncertainty avoidance	93	85
Pragmatism	38	46
Indulgence	29	49

Source: [Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov 2010].

There is some evidence that the dimension of national culture that has the major impact on entrepreneurial activity is uncertainty avoidance [Erdem 2001; Wennekers et al. 2007]. It affects two factors that are closely connected to entrepreneurship and are even treated at its antecedents: risk taking and innovativeness. The first factor is also reflected in the phenomenon that some scholars describe as "fear of failure". Both Poland and Turkey have relatively high levels of uncertainty avoidance, therefore we can expect that in both countries fear of failure will be high and therefore hypothesize:

H4: Fear of failure in Poland and Turkey is at similar level which is higher than the average.

Innovative activity is also very closely connected with risk taking as it means the involvement of resources in the activities that results are impossible to predict [McKinley, Latham and Braun 2014]. Therefore, in countries that are rather risk-aversive, lower innovativeness might be expected. Moreover, Poland and Turkey are countries with one of the lowest expenditures on research and development as the percentage of GDP (0.68 and 0.85, respectively comparing to 1.9 of EU average and 4.38 of the leader – Israel) – Table 1. Therefore, we can hypothesize that:

H5: In both Poland and Turkey that start-ups have lower innovativeness than in other countries.

It is worth commenting that Turkish R&D expenditures rose from the level of 0.37% of GDP in 1998 while Polish expenditures has stayed at more or less the same level since the mid-nineties [Grabowski et al. 2013].

One of the differences between Polish and Turkish cultures is masculinity with Poland being more masculine than Turkey (64 to 45). Masculinity is an important factor influencing entrepreneurial activity [Mueller 2004] and its impact is twofold. First of all, in masculine countries entrepreneurs are more ambitious and therefore have higher growth expectations in terms of the incline of number of jobs in time. This is also supported by the fact that cultures that score higher in individualism tend to have a higher need for achievement [Demirci 2013]. Therefore it can be hypothesized that:

H6: Growth expectations of Polish nascent entrepreneurs are higher than of Turkish ones.

Secondly, in masculine countries the social roles of men and women are more distinct which results in higher gender gaps including the gender gap in entrepreneurship. Moreover, there is evidence that in Turkey the impact of human capital on the likelihood of becoming an entrepreneur is higher for women

than men and that no gender differences are observed in the impact of financial capital on the likelihood of becoming an entrepreneur [Cetindamara et al. 2012], therefore it can be assumed that:

H7: Gender gap in entrepreneurship is higher in Poland than in Turkey.

Another two cultural differences between Poland and Turkey are individualism and indulgence. The Polish culture is more individualistic than Turkish (60 to 37) and at the same time more restraint (29 to 49 in indulgence which is the opposite of restraint). That could further support the hypothesis of higher growth expectations of Polish entrepreneurs, but also illustrates that Turkish entrepreneurs are more open to cooperation with other individuals and businesses both in the processes of starting up a business and running an established enterprise. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that:

H8: Turkish entrepreneurs are more inclined to cooperation with other enterprises than Polish ones.

2. Research methods, sample, variables and measures

The research carried out to test the above hypotheses is based on Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) study [Amorós, Bosma 2014]. It is the biggest scientific project of researching entrepreneurship worldwide [Amorós, Bosma 2014]. It was started in 1999, when 10 countries took part in the study. In 2013, it encompassed 70 economies, 75% of the world population, and 90% of world GDP. In the GEM project the same research process is repeated in yearly cycles. Moreover, the same methodology is applied in all countries taking part in the research. This results in full comparability of the results both longitudinally and across countries. GEM has two main research elements. Adult population survey (APS) is completed by a representative sample of at least two thousand adults in each economy. The total sample in 2013 accounted for 197,000 respondents across the globe. The purpose of APS is to capture the attitudes, activities and aspirations of society in the field of entrepreneurship. APS has two main advantages over official statistics: it captures not only people registering their activity but also entrepreneurs-to-be – people who intend to start a business or even start to prepare to do so, and it provides in-depth view into motivations, attitudes and aspirations of entrepreneurs. The other part of the research is called National Experts Survey (NES) where national experts are consulted on entrepreneurial framework conditions – factors that explain the nature and level of entrepreneurship in the economies: financing, governmental policies, governmental pro-

grams, education and training, research and development transfer, commercial infrastructure, internal market openness, physical infrastructure and cultural land social norms [Amorós, Bosma 2014].

While entrepreneurship is a multifaceted phenomenon with many different meanings, GEM operationalizes entrepreneurship as: any serious attempt at new business or new venture creation, such as self-employment, a new business organization, or the expansion of an existing business, by an individual, a team of individuals, or an established business. While entrepreneurship is defined narrowly as new business activity, it takes a broad view of what it recognizes business activity to be. This has its implications in measuring the level of entrepreneurship in GEM that is not limited to registration of new business activity, but it is treated rather in behavioral than in institutional terms, and it includes both entrepreneurial activities aimed at registration of new business entities, and entrepreneurial activities in the existing organizations.

GEM employs socio-economic approach in its research [Kelley, Singer & Herrington 2012; Xavier et al. 2013; Amorós, Bosma 2014]. This model attempts to present entrepreneurship in two ways. First of all, it documents how entrepreneurship is affected by national conditions. It also shows that three major components of entrepreneurship cover: attitudes, activity and aspirations. These three components are presented in the form of conglomerate creating innovations, economic growth and new jobs. Detailed interactions between the components are subject to analysis.

In GEM it is important to differentiate a phase of the business activity [Amorós, Bosma 2014], while phases before its formal implementation are also subject to the analysis, and most attention is paid to the phase of early-stage activity. It is one of the significant elements distinguishing GEM from other research projects on entrepreneurship where registration of new entities is studied on the basis of data of national statistical offices which does not enable good insight in the nature of the new enterprises. In modeling the process of entrepreneurship, GEM applies three stages of economic project development. Depending on the phase an entrepreneur is in, they may be defined as a nascent entrepreneur, a new entrepreneur or an established enterprise. In the GEM methodology, nascent entrepreneurs are individuals who have not established business activity yet but they plan to, and those who have already established business activity and are at its early stage – up to three months from establishment of business activity. Business activity is considered to be new in the case of paying wages for the period of three months. Such persons start to take first steps to establish a business: they obtain financial support, do the business planning, apply for legal protection of

their intellectual property. New entrepreneurs are people who established their business activities from three to 42 months before the beginning of the research.

For some of the analyses the study uses the aggregated data at the national level and presents the comparison of European countries taking part in the research and averages for other geographical regions. For those analyses the study uses the data for 2013, data from 2014 has not been released at the time of writing the paper. For some more detailed analyses the study uses APS samples from the research carried out in Poland and Turkey in 2012, data from 2013 at the individual level has not been available for the author at the time of preparing the paper due to the data embargo in GEM. The overall sample for this part of research is a random sample of 2003 respondents (Poland) and 2401 respondents (Turkey). The sample is chosen from general public instead of only entrepreneurs. Certainly, it also includes entrepreneurs starting up a business and owners-managers of established enterprises. Those groups have been separated from the sample to run some additional analyses. The joined sample of nascent and new entrepreneurs consist of 173 respondents (Poland) and 283 respondents (Turkey), the sample of established businesses' owners-managers consists of 159 respondents (Poland) and 211 respondents (Turkey). All observations have been weighted to represent the structure of the populations. I mainly use independent samples t-test to test the hypotheses.

A numbers of variables have been measured in the research. Entrepreneurial intent is measured as a willingness to start-up a business in the next three years (answers are yes or no). Entrepreneurial activity is measured as involvement in business activity at different stages: nascent, new or established. Opportunity recognition is measured as the perception of good opportunities for starting a business in the area where respondent lives during the next six months. Fear of failure is measured by the answer to the question: Would fear of failure prevent you from starting a business? Innovativeness is measured by the fact that: (1) new enterprise uses new technology, and (2) start-up introduces new product on the new market. Growth expectations are measured by (1) willingness to create any jobs now or in next five years and (2) the fact that nascent entrepreneur expects more than 19 jobs in five years (high growth expectations). The gender gap is measured by the inequality of involvement of women and men in three stages of entrepreneurial activity. The intensity of cooperation is measured by aggregate level of cooperation in the fields of: production, procurement, marketing, increasing effectiveness, sales and product development. Most variables when presented in national-level analyses are percentages of yes answers (weighted) and presented in individual-level are averages, where no is coded as 0 and yes is coded as 1 (weighted) which gives the same results, but enables to conduct independent samples t-test.

3. Research results

Table 3 presents the measures of entrepreneurial perceptions, attitudes and activity in European countries and averages for other geographical regions.

Table 3. Entrepreneurial attitudes, perceptions and activity

Country/region	Entrepreneurial intentions	Opportunity recognition	Fear of failure	Nascent entrepreneurs	New businesses	Established businesses	TEA
EU	**15.86**	**28.67**	**47.28**	**4.85**	**3.27**	**6.35**	**8.01**
Belgium	9.20	31.50	50.81	3.06	1.93	5.94	4.92
Croatia	24.09	17.58	46.03	6.33	1.98	3.28	8.27
the Czech Republic	15.28	23.08	42.86	4.89	2.67	5.26	7.33
Estonia	22.87	46.07	47.78	8.79	4.54	5.01	13.11
Finland	9.31	43.80	41.11	2.75	2.69	6.65	5.29
France	13.73	22.87	45.31	2.73	1.84	4.09	4.57
Germany	8.90	31.30	48.15	3.07	2.00	5.07	4.98
Greece	8.94	13.54	69.06	3.25	2.26	12.60	5.51
Hungary	17.35	18.87	47.88	5.99	3.75	7.20	9.68
Ireland	14.71	28.28	45.33	5.55	3.84	7.50	9.25
Italy	11.26	17.34	56.20	2.36	1.11	3.67	3.43
Latvia	26.75	34.80	42.55	8.09	5.26	8.84	13.25
Lithuania	25.66	28.72	49.36	6.07	6.35	8.34	12.43
Luxembourg	19.24	45.57	49.58	6.00	2.78	2.39	8.69
Netherlands	10.28	32.66	41.28	4.67	4.77	8.68	9.27
Poland	**21.39**	**26.06**	**56.34**	**5.14**	**4.34**	**6.47**	**9.28**
Portugal	15.97	20.24	48.17	4.22	4.16	7.72	8.25
Romania	26.82	28.86	45.98	6.20	4.21	5.35	10.13
Slovakia	20.30	16.10	44.46	6.11	3.61	5.39	9.52
Slovenia	14.68	16.06	41.98	3.58	2.87	5.68	6.45
Spain	9.35	16.01	47.70	3.09	2.2	8.39	5.21
Sweden	11.02	64.45	39.73	5.87	2.46	6.03	8.25
the United Kingdom	7.60	35.54	39.84	3.63	3.65	6.55	7.14
non-EU Europe	**18.34**	**37.07**	**37.16**	**4.19**	**3.79**	**6.17**	**7.85**
Bosnia	25.24	23.26	39.47	5.75	4.64	4.51	10.34
Macedonia	30.9	37.15	41.05	3.35	3.53	7.29	6.63
Norway	6.23	63.67	33.25	2.90	3.40	6.15	6.25
Russia	4.70	18.19	40.53	3.05	2.76	3.41	5.75
Switzerland	11.31	41.52	35.47	4.55	3.70	9.96	8.18
Turkey	**31.64**	**38.63**	**33.20**	**5.52**	**4.71**	**5.67**	**9.95**
MENA	**40.12**	**49.40**	**39.48**	**5.15**	**4.55**	**6.36**	**9.60**
Asia Pacific & South Asia	**23.86**	**34.24**	**42.96**	**5.09**	**7.56**	**11.56**	**12.45**
Sub-Saharan Africa	**49.09**	**68.83**	**24.64**	**12.52**	**15.33**	**14.54**	**27.32**
North America	**16.82**	**44.28**	**33.26**	**7.84**	**3.42**	**5.99**	**11.07**
Latin America & Carribean	**35.12**	**55.20**	**30.41**	**11.83**	**7.38**	**8.02**	**18.75**

Source: Based on GEM data.

It is immediately apparent that the level of both opportunity recognition and entrepreneurial intent in Turkey are higher than in Poland and most other European countries. Opportunity recognition is only higher in a couple of northern countries. Moreover the level of entrepreneurial activity is high in Turkey and higher than in most EU countries with the exception for the percentage of owners-managers of established businesses. That level in Turkey is below the average and lower than for most European countries, including Poland. Early-stage activity in Poland is also at a reasonably high level and established activity is just slightly stronger than in Turkey. To further test the differences t-test for independent samples has been conducted (Table 4).

Table 4. Results of t-test analyses

Specification	Levene's test		t-test of means' equality						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.	Mean's diff.	SE of diff.	95% conf. range	
								Lower	Higher
Entrepreneurial intent	71,894	,000	4,264	4186	,000	,054	,013	,029	,079
Opportunity recognition	654,723	,000	–12,867	3551	,000	–,195	,015	–,224	–,165
Fear of failure	12,915	,000	17,607	4220	,000	,262	,015	,233	,292
Nascent entrepreneur	45,177	,000	–3,337	4389	,001	–,024	,007	–,039	–,010
New business	6,000	,014	–1,223	4389	,221	–,008	,007	–,021	,005
Established business	53,437	,000	–3,624	4389	,000	–,029	,008	–,044	–,013
TEA	37,082	,000	–3,024	4389	,003	–,029	,009	–,047	–,010

Source: Based on GEM data.

The results of t-test confirm the results of initial comparison. The only significant difference between Poland and Turkey concerns new business rates. The following conclusions can therefore be drawn. Hypothesis H1 is supported: the level of entrepreneurial intent in Turkey is higher than in Poland and other European countries. Hypothesis H2 is partly supported: level of entrepreneurial activity in Turkey is higher than in Poland, however, in some respects (new businesses) the difference is not statistically significant, moreover, the level of entrepreneurial activity in Turkey is lower than in some European countries, which especially concerns the level of established businesses ownership. Hypothesis H3 is also partially supported: level of opportunity recognition in Turkey is much higher than in Poland (and the difference is statistically significant) but lower in some European countries. Hypothesis H4 has to be rejected as the level of fear of failure in Poland is second highest in Europe (as hypothesized), however, fear of failure in Turkey is

at the lowest level of all European countries. To test hypotheses H5-H8 additional t-tests were conducted (Table 5). It has to be noticed that while the results are presented in one table for increased clarity the analyses were conducted on various samples. First four analyses were conducted on the samples of nascent entrepreneurs, the rest were conducted on the sample of any kind of entrepreneurs with comparison of groups.

Table 5. Results of t-test analyses

Specification	Levene's test		t-test of means' equality						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.	Mean's diff.	SE of diff.	95% conf. range	
								Lower	Higher
New technology	7,998	,005	1,411	268	,159	,038	,027	–,015	,091
New product and market	12,038	,001	1,843	268	,066	,102	,055	–,007	,212
Any jobs in 5 years	,513	,475	,354	268	,724	,020	,056	–,091	,131
High job growth	23,053	,000	–2,229	268	,027	–,106	,047	–,199	–,012
Gender gap – SU	2,553	,111	,827	269	,409	,047	,057	–,065	,160
Gender gap – BB	7,540	,007	1,468	198	,144	,098	,067	–,034	,231
Gender gap – EB	25,468	,000	2,542	353	,011	,112	,044	,025	,199
Cooperation – SU	3,328	,069	,185	246	,853	,055	,296	–,527	,636
Cooperation – EB	,323	,570	–,041	265	,967	–,019	,462	–,929	,891

Note:
SU – start-ups – nascent entrepreneurs, BB – baby businesses, new entrepreneurs, EB – owners--managers of established businesses).

Source: Based on GEM data.

The mean values for new technology employed by nascent entrepreneurs are 0.07 for Poland and 0.03 for Turkey, which means that new technologies are employed by 7% of Polish and 3% of Turkish entrepreneurs. The introduction of new product on new market is performed by 32% of Polish and 22% of Turkish entrepreneurs. Those values are higher than for other European countries that falsifies hypothesis H5. Job expectations are analyzed in two categories: any job expectations and high growth expectations. In terms of the first category two countries are very similar – 75% of Polish entrepreneurs and 73% of Turkish ones declare the willingness to create any jobs during next 5 years. Turkish entrepreneurs, however, have stronger high growth expectations – 21% of nascent entrepreneurs want to create more than 19 jobs compared to only 10% in Poland. That falsifies hypothesis H6.

There is a gender gap in entrepreneurship in both countries, however, it is higher in Turkey than in Poland. In the first case the involvement of women in

entrepreneurship is at the levels of 26%, 28% and 17%, respectively for nascent entrepreneurs, new business owners and established business owners-managers. For Poland the values are 30%, 38% and 28%. It has to be said though, that only the difference for established businesses is statistically significant which anyway falsifies hypothesis H7. In addition, hypothesis H8 is falsified as entrepreneurs in Poland and Turkey cooperate with others at a similar level (4.09 and 4.04 for nascent and new entrepreneurs and 5.57 and 5.59 for established business owners) and differences are not statistically significant.

Discussion and conclusions

Similarly to other characteristics, Poland and Turkey in terms of entrepreneurship are similar in some respects and different in others. First of all, Turkey has the highest level of entrepreneurial intent in Europe – over 30% of people consider the possibility of starting up a business within next three years. This is a very good indication for the development of the economy in the future, especially that Turkey has the lowest level of fear of failure in Europe which means that that constraining factor will be less important. Moreover, the level of opportunity recognition in Turkey is above average. Unfortunately, the picture for Poland is not that optimistic as there are lower levels of entrepreneurial intent and opportunity recognition and the second highest level of fear of failure in Europe.

The above factors are reflected in the relatively high level of entrepreneurial activity in Turkey, except for the mature businesses rate. Lower level of established businesses ownership in Turkey might be caused by two factors. The first of them is a growing economy which would mean that entrepreneurial activity is at a much higher level now than it was at least four years ago when established businesses were started up. The second explanation might come from high fluctuation in business ownership, high level of ownership and low survival rate. However, this kind of process could only be analyzed in longitudinal research.

Contrary to what was hypothesized, Turkish and Polish start-ups are characterized by relatively high level of innovativeness and it has to be said that results for Poland are slightly higher than for Turkey. The possible explanation is that both countries are at the stage of development which means that markets are not saturated in terms of new technologies and existing markets therefore technologies and products are considered innovative. Moreover, Turkish entrepreneurs have high growth expectations which means that they are optimistically set for the future. In both countries there is a serious gender gap in terms of entrepreneurship, however, unlike hypothesized, it is higher in Turkey than in Poland.

That might be the result of other cultural factors that were not taken into consideration like religion and history.

Summing up, a few most important factors in terms of entrepreneurship could be pointed out for Poland and Turkey. Turkey:

- the level of intent is the highest in Europe,
- high level of opportunity recognition, lower than in just a few European countries,
- lowest level of fear of failure in Europe,
- high level of early-stage entrepreneurial activity,
- lower level of established businesses ownership,
- high growth expectations,
- considerable gender gap.

Poland:

- rather low level of opportunity recognition – lower than the average score in EU,
- extremely high fear of failure among Polish society,
- entrepreneurial intentions are at rather high level,
- TEA higher than the EU average but lower than some EU countries,
- gender gap entrepreneurship one in of the biggest in EU,
- high aspirations of entrepreneurs – high job expectations, high innovativeness.

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