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I AM A HUNGARIAN PERSON FROM EUROPE, FROM A EUROPEAN HUNGARY

There are few things more important in life than feeling that you are important to somebody. That it is important what you do, or how you do it. That special one is the positive manifestation, the projection in your life, what drives you ahead. To do your job. To want it. Is it important for that entity to be a person? I do not think so. Much rather the atmosphere, the environment itself, which surrounds you and impacts you. Motivates. To move forward. The story I am about to tell began with an imaginary shell. In my mind.

Among my memories remaining from my childhood, there are images projecting the picture of a rather demarcated world, the face of single nations. I grew up in a small town close to the border, at stone's throw from something different, formed by a country different from ours. I never left my country with my family, even though I also wanted to see the sea, many high summits. This is what I called a rough contour. It sounded so foreign to cross the country border, we were afraid to have a go, to see the world. Just as if you lived in a shell and in order to step out of the shell, well, you need to spend a lot of energy. Energy in this given case meant the appropriate official documents, the necessary currency, the linguistic difficulties of the target country. Simply, there was no common point between two European countries.

In 2004, I was twelve and my country became a full member of the European Union. Although I did not feel any difference, at the photo shoot at school you could ask for the background with the Union flag. It was so new for me that in the end that is what I chose. One of my teachers even praised me; how well this youthful background fits me. I did not understand what is 'youthful' in a starry flag with blue background, but I felt proud.

This was exactly ten years ago, and since then I made it to university and I can say now, that at the age of 22, I finally managed to experience what it means to live as a citizen of this vast, integrated society. Thanks to the openness of the new system, I've been provided the opportunity to become a significant part of international, structured and serious programmes; to experience intense university student adventures. Its purpose is to establish and maintain relations built on knowledge, bridging nations in the region. I think this time period included everything which forms the essence of the European Union: a multicultural team, communication in one common language, knowledge-based topics, leisure time based on positive verbalisation among ourselves. The emphasis was placed on existing among extended nations.

By the end of the program the shell I sensed as a resident of a small town near the border had disappeared. Suddenly, I landed in the middle of an incredible kaleidoscope, where my life started to be defined by continuous interactions, influences. I managed to find friends from ten Member States; as an engineering student I obtained an enormous knowledge and gathered eternal memories in conjunction with people of other nationalities. There was a smile on my face all along,



while my head was close to exploding. I was staring at these intellectual impressions proliferating from the depth as constantly changing dialects, varied human behaviours kept whirling around me. A lot of information was floating around with no author, to collect all of it was mission impossible. You are simply unable to become so much all at once. This is a medium that surrounds you, it is all in the air. You cannot get rid of it, but you get used to it with time and you do not want to rid of it anymore. You just yearn for more and more. You just enjoy being a part of all this multitude. This is how I could describe the expanding European Union, as well. There are numerous concerns: contradictions, different cultures clashing, full of confronting zones and as we keep expanding this circle with newer and newer members, we keep receiving a more and more exuberant cavalcade. The tone of Europe slowly starts to get deeper.

To me this expanding environment is youthfulness. While the portrait of our continent was made so uneven by the fluctuations of country borders evolving for centuries, embodying in deep wounds, still the grandiose revelation arising from the constant contradictions helped us to build all what we call the European Union today. I think the surging problems of today and the past will become at the same time the sustainable strengths of the future. Conflicts have always been followed by learning and peace, thus if we artificially create such elementary interactions, we can pull out a more complex, more comprehensive knowledge for us, making the nations of Europe more and more resistant and richer. Not against each other, but for each other. Mobility, change of environment, culture shock, knowledge centeredness, these are all competitors to be nominated among the elementary interactions of the 21st century. Their objective is to shake up our nations, to motivate them for knowledge. The only outstanding quality of the European Union is the society built on knowledge. And to build up a media like this, as many Member States are needed as possible. As many new as possible to give a buzz to the still water.

The blend of 500 million citizens of the 28 Member States and the coordinated external migration gives a solid base for a sustainable intellectual buzz. Europe is getting older, the human management of the Union is important. The widening population will carry a kind of stimulus in itself, which prompts us instinctively to act, to develop. And finally conscious thinking will be established. Or we may also call it caretaking, just like in a family, where each member has his/her own role. The grown-ups' role - grandparents, parents, adults - is teaching, bringing the kids up, while the youngsters' role - the young ones, children - is learning, watching, growing. The cooperation, healthy competitive spirit is important within the family. We need to create buffer zones among our communication channels to get acquainted with each other. To learn from each other's past. Preserving traditions can only be solved with an integrated internal diversity.

The European way of thinking is present in all of us, each nations brings something peculiar to the common. This is the region on Earth, where diversity, intellectual well-being and culture meets most. You do not have to exit from this media to become a part of something new, because it is all around you. There is no shell, there are no boundaries. You feel proud to be a part of it - just like as I was proud at the age of twelve, through the eyes of a child, of the blue flag appearing on the photo, indicating unity.

As time goes by, we start to adjust, to get used to each other. We realise that in the overall picture we do not differ from one another that much; only when lost in the details will it strike you, how different the role of you and me is in two different countries.



The difference from what we are used to will be a very defining role of this mechanism. This community of nations should just keep being characterised by this key. Varied geography, diverse climates, manners, moods, ways of thinking, instincts. We all want the opportunity to develop, and this does not require country borders, but twelve bright stars in the united, clear blue sky. The story I have just recounted began with an imaginary shell. In your mind. Which slipped away, disappeared.

I was a Hungarian from Europe, from a European Hungary.