

Polish ambassador pitches capitalism for his country

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Poland is open for business and looking for investors from Windsor.

Prof. Bogdan Grzelonski, the Polish Ambassador to Canada, was in the city Saturday at the invitation of the Polish-Canadian Business and Professional Association of Windsor.

As guest speaker at the group's annual Business Dinner, Grzelonski wasted no time getting down to business — trying to lure investment from the city's strong Polish community.



**Prof. Bogdan
Grzelonski**

"Poland is open for foreign capital," Grzelonski told the crowd of about 200. "There is a lot of (opportunity) in the country for people with bright ideas."

Poland, a country of 40 million consumers, is becoming one of the success stories of Eastern Europe.

Privatized

After pulling itself from the morass of Communist rule in 1989, the fledgling democracy began privatizing with abandon — once untouchable state monopolies like shipbuilding, manufacturing, telecommunications and the transportation system are, or are soon to be, open to tender. Foreigners pumped \$21 billion into the Polish economy in 1997.

While inflation is relatively high in Poland — 10.2 per cent — it's still an amazing accomplishment, considering inflation

was running at more than 500 per cent only a few years ago.

"We would like to (emulate) the West, including Canada, in terms of economic development," Grzelonski said. "Your economy is dynamic, with low inflation."

After the talk, the ambassador and members of the city's Polish community talked business.

Anthony Blak of the St. Stanislaus-St. Casimir's Polish Parishes Credit Union, said this was a sure sign the city's 10,000-strong Polish community has matured with the generations.

"The landscape is changing," said Blak, whose grandparents first came to Windsor in 1905.

"The first immigrants used to be the working class, but their sons and daughters are now the managers and business leaders in the community.