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## **European Central Bank - men only**

**10th September, 2012**

[http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1209/120910-european\\_central\\_bank.html](http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1209/120910-european_central_bank.html)

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# THE ARTICLE

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1209/120910-european\\_central\\_bank.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1209/120910-european_central_bank.html)

In this day and age of supposed sexual equality, it is unbelievable that there is not a single woman among the top 58 positions of the European Central Bank (ECB), even though women make up 34 per cent of the European Parliament. This situation, or crisis, has led to the postponement of a hearing for a new nominee, another man, to be appointed to the six-member Executive Board of the ECB. The Board did have a woman member from after it was founded in 1998 until May 2011, when Austria's Gertrude Tumpel-Gugerell left her post. Besides there being no women on the Executive Board, there is also a total female absence on the ECB's 23-member Governing Council and its 29-strong General Council.

The European Parliament's economic and monetary chief Sharon Bowles expressed her frustration with the all-male institution. She said: "There is now not even a single woman sitting on the main board of what is one of the most powerful and essential institutions in the EU." She added that the bank needs to act to rectify things, saying: "The symbolic and practical effects of this absence are not without note. It does seem, as with corporations, that there is a systemic cultural problem to address." Ms Bowles said she had been told "that no women could be located" and that there were no plans in place to promote women. It is likely that Luxembourg banker Mr Yves Mersch will fill a current vacancy on the Board.

# WARM-UPS

**1. BANKS:** Walk around the class and talk to other students about banks. Change partners often. Share your findings with your first partner.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

*this day and age / sexual equality / crisis / postponement / executives / members / monetary / frustration / essential institutions / rectify things / corporations / vacancy*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

**3. SEXUAL EQUALITY:** How fair are things in your country? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you wrote. Change and share again.

Equality in...	How fair?	How to improve things
government		
the boardroom		
the military		
sport		
the home		
education		

**4. BALANCE:** Students A **strongly** believe institutions should try for a 50-50 balance between male and female workers; Students B **strongly** believe this is rubbish. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

**5. BETTER:** Which of these things do women do better than men? Rank them and share your rankings with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often.

- teach
- cook
- make decisions
- lie
- argue
- save money
- resolve differences
- drive

**6. EXECUTIVE:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'executive'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1209/120910-european\\_central\\_bank.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1209/120910-european_central_bank.html)

## 1. TRUE / FALSE:

Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| a. Europe's main bank has voted for a men-only policy for employees.     | T / F |
| b. The European Central Bank (ECB) has opened a male-only branch.        | T / F |
| c. The ECB has only ever had one female board member.                    | T / F |
| d. A woman has not served on the ECB for over a year.                    | T / F |
| e. The European Parliament's economic and monetary chief is a woman.     | T / F |
| f. The economic and monetary chief said things didn't need to change.    | T / F |
| g. The article said the ECB couldn't find a woman to serve on the board. | T / F |
| h. It is probable a female Luxembourg banker will fill a board vacancy.  | T / F |

## 2. SYNONYM MATCH:

Match the following synonyms from the article.

- |                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. supposed     | a. incredible |
| 2. unbelievable | b. tackle     |
| 3. make up      | c. constitute |
| 4. postponement | d. boss       |
| 5. besides      | e. vital      |
| 6. chief        | f. apart from |
| 7. frustration  | g. apparent   |
| 8. essential    | h. probable   |
| 9. address      | i. delay      |
| 10. likely      | j. annoyance  |

## 3. PHRASE MATCH:

(Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. In this day                          | a. of a hearing           |
| 2. there is not a single woman among    | b. to promote women       |
| 3. the postponement                     | c. monetary chief         |
| 4. a total female                       | d. and age                |
| 5. its 29-                              | e. vacancy                |
| 6. economic and                         | f. the top 58 positions   |
| 7. one of the most powerful and         | g. to address             |
| 8. there is a systemic cultural problem | h. strong General Council |
| 9. there were no plans in place         | i. essential institutions |
| 10. fill a current                      | j. absence                |

# WHILE READING / LISTENING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1209/120910-european\\_central\\_bank.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1209/120910-european_central_bank.html)

**GAP FILL:** Put the words into the gaps in the text.

In this day and (1) \_\_\_\_\_ of supposed sexual equality, it is unbelievable that there is not a (2) \_\_\_\_\_ woman among the top 58 positions of the European Central Bank (ECB), even though women (3) \_\_\_\_\_ up 34 per cent of the European Parliament. This situation, or (4) \_\_\_\_\_, has led to the postponement of a hearing for a new nominee, another man, to be (5) \_\_\_\_\_ to the six-member Executive Board of the ECB. The Board did have a woman member from after it was (6) \_\_\_\_\_ in 1998 until May 2011, when Austria's Gertrude Tumpel-Gugerell left her post. Besides there being no women on the Executive Board, there is also a (7) \_\_\_\_\_ female absence on the ECB's 23-member Governing Council and its 29-(8) \_\_\_\_\_ General Council.

*founded*

*crisis*

*single*

*appointed*

*strong*

*age*

*total*

*make*

The European Parliament's economic and (9) \_\_\_\_\_ chief Sharon Bowles expressed her (10) \_\_\_\_\_ with the all-male institution. She said: "There is now not even a single woman sitting on the main board of what is one of the most powerful and (11) \_\_\_\_\_ institutions in the EU." She (12) \_\_\_\_\_ that the bank needs to act to (13) \_\_\_\_\_ things, saying: "The symbolic and practical effects of this absence are not without note. It does seem, as with corporations, that there is a systemic cultural problem to (14) \_\_\_\_\_." Ms Bowles said she had been told "that no women could be located" and that there were no plans in place to (15) \_\_\_\_\_ women. It is likely that Luxembourg banker Mr Yves Mersch will fill a current (16) \_\_\_\_\_ on the Board.

*added*

*frustration*

*vacancy*

*address*

*monetary*

*promote*

*essential*

*rectify*

## LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1209/120910-european\\_central\\_bank.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1209/120910-european_central_bank.html)

In (1) \_\_\_\_\_ supposed sexual equality, it is unbelievable that there is not a (2) \_\_\_\_\_ the top 58 positions of the European Central Bank (ECB), even (3) \_\_\_\_\_ 34 per cent of the European Parliament. This situation, or crisis, has led to the postponement of a (4) \_\_\_\_\_ nominee, another man, to be appointed to the six-member Executive Board of the ECB. The Board did have a woman member from after it was founded in 1998 until May 2011, when Austria's Gertrude Tumpel-Gugerell left her post. Besides (5) \_\_\_\_\_ on the Executive Board, there is also a total (6) \_\_\_\_\_ ECB's 23-member Governing Council and its 29-strong General Council.

The European Parliament's (7) \_\_\_\_\_ chief Sharon Bowles (8) \_\_\_\_\_ with the all-male institution. She said: "There is now not even a single woman sitting on the main board of what is one of the most powerful (9) \_\_\_\_\_ in the EU." She added that the bank needs (10) \_\_\_\_\_ things, saying: "The symbolic and practical effects of this absence are not without note. It does seem, as with corporations, that there is a systemic cultural (11) \_\_\_\_\_." Ms Bowles said she had been told "that no women could be located" and that there were no plans in place to promote women. It is likely that Luxembourg banker Mr Yves Mersch will fill (12) \_\_\_\_\_ the Board.

# AFTER READING / LISTENING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1209/120910-european\\_central\\_bank.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1209/120910-european_central_bank.html)

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'central' and 'bank'.

<b>central</b>	<b>bank</b>
----------------	-------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• age</li><li>• single</li><li>• 34</li><li>• six</li><li>• 1998</li><li>• 29</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• chief</li><li>• main</li><li>• act</li><li>• seem</li><li>• located</li><li>• current</li></ul>
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# SEXUAL EQUALITY SURVEY

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1209/120910-european\\_central\\_bank.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1209/120910-european_central_bank.html)

Write five GOOD questions about sexual equality in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

# SEXUAL EQUALITY DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the term 'sexual equality'?
- c) What do you think of the gender imbalance at the European Central Bank?
- d) Why do you think such an imbalance exists?
- e) How surprising is this imbalance for a European institution?
- f) Does this change your image of equality within Europe?
- g) Is this really a "crisis"?
- h) What is sexual equality like in your country?
- i) How has sexual equality in your country changed over the years?
- j) Do you think it's possible that men make better bankers?

*European Central Bank - men only - 10th September, 2012*  
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# SEXUAL EQUALITY DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Is there a place for an all-male institution in this day and age?
- c) Do you think women could sue the European Central Bank for inequality?
- d) Should institutions enforce a ratio of men-women workers?
- e) How long might it be for the ECB to rectify things?
- f) Will there ever be a day when as many women are in power as men?
- g) Why is there such a systemic problem in corporations?
- h) Do you believe "that no women could be located" for the vacant ECB executive position?
- i) What three adjectives best describe this story (and why)?
- j) What questions would you like to ask the boss of the ECB?

# LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1209/120910-european\\_central\\_bank.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1209/120910-european_central_bank.html)

In this day and (1) \_\_\_\_ of supposed sexual equality, it is unbelievable that there is not a (2) \_\_\_\_ woman among the top 58 positions of the European Central Bank (ECB), even though women make (3) \_\_\_\_ 34 per cent of the European Parliament. This situation, or crisis, has led to the postponement of a hearing for a new nominee, another man, to be appointed to the six-member Executive Board of the ECB. The Board did have a woman member from after it was (4) \_\_\_\_ in 1998 until May 2011, when Austria's Gertrude Tumpel-Gugerell left her post. Besides there (5) \_\_\_\_ no women on the Executive Board, there is also a total female absence on the ECB's 23-member Governing Council and its 29-(6) \_\_\_\_ General Council.

The European Parliament's economic and (7) \_\_\_\_ chief Sharon Bowles expressed her frustration (8) \_\_\_\_ the all-male institution. She said: "There is now not even a single woman sitting on the main board of what is one of the most powerful and essential institutions in the EU." She added that the bank needs to act to (9) \_\_\_\_ things, saying: "The symbolic and practical effects of this absence are not without note. It does seem, (10) \_\_\_\_ with corporations, that there is a systemic cultural problem to (11) \_\_\_\_." Ms Bowles said she had been told "that no women could be located" and that there were no plans in place to promote women. It is likely that Luxembourg banker Mr Yves Mersch will fill a current (12) \_\_\_\_ on the Board.

## Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- |     |              |                |              |              |
|-----|--------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1.  | (a) epoch    | (b) era        | (c) old      | (d) age      |
| 2.  | (a) single   | (b) lonely     | (c) sole     | (d) married  |
| 3.  | (a) down     | (b) in         | (c) up       | (d) of       |
| 4.  | (a) finding  | (b) founded    | (c) findings | (d) foundry  |
| 5.  | (a) was      | (b) being      | (c) is       | (d) be       |
| 6.  | (a) strength | (b) stronger   | (c) strong   | (d) strongly |
| 7.  | (a) monetary | (b) monetize   | (c) moneyed  | (d) money    |
| 8.  | (a) as       | (b) by         | (c) of       | (d) with     |
| 9.  | (a) beautify | (b) notify     | (c) vilify   | (d) rectify  |
| 10. | (a) is       | (b) as         | (c) if       | (d) of       |
| 11. | (a) address  | (b) sign       | (c) label    | (d) mail     |
| 12. | (a) vacant   | (b) evacuation | (c) vacancy  | (d) vacate   |



# HOMework

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find out more about the European Central Bank. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. SEXUAL EQUALITY:** Make a poster about sexual equality. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

**4. FEMALE ABSENCE:** Write a magazine article about the absence of female executives within the European Central Bank. Include imaginary interviews with some top bankers.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

**5. LETTER:** Write a letter to the boss of the European Central Bank. Ask him three questions about the sexual inequality at the top of the bank. Give him three ideas how to change things. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

# ANSWERS

## TRUE / FALSE:

a. F      b. F      c. T      d. T      e. T      f. F      g. T      h. F

## SYNONYM MATCH:

- |                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. supposed     | a. apparent   |
| 2. unbelievable | b. incredible |
| 3. make up      | c. constitute |
| 4. postponement | d. delay      |
| 5. besides      | e. apart from |
| 6. chief        | f. boss       |
| 7. frustration  | g. annoyance  |
| 8. essential    | h. vital      |
| 9. address      | i. tackle     |
| 10. likely      | j. probable   |

## PHRASE MATCH:

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. In this day                          | a. and age                |
| 2. there is not a single woman among    | b. the top 58 positions   |
| 3. the postponement                     | c. of a hearing           |
| 4. a total female                       | d. absence                |
| 5. its 29-                              | e. strong General Council |
| 6. economic and                         | f. monetary chief         |
| 7. one of the most powerful and         | g. essential institutions |
| 8. there is a systemic cultural problem | h. to address             |
| 9. there were no plans in place         | i. to promote women       |
| 10. fill a current                      | j. vacancy                |

## GAP FILL:

### European Central Bank - men only

In this day and (1) **age** of supposed sexual equality, it is unbelievable that there is not a (2) **single** woman among the top 58 positions of the European Central Bank (ECB), even though women (3) **make up** 34 per cent of the European Parliament. This situation, or (4) **crisis**, has led to the postponement of a hearing for a new nominee, another man, to be (5) **appointed** to the six-member Executive Board of the ECB. The Board did have a woman member from after it was (6) **founded** in 1998 until May 2011, when Austria's Gertrude Tumpel-Gugerell left her post. Besides there being no women on the Executive Board, there is also a (7) **total** female absence on the ECB's 23-member Governing Council and its 29-(8) **strong** General Council.

The European Parliament's economic and (9) **monetary** chief Sharon Bowles expressed her (10) **frustration** with the all-male institution. She said: "There is now not even a single woman sitting on the main board of what is one of the most powerful and (11) **essential** institutions in the EU." She (12) **added** that the bank needs to act to (13) **rectify** things, saying: "The symbolic and practical effects of this absence are not without note. It does seem, as with corporations, that there is a systemic cultural problem to (14) **address**." Ms Bowles said she had been told "that no women could be located" and that there were no plans in place to (15) **promote** women. It is likely that Luxembourg banker Mr Yves Mersch will fill a current (16) **vacancy** on the Board.

## LANGUAGE WORK

1 - d    2 - a    3 - c    4 - b    5 - b    6 - c    7 - a    8 - d    9 - d    10 - b    11 - a    12 - c