

French minister knocks EU expansion

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THE ARTICLE

French minister knocks EU expansion

BNE: A top French politician, Nicolas Sarkozy, has called for a freeze on more countries joining the European Union (EU). He said enlargement should wait until everything in the EU works smoothly. He thinks EU departments are too slow and cannot process changes quickly enough when new countries join. He also said the French and Dutch rejection of the European Constitution showed the EU was not ready to get bigger. Mr. Sarkozy agreed Romania and Bulgaria should join the Union in 2007 but said they should be the last countries for a while.

Mr. Sarkozy's words are very disappointing for Turkey. It is due to start EU membership talks in October. He stopped short of saying Turkey should never be allowed to join. Croatia might also feel upset at his comments. It is already in line to join the Euro elite. He warned that the EU was not an experiment. He said not all countries had an automatic right to be a member of the 25-nation bloc. Mr. Sarkozy is a probable candidate for the 2007 French presidential elections. He is likely to play a major role in the future shaping of the EU.

WARM-UPS

1. EU LEADER: The European Union has decided to have a permanent new leader. Choose your favourite European country (EU or non-EU) to become that leader. The country must be different from your own. Talk with other classmates about why you think your chosen country should be permanent leader.

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

Nicolas Sarkozy / French politicians / European Union / enlargement / Romania / Bulgaria / Turkey / Croatia / elitism / the future / the shape of Europe

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

3. EUROPE: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with Europe. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

4. CONTINENTS: Is Europe the greatest continent? Talk with your partner(s) about which continent is the best in the world. Think of and talk about five wonderful things about Africa, Antarctica, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America and South America. Change partners and share your positive comments.

5. MEMBER STATES QUIZ: In pairs / groups, take turns in asking each other questions about the 25 member states of the European Union. Write down the questions for which you do not know the answers. Ask these questions to the class after you have finished in your pairs / groups.

Austria	France	Latvia	Portugal
Belgium	Germany	Lithuania	Slovakia
Cyprus	Greece	Luxembourg	Slovenia
Czech Republic	Hungary	Malta	Spain
Denmark	Ireland	The Netherlands	Sweden
Estonia	Italy	Poland	United Kingdom
Finland			

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. A French politician wants France to join the European Union. | T / F |
| b. The politician wants EU enlargement to stop for a while. | T / F |
| c. He said the EU wasn't ready to get bigger. | T / F |
| d. He said Bulgaria and Romania have to wait to join the EU. | T / F |
| e. The politician said Turkey could never join the EU. | T / F |
| f. Croatia will fully support the politician's comments. | T / F |
| g. He said the EU was a giant political experiment. | T / F |
| h. The politician may be the French president in two years' time. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|------------------|-------------|
| a. top | thumbs down |
| b. freeze | alliance |
| c. enlargement | depressing |
| d. rejection | expansion |
| e. while | pause |
| f. disappointing | part |
| g. comments | runner |
| h. bloc | leading |
| i. candidate | remarks |
| j. role | time |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| a. A top | while |
| b. a freeze on more countries | to join the Euro elite |
| c. cannot process changes quickly | membership talks |
| d. not ready to | joining the EU |
| e. the last countries for a | a major role |
| f. due to start EU | enough |
| g. stopped short | French politician |
| h. in line | a member |
| i. an automatic right to be | get bigger |
| j. likely to play | of saying |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the correct spaces.

French minister knocks EU expansion

BNE: A top French politician, Nicolas Sarkozy, has called for a _____ on more countries joining the European Union (EU). He said enlargement should _____ until everything in the EU works _____. He thinks EU departments are too slow and cannot _____ changes quickly enough when new countries _____. He also said the French and Dutch rejection of the European Constitution showed the EU was not _____ to get bigger. Mr. Sarkozy _____ Romania and Bulgaria should join the Union in 2007 but said they should be the last countries for a _____.

Mr. Sarkozy's _____ are very disappointing for Turkey. It is _____ to start EU membership _____ in October. He stopped _____ of saying Turkey should never be allowed to join. Croatia might also feel upset at his _____. It is already in line to join the Euro elite. He warned that the EU was not an _____. He said not all countries had an automatic right to be a member of the 25-nation _____. Mr. Sarkozy is a probable candidate for the 2007 French presidential elections. He is likely to play a major role in the future _____ of the EU.

ready
wait
process
while
freeze
join
agreed
smoothly

experiment
words
due
short
shaping
comments
talks
bloc

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'process' and 'change'.

- 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 gap fill. 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. STUDENT EU SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about the future of the European Union.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- freeze
- wait
- slow
- rejection
- ready
- while
- words
- short
- upset
- experiment
- bloc
- shaping

DISCUSSION

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

- a. What did you think when you read this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the story?
- c. Do you care about what Mr. Sarkozy says?
- d. Are you interested in stories on the European Union?
- e. Would you rather read stories on the EU or on Italian frogs?
- f. Do you think Russia or other ex-Soviet states should join the European Union?
- g. Many Euroland politicians think the EU should be exclusively Christian and should not accept Turkey. What do you think?
- h. Do you think Turkey is part of Europe?
- i. What needs to be done to make the EU work better?
- j. Do you think the EU will become more powerful than the USA?

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

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What did you think about what you read?
- c. What do you think of Mr. Sarkozy's comments?
- d. What do you think about the European Union?
- e. How large do you think the EU will become?
- f. Will the EU always be led by France, Germany and the UK?
- g. Do you think there should be just one language in the EU – English?
- h. Do you think the EU could ever collapse or break up?
- i. Should there be an EU army to help police the world's trouble spots?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

WORLD UNION: You are on the committee to make the rules for membership of the new World Union (WU). Decide on the minimum requirements for entry to the new organization.

AREA	MINIMUM MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS
Economy	
Human rights	
Nuclear policy	
Friendliness	
Democracy	
Disputes with neighboring countries	
Other	

Decide which of these countries could join the WU under your membership rules: Brazil, France, Japan, USA, Egypt, China, India, Australia, Bhutan, UK, Zimbabwe, others (?).

Change partners and compare your membership rules. Did you agree to accept or reject the same countries?

Discuss what the rejected countries need to do to be able to join the WU. Do you think these countries could make the necessary changes?

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

French minister knocks EU expansion

BNE: A top French politician, Nicolas Sarkozy, has _____ on more countries joining the European Union (EU). He said _____ should wait until everything in the EU _____. He thinks EU departments are too slow and _____ quickly enough when new countries join. He also said the French and _____ the European _____ showed the EU was not ready to get bigger. Mr. Sarkozy _____ Romania and Bulgaria _____ the Union in 2007 but said they should be the last countries for a while.

Mr. Sarkozy's _____ disappointing for Turkey. It is _____ EU membership talks in October. He _____ saying Turkey should never be allowed to join. Croatia might also _____ his comments. It is already _____ the Euro elite. He warned that the EU was _____. He said not all countries had an automatic right to be a member of the _____. Mr. Sarkozy is a _____ for the 2007 French presidential elections. He is likely to play a major role in the _____ the EU.

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 more information on the candidate countries for EU membership – Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Turkey . Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. THE EU'S WORLD ROLE: Create a poster describing the role the EU should have in the world. Should it have an army? Should it play a bigger role with human rights? Should it stop the USA and China from having too much power? Should it pressure countries in the troubled areas of the world to create conditions for peace? Should it abandon nuclear weapons? Etc. Show and explain your fact posters to your classmates in your next lesson.

4. LETTER: Write a letter to French Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy about his idea to put a freeze on European expansion. Read your letter to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

a. top	leading
b. freeze	pause
c. enlargement	expansion
d. rejection	thumbs down
e. while	time
f. disappointing	depressing
g. comments	remarks
h. bloc	alliance
i. candidate	runner
j. role	part

PHRASE MATCH:

a. A top	French politician
b. a freeze on more countries	joining the EU
c. cannot process changes quickly	enough
d. not ready to	get bigger
e. the last countries for a	while
f. due to start EU	membership talks
g. stopped short	of saying
h. in line	to join the Euro elite
i. an automatic right to be	a member
j. likely to play	a major role

GAP FILL:

French minister knocks EU expansion

BNE: A top French politician, Nicolas Sarkozy, has called for a **freeze** on more countries joining the European Union (EU). He said enlargement should **wait** until everything in the EU works **smoothly**. He thinks EU departments are too slow and cannot **process** changes quickly enough when new countries **join**. He also said the French and Dutch rejection of the European Constitution showed the EU was not **ready** to get bigger. Mr. Sarkozy **agreed** Romania and Bulgaria should join the Union in 2007 but said they should be the last countries for a **while**.

Mr. Sarkozy's **words** are very disappointing for Turkey. It is **due** to start EU membership **talks** in October. He stopped **short** of saying Turkey should never be allowed to join. Croatia might also feel upset at his **comments**. It is already in line to join the Euro elite. He warned that the EU was not an **experiment**. He said not all countries had an automatic right to be a member of the 25-nation **bloc**. Mr. Sarkozy is a probable candidate for the 2007 French presidential elections. He is likely to play a major role in the future **shaping** of the EU.