

## Women hold most government positions in Spain

9th June, 2018



Women are on the rise in Spanish politics. Spain's newly-formed government consists of eleven women and six men. The newly-elected socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez has put women in some of the biggest positions in his cabinet, including head of defence, economy,

education and finance. Spain now has the highest proportion of women in top government positions than anywhere else in Europe. In a televised statement, Mr Sanchez said his new government consisted of people who wanted to move Spain forward. He said: "All are highly qualified and bring a vocation for public service and reflect the best of Spain. [They are]...open to the world but anchored in the European Union."

Mr Sanchez seems an unlikely leader. His Socialist party holds just 84 of the 350 seats in Spain's parliament. He took office on Friday, replacing the unpopular conservative leader Mariano Rajoy. Ex-prime minister Rajoy was the focus of a corruption scandal and had become unpopular because of his austerity measures. Sanchez promised to bring change to Spain. However, he has to work quickly to turn Spain's economy around. He has promised to call elections in less than two years, which may not be enough time to amend the outgoing government's budget for 2018. One of his biggest challenges will be rebuilding relations with the northeastern region of Catalonia.

Sources: [bbc.com](http://bbc.com) / [reuters.com](http://reuters.com) / [elpais.com](http://elpais.com)

## Writing

Women in power make life better for other women. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

politics / government / socialist / cabinet / education / statement / public service / leader / parliament / unpopular / conservative / corruption / scandal / challenges

## True / False

- There are twice as many women as men in Spain's new government. T / F
- The women in Spain's government are in more junior roles. T / F
- No EU country has a higher ratio of women in top government roles. T / F
- Spain's leader said his government wants a vacation for public service. T / F
- Spain's leader's party holds less than 50% of seats in parliament. T / F
- Spain's previous leader is caught up in a corruption scandal. T / F
- Spain's new leader said the next election would be in 2022. T / F
- Spain's new leader may have insufficient time to change the budget. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                      |               |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 1. <b>rise</b>       | a. vowed      |
| 2. <b>formed</b>     | b. ratio      |
| 3. <b>positions</b>  | c. improbable |
| 4. <b>proportion</b> | d. created    |
| 5. <b>reflect</b>    | e. revise     |
| 6. <b>unlikely</b>   | f. show       |
| 7. <b>corruption</b> | g. up-and-up  |
| 8. <b>promised</b>   | h. district   |
| 9. <b>amend</b>      | i. dishonesty |
| 10. <b>region</b>    | j. posts      |

## Discussion – Student A

- What do you think about what you read?
- Would you be a good politician?
- What do you think of corruption scandals?
- What do you think of austerity measures?
- Who is the greatest female leader ever?
- What advice do you have for Spain's prime minister?
- What are the biggest challenges your government has?
- What questions would you like to ask Spain's prime minister?

# BreakingNewsEnglish - The Mini Lesson

## Phrase Match

1. Women are on the
  2. Spain's newly-
  3. the highest proportion
  4. In a televised
  5. All are highly
  6. Sanchez seems an unlikely
  7. He took
  8. the focus of a corruption
  9. He has promised to call
  10. amend the outgoing government's
- a. budget
  - b. of women
  - c. qualified
  - d. office on Friday
  - e. leader
  - f. elections
  - g. rise in Spanish politics
  - h. statement
  - i. scandal
  - j. formed government

## Discussion – Student B

- a) What do you think of the politics in your country?
- b) Are there many women politicians in your country?
- c) Should all governments be a healthy mix of men and women?
- d) How do men and women lead differently?
- e) Who is the greatest male leader of all time?
- f) How would you like to move your country forward?
- g) Would you be good working for the public service?
- h) What kind of global view do you have?

## Spelling

1. on the rise in Spanish soliipct
2. The newly-elected isciltsao Prime Minister
3. education and nfciean
4. All are highly qefldiiau
5. a acvnoito for public service
6. rteefcl the best of Spain
7. Spain's lamparinte
8. the focus of a rtrcuopion scandal
9. because of his tteuayrsi measures
10. He has promised to call linscoete
11. the outgoing government's begdtu
12. rebuilding selairont

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. j	4. b	5. f
6. c	7. i	8. a	9. e	10. h

## Role Play

### Role A – Defence

You think defence is the most important area of government. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their areas aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): economy, health or education.

### Role B – Economy

You think economy is the most important area of government. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their areas aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): defence, health or education.

### Role C – Health

You think health is the most important area of government. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their areas aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): economy, defence or education.

### Role D – Education

You think education is the most important area of government. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their areas aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): economy, health or defence.

## Speaking – Ministers

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Foreign Affairs
- Transport
- Sport
- Education
- Defence
- Economy
- Culture
- Health

### Answers – True False

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

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.