

## 1 Name a famous Belgian

2 *(original at [http://www.economist.com/world/europe/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=14941824](http://www.economist.com/world/europe/displaystory.cfm?story_id=14941824))*

3 For nearly a decade, EU politicians have been arguing about a new rule book that  
4 would create leadership posts to help their club stride the world stage. Yet by the  
5 time national leaders arrived at a Brussels summit to agree on the first president  
6 of the European Council and the first EU foreign-policy high representative, their  
7 ambition was a sad memory.

8 The path was cleared for Mr Van Rompuy and Lady Ashton after the British  
9 government at last accepted what had been obvious for weeks: that there was  
10 very little support for Tony Blair, and there was near-consensus for a chairman-  
11 style presidential post. Gordon Brown, the British prime minister, accepted that  
12 Mr Blair's candidacy was finished at a meeting of fellow centre-left political  
13 leaders just before the main summit. He agreed to a plan by the European  
14 socialists and the European People's Party to give the council presidency to  
15 someone from the centre right and the foreign-policy job to the centre left.

16 In return for dropping Mr Blair, Mr Brown secured the foreign-policy post for Lady  
17 Ashton. The British deal on Lady Ashton meant that centre-right governments,  
18 led by France and Germany, were free to impose their favoured candidate, Mr  
19 Van Rompuy. There was also swift agreement on a Swedish plan to limit the  
20 president's powers, which now more or less exclude any foreign-policy role.

21 Two lessons can be drawn from the selection of these new top officials. Europe's  
22 national leaders are not ready to share the world stage with real rivals. With the  
23 Lisbon Treaty, those same national leaders have also ceded far more power than  
24 they realised to pan-European political parties, who imposed on them the deal  
25 dividing up the two posts. They did so by threatening that the European  
26 Parliament would not approve any nominees which are not to its liking. Not all  
27 national governments are happy about this apparent shift of power: expect  
28 tussles as national leaders attempt to push back.

## Questions:

- 1) The phrase 'new rulebook ' (line 3) refers to a concept you are very well familiar with. Which one?
- 2) 'To help their club stride the world stage' (line 4) – what is the meaning of this phrase? Can you give it in your own words?
- 3) 'their ambition was a sad memory' (line 4). Which noun in the preceding sentence does 'their' refer to? And why was their ambition a sad memory?
- 4) Paragraph 2 (lines 8 to 15) gives two reasons why Gordon Brown, UK's prime minister had to give up the plan to install Tony Blair as the new EU president. What are they?
- 5) Why were France and Germany 'free to impose their favoured candidate' and what does this phrase mean? (line 18)
- 6) Paragraph 4 (the last one) states that national leaders have ceded far more power than they have realised to pan-European political parties. The text gives one specific instance of this influence of the pan-European parties. What kind of dividing is meant in line 25?
- 7) What, according to the article, proves that European national leaders are not ready to share the world stage with real rivals? (line 22)
- 8) Why should we expect 'tussles' and what are they anyway? (line 28)
- 9) Are you happy with the choice Mr. Van Rompuy and Lady Ashton for their respective jobs? Do you think these new posts will in any way change the EU?

## Vocabulary:

dropping/ to drop (16) – to decide not to use something

clear the path for (8) – make something possible

shift (27) - a change or transfer from one place, position, direction, person, etc., to another

draw a lesson (21) – to learn something for the future

You can find additional explanation and more examples to help you understand and use English words and phrases at

<http://dictionary.reference.com>, <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/>, or <http://www.merriam-webster.com/>

Přejeme Vám mnoho studijních úspěchů.

Tým jazykové skupiny Spěváček: