

**Question for oral answer O-000053/2012
to the Council**

Rule 115

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on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

Subject: Call for a gender-balanced representation on the ECB executive board

Across the EU, women are still largely outnumbered by men in positions of responsibility in all fields, particularly at the highest levels of politics and business, as well as in other fields.

European politicians and women's rights organisation continually emphasise the importance of balanced representation of men and women in influential positions – be it in the private or the public sphere. We all know that diversity in boards and governments ensure broader competence and wider perspectives. Recruiting only men or only women means a more narrow selection and the risk of missing out on potentially excellent candidates. Furthermore, the argument that there are no qualified women candidates to be found simply lacks credibility today.

The under-representation of women at all levels of economic decision-making is an alarming problem. Several EU Member States have adopted legislative measures to increase the representation of women in boardrooms, following the successful example set by Norway in 2005.

This notwithstanding, the EU Member States' nominations to some of the most important and influential bodies of EU institutions result in an appallingly monotonous line-up of nominees. One apparent example is the European Central Bank (ECB): there is not a single woman on the Bank's Executive Board – nor even on its Governing Council or General Council.

At issue here is not the competence the present candidates, but rather whether there is not a systematic failure in the process itself, given the consistently poor results when it comes to nominating women candidates?

How will the Council work towards a more gender-balanced representation in the ECB's Governing Council, Executive Board and General Council?

Will the Council consider, for example, adopting a model whereby each Member State nominates two candidates, a man and a woman, to the ECB Executive Board?

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