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Venice calls for independence from Italy

7th October, 2012

http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1210/121007-venice_independence.html

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THE ARTICLE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1210/121007-venice_independence.html

Thousands of protesters in Venice gathered in front of the regional government building on Saturday demanding independence from Italy. The separatists called for an immediate referendum on the region's independence from Rome. The pro-independence activists have also referred their case to the European Commission to start the legal process for self-rule. A survey taken in September showed that support from local residents for autonomy is very high, with 80 per cent favouring it. The new Venetian state would be known as the "Repubblica Veneta" and would be home to around five million people. Separatist leader Lodovico Pizzati told reporters: "It will be the second-richest country in Europe."

Venice was an independent republic for a thousand years before it was annexed to the then Kingdom of Italy in 1866. There have been calls for a break away from Rome since the 1970s, but Italy's current economic downturn and similar calls for independence from Catalonia in Spain have added momentum to the Venetian cause. Italy's economic crisis has caused a lot of anger against the Italian government. Mr Pizzati said: "The economic situation here is really desperate, with the recession hitting small and medium-sized businesses. In addition, of the 70 billion euros we pay in taxes to Rome, we only get back about 50 billion euros....We are losing out on 20 billion euros a year." Pizzati said that was "unbearable".

WARM-UPS

1. INDEPENDENCE: Walk around the class and talk to other students about independence. 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.

protestors / separatists / referendum / legal process / survey / local residents / republic / annexed / break away / economic downturn / desperate / unbearable

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

3. PROTEST: What would make you take to the streets to protest? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners often and share what you wrote.

	Why / not?
More freedoms	
More money	
Decision to go to war	
Autocratic leader	
Nuclear power stations	
Closing of free press	

4. SELF-RULE: Students A **strongly** believe any people who want self-rule should have it; Students B **strongly** believe we should not be encouraging countries to split up. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. NEW COUNTRIES: Which of these will become independent countries? Rank them and share your rankings with your partner. Put the first to become a country at the top. Change partners often.

- Venice
- Catalonia
- Scotland
- Sardinia
- Palestine
- Somalialand
- Kashmir
- Quebec

6. VENICE: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the city 'Venice'. 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/1210/121007-venice_independence.html

1. TRUE / FALSE:

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

- a. A gathering of a few hundred people in Venice called for independence. T / F
- b. People in Venice want a referendum on breaking away from Italy. T / F
- c. Around 80% of Venetians are opposed to separating from Italy. T / F
- d. If Venice became a country, it would be the second-richest in Europe. T / F
- e. Venice was an independent country 200 years ago. T / F
- f. Venetians are encouraged by Catalonia's quest for autonomy. T / F
- g. A Venetian separatist leader said big business is worst hit in Venice. T / F
- h. The leader is unhappy because Venice is losing \$20 million to Italy. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH:

Match the following synonyms from the article.

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. protestors | a. case |
| 2. gathered | b. independence |
| 3. referred | c. plus |
| 4. autonomy | d. passed on |
| 5. richest | e. decline |
| 6. annexed | f. demonstrators |
| 7. downturn | g. taken over |
| 8. cause | h. serious |
| 9. desperate | i. congregated |
| 10. in addition | j. wealthiest |

3. PHRASE MATCH:

(Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. The separatists called for | a. residents for autonomy |
| 2. start the legal | b. annexed |
| 3. support from local | c. richest country in Europe |
| 4. home to | d. to the Venetian cause |
| 5. the second- | e. an immediate referendum |
| 6. before it was | f. downturn |
| 7. calls for a break | g. about 50 billion euros |
| 8. Italy's current economic | h. around five million people |
| 9. added momentum | i. away from Rome |
| 10. we only get back | j. process for self-rule |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1210/121007-venice_independence.html

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

Thousands of protesters in Venice (1) _____ in front of the regional government building on Saturday demanding independence from Italy. The separatists called for an immediate (2) _____ on the region's independence from Rome. The pro-independence activists have also (3) _____ their case to the European Commission to start the legal (4) _____ for self-rule. A survey taken in September showed that support from local (5) _____ for autonomy is very high, with 80 per cent favouring it. The new Venetian (6) _____ would be known as the "Repubblica Veneta" and would be (7) _____ to around five million people. Separatist leader Lodovico Pizzati told reporters: "It will be the (8) _____-richest country in Europe."

process
second
referred
gathered
state
referendum
residents
home

Venice was an independent republic for a thousand years before it was (9) _____ to the then Kingdom of Italy in 1866. There have been calls for a (10) _____ away from Rome since the 1970s, but Italy's current economic downturn and similar (11) _____ for independence from Catalonia in Spain have added (12) _____ to the Venetian cause. Italy's economic (13) _____ has caused a lot of anger against the Italian government. Mr Pizzati said: "The economic situation here is really (14) _____, with the recession hitting small and medium-sized businesses. In (15) _____, of the 70 billion euros we pay in taxes to Rome, we only get back about 50 billion euros...We are losing out on 20 billion euros a year." Pizzati said that was "(16) _____".

momentum
unbearable
break
desperate
addition
annexed
calls
crisis

LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1210/121007-venice_independence.html

Thousands of protesters in Venice (1) _____ of the regional government building on Saturday demanding independence from Italy. The separatists called for an (2) _____ the region's independence from Rome. The pro-independence activists have also (3) _____ the European Commission to start the legal process for self-rule. A survey taken in September showed that support from local residents (4) _____ high, with 80 per cent favouring it. The new Venetian state (5) _____ the "Repubblica Veneta" and would be home to around five million people. Separatist leader Lodovico Pizzati told reporters: "(6) _____-richest country in Europe."

Venice was an independent republic for a thousand years before it was (7) _____ Kingdom of Italy in 1866. There have been calls for a break away from Rome since the 1970s, but Italy's current economic downturn (8) _____ independence from Catalonia in Spain have added momentum to the Venetian cause. Italy's economic crisis has caused a (9) _____ the Italian government. Mr Pizzati said: "The economic situation (10) _____, with the recession hitting small and (11) _____. In addition, of the 70 billion euros we pay in taxes to Rome, we only get back about 50 billion euros...We (12) _____ 20 billion euros a year." Pizzati said that was "unbearable".

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1210/121007-venice_independence.html

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

local	residents
--------------	------------------

- 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">• front• immediate• case• local• known• second	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• before• break• current• anger• addition• losing
---	--

INDEPENDENCE SURVEY

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1210/121007-venice_independence.html

Write five GOOD questions about independence 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.

INDEPENDENCE 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 word 'independence'?
- c) What do you think of the idea of Venice as a country?
- d) Do you think it will happen?
- e) If 80% of locals want it, would Rome agree to it?
- f) Should all people who want self-rule be able to get it?
- g) If a majority of people want self-rule, should it be automatic because it is democratic?
- h) How would you feel about the richest part of your country breaking away to become a separate country?
- i) Do you hope the "Repubblica Veneta" is created?
- j) Why do different regions want independence?

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INDEPENDENCE DISCUSSION

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Are there separatist movements in your country? What do you think of them?
- c) If all separatist movements got what they wanted, would the world be a more peaceful place?
- d) What are the reasons for people demanding independence?
- e) Why is Rome unhappy that Venice is considering independence?
- f) Are there any dangers of regions becoming countries?
- g) What countries have gained their independence over the past few decades and how are they doing?
- h) What problems might a region have in becoming independent?
- i) Is it unfair Venice pays 70 billion euros to Rome but only gets 50 billion back?
- j) What questions would you like to ask separatist leader Lodovico Pizzati?

LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1210/121007-venice_independence.html

Thousands of protesters in Venice (1) _____ in front of the regional government building on Saturday demanding independence from Italy. The separatists called for an immediate referendum (2) _____ the region's independence from Rome. The pro-independence activists have also referred their (3) _____ to the European Commission to start the legal process for self-rule. A survey (4) _____ in September showed that support from local residents for autonomy is very high, with 80 per cent (5) _____ it. The new Venetian state would be known as the "Repubblica Veneta" and would be (6) _____ to around five million people. Separatist leader Lodovico Pizzati told reporters: "It will be the second-richest country in Europe."

Venice was an independent republic for a thousand years before it was (7) _____ to the then Kingdom of Italy in 1866. There have been calls for a (8) _____ away from Rome since the 1970s, but Italy's current economic downturn and similar calls for independence from Catalonia in Spain have added (9) _____ to the Venetian cause. Italy's economic crisis has caused a lot of anger against the Italian government. Mr Pizzati said: "The economic situation here is really (10) _____, with the recession hitting small and medium-sized businesses. In addition, of the 70 billion euros we pay (11) _____ taxes to Rome, we only get back about 50 billion euros....We are losing (12) _____ on 20 billion euros a year." Pizzati said that was "unbearable".

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

- | | | | | |
|-----|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. | (a) grated | (b) gathered | (c) garnered | (d) gartered |
| 2. | (a) by | (b) on | (c) at | (d) in |
| 3. | (a) luggage | (b) binder | (c) bag | (d) case |
| 4. | (a) stolen | (b) taken | (c) noted | (d) polled |
| 5. | (a) favourably | (b) favouring | (c) favouritism | (d) favoured |
| 6. | (a) house | (b) abode | (c) home | (d) residency |
| 7. | (a) maxed | (b) poleaxed | (c) annexed | (d) boxed |
| 8. | (a) take | (b) carry | (c) break | (d) do |
| 9. | (a) moments | (b) momentous | (c) momentum | (d) monuments |
| 10. | (a) moderate | (b) liberate | (c) generate | (d) desperate |
| 11. | (a) in | (b) of | (c) up | (d) to |
| 12. | (a) in | (b) up | (c) out | (d) down |

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 Venetian history. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. INDEPENDENCE: Make a poster about independence. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. VENETA: Write a magazine article about a possible "Repubblica Veneta". Include imaginary interviews with a Venetian who is for it and a Roman who is against it.

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 Italy's leader. Ask him three questions about Venetian independence. Give him three of your opinions on it. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. protestors | a. demonstrators |
| 2. gathered | b. congregated |
| 3. referred | c. passed on |
| 4. autonomy | d. independence |
| 5. richest | e. wealthiest |
| 6. annexed | f. taken over |
| 7. downturn | g. decline |
| 8. cause | h. case |
| 9. desperate | i. serious |
| 10. in addition | j. plus |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. The separatists called for | a. an immediate referendum |
| 2. start the legal | b. process for self-rule |
| 3. support from local | c. residents for autonomy |
| 4. home to | d. around five million people |
| 5. the second- | e. richest country in Europe |
| 6. before it was | f. annexed |
| 7. calls for a break | g. away from Rome |
| 8. Italy's current economic | h. downturn |
| 9. added momentum | i. to the Venetian cause |
| 10. we only get back | j. about 50 billion euros |

GAP FILL:

Venice calls for independence from Italy

Thousands of protesters in Venice (1) **gathered** in front of the regional government building on Saturday demanding independence from Italy. The separatists called for an immediate (2) **referendum** on the region's independence from Rome. The pro-independence activists have also (3) **referred** their case to the European Commission to start the legal (4) **process** for self-rule. A survey taken in September showed that support from local (5) **residents** for autonomy is very high, with 80 per cent favouring it. The new Venetian (6) **state** would be known as the "Repubblica Veneta" and would be (7) **home** to around five million people. Separatist leader Lodovico Pizzati told reporters: "It will be the (8) **second**-richest country in Europe."

Venice was an independent republic for a thousand years before it was (9) **annexed** to the then Kingdom of Italy in 1866. There have been calls for a (10) **break** away from Rome since the 1970s, but Italy's current economic downturn and similar (11) **calls** for independence from Catalonia in Spain have added (12) **momentum** to the Venetian cause. Italy's economic (13) **crisis** has caused a lot of anger against the Italian government. Mr Pizzati said: "The economic situation here is really (14) **desperate**, with the recession hitting small and medium-sized businesses. In (15) **addition**, of the 70 billion euros we pay in taxes to Rome, we only get back about 50 billion euros....We are losing out on 20 billion euros a year." Pizzati said that was "(16) **unbearable**".

LANGUAGE WORK

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