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## LISBON TREATY – VOTE YES ON 2<sup>nd</sup> OCTOBER

### TEN REASONS WHY THE EU IS GOOD FOR DUBLIN AND IRELAND

#### 1 EXPORTS

The EU greatly facilitates Irish exporters and provides greater security to the very many jobs that are dependent on international trade. **Ireland** is an open economy that **exports 90% of what we produce.**

#### 2 EU FUNDS

Ireland has **received some €58 billion from Europe** to date, including €18 billion from Structural Funds over the past 35 years. Dublin's infrastructure, educational and enterprise facilities have been major beneficiaries of EU funding.

#### 3 INVESTMENT

Dublin business will also be able to benefit from the **€300 million** allocated by the European Investment Bank, to Irish banks, in order to lend to **small and medium size businesses.**

#### 4 MONEY

The euro **keeps interest rates low and stable**, particularly in recessionary times, and requires governments to respect strict EU-wide economic policy guidelines. It is also **good for tourism.**

#### 5 ACCESS

Because of EU membership Irish businesses have access to a **market place of over 500 million** potential customers.

#### 6 PROTECTION

EU law protects businesses and consumers from anti-competitive behaviour and **provides a level playing field for all SMEs** at home and abroad.

#### 7 LOWER COSTS

EU law provides considerable **legal and regulatory certainty** to the economy and in particular to sectors that are regulated by the EU such as financial services and transport. For example, the costs of flying and mobile roaming charges are lower because of EU membership.

#### 8 FREEDOM

Irish citizens can work and set up business anywhere in the EU.

#### 9 INCOME

Since we joined in 1973, the average income in Ireland has increased from 60% of the EU average to over 140% by 2008. EU membership has been a significant reason for the improvement in our standard of living.

#### 10 ENVIRONMENT

The legislative framework for Ireland's high standards of environmental protection is based almost entirely on EU Directives. The EU provides a collective response to climate change.



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## LISBON REFORM TREATY

### KEY FEATURES

Since the referendum on 12 June 2008, the 27 Member States have agreed “the Guarantees” to provide assurances to Irish voters. These are marked with \*.

#### PURPOSE

The Lisbon Treaty will produce a decision-making process and streamlined institutions for an enlarged European Union of 27 members. The Irish people are represented in the process through the Irish Government (European Council), Irish MEPs (European Parliament) and the Dáil (national parliament oversight).

#### COMMISSION \*

If the Lisbon Treaty is ratified every country, including Ireland, will continue to have a representative on the European Commission. The number of Commissioners will remain at 27.

#### VETO \*

Irish Ministers maintain their veto in the areas of tax, foreign policy and defence – no changes can be made in these areas the Government, Dáil and Seanad agree. The Guarantees secure Ireland’s right to set its own corporation tax rate.

#### NEUTRALITY \*

Military capability and defence spending remain exclusive matters for the Irish Government, ensuring our national neutrality is unaffected. The Guarantees secure that the Treaty cannot lead to the creation of a European army or the introduction of conscription.

#### FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS \*

The Treaty makes significant progress in protecting fundamental rights, including human rights. However, the Guarantees mean that the Irish Constitution will take precedence on the issues of abortion, divorce, the role of the family as the primary educator and the role of religion in education.

#### DEMOCRACY

The Treaty gives greater powers to Ireland’s and other EU citizens’ directly elected representatives in the European Parliament as well as a stronger role for national parliaments. Irish Ministers will continue to represent our interests directly in the European Council. Citizens will also gain the right to petition the Commission directly.

#### TRANSPARENCY

The EU will consult with interested stakeholders on all major policy proposals and will make it easier for citizens and groups to access working documents and to participate in the work of the European Parliament. The impact of all proposals will be costed before they are negotiated.

#### CONTROL

Ireland will continue to have exclusive control in areas - such as taxation rates, education, healthcare and justice, family law, and defence, where there is no EU dimension.

#### LEADERSHIP

A President of the European Council will be elected for up to five years giving the EU a more stable leadership. Having a designated President will give the EU more clout on the world stage.

#### DECISION-MAKING

Major decisions can be taken if countries, who represent a majority of citizens and Member States, support the proposal. Even so, decisions by such voting procedures will continue to be the exception and not the rule. The current preference for seeking consensus on decisions will continue.