

**Brussels, Saturday 3 October 2009
Statement**

**José Manuel BARROSO
President of the European Commission**

on the outcome of the Irish Referendum

Ladies and gentlemen,

My message today is very simple; Thank you Ireland: It's a great day, for Ireland and for Europe.

The Irish people have spoken. They have said a resounding yes to Europe.

I have just spoken to the Irish Taoiseach, Brian Cowen to congratulate him. I have also spoken to Enda Kenny, the leader of Fine Gael and to Eamon Gilmore, the leader of the Labour Party. I am extremely happy about the resounding result of the referendum.

All Member States have now democratically approved the Lisbon Treaty, either by popular or by parliamentary vote.

I want to congratulate the Irish people on reaching their overwhelming decision after such long and careful deliberation.

I see the yes vote as a sign of confidence by the Irish people in the European Union, as a sign of their desire to be wholehearted members at the heart of the European Union. As a sign that Ireland recognises the role that the European Union has played in responding to the economic crisis.

The debate has been intense, many people have been involved and all aspects of the Lisbon Treaty and European Union policy have been discussed.

The campaign has been extensive over the past month. Indeed I saw it at first hand when I was in Limerick on Saturday 12th September. I was genuinely impressed not just by the campaign of the political parties, but particularly, and I want to underline this, by the campaigns by civil society organisations.

This shows when we engage, when we explain, we can have real support for our European project

Much more information about the Treaty was available on this occasion and I believe this played a key role in helping people make up their minds. I am pleased that the European Commission helped in providing impartial and accurate information at the disposal of the Irish people.

I also believe that the legal guarantees, including the retention of a Commissioner per Member State, played a significant role in meeting the legitimately expressed concerns voiced by the Irish people in June 2008. It demonstrated that the European Union was ready to listen, and to react.

The European Union is a project based on the idea of solidarity.

I believe that the European Union needs the Lisbon Treaty so that we can be more effective, and more accountable, in delivering an agenda that produces concrete results for our citizens.

Now that all Member States have democratically approved the Lisbon Treaty, I hope that the necessary procedures for its entry into force can be completed as quickly as possible in Poland and the Czech Republic.

Today was indeed a great day for the European Union, once again thanks to Ireland.