

EPP VICE PRESIDENT ENDA KENNY: "THURSDAY'S REFERENDUM VOTE REPRESENTS A MOMENT OF TRUTH FOR IRELAND"

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Speaking at Fine Gael's final event for the broadcast media, [Fine Gael](#) Leader and EPP Vice President, **Enda Kenny** TD, urged people to focus on the real implications of the Lisbon Treaty as they prepare to cast their votes.

"I would like to welcome my predecessors as Fine Gael Leader. Their participation today emphasises this Party's consistent support, both in Government and in opposition, for Ireland's participation in the European process.

"Thursday's referendum vote represents a moment of truth for Ireland.

"We will decide whether we want to reaffirm and strengthen our place in Europe or turn our backs on the huge progress we have achieved over the past 35 years.

"I'm voting 'YES' on Thursday because I believe that Ireland's future success depends on this country remaining at the heart of a reformed Europe.

"The fact that Ireland is the only country holding a referendum on this Treaty is both a privilege and a huge responsibility. A responsibility we should take seriously. On Thursday we will decide if Europe is to be reformed so that it can meet the challenges it faces. We will also send a signal internationally about our commitment to a European process that has been pivotal to the economic transformation of Ireland. A European process that ended our economic dependence on Britain and enabled us to grow into a progressive, outward-looking nation.

"I urge people to reject the simplistic argument that there are no negative consequences if Ireland rejects this Treaty, that we can just go back and get a better deal. The truth is this that Lisbon is a very good deal for Ireland and for other small countries. If we were to demand a renegotiation, this would mean re-opening the negotiations for all 27 Member States, the outcome of which would be very uncertain with no guarantees for anybody.

"Irrespective of the institutional consequences, a 'NO' vote would send out a message internationally that Ireland has isolated itself from the rest of Europe, that we have removed ourselves from the centre of influence.

"As we prepare to cast our votes, I urge people to focus on the facts as they decide on this momentous decision for Ireland's future. I ask you to ignore the any false claims that have been repeated over and over again in an attempt to confuse and mislead people. It is very regrettable that totally untrue arguments about taxation, abortion, neutrality and even euthanasia have been put before the Irish people. I urge people to evaluate the credibility of the groups that have made these false claims. These claims are completely at variance with the facts as confirmed by the Referendum Commission and by the elected representatives of the vast majority of the Irish people. The truth is that Lisbon will not create any new powers for the European Union and we have nothing to be fearful about in approving it.

"I urge people to think about future generations when you go to vote on Thursday. If we give this Treaty a resounding 'YES' vote, we will be able to look back pride in the knowledge that we, the Irish people, were the ones who built the platform for the future success of Ireland and Europe.

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