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Press Summary Archive

Ryanair boss “less-than-convincing” on Lisbon Treaty answers

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The Irish edition of the *Mail* reports that, at the launch of Ryanair’s €500,000 campaign for a Yes vote in the second Irish Lisbon Treaty referendum, Ryanair Chief Executive Michael O’Leary gave a “less-than-convincing answer” to a direct question about how the Treaty would expand the single market, although he claimed to have read the Treaty. He said, “I’m not going to get into explaining the European treaty; go read it yourself”.

He added that he thought, “Without Europe and the euro, the Irish economy would be run by our incompetent politicians, our inept civil service and the greedy public sector trade union bosses.” However, when asked what the effects of a second No vote might be, he said “I don’t think we’ll get drummed out of the euro.”

Meanwhile, the *Irish Independent* reports that the Irish Farmers’ Association yesterday launched a campaign for a Yes vote. However, the group was criticised by The Farmers for No group, who said that the Treaty would see Ireland’s voting weight in the EU Council of Ministers reduced and would transfer power from the Irish people to EU institutions.

[Irish Independent](#) [Irish Times](#) [Irish Mail](#) [OE blog](#) [Irish Times: Letters](#) [EU Referendum blog](#)

Doug Bandow: Democracy doesn’t mean drowning out the voices of the people

An op-ed in the *Washington Examiner* by Doug Bandow argues that, “When it comes to the European Union, any vote to increase authority in Brussels is viewed as final. Any vote against consolidating power is treated as merely temporary.” He cites an Open Europe poll which found that 75 percent of all Europeans, including a majority in every country, wanted a referendum on any new Treaty transferring powers to the EU from member states. Concerning the second Irish referendum on the Lisbon Treaty, he quotes Open Europe Director Lorraine Mullally saying, “Despite lengthy negotiations and lots of superficial statements about ‘respecting’ the Irish ‘no’ vote, not a single comma has changed.”

He concludes, “Oxford professor Timothy Garton Ash wrote in the *Guardian* of ‘the essential grandeur of this project we call the European Union, where nations born in so much blood work together freely in a commonwealth of democracies.’ He is right, but his argument actually works against the Lisbon Treaty, or at least the current ratification process. Democracy doesn’t mean drowning out the voices of those who would be forced to live under the government.”

[Washington Examiner](#) [Open Europe press release](#)

On her *Mail* blog, Mary Ellen Synon cites Open Europe’s findings that EU Commissioners retiring this year can expect to walk away with over £1 million each in pension, transition and resettlement payments.

[Mail: Synon blog](#) [Open Europe press release](#) [OE blog](#)

French PM says France cannot be a net contributor to the EU budget “forever”

At the recent annual gathering of French Ambassadors, Prime Minister Francois Fillon spoke about the French economic situation, and emphasised the fact that, with a rising debt burden, France would not be able to remain one of the main contributors to the EU budget for much longer. He noted that every year, France contributes €19 billion to the EU budget and receives €14 billion back (including CAP subsidies), and said, “Our partners must understand that this position as a top net contributor, along with Germany, will not be able to resist the current tensions in public finances forever.”

Meanwhile, in a recent speech, President Nicolas Sarkozy called on the EU to assist with moving out of the downturn, saying, “each time Europe wants to, Europe can, the problem is that Europe doesn’t always want to”. He also claimed that the second Irish referendum on the Lisbon Treaty is at the centre of the issue, saying that “10 years of institutional debates could turn into a success”.

[Euro Investor](#) [Reuters America Latina](#) [Le Point](#) [EurActiv](#) [French Foreign Office](#)

Charlemagne: EU actions in the economic crisis have depended on “political will, not treaties”

The *Economist*’s Charlemagne column looks at the end of the summer break and return to work of politicians in Brussels and suggests that “there is much chatter about the Lisbon treaty, a proposed set of changes to the EU’s rule book that faces a second referendum in Ireland on October 2nd. Yet in this crisis, whether Europe has acted or not has depended on political will, not treaties.”

[Economist: Charlemagne](#)

Oxford fellow: Increased German parliamentary involvement not sufficient to resolve EU’s democratic deficit

German newspaper *Welt* reports that Peter Gauweiler (CSU), one of the main complainants against the Lisbon Treaty, does not intend to file a constitutional complaint against the new German law to ratify the Lisbon Treaty.

Meanwhile Katrin Auel, lecturer and fellow at Oxford University, stresses in *European Voice* that Germany’s Constitutional Court ruling emphasised the EU’s structural democratic deficit, focusing its criticism mainly on the European Parliament. She argues that while the Court demands increased involvement of domestic parliaments in EU affairs this will not be enough to resolve EU’s

democratic deficit, but increased public debate and political competition on European issues is required.

Auel underlines that 'Europe' is no longer an issue that the public is willing to leave on trust to its political elites and that EP elections do not give citizens the opportunity to express their preferences on EU issues and to hold parties in the EP accountable for their performance. She adds, "Given the lack of other opportunities, it is therefore hardly surprising that citizens have used referenda to express their unease about EU developments."

[Welt Sueddeutsche](#) [EU Observer](#) [European Voice](#)

EP President wants 16 September vote on Barroso reappointment

EUobserver reports that European Parliament President Jerzy Buzek has said that he wants MEPs to vote on the re-appointment of José Manuel Barroso as Commission President on 16 September. The political groups in the Parliament are scheduled to take a decision on the timing of the vote on 10 September.

Meanwhile Liberal group leader Guy Verhofstadt has suggested that if Barroso's candidacy was rejected in September, that would be the "worst case" scenario, and said the rejection would play badly in an Irish context, reports *EurActiv*.

[EUobserver](#) [European Voice](#) [EurActiv](#)

Barroso in agreement with Sarkozy over limits on bonuses

Le Figaro reports that EU Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso has said he agrees with the spirit of French proposals to limit bankers' pay. Mr Barroso said that one of his first acts at the Commission was to attempt to limit bonuses but "no one paid attention". He said he was pleased the issue would be tackled on a global scale at the G20, and that the EU also wants ensure that bonuses do not "encourage and reward excessive risk taking".

No link

Industry criticises EU derivatives proposals

The *FT* reports that the London-based Association of Corporate Treasurers has produced a comment paper criticising the European Commission's proposed reforms for the over-the-counter derivatives market, arguing that the plans requiring contracts to be routed through clearing houses could require companies to hold billions of pounds of extra cash against positions or post as margin. The paper, submitted to the Commission, argues that "In attempting to remove the credit risk between a company and a bank which is not systemically significant, a serious liquidity risk for the firm would be introduced instead."

[FT](#)

British tax fraud in ETS leads to re-examination of EU VAT directive

Le Monde reports that the £38m tax fraud over the EU's carbon trading scheme has led the European Commission to take another look at its directive on VAT. In September the Commission will announce modifications to the VAT directive, in force since 2007, to limit the problem posed by fraud, whilst re-establishing unity of tax rules across the EU.

No link

The *Express* reports that traditional fairground rides, such as carousels, are under threat from the EU's ban on incandescent light bulbs. Ride owners say the new energy efficient bulbs will not properly illuminate the rides.

No link

According to *Central Bank News*, Italian Central Bank Governor Mario Draghi has the best chance of succeeding Jean-Claude Trichet as President of the European Central Bank in November 2011. An article on business site *Z24* questions whether an Italian President could cope with ECB presidency, noting that picking a German would seem more intelligent.

[Z24](#)

The *FT* reports that, ahead of its interest-rate meeting next week, the European Central Bank feels that its strategy to combat the economic crisis is being vindicated. It quotes ECB President Jean-Claude Trichet saying the central bank needs "credible alertness", to be ready to act at any moment.

[FT](#) [FT: Leader](#) [FAZ](#)

An article in the *Economist* looks at the diplomatic row between Israel and Sweden, currently holders of the EU Presidency, over an article in *Aftonbladet*, and suggests it has the "potential to escalate".

[Economist](#)

The European Commission will today propose draft rules that would make it easier to put many books and manuscripts online, according to the *IHT*. EU Media Commissioner Viviane Reding also moved to support Google in its efforts to publish millions of scanned books online, reports *Reuters*.

[IHT](#) [Reuters](#) [Euractiv](#) [European Voice](#)

A leader in the *Times* defends the right of politicians, citing Conservative MEP Dan Hannan, to make controversial statements arguing, "If politicians can't say what they think, why bother with them?"

[Times: Leader](#)

An article in *Eurasia Critic* magazine looks in detail at the EU's planned Nabucco pipeline project and considers where the potential sources of gas may be. It also suggests that shipping gas via the pipeline could be "30-40% cheaper" than via the