Images of the Lisbon Treaty Debate
in the British Press
Images of the Lisbon Treaty Debate
in the British Press:
A Corpus-based Approach to Metaphor Analysis

By

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CAMBRIDGE SCHOLARS
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This book has been the result of a three year PhD research project at the Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II. The project has focused on the investigation of conceptual metaphors in the British press in order to analyse how the British popular and quality press describes the political debate about the new European Treaty, and to what extent its ‘attitude’ towards sensitive European issues in general and the European Union in particular is still Eurosceptic, as highlighted in previous studies (Anderson and Weymouth 1999). Moreover, the analysis also aims to investigate the extent to which the British press attributes stereotyped roles to EU leaders.


Chiara Nasti’s study follows a well established trend in metaphor analysis that claims that the conceptual aspect of metaphors is neither superior nor inferior to their linguistic manifestations and that, therefore, metaphor analysis requires an investigation that not only concentrates on their cognitive function but also on their pragmatic and linguistic features. Within this line of research, this study draws on the contribution of scholars who have shown how metaphors are fundamental in the identification of ideologies and values of a discourse community (Charteris-Black 2004), and in interpreting and understanding the complex dynamics of the political debate about Europe (Musolff 1996, Schäffner 1996, Musolff et all 2001).

Against this background, Chiara Nasti’s analysis aims to investigate the representation and description of the European Union integration process related to the Lisbon Treaty debate. In particular, her aim is to identify and explore the most recurrent conceptual metaphors in order to show how not only do they describe the scenario created by the Irish rejection of the treaty but also give information about Britain’s perception of the EU and its future. The analysis clearly shows that both a qualitative and a quantitative investigation are needed. A qualitative analysis is
necessary to establish what is a metaphor and to explore its pragmatic function, while a quantitative approach reveals the frequency and distribution of metaphors in the corpus, helping the researcher to focus on their cognitive aspect too. In this regard, the book provides a major contribution on the value of corpus linguistics use in the investigation and analysis of metaphors.

The study focuses on the two most recurrent conceptual metaphors in the corpus: MOVEMENT and CONFLICT. In particular within the MOVEMENT conceptual metaphor six scenarios emerge: a) there is a movement towards a destination (ratification of Lisbon Treaty); b) there are impediments on the journey; c) these impediments end into uncharted waters/territories; d) some countries are still moving towards the ratification leaving others behind; e) some countries proceed more quickly than others; f) some countries are forcing the movement towards the ratification. The CONFLICT metaphor investigation has identified three scenarios within the political debate (the Irish, the British and the European ones) trying to identify commonalities and distinct features among them.

The analysis of a specialised discourse topic – the newspaper discourse on the Lisbon Treaty ratification – investigates the stereotyped roles that metaphors construe of participants in the event, and highlights what image of the event itself is provided in the two conceptual metaphors and in the various scenarios. Moreover, it also intends to identify the role of metaphor in the public debate over Lisbon and, whenever possible, the specific attitudes of the British press towards the approval of this controversial treaty.

Due to the clear and careful analysis, this book will be of interests for readers from various academic backgrounds who are interested in linguistics, cognitive linguistics and in particular in the application of corpus linguistics to metaphor investigation.

Marco Venuti
I am immensely grateful to my supervisor Prof. Marco Venuti for his insightful remarks and comments.

I would also like to thank Professor Andreas Musolff for meeting me in London and giving me the opportunity to discuss my research project with him and providing me with generous suggestions.

I wish to thank my family and my husband for morally supporting me during the drafting stage of the manuscript.
Metaphors play an important role in understanding social and political realities, and in particular they are very useful to their user for presenting complex and abstract situations in more simple and familiar terms. According to Lakoff and Johnson (2003) metaphors are not merely linguistic structures, but they shape our thinking and define our social and political reality. Many scholars (Musolff et al. 2001, Musolff 1996, Schäffner 1996) have also shown how metaphors are fundamental in interpreting and understanding the complex dynamics of the political debate about Europe. By presenting European issues in the form of well-known and recognizable schemas and scenarios, metaphors make them accessible to the general reader. However, in order to understand the complexity of metaphors, it is necessary to analyse them in the context where they occur. Metaphors have turned out to be particularly significant in the identification of ideologies and values of a discourse community (Charteris-Black 2004; Fairclough 1989). In the past, many researchers regarded the conceptual form of metaphors as more important than their linguistic representation and largely ignored metaphor connection to real life issues. Many studies only involved investigations of the conceptual sphere and based their findings on intuitions or invented data without questioning the applicability of these results to the real world (Gibbs 1994; Lakoff and Johnson 2003). Nowadays, research is involving the application of metaphor analysis to real situations. Zanotto et al. (2008) and Deignan (2005) have shown how some intuitions may be partially true or completely wrong when confronted with the real occurrences of metaphorical expressions in a corpus, and they suggest a new approach to metaphor as “social and situated, as a matter of language and discourse, and not just as a matter of thought” (Zanotto et al. 2008: 1).

Against this background, this research project aims to investigate the representation and description of the European Union integration process relating to the Lisbon Treaty debate in a selection of British tabloids and broadsheets. In particular, this study aims to explore the most recurrent conceptual metaphors in order to show not only how they describe the scenario created by the Irish rejection of the treaty, but also give information about Britain’s perception of the EU and its future. Starting from the results of previous metaphor analyses on the European debate
over sensitive issues, the present research questions whether the British press is still Eurosceptic or whether its generally negative stance towards the European Union has softened. The decision to investigate the British press is due to the fact that other studies have already been conducted in this field, but is also based on the assumption that printed media is one of the most attractive genres and may indicate the general overview and public perception on a specific topic. It has been argued that the media represent our first contact with the external world (Van Dijk 1991) and in particular that through the printed media the British have ready access to important information aimed at forming and reinforcing opinions, especially on matters concerning Europe (Anderson and Weymouth 1999). Moreover, it is unquestionable that the British press has devoted great attention to the European Integration process during the last ten years. Indeed, media interest in the relationship between the UK and EU can be traced back to the 1990s when negotiations for the Maastricht Treaty were beginning to take place. The relationship between Britain and Europe has been a controversial issue and has occupied the pages of national newspapers and filled the political agenda. This much-debated topic has in fact seen both political and social supporters and opponents to the integration of Britain with the EU discussing the best option to choose. Moreover, the several opt-outs from Britain to the proposals of the EU have attracted media attention which, on the one hand, has favoured the flow of information while, on the other hand, it has helped to influence the reader’s perception of the UK and EU. This interest has increased, and nowadays the British press is still focusing on political debates over Europe.

At the beginning of the drafting stage of the new European Treaty, the British press seemed to be interested in the worries and hopes of the European Commission President, José Barroso.

José Manuel Barroso, the European Commission president, told the national leaders last night that there were “no reasons, no excuses” why the treaty should not be agreed tomorrow. “This will not be the Battle of Lisbon,” he said. (The Daily Telegraph, 18 October 2007)

The metaphorical expression used by the leader and reported by the Daily Telegraph might suggest the intention of persuading European Heads of Government to sign the Lisbon Treaty without difficulties or reserve. The following day, the Daily Mail and The Independent, respectively quoting Brown and Barroso, reported that it was necessary to move on/forward in order to get a renovated Europe.
In his first appearance on the European stage as Prime Minister, Mr Brown insisted it was time for Britain to ‘move on’ from the arguments it had had for ‘many, many decades’ over changes to the EU’s powers and structure.

(Daily Mail, 19 October 2007)

Jose Manuel Barroso, the European Commission President, criticised Britain for demanding so many opt-outs. “Of course we regret that it was necessary to have some opt-outs from some countries. But we respect this. We prefer to have a solution that is broadly agreed with some specific opt-outs for some countries than not to move forward”. But the Tories dismissed Mr Brown’s “red lines”, and renewed their call for a referendum.

(The Independent, 19 October 2007)

A common intention of finding a solution for the benefit of Europe was in the mind of both leaders. Barroso in particular stressed the importance of a solution agreed by all the member states. CONFLICT and MOVEMENT metaphors when speaking of Europe come as no surprise. Many scholars (Musolff 1996, 2004; Schäffner 1996; Charteris-Black and Musolff 2003) have shown that they are recurring conceptual metaphors of the debate about Europe. Images of a train moving at different speeds along the path of integration are common during the years of the Maastricht and Amsterdam Treaties. While the conceptualisation of euro trading as PHYSICAL COMBAT is a common feature of the British press reporting during the years preceding euro adoption. Since then it is not surprising that politicians as well as newspapers have spoken of the European Union projects in terms of MOVEMENT and CONFLICT. Therefore, we could say that those metaphors are still used in the political debate over Europe, even though the TARGET domain appears to be different. In this regard, the movement seems to have a new destination: the renovation of the EU structure, i.e. the approval and later ratification of the Lisbon Treaty. It is this new destination that is going to be investigated.

The present research project is divided into 7 Chapters. The first Chapter provides a general overview of the political background to the Lisbon Treaty ratification. It tries to outline the most significant stages in the political process of European Institutional reforms that were started with the drafting and following rejection of the European Constitution in 2005. The second Chapter traces the main tenets of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory, focusing in particular on the methodology of Cognitive Linguists to investigate metaphors. It argues that the traditional methodology merely explores a limited potential of metaphor that can be fully appreciated only by considering the pragmatic function of metaphors and combining a qualitative and quantitative approach. The second
Chapter also gives an overview of the main findings of corpus-based studies focusing on the application of metaphor research to the European framework and explaining why these studies are fundamental for this research project.

The third Chapter provides information on the selection of data, their collection steps, and corpus size. It gives an overview of article distribution in the entire corpus, making parallels with the historical background traced in Chapter 1. Ultimately, it also deals with corpus annotation and any other procedure carried out to make the data more comparable and suitable for the computational tool used for the metaphor analysis in this research project. Chapter 4 is concerned with the two stage analysis undertaken following Charteris-Black’s Critical Metaphor Analysis procedure. It focuses on the first stage of analysis carried out on a sample of articles, providing a basis for a more quantitative analysis. It shows how, from a first reading, it has been possible to identify the most recurrent conceptual domains and draw some preliminary observations. In particular, Chapter 4 deals with the first stage analysis of the two most recurrent conceptual metaphors in the corpus: the MOVEMENT and CONFLICT metaphors. The first reading of a sample of articles gave a perception of possible metaphorical expressions in the corpus, as described in the second paragraph of Chapter 4, while further investigation with computer tools provided by the Software used (WordSmith 5) offered a more detailed scenario of the real occurrences in the whole corpus. This second stage of the analysis provided the basis for a wider qualitative analysis whose description is part of Chapters 5 and 6.

The fifth Chapter deals with the analysis of MOVEMENT metaphors in detail. It examines the six scenarios that emerged from the analysis of both the political scenario and the media coverage of the two conceptual metaphors identified: LISBON RATIFICATION PROCESS IS MOVEMENT FORWARD/DIRECTION and REJECTION OF RATIFICATION IS LACK OF MOVEMENT/Opposite DIRECTION. The sixth Chapter examines the CONFLICT metaphor in detail. It focuses on the three scenarios that emerged, the Irish, the British, and the European ones, trying to identify commonalities and distinct features among them. Not only do both Chapters try to describe the stereotyped role attributed to the participants in the ratification process, but also highlight the different attitudes of the British press towards the event. The Conclusion indicates that the findings are consistent with some tenets of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory, but also confirms critics’ insights into metaphor analysis application to real world issues. Moreover, it also tries to integrate the two metaphor analyses
In conclusion, this project deals with the analysis of a specialised discourse topic – the newspaper discourse on the Lisbon Treaty ratification – and aims to investigate the stereotyped roles that metaphors, both as a matter of thought and a linguistic phenomenon, construe of participants in the event, and what image of the event itself is provided. Moreover, it also intends to identify the role of metaphors in the public debate over Lisbon and, whenever possible, the specific attitudes of the British press towards the approval of this controversial treaty.
CHAPTER ONE
POLITICAL BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

The Lisbon Treaty is the final stage of a wider institutional reform process that started with the drafting of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe. During the years preceding the Constitution, the European Union was growing faster and faster, and in 2004 it saw the entry of ten countries, raising the number of its member states to 25. The future scenario foresaw a possible wider expansion including other Eastern countries and, in fact, in 2007 Bulgaria and Romania entered the EU, which then reached 27 countries. This rapid integration process forced EU leaders to question the validity and effectiveness of the Treaties in force. As always happens in reform periods, contrasts among member states arose. In order to be enforced, treaties have to be approved unanimously by member states in accordance with national constitutional requirements, as established by the Treaty on European Union.

The approval of the Lisbon Treaty was decided in the member state parliaments, apart from Ireland whose constitution required a referendum. The Irish referendum marked a significant stage in the ratification process and made countries reflect on why this country that had long benefited from the EU, rejected the treaty. The Irish referendum became a symbol of democracy that was being ignored by EU leaders who continued to press for ratification despite the negative result. In Britain, and in particular for the Tory party and some Eurosceptics, the Irish referendum was the last chance to express a different point of view and to prevent the British government from following the rules of the EU, making it more powerful.

The present Chapter shows the different stages that were brought to the Lisbon Treaty and the consequences the EU leaders had to face. In particular, it offers an overview of the consequences of the referendum in Ireland and focuses on the important impact that this event had on British citizens.
1.2 From the Constitution to the ‘period of reflection’

The reform process of the European Union has been a much-debated issue among its Member States. The Laeken Declaration of 13 December 2001 redrafted the issues raised in Nice (December 2000) regarding a reform of the institutions, and set out the key issues to be discussed at a Convention on the Future of Europe whose inaugural session took place on February 28, 2002 in Brussels. In parallel with the proceedings of the Convention, with Mr V. Giscard d’Estaing as Chairman and Mr G. Amato and Mr J.L. Dehaene as Vice-Chairmen, a Forum was opened in order to involve all citizens in the debate about the Future of Europe. The Convention finished on 10 July 2003 with a draft of a Constitutional Treaty which the European Council considered a first step towards the reform of the Union. They concurrently convened an Inter-Governmental Conference (IGC) to discuss the matter. The IGC began its work on 4 October 2003 and concluded on 18 June 2004 with the agreement on a project for a Constitutional Treaty by all the Heads of State and Government.

On 29 October 2004, the 25 Heads of State and Government signed the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe in Rome. To be enforceable, this treaty had to be ratified by all the Member States in accordance with each one’s constitutional rules, namely either parliamentary ratification or referendum. Even though the Constitution for Europe was ratified by 18 Member States, the ratification process was not completed because the two referendums held in France and The Netherlands produced a negative turnout. Following the difficulties in ratifying the treaty, the Heads of State and Government decided to launch a “period of reflection” on the future of Europe, at the European Council meeting on 16 and 17 June 2005. This period of reflection was intended to prompt a wide debate with European citizens.

We have noted the outcome of the referendums in France and the Netherlands. We consider that these results do not call into question citizens’ attachment to the construction of Europe. Citizens have nevertheless expressed concerns and worries which need to be taken into account, hence the need for us to reflect together on this situation. This period of reflection will be used to enable a broad debate to take place in each of our countries, involving citizens, civil society, social partners, national parliaments and political parties. (Declaration on the ratification of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, European Council 16-17 June 2005)
Chapter One

It was necessary to unanimously reflect on the results of the referendums without questioning “the validity of continuing with the ratification process” and therefore the Heads of State and Government agreed to reconsider the issue in the first half of 2006.

The European Council of 15-16 June 2006 agreed that the German Presidency would present a report to the Council during the first semester of 2007, based on extensive consultation with the Member States. It also established that the report would assess the state of discussion with reference to the European Constitution and explore possible future solutions to continue with the reform process.4

1.3 The Reform Treaty and the Lisbon Summit

After the “period of reflection”, the European Council of 21-22 June 2007 welcomed the report of the German Presidency and convened an Inter-Governmental Conference to set the basis for the continuation of the reform process.5 It was agreed that the incoming (Portuguese) Presidency would draw up a draft Treaty and submit it to the IGC as soon as it started. It was also established that the work of the IGC would finish as quickly as possible in order to have the new treaty ratified before the Parliament election in June 2009. The European Council adopted a detailed and precise mandate for the IGC, which would broadly take over the institutional reforms agreed in 2004, while taking into account the assessment resulting from the reflection period.

The work of the IGC began on 23 July 2007 and concluded on 17-18 October 2007 at the Lisbon Informal Summit. On that occasion, the President of the European Council, José Sócrates, said that the EU was close to a Reform Treaty which would be named Treaty of Lisbon whose adoption would be proof of a Europe that moves forward despite a limited number of problems that might be encountered for its ratification.6 During that Summit, the Heads of State and Government informally adopted the Reform Treaty that would amend the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and the Treaty establishing the European Community (TEC). The first one would keep its name while the TEC would be called Treaty on the Functioning of the Union. As a consequence, the European Union would be based on these two treaties and would abandon the project of a Constitution for Europe.

On December 3 and 4, MPs from all over the European Union met in Brussels to discuss the future of Europe and the Treaty of Lisbon. The two main issues on the agenda were how the treaty would meet the expectations of Europeans, and the increased power of the EU parliament.
The new Reform Treaty was officially signed by all the Heads of State and Government on December 13 in Lisbon. This treaty was seen as a positive step for the construction of a better Europe and the completion of the European project of Institutional reform, as the President of the Council, José Sócrates, stated in his speech at the signing ceremony of the Lisbon Treaty.

This Treaty is a new moment in the European adventure and of the European future. And we face this future with the same spirit we always had: certain of our values, confident in our project, strengthened in our Union. […] The Treaty of Lisbon includes the best in the tradition and heritage of the European project but is not a Treaty for the past; it is a Treaty for the future. It is a Treaty for the construction of a more modern, efficient and democratic Europe. (José Sócrates, 13 December 2007)

1.4 From the Lisbon Summit to the Ratification

The signing of the Lisbon Treaty was followed by the ratification process, and it was expected that the treaty would become enforceable on 1 January 2009, as provided for in article 6 of the treaty:

This Treaty shall enter into force on 1 January 2009, provided that all the instruments of ratification have been deposited, or, failing that, on the first day of the month following the deposit of the instrument of ratification by the last signatory State to take this step. (Art.6, paragraph 2 of the Lisbon Treaty)

The emphasis on a quick ratification and enforcement of the treaty was due to the fact that in June 2009, the European Parliament would hold elections and that the mandate of the President of the European Commission, Barroso, would end in October 2009.

However, the ratification process was carried out in accordance with the constitutional requirements of each Member State and it was expected that all the 27 Member States would ratify the treaty in its entirety. Only a few days after its signing, the Lisbon Treaty was approved by the Hungarian Parliament on 17 December, and President Barroso lauded this action, in a speech at the European Parliament:

I wish to warmly salute Hungary, its government and its parliament for the ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon yesterday. The Treaty was ratified with an overwhelming majority, 385 yes votes and only 5 no votes. It is a very positive political signal that a new Member State is the first country to ratify the Treaty. Hungary deserves our applause. (José Manuel Durão
On 29 January 2008, the Republic of Slovenia also approved the Treaty of Lisbon and its Prime Minister, who was also in charge of the rotating Presidency of the EU, welcomed the event and reaffirmed that the monitoring of the ratification was one of his Presidency’s priorities. In February other two Member States approved the treaty and the ratification process seemed to be proceeding as anticipated. While the other countries followed the parliamentary procedure for the ratification of the treaty, Ireland held a referendum according to the provisions of its Constitution.

Before the Irish referendum on 12 June 2008, eighteen Member States had approved the treaty. However, only eight of them had completed the process of ratification by depositing the instruments of ratification in Rome.

1.5 The Ratification in Ireland

The ratification in Ireland differed from the procedures of the other countries. After the Irish Parliament’s approval of the treaty, the Irish Constitution required a referendum to discuss these important political matters and therefore a referendum was held on 12 June 2008.

A proposal to amend the Constitution must be introduced in the Dáil as a Bill. When the Bill has been passed by both Houses of the Oireachtas (Parliament), it must be submitted to the people for approval at a referendum. If a majority of the votes cast at the referendum are in favour of the proposal, the Bill is signed by the President and the Constitution is amended accordingly. (Referendum results 1937-2009, page 7 paragraph 3)

The ratification of the Lisbon Treaty saw much political division in Ireland. The main parties that shared the political ground were the Fine Gael, Fianna Fáil, Labour, and Progressive Democrats supporting the ratification, and the Sinn Féin, Socialist Party, and the think-tank Libertas Group campaigning for a ‘no’ vote. The prospects of a possible ‘no’ were visible from the beginning of the referendum campaign, prompting EU leaders to speak to the Irish People in order to highlight the positive aspects of the Lisbon Treaty.

The European Commission Vice President, Margot Wallström in her speech to the National Forum on Europe on 28 February 2008, gave some
reasons to vote for the treaty. She stressed how this treaty would be positive for each member of the EU and its citizens. She also focused on the fact that the European system was enlarging and therefore what had been useful for fifteen members could not have been suitable for twenty-seven. In fact, she emphasised that this treaty would “make the EU more efficient, more transparent, more secure, more united on the world stage, and more democratic.”

The same support came from the President of the Commission Barroso who pointed out some crucial elements of the Treaty in his speech at the National Forum on Europe in Dublin on 14 April 2008. He focused on three main areas: the acceleration of the decision-making procedure, the possibility for citizens to make their proposals to the Commission through their national parliaments, and the foreign policy. He also reassured the Irish people that their main concerns such as taxation, neutrality, and abortion would not undergo any changes. Therefore, he concluded as follows:

On 12 June, the Irish people will be sending a message to the rest of Europe, and the wider world. I hope it will be one that says you want a more efficient, effective and accountable Europe. That you want to see the EU play its unique role in helping to spread peace, progress and responsibility round the world. That Ireland wants to continue to be at the heart of an open Europe and to bring its unique contribution to all of the fora where decisions are taken.

A few days later, Sinn Féin MEP Mary Lou McDonald, challenging Barroso’s claims on a better Europe, said that “Ireland will not be damaged by a “no” vote”. In later speeches MEP McDonald and other Sinn Féin MEPs expressed their reluctance to ratify the treaty and advocated a negative outcome. Moreover, the leader of the group urged voters to vote ‘no’ in order to send the government back to secure a better deal for Ireland. According to them, the ratification of the treaty would only cause a lack of influence in Europe and would result in the Irish losing their neutrality, tax policy, and abortion rules.

On the other hand, supporters of the Lisbon Treaty said that it was necessary for Ireland to vote ‘yes’ in order to fully participate to the European Union’s activity and still have a central role in it.

With referendum approaching, the ‘no’ campaign intensified and gained huge support, as was revealed by the last Irish Times polls. On 12 June 2008, the Irish people went to the ballot box to vote for the approval of the treaty. The turnout was negative, with 53.4% voting ‘no’ and 46.6% voting ‘yes’. The Irish people decided not to pass the treaty as was
expected. The rejection put the European Union in a sort of ‘institutional crisis’ and made the ratification process questionable for all the countries that had not completed the ratification and those that had not yet started the process. Moreover, this situation caused problems to the EU leaders’ plans to have the treaty ratified by 1 January 2009.

1.6 The Ratification Process after the Irish Rebuff

After the referendum, the European Commission Representation in Ireland requested a flash Eurobarometer survey which was conducted from 13 to 15 June. Two of the main objectives of this survey were to understand the reasons for non-participation in the referendum and the reasons for voting ‘yes’ or ‘no’. The survey revealed that citizens didn’t vote because “52% had not fully understood the referendum’s issues, 42% had not been informed about the issues at stake and 37% felt they were not informed about the Lisbon Treaty’s content or because the referendum was not important enough for them (45% said they were too busy to vote and 38% had something more important to do than vote in the referendum).”

Moreover, as Figure 1.1 shows, 68% of Irish voters said that the ‘no’ campaign was the more convincing, against 15% saying the same of the ‘yes’ camp.

![Figure 1.1 Flash Eurobarometer Survey 13-15 June 2008](image-url)
Whatever the reason, something went wrong for the EU project. EU leaders did not welcome the rebuff, worried about the future of the treaty, and stressed how it was necessary to continue ratification in the other Member States.

The rejection of the Treaty text by one European Union country cannot mean that the ratifications which have already been carried out by 18 EU countries become invalid. The ratifications in the other EU Member States must be respected just as much as the Irish vote. For that reason, the ratification process must continue in those Member States which have not yet ratified. (Hans-Gert Pöttering, President of the European Parliament – 13 June 2008)21

A solution was needed, and Hans-Gert Pöttering called on the Heads of State and Government to discuss the matter in Brussels. The European Council of 19-20 June 2008 took into account the results of the referendum and decided that more time was needed to come to a solution. It noted that ratification continued in other countries and agreed that the Irish government would actively consult both internally and with other Member States in order to propose a common solution at the European Council Summit in October 2008. Soon after the European Council, the Irish Foreign Affairs Minister, Micheál Martin, announced that the government decided to deeply analyse and clarify the negative outcome of the Lisbon referendum by commissioning a research project aimed at evaluating the reasons underlying the rejection of the treaty:

The outcome of the referendum on the Lisbon Treaty requires serious reflection and analysis in the period ahead. At last week’s European Council, it was agreed that more time was needed to analyse the situation and that the Council’s October meeting will receive a progress report. This project will allow for a deeper understanding of the factors that shaped the outcome of the referendum and will represent an important input into the Government’s analysis of the best way forward for Ireland. (Mr. Micheál Martin, 24 June 2008)23

In the meantime, as revealed by the Council, the ratification process was continuing in the other countries. However, the Irish rebuff created some problems for the completion of ratification in some countries. In Poland for example, the President refused to sign the instruments of ratification and suspended the entire process until the situation with Ireland was clarified. The United Kingdom, where the process of ratification had already started with the approval of the House of Commons on 11 March 2008 with a majority of 63 votes, was also
affected by the referendum results. The Conservatives, in fact, began to oppose the ratification in the name of a referendum that had been promised but was simply ignored. They criticised Gordon Brown for not considering the will of the British people and, moreover, they also criticised the British government for advocating another referendum in Ireland while not giving Britain a chance to vote. On 18 June 2008 the House of Lords passed the treaty and the final step of the ratification was completed on 16 July.

The political crisis caused by the referendum and the slowing down of the ratification needed a quick solution. On 21 July Nicholas Sarkozy, the French Prime Minister, at that time also in charge of the rotating Presidency of the EU, visited Ireland and discussed the issue of the treaty and the referendum results with the Irish Prime Minister Brian Cowen. They agreed that Ireland should present suggestions on the matter by the next Summit and worked in consultation both at national and European level.\textsuperscript{24}

In the meantime, other countries started the ratification process raising the number of Member States to 23.\textsuperscript{25}

Sarkozy’s visit was followed by another meeting with Cowen in Paris at the Palais de l’Elysee on 1 October 2008 in the context of the preparations for the European Council of 15-16 October. During this meeting Cowen anticipated the presentation of a survey conducted by the Irish government analysing the motivations which led to the referendum result of 12 June and the conclusions he drew from it. At the European Council of October, having taken stock of the survey presented by Cowen, it was agreed to return to the matter of the treaty ratification at the December Summit providing solutions and a common strategy to follow.\textsuperscript{26} At the core of the Summit was the increasing financial crisis in Europe.

After the October Summit there were only two Member States, in addition to Ireland, that had not approved the treaty yet: Sweden and the Czech Republic. Sweden approved the Treaty of Lisbon on 20 November 2008 after a consultation period with national authorities and civil society organisations. Even in the Czech Republic the Institutions slowly proceeded to the ratification. On 26 November 2008, the Czech Constitutional Court gave a positive verdict on the compatibility of the treaty with the Czech constitutional order. To complete the ratification process, the approval of the two houses of the parliament was necessary, and this required more time.

In the meantime, the European Council of 11-12 December 2008 agreed that provided the Treaty of Lisbon was enforced at the end of 2009, the Commission would continue to include one commissioner for each Member State despite what was provided for by the current Treaties.\textsuperscript{27} It
was also agreed that, provided the Irish approved the treaty by the end of
the presidency term, the Commission would ensure the required
guarantees concerning taxation policy, family, social and ethical issues,
and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) with regard to
Ireland’s traditional policy of neutrality.

On 1 January 2009 the Czech Republic took over the Presidency of the
EU and a month later the lower house of its parliament approved the treaty
with 125 votes in favour and 61 against (18 February 2009). The
ratification was not completed as the Czech Republic needed the approval
of the Senate and then the signature of the President.28

1.7 The Council Summit of June 2009 and the second
referendum in Ireland

As many Irish voters were worried about how the treaty would affect
the country’s taxation policies, its military neutrality and ethical issues
such as abortion, the Council of June 2009 granted Ireland legal
 guarantees in those areas, reassuring the Irish people that the treaty would
not infringe on the government’s authority in those domains. The Council
also agreed that Ireland held a referendum in autumn 2009 and on 8 July
the Irish Prime Minister announced 2 October as the official date for the
second referendum in Ireland.

Even though in January 2009 Micheál Martin said “We will not be
asking people to vote on the same proposition” (Irish Times 9 January
2009) and in May, the Europe Minister, Dick Roche, said “Our partners
understand, I believe, that we cannot and will not put the same package to
our people later this year” (Irish Times 5 May 2009). Soon after the
Council, Brian Cowen insisted on the importance of having the treaty
ratified.

The Taoiseach insisted: “Together we [EU leaders] have agreed a
package of guarantees that responds positively and decisively to the
concerns of the Irish people. Doubts raised about certain issues have been
put to rest once and for all”. (Mail on Sunday, 20 June 2009)

And in fact on 8 July the Irish Prime Minister announced 2 October as
the official date for the second referendum in Ireland.

The governing coalition parties, Fianna Fáil and the Greens, and the
two main opposition groups, Fine Gael and Labour together with the Irish
Congress of Trade Unions and the Irish Farmers Association, supported
ratification of the Lisbon Treaty. Sinn Féin and pro-life groups continued
to oppose the treaty and were critical of the decision to hold a second
referendum on Lisbon because of the rejection in 2008. The context for the
second referendum was also very different from the first one. The financial
crisis had in fact turned Ireland into the economic sick man of Europe.

The Government’s campaign was highly organised in comparison with
its 2008 work, and was also supported by prominent civil society figures,
high profile businessmen, political commentators, and sports stars. The
Irish government in fact launched a website, “The EU matters”, to explain
how Ireland had benefited from the EU. The Department of Foreign
Affairs also launched a Lisbon Treaty site, setting out how Irish concerns
had been met by the new concessions. The Government and its supporters
spent large amounts of money on the yes campaign and this sparkled
criticism. Joe Higgins, claimed that the yes side was spending “‘obscene”
amounts of money compared with the meager resources of the ‘no’ camp”.

The anti-Lisbon supporters claimed that a renegotiation of the treaty
was necessary. They focused on unemployment, the alleged reduction of
the minimum wage, and a loss of political weight for Ireland under the
Lisbon institutional arrangements. Gerry Adams, the Sinn Féin leader,
believed the Irish concessions had no legally binding power on other
Member States, and as a result, did not change the treaty in relation to
Ireland. In mid-September Declan Ganley returned to the no-campaign,
driven by the fallacies of the Lisbon Treaty.

At the beginning of 2009 the public opinion was in favour of the yes
side. An opinion poll by The Sunday Telegraph in early January 2009
showed a greater upturn in support for the Lisbon Treaty following the
December 2008 agreement on concessions, with 55% of the 500 people
asked saying they would vote for Lisbon with the December concessions,
37% saying they would vote against, and 15% undecided. In April and
May 2009, opinion polls still favoured a positive outcome.

On 4 September an opinion poll carried out by the Irish Times on 1000
voters at 100 sampling points in all 43 constituencies showed that most of
the voters had moved into the ‘Don’t Know’ category leaving the Yes
camp. The poll proved that there was a fall of 8% in yes camp support
(46%) since the May poll, an increase of 1% in the no camp (29%), and an
increase of 7% for the undecided side (25%).

However, in the last few days before the referendum, the yes campaign
took a decisive lead. According to a poll published at the end of September
by The Independent on Sunday, 68% voted in favour of Lisbon, 17%
against, with 15% still undecided.

On 2 October 2009, the Irish electorate voted by a majority of 67.13%
to 32.87% in favour of the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty with a turnout
of 59%. The European Commission President José Manuel Barroso
congratulated the Irish people “on reaching their overwhelming decision after such long and careful deliberation”. The Taoiseach, Brian Cowen, gave credit to the Irish people for the result and praised their determination to be at the centre of Europe. He told a press conference on 3 October that Ireland would now work with its partners to implement the Lisbon reforms.

Declan Ganley acknowledged that the result was very convincing and highly praised Mr Cowen for a “masterful campaign”, but he accused the yes campaign of “playing on the fears of many voters, particularly in connection with jobs and the economy”.

On 15 October, President Mary McAleese signed the bill reconciling the Lisbon Treaty with the Irish Constitution, thereby completing the ratification process for the treaty in Ireland. On 23 October, the Minister for European Affairs, Dick Roche, deposited the Instrument of Ratification with the Italian government in Rome.

The second Irish referendum result had a great impact on all the member states, especially on those that had not yet signed the treaty or still opposed its ratification.

### 1.8 Further Developments in the Ratification Process

Before the second referendum in Ireland, another important step in the ratification process was made. On 25 September 2009 the German President Köler signed the treaty after the approval of the legislation by both the Bundestag (8 September 2009) and Bundesrat (18 September 2009). The ratification process was getting closer to completion; however, to be enforced, the treaty had to wait until December.

The Polish President, Lech Kaczynski, who had hesitated over signing the treaty, said in September that he would complete ratification shortly after a yes vote in Ireland. However, reports in early October suggested he might withhold his signature for political power to obtain more EU funding or an important portfolio for a Polish Commissioner. Nevertheless, on 10 October, Poland concluded the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty. At a ceremony in Warsaw, the Polish President Lech Kaczynski signed the ratification instrument in the presence of the President of the European Council, Fredrik Reinfeldt, the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, and the President of the European Parliament, Jerzy Buzek.

A different reaction to the Irish positive outcome was visible in the Czech Republic. President Vaclav Klaus had already indicated that a positive Irish vote was no longer the only pre-condition for Czech
ratification, and dismissed the German Constitutional ruling as predictable, insisting that the question was whether the citizens of Europe really want more integration and centralisation of powers in Europe. In September, Czech senators brought two complaints against Lisbon before the Constitutional Court, effectively suspending the Czech ratification for some months. The second complaint centred on senators’ concerns as to whether the Lisbon Treaty formed the legal basis for the creation of a European ‘super-state’. If so, this would violate the Czech Constitution. The timing of the new challenge further increased speculation among Lisbon supporters that the anti-Lisbon politicians aimed to delay their ratification process until the UK elections. After the Irish vote, President Klaus declined to say how he would proceed, insisting he could do nothing until the pending Court review was completed. Jan Fischer, the Czech Prime Minister, on the other hand, remained confident that ratification would be completed by the end of the year and his Government assured the EU that the treaty would be ratified.

On 3 November, in fact, the Czech Constitutional Court cleared the way for the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty by the Czech Republic. The Czech President Vaclav Klaus went on to sign the Lisbon Treaty on the same day.

An extraordinary informal summit took place on 19 November in order to fill top EU posts created under the treaty, namely the President of the European Council, which was given to the Belgian Premier Herman Van Rompuy, and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, to which EU trade commissioner Catherine Ashton from the UK was appointed.

The Lisbon Treaty came into force on 1 December 2009 with a ceremony in Lisbon where it was signed for the first time. Among many other changes, the treaty redistributed voting weights between member countries, removing national vetoes in a number of areas. It expanded the commission’s powers and greatly increased parliament’s involvement in the legislative process. A new petition process afforded citizens the opportunity to directly influence EU policy. The Human Rights Charter became legally binding. Lisbon amended the Rome and Maastricht Treaties, giving the EU a new legal framework and tools to tackle challenges in an increasingly interlinked world.33