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Ireland 'No' vote plunges EU into crisis

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THE ARTICLE

The people of Ireland have rejected the European Union's reform treaty in a referendum and plunged the EU into crisis. The Irish delivered a Friday the 13th bad omen to European integration. All 27 countries needed to agree to the Lisbon Treaty in order for it to come into force. Ireland represents less than one per cent of the EU population, but their 'no' vote meant it was back to the drawing board for the whole of the EU. The treaty was supposed to replace the constitution, give the EU stronger leadership and allow streamlining reforms to take place more quickly. It took many years to draw up and just a few hours to vote into the trash can of history. The 'no' vote also highlights how unpopular the EU is to its citizens. Three years ago, the French and Dutch voted to reject the EU constitution.

Other European countries are now debating how to progress in the wake of the Treaty's collapse. Britain, France and Germany are keen to somehow ratify the treaty through backdoor legal means. France takes over the EU Presidency on July 1st and President Sarkozy will now need all his diplomatic skills to paper over the cracks that are appearing in Euroland. France's foreign minister Bernard Kouchner warned Ireland last Monday that it would be a bad idea to vote no. He said: "We would not be able to count on the Irish who counted a lot on Europe's money." He was referring to the millions of Euros the EU has given Ireland to turn it into a booming economy. There will now be considerable pressure on Dublin to find a workable solution that will allow the reforms to go ahead.

WARM-UPS

1. EUROPEAN UNION: Walk around the class and talk to other students about the European Union. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your partner(s) and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

rejection / referendum / crisis / EU population / constitution / reforms / trash can / debating / collapse / diplomatic skills / booming economy / pressure / solution

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. REFERENDUM: Would you like a greater say in your country's affairs? With your partner(s), discuss your ideas on how you would vote in the referenda below. Write your ideas in the table. Change partners and share your ideas. Have your own class referenda.

Referendum on	How would you vote?	Why?
Going to war		
Terror-related laws		
Selling of national companies		
Selection of national sports coaches		
Changing interest rates		
Setting immigration levels		
Other...		

4. TREATY: Rank these countries: 10 = my country would hugely benefit from a treaty with this country; 1 = there would be no benefits whatsoever having a benefit with this country. Share, explain and discuss your rankings with your class.

_____ Ireland
 _____ USA
 _____ China

_____ Afghanistan
 _____ Zimbabwe
 _____ Brazil

a #10 _____

a #1 _____

5. HEADLINE PREDICTION: With your partner(s), use the words in the "Chat" activity above to predict what the news article will be about. Once you have your story, change partners and share them. Who was closest to the real story?

6. TREATY: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'treaty'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. A vote by the Irish on an EU treaty has caused trouble in EU politics. T / F
- b. Just over two per cent of the EU population is Irish. T / F
- c. Politicians started writing the Lisbon Treaty in Lisbon last August. T / F
- d. The Irish are the first EU citizens to vote 'no' in an EU referendum. T / F
- e. Other EU countries are now debating whether or not to leave the EU. T / F
- f. The French president will need to do some wallpapering in July. T / F
- g. The French foreign minister said the Irish always counted their money. T / F
- h. Now Ireland has voted, the pressure is off for Irish politicians. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. rejected | a. sign |
| 2. plunged | b. proceed |
| 3. omen | c. create |
| 4. the drawing board | d. descended |
| 5. draw up | e. following |
| 6. in the wake of | f. cover |
| 7. ratify | g. square one |
| 8. paper over | h. rely on |
| 9. count on | i. given the thumbs down to |
| 10. go ahead | j. accept |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. a Friday the 13th bad | a. for it to come into force |
| 2. agree to the Lisbon Treaty in order | b. of the Treaty's collapse |
| 3. back to the drawing | c. unpopular the EU is |
| 4. allow streamlining reforms to take | d. the cracks |
| 5. The 'no' vote also highlights how | e. economy |
| 6. in the wake | f. board |
| 7. paper over | g. solution |
| 8. We would not be able to count | h. place more quickly |
| 9. turn it into a booming | i. omen |
| 10. find a workable | j. on the Irish |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

The people of Ireland have _____ the European Union's reform treaty in a referendum and plunged the EU into crisis. The Irish _____ a Friday the 13th bad omen to European integration. All 27 countries needed to agree to the Lisbon Treaty in _____ for it to come into force. Ireland represents less than one per cent of the EU population, but their 'no' vote _____ it was back to the drawing board for the whole of the EU. The treaty was supposed to _____ the constitution, give the EU stronger leadership and _____ streamlining reforms to take place more quickly. It took many years to draw up and just a few hours to vote into the trash can of _____. The 'no' vote also highlights how unpopular the EU is to its citizens. Three years ago, the French and Dutch _____ to reject the EU constitution.

meant
order
allow
rejected
replace
voted
history
delivered

Other European countries are now debating how to _____ in the wake of the Treaty's collapse. Britain, France and Germany are keen to _____ ratify the treaty through backdoor legal means. France _____ over the EU Presidency on July 1st and President Sarkozy will now need all his diplomatic skills to paper over the _____ that are appearing in Euroland. France's foreign minister Bernard Kouchner _____ Ireland last Monday that it would be a bad idea to vote no. He said: "We would not be able to _____ on the Irish who counted a lot on Europe's money." He was referring to the millions of Euros the EU has given Ireland to turn it into a _____ economy. There will now be considerable pressure on Dublin to find a workable _____ that will allow the reforms to go ahead.

warned
takes
solution
booming
progress
cracks
somehow
count

LISTENING: Listen and fill in the spaces.

The people of Ireland _____ European Union's reform treaty in a referendum and plunged _____. The Irish delivered a Friday the 13th bad omen to European integration. All 27 countries needed to agree to the Lisbon Treaty in _____ come into force. Ireland represents less than one per cent of the EU population, but their 'no' vote meant it was back to the drawing board _____ EU. The treaty was supposed to replace the constitution, give the EU stronger leadership and allow streamlining reforms _____ quickly. It took many years to draw up and just a few hours _____ trash can of history. The 'no' vote also highlights how unpopular the EU is to its citizens. Three years ago, the French and Dutch _____ EU constitution.

Other European countries are now debating how _____ wake of the Treaty's collapse. Britain, France and Germany are _____ ratify the treaty through backdoor legal means. France takes over the EU Presidency on July 1st and President Sarkozy will now need all his diplomatic skills to _____ that are appearing in Euroland. France's foreign minister Bernard Kouchner warned Ireland last Monday that it would _____ vote no. He said: "We would not _____ the Irish who counted a lot on Europe's money." He was _____ millions of Euros the EU has given Ireland to turn it into a booming economy. There will now be considerable pressure on Dublin to _____ that will allow the reforms to go ahead.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'reform' and 'treaty'.

reform	treaty
---------------	---------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• people• bad• order• allow• trash• highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• wake• legal• paper• idea• count• ahead
---	---

STUDENT EUROPEAN UNION SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about the European Union in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

EUROPEAN UNION DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the term 'European Union'?
- c) What do you think of Ireland voting no?
- d) Do you think people in other EU countries will be angry with the Irish?
- e) How deep is the EU crisis in the wake of Ireland's rejection?
- f) Do you think this is a good example of "the little guy" having a say?
- g) Is it right that a country with less than one percent of the EU population can destroy such an important treaty?
- h) Do you think the EU needs to be reformed?
- i) Do you think this no vote makes the EU weaker in the world?
- j) Do you think all EU citizens should vote in their own referendum?

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EUROPEAN UNION DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Do you think the Lisbon Treaty is now dead in the water?
- c) If larger EU countries continue to try and ratify the treaty, does this mean they don't care about the Irish vote?
- d) Do you think President Sarkozy can paper over the cracks?
- e) Do you think the EU will integrate more or less in the future?
- f) Should the Irish have been happy with how the EU has improved their country and voted 'yes'?
- g) Does your country have any international treaties you don't agree?
- h) What do you think will happen to the Lisbon Treaty from now?
- i) What questions would you like to ask President Sarkozy?
- j) Did you like this discussion on the European Union?

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LANGUAGE

The people of Ireland have rejected the European Union's reform treaty in a referendum and (1) _____ the EU into crisis. The Irish delivered a Friday the 13th bad omen to European integration. All 27 countries needed to agree (2) _____ the Lisbon Treaty in order for it to come into (3) _____. Ireland represents less than one per cent of the EU population, but their 'no' vote meant it was (4) _____ to the drawing board for the whole of the EU. The treaty was supposed to replace the constitution, give the EU stronger leadership and (5) _____ streamlining reforms to take place more quickly. It took many years to draw (6) _____ and just a few hours to vote into the trash can of history. The 'no' vote also highlights how unpopular the EU is to its citizens. Three years ago, the French and Dutch voted to reject the EU constitution.

Other European countries are now debating how to progress in the (7) _____ of the Treaty's collapse. Britain, France and Germany are keen to somehow ratify the treaty through backdoor legal (8) _____. France takes over the EU Presidency on July 1st and President Sarkozy will now need all his diplomatic skills to paper over the (9) _____ that are appearing in Euroland. France's foreign minister Bernard Kouchner warned Ireland last Monday that it would be a bad idea to vote no. He said: "We would not be able to (10) _____ on the Irish who counted a lot on Europe's money." He was referring to the millions of Euros the EU has given Ireland to turn it (11) _____ a booming economy. There will now be considerable pressure on Dublin to find a workable (12) _____ that will allow the reforms to go ahead.

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|--------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1. | (a) plunge | (b) plunger | (c) plunges | (d) plunged |
| 2. | (a) by | (b) to | (c) for | (d) in |
| 3. | (a) force | (b) for | (c) forced | (d) forceful |
| 4. | (a) up | (b) front | (c) back | (d) down |
| 5. | (a) allowing | (b) allowed | (c) allow | (d) allows |
| 6. | (a) on | (b) up | (c) with | (d) in |
| 7. | (a) wake | (b) wakey-wakey | (c) wake up | (d) wakey |
| 8. | (a) mean | (b) meaning | (c) meant | (d) means |
| 9. | (a) walls | (b) cracks | (c) windows | (d) divides |
| 10. | (a) sum | (b) add | (c) multiply | (d) count |
| 11. | (a) on | (b) in | (c) into | (d) out |
| 12. | (a) solution | (b) solve | (c) soluble | (d) solutions |

HOMework

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find out more about the effects of the Irish 'No' vote. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. EU: Make a poster about the different EU countries and what they get out of the EU. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. CRACKS: Write a magazine article about Ireland's 'No' vote. Include imaginary interviews with French President Sarkozy and an Irish person who voted no. What do they think of the EU's future?

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. LETTER: Write a letter to President Sarkozy. Ask him three questions about what he will do in Europe over the six months of the French presidency of the EU. Give him three pieces of advice on what he should do paper over the cracks. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. T b. F c. F d. F e. F f. F g. F h. F

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. rejected | a. given the thumbs down to |
| 2. plunged | b. descended |
| 3. omen | c. sign |
| 4. the drawing board | d. square one |
| 5. draw up | e. create |
| 6. in the wake of | f. following |
| 7. ratify | g. accept |
| 8. paper over | h. cover |
| 9. count on | i. rely on |
| 10. go ahead | j. proceed |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. a Friday the 13th bad | a. omen |
| 2. agree to the Lisbon Treaty in order | b. for it to come into force |
| 3. back to the drawing | c. board |
| 4. allow streamlining reforms to take | d. place more quickly |
| 5. The 'no' vote also highlights how | e. unpopular the EU is |
| 6. in the wake | f. of the Treaty's collapse |
| 7. paper over | g. the cracks |
| 8. We would not be able to count | h. on the Irish |
| 9. turn it into a booming | i. economy |
| 10. find a workable | j. solution |

GAP FILL:

Ireland 'No' vote plunges EU into crisis

The people of Ireland have **rejected** the European Union's reform treaty in a referendum and plunged the EU into crisis. The Irish **delivered** a Friday the 13th bad omen to European integration. All 27 countries needed to agree to the Lisbon Treaty in **order** for it to come into force. Ireland represents less than one per cent of the EU population, but their 'no' vote **meant** it was back to the drawing board for the whole of the EU. The treaty was supposed to **replace** the constitution, give the EU stronger leadership and **allow** streamlining reforms to take place more quickly. It took many years to draw up and just a few hours to vote into the trash can of **history**. The 'no' vote also highlights how unpopular the EU is to its citizens. Three years ago, the French and Dutch **voted** to reject the EU constitution.

Other European countries are now debating how to **progress** in the wake of the Treaty's collapse. Britain, France and Germany are keen to **somehow** ratify the treaty through backdoor legal means. France **takes** over the EU Presidency on July 1st and President Sarkozy will now need all his diplomatic skills to paper over the **cracks** that are appearing in Euroland. France's foreign minister Bernard Kouchner **warned** Ireland last Monday that it would be a bad idea to vote no. He said: "We would not be able to **count** on the Irish who counted a lot on Europe's money." He was referring to the millions of Euros the EU has given Ireland to turn it into a **booming** economy. There will now be considerable pressure on Dublin to find a workable **solution** that will allow the reforms to go ahead.

LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - d 2 - b 3 - a 4 - c 5 - c 6 - b 7 - a 8 - d 9 - b 10 - d 11 - c 12 - a