

**24 September 2009**

**Free flights to Ireland to push for a 'Yes' vote an outrage – McKenna**

Former MEP Patricia McKenna, chairperson of the People's Movement, has called for an investigation into a letter being circulated by EU officials in Brussels which offers free flights to Ireland to canvas for a 'Yes' to Lisbon. McKenna said she had received a copy of a letter, from a source in Brussels, which had been circulated by officials in Brussels offering free flights to people so they could come and canvas for a 'Yes' vote in the days running up to the referendum: "It is absolutely outrageous that EU officials are offering free flights to people to come to Ireland to canvas for a Yes vote in the forthcoming referendum and it demonstrates the lengths to which EU officials are willing to go to get their own way on this issue."

McKenna said: "After logging on to a website link in the letter I discovered that one can only avail of these flights if they actually canvas for a 'Yes' vote and if they fail to do so they may be left in Ireland without a return ticket".

The website called 'Europe for Ireland' states: "you must agree in writing to canvass for a Yes vote while in Dublin. We will put you in touch with one of the relevant organizations in Dublin (if you do not turn up to canvass, your return flight may be jeopardized)."

"This is absolutely unbelievable and I am calling on those responsible to come out publicly and justify this deliberate interference in a sovereign decision of the Irish people. I would also like them to outline exactly where the funding for these flights is coming from and if the Standards in Public Office Commission and the Referendum Commission have been notified" said McKenna.

[ENDS]

**See details of letter below.**

**For further information:**

**Patricia McKenna (chairperson) – 087 2427049**

**Below is a copy of the letter being circulated by EU officials in Brussels.**

Subject: Free flights to Ireland to canvas for a YES to Lisbon

A chara

Are you available to fly to Ireland on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday next week (29, 30 Sept, 1 Oct) to campaign alongside *Europe for Ireland* for a YES vote in the Lisbon Treaty Referendum on Friday 2 October?

*Europe for Ireland* has arranged free flights with Ryanair from Charleroi to Dublin. You could take either of two daily flights on whichever day suits you and come back whenever you like. Even if you can manage to take just one day off, you could fly over and back on the same day.

All you need to do is send me an email with your name(s) by Monday 28 September and tell me which flights you wish to take. *Europe for Ireland* will arrange your booking. You don't pay, you just turn up.

Slán  
Fearghas

Further details of free flights to Dublin, call:

- Colm: 0476 42 47 43
- Eoghan: 0476 084 160
- Linda: 0467 084 166

Further information about *Europe for Ireland* on their website:

<http://www.europeforireland.eu/>