



## Holdout Signs Lisbon Treaty Creating EU Super-State

Under intense pressure from European Union leaders, other governments, and factions within his own country, Czech President Vaclav Klaus caved in on November 3 and signed the so-called Lisbon Treaty, a slightly altered version of the EU Constitution that was rejected by French and Dutch voters in 2005. The agreement, having cleared its final hurdle, is expected to go into force in December or January.



The signature came after a ruling from the Czech Republic's Constitutional Court earlier in the day that concluded the agreement was indeed constitutional; though Klaus did not concur. The signing was announced at a brief [press conference](#), where the president expressed strong disagreement with the court's decision and claimed the ruling improperly forced him to sign the treaty "without delay."

"Good afternoon. Good, gloomy afternoon," Klaus began, saying he had anticipated the court's decision. "The ruling of the Constitutional Court is not neutral judicial analysis, but tendentious political pleading for the Lisbon Treaty from the side of its supporters." Klaus said the Czech Republic was giving up its sovereignty and added as a brief end note that he had signed the Lisbon Treaty at 3:00 p.m.

The Czech Republic became the last of 27 countries to ratify the treaty, following months of delays and sharp criticism from Klaus. He recently demanded and received an opt-out from the "European Charter of Fundamental Rights" out of fear that ethnic Germans expelled after World War II could sue in European court over property claims. The "rights" purportedly granted by the document include healthcare, education, and security.

The Czech president, known for being a "Euro-skeptic," has been a fierce opponent and perhaps the most prominent critic of the European super-state currently taking shape. He regularly [compares](#) it to the Soviet Union, and he has also blasted global warming alarmism and other leftist and globalist political movements. But he recently [conceded](#) that it would likely be impossible to beat back the Lisbon Treaty, so observers were not surprised by the announcement.

News [reports](#) said European governments were applying intense pressure on Klaus to sign the agreement, even lobbying to have him removed as President if he refused to cooperate. So naturally, European leaders and EU officials immediately hailed the Czech ratification — removing the final obstacle to implementation of the treaty.

"President Klaus' decision marks an important and historic step for all of Europe," British Prime Minister Gordon Brown said in a [statement](#) released just after the announcement. "Today is a day when Europe looks forward, when it sets aside years of debate on its institutions, and moves to take strong and collective action on the issues that matter most to European citizens: security, climate change, jobs and growth."

There was talk of allowing the English to vote on the treaty if Gordon Brown's government was defeated at the next election, as is widely expected. But it appears that with Klaus' signature, it is now too late. "What has happened today means that it is no longer possible to have a referendum on the Lisbon



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on November 4, 2009

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treaty," said the Conservative Party's foreign affairs spokesman William Hague. He said the treaty would now become law, calling it bad day for democracy since the British people were not even consulted.

But EU officials were ecstatic and urged haste in filling positions and implementing the agreement. European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso said he was "extremely pleased." Other commission officials echoed his sentiments. "I hope that we can now move forward as quickly as possible on the nomination of the president of the European Council and the vice-president of the commission," [said](#) the chief spokesperson for the European Commission immediately after the Czech Constitutional Court gave the go-ahead. Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair has been cited frequently as a potential candidate for president of Europe.

The Lisbon Treaty is a slightly altered version of the Constitution that voters decisively rejected when it was put to a referendum in 2005. The re-packaged and renamed document was also originally blocked by Irish voters, the only nation that was allowed a vote on the treaty after it was rejected as the Constitution.

But after a scare-mongering campaign, the agreement was once again put to a vote in Ireland and was finally approved. Then the Polish government ratified it, leaving only Klaus and the Czech Republic standing in its way. But despite being sold as mere technical changes, the agreement grants broad new powers and alters European governance significantly.

In addition to the creation of a long-term president of the body and a foreign affairs chief, the treaty creates a military alliance between the countries that [Reuters compared](#) to the North-Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The agreement also purports to give the European Court of Justice the power to rule on national laws to ensure their compatibility with EU law (this is the same court that claimed to [outlaw criticism](#) of the EU.)

The number of parliamentarians (the EU parliament does not make laws, it simply advises the executive branch's law making) will be increased slightly, while the number of member states on the European Commission, which is currently composed of representatives from each country, will be limited to two thirds of members at any one time. The agreement also makes it easier for the EU to make decisions by requiring a majority vote instead of unanimity in a number of important fields.

In the field of security, the treaty will give the EU vast new powers of [surveillance](#) and crime fighting while providing for joint EU-national government responses to attacks or disasters. Reports also indicate that the EU is drawing up plans for a [Europe-wide income tax](#).

Citizens across Europe are continuing to criticize and revolt against the government growing rapidly in Brussels, but the dramatic pace of expansion is simply accelerating. As in Ireland, if citizens do not agree to something initially, they will be browbeaten until they accept. Otherwise, they will simply have no say as in France and Holland after voters in those countries rejected the proposed Constitution.

But if the Conservative Party in Britain lives up to its word, the fight is not yet over. It will take a massive and concerted effort to turn back the tide, but it is still theoretically possible if enough Europeans — particularly in the United Kingdom — demand that the EU be reigned in. For the sake of freedom, the march of regional and global governance must be halted.

*Photo of Vaclav Klaus: AP Images*



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