



ELECTION PACK

Abortion
RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

THE ABORTION RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

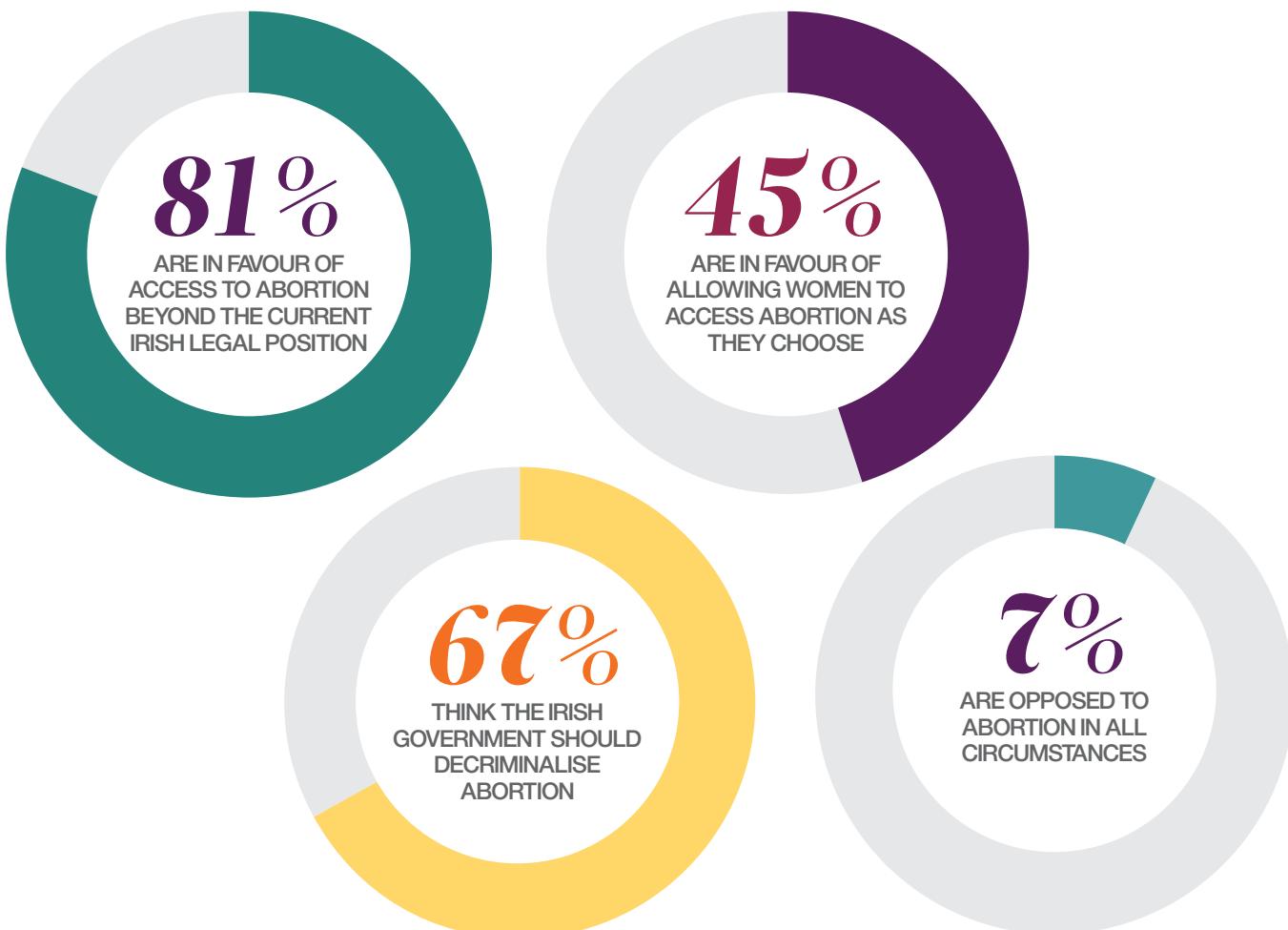
WHO WE ARE:

The Abortion Rights Campaign is an organisation working for choice and change in Ireland. We aim to promote broad national support for a referendum to repeal the 8th Amendment to the Constitution by the Irish Parliament; to push for the introduction of extensive abortion legislation by the Northern Ireland Assembly; to ensure the health and rights of women in pregnancy are protected in line with international human rights standards; and to see the introduction of Free, Safe and Legal abortion in Ireland.

We believe women can be trusted to choose for themselves. So do the majority of people in Ireland. However, in Ireland and Northern Ireland, there are many barriers to women's full reproductive rights. Working together, we can dismantle these barriers so that women and their families can make the best decisions for themselves.

THE AIMS OF THE ABORTION RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

- 1** To educate the public and policy-makers about the need for access to free, safe and legal abortion options in Ireland for all who need it, regardless of citizenship or financial capacity, in line with provision of other basic health-care options
- 2** To lift the stigma and silence surrounding abortion and women's reproductive healthcare choices through educational programmes and awareness raising projects and by facilitating people to share their abortion experiences in supportive and empowering environments
- 3** To promote broad national support for a referendum to repeal the 8th Amendment to the Constitution by Dáil Éireann; to push for the introduction of extensive abortion legislation by the Northern Ireland Assembly; and to ensure the health of women in pregnancy is protected in line with international human rights standards
- 4** To mobilise support nationally from a diverse range of groups, organisations, trades unions, communities and individuals for the right to choose in pregnancy
- 5** To promote the provision of relevant up-to-date information to support evidence-based policy-making and to challenge anti-choice rhetoric that threatens reproductive freedom



ABORTION POLITICS IN IRELAND

WHY YOUR VOICE MATTERS

In order to change Ireland's abortion laws, politicians need to know women's lives and their choices are important to you.

Our politicians need to know you want them hold a referendum, you want the opportunity to vote on that referendum, and it is their job to represent you.

Politicians (and their canvassers) that may be knocking on your door need to know:

- 1** Your vote depends on their committing to holding a referendum and reforming Ireland's restrictive abortion laws
- 2** You are a pro-choice voter
- 3** You want Irish women to get the health services they need in Ireland
- 4** You want Ireland to honour its commitments to women's human rights

Ireland is currently failing to honor its commitments to international human rights laws - these failures have repeatedly been flagged by the numerous United Nations bodies and Amnesty International. Ireland's restrictive abortion laws violate women's and girls' rights to life, health, privacy, non-discrimination, and freedom from torture.

International standards are clear: Women should have reproductive choice and not face criminal penalties for having an abortion.

Politicians need to hear from you that **It is not acceptable for Ireland to 'export' its obligations - women should no longer be forced to travel to seek medical care.**

Currently in Ireland, an abortion can be carried out only if a doctor is almost certain a woman will die without one. Other than in these very limited situations of life and death, if a woman accesses an abortion in Ireland she faces a fourteen year prison sentence if charged and prosecuted.

Criminalising abortion puts women in danger but does not reduce the numbers of abortions that happen. Rates of abortion are no lower in countries where it is illegal.¹

Every year, thousands of Irish women and their families are affected by Ireland's hypocritical and inhumane laws. At least ten women a day travel abroad for abortions; more risk imprisonment by ordering abortion pills online. Over 1,000 abortion pills were seized by Irish customs in 2013.

¹Foundes and Shah, International Journal of Gynaecology and Obstetrics, October 2015; Sedgh G et al, Induced abortion: incidence and trends worldwide from 1995 to 2008, The Lancet, 2012, 379(9816):625–632.

POLITICIANS NEED TO HEAR THAT:

- 1** Abortion is part of standard part of reproductive health care
- 2** Is not uncommon
- 3** The majority of Irish people want change!

Doctors for Choice have estimated that 1 in every 10 women in Ireland has had an abortion.

Even if you don't think you know anyone who has had an abortion, you probably do.

Most people in Ireland favour reform, 81% of Irish people believe current legislation is too restrictive and 67% of Irish people believe it should be decriminalised entirely, but politicians are reluctant to broach what they fear is a divisive issue.²

Help to Repeal the Eighth Amendment.

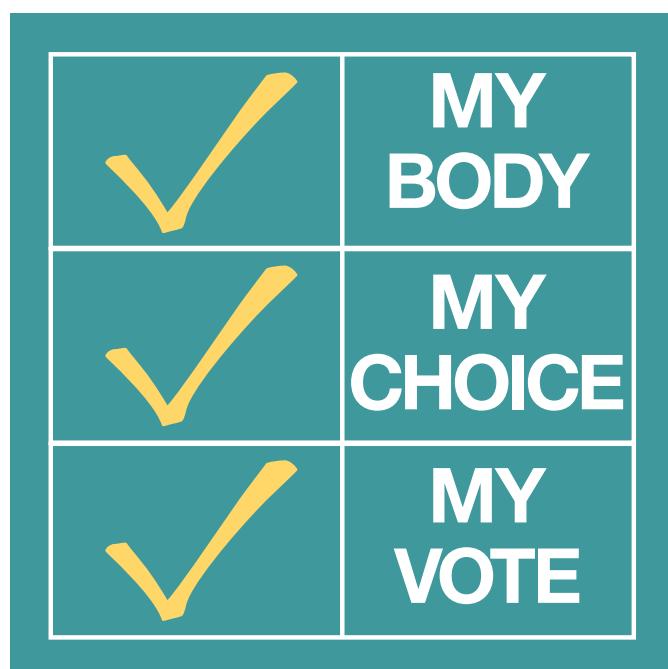
Help break down the stigma surrounding abortion.

Help make sure your representative knows the facts!

Have an honest and practical conversation with your political representatives and others in your community about how we can best provide safe and legal abortion services in Ireland.

Ensure your voice is heard - talk to your representatives today.

² Amnesty International Red C Poll July 2015



THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP REPEAL THE EIGHTH

- 1** Talk to your TD and elected representatives both as and after they run for office. Make it clear they have a responsibility to protect women's health by calling for and supporting motions to repeal the eighth and blocking further restrictive legislation. We have included a poster with this pack to help you question your candidate when they call looking for your vote.
- 2** Start the Conversation with your family and friends about why you are pro-choice and why it is so important that access to free, safe and legal abortion in Ireland becomes a reality. Our "5 Facts About Abortion" leaflet (also available in an easy-to-read version) and "Abortion FAQs" section on our website will help you with this.
- 3** Get Involved with a pro-choice group in your area, or speak to us about how we can support you to set one up.
- 4** Donate. We are volunteer-run and rely on donations, however small, to help us bring about change. We appreciate any donation you can give us, whether of money, skills or time.
- 5** Debunk the myths that surround abortion using our "They Say, We Say" document in this pack, our "8 myths in 8 days" document available www.abortionrightscampaign.ie/tag/8days2repealthe8th/, or the resources available on our website.
- 6** Sign the petition. The Abortion Rights Campaign and coalition of pro-choice groups in Ireland are gathering signatures to call for a referendum to repeal the Eighth Amendment. www.abortionrightscampaign.ie/repealthe8th/

GET INVOLVED

If you would like to get involved with pro-choice campaigns your area, please check out the following for details of meetings and events:

GALWAY

See more at: www.facebook.com/GalwayProChoice,
@GalwayProChoice or email prochoicegalway@gmail.com

CORK

See more at: [@Cork4Choice or email \[cork.womens.right.to.choose@gmail.com\]\(mailto:cork.womens.right.to.choose@gmail.com\)](https://www.facebook.com/corkwomensrighttochoose)

SLIGO

See more at: [@Repeal8thSligo or email \[repealthe8thsligoarc@gmail.com\]\(mailto:repealthe8thsligoarc@gmail.com\)](https://www.facebook.com/Repeal-the-8th-Sligo-arc-724922747634011)

LIMERICK

See more at: [@Limkprochoice or email \[Limerickprochoice@outlook.com\]\(mailto:Limerickprochoice@outlook.com\)](https://www.facebook.com/limerickprochoice)

BELFAST

See more at: [@Alliance4Choice or email \[alliancechoice4@gmail.com\]\(mailto:alliancechoice4@gmail.com\)](https://www.facebook.com/AllianceForChoiceBelfast)

DERRY

See more at: [@equalchoice or email \[equalchoice@aol.com\]\(mailto:equalchoice@aol.com\)](https://www.facebook.com/Alliance-for-Choice-Derry-671209726322824)

WATERFORD

See more at: [@repealtheeighthwaterford or email \[repealtheeighthwaterford@gmail.com\]\(mailto:repealtheeighthwaterford@gmail.com\)](https://www.facebook.com/Repeal-the-8th-Waterford-449462815239008)

KERRY

See more at: [@KerryForChoice or email \[Kerryforchoice@gmail.com\]\(mailto:Kerryforchoice@gmail.com\)](https://www.facebook.com/KerryForChoice)

DUBLIN

We have an open meeting on the third Monday of every month at the Outhouse, Capel Street

if there isn't one in your area contact us and we can support you to set one up.

CONNECT WITH US ON

Web: abortionrights.ie

Email: info@abortionrights.ie

 facebook.com/abortionrightscampaign

 @freesafelegal

 instagram.com/freesafelegal

 repealthe8th.tumblr.com

While the term 'woman' is used in this document, we are fighting for abortion access for any person who needs or wants one, including women, men and non binary people