

**25<sup>TH</sup>  
MAY  
2018**

# **YOUR VOTE MEANS EVERYTHING**

**The independent guide to the referendum  
on the regulation of termination of pregnancy**



**This guide is written for people  
with an intellectual disability**



**An Coimisiún Reifrinn  
Referendum Commission**

# Introduction

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Dear Voters,



On Friday, 25th May 2018 you have the chance to vote in a referendum.



A referendum is a vote to change the constitution of Ireland.



The constitution of Ireland sets out the rules of the country.

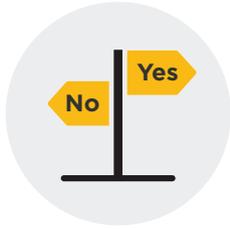
## **This referendum asks:**



Would you like to change the constitution so the rules for ending a pregnancy in Ireland could be changed?



The Referendum Commission gives you information about what your vote will mean.



The Referendum Commission does not tell you to vote yes or no.



You can vote yes or no using your ballot paper.



It is up to you how to vote.



It is important to vote.



The constitution belongs to you.



You can help decide whether to change the constitution or not.



Make sure your voice is heard by voting on Friday, 25th May 2018.



All the votes are counted.



The constitution changes if most people vote yes.



The constitution stays the same if most people vote no.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Isobel Kennedy'.

Isobel Kennedy  
Chairperson  
Referendum Commission





The Constitution of Ireland sets out the rules of the country.



This referendum asks you to vote about changing a rule called Article 40.3.3.



The referendum asks if you would like to change what Article 40.3.3 says in the constitution.

# The proposed change:

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## The **PRESENT** Article 40.3.3

The State acknowledges the right to life of the unborn and, with due regard to the equal right to life of the mother, guarantees in its laws to respect, and, as far as practicable, by its laws to defend and vindicate that right.

This subsection shall not limit freedom to travel between the State and another state.

This subsection shall not limit freedom to obtain or make available, in the State, subject to such conditions as may be laid down by law, information relating to services lawfully available in another state.



## The **PROPOSED** new Article 40.3.3

Provision may be made by law for the regulation of termination of pregnancy.

# What is the referendum about?

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This is a referendum about whether the rules on the ending of pregnancy in Ireland should be changed.

# What is the law in Ireland now?

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Sometimes a woman's life is in danger if the pregnancy is not ended. If that happens, the pregnancy can be ended.



If her life is not in danger, a woman may not end her pregnancy in Ireland. If that happened, it would be against the law.



Anyone who helps her to end her pregnancy might be breaking the law too.



She can get information in Ireland about ending her pregnancy in other countries.



A woman can travel to another country to end her pregnancy there.

# What will happen if most people vote yes?

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If most people vote yes to this referendum, the rules in the constitution about ending pregnancy will change.

## This will mean:



Politicians will be able to decide on new laws about ending pregnancy.



New laws might be passed. New laws could change the rule that a woman can end her pregnancy only if her life is in danger.



Depending on what new laws might be passed, a doctor could help a woman to end her pregnancy even if her life is not in danger.

# What will happen if most people vote no?

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If most people vote no to this referendum, the rules about ending pregnancy will stay the same.



The constitution will not change.

## This will mean that:



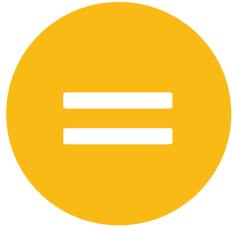
Where a woman's life is in danger, she will still be able to have the pregnancy ended. If that happens, the pregnancy can be ended in Ireland.



If her life is not in danger, a woman will not be able to choose to end her pregnancy in Ireland.



A woman will still be allowed to travel to another country to end her pregnancy if she chooses.



Some things will stay the same, whether most people vote yes or no.



For example, everyone who is born will continue to have the right to live.

# Sample Ballot Paper

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An bhfuil tú ag toiliú leis an togra chun an Bunreacht a leasú atá sa Bhille thíosluaite?

Do you approve of the proposal to amend the Constitution contained in the undermentioned Bill?

An Bille um an Séú Leasú is Tríocha ar an mBunreacht, 2018

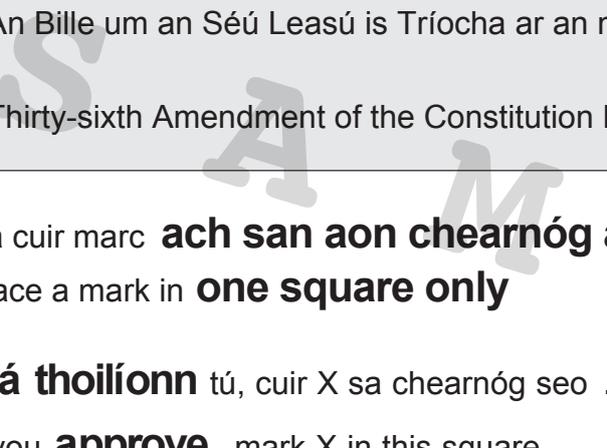
Thirty-sixth Amendment of the Constitution Bill 2018

Ná cuir marc **ach san aon chearnóg amháin**

Place a mark in **one square only**

**Má thoilíonn** tú, cuir X sa chearnóg seo .....

If you **approve**, mark X in this square .....

	<b>Tá</b> <b>Yes</b>
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**Mura dtoilíonn** tú, cuir X sa chearnóg seo .....

If you do **not approve**, mark X in this square.....

	<b>Níl</b> <b>No</b>
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