



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on May 27, 2018

Ireland, a Once Pro-Life Stronghold, Has Repealed Its Eighth Amendment Protecting Unborn Children

On Friday, Irish citizens voted to repeal its constitution's eighth amendment, which "acknowledges the right to life of the unborn," with 66 percent of voters voting in favor of the repeal. With the eighth amendment out of the way, the Irish government is expected to introduce legislation by the end of the year that will legalize abortions up to 12 weeks, and potentially longer, for any reason. The vote marks a significant departure from the nation's once strongly pro-life, Catholic roots.



The repeal vote proved to be a surprising landslide, though media outlets had reported that the turnout at the polls was "brisk," with long lines reported early in the day. More than 3.2 million Irish citizens registered to vote during the debate to repeal the amendment, *Express UK* reported.

Prime Minister Leo Varadkar urged voters to support the repeal and remove what he called the country's "legacy of shame" that forced women to leave Ireland in pursuit of abortions.

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"If the referendum doesn't pass these women will continue to have to travel abroad in their thousands," Varadkar said.

Polls leading up to the vote showed that while the vote was extremely close, the "yes" vote had a small majority. Undecided voters, averaged to be anywhere from 14 to 20 percent of the total, played a prominent role in the final results. With 64 percent of voters turning out for the referendum, the results showed that all but one of Ireland's 40 constituencies voted in favor of the repeal, the *Otago Daily Times* writes.

The repeal of the eighth amendment means that Northern Ireland is the only remaining place in the UK and Ireland, and most of Europe, where abortions remain outlawed, according to *The Guardian*. And while this places some pressure on the region to review its own abortion laws, one lawmaker, Democratic Unionist MP Ian Paisley, stated that Northern Ireland would not allow itself to be "bullied into accepting abortion on demand."

Passionate right-to-life supporters pleaded with voters to keep the eighth amendment in "letters to the editor," *USA Today* reports.

"If we vote 'Yes,' every unborn, wanted and unwanted, will have zero rights," wrote Frances Kelleher, from Killarney, in the *Irish Independent*. "I do not believe the smart people of Ireland want this unrestricted, abortion-on-demand bill. I will be voting 'No.'"

Pro-life advocates believe that Ireland was targeted by pro-abortion activists because the country is proof that abortion can be banned while women can simultaneously have some of the best healthcare in



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the world. Niamh Ui Bhriain of the Life Institute told Breitbart News in a recent interview:

Ireland's experience shows that you could ban abortion and protect women's lives. We have one of the lowest maternal mortality rates and some of the best maternal health care in the world according to the UN. So abortion campaigners are focused on smashing Ireland's laws because they know pro-lifers the world over can look to Ireland as a real, proven example of why abortion is never necessary.

Pro-life advocates in Ireland claim they were at a significant disadvantage throughout the debate. The campaign to repeal the amendment maintained a lead throughout the debate over the repeal because the pro-abortion government had been monopolizing the debate and because outside pro-abortion groups have been permitted to illegally influence the vote while pro-life groups have been silenced.

International pro-abortion groups have been influential in the campaign to overturn the Eighth Amendment despite rules against such outside interference by the Irish Standards in Public Office Commission. LifeNews reported that leaked documents showed a "well-funded plan to legalize abortion in Ireland" that included money funneled from leftist billionaire globalist George Soros. Those documents showed Soros' Open Society Foundations' three-year plan through 2019 to target abortion laws in Ireland, Mexico, and other fiercely pro-life countries, the Catholic News Agency reports.

Pro-abortion advocates throughout the United Kingdom even provided Irish students in institutions located in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland with vouchers so they could be home in time for the May 25 vote.

The nail in the coffin seemed to come when both Facebook and Google announced that they would regulate advertisements pertaining to the referendum vote. Facebook claimed it would not accept advertisements from groups based outside of Ireland, but focused only on pro-life groups. Google went even further, placing a "moratorium on all referendum-related advertising, of both foreign and domestic origins." Unfortunately, the moratorium affected only pro-life advocates, as the pro-abortion groups had virtually limitless access to the public through the Irish media, the Irish government, and the Irish branch of Amnesty International.

Amnesty International welcomed the referendum, calling it "a once-in-a-generation opportunity for Ireland to put in place laws which respect the #human rights of women & girls."

Irish celebrities such as rock music band U2 and actors Liam Neeson and Chris O'Dowd had also voiced their support in favor of abortion. American celebrities such as actress Emma Watson and singer Pink also supported the repeal.

Critics contend that Friday's vote is a reflection of the rift between Irish citizens and the Catholic Church, which was relatively quiet throughout the debate. The UK Spectator observed that the Catholic Church was virtually absent from the fight, stating that the church's impotence is "reflective of the condition of the Church in the wake of successive abuse scandals." According to the *New York Times*, pro-life advocates even discouraged the church's participation in the campaign to save the eighth amendment, "possibly to avoid being tarnished by the church-related scandals."

Some believe that Friday's vote was a referendum on the Catholic Church. "This is devastating for the Roman Catholic hierarchy," said Gail McElroy, professor of politics at Trinity College Dublin. "It is the final nail in the coffin for them. They're no longer the pillar of society, and their hopes of re-establishing themselves are gone."



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With the eighth amendment now repealed, the Irish government will be unveiling legislation to legalize abortion up to 12 weeks. However, advocates of the legislation have been deceptive in their campaign in favor of the referendum. Though they have stated that the legislation would legalize abortions up to 12 weeks, the reality is that it could legalize abortion up to 23 weeks, so long as two doctors agree that the pregnancy could cause mental or physical harm. The legislation will ask general practitioners to perform abortions, but they would still be allowed to conscientiously object.

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