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Talents pour le monde

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TRADUCTION ANGLAIS – ITALIEN

Ireland's election result is no stepping stone to abortion rights. It's a roadblock

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Something has shifted in Ireland's attitude to abortion. I see it in the opinions my friends express online, in conversations with my loved ones, even the timbre of the comments below pro-choice articles. This is borne out by empirical evidence too. Last July, an Amnesty poll found that 81% of Irish people favour more liberal abortion legislation; in October, an Irish Times poll found that 68% of people want a referendum on the eighth amendment, which enshrines the equal right to life of women and the unborn; and, just days ago, a second Amnesty poll found that 87% of people want access to abortion expanded, while 69% believe it should be a priority for the next government.

Legislation introduced in 2013 stipulates that the unborn's right to life begins at implantation. To change the constitution, we need a referendum. Until we get one, the misogynistic ideology that a clump of differentiating cells holds moral parity with a woman remains the law of the land.

Over the last year, feminists in Ireland have been campaigning passionately for an abortion referendum, tapping into the progressive political current that carried Ireland's marriage equality referendum to triumph in May 2015.

Tara Flynn, Róisín Ingle, Helen Linehan, and Susan Cahill bravely shared their abortion stories publicly. The activist group Rosa (for Reproductive rights, against Oppression, Sexism & Austerity) toured the island on an 'abortion pill bus', providing banned medication to those in need, risking prison sentences of up to 14 years.

The annual march for choice is growing each year, and new pro-choice groups are popping up in every county.

But the messy result of the recent general election does not bode well for women. Ireland's two biggest political parties, Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil, are both socially conservative – quite ideologically similar to each other. It is joked that the only marked difference between them is the side their forebears took in the Irish civil war.

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After all our work, can Ireland's feminist movement risk letting Fine/Fáil scheme to replace the eighth with another constitutional amendment? To offer – masquerading as middle ground – not the opportunity to repeal the eighth but to amend it? This would not be a stepping stone to abortion rights, but a roadblock. To change the constitution, we would need another referendum. And the next generation of feminists and women will be back to where we are now – begging blithe governments for a say over what happens to their bodies.

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/mar/09/ireland-election-abortion-rights-campaign>