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# ‘Abortion drone’ to deliver drugs to Polish women denied procedure

by [Katie Medlock](#), 06/25/15

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This Saturday a [drone packed up with medical abortion pills](#) will make its way from Germany to Poland to help women safely terminate pregnancies in a country where the practice is restricted. [Women on Waves](#), an organization dedicated to making reproductive health practices accessible to women everywhere, is behind the experimental endeavor, but it is unclear how the government will react when the drone lands.



Since 1993, Poland has held strict restrictions on abortion, only allowing the practice in cases of rape or incest, if the mother faces a serious health risk, or if the fetus is significantly damaged. While Polish women do not face jail time if they seek an abortion, doctors who assist in the procedure could face up to two years in jail. This makes access to vital, time-sensitive health care daunting and, in many cases, nearly impossible. The medications being sent in the drone, mifepristone and misoprostol, will be received by a team of people on the border, and can be taken safely up to nine weeks into pregnancy. The drugs are listed on the [World Health Organization's Essential Medicine's](#) list.

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European countries have a variety of stances on abortion access, ranging from easy access in most nations to meeting special circumstances in the UK and Spain to being completely prohibited in Malta and Andorra. The case of Savita Halappanavar garnered a great deal of international attention in 2012 after the woman died in an Irish hospital after staff refused to perform a life-saving abortion. Dialogue about abortion access in European countries has since accelerated.

An estimated 50,000 underground abortions take place in Poland each year and [thousands of women](#) save up to visit the UK to have the procedure. This is why Women on Waves has chosen Poland for its inaugural drone visit, a practice which it hopes to continue depending on its success. Rebecca Gomperts, founder of the Dutch-based organization, explains, "It's the first time we're doing something like this, so we don't know what the Government's going to do. We're just going to see what happens."

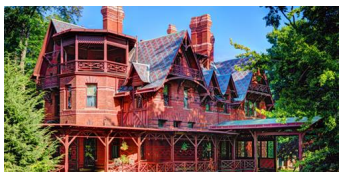
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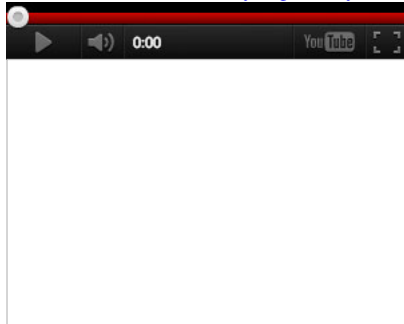
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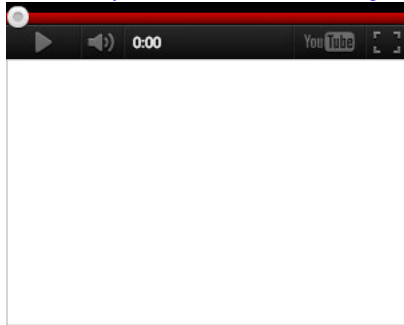
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