

## Lifestyle

# Drone carrying abortion pills to be flown into Northern Ireland

858

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Pro-choice activists rally in Belfast in support of the 21-year-old woman who was handed a suspended sentence earlier this year for buying and taking abortion pills.

IMAGE: CHARLES MCQUILLAN/GETTY IMAGES

BY RACHEL THOMPSON

1 HOUR AGO

LONDON — Abortion rights campaigners plan to fly a drone carrying abortion pills from the Republic of Ireland to [Northern Ireland](#).

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In Northern Ireland — which forms part of the United Kingdom — [abortion is illegal](#), and women face a life prison sentence if they buy the medication used elsewhere in legal abortions. And, in the Republic of Ireland abortion is a criminal offence except in very limited circumstances.

But, a collaboration of activist groups from the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland want to draw attention to the restrictive abortion laws in the two countries by flying a drone between them. Abortion rights groups Alliance for Choice, Rosa, Labour Alternative and Women on Waves are behind the project.

On Tuesday at 10 a.m., the drone will take off at Omeath, County Louth — in the Republic of Ireland — before landing near Narrow Water, County Down, in Northern Ireland.

"It is an all-island act of solidarity between women in the north and the south to

highlight the violation of human rights caused by the existing laws that criminalise abortion in both the north and south of Ireland except in very limited circumstances," a spokesperson for Rosa said in a statement.

"We'll be on the southern border where there is a river and we will fly the drone with pills to the activists in the North," Rita Harrold from Rosa told *Mashable*.

"Some women will then take the first pill to show how safe it is," Harrold continued.

The women — who are not pregnant — [will take](#) mifepristone, which is the first pill administered by doctors during legal abortions, and is on the World Health Organisation's list of essential medicines.

The "abortion drone" is intended to highlight the reality Irish and Northern Irish women face when trying to access safe abortion services compared to women in other European countries.

In a statement, the groups said that the legislation in both countries allows for a drone to fly abortion pills lawfully from the Republic of Ireland to Northern Ireland.

"We aren't too concerned about the police. We did protests with the pills last year and the year before with no police interference," Harrold told *Mashable*.

This isn't the first time a drone carrying abortion pills has been flown into a country with restrictive abortion laws. June 2015 marked the first time an "abortion drone" was [flown](#) from Frankfurt, Germany, into Słubice in Poland.

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