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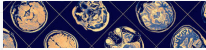
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Wall-E Like Robots Used To Sneak Abortion Pills Into Northern Ireland In Protest

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WOMEN ON WAVES

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Women's rights activists used remote-controlled robots to smuggle abortion pills into Northern Ireland yesterday in protest against the archaic state of the country's abortion laws. The stunt highlighted the extreme lengths women have to go through – in this case, *Wall-E*-esque drug mules, heavy police presence, and possible



By **Rosie McCall**



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arrest – to access healthcare that is perceived as a basic human right across the rest of the UK.

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“The abortion robot will mark the different legal reality for Northern Irish women, who still have to rely on new technology, like telemedicine, drones and robots that use international legal loopholes to protect their rights,” the organizers explained in a [Facebook post](#).

This protest follows the Irish "Repeal the 8th" referendum last week that ended in a colossal win for the pro-choice campaign. With the exception of Donegal, each county elected to repeal by a ratio of two to one. The country is now expected to legalize abortion [by the end of the year](#) – making its northern neighbor one of the very few places in Europe where abortion is illegal unless it can be proven the pregnancy poses a permanent or serious risk to the mother's physical or mental health. [Poland is the only other country](#) in the EU with such stringent rules on abortion.

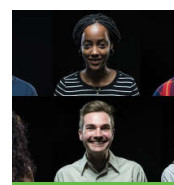
The activists pointed out they were not breaking any laws. The pills could be dispatched to women in Belfast, Northern Ireland's capital, entirely legally because it was operated from outside the country in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Doctors, also remotely, were able to advise and counsel.

“Although the women in Northern Ireland would break the law if they were pregnant while taking the abortion pills, this is a matter of patient confidentiality and forcing women to undergo a pregnancy test would be a severe violation of their human rights,” the activists [added](#).

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Women on Waves

@WomenOnWaves_

Earlier, at the beginning of the [#AbortionRobot](#) event.

1:43 PM - May 31, 2018 · Belfast, Northern Ireland

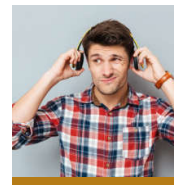
3 See Women on Waves's other Tweets

It also helps that Belfast city council has agreed, since April, to decriminalize the use of abortion pills, [saying](#): "A woman who has an abortion is not a criminal, nor are healthcare professionals who care for them, and the law should not treat them as such."

Despite all this, one woman, who swallowed a pill at the protest, was almost taken by police for questioning before protestors intervened and prevented her arrest.

While studies have shown legal access to abortions does not change the number of procedures ([only makes them safer](#)), women in Northern Ireland risk life in prison if caught, says [Sky correspondent Darren McCaffrey](#) - "even in cases of fatal fetal abnormality, rape or incest." MPs in Westminster are [calling for reform](#). However, UK Prime Minister Theresa May has [no plans to intervene](#), possibly because her government leans heavily on support from a handful of MPs from the Christian conservative party, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) of Northern Ireland.

The event was a collaboration between Women on Web, ROSA Northern Ireland, and Women on Waves, who have in the past sent abortion pills to Ireland (2016) and [Poland \(2015\)](#).



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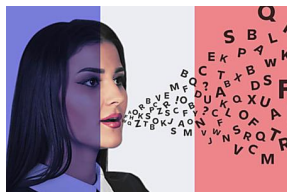
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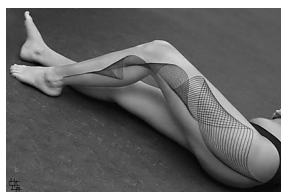
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