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Woman sentenced after having an abortion in Northern Ireland

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(/images1412/Image/2016/2498/abortion.jpg)

A pro-choice protest in Belfast earlier this year (Pic: People Before Profit)

A woman in Northern Ireland was this week given a suspended prison sentence after inducing an abortion.

The ruling will have disgusted everyone who cares about women's rights.

The 21 year old woman pleaded guilty to procuring an abortion by using pills (<https://socialistworker.co.uk/art/42004/Jail+threat+over+abortion+attempt+sparks+pro-choice+protests>) when she was 19 years old.

She had been too poor to afford the travel to England to obtain a legal abortion. She was given a three-month sentence suspended for two years.

Her barrister said she induced the abortion at a time when she felt “isolated and trapped with no one to turn to”.

He added that had she lived anywhere else in the UK she would “not have found herself before the courts”.

The 1967 Abortion Act

(<https://socialistworker.co.uk/art/13033/Abortion+rights+%E2%80%93+40+years+on>) made abortion legal—if women meet certain conditions. It was never extended to Northern Ireland.

And the Eighth Amendment

(<https://socialistworker.co.uk/art/38807/Pregnant+in+Ireland%3F+The+state+owns+your+body>) in Northern Ireland effectively criminalises abortion except where continuing a pregnancy would result in a woman’s death.

This law sees the “rights” of a foetus as equal to those of a woman.

Campaigners in Northern Ireland are fighting to repeal the Eighth Amendment—and are winning growing support.

It’s a disgrace that women are still being denied the right to control their own bodies and lives.

Socialists must defend a woman’s right to choose

(<https://socialistworker.co.uk/art/25559/Why+socialists+should+back+abortion+rights>).


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