



## Goldsmiths Students' Union Policy

**Goldsmiths Students' Union Student Assembly**

**Motion Proposed by Aisling Gallagher**

**Motion Seconded by Bahar Mustafa**

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**Motion title:**

**Access to abortion in the North and South of Ireland**

**Notes:**

1. The current laws governing abortion in Northern Ireland are the 1861 Offences Against the Person Act and the 1945 Criminal Justice Act.
2. The current laws governing abortion in the Republic of Ireland are the 1861 Offences Against the Person Act and the 2013 Protection of Life During Pregnancy Act. In 1983, the Eighth Amendment was added to the Irish constitution, which acknowledged the "right to life of the unborn" as being "equal to" the right to life of the mother.
3. In practice, this means it is almost impossible to access an abortion in the north or south of Ireland.
4. Thousands of people travel from the island of Ireland to the UK every year to access abortion services, and many buy illegal (and often unsafe) abortion pills online<sup>1</sup>.
5. These are conservative estimates, as those who buy pills are not included in official statistics and it is likely that many people give fake addresses in England to help conceal their identity.

**Believes:**

1. Bodily autonomy is an inalienable right.
2. Reproductive justice is not just about accessing an abortion – people should have a real choice when it comes to their reproductive healthcare and whether or not they wish to have children.
3. This includes (and is not limited to) access to free childcare, flexible working hours, a living wage, affordable social housing and sufficient maternity & paternity leave.
4. The laws governing abortion in the north and south of Ireland are entirely unfit for purpose.
5. A person should not legally have to prove that they "deserve" an abortion in order to access one (which is the case in the UK).

**Resolves:**

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics for the Republic of Ireland: <http://www.ifpa.ie/Hot-Topics/Abortion/Statistics>. Statistics for Northern Ireland: <http://www.fpa.org.uk/sites/default/files/northern-ireland-abortion.pdf>.



1. To support activists across the island of Ireland fighting for reproductive justice.
2. To support Irish and Northern Irish students studying at Goldsmiths who are at a distinct disadvantage to their British counterparts when it comes to accessing an abortion, particularly out of term time.
3. To campaign against any proposal to roll back any aspect of the current abortion laws in the UK.
4. To campaign against any proposal to make international students pay to access abortion services on the NHS.
5. To affiliate to the largest pro-choice campaigning organisation in the UK, Abortion Rights.

To publicise the work of the Abortion Support Network (who help women in Ireland pay for abortions in England) and Women on Web (a Netherlands-based organisation who distribute safe abortion pills to people living in countries where access is limited).