

Building Blocks for a Campaign on the Right to Housing

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Towards a Vision for Ending Homelessness

A complete ban on abortion until 2019

8th Amendment to the Constitution in 1983 via referendum:

“equal right to life of the pregnant woman
and the unborn”

Of course, women still had abortions

Public debate never 'settled'

- Condemnation of Ireland's law as violations of women's human rights
- Death of a young woman who was denied an abortion and died of sepsis in 2012
- Referendum was called in 2018 to remove the 8th Amendment
- 66% voted Yes



Building the case for a referendum

- Document and highlight harm to women, numbers of women travelling, unregulated and unsafe abortions in Ireland
- Legal cases and human rights violations
- Marches and call to actions
- Successful marriage equality referendum
- Public opinion
- **Goal:** Build pressure on the Government to call a referendum on removing the 8th Amendment

Communicating the case for change

Our main audience: Undecided voters in the 'middle'

Our goal: 50% +1 of voters on polling day to vote YES

Not our audience:

- Definite No voters
- Definite Yes voters

Other audiences:

Supporters and politicians

What did we know about undecided voters

- Wanted to care for women at home
- Believed pregnant woman is best placed to make decisions about her pregnancy
- Doctors should be able to do their job
- They wanted to know what comes after referendum
- They did not want 'no restrictions'
- Similar to the right to housing?

What is our core message?

Start with the needs and experiences of women.

Abortion is a normal and necessary part of healthcare.

Women are best placed to make decisions about their healthcare with their doctor.

Women must access care at home.



Understand where people are 'listening from'



My Body, My Choice =>
Care, Compassion, Change

- Care for women at home.
- Sometimes a private matter needs public support.
- 'Your daughter, sister, mother, wife, friend.'

Who are the right messengers?

Women and people affected by abortion ban – focus on the ‘hard cases’



‘It’s time to vote Yes and bring compassion home’



Dr Siobhan Donohue

Who are the right messengers?

Doctors and healthcare professionals, people on a 'journey' but also family members and friends



Together for Yes – Campaign Structure

Together for Yes

- a civil society, grass roots campaign
- 3 organisations and 3 Co-Directors
- Numerous supporting organisations, local Together for Yes groups

Creating a big enough tent – mobilise a lot of people and ensure a broad based consensus

Small group of internal decision makers – make decisions fast and adapt

The role of politicians

- Did not speak 'for' Together for Yes but were crucial in communicating the message
- Media turns to politicians for political analysis and commentary
- Engagement was across all parties => Can create tensions in local campaigning groups

Supporters are the backbone of your campaign

- Mobilising existing supporters and recruiting new ones
- Connect people to local groups
- Fundraising
- Posters
- Information stands
- Canvassing
- Merchandising



The last phase: Deliver the change – Winning the referendum

- Get out the vote – make sure the people who want to vote yes actually go out and vote on polling day!
- Very pointed message
- ‘Visibility Canvassing’



Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Care in Ireland for women in Ireland.
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Women are forced to seek the care they need abroad.

Together for Yes.

Questions to ask

- Where are we in the 'campaign cycle'?
- Is there a concrete ask that we can work towards?
(And if not, can we create this?)
- Who is our audience?
- What are the concerns/questions of this audience?
Who is the right messenger?
- Who are our allies and how can we work together?
- How can we mobilise and recruit supporters?

Thank you!

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