

**YES Bureau meeting
hosted at the IUSY World Festival
Mellieħa, Malta, 23rd August 2014**

**THE YOUNG EUROPEAN SOCIALISTS RESPECT A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO
CHOOSE**

*Emergency resolution on current events
Proposed by Labour Youth Ireland and JSE Spain*

The Young European Socialists are shocked and appalled by reports from Ireland outlining the circumstances in which a "suicidal" woman gave birth by caesarean section after requesting a termination of her pregnancy. The vulnerable young woman had sought a termination of her pregnancy under section 9 of the Protection of Life During Pregnancy Act (2013) on the grounds that she was suicidal. An expert panel, convened under Ireland's new abortion laws, decided not to permit an abortion after assessing her as having suicidal thoughts but decided she should have a caesarean section. She began a hunger strike and health authorities went to court to force her to end the fast. She later agreed to a caesarean section and gave birth to a child.

While the current case is a particularly distressing example, all pregnant women in Ireland endure an excessive degree of scrutiny by medical professionals and a severely restricted right to make choices regarding healthcare. Therefore, it is with urgency that we note the concluding observations of the United Nations Human Rights Council fourth periodic review of Ireland's compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: "Irish Women are being denied human rights owing to the highly restrictive circumstances under which women can lawfully have an abortion owing to article 40.3.3 of the Constitution and its strict interpretation by the State." Article 40.3.3 guarantees to protect, as far as practicable, the equal right to life of the unborn and the pregnant woman. It is the only legal provision of its kind existing in the EU.

The Young European Socialists demand that all EU Governments protect women's basic human rights. In this regard, we welcome the UN's call for the Irish Government to "revise its legislation on abortion, including its Constitution" to enable women who would be entitled to an abortion under international human rights law, to access healthcare in Ireland.

We further call on the Spanish Government to take note of the perilous situation for pregnant women in Ireland, arising from its restrictive abortion regime, and call a halt to legislation seeking to drastically limit access to abortion in Spain.

We believe women deserve better; women deserve to give birth and raise their children in societies unravished by austerity with adequate public services, and equally, women deserve to exercise free will and make decisions concerning family and private life. In the landmark case of *A, B & C v Ireland* [2010], the European Court of Human Rights ruled that Ireland's abortion laws violated article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights by failing to provide respect for "private and family life".

It is clear that proposed changes to Spanish law seeking to render abortion illegal except in the

case of rape or when there is a risk to the physical and mental health of the woman are likely to fall foul of the same international human rights standards.

We therefore reiterate our call for all EU Governments to respect and in their laws to protect women's rights to bodily integrity, to equal access to healthcare, and freedom to make choices about private and family life.