

Hello to Pro Choice Saxony! My name is Clare and I'm speaking on behalf of the Abortion Rights Campaign here in Ireland. In 2018, ARC joined with two other organisations to form Together for Yes, the campaigning group that won the historic referendum that took place that year.

We'll never forget the night of 25th May 2018, when the results of several exit polls were announced in the media. We were all gathered in the head office of the campaign - people from all over the country, from all kinds of different backgrounds - united by our commitment to reproductive justice and freedom for all people to choose if and when they want to become pregnant. We cried with joy and relief, hugged each other, popped bottles of prosecco, sang songs, cried some more.

One thing I learned that night, and all the way through the campaign, is the power people can wield when they work together. Sometimes we do not know our own power, and we need to come together to realise just how much we can achieve. The memory of that magical night, as well as the memories of the many long hard days, months and years that preceded it is very important to us, as we face into the future.

Abortion on request in early pregnancy finally became legal in Ireland in January 2019. There are many flaws in the law, including many that will be familiar to you in Germany - gestational limits, mandatory waiting periods, continued criminalisation of abortion outside the limits of the law. Also, people who receive diagnoses of serious foetal illness or abnormality, or many people whose health is threatened later in their pregnancies, are still forced to travel to Britain for abortion care, due to the restrictions in the Irish law. Our Minister for Health promised free contraception by 2021 - there is no sign of that yet, so many people are still unable to afford contraception.

Our work is not finished while anyone is still forced to travel for essential health care. And around the world, abortion rights are being severely threatened and even overturned in some countries. It's more important than ever to proudly stand up for the right for any person to access abortion care, at any time, for any reason, and without any shame or obstruction. We must defend the right to abortion loudly and clearly. That's why we also hold an annual rally in September, and have done so for 10 years, and will keep doing so as long as we need to. The [2021 March for Choice](#) took place in Dublin on 25th September.

Rallies like this are important, because they remind us of those times when we have come together and made each other stronger. We are reminded of the times we have stood up for the rights of marginalised people, both ourselves and others – the rights of refugees, of LGBT people, of disabled people, of people without homes – in fact, of all of us.

Every improvement we have won for our own lives and those of others, no matter how small, matters. Every bit of this work matters.

For 35 years, the eighth amendment of the Irish constitution seemed immovable and impossible to repeal. Yet, on 25 May 2018, we did the impossible. What other “impossible” things can we do if we put our minds to it?

No matter what happens, we will always stand with our friends around the world fighting for reproductive justice.

Solidarität für immer!

*<https://abortionrightscampaign.ie/>
Email: info@abortionrights.ie
Twitter: [@freesafelegal](https://twitter.com/freesafelegal)
Facebook: [@abortionrightscampaign](https://www.facebook.com/abortionrightscampaign)
Press: media@abortionrights.ie*

