

Argentina: Legalising abortion an historic victory for human rights



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Law enables termination up to the 14th week of pregnancy

Bill was passed with 38 votes in favour, 29 against and 1 abstention in the Senate

‘Today we have grown as a society’ - Mariela Belski

Amnesty International welcomes the historic passage of a law enabling the termination of pregnancy up to the 14th week of gestation in Argentina, an achievement that serves as an inspiration to other countries in the region – as well as the wider world – to move towards recognising access to safe, legal abortion.

“This is a victory for the women's movement in Argentina, which has fought for its rights for decades.

“Now, people who decide to terminate their pregnancy will have a safe, high-quality service.

“Today we have grown as a society. Amnesty is going to work to ensure that the state guarantees compliance with legal abortion throughout the country.”

“Today Argentina has made an emblematic step forward in defending the rights of women, girls and people with reproductive capacity.

“It has also sent a strong message of hope to our entire continent: that we can change course against the criminalisation of abortion and against clandestine abortions, which pose serious risks to the health and lives of millions of

people.

“Both the law passed by the Argentine Congress today and the enormous effort of the women's movement to achieve this are an inspiration to the Americas, and to the world.”

The bill was passed with 38 votes in favour, 29 against and 1 abstention in the Senate, with support from multiple parties across the political spectrum. All that remains is for the law to be published in the Official Gazette.

Key points of the new law

Abortion is freely available until the 14th week of pregnancy. After that time, abortion is legal in case of danger to the life or health of the pregnant woman or in cases of rape.

Terminations can be accessed through either the public or private health system, no more than 10 days after a request.

People aged 16 or over have full capacity to give their own consent; girls aged 13 to 16 are presumed to have sufficient ability and maturity to decide on the practice and give due consent unless a procedure involving serious risk to their health or life is to be used (as set out in Article 26 of the National Civil and Commercial Code). Healthcare workers must provide dignified treatment, guarantee the privacy and confidentiality of information, and respect autonomy of will. Any public official or health worker who delays, obstructs or refuses to perform an abortion in legally authorised cases may be criminally sanctioned and disqualified from practise.

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