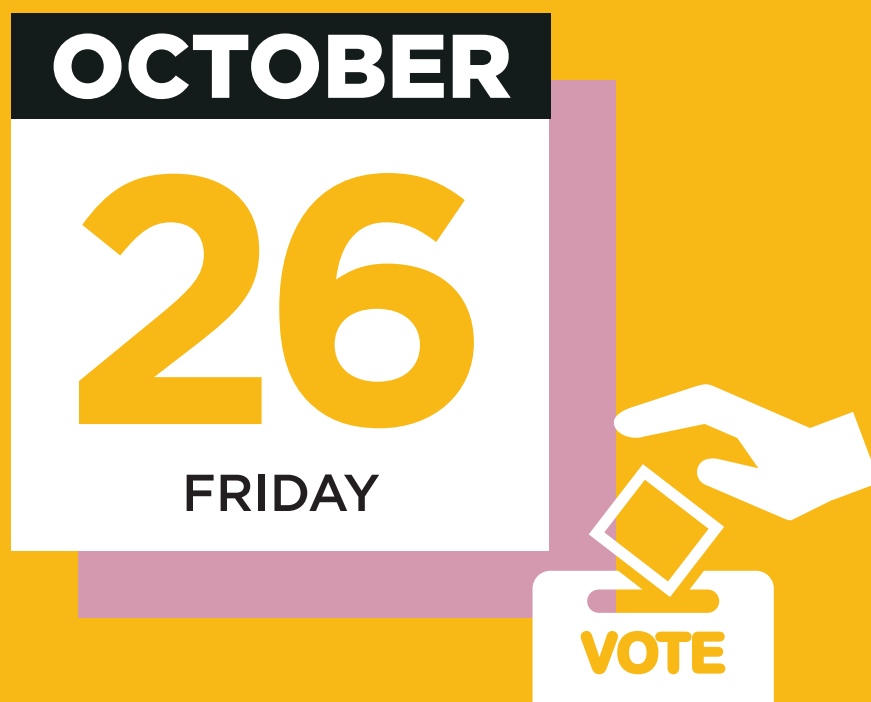




An Coimisiún Reifrinn  
Referendum Commission



# The independent guide to the **referendum on blasphemy**



This guide is written for people  
with an intellectual disability

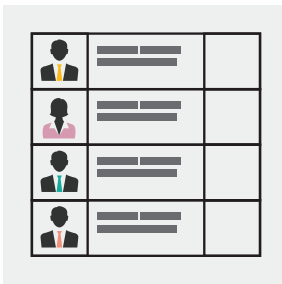
# Introduction

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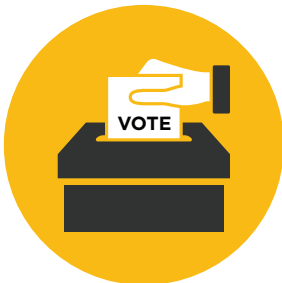
Dear Voters,



On Friday, 26th October 2018 you will be asked to vote on **two** things



You will have the chance to vote in an election to choose a **president**.



You will also be able to vote in a **referendum**.



This information is about the **referendum**.



A referendum is a vote to change the constitution of Ireland.



The constitution of Ireland sets out the rules of the country.

### **This referendum asks:**



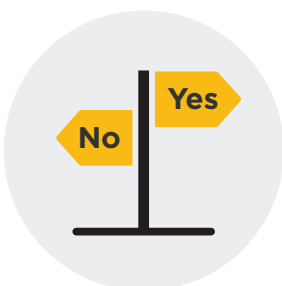
Would you like to change the constitution so the rules about blasphemy in Ireland can be changed?



**Blasphemy** is being very insulting or abusive about things which are sacred to a religion. It is deliberately hurting the feelings of people who follow that religion.



The Referendum Commission gives you information about what your vote will mean.



The Referendum Commission does not tell you to vote yes or no.



You can vote yes or no using your ballot paper.



It is up to you how to vote.



It is important to vote.



The constitution belongs to you.



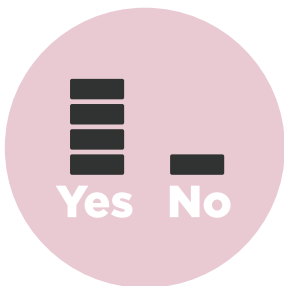
You can help decide whether to change the constitution or not.



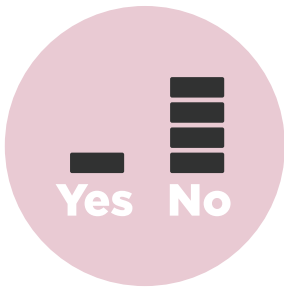
Make sure your voice is heard  
by voting on Friday, 26th October 2018.



All the votes are counted at the end of the day.



The constitution **changes** if most people vote YES.



The constitution **stays the same** if most people  
vote NO.

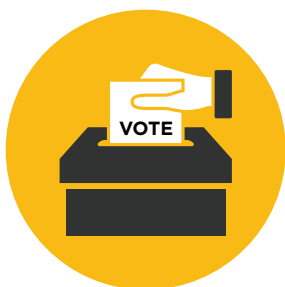


**Isobel Kennedy**

Chairperson  
Referendum Commission



The Constitution of Ireland sets out the rules of the country.



This referendum asks you to vote about changing a rule.



This rule is about what people can say or publish about a religion.



Publishing includes writing something in a newspaper, magazine or on the internet.



**Blasphemy** is about being very insulting or abusive about things which are sacred to a religion.



**Blasphemy** is a crime.



If it is proved that someone is guilty of blasphemy, they might have to pay a lot of money.



The referendum asks if you would like to change what Article 40.6.1 says in the constitution.

# Blasphemy in Ireland now:

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The constitution says that blasphemy is a crime.



In Ireland, someone can not say or publish something very insulting about a religion. People can not say or publish something to deliberately hurt people who follow that religion.



This is breaking the law. They could be fined €25,000.



Nobody has been punished for blasphemy for a very long time. (More than 150 years)



# The **proposed** change to Article 40.6.1

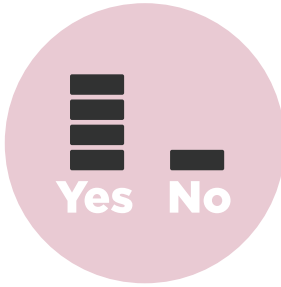
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The proposal is to take the word **blasphemy** out of the Constitution so that blasphemy won't be a crime anymore.

## What will happen if most people vote yes?

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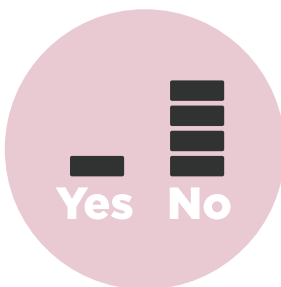
If most people vote yes to this referendum, the rules in the constitution about blasphemy will change.



Politicians will be able to change the law that makes blasphemy a crime.

## What will happen if most people vote no?

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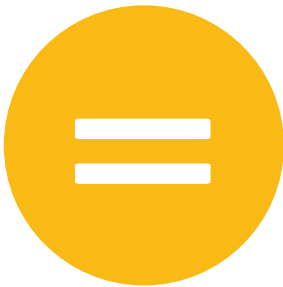
If most people vote no to this referendum, the rules will stay the same.



The constitution will not change.



Blasphemy will still be a crime.



Some things will stay the same, whether most people vote yes or no.



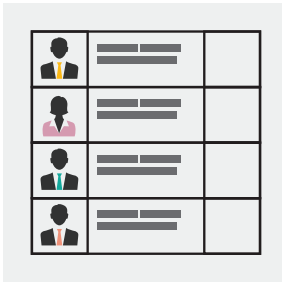
It will still be against the law to publish things which encourage people to hate other people.

# How to vote

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Polling stations open all day (from 7 in the morning to 10 at night)



Voting in the presidential election will take place on the same day as voting in the referendum.



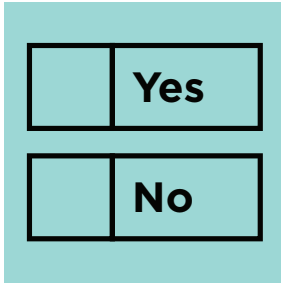
You will be given two ballot papers to use.



The white ballot paper is for the presidential election. This will have the names of people who would like to be President of Ireland.



The green ballot paper is for the referendum.



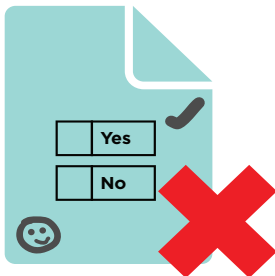
This will have boxes marked YES and NO



You can vote in the referendum by marking an 'X' in the YES box or the NO box.



Only mark one box.



Do not mark any other part of the ballot paper.

# Sample Ballot Paper

An bhfuil tú ag toiliú leis an togra chun an Bunreacht a leasú atá sa Bhille thíosluaite?

Do you approve of the proposal to amend the Constitution contained in the undermentioned Bill?

An Bille um an Seachtú Leasú is Tríocha ar an mBunreacht (Cion a aisghairm arb éard é ní diamhaslach a fhoilsiú nó a aithris), 2018

Thirty-seventh Amendment of the Constitution (Repeal of offence of publication or utterance of blasphemous matter) Bill 2018

Ná cuir marc **ach san aon chearnóg amháin**

Place a mark in **one square only**

**Má thoilíonn** tú, cuir X sa chearnóg seo .....

If you **approve**, mark X in this square .....

|  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
|  | <b>Tá</b><br><b>Yes</b> |
|--|-------------------------|

**Mura dtoilíonn** tú, cuir X sa chearnóg seo .....

If you do **not approve**, mark X in this square.....

|  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
|  | <b>Níl</b><br><b>No</b> |
|--|-------------------------|



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