



THE WORLD'S ABORTION LAWS

2014

Currently, more than 60% of the world's people live in countries where induced abortion is permitted either for a wide range of reasons or without restriction as to reason. In contrast, more than 25% of all people reside in countries where abortion is generally prohibited, while nearly 14% live in countries where abortion is permitted to preserve the woman's health.

The table below illustrates the varying degrees to which countries worldwide permit access to abortion. Laws are categorized according to provisions in national statutes, regulations and court decisions. The categorization of each law does not necessarily reflect the law's actual implementation in that country. Depending on such factors as public support for abortion rights, the views of government officials and providers, and individual circumstances, laws in each category may be interpreted more broadly or restrictively than indicated by their classifications below. Countries in Category I have the most restrictive laws. Those in each subsequent category recognize the grounds specified in the preceding category as well as additional grounds.

CATEGORIES OF ABORTION LAWS FROM MOST TO LEAST RESTRICTIVE

[WWW.WORLDABORTIONLAWS.COM](http://www.worldabortionlaws.com)

I. TO SAVE THE WOMAN'S LIFE OR PROHIBITED ALTOGETHER

Countries printed in bold make an explicit exception to save the woman's life. See also NOTE I.

Afghanistan
Andorra
Angola
Antigua & Barbuda
Bangladesh
Bhutan- R/I+
Brazil- R/+
Brunei Darussalam
Central African Rep.
Chile- x
Congo (Brazzaville)
Côte d'Ivoire
Dem. Rep. of Congo
Dominica
Dominican Republic
Egypt
El Salvador- x
Gabon
Guatemala
Guinea-Bissau
Haiti
Honduras
Indonesia- SA/R/F

Iran- F
Iraq
Ireland
Kiribati
Laos
Lebanon
Libya
Madagascar
Malawi
Mali- R/I
Malta- x
Marshall Islands- U
Mauritania
Mexico- R/F/♦
Micronesia- U
Myanmar
Nicaragua- x
Nigeria
Oman
Palau- U
Panama- PA/R/F
Papua New Guinea
Paraguay

Philippines
San Marino
Sao Tome & Principe
Senegal
Solomon Islands
Somalia
South Sudan
Sri Lanka
Sudan- R
Suriname
Syria- SA/PA
Tanzania
Timor-Leste- PA
Tonga
Tuvalu
Uganda
United Arab Emirates- SA/PA
Venezuela
West Bank & Gaza Strip
Yemen



II. TO PRESERVE HEALTH

(also to save the woman's life). Countries printed in bold recognize an exception to preserve the woman's mental health. See also NOTE II.

Algeria
Argentina- R
Bahamas
Benin- R/I/F
Bolivia- R/I
Botswana- R/I/F
Burkina Faso- R/I/F
Burundi
Cameroun- R
Chad- F
Colombia- R/I/F
Comoros
Costa Rica
Djibouti
Ecuador- R
Equatorial Guinea- SA/PA
Eritrea
Ethiopia- R/I/F/
Gambia
Ghana- R/I/F/
Grenada
Guinea- R/I/F
Israel- R/I/F/
Jamaica
Jordan
Kenya
Kuwait- SA/PA/F
Lesotho- R/I/F
Liberia- R/I/F
Liechtenstein- +
Malaysia
Maldives- SA
Mauritius- R/F/PA
Monaco- R/I/F/xx
Morocco- SA
Mozambique
Namibia- R/I/F
Nauru
New Zealand- I/F
Niger- F
Northern Ireland
Pakistan
Peru
Poland- PA/R/I/F
Qatar- F
Rep. of Korea- SA/R/I/
Rwanda- R/I/+

Saint Kitts & Nevis
Saint Lucia- R/I
Samoa
Saudi Arabia- SA/PA
Seychelles- R/I/F/
Sierra Leone
Swaziland- R/I/F
Thailand- R/F
Togo- R/I/F
Trinidad & Tobago
Vanuatu
Zimbabwe- R/I/F/xx

III. SOCIOECONOMIC GROUNDS

(also to save the woman's life and health)

Barbados- PA/R/I/F
Belize- F
Cyprus- R/F
Fiji- R/I/F/PA
Finland- R/I/F/+
Great Britain- F
Hong Kong- R/I/F
Iceland- R/I/F/
India- PA/R/F
Japan- SA/R
Saint Vincent & Grenadines- R/I/F
Taiwan- SA/PA/F
Zambia- F

IV. WITHOUT RESTRICTION AS TO REASON

See also NOTE IV.

Albania- PA
Armenia- PA
Australia- ♦
Austria*
Azerbaijan
Bahrain
Belarus
Belgium*
Bosnia- Herzegovina- PA
Bulgaria
Cambodia- PA
Canada*
Cape Verde
China- S
Croatia- PA
Cuba- PA
Czech Rep.- PA
Dem. People's Rep. of Korea*
Denmark- PA
Estonia
France*
Fmr. Yugoslav Rep.
Georgia- PA
Germany*
Greece- PA
Guyana†
Hungary
Italy§
Kazakhstan
Kosovo- PA/S
Kyrgyzstan
Latvia- PA
Lithuania- PA
Luxembourg*
Moldova- PA
Mongolia- PA/S
Montenegro- PA/S
Nepal- S
Netherlands-
Norway- PA
Portugal- PA
Puerto Rico*
Romania*

Russian Fed.
Serbia- PA
Singapore***
Slovak Rep.- PA
Slovenia- PA
South Africa
Spain*- PA
Sweden**
Switzerland
Tajikistan
Tunisia**
Turkey- SA/PA
Turkmenistan
Ukraine
United States- PA/♦
Uruguay- PA
Uzbekistan
Vietnam*

NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

"Countries" listed on the table include independent states and, where populations exceed one million, semi-autonomous regions, territories and jurisdictions of special status. The table therefore includes Hong Kong, Northern Ireland, Puerto Rico, Taiwan, and the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Other entities, where visible on the map, appear in colors corresponding to laws in force, but they are not listed on the table.

NOTE I Laws that make no explicit exception to save a woman's life are normally interpreted to permit life-saving abortions on grounds of the general criminal law defense of "necessity." In this situation, although laws do not expressly permit abortion, the procedure could be performed on the rationale that it is necessary to preserve the life of the woman.

NOTE II According to the World Health Organization, "health" is "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." Laws in this category that do not make an explicit exception to protect a woman's mental health should be interpreted to allow abortion on such grounds.

NOTE III GESTATIONAL LIMITS KEY

All countries in Category IV have gestational limits of 12 weeks unless otherwise indicated. Gestational limits are calculated from the first day of the last menstrual period, which is considered to occur two weeks prior to conception. Where laws specify that gestational age limits are calculated from the date of conception, these limits have been extended by two weeks.

† Gestational limit of 8 weeks
‡ Gestational limit of 10 weeks
§ Gestational limit of 90 days
** Gestational limit of 14 weeks
** Gestational limit of 18 weeks
*** Gestational limit of 24 weeks
○ Gestational limit of three months

INDICATIONS

R Abortion permitted in cases of rape
R₁ Abortion permitted in the case of rape of a woman with a mental disability
I Abortion permitted in cases of incest
F Abortion permitted in cases of fetal impairment
SA Spousal authorization required
PA Parental authorization/notification required
+ Abortion permitted on additional enumerated grounds relating to such factors as the woman's age or capacity to care for a child
S Sex selective abortion prohibited
X Legislation eliminated all exceptions to prohibition on abortion; availability of defense of necessity highly unlikely
XX Legislation explicitly permits abortion only to protect the physical health of the woman
U Law unclear
♦ Federal system in which abortion law is determined at state level; classification reflects legal status of abortion for largest group of people

**CENTER FOR
REPRODUCTIVE
RIGHTS**

The Center for Reproductive Rights is a nonprofit legal advocacy organization dedicated to promoting and defending women's reproductive rights worldwide.

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