

Citizens' Assembly

Work Programme Item 1: The Eighth Amendment of the Constitution

Detailed Conversation Starters: Facilitators and Note Takers

General Instructions for Roundtable Discussions following presentations:

- Hear from everyone and as you do, enforce the groundrules, firmly and with good humour. In particular, encourage people to be respectful of others and to share the airtime.
- Remember that the speakers are available for any questions or clarifications if required during the discussion. The Secretariat is also available for any clarification.
- Spend the last 5-10 minutes recapping the conversation to ensure that the key points are captured for inclusion in the table summary.
- As members may still be nervous/ uncomfortable with speaking in the public Q&A session on this topic later, you should also capture the top 3 questions which emerge in the discussion, and should be prepared to ask them on behalf of the table if called upon to do so by the Judge.
- Complete the standard feedback template sheet based on the last 5-10 minutes of conversation. Retain the feedback sheet for collection at the end of the discussion.

Saturday Morning

9.45am Warm-up conversation: Introductions

The warm-up conversation serves to:

- establish who's who at the table and differentiate your role as facilitator
- allow everyone to contribute early on in the meeting
- give people a sense of how they are going to work together over the course of the Citizens' Assembly
- provide people with an opportunity to raise any concerns or objections to the rules

You'll have **20-25 minutes** for this part of the meeting.

Conversation Starters:

1. Introduce yourself and the note taker to everyone at the table and outline the ground rules.
2. Describe your role as facilitator - to guide the conversation so they can concentrate on contributing their views and coming up with ideas.
3. Ask each person to say their name, where they are from and what excites/interests them about being part of the Citizens' Assembly. Nobody should speak for longer than 2 minutes.

11.15 Presentation by Dr. Eoin Carolan on "Article 40.3.3 and the law on abortion: A history"

The purpose of this round table discussion is to:

- help members understand the information they have heard
- embed that knowledge and to document key themes arising from the conversation.
- capture the key questions which emerge during the discussion.

You'll have **45 minutes** for this part of the meeting.

Conversation Starters:

1. In what circumstances can a termination lawfully take place in Ireland?
2. What do you understand Article 40.3.3 of the Constitution to mean?
3. What did you think were the key points in the development of the current legal position?
4. What impact have the courts had?

Saturday Afternoon

15.00 Current Practice in Ireland. Four speakers from afternoon session.

The purpose of this round table discussion is to:

- help members understand the information they have heard in the four presentations on the current practice in Ireland
- embed that knowledge and to document key themes arising from the conversation.
- capture the key questions which emerge during the discussion.

You'll have 60 **minutes** for this part of the meeting.

Conversation Starters:

1. In what circumstances can a woman have a termination in Ireland?
2. Do you understand the difference between termination of pregnancy under sections 7, 8 and 9 of the 2013 Act and what the difference it makes to the doctor looking after that patient?
3. What guidance can a woman be given if she chooses to travel to the UK/ Netherlands for a termination of pregnancy?
4. What do you understand a crisis pregnancy to be?
5. Did anything surprise you in the information that you heard and / or read for this session?

Sunday Morning

10.00 Ethics: An Overview

The purpose of this round table discussion is to:

- help members understand the information they have heard
- tease out the issues that arise and consider how the information they have heard might be useful to them in considering this topic.
- capture the key questions which emerge during the discussion.

You'll have **45 minutes** for this part of the meeting.

Conversation Starters/ Suggested Questions to guide discussions:

1. What is the role and relevance of ethics in the discussions we will be having around the 8th amendment?
2. What do you understand the difference and/or relationship between ethics and law to be?
3. How should we deal with situations in which reasonable people hold differing views on matters of ethical significance?
4. In your everyday lives, you make ethical decisions every day. Think of a decision you have made and how you would defend/explain/justify that decision to someone who disagreed with you.

11.30 Brainstorming on topics/ issues to be considered in subsequent weekends

The purpose of this round table discussion is to:

- Hear from members on what they want to learn more about over the course of the remaining three weekends on the Eighth Amendment.

You'll have **45 minutes** for this part of the meeting.

Conversation Starters/ Suggested Questions to guide discussions:

1. What issues should be focused on and discussed?
2. What kind of people do you think should be asked to present information?
3. What kind of people or groups should be invited in to argue in favour or against certain positions on this issue?
4. In order to get a good understanding of this issue, what do you think might be the best way to organise the next three weekends?
5. Is there anything else that we should focus on in order to get a full and comprehensive understanding of all sides on this issue?