

Abortion on demand a step too far for Spanish right

A move to allow abortion on demand for Spanish women is provoking a virulent clash between the conservative clergy and the socialist government of Rodríguez Zapatero, whose gay marriage law drove hundreds of thousands of people on to the streets.

Currently, it is a crime to have an abortion unless a woman can prove that she was raped, that the foetus is malformed or that the pregnancy endangers her physical or mental health. In practice, however, the law is interpreted liberally across a network of private clinics, which perform more than 100,000 abortions a year.

The new abortion law, which would also allow the procedure up to 22 weeks with a doctor's certificate, is expected to be approved before the summer, with a provision that would allow girls over 16 to have an abortion without parental consent. "They can't smoke, they can't drink alcohol but nevertheless they can abort without their parents' permission", said a spokeswoman for the Right to Life movement.

Thousands of activists are expected to join demonstrations throughout Spain this weekend. Hundreds of doctors, scientists and other Spanish professionals also signed a manifesto earlier this month rejecting the government's plans.

However, apparently only 15% of Spaniards oppose abortion under any condition, and 45% support abortion on demand. A survey found 65% of Spaniards support abortion in the first three months. Women's groups also welcome the proposed reforms but also call for other measures, such as sex education in schools. A feminist coalition launched a counter-offensive to the church on Friday, with posters that say "For motherhood with liberty and abortion with security".

Dale Fuchs, The Guardian, 28-3-2009

Please answer on a separate sheet of paper.

I. Answer the following questions using your own words but taking into account the information in the text (2 points: 1 point each)

a. In which cases is abortion allowed in Spain?

b. What's new in the socialist government's abortion law?

II. Are the following statements true (T) or false (F)? Identify the part of the text that supports your answer by copying the exact words on the answer sheet. (1.5 point: 0.5 each)

- a. With the new law, girls over 16 can have an abortion even if their parents disagree.
- b. All Spanish professionals support abortion on demand.
- c. A minority of Spaniards are entirely against abortion.

III. Find a synonym for each of the four words below from these six options: (1 point: 0.25 each)

clash endangers demonstrations oppose support measures

- a. to be in favour of
- b. confrontation
- c. protests
- d. puts at risk

IV. Choose a, b, or c, in each question below. Only one choice is correct (1.5 points: 0.5 each)

1. Private clinics...

- a) never follow the law.
- b) follow the law loosely.
- c) only perform legal abortions.

2. The new law...

- a) allows abortions under 22 weeks of pregnancy.
- b) allows abortions beyond 22 weeks of pregnancy.
- c) allows abortions only at the 22nd week of pregnancy.

3. Women's groups...

- a) are not in favour of the new law unless other measures are added.
- b) are not in favour of the new law even if sex education is taught in schools.
- c) are in favour of the new law but they would like to see additional measures too.

Part B. Composition (130-150 words approximately). Choose one of the following topics. (4points)

1. What do you think about the government's new law?
2. What role can schools and parents play in preventing teenage pregnancies?

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I. En cada pregunta se valorará en primer lugar la comprensión con un máximo de 0'5. A continuación se valorará la corrección gramatical con un máximo de 0'5. Valor: 2 puntos.

II. No se restará puntuación si la respuesta no es correcta

- a. True (with a provision that would allow girls over 16 to have an abortion without parental consent.)
- b. False (Hundreds of doctors, scientists and other Spanish professionals also signed a manifesto earlier this month rejecting the government's plans.)
- c. True (only 15% of Spaniards oppose abortion under any condition.)

III. De entre una lista de seis palabras del texto, el/la estudiante tendrá que identificar –a partir del contexto la cuatro palabras que se corresponden con los sinónimos o definiciones dados. Valor: 1 punto, 0.25 por ítem.

- a) support
- b) clash
- c) demonstrations
- d) endangers

IV..

Valor: 1.5 puntos, 0.5 por ítem.

- 1. b
- 2. a
- 3. c