

What countries in Europe permit euthanasia?

In April of 2002, the Netherlands became the first country in Europe to legally sanction euthanasia, shortly followed by Belgium in September 2002. While it is still a massive subject of debate with many complicated moral dilemmas raging as we speak, the principle issues affecting its legality involve what is referred to as active euthanasia and passive euthanasia. Passive euthanasia, also called assisted suicide, is when a doctor stops treatment of a patient who has willingly consented to his or her death either at the time or in written form prior.

A list of European countries where euthanasia or assisted dying is permitted is:

1. Netherlands:

- The Netherlands was the first country in the world to legalize euthanasia in 2002. It allows for both voluntary euthanasia, where a patient makes a request, and physician-assisted suicide, where a doctor provides the means for the patient to end their life.

2. Belgium:

- Belgium legalized euthanasia in 2002, following the example set by the Netherlands. Like the Netherlands, Belgium allows for both voluntary euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide.

3. Luxembourg:

- Luxembourg permits euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide, which were legalized in 2009. The law allows for assisted dying under specific conditions and with appropriate safeguards.

4. Switzerland:

- Switzerland does not have specific laws legalizing euthanasia, but it allows for assisted suicide. Organizations like Dignitas and Exit provide assisted suicide services for individuals with terminal illnesses or unbearable suffering.

5. Spain (limited form):

- Spain decriminalized euthanasia in March 2021, becoming one of the more recent European countries to do so. The law allows for euthanasia and assisted suicide for terminally ill patients or those suffering from unbearable conditions.

6. Austria (limited form):

- Austria allows for assisted suicide but does not have a specific law legalizing euthanasia. Organizations like Dignitas operate in the country.

It's important to note that the specific conditions, procedures, and regulations for euthanasia or assisted dying can vary between countries. Additionally, some countries may require strict criteria to be met, such as a terminal diagnosis or unbearable suffering, and may involve thorough medical and legal processes.

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