



A "euthanasia kit" as available in Belgium

## Luxembourg to become third EU country to allow euthanasia

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LUXEMBOURG (AFP) — Luxembourg lawmakers have adopted a bill legalising euthanasia priming the Grand Duchy to become the third EU country allowing doctors to help patients end their own lives.

The parliament passed the bill with only a slim majority with 30 out of 59 lawmakers voting in favour and nearly all of the members of Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker's Social Christian Party voting against.

The Netherlands became in 2002 the first EU country to allow euthanasia, although in strict conditions, and was followed by Belgium the following year.

The bill, which still has to be approved in a second reading to take effect, fuelled passionate debates in Luxembourg, where Catholic values remain firmly entrenched. The medical community was mostly against it.

"This bill is not a permit to kill," said Socialist lawmaker Lydie Err, who helped draft it.

"It's not a law for the parents or the doctors but for the patient and the patient alone to decide if he wants to put an end to his suffering," she added.

According to the bill, euthanasia will be strictly regulated and can be mentioned in a "living will."

Doctors will have to consult with a colleague to confirm that the person is suffering from a "grave and incurable condition."

A national commission made up mainly of doctors and officials would also be created to check on a case-by-case basis that all legal conditions and procedures are respected.

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