

**Committee:** World Health Organization

**State:** Turkey

**Agenda:** Legalization of Euthanasia

Since the establishment of the World Health Organization, there have been various transformations and reconstructions in the globalizing world. As a country that is developing in every aspect, we will be very pleased to take part in this assembly of the World Health Organization and represent our country’s policies on the topic of the Legalization of Euthanasia.

Since euthanasia has been a topic of discussion around the globe over the past thirty years, science and ethics have frequently been the case of contentious debates among scientists. The European Convention on Human Rights specifies in its opening paragraph that "Everyone's right to life is safeguarded by law.” A statement that reads, "No one shall be wilfully killed, except for the execution of the sentence given by the court for an offense punishable by the crime of murder by law.” The death penalty was abolished by all 47 Council of Europe member nations that are parties to the convention, in accordance with Protocol Number 6 to the European Convention on Human Rights, which went into effect on March 1st, 1985. According to Article 2 paragraph 1 of the Convention, “Everyone's right to life must be protected by law. No one can be deprived of his right to life, even for the purpose of carrying out a court decision, for committing a crime for which the penalty has not been determined by law.” This article of the Convention requires the State to protect the right to life and states that no one can be deliberately deprived of life. Therefore, in addition to protecting the person from conduct that would directly constitute rape, the state also has an obligation to safeguard that person against potentially fatal circumstances. Since it must protect individuals from circumstances that could be fatal, the legalization of governmental euthanasia is contentious. Beyond just being respected, the right to life also needs to be safeguarded and upheld. The right to life necessitates not only respect but also protection and observance. Euthanasia is outlawed in the first paragraph of the 14th article of the Medical Deontology Regulation and the 13th article of the Patient Rights Regulation of the Ministry of Health, even though there is no specific provision on the matter in the penal code of Turkish law.[[1]](#footnote-1) The right to live is safeguarded by all fundamental legal principles, including the Constitution. According to Article 17 of the Turkish Constitution, “Everyone has the right to live, to protect, and to develop their material and spiritual existence.” It also states that the physical integrity of the person cannot be harmed and that he cannot be subjected to scientific or medical experiments without his consent, except for legal requirements and situations that are explicitly addressed in the law.[[2]](#footnote-2)

The findings of studies indicate that the population of Turkey is opposed to euthanasia in a general sense. Research involving 300 doctors was carried out to find the answer to what Turkish people are commonly thinking about this issue. In May 1992 48% of the doctors indicated their support for voluntary passive euthanasia in this study, which was presented at the III. National Public Health Congress. On the other hand, 37% approved of involuntary passive euthanasia. Effective euthanasia received a no response from 89% of the medical professionals. However, 44.8% of the nurses who responded to the survey given to those who work in intensive care units said they supported legalizing euthanasia due to the financial burden that these patients place on the state.[[3]](#footnote-3) Since active euthanasia has an invisible face and myriad possible consequences, Turkey is concerned about it. On grounds of euthanasia, first and foremost comprises the crime of deliberate manslaughter. The physician or the murderer has the intent to commit murder, making it an intentional crime. Here, the goal—rather than the motivation—is crucial. The potential for the doctor to make a false diagnosis or learn a novel therapeutic strategy to utilize on the patient is the first of the issues that euthanasia may result in. The possibility of error exists in medical science. It is not always feasible to say for sure whether a sickness is fatal or not. The right to life can be flagrantly infringed. Another concern is that the moral and psychological foundation of society may crumble if euthanasia is permitted. Because the imperative of creation requires selecting an easy end. The decision to choose an easy death in specific situations will prevail over other concepts considering the absolute decline in the worth of human life. Giving doctors or other individuals the power to execute can result in abuse. The legislation avoided several homicides, each of which might have had justifiable reasons, by prohibiting euthanasia. It has been argued that allowing euthanasia to impede medical advancement will cause people to lose faith in medicine and doctors. Killing an incurable patient now is equivalent to denying the future accomplishments of humanity. In reality, blood cancer, which was previously a fatal condition, is now treatable through marrow transplants and other techniques. If doctors had taken the easy way out at that time, when many patients were doomed to misery and death, rather than exerting considerable effort to alleviate their suffering, blood cancer might not be a treatable disease today. The Hippocratic Oath makes it plain that it opposes active euthanasia. Hippocrates pledges in the Hippocratic Oath: “I will not, even if requested, deliver lethal medicine to anyone or administer lethal drugs to myself.” The patient's treatment is the doctor's responsibility. Euthanasia also goes against human nature since it contradicts the need for protection that exists in every human being. Quality of life is incredibly valuable, regardless of what comes to mind when people consider it. Consequently, life is also holy in light of this value. If the sanctity of life is upheld, it is not permissible to ask a patient who is suffering from a terminal illness or is about to die to kill themselves or at the behest of the patient's unconscious relatives, and it is not possible to carry out this request to alleviate the patient's suffering. Whether or not one is religious, life is holy. The right to live includes the right to die, hence euthanasia is permissible, according to individuals who view the sanctity of life from various perspectives. Because of the sacredness of life, Turkish citizens commonly believe that that passive euthanasia can be used in this situation, just as it is in Turkey, but only under extremely specific circumstances. In our opinion, palliative care should be prioritized over euthanasia or assisted suicide as the first line of therapy for patients, and it should even be made mandatory. Palliative care should be a requirement internationally at the outset of the process and supplying the manpower and resources required for each nation. As Turkey's representative, we think it is critical to write a statute outlining the unique circumstances under which euthanasia would be implemented. However, this contradiction may not be an issue that all countries of the world will meet at the same point due to its sensitivity. Nevertheless, as Turkey, we believe with great hope that our committee will be successful resulting in effective solutions.

1. <http://koraytuncer.dr.tr/index.php/tipsal/otanazi?highlight=WyJcdTAwZjZ0YW5hemkiXQ> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Güven, Kudret, Kişilik Hakları ve Ötanazi, Nobel Yayın Dağıtım, Ankara, 2000, s. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Tepehan, Selma, “Yoğun Bakım ve Servislerde Çalışan Sağlık Personelinin Ötanaziye Bakışı, Yüksek Lisans Tezi” İstanbul Üniversitesi Adli Tıp Enstitüsü, İstanbul, 2006, s. 91. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)