

Reported Dutch euthanasia cases rise

September 26 2012

(AP)—The number of doctor-assisted suicide cases reported in the Netherlands grew by 559 between the years of 2010 and 2011, a commission says.

Euthanasia was decriminalized in the Netherlands in 2002 for patients who are terminally ill, in great pain, and ask to die.

The Euthanasia Commission, set up by the government, found that doctor-reported cases made up about 2.7 percent of all deaths in the Netherlands in 2011, from 2.3 percent in 2010.

Nicole Visser, the secretary general of the commission, said Wednesday her organization investigates whether doctors followed the law, and she could only speculate about possible reasons for the increase. They might include better reporting by doctors; more deaths from [terminal illness](#), as a result of an [aging population](#); and changes in ethical views.

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