

# Germany clears genetic testing of embryos

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Germany's upper house of parliament on Friday gave its green light to testing embryos after in vitro fertilisation in certain cases after a passionate ethical debate in the country on the issue.

The Bundesrat voted to allow so-called pre-implantation [genetic diagnosis](#) of embryos when one of the partners had a history of serious hereditary disease or if there was a high risk of stillbirth.

The lower house of parliament, the Bundestag, gave its approval in July 2011 after an emotional three-and-a-half hour debate.

Such testing, which is expected to apply to a few hundred cases each year, had long been outlawed in Germany.

The law specifies that each case will have to be examined by an ethics commission and that the parents receive specialist counselling before the testing is carried out.

The delicate issue pitted medical professionals against church associations.

The former argued that this law would in no way lead to so-called [designer babies](#) but the latter said it violated the "principle of respecting human dignity" enshrined in Germany's constitution.

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