

Record numbers join Swiss euthanasia organisation

March 11 2015

The Swiss right-to-die organisation Exit that helps with assisted suicides on Wednesday said its membership reached a record high in 2014 with the number of applicants increasing by 20 percent.

The group said that 13,413 members from the Italian- and German-speaking parts of Switzerland joined last year.

The trend has continued into 2015 with 5,000 new applicants joining Exit in the first two months of the year.

Figures from the French-speaking region were not yet available.

The group also said it carried out 583 assisted suicides in 2014, up by 124 from the previous year.

Of those, 56 percent involved women and the average age was 77.5 years, Exit said.

The organisation attributed the spike in membership numbers to greater media interest in euthanasia, an ageing population and a rise in cases of dementia.

The issue of [assisted suicide](#) was widely discussed in Swiss media after 66-year-old politician This Jenny, who was suffering from cancer, took his own life in November.

Soon after the number of Exit membership applications more than doubled.

Switzerland is one of the rare countries in Europe that allows assisted suicide by patients administering a [lethal dose](#) of medication themselves.

The country does not allow active, direct euthanasia by a third party, but tolerates the provision of substances to relieve suffering even if death is a possible side-effect.

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