

Polish parliament passes law regulating IVF (Update)

June 25 2015

Poland's parliament adopted a law Thursday on in vitro fertilisation (IVF), which was previously allowed in the mostly Catholic country but remained unregulated because of opposition from the right and the Church.

Lawmakers voted 261 in favour and 176 against with six abstentions for the law, tabled by the centre-right government of Prime Minister Ewa Kopacz.

"I'm very pleased, this is a great success for freedom in Poland. This grants a great opportunity for happiness to people with a great problem," Kopacz told reporters in parliament in the capital Warsaw after the vote.

A trained physician, she previously said her government tabled the new legislation because the lack of regulation on IVF made it "morally ambiguous" and "potentially dangerous" from a medical point of view.

Kopacz faces a general election this autumn, with opinion polls showing her centrist Civic Platform (PO) party trailing its conservative opposition Law and Justice (PiS) rivals.

IVF is reimbursable under the new law, while individuals risk up to five years in prison for trading in or destroying embryos.

Couples can anonymously offer spare embryos for adoption.

Several draft laws related to IVF have been proposed over the years.

Echoing the outright opposition of the Roman Catholic church to IVF, the PiS even pushed to ban IVF outright, proposing jail for anyone who opted for the method.

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