

France

Let's help each other to live, not to die

(sv) *The French association "Alleviate but don't kill" makes an appeal to the whole of society in view of the Civic Convention that has been meeting in France since 9 December 2022 on end-of-life issues (see box).*

* * *

"Together for the weakest!"

As a participatory process is launched that could lead France to legalise assisted suicide or euthanasia, we, the most vulnerable, together with those who surround and support us, appeal to the President of the Republic and the parliamentarians.

Incontinent, suffering, paralysed, confused people, carriers of disabilities or disabling illnesses, victims of the consequences of accidents, traumatic brain injuries, the mentally ill – we feel even more weakened by this debate!

Many "healthy" people who don't even know us declare us unfortunate and think they would rather not live any longer than live with our disabilities. Yet, what do they know? What do they know about the road we have travelled to consent to our situation? What do they know about the vital resources that our misfortunes have brought to light or strengthened?

Some consider us useless, expensive or even unworthy of life. They applaud those who go abroad to take their own lives out of desperation, as if we should do the same. That is what pains us the most.

Would we have to give up the courage to live? Would our carers and loved ones have to give up their efforts, they who help us to alleviate and overcome our difficulties? We all need a view that values us and encourages us to live, not a reflection on a supposed "right, to a self-determined death".

Whether we are healthy or sick, we are all 100% alive. What do we say to the weakest links of this human chain that forms our society? Is it not precisely their fragility that calls us to protect them? For it is the weakest link of a chain that determines its strength.

Especially the "weakest" need much solidarity, but – let's be honest – so do the "capable"! In a world where we have to rely on each other to feed, clothe, warm, care for and live in safety, who can claim to be completely "autonomous"? We all need each other to live: The presence of the most vulnerable at the heart of society reminds us all of this. It can also help those who will one day leave the world of the "healthy" to preserve the love of life until the end.

Information from the French association "Alleviate but don't kill":

The Citizens' Convention on End of Life, led by the Economic, Social and Environmental Council starts on 9 Friday December 2022.

But what is it about?

185 citizens drawn by lot will meet together until March to reflect on the current conditions for end-of-life care in France.

The members of the Convention will draw on a documentary basis provided by the EESC. They will decide whom to consult and how to conclude.

A discussion in three phases

- 9 December-January 2023: Appropriation of the topic and meetings between citizens.
- January-February 2023: Consultations and hearings of personalities and organisations.

- February-March 2023: Conclusion of discussions.

The challenge

Answering the question: "Is the framework for end-of-life care appropriate to the different situations encountered, or should possible changes be introduced?"

Caution Danger!

This debate weakens the most vulnerable who need to be protected from euthanasia and assisted suicide.

Source: <https://www.soulagermispastuer.org/appel/#appel>
Translation "Swiss-Standpoint"

With the strength of our fragility, we ask you for the good of our society:

- Do not drive anyone into despair, self-exclusion, suicide or euthanasia.
- Protect us from a supposed freedom to die that would push some people to leave us.
- Affirm the right of every human being to receive help in living and never in dying.

Then the society we build together will be more humane.

Philippe Pozzo di Borgo, spokesperson for “Alleviate but don’t kill” [“Soulager mais pas tuer”].

Source: <https://www.soulagermaispastuer.org/appel/#appel>



(Bild Thibaut Despierres/
Wikipedia)

The story of *Philippe Pozzo di Borgo*, spokesperson for the association “Alleviate but don’t kill”, is at the origin of the film “The Intouchables”. A quadriplegic himself for 30 years, he is a fierce advocate for the most vulnerable in society.