
Germany: assisted suicide legislation. Welskop-Deffaa (Caritas), “wanting to live does not require justification, regardless of age or illness”

As the Bundestag debates new legislation on assisted suicide, Caritas Germany points out that the number of suicides among people over 65 is already alarming. “Suicide reflects a state of despair and loneliness, especially among people over 90 who feel unappreciated in our performance-oriented society”. This “reality must neither be trivialized nor exacerbated by making suicide assistance more accessible”. Caritas calls for better suicide prevention, especially among the elderly. Further efforts are also needed to expand the hospice and palliative care provided by personnel trained in hospital and outpatient care for the elderly. “Today in the new Bundestag, MPs are once again discussing the consequences for the legislator of the ruling on assisted suicide issued by the Federal Constitutional Court in February 2020. We need rules that effectively guarantee that people are not put under pressure to justify themselves by suicide assistance offers. Wanting to continue living does not require justification, regardless of age or illness”, the president of Caritas Germany, Eva Maria Welskop-Deffaa, said today. “It is important for both the facilities and the workers of our services to reaffirm that no one is obliged to provide suicide assistance. This principle, upheld by the Federal Constitutional Court, applies not just to natural persons, but also to institutions and services”, the president remarked, and “legislation should clarify this”.

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