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## **Germany: upcoming Bundestag debate on euthanasia. Ecumenical Life Week from 17 April**

According to reports in the German media covering parliamentary affairs, a new orientation debate on tabled draft legislation on assisted suicide and euthanasia practices should be included in next week's Bundestag agenda. Indeed, euthanasia in Germany may be regulated before the federal elections scheduled for late September as a follow-up to the ruling by the Federal Constitutional Court of Germany which, in early 2020, had lifted the ban on commercial euthanasia that has been in force since 2015. The Karlsruhe-based judges, while upholding the right to a self-determined death, noted that this includes the freedom to resort to assistance provided by third parties. The debate on euthanasia and assistance to the terminally ill will also be the focus of next "Week for Life", a joint national ecumenical initiative of the Catholic and Protestant Churches. It will take place from 17 to 24 April under the motto "Living in Death". Reflections will focus on assistance to the seriously ill and the dying through palliative and pastoral support, as well as on general assistance to the terminally ill. "We want to promote palliative and hospice support, and a global life culture in our society, in a more consistent way than before", explained the president of the German Bishops' Conference, Bishop Georg Bätzing, and the chair of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany, Bishop Heinrich Bedford-Strohm.

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