



# PRESS RELEASE

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### Annual public meeting of the German National Ethics Council on other cultures' attitudes to prenatal life

**This whole-day event on Thursday 23 October is concerned with the religious, ethical and normative attitudes of other cultures to prenatal life.**

The questions to be discussed include the following:

- Do the various religions constitute a reference point for moral action in relation to biomedical developments, or is the influence of religions dwindling with the modernization of societies?
- Might there perhaps be more common ground in the practical handling of issues of bioethics and medical ethics than is generally assumed given the differences in ethical and philosophical principles on the one hand and religious conceptions on the other?
- In view of the differences, is there in fact any possibility of arriving at a bioethics based on the common ground shared by diverse cultures without ignoring the views of some of those cultures?

A total of eight lectures will compare the relevant beliefs of the selected cultures – Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam – with social practices in China, India, Israel and Islamic countries.

The ensuing panel discussion will focus on the possibilities of and prospects for intercultural understanding on bioethical issues. The debate will be based on the consideration that the practical implications of modern biomedical research are so far-reaching as to raise fundamental questions about our image of man, while at the same time extending beyond national boundaries. Science and economics operate internationally and have global consequences. These developments therefore affect not just individual human beings or societies, but the whole of mankind.

For detailed information on the programme of the meeting, visit:

[http://www.ethikrat.org/veranstaltungen/pdf/Programm\\_JT\\_2003-10-23.pdf](http://www.ethikrat.org/veranstaltungen/pdf/Programm_JT_2003-10-23.pdf)

#### The German National Ethics Council

The German National Ethics Council's task is to provide a forum for interdisciplinary discourse between the natural sciences, medicine, theology and philosophy, and the social and legal sciences.

It expresses views on ethical issues relating to new developments in the field of the life sciences and on their consequences for the individual and society.

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