

We reformers – initiatives for victims of sexual and spiritual violence, Catholic associations and church reform groups – have been accompanying the Synodal Path since its inception. Some of us are represented in the Synodal Assembly and Synodal Committee, and we are in close contact with many members and support them.

We reformers speak for the vast majority of Catholics in Germany: according to [KMU 2023](#), 96 per cent consider profound reforms in the Roman Catholic Church to be urgently necessary.

The Synodal Path, which began in 2019, was triggered by the [MHG study](#). Its shocking findings on sexualised violence and systematic cover-ups have severely shaken confidence in the church leadership. The aim of the Synodal Path was and is to combat the systemic causes of the risk factors for this violence. These were dealt with intensively in the four Synodal Fforums on power, priests, women and sexuality. The texts that were adopted (as well as those that were not) show ways out of the major reform backlog that has existed since the end of the Second Vatican Council and the Würzburg Synod (1971-1975).

The German Synodal Path is not a special case, no “German Sonderweg”. This is confirmed by the worldwide Synodal Process launched by Pope Francis in 2021. The same problems are being identified worldwide, especially with regard to the issue of women's equality. The German reform proposals have met with great interest internationally, as demonstrated by the [meeting of Synodal Bodies in Rome in October 2025](#), in which *We Are Church* participated.

However, the Vatican's intervention in the statutes of the future Synodal Conference has made it clear that binding synodality is hardly possible within the existing hierarchical canon law. The Synodal Path can therefore only be a first step towards a church without clericalism, with shared responsibility and effective control of power.

At the end of February 2026, the chairman of the DBK will be elected again. This election is taking place in a situation in which the forces opposed to the limitation of power have gained influence in both the Bishops' Conference and the Vatican. We see the [resignation of Bishop Bätzing](#) as a serious risk to the continuation of the reform process in the coming years.

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