

## Historic Places of Worship: basic information by country

This up-to-date background information will be used to provide comparative data and a policy overview that will be shared with other delegates at the forum in November and before the event on the website.

We aim to have only one form per country, so ask that delegates from the same country share information and return it to [hockley@tcct.org.uk](mailto:hockley@tcct.org.uk) when all parties are all satisfied with the overview. Please avoid abbreviations and explain any country specific terms. Thank you.

<b>Country</b>	Federal State of Brandenburg/Germany
Names and email address/web site for people who have completed form	Dr. Uwe Otzen <a href="mailto:altekirchen@alice-dsl.net">altekirchen@alice-dsl.net</a> <a href="http://www.altekirchen.de">www.altekirchen.de</a>
<b>The current situation</b>	
Brief country context to explain current situation	In 1990 out of 1.400 Protestant churches in Brandenburg approx. one third were in decay and threatened by destruction
<b>Places of worship in use</b>	
Number of places of worship by religion/denomination and religious attendance.	There are 1.400 Protestant churches, out of which 1.164 are village churches, in regular or occasional use. Some churches, mostly in poor condition are unused. Attendance has been and still is very poor but seems to slightly increase. There are some Roman-Catholic and very few churches of other denominations. A few former Jewish synagogues exist, most were destroyed in 1938 or thereafter under the Nazi regime.
Who is responsible for the management of buildings?	For most of the Protestant churches usually the local church council/congregation, supervised by the Protestant Church of Berlin-Brandenburg-Silesian Upper Lausitz (EKBO). For the Roman Catholic churches the local church council/congregation, supervised by the Roman Catholic archdiocese of Berlin
Who finances the maintenance? (State funding, Church tax...)	The local church congregations/church councils with their financial resources, collections, donations etc. and to a small part by Church taxes, granted to the Protestant Church of Berlin-Brandenburg-Silesian Upper Lausitz (EKBO) and the Roman Catholic archdiocese of Berlin. The Jewish Community in Brandenburg also receives a very small amount from Church taxes. The Federal State of Brandenburg, the official church authorities (EKBO and the Roman Catholic archdiocese), Communal Authorities (Kreise/districts, Städte/towns and Gemeinde/local communes), the Deutsche Stiftung Denkmalschutz, the Förderkreis Alte Kirchen Berlin-Brandenburg e.V. (FAK) and other foundations and bodies make grants for urgent repairs and restorations.
What support organisations exist (to help a church or other organisation when there is a problem?)	Förderkreis Alte Kirchen Berlin-Brandenburg e.V. (FAK), Deutsche Stiftung Denkmalschutz/DSD (German Foundation for Preservation of Ancient Monuments), Stiftung zur Bewahrung kirchlicher Baudenkmäler in Deutschland/KIBA (Foundation for Preservation of Historic Protestant Church Monuments in Germany), private sponsors and - for specific projects - organizations like Robert-Bosch-Foundation, etc.
<b>Places of worship not used for worship</b>	
Number of places of worship that have closed for worship in recent years	Approx. 20 Protestant churches, a very few Roman-Catholic churches.
What organisations are responsible for the management of these places of worship	As long as church buildings have not been officially made redundant and closed (and de-consecrated) responsibility lies with the local church congregations under the umbrella of the Protestant Church of Berlin-Brandenburg-Silesian Upper Lausitz, EKBO or the Roman Catholic archdiocese of Berlin. A very few have been taken over by local associations (e.g. Saaringen). Some churches have been transferred or sold into communal or private possession. There is no body – like the Churches Conservation Trust in England- in Brandenburg or

	Germany which administers culturally important redundant churches, except for the Förderkreis Alte Kirchen Marburg in Hessen, which has looked after 4 redundant churches for over 20 years. The FAK itself does not own any churches.
Who finances the above-mentioned organisations?	As mentioned above, there is no organization which looks after redundant churches in Brandenburg
<b>General information</b>	
Number of buildings of architectural or historical importance.	Almost all 1.400 church buildings
Rural/urban issues	Rural-urban migration and increasing urban bias
Tax situation	The Protestant, Roman Catholic and other Christian Churches and religious denominations pay the full VAT of 19% on all their activities, including repair and restoration of historic buildings, also paid by associations owning historic churches. The state gets back more than that it pays in grants. Full VAT also for new buildings. Persons paying income tax, paying subscriptions and making donations to charitable organizations supporting historic churches, such as local church councils, local associations for churches and the FAK, are able to claim tax relief. Revenue from Church taxes is falling, due to declining church membership and high unemployment.
Have any surveys been compiled recently? (Please attach weblink or email document).	By the Protestant Churches in Germany/EKD 2006, based on information from the individual Churches, including the Protestant Church of Berlin-Brandenburg-Silesian Upper Lausitz, published in: Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland/Zahlen und Fakten zum kirchlichen Leben, Hannover 2009, see <a href="http://www.ekd.de/statistik/kirchen.html">www.ekd.de/statistik/kirchen.html</a>
Which subjects are of special concern?	Dramatic demographic change and peripheral economic decline in rural Brandenburg
Which are the areas that could be helped by working together at a European level	Reduction of VAT on repair and restoration work on churches. Awareness building and supporting a sense for the tremendous cultural and Christian heritage in rural and urban areas, promotion of churches as often main historic buildings in villages and towns, with their often very rich furnishings power-houses of the cultural heritage, major sources of local identity. Need for better funding to repair and maintain many churches still in very poor condition. Forging urban-rural and other cross-sectional alliances for sustaining historic places of worship
Predicted future national situation/direction it is heading	It seems that above mentioned awareness is slightly increasing also due to the activities of the Förderkreis Alte Kirchen Berlin-Brandenburg e.V. However it is likely that in the future many more churches will be made redundant.
Any other comments	