

Historic places of worship: basic information by country

Country	The Netherlands
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The current situation	
Brief country context to explain current situation	<p>Our society has changed dramatically over the past few decades. The population has increased, its makeup has become multicultural, more people have moved to urban centres, the average level of education has risen, our welfare has grown and the number of people that identify themselves with a religious community has decreased, to half the Dutch population. Catholic religious practice and vocations decreased slowly, and other religions appeared, especially in the towns (Islam, Orthodox, Buddhist etc.).</p> <p>By way of various developments, including secularisation, religion is taking a less prominent role in the lives of many. The consequences of this are that it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain religious heritage, many buildings are left empty, to ruin or demolished.</p> <p>At this moment 2 churches a week are closing, it is to be expected that in the near future 1.000 to 1.200 Roman Catholic and Protestant churches will be closed. Of the 170 monasteries which are still in use for religious purposes, approximately 150 will close in the next ten years.* (* bron Summary and perspective 2008 Religious heritage year).</p> <p>Threats for the conservation and restauration of the buildings are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Due to little building space in the Netherlands, religious buildings which are on so called A-locations are sold for demolition at the highest bidder. - Uncompromising attitude of diocese (RK) regarding conservation and regeneration after closing down. <p>Historical information: Until the 16th century the Netherlands was a nearly monoreligious catholic country. Due to the reformation only the south (the provinces Noord Brabant-Limburg-Zeeland and parts of Gelderland) remained catholic, the rest of the country became Protestant. In these southern provinces catholic organisations structured all the components of the society (health care, education, socio professional associations. Catholic Parishes covered the southern territory. In the rest of the country protestant parishes were active. The two main religions were also of importance in politics. Due to the freedom of religion in Holland other cults are officially recognized by the government. (Buddhism, Lutheran, Jewish</p>
Places of worship in use	
Number of places of worship by religion/ denomination and religious attendance.	<p>In the Netherlands the relationship between the State and the Church is strictly divided with the Constition of 1848 (Thorbecke) Catholic parishes,</p> <p>reformed parishes and other denominations. At the moment there is a huge process taking place to unite parishes, therefor it is not possible to give exact figures.</p>
Who is responsible for the management of buildings?	The Churchgovernment, RK churches get also support from the Diocese construction desk. Reformed churches get support from the RCBB.

Who finances the maintenance? (State funding, Church tax...)	National Monuments are financed via subsidy BRIM for conservation 65% of the costs. Local Monuments and important buildings get no subsidy, or very little. There is no church tax system in the Netherlands
What support organisations exist (to help a church or other organisation when there is a problem?)	Government: Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, Ministry of OC&W. Province, council. There are several organisations of church owners: VBMK Stichting Groninger Kerken, SOGK, SOHK. St. Fryske Kerken, SKKN: for the interiors www.SKKN.nl Monumentenwacht Nederland (Monumentwatch organisation)
Places of worship not used for worship	
Number of places of worship that have closed for worship in recent years	At this moment 2 a week are closed. In the past few years approx. 20 a year.
What organisations are responsible for the management of these places of worship	The Churchgovernment as long as these buildings are in there possession. The dutch Government is preparing a so called Wind and Watershut regulation.
Who finances the above organisations?	No one, we are urgently in need of a national fund or trust organisation.
General information	
Number of buildings of architectural or historical importance.	3.676 religious buildings are registered as national monuments. And thousands as municipal or provincial monument Younger buildings: (after 1950 up till now) are not yet registered as monument.
Rural/urban issues	Small villages in the country side: so called Church-villages (3 farms and a very old church) there is the problem of redundancy and no funding facilities. Little villages with enormous Neo Gothic Churches. To expensive maintenance costs and the regeneration issue. Big Cities: regeneration most of the time possible, but the churchleaders attitude is an obstructure even when the parishes wishes to cooperate and facilitate the (partial) regeneration of the building. Also the economic revenue is an issue.(A-locations).
Tax situation	
Have any surveys been compiled recently? (Please attach weblink or email document).	In 2008 the Year of the Religious Heritage took place, a summary and perspective is given free under www.religieuserfgoed.nl/doc/gelooftoekomstWEB.PDF Stock taking of the restauration need of all religious buildings in Gelderland. (see email attachment) Investigation of the Stichting Alte Fryske Kerken http://www.aldefrysketsjerken.nl/pdf/inventarisatierapport-tinkom%27e-tsjerken.pdf Coming up: Support publication District Gelderland with inspiring examples of regeneration of religious buildings. (see e-mail attachment) Ministry of education culture and science: future for monumental churches (guidance for buildings and regeneration out of monumental point of view)
Which subjects are of special concern?	Mobile heritage (church interiors, religious art objects). Keeping it in a good condition is hard and it is not protected in any way (not monumental), church art etc. It is not possible to get subsidies or funding for these issues at this moment. Ensembles of religious buildings in context to there surrounding.They are not protected by monumental status.

	<p>The new spacial planning laws and guidelines can be a threat for monumental buildings.</p> <p>Especially for the Netherlands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • very weak heritage policies and insufficient funds at most levels of government, and • a general lack of openness and cooperation between church-representatives, governments, citizens and expert institutions. • church-leaders' fear for bankruptcy due to increasing maintenance costs and decreasing income due to decreasing membership of religious institutions; • church-leaders' fear for competition with other religions and for so called "improper" use of churches, chapels and cathedrals; <p>Lack of Stock-taking of the restauration need of all religious buildings, not only governmental monuments. Only the Province of Gelderland and Friesland have done this already in the past year.</p> <p>Publications to support church owners how to handle the process of maintenance and regeneration Inspiring cases of regeneration of religious buildings</p>
<p>Which are the areas that could be helped by working together at a European level</p>	<p>Better collaboration (there is nearly any) between different regional institutions in the Netherlands. Support for civic foundations in the Netherlands. A National trust foundation for religious heritage with links to national trusts in other countries, sharing information and inspiring regeneration projects with special attention for sustainable solutions.</p> <p>Create possibilities for Stock-taking of the true restauration need of religious heritage and example cases and studies. Working together on similar heritage regeneration issues (cloisters and churches) and sharing knowledge.</p> <p>Publications to support church owners and governments how to handle processes of maintenance and regeneration.</p>
<p>Predicted future national situation/direction it is heading</p>	<p>At this moment 2 churches a week are closing, it is to be expected that in the near future 1.000 to 1.200 Roman Catholic and Protestant churches will be closed. Of the 170 monasteries which are still in use for religious purposes, approximately 150 will close in the next ten years.*</p>
<p>Any other comments</p>	