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## **Systemic mass-scale religious segregation condoned by the European Union for 10 years**

*By Willy Fautré, director of Human Rights Without Frontiers*

[The European Times](#) (06.11.2024) - As of 5 October 2024, 512 public tenders submitted by Germany to the EU in the nine first months of the year were accepted and published by the [EU Tenders Transparency Portal](#) despite their egregiously discriminatory nature.

Their peculiarity was that they contained a "Bidder's declaration of protection" against a specific religious group to be mandatorily filled in and signed on a "form 2496" for the bidding to be valid.

One of the 512 tenders concerned "advanced services in preparation for the construction of the future excavation pit shoring for the new center at the Nuremberg Clinic" (Ref. 598098-2024). Another one is about the "supply of electrical energy for *Neue Materialien Bayreuth GmbH* in 2025 and 2026" (Ref. 637171-2024). One can wonder what the religious affiliation of the bidders has to do with the [EU](#) tenders and why the EU endorses this criterion of exclusion for access to EU tenders instead of rejecting the questionable German applications.

### ***About the magnitude of the issue: over 3173 cases***

This systemic segregation violating for 10 years the [Directive 2014/24/EU of 16 February 2014](#) and its magnitude are however well-known as the information about contracts above 140,000 EUR must be and is public.

Statistics about tenders from 2014 to 2024 : 81 in 2014, 156 in 2015, 173 in 2016, 163 in 2017, 215 in 2018, 284 in 2019 294 in 2020, 370 in 2021, 432 in 2022, 493 in 2023 and 512 in 2024. Total: 3173.

These facts and figures were presented at the [OSCE](#) Warsaw Human Dimension Conference on 7 October 2024 and uploaded on their website.

The [Directive on public procurement](#) provides in its first paragraph that "The award of public contracts by or on behalf of Member States' authorities has to comply with the principles of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), and in particular (...) equal treatment, non-discrimination, mutual recognition, proportionality and transparency."

The imposition of faith-related requirements in public tenders is a serious violation of the European Charter on [Human Rights](#) and the European Convention on Human Rights. Such a provision should be removed from the EU tenders without delay or the German submissions should be rejected.

The religious community targeted by Germany in this segregation case is the Church of Scientology which is recognized as a religious or belief community in EU and other countries where such a legal status exists, except in Germany despite quite a number of [court decisions](#).

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## **10,000 Catholic and Protestant temples expected to close in next decade**

***The decline in membership of the two historic Christian confessions will have consequences: "Every fifth worship place will no longer be used for its original purpose".***

[Evangelical Focus](#) (19.09.2024) - **The fall in membership of the two largest Christian institutions in [Germany](#) is forcing them to sell or demolish hundreds of temples.**

According to an investigation of German newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 603 Roman Catholic temples and 444 worship places of the Evangelical Church of Germany ([EKD](#), the mainline Protestant Church) have been "deconsecrated", meaning that they would no longer be used for worship services.

In the case of the Protestant Church, the buildings have been either sold or demolished.

By 2033, "every fourth or fifth church [building] will no longer be used for its original purpose", says architecture professor Stefanie Lieb. She believes this would mean in practice that 10,000 temples will no longer celebrate worship services.

An example of this trend, reports *Pro*, is that the diocese of Essen already announced in 2006 that it could no longer finance a third of the buildings.

Many of these church buildings have been sold and new owners use them for private business such as restaurants, fitness centres or shops.

### **The cause: a sharp drop in affiliations**

The reason behind everything is the [constant fall in the membership of the two churches](#). The figures of the year 2023 show that the Roman Catholic Church in Germany lost 628,000 members, and the Protestant EKD, 593,000.

The main cause are intentional exits of members who no longer identify with these churches. But the negative statistics are also affected by the [death of members and the fall in baptisms of newborn](#).

Tied to this realities is the fall in church taxes, an important income both the Catholic Church and the EKD receive from all of its registered members.

According to German magazine *Pro*, only in the Southern *Land* of Bavaria (Bayern), the maintenance of Catholic buildings costs over 100 million euros every year.

Experts have warned about the danger that many historic Christian temples fall in the hands of "greedy investors".

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