

Policy Statement

Committee: GA2

Delegation: The Netherlands

Delegate: Sarah Annamária Kuipers

The Kingdom of the Netherlands concerning the issue: Churches contributing to government revenues

Religion not only nowadays is an important human task for us and our citizens. Looking back at all the events we are deeply disturbed by all the actions that the churches and our citizens had to overcome to finally live in peace without being followed. The Netherlands was predominantly Christianity between the 10th and until the late 20th century. In the mid-20th century roughly 60% of the population was still Protestant and 40% was Catholic. Since then there has been a significant decline of Christianity, both Catholic but especially Protestant, so that nowadays Catholics outnumber Protestants and there is a secular majority.

In the Kingdom of the Netherlands the state is divided from the churches, that means that they have tax-exemption, same as the political, patriotic, philosophical or charitable nature, but there are some exceptions. The churches and other organizations in the Netherlands must pay tax in case there are some replacements needed as it is written in the laws of taxes. The Netherlands would like to emphasize that we do not economically support the churches. The only income of the churches is from the donations of the citizens.

Another majority in the Netherlands is the atheists, they form 50% of the population in the Netherlands. Most of them are settled in the government and are deeply convinced that the churches should pay taxes as other facilities/institutes, they believe that the tax-exemption is a waste of money which the Netherlands could invest in some social facilities or it could be used for environmental projects. That is why those parties are trying to accomplish new laws for the churches and other charitable organizations. But till now the law of the taxes says, we can not charge the churches or charitable organization for economic purposes.

The delegation of the Netherlands is looking forward to cooperate with other countries to find an economical balance between the churches and the government.