



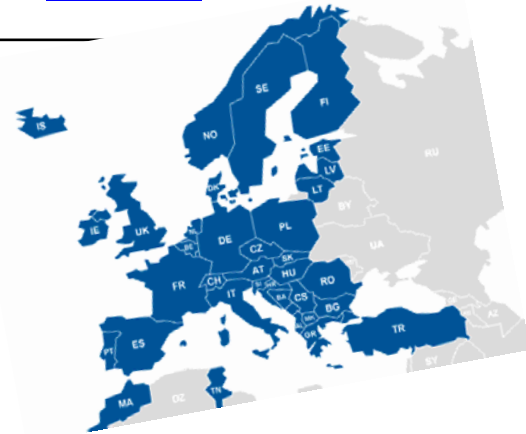
# FRIDAYFAX 2.0

Issue # 13, Aug 31, 2007

Kingdom-focussed E-Mail news-bulletin with inspiring reports of God at work around the world, with special emphasis on the current global reformation of Church and Missions. **Editor:** Wolfgang Simson. Subscription: €30/ US-\$ 40 per year. Freitagfax 2.0, PO Box 1248, D-79397 Kandern, Germany. Email [info@ffax2.com](mailto:info@ffax2.com); website: [www.ffax2.com](http://www.ffax2.com). © Dawn Europa e.V.; 22 issues per year, available in English and German.

## Europe: Only *one out of ninety* follows Jesus? What happens if nothing happens?

Is it because of – or rather in spite of – a hectic Christian activity in Europe that the numbers of churchbased Evangelicals have reached a historic low? Peter Brierly, an institution amongst Christian researchers in Europe, has just corrected the number of “Broad Evangelicals” in England from 6% down to 2%. And if this development continues – what happens, if nothing happens, that is, if the current trend over the last hundred years continues for another two or three decades? The answer seems clear: European Christianity will be extinct, like a dinosaur. Today it is generally overaged, inflexible, steeped in self-absorbed tradition and dead sure it’s right. Many say: something should happen – but nothing must change! Is the church in Europe dying of inflexibility?



“The traditional church in Europe is in crisis”, writes *Ruth Robinson* of GEM (Greater Europe Mission). “Both membership and attendance in mainstream Christian denominations are tumbling. Cathedrals are standing empty, or being transformed into restaurants, nightclubs and flower shops. Although many Pentecostal, Evangelical and Charismatic groups are growing - including many ‘immigrant’ churches – there also exists a less visible yet dynamic growth of house churches, youth churches and new emerging forms of meeting together to worship and celebrate life with Christ. Sprinkled among these various groupings are Christians who have become disillusioned with the church – the ‘out-of-church Christians’. Yet, at the same time, the rise of spiritual interest and awareness continues in the realm of New Age, occult, Celtic, voodoo and other beliefs/practices, all expressions of unsatisfied and thirsty hearts in a postmodern context.”

*Scott Friderich*, in his “European Spiritual Estimate 2005”, says: “Europe is both the most Christian and the least Christian place in the world today.” According to his study, “72.7% of Europeans would label themselves as Christians. Does this mean that more than 2/3 of Europeans are following Jesus Christ and are concerned about the people around them? The answer is a resounding no.” Although about 2/3 of all Europeans are sacramentalized (baptized, connection to a church), Friderich estimates that “only 4.2% of Europeans follow Jesus and are actively concerned about the people around them following Jesus.” And: “While most of the world has a church for at least every 5.000 people, this study estimates that there is only one Gospel oriented church for every 27.749 people in Europe.” Self-proclamation, belief in ones own belief, however, has its limits. George Barna of the U.S.-based Barna Group states that, though some 40% of Americans are self-proclaimed ‘Evangelicals,’ only 8% believe a set of core ‘orthodox’ values/beliefs and are regularly involved in practices by which this research group defines the term ‘evangelical.’

Ruth Robinson’s “European Believers Report 2007” is a good attempt to estimate those believers in countries across Europe “who have chosen a personal, obedient relationship with Jesus, the only way to God and to eternal life in heaven”. Her result? About a mere 1.1% as a continental average, which does not only include classical Evangelicals, but also estimates of Evangelicals from within Orthodox, Protestant and Catholic churches (sources: <http://www.emrgnet.eu/wordpress/data/europe-level/ebr-2007> und <http://emrg.friderich.net/>)

**The summary is:** of Europe’s 755 million inhabitants, only 8,3 million (1,1%, one out of ninety) follow Christ in a recognizable, classical *evangelical* way that focuses on personal obedience and visiting evangelical church-services rather than cultural religion and conformity. The top-Christian nations in this regards are: Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales (all 10%), followed by Norway (4), Sweden (4) and Finland (4). The least are Montenegro (0.02), Kosovo (0.04), Russia, Moldova, Lithuania, Estonia and Georgia (all 0.07%).

If God has not given up on Europe and traditional Evangelicalism is not poised to make a significant headway in Europe anytime soon, would it be thinkable that the solution to Europe's spiritual quest lies in the margins – or even clean outside CAWKI –church-as-we-know-it *in Europe*? If yes, the margins might be the true centre and cutting edge, and the centre of traditional Evangelicalism might have become irrelevant by now – except to Evangelicals. “House churches, youth churches and new emerging forms” of church, as Ruth Robinson observes, might be far more of an answer to Europe's spiritual future than upholding a form of faith that most Europeans find it difficult to connect with.

Here a list based on Robinsons' European Believers Report 2007 in the form of a country-by-country account (more details on <http://emrgnet.eu/wordpress/method/innovation/articles/abacus>)

Country	% Believers		total number of Believers		Population in millions	
	1999	2007	1999	2007	1999	2007
Albania		0.70		25,000		3.56
Armenia	0.51		17,200		3.5	3
Austria		0.50		42,000		8.18
Azerbaijan	0.01		520		8	8
Belarus		0.10		10,000		10.3
Belgium		0.30		30,000		10.36
Bosnia-Herzegovina	0.12		4,918		4	
Bulgaria		1.40		105,000		7.45
Croatia		0.22		10,000		4.5
Cyprus (Greek)		0.22		1,500		0.69
Czech Republic		0.17		17,600		10.24
Denmark	2		106,000		5.3	5.43
Estonia	0.07		975		1.4	1.345
England		2.0		1,260,000		60.6
Finland		4		208,800		5.22
France		0.82		500,000		60.65
Georgia	0.07		3,683		5.3	4.66
Germany		1.58	1,300,000			82.44
Greece		0.23		25,000		10.67
Hungary		1.34		134,500		10
Iceland	0.65		1,768		0.27	0.3
Ireland		0.75		30,000		4
Italy		0.80%		464,800		58.1
Kosovo	0.04		1,080		2.7	2.4
Latvia	0.10		2,700		2.7	2.3
Lithuania	0.07		2,587		3.7	
Luxembourg	0.19		750		0.4	0.47
Macedonia		0.18		3,500		2
Malta		0.10		400		0.4
Moldova	0.07		3,007		4.3	4.45
Montenegro		0.02		100		0.62
Netherlands		2.64		432,800		16.4
Northern Ireland	10		170,000		1.7	1.7
Norway		4		184,000		4.6
Poland		0.46		178,400		38.63
Portugal		2.80		300,000		10.6
Romania		3		669,900		22.33
Russian Federation	0.07		101,844		145.5	
Scotland	10		510,000		5.1	
Serbia		0.10		7,800		7.8 (ca)
Slovakia		0.28		15,000		5.44
Slovenia		0.25		5,000		2
Spain		0.20		82,000		40.34
Sweden		4		360,000		9
Switzerland		3	224,700			7.49
Ukraine	0.93		461,250		49.6	47.42
Wales	10		280,000		2.8	2.9
<b>Total</b>		<b>1.1</b>		<b>8,296,082</b>		<b>755,085,000</b>