

Panel discussion on 07 September on the subject

”Alternatives to Military Peace Measures”

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Conversion in Brandenburg

Result after one decade of conversion in the State of Brandenburg: About 82.000 hectares – that is about half of the original conversion potential – are in civil use today or a civil use is being prepared. Within the scope of conversion, the creation and conservation of future-oriented places of employment in the field of modern technologies as well as of attractive housing was successfully implemented; this contributed to the general structural change in many affected regions. Most of the former garrison towns are demilitarised civil centres.

Until 1989, 230,000 hectares in the State of Brandenburg were used for military purposes by the West Group of the (Russian) troops (WGT), the East German Nationale Volksarmee (NVA) and other armed forces. 160,000 hectares of this land were available for conversion – thus, 43% off all conversion areas in the Federal Republic of Germany are concentrated in the State of Brandenburg.

About 100,000 hectares of former WGT-areas were taken over as property of the State of Brandenburg in 1994 by the Federal Government and put into the special fund “Real Estate Fund Brandenburg”. The Brandenburgische Boden Gesellschaft für Grundstücksverwaltung and –verwertung mbH (BBG) is responsible for administration, development, and usage. The BBG was especially founded for that purpose.

The personal and business conversion are considered to nearly completed in Brandenburg. Thus, and due to the giant dimensions of former military real estate, the main focus in Brandenburg lies on real estate conversion.

Nearly 5,000 hectares were assessed relevant for urban development due to their building modes, their location or quality of their development. This potential was included into municipal planning more intensely during the last few years.

However, the major part of state-owned terrain is maid up by military training areas and shooting ranges with a total of 82,000 hectares. Mainly, natural and landscape conversion as well as forestry and recreation are realised on those areas.

One focus of the current and future work is the development of buildings that are no longer needed, on the one hand in order to positively influence the soft local factors such as the townscape, and on the other hand in order to improve the local and regional environment balance by the de-sealing of surface.

But conversion in Brandenburg will remain uncompleted for some time to come. To ensure its future financing, lobby work at all levels and political wisdom of all actors involved have become more urgent than ever. Together with the local protagonists, the State is prepared to carry out the economic and structural key tasks in the future.

However, Brandenburg will depend on outside help to be able to cope with the difficult inheritance that the area of the Cold War left; especially, help from the Federal Government and the European Union will be needed. The State hopes to take new impulses for the conversion business from the international exchange of experience and network.