In the plenum
Members have agreed on procedural arrangements for the plenary session in the Rules of Procedure of the Landtag. The Landtag President or his representative presides over the meeting to ensure that the rules are duly observed. Two members assist him as recording clerks. The following basic procedure is followed for the plenary session:

1. News hour (Aktuelle Stunde)
The members discuss a current political topic in depth. The right of petition alternates between the parliamentary groups.

2. Question time
The duty of the Land government to answer questions from members helps to monitor the work done by the Land administration. This gives members of the Landtag the opportunity to air any grievances in public at short notice.

3. Reading of draft bills
Priority is given to laws on which a final vote is needed after being debated by the committees. Newly introduced draft bills are then dealt with.

4. Major interpellations and reports by the Land government
The Land government reports on a subject in detail. The report is then discussed in the plenum.

5. Motions and independent motions for a resolution
By using motions, the parliament attempts to move the Land government towards a specific course of action. Oppositi-
on groups often use motions to make it clear that, should they come to power, they would implement the measures in questi-
on in a different way to the government.

Parliamentary groups
The members of a party form a parliamentary group. Groupings enable members to specialise in certain subjects and give structure to the work done by parliament. The parliamentary groups forming the government are the coalition government, whilst the remaining groups represent the opposition.

The Land parliament
The Landtag Brandenburg consists of 88 members who were elected to serve a five-year term in the Landtag in 2009 by voters in 44 electoral districts and by means of lists of candidates at a Land level. In Germany, jurisdiction is shared between the authorities at federal (Bundestag) and state (Landtag) level, as well as the local authorities (Kreis- (county council), Stadt- verordnetenversammlung (city assembly) and Gemeindevertretung (municipal council). Examples of issues dealt with by the Landtag Brandenburg are schools and nurseries, the police, the courts and penal system, economic development, transport infrastructure and consumer protection.

The legislative process

The fundamental principles of draft bills are discussed during the first reading. Politicians then debate possible amendments in expert committees whose meetings are open to the public. They listen to the representatives of interest groups at the same time. The laws, including any amendments, are then approved or rejected by all the members in the plenum.

The Landtag

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Land government

Landtag

Draft bills

First reading in the plenum
Reason for draft bill and statement on principles behind its submission = preliminary debate

Second reading in the plenum
Expert committees

Expert committees

Third reading in the plenum

Landtag President

Landtag President