

## VII. ESTONIA

**Population: 1,366,723**

**Membership OSCE: 10/09/91 - Helsinki Final Act: 14/10/92 - Charter of Paris: 06/12/91**

**Membership Council of Europe: 14/05/93 - Membership U.N.:17/09/91**

### A. CONSTITUTION

**Constitution adopted on: 28 June 1992**

#### Article 12 [General Equality, No Discrimination]

- (1) All persons shall be equal before the law. No one may be discriminated against on the basis of nationality, race, color, sex, language, origin, creed, political or other persuasions, financial or social status, or other reasons.
- (2) The propagation of national, racial, religious or political hatred, violence or discrimination is prohibited and punishable by law. The propagation of hatred, violence or discrimination between social strata is equally prohibited and punishable by law.

#### Article 29 [Right to Profession]

- (2) No one may be compelled against his or her free will to perform work or service, except military or alternative service, or work required to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, or in cases of natural disasters or catastrophes, or work which by law is required of a person convicted of a crime.

#### Article 40 [Freedom of Religion]

- (1) Everyone shall have freedom of conscience, religion and thought
- (2) Everyone may freely belong to a church or a religious association. There shall be no state church.
- (3) Everyone shall have the freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private to practice his or her religion, unless it endangers public order, health or morals.

#### Article 41 [Freedom of Belief]

(1) Everyone shall have the right to hold his or her opinions and persuasions. No one may be coerced to change them.

(2) Persuasions cannot be pleaded as an excuse for a legal offence.

(3) No one may be legally charged because of his or her persuasions.

**Article 42 [Privacy of Religion and Belief]**

No state or local government authority or their officials may collect or store information on the persuasions of any Estonian citizen against his or her free will.

**B. LEGISLATION**

**C. CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION**

Law on Service in the National Defence Forces (Military Service Act of 9.3.1994)