

XVI. LITHUANIA

Population: 3,700,000

Religious make-up: 90% Catholic - 5% Orthodox

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

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

A. CONSTITUTION

Constitution (1992)

Article 25

(4) Freedom to express convictions or impart information shall be incompatible with criminal actions - the instigation of national, racial, religious, or social hatred, violence, or discrimination, the dissemination of slander, or misinformation.

Article 26: Freedom of thought, conscience, and religion shall not be restricted.

Every person shall have the right to freely choose any religion or faith and, either individually or with others, in public or in private, to manifest his or her religion or faith in worship, observance, practice or teaching.

No person may coerce another person or be subject to coercion to adopt or profess any religion or faith.

A person's freedom to profess and propagate his or her religion or faith may be subject only to those limitations prescribed by law and only when such restrictions are necessary to protect the safety of society, public order, a person's health or morals, or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

Parents and legal guardians shall have the liberty to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions.

Article 27: A person's convictions, professed religion or faith may justify neither the commission of a crime nor the violation of law.

Article 28: While exercising their rights and freedoms, persons must observe the Constitution and the laws of the Republic of Lithuania, and must not impair the rights and interests of other people.

Article 29: A person may not have his rights restricted in any way, or be granted any privileges, on the basis of his or her sex, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, religion, convictions, or opinions.

Article 36: Citizens may not be prohibited or hindered from assembling in unarmed peaceful meetings.

Article 40

(1) State and local government establishments of teaching and education shall be secular. At the request of parents, they shall offer classes in religious instruction.

Article 43: The State shall recognize traditional Lithuanian churches and religious organizations as well as other churches and religious organizations provided that they have a basis in society and their teaching and rituals do not contradict morality or the law.

Churches and religious organizations recognized by the State shall have the rights of legal persons.

Churches and religious organizations recognized by the State shall freely proclaim the teaching of their faith, perform the rituals of their belief and have houses of prayer, charity institutions and educational institutions for the training of priests of their faith.

Churches and religious organizations shall function freely according to their canons and statutes.

The status of the churches and other religious organizations in the State shall be established by agreement or by law.

The teachings proclaimed by churches and other religious organizations, other religious activities, and houses of prayer may not be used for purposes which contradict the Constitution and the law.

There shall not be a State religion in Lithuania.

B. LEGISLATION

Law n°I-1057 issued on 4 October 1995, published on 2 November 1995 "On Religious Communities and Associations"

Law n°I-1059 issued on 12 October 1995 published on 2 November 1995 "On Implementation Procedure of the Law "On Religious Communities and Associations"

Resolution n°278 issued on 6 March 1998 published on 10 March 1998 on Allocation of Means for Governing Bodies of Traditional Religious Communities and Churches

C. CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION

Law on Military Service (1990).

Law on Alternative Service

(1990).