



# Estonia

## Republic of Estonia

### Europe

### Geography

**Area** 45,215 sq km. Northernmost of the three Baltic states. Separated from Finland to the north by the Gulf of Finland.

| Population | Ann Gr    | Density |
|------------|-----------|---------|
| 2010       | 1,339,459 | -0.11%  |
| 2020       | 1,332,507 | -0.07%  |
| 2030       | 1,301,132 | -0.30%  |

**Capital** Tallinn 399,000. **Urbanites** 69.5%. **Pop under 15 yrs** 15%. **Life expectancy** 72.9 yrs.

### Peoples

**Finno-Ugric** 69.8%. Estonian 68.6%; Finnish 0.8%. **Slavic** 29.2%. Russian 25.7%; Ukrainian 2.1%; Belarussian 1.2%. **Other** 1.2%. Tatar, Jews, others.

**Literacy** 99%. **Official language** Estonian; Russian is still common. **All languages** 18. **Indigenous languages** 2. **Languages with Scriptures** 1Bi 1NT 1por.

### Economy

Movement to a capitalist free market society and joining the EU has attracted foreign investment and sustained significant economic growth. One of the most successful of the post-Soviet economies.

**HDI Rank** 40<sup>th</sup> / 182. **Public debt** 4.8% of GDP. **Income/person** \$17,532 (37% of USA).

### Politics

Long dominated by surrounding nations. Independent 1918-1940. The Soviet invasion in 1940 and subsequent deportation and murder of many Estonians caused deep

resentment against Russia. Became independent as a multiparty democracy by 1991. 2004 entry to the EU and NATO reflects increasing Western orientation.

### Religion

Severe persecution of all faiths under the Soviet occupation 1940-1988. No state religion, and freedom of religion since independence.

| Religions        | Pop % | Population | Ann Gr |
|------------------|-------|------------|--------|
| Non-religious    | 54.00 | 723,308    | 1.0%   |
| Christian        | 45.30 | 606,775    | -1.4%  |
| Ethnoreligionist | 0.20  | 2,679      | 5.8%   |
| Muslim           | 0.20  | 2,679      | -0.1%  |
| Jewish           | 0.15  | 2,009      | -3.7%  |
| Buddhist         | 0.08  | 1,072      | 9.7%   |
| Other            | 0.07  | 938        | 6.8%   |

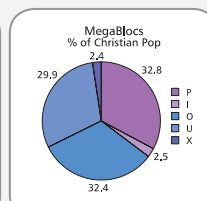
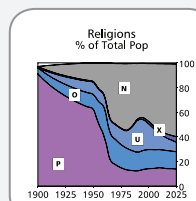
| Christians   | Denoms | Pop % | Affiliates | Ann Gr |
|--------------|--------|-------|------------|--------|
| Protestant   | 13     | 14.85 | 199,000    | 0.4%   |
| Independent  | 39     | 1.04  | 14,000     | 2.9%   |
| Anglican     | 1      | 0.03  | <400       | 3.1%   |
| Catholic     | 1      | 0.38  | 5,000      | 0.4%   |
| Orthodox     | 5      | 14.67 | 196,000    | -0.8%  |
| Marginal     | 2      | 0.53  | 7,000      | -0.2%  |
| Unaffiliated |        | 13.54 | 185,000    | -4.4%  |

| Churches                    | MegaBloc | Congs      | Members        | Affiliates     |
|-----------------------------|----------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| Lutheran Church             | P        | 165        | 46,000         | 177,000        |
| Orthodox Church             | O        | 29         | 66,387         | 158,000        |
| Estonian Orthodox           | O        | 55         | 12,571         | 22,000         |
| Old Believers               | O        | 11         | 5,500          | 16,500         |
| Ev Chr/Baptist Union        | P        | 81         | 5,900          | 9,440          |
| Jehovah's Witnesses         | M        | 42         | 3,750          | 6,375          |
| Catholic Church             | C        | 7          | 1,821          | 5,100          |
| Christian Pente Ch          | P        | 38         | 2,556          | 4,600          |
| Evang Char congs            | I        | 13         | 1,450          | 2,422          |
| Other denominations[50]     |          | 117        | 13,106         | 20,461         |
| <b>Total Christians[61]</b> |          | <b>558</b> | <b>159,041</b> | <b>421,898</b> |

| TransBloc           | Pop % | Population | Ann Gr |
|---------------------|-------|------------|--------|
| <b>Evangelicals</b> |       |            |        |
| Evangelicals        | 4.9   | 65,726     | 0.5%   |
| <b>Renewalists</b>  |       |            |        |
| Charismatics        | 1.9   | 25,956     | 1.8%   |
| Pentecostals        | 0.6   | 7,930      | 1.2%   |

### Missionaries from Estonia

**P,I,A** 22 long-term international in 12 agencies; 6 serving among the deaf in Southern Europe.



# Challenges for Prayer

- 1 Estonia is a former-Soviet success story**, as the small nation transitions to a more Western economy and political structure. However, poverty is not vanquished, and materialism's influence grows. There is a crisis of values, recognized even by the media and the state, as secularism and pluralism tighten their grip. Pray for righteousness and biblical values to be modelled by a wise and upright government.
- 2 Religious freedom is an open door to Christian ministry** but also to theological error. Many marginal Christian sects are increasing in number and influence – Mormons have more missionaries in Estonia than any Christian agency has there. While actual practitioners are few, a recent poll showed 11% of Estonians expressed warmest feelings toward pre-Christian pagan religions. Pray for the truth and light of Christ to be established in this new marketplace of religious options.
- 3 Despite a Protestant heritage, genuine faith in Estonia is rare.** Many have limited Christian belief, but very few follow Jesus in any meaningful way. Most of the population need to be re-evangelized. Young people have little to equip them against the predations of post-Christian values, since the traditional Christian confessions are weak and in decline. Pray for a new vision for evangelism and revival to reawaken the nominal majority.
- 4 Unity in the Church is a potentially powerful witness** to a cynical population. The Estonian Evangelical Alliance seeks to foster unity in diversity among many denominations through fellowship and prayer events. Pray that all of Christ's faithful would demonstrate Christ's love for one another.
- 5 Christian education and formation remain essential.** Preparing believers, both clergy and laity, for effective Christian living becomes more important as Estonia changes. Lutheran, Baptist, Methodist and Pentecostal seminaries or Bible schools all train pastors and lay Christians. Module-based correspondence courses are proving helpful in preparing believers in biblical faith and in an effective Christian life and witness.
- 6 Ministry to minorities.** Specific outreach is needed for the large Russian population, with whom reconciliation is still a point for prayer. Pray also for the gospel to be shared with the Tatar Muslims, the Jews and the growing minority groups in Estonia.
- 7 Student ministry continues to grow.** There is work in five universities with a view to expand further. Pray for outreach to the 50,000 university students; training Christians to ably share their faith is a need.
- 8 Christian media.** Radio, television and printed media are all growing ministries. Radio 7 broadcasts the gospel over four frequencies.