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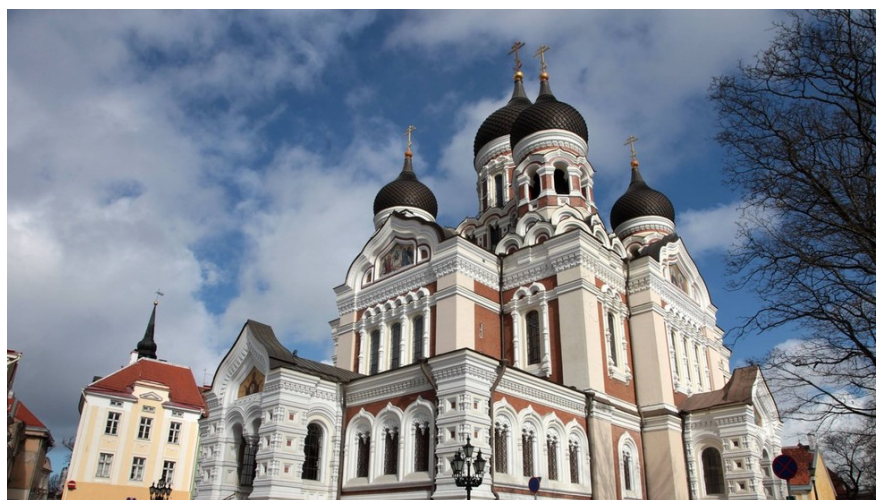
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4 Jul, 2025 16:38 / Home / Russia & FSU

EU state's president refuses to sign law banning Christian church

It is the second time Estonian President Alar Karis opposes legislation he claims is unconstitutional



FILE PHOTO: The Alexander Nevsky Cathedral is seen in Tallinn, Estonia. © Global Look Press / imago stock & people

Estonia's president, Alar Karis, has for the second time refused to support a controversial law targeting the nation's largest Christian denomination – the Estonian Christian Orthodox Church (ECOC) – which he claims violates the Baltic State's constitution.

The bill that was initially passed by lawmakers back in April is aimed at barring religious organizations from having ties with foreign bodies deemed a security threat.

It would prohibit local churches from having ties or economic relations with such bodies enshrined in foundational documents or charters. Legislation seeking to bar religious entities from being governed by foreign bodies or leaders deemed a threat was dropped after Karis opposed the bill in April. He maintains, however, that the changes were not sufficient enough.

The bill *“disproportionally limits the freedom of congregations and religion,”* Karis said on Thursday, criticizing the definition of a *“threat”* in the legislation as extremely *“vague.”*

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Tallinn has *“other effective means”* to combat what he called foreign influence and such *“extensive interference”* into people’s religious life is not needed. Lawmakers have openly admitted that they sought to exert control *“over the church teachings and religious rituals,”* he claimed.



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The president’s decision drew criticism from Estonian Interior Minister Igor Taro, who claimed the bill was aimed at protecting the country’s *“security”* and would not lead to *“a ban on Orthodox Christianity or any other religion.”*

The ECOC has repeatedly expressed its concerns over the legislation. In June, it warned that the bill interfered *“disproportionately”* with the internal life of religious associations even after its initial version was amended.

The church had previously been required to revise its charter and remove any mention of the Moscow Patriarchate, despite maintaining historic and canonical ties with the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC), following the escalation of the Ukraine conflict in 2022.

The ROC has previously condemned the draft law as discriminatory against Estonia’s 250,000 Orthodox believers, stressing that the ECOC has never engaged in politics or jeopardized public safety. Around 16% of Estonians identify as Orthodox Christians and 8% as Lutherans, according to government data.

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- Here's something that makes me smile. Vladimir Vladimirovich is a professed Christian. Since birth. His mother had him baptized as a baby. Xi Jinping brags about about what close friends he is with Putin. No daylight between their friendship. Russia was the birthplace of Marxist-Leninism. Now? Russia is officially a Christian nation. That's in the Russian constitution. China's still Communist but has over 100 million Christians. Growing by 500,000 per year. So my question is, how does Xi regard a devout Christian as his best pal? Christianity in China is Protestant. Communist Vietnam is having a huge growth in Protestantism.
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-  **Ari** 7/5/2025 at 4:11 PM ↑ 1
- Marxism, Communism, Nazism were born in Germany. You should know this.
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- Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels were Germans and they invented the Communism and Marxism. Drexler, Eckart founded the Nazi party.
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- Marx and Engels where Jews not germans !
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-  **Yemoot Toomey** 7/5/2025 at 4:34 PM ↑ 0
- The US has many religions and many religious groups. Christianity is the most popular. It works out well for the US. As I grew up there were only 2 groups of people who could NEVER be President, A Jew and a Catholic. The first Catholic elected president was killed before he could be a great president (Kennedy).
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