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Estonian Flag Act

Passed 23.03.2005
RT I 2005, 20, 126
entry into force pursuant to section 26

Amended by the following acts

Passed	Published	Entry into force
19.06.2008	RT I 2008, 35, 213	01.01.2009
18.06.2009	RT I 2009, 33, 214	02.07.2009
26.11.2009	RT I 2009, 62, 405	01.01.2010
22.04.2010	RT I 2010, 19, 101	01.06.2010
17.02.2011	RT I, 09.03.2011, 2	19.03.2011
21.05.2014	RT I, 04.06.2014, 1	14.06.2014
19.06.2014	RT I, 29.06.2014, 109	01.07.2014, official titles of ministers replaced in accordance with subsection 4 of section 1073 of the Government of the Republic Act starting with the version in force on 1 July 2014.
14.06.2017	RT I, 04.07.2017, 1	01.01.2018
13.06.2018	RT I, 22.06.2018, 6	02.07.2018

§ 1. Estonian flag

- (1) The Estonian flag is blue, black and white.
- (2) The Estonian flag is used as the ethnic and the national flag.

§ 2. Description of Estonian flag

- (1) The Estonian flag is made up of three horizontal bands of colour of equal width. The upper band is blue, the middle one is black and the lower one is white. The hoist to fly ratio of the flag is 7:11.
- (2) An image of the Estonian flag is annexed to this Act.

§ 3. Hoisting of Estonian flag on the Pikk Hermann tower

- (1) The Estonian flag is hoisted on the Pikk Hermann tower in Tallinn every day at sunrise, but not earlier than 7.00 a.m., and is lowered at sunset.
- (2) When hoisting the Estonian flag on the Pikk Hermann tower, the opening phrases of the national anthem of Estonia and of Friedrich Pacius's song *Mu isamaa, mu õnn ja rõõm* (lyrics by Johann Voldemar Jannsen) are used as a musical signature, and the musical signature used when the Estonian flag is lowered is the signature created on the basis of a fragment of Gustav Ernesaks's song *Mu isamaa on minu arm* (lyrics by Lydia Koidula). [RT I, 22.06.2018, 6 - entry into force 02.07.2018]

§ 4. Right to hoist and use the Estonian flag

- (1) Everyone has the right to hoist and use the Estonian flag in accordance with the provisions of this Act and with good practice.

(2) On Independence Day, Victory Day and the Day of the Restoration of Independence, the Estonian flag shall be hoisted on all residential buildings, commercial buildings and office buildings.

§ 5. Permanent hoisting of the Estonian flag

(1) The Estonian flag is not lowered on the buildings of the *Riigikogu*, of the Government of the Republic, of the Supreme Court, on court buildings, on the buildings of the National Audit Office, of the Chancellor of Justice, of the Government Office, of the ministries, of the Bank of Estonia, of rural municipality or city councils, of rural municipality or city administrations and at border checkpoints.

[RT I, 04.07.2017, 1 - entry into force 01.01.2018]

(2) The Estonian flag shall be hoisted on the buildings of foreign missions of Estonia, taking into consideration the laws and customs of the host country.

(3) The Estonian flag shall be hoisted on every school day on the buildings of basic schools, upper secondary schools, vocational educational institutions, institutions of vocational higher education and universities.

(4) In the territory which it administrates, the council of a local authority may designate a place where the Estonian flag is to be hoisted permanently.

(5) A permanently hoisted Estonian flag shall be illuminated at night-time.

§ 6. Flag days

(1) The flag days are:

1) 3 January – Commemoration Day of Combatants of the Estonian War of Independence;

2) 2 February – Anniversary of Tartu Peace Treaty;

3) 24 February – Independence Day;

4) 14 March – Mother Tongue Day;

4¹) 23 April – Veterans' Day;

[RT I, 04.06.2014, 1 - entry into force 14.06.2014]

5) the second Sunday of May – Mothers' Day;

6) 9 May – Europe Day;

7) 4 June – Flag Day;

8) 14 June – Day of Mourning;

9) 23 June – Victory Day;

10) 24 June – Midsummer Day;

11) 20 August – Day of Restoration of Independence;

12) 1 September – Day of Knowledge

12¹) the third Saturday of October – Finno-Ugric Day;

[RT I, 09.03.2011, 2 - entry into force 19.03.2011]

13) the second Sunday of November – Fathers' Day;

14) the day of election of the *Riigikogu*, the day of election of local councils, the day of a referendum and the day of election of the European Parliament.

(2) On flag days, government and local authority agencies and legal persons in public law shall hoist the Estonian flag.

(3) On the day of election of the *Riigikogu*, the day of election of local councils, the day of a referendum and the day of election of the European Parliament, the Estonian flag shall also be hoisted on the building of the polling station.

(4) On 16 February, the Independence Day of Lithuania, the national flag of Lithuania, and on 18 November, the day of proclamation of the Republic of Latvia, the national flag of Latvia shall be hoisted together with the Estonian flag on the building of the *Riigikogu*, the President of the Republic and the Government of the Republic.

(5) The Government of the Republic may decide that the Estonian flag is to be hoisted on a particular occasion on government agencies, local authority agencies and legal persons in public law on other days in order to celebrate an event of significant importance for the Estonian state and the Estonian people.

§ 7. Time of hoisting and lowering of flag

(1) The Estonian flag shall be hoisted at sunrise but not later than 8.00 a.m. and shall be lowered at sunset but not later than 10 p.m.

(2) The Government of the Republic may decide that, on a particular occasion, the Estonian flag is to be hoisted and lowered at other hours.

(3) The Estonian flag shall not be lowered on Midsummer Night.

§ 8. Place of hoisting the flag

The flag together with the flagstaff shall be mounted on the wall or roof of a building or shall be hoisted on a flagpole.

§ 9. Requirements for flags to be hoisted

- (1) A flag to be hoisted must be clean and undamaged.
- (2) The minimum size of the flag to be hoisted on a wall-mounted flagstaff or on a flagpole on the roof of a building shall be 105×165 centimetres.
- (3) When the Estonian flag is hoisted vertically, the blue band of the flag must be on the left side of the flag as it appears to the observer.
- (4) When the flag is hoisted on a flagpole, the length of the flagpole must be approximately six times the hoist of the flag.

§ 10. Hoisting of Estonian flag together with other flags

(1) When the Estonian flag is hoisted together with other flags, the Estonian flag shall be placed in a prominent position.

(2) From the point of view of an observer located behind the line of flags, the flag of the President of the Republic shall be placed to the right and the flag of a foreign head of state to the left of the Estonian flag.

(3) The flags of other states shall be placed after the Estonian flag in the alphabetical order of the names of those states in the French language. Only when hoisting the flags of member states of the European Union shall such flags be placed in the alphabetical order of the names of the states in their own language. The alphabetical order of the names of states in the French language and the alphabetical order of the names of the member states of the European Union in their own language shall be published as an announcement of the Secretary of State on the webpage of the Government Office.

[RT I 2010, 19, 101 - entry into force 01.06.2010]

(4) When the Estonian flag is hoisted together with the flag of another state and the flag of an international organisation and the flag of an Estonian county, city or municipality or another flag, the flag of the Estonian county, city or municipality or any other flag shall be placed to the left of the flag of the international organisation when observed from behind the line of the flags.

(5) Depending on the location of the line of flags and the number of flags, the order of the flags as prescribed in subsections 2–4 may be modified such that the Estonian flag is placed in a prominent position.

(6) Flags shall be hoisted separately, on flagstaffs or flagpoles of equal length, and at the same height with the Estonian flag. The flags to be hoisted must have equal hoist size.

§ 11. Hoisting of Estonian flag and the flag of the European Union

(1) On the Day of Europe and on the day of election of the European Parliament, the flag of the European Union is hoisted together with the Estonian flag on the buildings of the *Riigikogu*, the Government of the Republic, the Supreme Court, the National Audit Office, the Chancellor of Justice, of the ministries, of the Bank of Estonia, of the Headquarters of the Defence Forces, of rural municipality or city councils and rural municipality or city administrations, or on flagpoles located beside these buildings.

[RT I, 04.07.2017, 1 - entry into force 01.01.2018]

(2) The Government of the Republic shall designate the border checkpoints at which the flag of the European Union shall be hoisted permanently together with the Estonian flag.

(3) The minister responsible for the area gives instructions regarding the hoisting of the flag of the European Union on the buildings of foreign missions of Estonia. The flag of the European Union is hoisted together with the national flag of Estonia.

[RT I, 29.06.2014, 109 - entry into force 01.07.2014, in accordance with subsection 4 of section 1073 of the Government of the Republic Act as of 1 July 2014 the words ‘Minister of Foreign Affairs’ are replaced with the words ‘minister responsible for the area’.]

§ 12. Hoisting of Estonian flag as a mourning flag

- (1) On days of national mourning, the Estonian flag shall be hoisted as a mourning flag.

(2) When the Estonian flag is hoisted as a mourning flag, a black ribbon shall be attached to the upper end of the flagstaff or the flag shall be hoisted at half-mast.

§ 13. Placing Estonian flag on vehicles of government officials

In conformity with the requirements of diplomatic protocol, the Estonian flag may be placed on a vehicle used by the head of a foreign mission of Estonia or by the representative of a foreign state during his or her visit to Estonia, and on a vehicle used in the performance of their official duties by the President of the *Riigikogu*, the Prime Minister or another official who represents the Republic of Estonia.

§ 14. Hoisting and use of Estonian flag on ships

The hoisting and use of the Estonian flag on board ships is governed by the Ensign Law and Registers of Ships Act and by good international maritime customs and practice.

§ 15. Use of Estonian flag and its sequence of colours

- (1) The Estonian flag or the sequence of its colours shall be used in accordance with good practice.
- (2) One side of the flag of a unit of the Defence Forces may be in the sequence of colours of the Estonian flag.
- (3) Everyone has the right to use a streamer which has the sequence of colours of the Estonian flag. A streamer is not a substitute for the Estonian flag.
- (4) An indication which contains the image of the Estonian flag shall not be used as a trade mark or service mark.
- (5) The flag of a natural person or legal person (with the exception of the flag of the Estonian Students' Society) may not be so similar to the Estonian flag that the two are likely to be confused.
- (6) The Government Office shall provide explanations regarding the procedure for the use of the Estonian flag and of its sequence of colours and regarding the observance of good practice.
- (7) The Government Office is entitled to draw attention to the importance of compliance with the procedure for the use of the Estonian flag and its sequence of colours and with the observance of good practice.

§ 16. Destruction of flags which have become unusable

A flag which has become unusable shall be destroyed in a dignified manner.

§ 17. Flag of the President of the Republic

- (1) The flag of the President of the Republic is an Estonian flag which bears the greater national coat of arms in the centre on both its sides. The lions on the national coat of arms on both sides of the flag face towards the flagstaff. An image of the flag of the President of the Republic is annexed to this Act.
- (2) The flag of the President of the Republic shall be hoisted on the President's residence and vehicle and, if necessary, at the place where a ceremony in which the President participates is taking place, for the duration of participation of the President in the ceremony.

§ 18. Estonian flag bearing a specific emblem

- (1) The minister responsible for the area, as well as the police, border guard and customs institutions and post offices are entitled to use an Estonian flag bearing a specific emblem.
[RT I, 29.06.2014, 109 - entry into force 01.07.2014, in accordance with subsection 4 of section 1073 of the Government of the Republic Act, the words 'Minister of Defence' are replaced with the words 'minister responsible for the area'.]
- (2) A description of an Estonian flag bearing a specific emblem shall be established by a regulation of the Government of the Republic.

§ 19. Flag of the Estonian Navy

- (1) The flag of the Estonian navy is in the sequence of colours of the Estonian flag and bears the lesser national coat of arms on both its sides. The lions on the national coat of arms on both sides of the flag face towards the flagstaff.
- (2) A description of the flag of the Estonian navy shall be established by a regulation of the Government of the Republic.

§ 20.–§ 25.[Omitted from this version]

§ 26. Entry into force of this Act

(1) This Act enters into force on 1 January 2006.

(2) Section 5(3) of this Act enters into force on 1 September 2005.

Annex 1 Estonian flag

Estonian flag

The blue colour tone is 285 C as specified in the international Pantone matching system

In the colours of the triad:	C 91%	CYAN (blue)
	M 43%	MAGENTA (purple)
	Y 0%	YELLOW (yellow)
	B 0%	BLACK (black)

Annex 2 Flag of the President of the Republic of Estonia

The blue colour tone is 285 C as specified in the international Pantone matching system

In the colours of the triad:	C 91%	CYAN (blue)
	M 43%	MAGENTA (purple)
	Y 0%	YELLOW (yellow)
	B 0%	BLACK (black)