

## Internet Resources for BELARUS



### General Information

Belarus Official Portal: [www.belarus.by](http://www.belarus.by)

Travel Information: [www.belarusguide.com](http://www.belarusguide.com)

Belarusian Telegraph Agency: [www.belta.by/en](http://www.belta.by/en)

Charter 97 On-line New: <http://www.charter97.org/en/news/>

Belarus from the Belarusians point of view: [www.belarusinside.org](http://www.belarusinside.org)

Belarusian Research Server: [www.catalog.akavita.by](http://www.catalog.akavita.by)

Maps of Belarus: [www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/belarus.html](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/belarus.html)

### Youth in Action Programme related links

EAC Executive Agency: [http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth/index\\_en.php](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth/index_en.php)

SALTO Resource Centres Network: [www.salto-youth.net](http://www.salto-youth.net)

European Youth Portal: [www.europa.eu/youth](http://www.europa.eu/youth)

Eurodesk: [www.eurodesk.eu](http://www.eurodesk.eu)

EVS Volunteers Blogs: [www.myevs.net](http://www.myevs.net)

### SALTO EECA Support Service ([www.salto-eeca.eu](http://www.salto-eeca.eu))

- Contact List of Organizations,
- Forum (Partner Finding, Exchange of Experience, Reports and Photos from Events, Documents and Articles download and more),
- Blogs and Chat Room for EVS Volunteers.

...moreover

Regional Multipliers Network: [www.salto-youth.net/eecamultipliers](http://www.salto-youth.net/eecamultipliers)

Manual on EECA Countries: [www.salto-youth.net/eecamanual](http://www.salto-youth.net/eecamanual)

## Belarus

Belarus is a landlocked nation-state in Eastern Europe, which borders Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania, and Latvia. Its capital city is Minsk, and other important cities include Brest, Grodno, Gomel, Mogilev and Vitebsk.



Throughout much of history, the area which is now known as Belarus was part of various countries including Lithuania, Poland and the Russian Empire. Eventually, in 1922, Belarus became a republic in the Soviet Union as the Byelorussian SSR.

In 1986, a section of Belarus was affected by the fallout from the Chernobyl power plant accident in neighboring Ukraine. When Soviet premier Mikhail Gorbachev began pushing through his Perestroika plan, the Belarusian people delivered a petition to him in December of 1986 explaining the loss of their culture. This event has been coined by historians as the "cultural Chernobyl". In June of 1988, mass graves were discovered at the city of Kurapaty. The graves allegedly contained about 250,000 of Stalin's victims. Some contend that this discovery was proof that the Soviet government was trying to erase the Belarusian people and caused some to seek independence. The republic officially declared its sovereignty on 27 August 1990, and following the collapse of the Soviet Union, declared independence as the Republic of Belarus on 25 August 1991.

In a referendum in 2004, a constitutional amendment lifted the restriction on the number of



Flag



Coat of Arms

terms for president. Alexander Lukashenko claimed about 76% voter support for this referendum while results were denounced by opponents as fraudulent.

In October 2005 Lukashenko confirmed that he's going to run for his third turn in 2006, "unless people will tell me: Lukashenko, you must stop." The prospective candidate from the united opposition that was a main rival of Lukashenko was Alexander Milinkevich. The President won a landslide victory, over 80% of the vote. It was however deemed unfair by the OSCE.

Languages commonly spoken in Belarus are Russian and Belarusian, which are both official languages.

(source: *Wikipedia*)

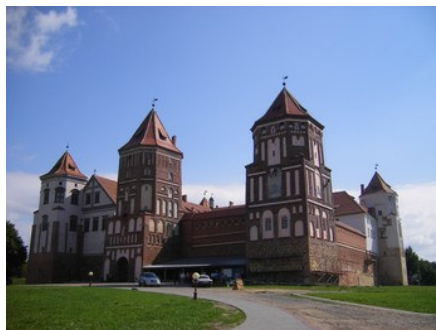
### Visas and registration

Citizens of EECA countries don't need visas. All EU citizens need to obtain visa to enter Belarus. Cost of travel/visitor visa (up to 90 days) vary from 6 to 140 USD and depends on the nationality of the traveller and time of stay in the country. It can be issued in Belarusian consulates and at Minsk airport. It is not possible to obtain visa at the land border-crossings. Additional photos and official invitation from Belarusian citizen or tourist voucher from hotel or travel agency are necessary. Passport must be valid for at least 6 months.

All travellers should have valid medical/health insurance valid in Belarus. It can be bought at the border-crossings. Travellers should have 14 USD per each day of planned stay in the country. Bringing to Belarus more than 3000 USD requires official declaration.

Foreigners must register within a period of 3 working days with local passport and visa office (OWIR) and have registration put in their passport. If staying in hotel, the registration should be organized automatically. Tourist visas cannot be prolonged. Year-long visas require official invitation, which confirms institutional support and purpose of stay in Belarus, it costs: 300 USD.

[www.mfa.gov.by](http://www.mfa.gov.by), 2007



### Basic information

**Full country name:**  
Republic of Belarus

**Government type:**  
Republic

**Capital:** Minsk

**Independence:** 25 August 1991 (from Soviet Union)

**National holiday:**  
Independence Day, 3 July (1944); note - 3 July 1944 was the date Minsk was liberated from German troops,

**Area:** 207,600 sq km

**Administrative divisions:** 6 provinces (voblastsi, singular - voblasts')

**Population:** 9,648,533 (July 2009 est.)

**Ethnic groups:** Belarusian 81.2%, Russian 11.4%, Polish 3.9%, Ukrainian 2.4%, other 1.1% (1999 census)

**Language:** Belarusian and Russian - both are official

**Religion:** Eastern Orthodox 80%, other (including Roman Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and Muslim) 20% (1997 est.)

(source: *The World Factbook*)

