

## = National emblem of Belarus =

The national emblem of Belarus , which replaced the historic Pahonia arms in a 1995 referendum , features a ribbon in the colours of the national flag , a map of Belarus , wheat ears and a red star . It is sometimes referred to as the coat of arms of Belarus , although this is incorrect due to the lack of several heraldic elements . The emblem is an allusion to one that was used by the Byelorussian SSR , designed by Ivan Dubasov in 1950 , with the biggest change being a replacement of the hammer and sickle with an outline map of Belarus . Emblems reminiscent of the times of the Soviet Union are also used in Macedonia , Tajikistan , Uzbekistan and the region of Transnistria .

The Belarusian name is *Дзяржаўны герб Рэспублікі Беларусь* , *Dziaržaŭny herb Respubliki Biełaruś* , and the name in Russian is *Государственный герб Республики Беларусь* .

In 2012 the emblem has been modified .

## = = Description = =

### = = = Design = = =

In the center of the emblem sits a green outline of Belarus , superimposed over the rays of a golden sun . The sun is partially covered by a globe , with the landmass ( part of Eurasia ) in purple and waters in blue . Lining the left and right sides of the emblem are stalks of wheat , superimposed with flowers . Clovers adorn the left wheat stalks ; flax flowers adorn the right . Wrapped around the wheat stalks is a red and green ribbon bearing the colours of the flag of Belarus ; the ribbon meets at the base of the emblem , where the name Republic of Belarus ( *Рэспубліка Беларусь* ) is inscribed in gold in the Belarusian language . At the top of the emblem there is a five @-@ pointed red star .

### = = = Symbolism = = =

The elements that comprise the state emblem are not tied to any " official " symbolism . The design of the emblem of the Byelorussian SSR was used as the basis for the current Belarusian emblem ; the primary difference between the two is that the Byelorussian SSR emblem contains more references to Communism , such as the Communist symbol of hammer and sickle and pure red ribbon , which the modern emblem does not , replaced with the outline and the flag of Belarus , respectively , however it still retains the communist red star , the globe and the wheat bundles , which are also typical of Soviet emblems and still is very Soviet in nature .

### = = = Legislation = = =

The current law regulating the design and use of the Belarusian emblem was passed on July 5 , 2004 . Article 9 of Chapter 3 of Law No. 301 @-@ 3 begins by describing the official drawing of the Belarusian arms and regulates on its proper design . Officially , the arms can be drawn in full colour , monochrome or using two colors . Article 10 states that the national emblem must be displayed at specified locations on a continual basis , such as the residences of the Belarusian leader , the chamber of the National Assembly and at governmental offices of national and regional levels . The emblem can also be used on documents issued by the government , including money , passports and official letterheads .

The law also restricts the use of the emblem in other contexts ? e.g. cities , towns or oblasts may not adopt a coat of arms or emblem using the national emblem either completely or in part . Furthermore , organizations not listed in the Law on State Symbols may only use the emblem by permission . The emblem can be used by both foreigners and citizens of Belarus , as long as the symbol is displayed with respect , although citizens may not use the state emblem on letterheads or

business cards if they are not agents of the government .

In addition to standard usages listed in the law , the emblem has been used in various other circumstances . The emblem is displayed , along with the national flag , at the beginning and the end of a video clip with the Belarusian anthem My Belarusy , regularly played on Belarusian television . Another use of the emblem is on ballot boxes and campaign mailings used during national and local elections . The emblem also appears on Belarus 's border posts .

= = History = =

= = = Pahonia = = =

The Pahonia was used as an official coat of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania since 1366 after being first used as the personal arms of Algirdas , the Grand Duke of Lithuania . The arms continued to be used until Grand Duchy of Lithuania were annexed by the Russian Empire in 1795 , though the arms was incorporated into the Imperial coat of arms . The idea of return to the historic national symbol was pursued by Belarusian poet Maksim Bahdanovi? in his poem " Pahonia " . The arms was again used in 1918 when the short @-@ lived Belarusian People 's Republic used the Pahonia as part of their emblem .

More recently , the Pahonia was the official coat of arms starting in 1991 , when Belarus declared itself independent of the Soviet Union . It was replaced by the current emblem following a controversial referendum held in 1995 .

Since it was dropped as the official emblem of Belarus , opposition groups such as the Belarusian People 's Front have used the Pahonia as part of their own party symbols or used them as a form of protest against Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko .

= = = Emblem of the Byelorussian SSR = = =

From 1920 until the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 , the Byelorussian SSR used an emblem instead of a coat of arms . The first emblem used by Soviet Byelorussia was adopted in 1919 and is similar to the contemporary insignia of the Russian and Ukrainian republics . The central part of the emblem is a stylized red shield , showing a golden sun rising from the base . Above the sun is a crossed golden hammer and sickle , symbolizing unity between workers and peasants . Above the hammer and sickle , the letters B.S.S.R. are shown in black , denoting the name of the republic . B.S.S.R. ( BSSR ) is an abbreviation for the full name of the republic ; " Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic " , the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic . The shield is framed by ears of wheat meeting at the its base and featuring a red ribbon inscribed in black with the state motto of the Soviet Union , " Workers of the World , Unite ! " The text is written in the Belarusian language .

In 1937 , this emblem was replaced by a new one , removing the shield and including more text . The right side of the emblem features oak leaves and the left features wheat ears with clovers placed on top . In the center of the emblem , a sun is rising behind a profile of Earth . A hammer , sickle and red star appears over the sun . Around the ears of wheat and leaves of oak is a red ribbon , featuring the phrase " Workers of the World , Unite ! " written ( from left to right ) in Belarusian , Yiddish , Polish and Russian . The initials B.S.S.R. are shown at its base denoting the name of the republic . Ten years before in 1927 , the arms was the same except for the wording on the bottom ribbon . Instead of the letters reading B.S.S.R. , the letters read " B.S.S.R. " , which stood for the Soviet Socialist Republic of Byelorussia .

This emblem was in turn replaced by a new one in 1950 . The central feature of this symbol is a crossed hammer and sickle , a universal Communist symbol symbolizing the unity of workers and peasants . Below this symbol , a sun is shown rising behind a globe . The insignia is framed by ears of wheat , each ear ending in flowers ; clover on the left and flax on the right . A red ribbon is wrapped around the ears of wheat , reminiscent of the red flag used by the Communist movement .

The base of the emblem shows the letters БССР . The ribbon features the phrase Workers of the World , Unite ! The left side inscribed in Belarusian , the right side in Russian . The red star of Communism is featured above the hammer and sickle . The 1950 version was designed by Ivan Dubasov , a People 's Artist of the USSR . Article 119 of the Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR defines the design of the emblem .

= = = 1995 referendum = = =

On May 14 , 1995 , a referendum was conducted in all regions of Belarus . Out of four questions , one was the following : " Do you support the introduction of the new national symbols ? " With a voter turnout of 64 % , the new state symbols were approved by a ratio of 3 : 1 ( 75 % to 24 % ) . The way the referendum was carried out was heavily criticized by the opposition , including the exact wording of the question about the national insignia . Supporters of the Pahonia also criticize that the Pahonia and the former white-red-white flag were compared to ones , used by collaboration forces , in propaganda that was published during the run-up to the vote . The comparison was made due to the white , red , white flag and Pahonia being used on the patches and symbols of the Belarusian Central Rada , the Belarusian government under the control of Nazi Germany . Alexander Lukashenko claimed the selection of the Soviet-inspired symbols as a victory , especially to his Great Patriotic War veteran base , by saying " we have returned to you the flag of the country for which you fought . We have returned to you both memory and a sense of human pride . "