

## = National symbols of Belarus =

Upon the independence of Belarus from the Soviet Union , the country resurrected national symbols that were used before the Soviet era . These included a flag of red and white stripes and a coat of arms consisting of a charging knight on horseback . These national symbols were replaced by Soviet @-@ era symbols in a disputed 1995 vote . Those two symbols , along with the national anthem , are the constitutionally defined national symbols of Belarus .

## = = Law = =

In the 1994 Constitution of Belarus , Article 19 lists the official symbols of the country . Article 19 reads :

Each national symbol is further defined by their respective laws . Uses of the national symbols are covered in the relevant law of each symbol .

## = = National flag = =

The national flag has been in use since June 7 , 1995 , one of two symbols adopted in the 1995 referendum . The main elements of the flag is a red and green bicolor , then decorated with an ornament pattern at the hoist position . The current flag is a modification of the 1951 flag used while the country was a republic of the Soviet Union . In the Soviet version , a hammer and sickle was placed near the top @-@ hoist corner and the ornament colors were inverted . Several flags used by government officials and agencies were based on the national flag .

Despite being replaced , the former flag of Belarus is used by those who oppose current Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko . The former flag consisted of a white background with a red horizontal stripe in the middle . It was used by the Belarusian National Republic and immediately after independence from the Soviet Union in 1991 .

## = = National emblem = =

The other national symbol that was chosen in the 1995 referendum was the national emblem . The elements of the emblem include a ribbon in the colors of the national flag , a map of Belarus , wheat ears and a red star . At the base of the ribbon , it says the country 's official name in the Belarusian language . The emblem is an allusion to the one used by the Byelorussian SSR , designed by Ivan Dubasov in 1950 . In the Soviet version , a hammer and sickle replaced the map of Belarus and the ribbon was all red . On the left and right ribbons , the Soviet motto Workers of the world , unite ! appeared in the Belarusian and Russian languages .

The national emblem that was used at the time of the BNR and post @-@ Soviet independence was called the Pahonia ( the chase ) . On the base of a red shield , an armored white knight is mounted on a silver horse , with a sword drawn and charging to the left . On the shield of the knight , a golden Patriarchal cross is displayed . A variant of the Pahonia is used as the coat of arms of Lithuania .

## = = National anthem = =

The only symbol that hasn 't changed over during independence is the national anthem . Adopted during the Soviet era , " My Belarusy " was used provisionally until 2002 . The only change that occurred was dropping the Soviet @-@ era lyrics and choosing just to use the music , composed by Nyestar Sakalowski . On July 2 , 2002 , President Lukashenko issued a decree adopting new lyrics to the anthem , written by Uladzimir Karyzny . Klimkovich also wrote the lyrics to the Anthem of the Byelorussian SSR . Not only the lyrics were chosen , a protocol guide related to the national anthem was released by Lukashenko . The reason that was given for keeping Sakalowski 's music was to keep the historic traditions of the country . While references to Lenin , the Communist Party of the

Soviet Union and the idea of Soviet brotherhood were dropped , the general idea of a " friendship of peoples " still remains present . According to the Belarusian Government , once the national anthem was adopted , the long process to adopt the three national symbols of Belarus was completed .

= = Historic symbols = =

= = Unofficial symbols = =

Other than the national flag , anthem and emblem , Belarus has several unofficial symbols . The Cross of Saint Euphrosyne , a 12th @-@ century relic which disappeared during the Second World War is considered a spiritual symbol of Belarus . The European bison , commonly called the wisent , is seen as a symbol of Belarus and the Belavezha Forest . It is also featured on the symbols of Brest Oblast . An other widely known mascots of Belarus are stork and cornflower .