

# Missionary Atlas Project

## Central & Eastern Europe

### Country Snapshot

**Country Name:** Belarus

**Population:** 10,300,483 (July 2005 est.)

**Government Type:** Republic in name but is actually a dictatorship

**Capitol:** Minsk

#### Geography:

- Located in Eastern Europe, to the east of Poland
- Shares borders with Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, and Ukraine
- Cold winters, cool and wet summers
- Terrain is generally flat with thick forests and marshlands
- 11,000 lakes
- Landlocked
- Landmass roughly the size of the state of Kansas

#### Picture of Flag:



**Official Language(s):** Belarusian and Russian (90% of the population speaks Russian)

#### People Groups:

Belarusian (81.2%)  
Russian (11.4%)  
Polish (3.9%)  
Ukrainian (2.4%)

**Major Religion:** Eastern Orthodox (80%)

**All Other Religions:** Protestant, Roman Catholic, Muslim and Jewish (20%)

(Statistics taken from <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5371.htm> and [http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook\\_old/print/bo.html](http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook_old/print/bo.html))

# Belarus

## Demographics

As of July 2005 the population of Belarus was estimated at 10,300,483 with a negative population growth rate of -0.09%.

Native Belarusians make up 81.2% of the population. There is a large Russian population in Belarus (11.4%) as well as sizeable Polish (3.9%) and Ukrainian (2.4%) minorities.

The large majority of the population lives in urban areas (71.5%). Twenty four percent (24%) of that urban population lives in Minsk, the capitol of Belarus and the nation's largest city.

The median age of the population of Belarus is 37 years old. The population is steadily growing older. By the year 2050 the majority of the country's population will be over the age of 50. Life expectancy is currently 68.72 years.

## Language

Belarus has two official languages, Russian and Belarusian. Belarusian was made the official language in 1990 and Russian became an official state language in 1995. The majority (90%) of the population speaks Russian as their primary language. It would be impossible to function in Belarusian culture if you only spoke Belarusian as it is typically only spoken in rural areas.

For those who still speak Belarusian there are four basic regional dialects, three of which are mutually understandable. These three are known as southwestern, northwestern, and central Belarusian. The differences between these dialects are very small. The fourth, more distinct dialect is spoken by a people called the *Poleshchuk* who live the marshland areas of southwestern Belarus/northwestern Ukraine. This group of people has lived in isolation because of the low economic value of the area where they live. Their dialect is heavily influenced by Ukrainian elements.

## Society/Culture

The people of Belarus remain deeply influenced by the Soviet period. They tend to idealize the past and still hold Soviet heroes in high regard. The Belarusian government is still run by ex-Soviet leaders.

The government, although claiming to be a republic, is very repressive of the civil rights of its population. The people of Belarus operate under the illusion of freedom but are not really free.

Daily life for the people of Belarus is far from easy. Their standard of living plummeted after the fall of Communism. Employees are paid erratically. Their wages remain fixed while the price of food continues to rise, remaining out of the reach of the many Belarusians.

Over half of the population lives below the poverty line and alcoholism is on the rise. Urban residents typically live in run-down Communist block apartment buildings that haven't been updated since their construction in the 1950s.

The healthcare system is state-operated and sub-par. Hospitals lack the most basic supplies and equipment. Diphtheria and Tuberculosis are common among Belarusians and the infant mortality rate of Belarus is twice that of the United States (13.37 deaths/1,000 live births).

The typical Belarusian diet consists of bread, potatoes, cabbage, and pork. They typically eat small amounts in the morning and larger meals at lunch and dinner.

Many aspects of Belarusian culture have been lost over the years due to Russification. Belarus generally lacks a sense of national identity. The Belarusian government is attempting to revive and establish Belarusian culture. President *Lukashenko* has introduced laws that require national TV and radio stations to have a daily showcase of Belarusian talent. The Belarusian government also sponsors numerous cultural festivals each year, including the Nation Festival of the Belarusian Song and Poetry.

Belarus celebrates many holidays each year:

January 1:	New Year's Day
January 7:	Orthodox Christmas
January 14:	Orthodox New Year
March 15:	Constitution Day (adopted in 1994, the year Belarus ratified its first post-Soviet constitution)
May 1:	International Labor Day
May 9:	Victory Day (celebrates victory over Germany in World War II)
July 3:	Independence Day
Dec 25:	Catholic Christmas

Catholic and Orthodox Easters are also celebrated each year but the dates are moveable.

## Government

Belarus is a Republic with Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches. The Executive branch is composed of the president and the prime minister and their staffs. The president is the head of state and he appoints the prime minister (with the approval of the House of Representatives) who is the head of government. Current president Alexander *Lukashenko* amended Belarus' 1994 constitution in 1996 to expand the

power of the Executive branch, specifically the office of the president. These amendments gave the president the power to dissolve the legislature if he so chooses and extended the presidential term of office from 5 to 7 years. Also, in 2004 an amendment to the constitution was approved that did away with the two consecutive term limit for the presidency.

The Legislative branch is a bicameral legislature known as the National Assembly. It consists of the House of Representatives and the Council of the Republic. The 110-seat House of Representatives is directly elected by the people. The Council of the Republic has 64 seats, 56 of which are appointed by regional council and 8 of which are directly appointed by the president. Members of both houses of the National Assembly are elected to 4-year terms.

The Judicial branch consists of three courts: the Supreme Court, the Economic Court, and the Constitutional Court. The Constitutional Court is the guardian of the constitution and all its decisions are final; there are no appeals. This court reviews the decisions of the other two high courts, as well as the constitutionality of presidential edicts. The president appoints 6 of the Constitutional Court's 12 judges, including the chairman. The Council of the Republic chooses the other 6 members. The president appoints all of the judges who fill the seats of the Supreme Court and the Economic Court.

Belarus is divided into six administrative provinces (*oblasts*), an organizational system inherited from the Soviet period. The six *oblasts* are named for their largest cities: *Minsk, Hrodna, Homyel, Mahilyow, Vitebsk, and Brest*. Each of these *oblasts* are then divided into *rayony*, smaller administrative districts. The residents of each *rayon* elect a local council. This council serves alongside local executive authorities that are appointed by higher executive authorities. Each *oblast* also has its own legislative council, also elected by the residents of that *oblast*, as well as an executive authority that is appointed by the president.

By Western standards, Belarus is Europe's last dictatorship. President *Lukashenko* has admitted to having an "authoritarian ruling style" and he uses this to run his country. Belarus has continually been criticized for its voting irregularities, casting doubts on the democracy of Belarus' elections. There have been widespread accusations of vote fraud, especially surrounding the 1996 constitutional referendum election.

The government of Belarus greatly restricts the human rights of its citizens. Belarus has been a subject of the United Nation's Human Rights Watch for years but it continues to suppress its citizen's freedom of speech, press, and assembly. The government maintains tight control of Belarus' print, radio, and television industries. To limit the expression of differing points of view the government monopolizes the television broadcasting industry. It also has been known to suspend the publication of periodicals associated with independent or opposition political parties. All of Belarus' internet providers are controlled by the state. Both of Belarus' constitutions (1994 and 1996) provide for freedom of assembly with a few restrictions. In order to peacefully protest or hold a demonstration of any kind, protestors must submit an application to the local

government at least 15 days prior to the expected date of demonstration. Local officials will advise the applicants whether they are free to protest or not at least 5 days before the event. Police officers often arrest, harass, and/or physically harm participants of unsanctioned demonstrations.

The 1994 constitution also guarantees religions freedom. Freedom of religion is true in Belarus only in theory, not in practice. The 1996 constitution also affirms that all religious denominations are equal in the sight of the law. However, the 1996 constitution also states that cooperation between the state and religions organizations "is regulated with regard for their influence on the formation of spiritual, cultural, and country traditions of the Belarusian people." Amid protests from various human rights organizations and independent Orthodox religious groups, the Belarusian parliament approved a new law that increases government restrictions on religious practices on October 22, 2002.

Belarusians are further restricted in their travel. The constitution states that Belarusian citizens are free to move about the country and live and work where they choose. Once again, these rights are sometimes only true in theory. The government sometimes issues domestic passports to all adults. This document is required in order to travel on all public transportation, obtain permanent housing, and rent hotel rooms. This is the traveler's primary source of identification.

Finally, the constitution provides for workers to organize themselves into independent trade unions. However, in 2003, the government began restricting the formation of these unions. Also, in March 2004 the government began requiring all state employees to sign short-term work contracts. Most of these contracts expire annually. Therefore, most government employees (around 80% of Belarusian workers are employed by the state) risk losing their job on a yearly basis.

## **Economy**

So far, Belarus has not made a successful conversion to free-market economy. The government is still the economy's the central controlling force. Eighty percent (80%) of all industry remains in state hands. Its economy could be classified as one of the world's few state-capitalistic national economies. With the introduction of free market concepts in 1990 the economy slowed considerably. It started growing again in 1996. By 2001 production had returned to its pre-1990 levels and was continuing to rise. Unlike many former Soviet Republics, Belarus has never come close to economic collapse. Belarus is fairly stable economically.

In 2005 the GDP was an estimated \$77.77 billion, approximately \$7,600 per citizen. However, the private sector's GDP remains dramatically lower than the state-owned sector making it the lowest in all of Eastern Europe. In the last 10 years, the average monthly income per person has grown from \$20 to \$225. According to the Belarusian government, unemployment was at 2% in 2005, as would be expected from an economy that still closely resembles socialism. However, some experts suspect that

Belarus actually has a higher unemployment rate than was reported. Also, underemployment continues to be a problem in Belarus as well as employees being irregularly paid.

Inflation remains high (10%) due, among other things, to the practice of printing money to finance real sector growth as well as pay employees and their pensions. Over 40% of enterprises (as well as a majority of communal farms) operate at a loss, a fact that has been true since 2002.

The national currency of Belarus is the Belarusian ruble (BYR). The BYR has been in use since Belarus left the Soviet Union. However, in 1994 the governments of Belarus and Russia announced plans for an eventual economic merger, a merger that the Russian government has continued to delay due to Belarus' continued economic problems. The merge is now tentatively expected for January 1, 2008, when Belarusians will begin using the Russian ruble. Along with Belarus' union with Russia, Belarus is also a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the European Asian Economic Community.

### **Literacy**

Belarus has a reported literacy rate of 99.6%.

### **Land/Geography**

Belarus is a small landlocked country in Eastern Europe, sandwiched between Poland and Russia. In size it is roughly the size of the state of Kansas. Belarus is generally flat with large portions of forest and marshland. There are some 11,000 lakes in Belarus, most of which are small. Thirty four percent (34%) of Belarus is covered by forest.

Winters in Belarus are very harsh. The average temperature in January ranges from -8 degrees C to -2 degrees C. Summers are cool and rainy with average temperatures only reaching 15 or 20 degrees C.

### **History**

Belarus was settled by Slavic peoples between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries. By the 9<sup>th</sup> century Belarus was developing its own distinct cultural features. Belarus was badly affected by a Mongol invasion in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and within a short period, parts of the country were absorbed into the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (a Grand Duchy is a form of government in which a grand duke or duchess serves as the head of state).

The Grand Duchy continued to expand during the next two centuries, despite continuing invasions from Mongols, Turks, and Teutonic knights. By the 15<sup>th</sup> century the Grand Duchy covered a large area of Eastern Europe, reaching from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea.

In 1386 the Grand Duchy was joined with the kingdom of Poland to form a monarchy ruled by King of Poland *Grand Duke Jogaila*. This union opened the door for the creation of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1569. On May 3, 1791 the Commonwealth ratified Europe's first national constitution. The constitution abolished all state subdivisions and merged everything into the Kingdom of Poland.

The kingdom was short-lived, however. It was divided in 1795 and various parts were annexed to Russia, Prussia, and Austria. From that point on Belarusian territories were part of the Russian Empire until being invaded by Germany during World War I. The Belarusian People's Republic was formed on March 25, 1918 when Belarus declared independence. Soon after, however, Belarus was absorbed into the USSR, becoming the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic (BSSR) in 1919, later merging with eastern Lithuania to become part of the Lithuanian-Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.

When the Polish-Soviet war ended in 1922 part of Belarus' land was split between Poland and the BSSR. In 1922 the BSSR became a founding member of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The Soviet Union regained all Polish-held Belarusian land in 1939 as part of the *Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact*.

Belarus was captured soon after Nazi Germany invaded the USSR in 1941 and remained under German control until 1944. The people of Belarus suffered greatly during the Nazi occupation. So many Belarusians were killed that the country did not reach its pre-war population again until 1971. Some segments of Belarus' population (i.e. the Jewish population) never recovered. After World War II Belarus was one of the 51 signatories to the founding of the United Nations.

Post-war reconstruction in Belarus established it as an industrial center for the USSR. Large numbers of Russians moved to Belarus because of the availability of jobs.

Joseph Stalin instituted *Russification* programs in Belarus to "protect" it from Western influences. His programs included sending Russians to Belarus to occupy key positions in government. He also limited the use of the Belarusian language and select cultural practices. Stalin's successor, Nikita Khrushchev, continued the Russification of Belarus, telling people that "The sooner we all start speaking Russian, the faster we shall build communism."<sup>1</sup>

The mid-late 1980s were a time of great upheaval in Belarus. The 1986 Chernobyl disaster in Belarus' neighbor country, Ukraine, had a profound effect on the country. Seventy percent of the nuclear fallout from the accident landed on Belarusian soil.

Later in 1986 the people of Belarus delivered a petition to Soviet premier Mikhail Gorbachev in response to his Perestroika plan. The petition expressed their concerns over losing their culture. Historians have referred to this event as the "*cultural Chernobyl*".<sup>2</sup>

In June 1998 a startling discovery was made in Kurapaty, a wooded area near Minsk. Mass graves allegedly containing the bodies of some 250,000 of Stalin's victims were uncovered. Stalin has been accused of executing thousands of Belarus' intelligentsia (a social class of people engaged in complex mental and creative labor directed to the development and dissemination of culture) as well as members of various minority groups from 1937-1941. This was not an isolated incident. A similar grave was discovered in Poland's Katyn forest in 1990. The discovery of the mass grave added fuel to the already burning fire of the pro-democracy, pro-independence movement in Belarus.

Belarus declared sovereignty on July 27, 1990 and the *Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic* formally became the *Republic of Belarus* on August 25, 1991. *Stanislav Shushkevich* became Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Belarus around that time and, soon after Belarus declared independence, *Shushkevich* met with Russian and Ukrainian leaders to formally dissolve the Soviet Union.

*Alexander Lukashenko* became president of Belarus in 1994. Although Belarus is technically a republic, *Lukashenko* is considered a dictator by Western standards and rules the country accordingly.

### **Christian History**

The first known settlers most likely settled in Belarus sometime between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries. From what we know of Belarus' Christians history, however, Belarus didn't become a Christian nation until the late 10<sup>th</sup> century. Little can be known for sure about the religious beliefs of the people before that time. What we do know comes from excavation of tombs scattered across northern Europe. It appears that, in its earliest beginnings, Belarus was a tribal society. Each community would have been run by a chief and their belief system would have been pagan with numerous gods in their pantheon.

As Belarus began to associate more with Russia, the religious climate began to shift. Belarus converted to Christianity (specifically Orthodoxy) in 988. The *Belorussian Orthodox Church* was founded in 1291 under Greek jurisdiction but later fell under the Russian Patriarchate in Moscow.

The *Belarusian Orthodox Church* struggled to survive during the 200 years that Belarus was under the rule of the Polish/Lithuanian Empire. Many converted to Roman Catholicism but most returned to the Orthodox Church when Belarus rejoined the Russian Empire in 1790. Historically the *Uniate Catholic Church* has been much more of a threat to Belarusian Orthodoxy than Roman Catholicism.

The *Uniate Catholic Church* was founded in 1596. This new church recognized the authority of the Pope and accepted Catholic doctrine but retained their Orthodox rituals and liturgical language. By 1839 the *Uniate Church* claimed some 75% of the



Belarusian population but it was abolished by Tsar Nicholas in 1840 and many were forced to return to Orthodoxy.

Under two Nazi occupations and then under Communism, the *Belarusian Orthodox Church* was the only church allowed to function. It still suffered. After suffering a great loss of numbers during Communist rule, the Belarusian Orthodox Church regained its autonomy in 1990. The church began to grow immediately and by 1995 more than 46% of the population of Belarus considered themselves Orthodox.

The Orthodox Church is the only church that enjoys any success in Belarus today. Less than 2% of Belarusians are Protestant and a large portion of the population still claims to be atheist/non-religious (29%).

## Religions

### Non-Christian

#### Jewish Religion

A Jewish population has existed in Belarus since the 14<sup>th</sup> century, their numbers increasing through the 20<sup>th</sup> century. By the late 1700s the government of Belarus had assigned them a portion of the country where they could live and they were not allowed to live anywhere else. This area was called the *Pale of Settlement*. By 1914 there were 1.3 million Jews living in Belarus with 657 Jewish congregations. During the three years of Nazi occupation during World War II the Jewish population was almost completely destroyed by mass executions. Less than 1% of the population of Belarus now claims to be Jewish. The drastic population decrease can mainly be contributed to genocide but also to mass immigration. Even though the Jewish population in Belarus remains small, as of 1992 there were still around 70 Jewish organizations operating there. An estimate of some 50,000 Jews live in Minsk. A Messianic Jewish group serves in Minsk.

#### Islam

Islam spread to Belarus to the extent that by the 16<sup>th</sup> century over 200,000 known Tartars living in Belarus. Many of these Tartars were descendents of invaders who repeatedly attacked Belarus from the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. Eventually these settlers adopted the Belarusian language but they held on to their religion.

Many Muslims left Belarus in the late 1500s after Belarus became part of the Polish/Lithuanian Empire. They left for various reasons, mainly because of isolation and persecution.

When Belarus came to be under Russian control in the late 1700s the Muslims faced more persecution and many more left. Those who remained suffered alongside the Jews in the wars and pogroms of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In January 1994, after being prohibited since 1939, an administration for the Muslim community in Belarus was reestablished. As of 1995 there were still 25,000 Muslims living in Belarus. Many of these are recent immigrants from the former Soviet Republics of Central Asia.

Some estimate that only 10,236 Muslims now live in Belarus and this number is shrinking by -0.86% annually.

### Non-Religious

Atheism grew in Belarus as a result of the rise of Communism. By 1970 almost 15% of the population claimed to be atheist and another 25% claimed that they were nonreligious. Together, these two groups, made up almost half of the population.

When Communism fell many of these returned to practicing the Christian faith of their ancestors. In the year 2000 people claiming to be atheists or nonreligious composed 29% of the population of Belarus. This group claimed over 2,067,709 people, making it the second largest religious. The Non-religious group is, however, suffering a -4.1% decline rate.

### Jehovah Witnesses'

The Jehovah Witness group claims 24 congregations with almost 2500 members. This group is experiencing a growth rate of around +7.8%.

### Christian Groups

News of the Protestant Reformation reached Belarus through word of mouth (primarily through trade relations and the attendance of Belarusians in Western Universities). The Reformation, however, never had much effect on Belarus, though.

Protestantism has never had much impact on the religious landscape of Belarus, but is has experienced some growth in recent years. Before 1917 there were only 32 Protestant congregations in the whole country. Since the fall of Communism Protestant churches have seen some growth but it has been slow going, primarily because of difficulties with the government.

In 1993 51 missions organizations served in Belarus, mostly Protestant Evangelical. Still, in 1995 less than 2% of the population of Belarus considered themselves Protestant. The largest Protestant groups in Belarus are Pentecostals and Baptists.

Protestants and evangelicals experience various degrees of persecution but continue to show some advance with up to a +5.9% increase.

The religious climate today is still very similar to the religious climate of the Communist Period. The government still restricts the religious practice of its people. While the constitution affirms religious freedom the state keeps a close eye on religious groups to assure that they are not improperly influencing the “formation of spiritual, cultural, and country traditions of the Belarusian people” (1996 Constitution). Government restrictions on religious practice continue to increase.

## Pentecostals

Pentecostals in Belarus consist of basically two groups, the unregistered and the Pentecostal Union. The unregistered Pentecostals have over 462 congregations with over 37000 members. The Pentecostal Union has some 510 congregations, over 22000 members.

## Baptists

The Evangelical Christian Baptist Union boasts of 232 congregations with almost 12000 members. Like other evangelicals, the Baptists show signs of life

Seventh Day Adventists have over 60 congregations with as many as 7000 members.

Other Protestant church groups have combined 211 congregations with 505.282 members.

## Old Believers Church

An Old Believers Church exists with 30 congregations and over 37,600 members. Old Believers Churches (Russian *staroobryadchestvo*, *staroverye*) refers to religious communities that do not recognize the 17<sup>th</sup> century reforms launched in Russian Orthodox Churches by Patriarch Nikon (1652-1666). These churches have no priests and retain their own rituals and church structure. They recognize only pre-reform icons and the eight-armed cross. The group is strongest in Lithuania (some 69 congregations and 27,000 members) and has been subjected to persecution over the years.

[http://www.ldm.lt/Naujausiosparodos/Old\\_Believers\\_b.en.htm](http://www.ldm.lt/Naujausiosparodos/Old_Believers_b.en.htm)

## The Orthodox Church

Belarus converted to Orthodoxy in 988. The Belorussian Orthodox church was founded in 1291 under Greek jurisdiction but later fell under the Russian Patriarchate in Moscow.

After suffering a great loss of numbers during Communist rule, the Belarusian Orthodox Church regained its autonomy in 1990. The church began to grow immediately, noticeable primarily in the reemergence of Church institutions. In the early 1990s there was a seminary, a monastery, and three convents. By 1995 there was Belarusian theological academy.

By 1995 more than 46% of the population of Belarus considered themselves Orthodox. The membership reached a total of 4,986,000 in 2001 with an annual growth rate of +0.8%.

### The Catholic Church

When Belarus became part of the Polish/Lithuanian Empire in the late 1500s many Belarusians converted to Catholicism. Most converted back to Orthodoxy when Belarus rejoined the Russian Empire in 1790. Today, the Catholic Church is small in Belarus, but is represented to the government of Belarus by a nuncio in Minsk.

The Catholic Church boasts of three congregations and 1,350,000 members and show meager growth + 0.8 % annually. This membership represents some 13.19% of the population.

### *The Uniate Catholic Church*

The *Belarusian Byzantine Catholic Church* was founded in 1596. This new church (the *Uniate Church*) recognized the authority of the Pope and accepted Catholic doctrine but retained their Orthodox rituals and liturgical language. By 1839 the *Uniate Church* (Ukrainian Catholicism) claimed some 75% of the Belarusian population but it was abolished by Tsar Nicholas in 1840 and many were forced to return to Orthodoxy.

With greater religious freedom in the early 1900s, however, the Uniate Catholic Church had a resurgence and in 1905 230,000 Belarusians claimed to be Uniate Catholics.

After steady growth for several decades the Belarusian Uniate Church was banned in 1946. After Communism fell and the Uniate Church was free to practice again many would have expected large numbers to return to it. However, by 1995 there were only 33,000 members of the Belarusian Uniate Church.

## **People Groups**

705

Belarusians (10,254,200)

The Belarusians of Belarus are considered unreached. Less than 2% of the population is evangelical. There have been some initial church planting efforts among them in the last 2 years.

42904

Russians (1,335,254)

Russians living in Belarus are also considered unreached. Less than 2% of the population is evangelical. There have been initial church planting efforts in the last 2 years.

42906

Ukrainians (293,426)

The Ukrainians of Belarus are considered unreached. Less than 2% of the population is evangelical. There have been initial church planting efforts in the last 2 years.

### **Missiological Implications**

1. Evangelical Christians and Mission organizations should approach evangelism in Belarus with care and wisdom. Public proclamation is dangerous and many churches are forced to meet secretly. *Open Doors International*, an organization that highlights ministering to the persecuted church, ranks Belarus as number 43 on its list of the top 50 most dangerous countries for Christians. This ranking places Belarus along with countries such as the United Arab Emirates (42), Columbia (44), Oman (45), and Jordan (46).
2. Evangelical Christians should seek to overcome the bias against evangelical Christianity by engaging in any humanitarian services that are possible
3. Evangelical Christians should provide increasing amounts of Christian literature in the form of tracts, Bibles, the Jesus Film, and Trans World Radio provide some proclamation. Christian literature in Belarusian and Russian languages. The organization, Every Home for Christ, has distributed tracts to most of the homes in Belarus.
4. Evangelical Christians should seek to aid in providing leadership training for church leaders in Belarus. This training may have to be by extension and short-term training methods.
5. Evangelical Christians should introduce teachings about simple, basic, or house churches and their ministries to people in Belarus. Again, the methods of this training may need to follow patterns of extension training or short-term training by visiting teams.
6. Evangelical Christians should encourage the witness to the minority groups of Jewish people and Muslim peoples in Belarus
7. Evangelical should approach the situation in Belarus with deep prayer that the ways will be open for the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

[http://sb.od.org/index.php?supp\\_page=wwl\\_2006&supp\\_lang=en&PHPSESSID=c64ef003a646f4a50178def1e6922a7b](http://sb.od.org/index.php?supp_page=wwl_2006&supp_lang=en&PHPSESSID=c64ef003a646f4a50178def1e6922a7b)

Information in the profile taken from:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belarus>

[http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia\\_761553191/Belarus.html#s1](http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761553191/Belarus.html#s1)

[http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook\\_old/print/bo.html](http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook_old/print/bo.html)

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5371.htm>

[http://sb.od.org/index.php?supp\\_page=wwl\\_2006&supp\\_lang=en&PHPSESSID=c64ef003a646f4a50178def1e6922a7b](http://sb.od.org/index.php?supp_page=wwl_2006&supp_lang=en&PHPSESSID=c64ef003a646f4a50178def1e6922a7b)

<http://www.hf.uib.no/Andre/vesti/belohist.htm>

<http://www.historycentral.com/NationbyNation/Belarus/Geo.html>

Olson, James S., ed. *An Ethno historical dictionary of the Russian and Soviet Empires* (London: Greenwood Press, 1994), 88-99.

*World Christian Encyclopedia, Second Edition*, vol 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 110-111.

Patrick Johnstone and Jason Mandryk, *Operational World*, 2001.

People Group section of the Country Profile ---  
EXAMPLE:

13600  
Hausa (3,600,000)  
The Hausa are .....

The “13600” number is the PopEntID from [www.peoplegroups.org](http://www.peoplegroups.org)  
3,600,000 is the population from [www.peoplegroups.org](http://www.peoplegroups.org)

If the people group does not exist on the people groups website, then input 00000 in place of the PopEntID and we will need to look up a number.

## Snapshots Section of the Country Profile

We will now include a “snapshot” section for each profile. Please electronically fill out this form for each country and include it on the front of the profile.

Country Name:

Country Founded in:

Population:

Government Type: (national, regional and local)

Geography/location in the world:

Number of people groups:

Picture of flag:

### Religion Snapshot

Major Religion and % of population:

All religions and % for each:

Government interaction with religion: (is the government cooperative [i.e. official church-state], supportive, tolerant, non-tolerant, antagonistic, etc.)

---

<sup>1</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/belarus#endnote\\_russification](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/belarus#endnote_russification) , Accessed 2/24/2006.

<sup>2</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belarus#endnote\\_Gorby](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belarus#endnote_Gorby), Accessed 2/24/2006.