

## GEOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

*The most remote point of the globe  
is close to something, while the closest  
one is remote from something.*

Kozma Prutkov

(a collective pen name of the group of Russian authors)

The Republic of Belarus is located in the centre of Europe, in the watershed of the Baltic and Black Seas.

The land area of Belarus is 207.6 thousand square kilometers and can be distributed as follows:

- 42% — forest land;
- 42% — agricultural land;
- 6% — surface water bodies, including wetland;
- 10% — other land.

### LAND AREA

(beginning of year)

	2001	2006	2012	2013	2014
Total land	20 760.0	20 760.0	20 760.0	20 760.0	20 760.0
of which:					
agricultural land					
'000 ha	9 257.7	9 011.5	8 874.0	8 817.3	8 726.4
% of total area	44.6	43.4	42.7	42.5	42.0
forest land					
'000 ha	8 436.8	8 393.0	8 584.7	8 588.5	8 630.7
% of total area	40.6	40.4	41.4	41.4	41.6
water bodies and marshland					
'000 ha	1 439.5	1 376.8	1 338.0	1 329.7	1 328.4
% of total area	7.0	6.7	6.4	6.4	6.4
other land					
'000 ha	1 625.9	1 978.5	1 963.3	2 024.5	2 074.5
% of total area	7.8	9.5	9.5	9.7	10.0

*For its area Belarus is ranked:*

- 13<sup>th</sup> among the European states; and
- 84<sup>th</sup> in the world.

In terms of the land area Belarus is 1.2 times bigger than Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia put together; it is a bit smaller than Great Britain, but 2.2 times bigger than Portugal and Hungary.



Belarus stretches:

- from north to south for 560 km; and
- from west to east for 650 km.

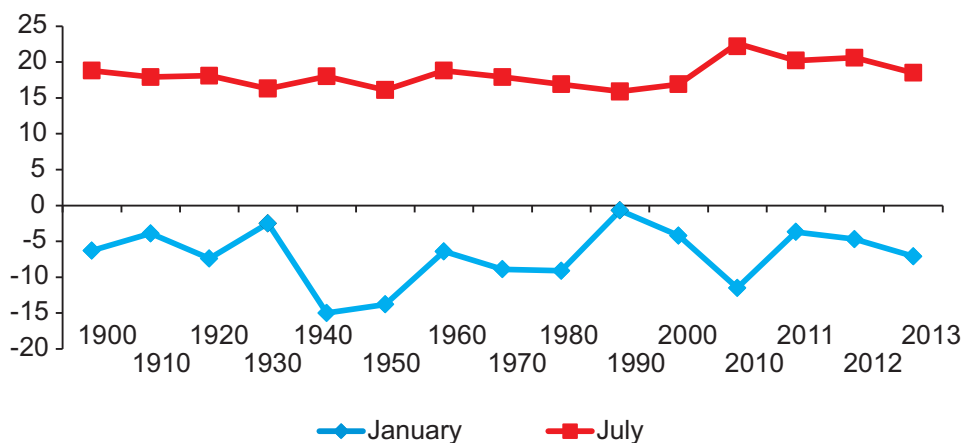
Topographically, Belarus is mostly a plain. The alternating uplands, plain areas and lowlands with marshes and lakes are typical for the country.

**The highest point above sea level in Belarus is 345 m** (mountain Dzerzhinskaya, Dzerzhinsk district of Minsk region); it is 26 times lower than the highest point in the world (Mount Everest in the Himalayas).

**The lowest point above sea level in Belarus is 80-90 m** (valley of the Neman River, Grodno region).

**The average altitude of Belarus above sea level is 160 m.**

## AVERAGE MONTHLY AIR TEMPERATURES (°C)



Belarus has a temperate continental climate, with prevailing westerly winds. As in all countries of the Northern hemisphere, the highest average monthly temperatures in Belarus occur in July, and the lowest are observed in January.

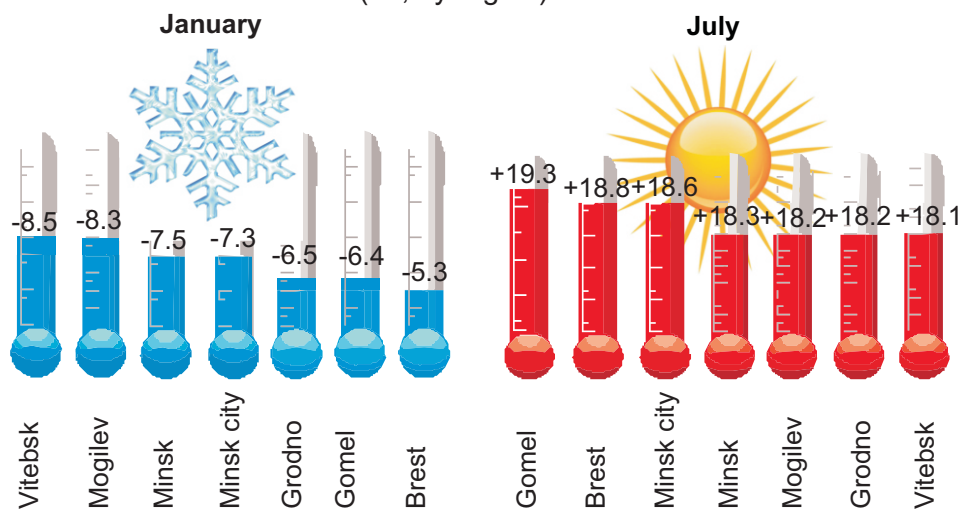
*In 2013 the mean temperatures in Belarus were:*

- $-7.1^{\circ}\text{C}$  in January, and
- $+18.5^{\circ}\text{C}$  in July.

## AVERAGE MONTHLY AIR TEMPERATURES

in 2013

(°C; by region)

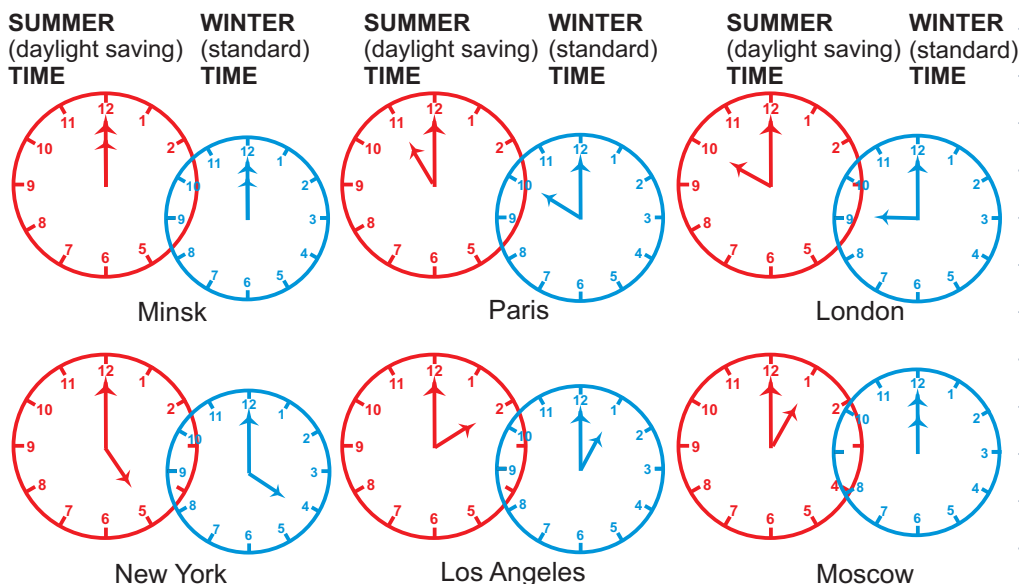


Belarus has sufficient rainfall. The average annual precipitation in 2013 was at 671 mm. Brest region had maximum precipitation (712 mm), while Mogilev region had minimum rainfall (650 mm).

*The average annual air temperature for the **whole Earth's surface** is  $+14^{\circ}\text{C}$ , with  $+12^{\circ}\text{C}$  in January and  $+16^{\circ}\text{C}$  in July. The Northern hemisphere is generally warmer ( $+15^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) than the Southern one ( $+13^{\circ}\text{C}$ ).*

*The distribution of precipitation across the Earth's surface is uneven. There is little rainfall in deserts; locally, there is no rain throughout several years – in Sahara (Africa) there are about 10-50 mm of precipitation over a year, and in the Atacama Desert (South America) 0.1-5 mm. The highest precipitation amounts fall in Cherrapunji (India) and in the Hawaiian Islands in the Pacific Ocean (about 12 000 mm per year).*

In Belarus time is kept according to the worldwide system of time zones, using the standard time plus 1 hour, without any seasonal time adjustments. Many countries of the world move to daylight saving time. Therefore, the time offset varies at different periods of the year.



Belarus has six regions with the centres in Minsk, Brest, Vitebsk, Gomel, Grodno and Mogilev. Each region is divided into districts, cities and other territorial and administrative units.

The capital is the city of Minsk. It is located in the centre of the country and covers the area of 348 sq. km.

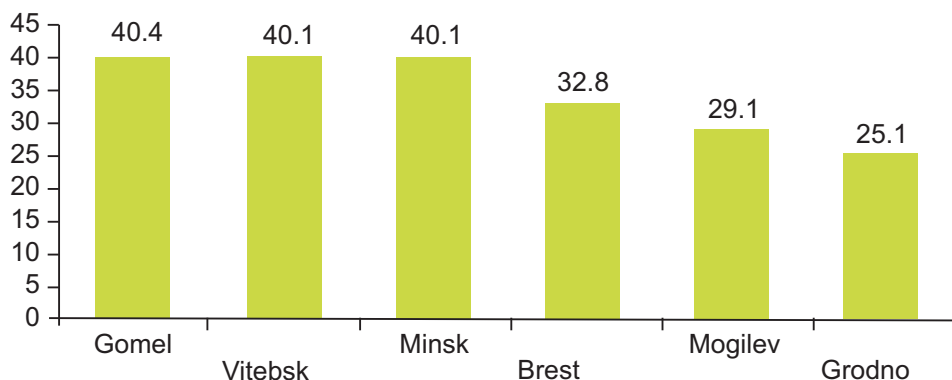
### CAPITAL CITIES OF STATES NEIGHBOURING BELARUS

Capital	Distance from Minsk (km)	Average traveling time	Population, thousand	National currency
Moscow (Russia)	698	Train – 10 h Plain – 1 h	12 108	Russian rouble
Kiev (Ukraine)	579	Train – 11.5 h Plain – 1 h	2 869	hryvnia
Riga (Latvia)	551	Train – 9 h Plain – 1 h	696	euro
Vilnius (Lithuania)	200	Train – 2.5 h Plain – 40 min	540	euro
Warsaw (Poland)	499	Train – 12 h Plain – 1 h	1 811	złoty

### ADMINISTRATIVE AND TERRITORIAL DIVISION OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS at 1 January 2014

Region	Area, '000 km <sup>2</sup>	Regional centre	Districts	Cities	Rural localities
Belarus	207,6		118	113	23 251
Brest	32,8	Brest	16	21	2 161
Vitebsk	40,1	Vitebsk	21	19	6 262
Gomel	40,4	Gomel	21	18	2 296
Grodno	25,1	Grodno	17	15	4 314
Minsk	40,1	Minsk	22	25	5 203
Mogilev	29,1	Mogilev	21	15	3 015

## AREA OF REGIONS OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS at 1 January 2014 (thousand km<sup>2</sup>)



The category of **cities** comprises:

- cities of regional subordination — settlements with the population 50 thousand and over which are administrative centres with the developed industrial and social infrastructure;
- cities of district subordination — settlements with the population 6 thousand and over which have industrial enterprises, social, cultural and personal service organisations, with prospects for further development and population growth.

**Urban-type settlements** include:

- urban settlements — settlements with the population at least 2 thousand, with industrial and utility enterprises, social, cultural, trade, catering and personal service facilities;
- industrial settlements — settlements with the population not less than 500 based at industrial enterprises, power plants, construction sites, railway stations and other facilities.



As of 1 January 2014 there were:

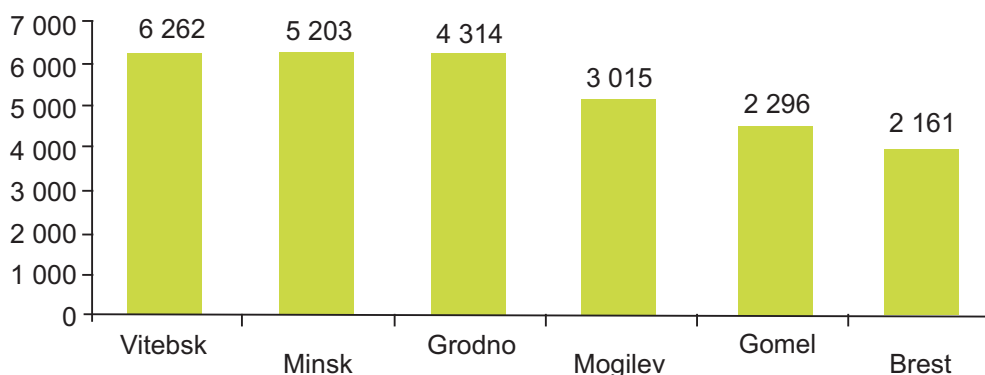
**82 urban-type settlements** (7 in Brest region, 24 in Vitebsk region, 13 in Gomel region, 16 in Grodno region, 16 in Minsk region, and 6 in Mogilev region);

**7 industrial settlements** (1 in Brest region, 3 in Gomel region, 2 in Minsk region, and 2 in Mogilev region).










The **rural** category comprises:

- agri-towns — developed localities with industrial and social infrastructure designed to ensure social standards for the resident population and inhabitants of the surrounding areas;
- villages, hamlets — settlements with relevant industrial and social infrastructure not included in the agri-town category;
- all other settlements (rural communities, single-farm settlements, etc.).

**NUMBER OF RURAL LOCALITIES  
at 1 January 2014  
(by region)**



## CITIES CELEBRATING ANNIVERSARY in 2014

Emblem	City	Age, years	Region	Population at 1 January 2014
	Vitebsk	1 040	Vitebsk	368 061
	Kopyl	740	Minsk	9 834
	Myadel	690	Minsk	6 893
	Glubokoye	600	Vitebsk	18 709
	Iveye	570	Grodno	7 825
	Kossovo	520	Brest	1 927
	Chashniki	510	Vitebsk	8 958
	Miory	500	Vitebsk	8 131
	Starye Doroghi	490	Minsk	10 727
	Gorki	470	Mogilev	31 988
	Cherikov	410	Mogilev	8 222
	Ivatsevichi	360	Brest	23 280
	Buda-Koshelevo	190	Gomel	8 467
	Novolukoml	50	Vitebsk	13 088