

## **THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW AND SIGNIFICANCE**

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*The article mainly studies the background and significance of the development of the Constitution of Belarus.*

The Constitution of the Republic of Belarus is a critical document that shapes the political and legal landscape of this Eastern European nation. To understand its significance, we must delve into its historical background, exploring the nation's journey from its early days to the present.

**Background and Historical Context.** The roots of the Belarusian Constitution can be traced back to the establishment of the Republic of Belarus. Belarus emerged as a sovereign state following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Its history, however, is intertwined with a series of geopolitical changes and political developments.

With the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, Belarus declared independence, forming the Republic of Belarus. In this newfound sovereignty, the country embarked on the path to establishing its own constitution.

The development of the Belarusian Constitution was marked by a series of key milestones:

**1994 Constitution:** The first Constitution of the Republic of Belarus was adopted on March 15, 1994. This marked a critical moment in the nation's history as it sought to establish its own legal framework. The 1994 Constitution introduced a presidential form of government and outlined the basic principles of the state, including the rule of law, human rights, and the separation of powers.

**Amendments and Referendums:** The Belarusian Constitution has seen several amendments since its adoption. One of the most significant amendments occurred in 1996 when President expanded his powers through a referendum. This move centralized power and extended presidential term.

The next republican referendum, to which the issue of changing the Basic Law was submitted, was held on October 17, 2004.

By the Law of the Republic of Belarus of October 12, 2021. No. 124-3 the Constitution has been amended concerning the conduct of elections of deputies on a single voting day.

On February 27, 2022, the next republican referendum on amendments and additions to the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus was held. As a result, the preamble and 85 articles were corrected, 11 new articles appeared, 2 articles were deleted. Also, the Basic Law has been supplemented with a new chapter (Chapter 31 "All-Belarusian People's Assembly").

Currently, the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus contains 9 sections, 9 chapters and 156 articles.

The Constitution of the Republic of Belarus holds great significance for both the country and the international community.

**Political Stability:** The constitution provides a legal framework for the functioning of the state, which is crucial for maintaining political stability in Belarus. It defines the structure of the government, the roles of various institutions, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens.

**Human Rights and Rule of Law:** The constitution enshrines the principles of human rights and the rule of law, setting a standard for governance and accountability.

**International Relations:** The constitution plays a role in shaping Belarus' relationships with other nations. Its political and legal structure impacts how the country interacts with the international community, including trade agreements, diplomatic relations, and its place on the global stage.

**Geopolitical Significance:** Given Belarus' strategic location in Eastern Europe, its constitution and governance are closely watched by neighboring countries, the European Union, and Russia. Changes in the constitution or governance can have broader geopolitical implications.

**Democratic Governance and Accountability:** The constitution is a key instrument for ensuring democratic governance and accountability.

The Constitution of the Republic of Belarus is a vital document that reflects the nation's complex history and political development. Its significance is evident in the way it shapes the governance of the country and influences its place in the international arena.

### **List of sources used**

1. Constitution of the Republic of Belarus // Official website of the President of the Republic of Belarus // <https://president.gov.by/ru/gosudarstvo/constitution>
2. Speech by Chairman of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Belarus P. P. Miklashevich “Strengthening the constitutional foundations of the judiciary” at the II Republican Conference of Judges (November 1, 2023) // Official website of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Belarus // <http://kc.gov.by/document-75393>.