

## RADIO MINSK, Belarusian a brief history

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Radio Minsk is the only external English-language service in Belarus. It is one of the departments of Radio Station Belarus, the oldest international radio broadcaster in the country. The idea behind the establishment of Radio Minsk in 1962 was to provide the Belarusian diasporas abroad (mainly in the European region) with a link to their homeland.

Originally, the broadcasts were only in Belarusian and focussed on the politics, economy and culture of Belarus. At that time, the radio station was an integral part of the Soviet Union's unified external broadcasting system, and the programmes also had to convey Moscow's point of view on world affairs and events.



*The main entrance of Belarus Radio at Cyrnovaja Street 4. This building is also the home of Radio Minsk.*

The fact that the output was aimed at the Western listener affected the general nature and style of reporting. The Senior Management in Moscow realized that the productions would be more convincing and appealing if they were more or less comparable to international standards. Unlike all the other domestic broadcasters in the country, the staff of Radio Minsk was allowed greater liberty in its coverage and analysis of news.

In 1985 - on the threshold of Perestroika - an enthusiastic team of journalists working at Radio Station Belarus, took the initiative to expand their audience and launch a new service for Radio Minsk in the German language. They had to overcome innumerable bureaucratic barriers to obtain permission from the chiefs in Moscow.

After the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991, as the whole country plunged into the maelstrom leading to independence, Radio Minsk gained an opportunity to add to its traditional focus an international perspective and thus increase the interaction between Belarus and the international community. However, except for obvious advantages, the independence also

brought an array of new problems which have - to a great extent - hindered further development, but the station has been struggling to overcome this.

In January 1998, new programmes started in English and Russian. The English-language service primarily deals with political and economic news from Belarus and the other CIS states, relations between Belarus and the world, analysis of current issues with emphasis on international aspects, culture and music. On November 17, 2005, Radio Station Belarus will celebrate its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of domestic broadcasting.



*Victory Square in Minsk.*



*Right behind the Belarus Radio and reflected in the Svislach river, is the telecommunication tower. From here the signals are carried by microwave to SW transmitter site at Kalodiziscy, 15 km. East of Minsk.*