

# **THE HISTORY OF THE UNIFORM OF CUSTOMS OFFICERS IN THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS**

## **ИСТОРИЯ ФОРМЫ ТАМОЖЕННИКОВ В РЕСПУБЛИКЕ БЕЛАРУСЬ**

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Customs on the territory of the Republic of Belarus have been put into action for more than a century. Now it is a highly developed service where a large number of people work. Every year more and more young people are striving to enter a higher institution with the specialty "Customs Service". And of course, a characteristic feature of a customs officer is their uniform.

There is no precise information on the appearance of customs on the territory of Belarus. The story begins in the early Middle Ages. However, the first Belarusian customs should not be spoken about as existing before the 9th century.

Since the collection and duty at that time were called "myto", the people who collected them were called "Mytniki". These "Mytniki" were most often "service people", who were senior collectors, supervised by the prince's manager. And although at that time customs were not equipped as well as it is in our time, nevertheless it was possible to distinguish "a mytnik" among other people. At that time, they did not wear a uniform. They were distinguished only by the fact that they stood at the bridges, on trade routes, in marketplaces and collected "myto" from merchants passing by.

Time did not stand still and the customs business developed rapidly, as the number of cities was growing. Thus, the exchange between cities was carried out more intensively. In the GDL, the Grand Duke managed the customs business himself. He personally appointed the "true" mytniks. Bona Sforza became the first female customs leader in the history of the Belarusian customs. She became the main governing officer of the GDL customs. At this time, the mytniks have started to wear their own uniform. It was red, and the belt was either red or blue. There was also a red cap. Since then the customs uniform begins to develop.

During the Russian Empire rule, the customs officers started to wear a clearly marked uniform. This was a blue-black uniform that was made of the best material. Winter narrow cloth pantaloons were added below the knee with leather leggings with peaks. The cuffs were fastened by nine metal buttons. Summer trousers were made of canvas. They had a bayonet with them, as smuggling was actively performed at that time. It is worth noting that in the

middle of the 19th century the uniform of the customs officers slightly changed. The uniform was replaced by green coats, trousers, and the scabbard was replaced by a revolver.

Beginning from 1918, smuggling was carried out across the boundary line in a wide stream. The work of customs officers was done in incredibly difficult conditions. They carried out not only verification, but also the seizure of goods. The uniform of the employees at that time consisted of a cloak, a shirt, a tunic, trousers and boots. The cloak was of a dark gray color, while the shirt and tunic were dark green. They also had a revolver on them. During the Great Patriotic War, the customs officers did not wear uniform. The customs units were dismissed. But in general, the customs system was not destroyed.

After the Great Patriotic War the customs business of Belarus had a difficult time. Many customs houses were destroyed, and the staff comprised only about 50 people. However, with the replenishment of the ranks, the uniform of customs officers has changed. Now they wore a blue shirt, dark blue pants and a jacket, and also a dark blue tie. But instead of boots there were shoes. And there was a cap on the head. Customs officers are not supposed to wear service weapon.

After Belarus became independent, the customs authorities became firmly established and started to bring fixed assets to the state revenue. At the same time, the uniform was adopted, which is still worn by customs officers. The uniform is dark blue: a blue shirt, dark blue trousers, a dark blue tie. Shoulder straps are attached to the shoulders. Headgear remained a cap. However, after 2000, the first girls appeared in the customs bodies of Belarus. Girls wear a skirt or dark blue trousers and a blue shirt. Headgear for them is a cap. It is important to remember that customs officers have a ceremonial uniform as well. In this uniform, the shirt is not blue, but white.

Basically, the dark blue form is worn by customs declarants or VET workers. If we speak about customs posts, then the uniform is black. It's a jacket and trousers. Also, customs officers are given T-shirts. On this form the word "МҮТНҮА" is embroidered on their backs. This uniform is the same for both men and women.

The uniform of customs officers is not just clothes that we put on every day. It is a part of the cause for which we are making history. It is necessary to wear the uniform with pride and dignity.

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