

Contemporary flags of the Ukrainian regions: Old traditions and new designs

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Abstract

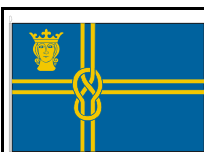
Ukraine consists of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and 24 *oblasts* (regions or provinces). The new law on local self-governments, adopted by the *Verkhovna Rada* (Parliament) of Ukraine in 1997, allowed local authorities to confirm the coats of arms, flags, and other symbols of *oblasts*, *rayons* (districts), cities, towns, and villages. Over the last six years, all *oblasts* have adopted their own symbols. Most of them have already adopted regional flags. Many of these flags have old historical signs and colours (Volyn, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, etc.), but some *oblasts* have chosen new designs (Donetsk, Cherkasy, Kherson, and others).

Ukraine is divided into 25 administrative territories — 24 *oblasts* (provinces or regions) and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. Two cities, Kyiv and Sevastopol, have a special, national status. The *oblast* borders have remained unchanged since 1959, when Drohobych oblast was joined to the Lviv oblast (Fig. 1).

After the disintegration of the Ruthenian Kingdom (Galician-Volynian State) in the middle of the 14th c., the Ukrainian lands were divided among various neighbouring countries. During this time the arms of separate administrative territories were used. When Ukraine was absorbed into the USSR, none of the oblasts possessed their own arms or flag. Only after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the declaration of Ukrainian independence did a process of the formation of symbols of administrative territories begin.

The first regional coat of arms was ratified for the Transcarpathian (Zakarpattya) oblast in December 1990. In 1992 the symbols of Crimea, which received the status of an autonomous republic, were adopted. In both cases, the symbols were adopted for specific, acute political reasons: local communists influenced by Moscow tried to kindle regional separatism and to prevent the restoration and development of the new Ukrainian state.

Starting in 1990, many cities and towns actively began restoring and using their former symbols. The arms of the city of Chernivtsi in particular were accepted based on historical sources, and in 1994 the arms of the Chernivtsi oblast were adopted. The decisions on symbols were adopted by the respective local councils, though according to the then extant legislation of the former USSR, Ukrainian SSR or independent



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Figure 1 The administrative division of Ukraine.

Ukraine, this issue was not addressed. The problem of the creation of modern arms and flags for *oblasts*, *rayons*, cities, towns, and villages repeatedly arose during annual scholarly conferences of the Ukrainian Heraldry Society.¹ Considerable progress in the development of regional symbols was made with the adoption of the Law on Local Self-Government adopted by the *Verkhovna Rada* (Parliament) in 1997,² in which, in accordance with suggestions made by the Ukrainian Heraldry Society, separate clauses about local symbols were introduced. According to article 22 of this law, the use of the arms, flags, and other symbols for cities, towns and villages, and also administrative territories — *oblasts* and *rayons*, was foreseen. Articles 26 and 43 established that these symbols be adopted at sessions of the respective local councils. During 1997-2003 all *oblast* councils ratified their arms and flags. The single exception was Transcarpathian oblast, which only adopted the coats of arms.

Very often symbols have been adopted via the staging of special competitions. In many cases the Ukrainian Heraldry Society has provided consultations and practical assistance. The Society made the general recommendation for the creation of a complete system of territorial and municipal arms and flags in Ukraine.³ This included their recommendation that all flags of *oblasts* possess a ratio of width to length of 2:3, similar to the State Flag of Ukraine. Several regional councils have heeded this advice and introduced changes to their flags.

In 2000 a Presidential decree created a Commission on Heraldry and State Awards.⁴ Its responsibility includes the control of creation of new arms, flags, emblems, other symbols (mainly for ministries and other government structures), and also

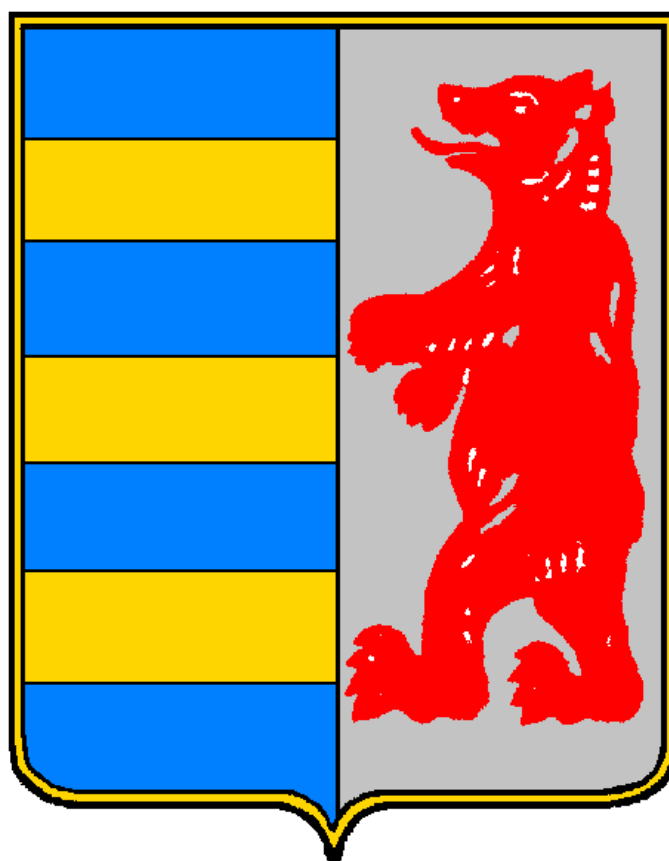


Figure 2 Arms of Transcarpathian oblast.

state awards and decorations. However the work of the commission is conducted largely virtually: formal meetings are not held, and on separate questions materials are circulated to the members via mail. In most cases the employees of the Department of Heraldry and State Awards of the Presidential Administration prepare decisions of the commission, though they have neither legal authority nor professional training to do so. Therefore very often their conclusions (in particular on questions of heraldry and vexillology) are entirely inappropriate (as evidenced by the symbols of the Mykolayiv or Zhytomyr oblasts). Nonetheless, regarding *oblast* symbols it is the exclusive right of the regional councils to adopt the coats of arms and flags, therefore any decision of the commission can have only advisory character.

Transcarpathian oblast

Arms: per pale Azure and Argent, dexter three bars Or, sinister a bear rampant Gules (Fig. 2). The arms were adopted on December 18, 1990. It is a restoration of an old symbol of Transcarpathia since 1920, in which blue and gold emphasize the Ukrainian tradition, and the bear characterizes local fauna. The new design was executed by artist I. Reyti. The flag of oblast is not accepted till now.

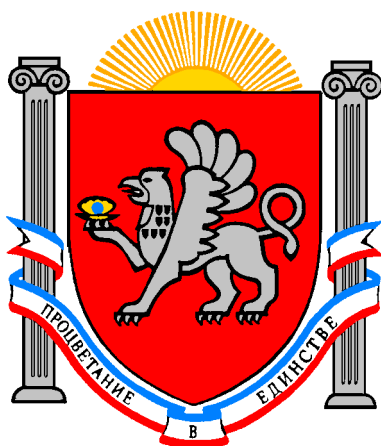


Figure 3 Arms of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea.

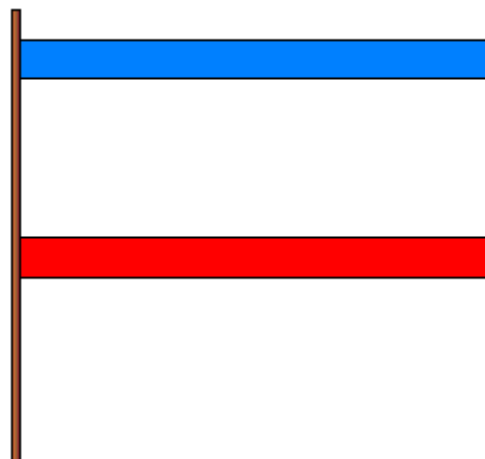


Figure 4 Flag of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea.

Autonomous Republic of Crimea

Arms: Gules, a griffin passant Argent holding a shell Argent with a pearl Azure. Above the shield is placed a demi-sun ascendant Or. On a compartment below the shield are placed for supporters two columns Argent (in text - white), and in blue-white-red escrol beneath this Russian motto: *Protsvetaniye v yedinstve* (Prosperity in unity) (Fig. 3). The flag is divided horizontally into three stripes, the upper blue and the lower red stripes, each being 1/6 the width of the flag, the middle stripe is white. The flag is described as being in the proportion 1:2 (Fig. 4). The arms and flag were adopted on September 24, 1992 as “the state symbols of Republic of Crimea”. The authors of the project of the arms are H. Yefetov and V. Yahupov, and for the flag, A. Malyhin and V. Trusov. After an establishment of the status of Crimea the symbols were re-adopted as “the republican arms and flag” by the decision of Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea from April 21, 1999. The symbol of the griffin was taken from the arms of cities Sevastopol and Kerch, the pearl symbolizes unique natural features of Crimea. The red stripe on a flag means past, the white the modern, and the blue stripe the future of Crimea.

Chernivtsi oblast

Arms: per pale Gules and Vert, in the first a half of city gate Argent in chief four bricks Argent and in base a branch of laurel Or with a blue and yellow ribbon, in the second three nuts of beech in pale Or. Above the shield is placed a falcon Argent and on a compartment below the shield are branches of beech Or with a blue and yellow ribbon (Fig. 5). The flag is in proportion 2:3 and comprises five horizontal stripes of blue, yellow, green, yellow and blue. The white falcon is displayed in the centre of the flag on the green panel. Each yellow stripe being 1/30 the width of the flag, and each blue stripe 1/10 the width of the flag (Fig. 6). The arms were adopted on December 16, 1994, and the flag on December 20, 2001. The author of both projects is O. Kry-



Figure 5 Arms of Chernivtsi oblast.



Figure 6 Flag of Chernivtsi oblast.

voruchko.

In the arms are present the elements from the arms of Chernivtsi city (urban gate and bricks). The nuts of beech symbolize the woods of Bukovyna (“a beech” in Ukrainian is *buk*, we can translate the word Bukovyna as “Land of the beech forests”), productivity of ground, generosity, continuation of a kin and traditions. The green colour and beech branches associates with gardens, woods and floors of *oblast* (“Green Bukovyna”).

The image of a falcon is known from the slab, found during the archaeological excavation on the right bank of Dnister river. The falcon personifies beauty, bravery and mind. The green colour means well-being and hope. Blue and yellow stripes emphasize a state accessory of *oblast*, and also the blue colour personifies the greatest rivers of the region (storming Prut and deep Dnister), yellow stands for the grain floors of the Bessarabian areas.

Vinnytsya oblast

Arms: quarterly Azure and Gules, in the first and the fourth quarters a sun figured Or with 16 beams and in the second and third a cross pattée Argent with an inescutcheon Azure charged with a crescent Argent (Fig. 7). The flag (ratio 2:3) is divided horizontally into five stripes of blue, red, blue, red and blue. It comprises the principle charges from the arms (yellow sun and white cross with an inescutcheon Azur charged with a crescent Argent) of a middle blue field. The upper and lower blue and red stripes being 1/10 the width of the flag each. At the back side of flag the images of the sun and cross are absent (Fig. 8). The arms and flag were adopted on July 18, 1997. The authors are Yu. Lehun, H. Melnyk and Yu. Savchuk. The charges are taken from the old arms of historical territories: Podillya (the sun) and Bratslav land (cross with an inescutcheon) are incorporated into the new symbols. On the flag the red strips mean the rivers of the *oblast*.

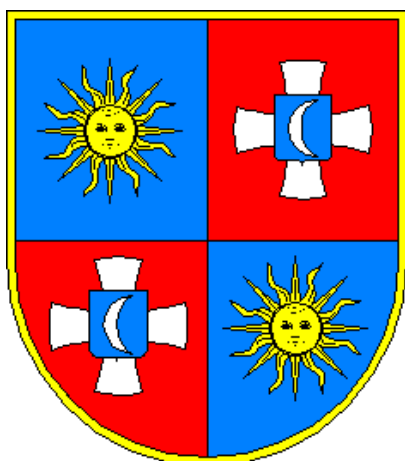


Figure 7 Arms of Vinnytsya oblast.

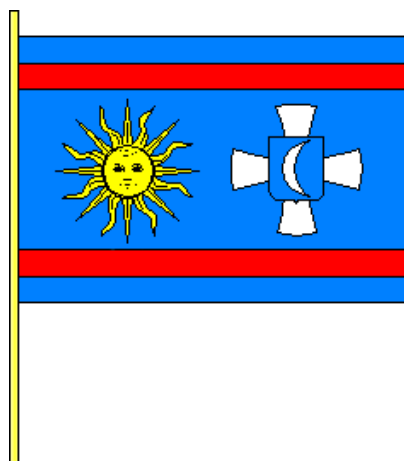


Figure 8 Flag of Vinnytsya oblast.

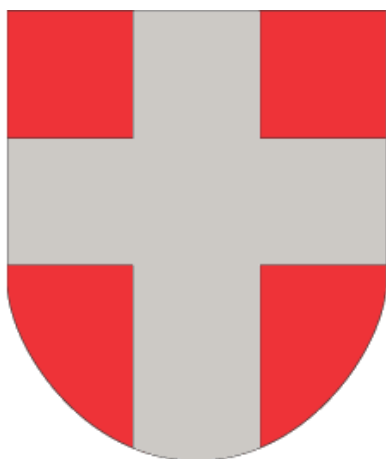


Figure 9 Arms of Volyn oblast.

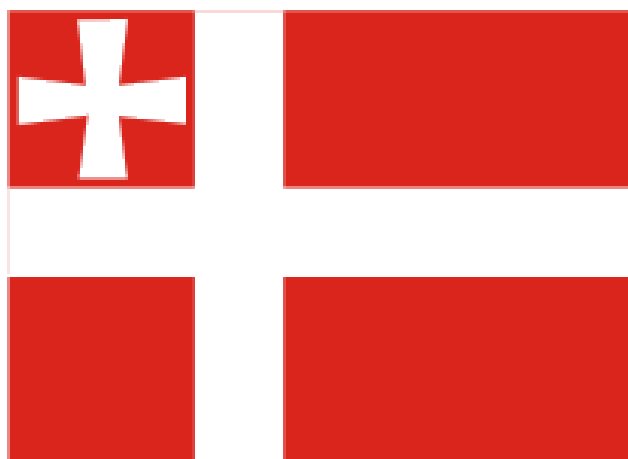


Figure 10 Flag of Volyn oblast.

Volyn oblast

Arms: Gules, a cross Argent (Fig. 9). The flag is rectangular (2:3) with a white cross on a red field, the square red canton is charged a white cross pattée (Fig. 10). The arms and flag (with a ratio of 5:7) were adopted on November 4, 1997. After the letter of the Ukrainian Heraldry Society proportions of a flag were changed to 2:3 by the separate decision dated May 30, 2000. Silver cross on a red field is known as the arms of Volyn land since the beginning of the 15th century. From the middle of the 16th century this symbol was changed to a cross pattée.



Figure 11 Arms of Poltava oblast.

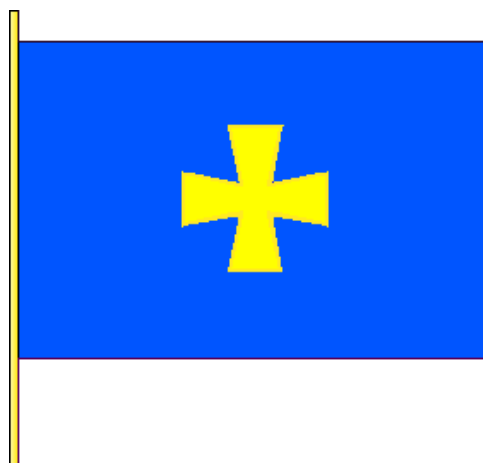


Figure 12 Flag of Poltava oblast.

Poltava oblast

Arms: per fesse, a fess wavy Argent and Azure; a chief tierced in point, 1st Azure, a cross pattée Or, 2nd Or, a horseshoe Gules, 3rd Gules, a reversed bow with arrow Or, between two stars of six points Argent; a base tierced in point reverced, 4th Gules, an urban gate Or, between two stars of six points Argent, 5th Or, a heart Gules, 6th Azure, a sheaf Or. Above the shield is placed a mural crown with five towers. The shield is framed with two branches of snowball-tree and blue and yellow ribbon (Fig. 11). The flag is in proportion of 2:3 and it has a yellow cross pattée in the centre of a blue field. The cross being half the width of the flag (Fig. 12). The arms was adopted on January 30, 1998 (author Ye. Shyray), and the flag on February 10, 2000 (under the proposal of the Ukrainian Heraldry Society). A blue flag with a yellow cross is known as a flag of Poltava Cossack's region since beginning of the 18th century. The arms of the *oblast* include charges from various municipal emblems.

Luhansk oblast

Arms: per fesse; a chief per pale Vert and Gules charged on the dexter side with a horse Or; a base tierced in point, 3rd Gules, 4th Vert, a marmot Or, 5th Azure, issuant from the base a sun Or; an inescutcheon Or charged with a quadrate Sable, edged in chief Gules, with a flame Gules, between two hammers Sable. The shield is framed with two ears, oak branches, and blue and yellow ribbon with an inscription in Ukrainian: "Luhanska oblast" (Fig. 13). The flag is blue (ratio 2:3) with the shield from the arms in the canton. Around the shield are 17 gold and 14 white stars of five points (Fig. 14). The arms were adopted on May 15, 1998 (designed by A. Zakoretskyi), and the flag was adopted on September 4, 1998 (designed by L. Zhdanov). The black square and two hammers symbolized the coil industry. The rising sun means, that the



*Figure 13 Arms of
Luhansk oblast.*



Figure 14 Flag of Luhansk oblast.

Luhansk oblast is the eastern border region of Ukraine. The arms of oblast include charges (horse and marmot) from two municipal emblems. The 17 gold and 14 white stars on the flag represent the 17 territorial districts and 14 administrative towns of the oblast.

Kirovohrad oblast

Arms: Gules, a steppe (Scythian) eagle Or. Above the shield is placed a banner Azure charged with a Trident Or. The shield is framed by decorative branches, ears and oak foliage Or, and in escrol Azure below the same this motto in Ukrainian: *Z dobrom do lyudey* (With goods to the people) (Fig. 15). The flag is divided into two equal vertical stripes, namely crimson and yellow. The crimson stripe, adjacent to the hoist, and charged on the yellow eagle. The proportion of the flag is 2:3 (Fig. 16). The arms and flag were adopted on July 29, 1998, and on December 23, 1998 the change of the image of the



Figure 15 Arms of Kirovohrad oblast.

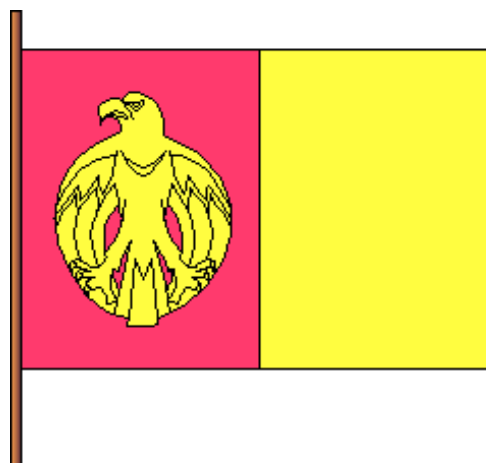


Figure 16 Flag of Kirovohrad oblast.

eagle was accepted. The authors of the symbols are V. Kryvenko and H. Shlyakhovyi. The gold steppe eagle, taken from Scythian ornaments, was found during the archaeological excavation on territory of Kirovohrad oblast, and symbolizes native ground, heredity from the past generations, and spiritual revival of descendants. The blue banner with a Trident specifies the belonging of the *oblast* to Ukraine. The gold wheaten ear emphasizes the riches of agricultural territory, gold oak foliage represents power and endurance. Blue, yellow and red (crimson in a flag) are the colours emphasizing the old Cossack tradition of this region and the riches of the ground in steppe Ukraine.

Kyiv oblast

Arms: Azure, on a base Vert the figure of Saint George with a spear Or, at the horse proper (in text: brown), in base a snake proper (in text: brown). Above the shield is placed a prince's diadem Or. The shield is covered with the grain ears and two oak branches with green leaves (Fig. 17). The flag (ratio 2:3) comprises three equal vertical stripes of blue, yellow and blue. The middle stripe is charged in the centre with an image of St. George and snake (Fig. 18). The arms and flag were adopted on February 2, 1999. The choice of St. George as the symbol of the Kyiv oblast, is, probably, connected with mentions from the 16th century about similar arms. However, these messages were erroneous, and were denied by other historical sources of the time.

Kharkiv oblast

Arms: Vert, a caduceus and cornucopia Or in saltire. Above the shield are placed a half of a gear Argent, an open book Argent charged with an atomic symbol and two ears Or. The shield is framed with a wreath of oak foliage and a blue ribbon (Fig. 19). The flag follows the familiar pattern with the full arms being displayed in the centre of a crimson field (ratio 2:3) (Fig. 20). The arms and flag were adopted on May 11, 1999.



Figure 17 Arms of Kyiv oblast.

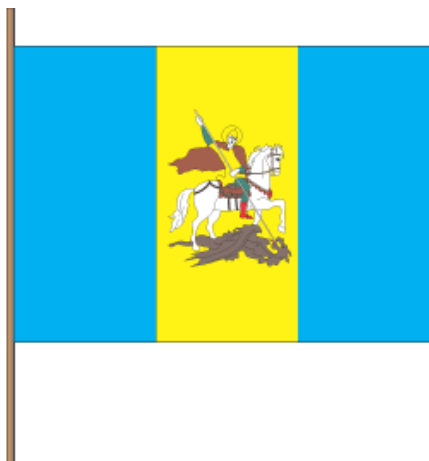


Figure 18 Flag of Kyiv oblast.



Figure 19 Arms of Kharkiv oblast.

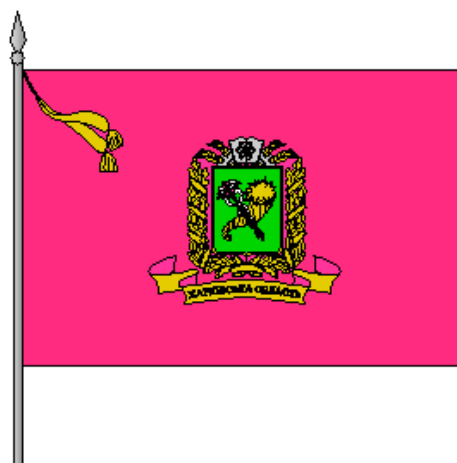


Figure 20 Flag of Kharkiv oblast.

The horn of plenty (cornucopia) and the rod of Mercury (caduceus) were on the arms of Kharkiv city and Kharkiv gubernia from the end of the 18th century. Now they also appear on the arms of the city. These symbols mind commerce and abundance. The new design of these arms for the *oblast* was executed by S. Shaposhnikov.

Donetsk oblast

Arms: Or, on base embowed Sable a palm Azure. Above the shield is placed a stylized crown Or (with chestnut leaves). The shield is framed by two oak branches Vert, and in escrol Purple below the same this motto in Russian: *Vozможность доказана делом* (Opportunity proved by business) (Fig. 21). The flag consists of two equal horizontal stripes of blue and black. The blue stripe is charged with a yellow (gold) rising demi-sun of 12 beams and the black stripe with the five yellow (gold) reflections of the sun.



Figure 21 Arms of Donetsk oblast.

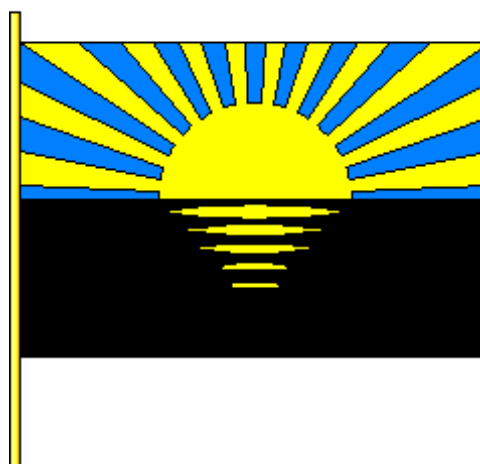


Figure 22 Flag of Donetsk oblast.



Figure 23 Arms of Cherkasy oblast.

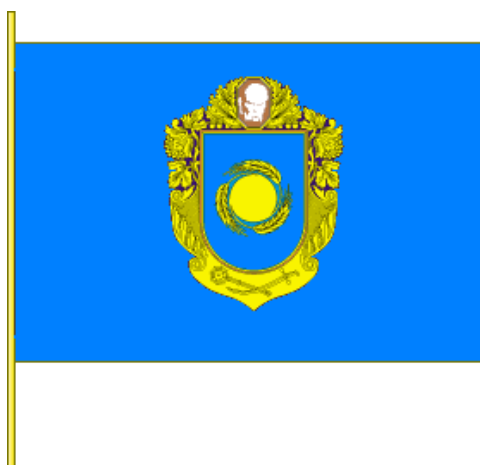


Figure 24 Flag of Cherkasy oblast.

The flag is in proportion 2:3 (Fig. 22). The arms and flag were adopted on August 17, 1999. The coat of arms were designed by the firm of “Cardinal”. The author of the flag project is N. Shcherbak. In 1896 the smith Oleksiy Mertsalov forged a palm from the piece of rail. The “Palm of Mertsalov” specifies the large economic potential of the *oblast*, the black colour means coal, the gold (yellow on a flag) field personifies Steppe Ukraine.

Cherkasy oblast

Arms: Azure, a solar disk with the three corn ears Or. The arms are entered in a decorative frame. Above the shield is placed a medallion with the portrait image of the poet Taras Shevchenko (Fig. 23). The flag is in proportion 2:3, with a blue field having the full arms in the centre (Fig. 24). The arms and flag (designed by O. and M. Teliz-



Figure 25 Arms of Chernihiv oblast.



Figure 26 Flag of Chernihiv oblast.

henko) were adopted on July 4, 2000. The sun and ears of corn symbolizes the riches of the Cherkasy region and the agrarian character of the *oblast*, whereas the blue colour means the river of Dniipro.

Chernihiv oblast

Arms: Argent, a double-headed eagle Sable, armed Or, langued and membered Gules, crowned with open crowns Or, charged on the breast with an inescutcheon Azure, fimbriated Or, and charged with a prince's sign (Trident) Or (Fig. 25). The flag (ratio 2:3) comprises three horizontal stripes of green, white and green, each green stripe being 2/5 the width of the flag. The flag has the white square canton, charged with a black crowned double-headed eagle with a shield on the breast: Azure, fimbriated Or, a Trident Or (Fig. 26). The arms and flag were adopted on July 11, 2000. The authors of the symbols are I. Sytyi, A. Grechylo and V. Pavlenko. A double-headed eagle was the symbol of Chernihiv-Siveria land during the first half of the 17th century. A gold sign of the founder of the Grand Duchy of Chernihiv, the prince Mstyslav Volodymyrovych, was known since 1024. The two green strips on the flag mean two basic geographical zones of the *oblast* — Polissya and Forest-steppe, and the white stripe personifies the river of Desna, which shares them.

Sumy oblast

Arms: Azure, charged on the dexter side with an ear embowed Or, on the sinister side with a cross bottony Or, in chief a helmet Or (Fig. 27). The flag is rectangular (2:3) with a blue field having the arms in the centre (Fig. 28). The arms and flag were adopted on July 12, 2000. The author of the projects is Yu. Shelkovnikov. The helmet means historical development of the territory from the times of the Kyiv Principality



Figure 27 Arms of Sumy oblast.

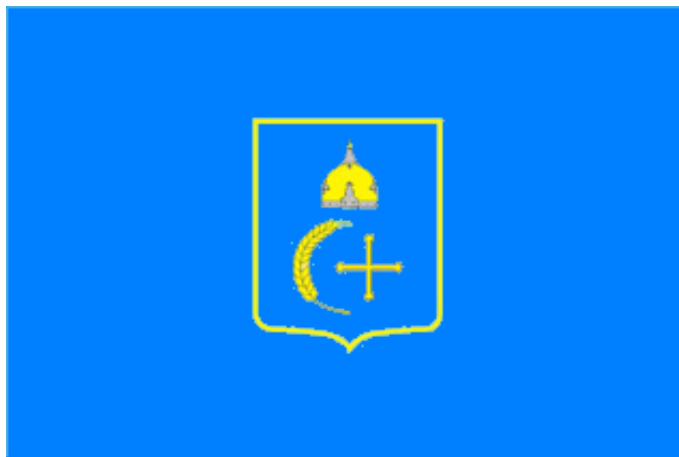


Figure 28 Flag of Sumy oblast.



Figure 29 Arms of Lviv oblast.



Figure 30 Flag of Lviv oblast.

(11th-12th centuries). The ear, curved in the form of the letter “С” (Cyrillic “S”), includes 25 grains, which symbolizes the agrarian character and the 25 subjects of the *oblast*. The cross personifies high spiritual life.

Lviv oblast

Arms: Azure, a lion crowned rampant Or climbing up a rock Or. The shield is entered in a decorative frame. Above the shield is placed a stylized Trident Or (Fig. 29). The flag is in proportion 2:3, with a blue field having the principle charge from the arms (the yellow crowned lion) in the centre (Fig. 30). The arms and flag were adopted on February 27, 2001. The lion on a rock was a symbol of the Ruthenian Kingdom from the first half of the 14th century. In the 15th-18th centuries this symbol was used as the



Figure 31 Arms of Ivano-Frankivsk oblast.



Figure 32 Flag of Ivano-Frankivsk oblast.

arms of the Ruthenian woyewodship and of Lviv land. From 1848 it was treated as a Ukrainian national symbol in Halychyna (Galicia or Western Ukraine).

Ivano-Frankivsk oblast

Arms: Argent, a jackdaw Sable crowned Or (Fig. 31). The flag (ratio 2:3) comprises five vertical stripes of red, black, white, blue and yellow. The white square field is charged in the centre with a black jackdaw with wings lifted upwards, and with a yellow crown. The other four stripes have equal sizes, each 1/12 the width of the flag (Fig. 32). The arms and flag (designed by A. Grechylo) were adopted on July 26, 2001. The jackdaw is an old symbol of historical Halych land from the 15th century (and probably since the 13th century). The flag of the *oblast* has patriotic (black and red) and national (blue and yellow) colours and emphasizes the role of this region in the forming of the Ukrainian state: "From struggle to independence!"

Zaporizhya oblast

Arms: Gules (in the text - crimson), a Cossack with a musket and sabre Or. The shield is imposed on a *bulava* (Ukrainian *hetman's* mace), *pernach*, *bunchuk* (staffs of power) and two *lytavrs* (tambourines) Or, weaved together by a blue ribbon with an inscription in Ukrainian *Zaporizka oblast* (Fig. 33). The *oblast* flag has the full arms in the centre of a crimson field. The flag ratio is 2:3 (Fig. 34). The arms and flag were adopted on July 27, 2001. The author of the projects is V. Pylypenko. The Cossack with a musket and sabre is the historical coats of arms of the Zaporozhian Cossacks, known from the end of the 16th century.



Figure 33 Arms of Zaporizhzhya oblast.



Figure 34 Flag of Zaporizhzhya oblast.

Mykolayiv oblast

Arms: Azure, in front of two bishop's croziers in saltire a mitre Or; on a base wavy Argent, an amphora in bend sinister proper. The shield is entered in a decorative frame. Above the shield is placed a stylized ears crown Or (Fig. 35). The flag is divided horizontally into three, the upper white stripe being 1/2 the width of the flag, the central stripe being yellow and the lower wavy stripe being blue, each 1/4 the width of the flag. The middle part of the flag is charged with a gold mitre over the two crossed gold croziers on white and yellow background. The flag is in proportion 2:3 (Fig. 36). The arms and flag were adopted on July 27, 2001. The symbols are designed by I. and Ya. Bulavytskyi. The mitre and two croziers resemble the arms of Mykolayiv city and personify the patron of region, Saint Nicolaus. The amphora symbolizes the antique cities-states of the north bank of Black sea.

Kherson oblast

Arms: Azure, an anchor, two grain ears and compasses Or, in chief an urban gate Or. Above the shield is placed a stylized crown Or. The shield is framed with two branches connected by a blue and yellow ribbon with an Ukrainian inscription *Khersonska oblast* (Fig. 37). The flag is in proportion 2:3. It comprises three equal horizontal stripes of blue, white and blue, with the shield from the arms in the hoist (Fig. 38). The arms and flag were adopted on October 25, 2001. The authors of the projects are S. Sazonov and Yu. Shepelev. The anchor is a symbol of the ports of *oblast*. The ears represent agriculture, and the compasses science.



Figure 35 Arms of Mykolayiv oblast.



Figure 36 Flag of Mykolayiv oblast.



Figure 37 Arms of Kherson oblast.



Figure 38 Flag of Kherson oblast.

Rivne oblast

Arms: Vert, an open book Argent with cover Or, in the dexter flank a sabre reversed Argent hilted Or, and in the sinister flank a feather Argent; on a chief Gules a cross pattée Argent. The shield is entered in a decorative frame. Above the shield is placed a stylized Trident Or (Fig. 39). The flag comprises three vertical stripes of yellow, light-blue and yellow; the full arms appears in the centre of the flag on the light-blue stripe (Fig. 40). The arms and flag (with a proportion 11:16) were adopted on November 4, 2001. The author of the projects is Yu. Terletskyi. After the letter of the Ukrainian Heraldry Society the ratio of the flag was changed to 2:3 by a separate decision, dated December 11, 2002. The book personifies an old historical monument — the gostel from Peresopnytsya, the sabre represents the struggle for independence, and the feather symbolizes development of written culture. The cross specifies the belonging to a part of historical Volyn, and the green colour symbolizes the natural region of Polissya.

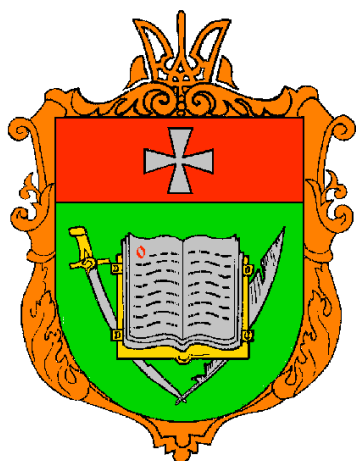


Figure 39 Arms of Rivne oblast.

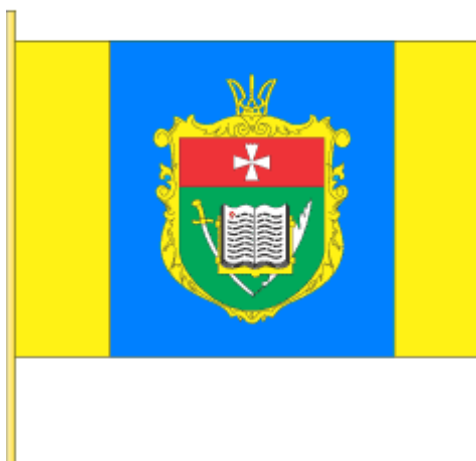


Figure 40 Flag of Rivne oblast.



Figure 41 Arms of Ternopil oblast.

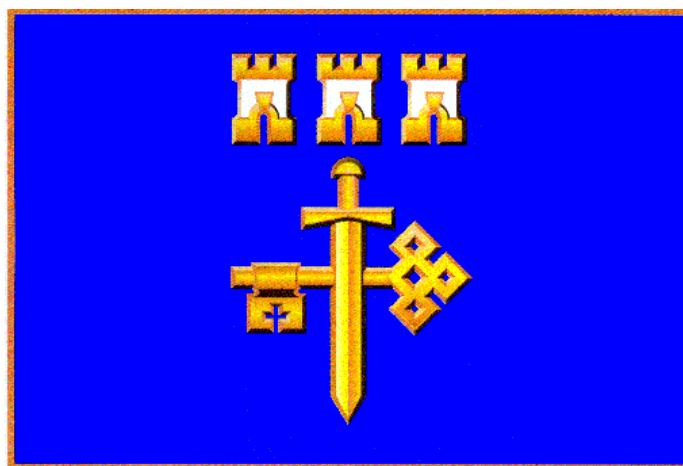


Figure 42 Flag of Ternopil oblast.

Ternopil oblast

The arms and flag of Ternopil oblast are new symbols (designed by D. Chepil). They were originally adopted on December 21, 2001. The lower stripe is charged in the centre with assigned crosswise yellow sword and key. A key and sword symbolize the strategic importance of the region. The towers personify the three historical lands — Halychyna, Podillya and Volyn — from which parts the modern *oblast* generated.

Originally, the arms were: Azure, a sword reversed Or and a key Or, one in pale surmounted by another in fess; on a chief Or three towers Argent. Above the shield is placed a stylized Trident Or. The shield is imposed on a wheaten sheaf and decorative branches, with a crimson ribbon. The flag, as first adopted, was a heraldic banner in proportion of 2:3 and was divided horizontally into two, the upper yellow stripe being 1/3 the width of the flag and the lower blue. The upper stripe is charged with three white towers. However, after receiving a letter from the Ukrainian Heraldry Society



Figure 43 Arms of Odesa oblast.



Figure 44 Flag of Odesa oblast.

the final design of the symbols was changed by separate decision, dated November 18, 2003. Now the shield and flag have full blue fields, and the towers are in white and yellow (Argent and Or in arms) (Figs. 41-42).

Odesa oblast

Arms: Azure, an anchor Argent; all within a bordure Gules charged with six anchors Or, in chief with three ears Or, in base with a bunch of grape Or. On a compartment below the shield are placed a wreath of the ears and vine (Fig. 43). The flag comprises three vertical stripes of yellow, blue and white. The shield from the arms appears in the centre of the flag on the blue stripe (Fig. 44). The arms and flag (with ratio 3:5) were adopted on February 21, 2002. The authors of the projects are P. Bondarenko, M. Murmanov, H. Fayer and L. Bruk. Following a letter from the Ukrainian Heraldry Society the ratio of the flag was changed to 2:3 by separate decision, dated December 17, 2003. The silver anchor resembles the old arms of the city of Odesa. Seven anchors symbolize seven ports of the Odesa oblast. The ears represent agriculture, and the bunch of grapes viticulture and wine-making.

Khmelnyskyi oblast

Arms: per pale Azure and Gules (in the text: crimson), a sun figured Or, in base two ears embowed Or. The shield is entered in a decorative frame (Fig. 45). The flag (ratio 2:3) comprises two equal vertical stripes of blue and crimson. The shield from the arms appears in the centre of the flag (Fig. 46). The arms and flag were adopted on March 21, 2002. The author of the design is M. Mastykash. The blue field and sun represent the historical land of Podillya, and the red (crimson in text) field stands for Volyn. The ears emphasize the agrarian character of the *oblast*. The two gold ears have the form of the letter “X” (Cyrillic “Kh”).



Figure 45 Arms of Khmelnytskyi oblast.

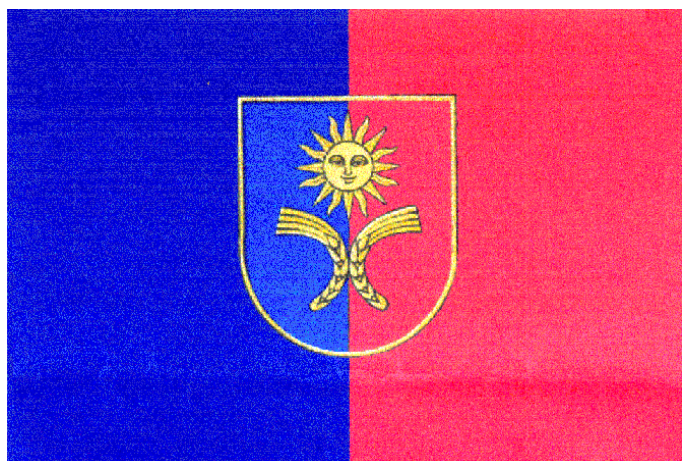


Figure 46 Flag of Khmelnytskyi oblast.



Figure 47 Arms of Dnipropetrovsk oblast.

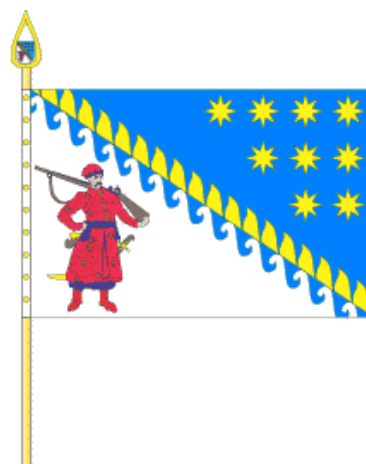


Figure 48 Flag of Dnipropetrovsk oblast.

Dnipropetrovsk oblast

Arms: per bend Azure and Argent, garnished rayonné Or and Azure, in the first nine stars of 8 points displayed, four, three and two Or, in the second a Cossack with a musket and sabre Gules (in text: crimson). The shield is entered in a decorative frame. Above the shield is placed a wreath and mantling (without a helmet!), in escutcheon Azure a Trident Or (Fig. 47). The flag is a heraldic banner in proportion of 2:3 and is divided diagonally into blue and white fields with the charges of the arms of the Dnipropetrovsk oblast (Fig. 48). The arms and flag were adopted on March 19, 2002. The authors are O. Potap and O. Rudenko. The Cossack with a musket and sabre is the historical coats of arms of the Zaporozhian Cossacks. The nine stars are connected with traditional Cossack's symbols and the old municipal arms of the administrative centre.



Figure 49 Arms of Zhytomyr oblast, 2002.



Figure 50 Flag of Zhytomyr oblast, 2002.



Figure 51 Arms of Zhytomyr oblast, 2003.

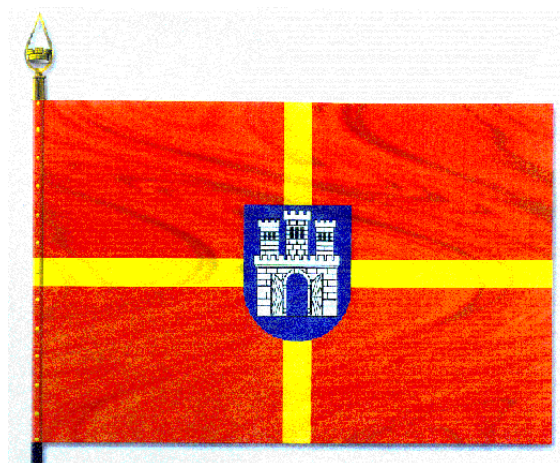


Figure 52 Flag of Zhytomyr oblast, 2003.

Zhytomyr oblast

In 2002 the *oblast* council held a local competition for the best projects for symbols. The arms and flag were adopted on October 31, 2002. Arms: per fess Argent and Azure, an inescutcheon Azure charged with a town gate triple-towered Argent, framed by two ears and cones of hop Or, with the leaves Vert. Above the inescutcheon is placed a flower of flax Azure (Fig. 49). The flag was a simple blue over green and yellow horizontal tricolor, with a ratio of width of the stripes as 3:2:3 (Fig. 50). In the arms is present an element from the arms of Zhytomyr city (town gate). The flax and hop are basic cultures, which cultivation glorifies this *oblast*. On the flag the blue stripe symbolizes the pure sky and the blossoming flax, green represents woods and fields of hop, while yellow stands for grain fields. But after the criticism of the coats of arms, the *oblast* council ordered new designs of symbols in Kyiv. Arms: Gules, a fillet cross Or; in the first quarter the figure of the Archangel Michael with wings expanded Argent, in

the 2nd on a horse saliant Argent, finished Azure, a chevalier armed at all points, grasping in his right hand a sword and in left hand a shield Purple, the Columns Argent, in the 3rd a cross pattée Argent, in the 4th sun figured Or; an inescutcheon Azure charged with a town gate triple-towered Argent. The shield is framed with a wreath of wheaten ears, flowers of flax and cones of hop. Above the shield is placed a stylized mural crown Argent with ears (!) Or (Fig. 51). The flag is in proportion 2:3, with a thin yellow cross on a red field, at the centre is placed an inescutcheon Azure charged with a town gate triple-towered Argent (Fig. 52). The new arms and flag were adopted on January 31, 2003. The author of the projects is O. Rudenko. The arms also include an emblem of Zhytomyr city, and four symbols, which should mean historical and geographical territories: Kyiv region, Polissya, Volyn and Podillya.

But the design of a symbol of *Pohonya* (a horse saliant Argent, finished Azure, a chevalier armed at all points, grasping in his right hand a sword) was a plagiarism of the State arms of Lithuania, designed by A. Kazdailis! Following the letter of the Ukrainian Heraldry Society the design of the arms will be changed.

Conclusion

The submitted material enable us to make certain conclusions whereby only 5 oblasts (Donetsk, Kirovohrad, Sumy, Ternopil, and Cherkasy) have totally new arms without the use of any old symbols of historical territories or towns. 6 oblasts have adopted their arms only in shields, while all others use supplementary elements (wreaths, crests, decorative details, etc.).

The designs of regional flags have the following elements: 9 oblasts have the image of their arms (in a shield) on their flag:

- 4 (Zaporizhya, Kharkiv, Sumy, Cherkasy): arms on an one-colour field,
- 1 (Luhansk): coat of arms and additional elements on an one-colour field,
- 4 (Odesa, Rivne, Khmelnytsky and Kherson): arms on a background of horizontal or vertical stripes.

13 oblasts have separate figures taken from their arms:

- 2 (Dnipropetrovsk and Ternopil) repeat their heraldic charges, but without a shield (armorial flag),
- 5 (Volyn, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kirovohrad, Kyiv, Chernihiv) repeat their heraldic charges with additional colour stripes or elements,
- 6 (Vinnytsya, Zhytomyr, Lviv, Mykolayiv, Poltava, Chernivtsi) have the image of separate charges from the coats of arms.

For 2 regions (Crimea and Donetsk) the flags are related to their arms only by colours.

The decentralized process of developing modern regional symbols has had a negative impact on their quality and imagery. For example, the coats of arms of the Poltava oblast are flawed; in the arms of the Ternopil oblast there is reference to improper norms of colours (Or field with Argent charges); in the arms of the Zhytomyr and Dnipropetrovsk oblasts outside support elements are flawed. In certain cases, had proper competitions been held or had the development of the symbols been conducted under the professional control of the Ukrainian Heraldry Society, it would have been possible to generate interesting and expressive symbols.

By 2005 Ukraine is planning on conducting administrative-territorial reform, according to which the number of oblasts might decrease to 10-15.

Notes

¹ Grechylo A., Osnovni napryamky dalshoho rozvytku miskoyi heraldyky, in: *Ukrayinska heraldyka: mynule, suchasnist, perspektyvy*, Kyiv, Lviv, 1991, p. 10-11; Dmytriyenko M., Suchasna miska heraldyka Ukrainy: istoriya ta perspektyvy rozvytku, in: *ibid.*, p. 14-16; Stetsyuk P., Do pytannya pro systemu symboliky orhaniv mistsevoho samovryaduvannya ta neobkhdnist vdoskonalennya protsesu yiknyoho stvorennia i vykorystannya, in: *ibid.*, p. 33-35; Grechylo A. Neobkhdnist vrehulyuvannya protsesiv herbotvorennia ta perspektyvy rozvytku ukrayinskoyi heraldyky, in: *Druha naukova heraldychna konferentsiya*, Lviv, 1992, p. 24-25; Kokhan O. Deyaki propozytsiyi shchodo rozvytku zemelnoyi ta miskoyi herbotvorchosti, in: *ibid.*, p. 32-33; Stetsyuk P., Do pytannya pro neobkhdnist stvorennia Ukrayinskoyi heraldychnoyi sluzhby, in: *ibid.*, p. 72-73; Pozharskyi A. Do pytannya pro herb Volyni, in: *Tretya naukova heraldychna konferentsiya*, Lviv, 1993, p. 62; Potap O., Khokhlovych L. Do pytannya pro systemnist v ukrayinskiy miskiy ta terytorialniy heraldytsi, in: *Pyata naukova heraldychna konferentsiya*, Lviv, 1995, p. 53-55; Grechylo A. Do problem suchasnoyi ukrayinskoyi heraldychnoyi ta veksylolohichnoyi tvorchosti, in: *Shosta naukova heraldychna konferentsiya*, Lviv, 1997, p. 21-23; Osetrova H. Herb Podillya: vytoky i zmist, in: *ibid.*, p.63-64; etc.

² Zakon Ukrainy Pro mistseve samovryaduvannya v Ukraini, in: *Holos Ukrainy*, 1997, June 14.

³ Grechylo A. Metodichni rekomendatsiyi z pytan heraldyky i prapornytstva oblastey, rayoniv, rayoniv u mistakh ta terytorialnykh hromad mist, selyshch i sil (terytorialni ta munitsypalni symboly), in: *Znak*, 2001, no. 23, p. 8-9.

⁴ Ukaz Prezidenta Ukrainy Pro Komisiyu derzhavnykh nahorod ta heraldyky, vid 11 kvitnya 2000 r.

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Andriy Grechylo, Ph.D. (historical science), president of the Ukrayinske Heraldychne Tovarystvo (Ukrainian Heraldry Society). Born on November 19, 1963 in Lviv . In 1985 Grechylo graduated from the Architectural Faculty of the Lviv Polytechnic Institute. Since 1990 research worker (scholar) of the Hrushevskyi Institute of Ukrainian Archaeography and Source Studies, National Academy of Science of Ukraine. In 1996 Grechylo defended his dissertation entitled “Ukrainian Municipal Heraldry: Tendencies of Evolution.” Since 1999 Grechylo teach as a reader (docent) of the Ivan Franko Lviv National University. Grechylo has published many scholarly and popular works (4 books and about 150 articles) devoted to the problems of heraldry, vexillology, emblems. Co-author of the Small State Coat of Arms of Ukraine, author of arms and flags of a number of *oblasts*, *rayons*, cities, towns, educational institutions, and organizations (for example, designed symbols for more than 200 towns and cities, adopted by local councils).

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