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by 3.8 per cent, per capita public consumption funds - by 6 per cent, the volume of services to the population - by 6.8 per cent, the number of children in pre-school institutions - by 5.3 per cent. Residential houses of total floor space of 4.1 million square metres will be built at the expense of all sources of financing.

The growing scales of production guarantee a job to every man and woman able to work, in accordance with their inclinations, abilities, training and education, and with due account of the needs of society.

5. The establishment in 1976 of the Standing Commission of the Supreme Soviet of the BSSR for Women's Labour, Living Conditions and Mother-and-Child Protection reflects the care of the Soviet society for the social position of women, its aspiration to take into account as fully as possible the peculiarities of woman manpower and to exercise a systematic state control over the implementation of measures aimed at the improvement of labour and living conditions of women.

## II. Participation of Women in the Political Life

6. Active participation of women of the Byelorussian SSR in the management and administration of state and public affairs has become a vivid reality of our days. They have all possibilities to exercise their right to vote and to be elected to all bodies of state power. In accordance with Article 85 of the BSSR Constitution all citizens of the Byelorussian SSR who have reached the age of 18 have the right to vote and to be elected.

485 deputies (they were 435 in 1975) were elected to the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian SSR at the elections which took place last February. Among them there are 180 women (they were 159 in 1975) or 37.1 per cent of total number of deputies.

Women of the Republic hold high state offices. Among them there are a Secretary of the Supreme Soviet of the BSSR, a Vice-Chairman of the Council of Ministers, chiefs of ministries, institutions and organizations.

7. 41501 women or 49 per cent (they were 46.7 per cent in 1975) of all deputies are elected this year to regional, district, city settlement and rural Soviets of People's Deputies of the Byelorussian SSR.

Women are elected to the offices of Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretaries of the Soviet's Executive Committees.

Women constitute 64% of the staff of state and economic administration and management bodies and of directing offices of cooperative and social organization.

8. Women are widely represented in various social organizations. 48 women are elected to leading trade-unions organs of the Republic. 47 per cent of the delegates of the 14th Congress of Byelorussian trade-unions, which took place in 1977, were women.

Byelorussian women actively participate in the work of different creative societies as well as of organizations responsible for the development of friendly relations with public abroad, and in the activity of the Soviet women's Committee.

## III. Employment and Labour Protection

9. As a result of profound social and economic transformations and of great successes in the socialist construction the Byelorussian SSR put an end to unemployment as long ago as 1930.

10. The right to work is a basis for equal rights of women in society and family. This right is enshrined in Article 38 of the BSSR Constitution which states: "Citizens of the Byelorussian SSR have the right to work (that is, to guaranteed employment and pay in accordance with the quantity and quality of their work, and not below the state-established minimum), including the right to choose their trade or profession, type of job and work in accordance with their inclinations, abilities, training and education, with the account of the needs of society. This right is ensured by the socialist economic system, steady growth of productive forces, free vocational and professional training, improvements of skills, training in new trades or professions, and development of the systems of vocational guidance and job placement".

11. The right of women to work in the Byelorussian SSR means the right to get equally with men guaranteed employment in accordance with abilities; free education; free choice of trade or profession; equal with men pay for equal job in accordance with quantity and quality of their work in social production; the right to a special labour protection and favorable labour and every day life conditions; the right to paid leave and maternity leave and reservation of employment place for women up to the end of her maternity leave; the right to maintenance in old age.

12. The labour rights of citizens are protected by law. Chapter XI of the Labour Code of the Byelorussian SSR deals with questions concerning labour activities of women. Protection of labour rights is ensured by state bodies as well as by trade-unions and other social organizations. The right of women to work is guaranteed juridically by freedom to conclude labour contract, that is to enter freely into labour relations and to interrupt them. Law prohibits to refuse to take somebody to a plant, an office or a kolkhoz for reason of sex, except to hard and harmful jobs which are forbidden for woman by a special medically grounded list of such jobs (Article 16 of the Labour Code of the Byelorussian SSR).

13. Law prohibits discrimination of women for reason of age when they are taken on. All working women of 16-18 years have such privileges as: reduced working day with full pay; longer annual leave; special labour protection etc. There are no problems for women of older age to be employed. Women who receive retirement pensions (the retirement age for women is 55 years and for some professions 50 or 45 years) may continue to work if they wish so. The state establishes different incentives for this purpose. For example women-workers, junior assistants and working women of some other professions, in particular in the field of communal services, education and health, retirement pensions are paid in full if they continue to work, that is they get pension and full pay for their job.

14. The law forbids to dismiss pregnant women, nursing mothers or women having children under one year or to deny an employment to them.

15. Percentage of employed women in various branches of the national economy in the Byelorussian SSR is shown below:<sup>1)</sup>

	1975	1978
Women employed	1,907,000	2,055,000

<sup>1)</sup> "National Economy of the Byelorussian SSR". Statistical Year Book. Minsk, "Belarus", 1979, page 155.

	1975	1978
Percentage total	53	53
trade, public catering distributive trades,		
State agricultural purchases	79	80
public education and culture	72	73
Science and scientific research assistance	51	52
banking and state insurance	78	80

Women in the Byelorussian SSR exercise fully their right to qualified work. Among the specialists with higher education women accounted for 53 per cent and among those with secondary special education - for 64 per cent.

16. Women play an active role in agriculture of the Republic. In 1979 women accounted for 27 per cent of all agronomists, for 31 per cent of all veterinarians and for 47 per cent of all zootechnicians. Female specialists not only participate in social agricultural production, but they are seen among kolkhoz and sovkhoz managers and management board members, as well as among brigade-leaders, farm-leaders etc.

17. Women and men are entitled to equal pay for equal work and this principle is strictly observed in the Republic. Women and men occupying equal posts get equal pay.

18. Working women exercise fully labour safety and health protection rights. Working week of industrial and office workers can not exceed 41 hours. For persons of 16 to 18 years old and for teachers and doctors working hours are reduced.

19. Taking into account women's physical and physiological properties special guarantees are provided for working women in addition to general legislation on labour safety and health protection. Women must not be given heavy or health-endangering work and must not work in underground mining (except for non-physical work and sanitary and every-day services). The Labour Code of the BSSR fixes maximum weight that can be lifted or moved by women (Article 160).

20. Employed women are granted pregnancy and maternity leaves lasting 56 days before confinement and 56 days after confinement. In case of plural births or complicated confinements the maternity leave is extended to 70 days. During all this period of time women receive the allowance amounting to their usual salary (Article 165 of the Labour Code of the BSSR).

At the request of a woman the administration of an enterprise or an office grants an additional leave without pay but with retention of working place untill the baby reaches the age of one year.

If an expectant mother cannot, because of a medical opinion, be employed at her usual job, she must be given easier or more suitable work without wage reduction. If a nursing mother cannot fulfil her usual work she must be given another more suitable one without of pay reduction for all the period of time needed for feeding her baby or until the baby reaches the age of one year (Article 164 of the Labour Code of the BSSR).

21. Ramified network of pre-school establishments plays an important role in creating conditions for women to unite their vocation and motherhood. In December 1979 the Council of Ministers of the BSSR adopted a resolution on measures of further improvement of the system of providing the people with pre-school establishments. There are 3.4 thousand pre-school establishments in the Republic attended by 463 thousand children. 80 per cent of the cost of upkeep is paid by the state and the rest by the parents.

Serious attention is paid to pre-school education in rural areas. There are 1,330 pre-school establishments in rural areas attended by 54.3 thousand children. Widely popular are seasonal kinder-gartens and full-day play-grounds organized in summer-time.

#### IV. Health Protection.

22. The Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR (Article 40) affirms the right of the citizens of the Republic to health protection. The Health Law of the Byelorussian SSR adopted in 1970 contains a detailed explanation of the system of mother-and-child care in the Republic. Free qualified medical aid : provided by state health institution to all citizens and equally available to everyone as well as broad and constant prophylactic measures taken by all health institutions that is the main principle of Soviet health care. This principle underlies the whole system of mother-and-child care in the Republic. There are now 31.6 thousand doctors of all specialities and over 90 thousand paramedical workers in the Republic. In 1979 the hospitals of the Byelorussian SSR had 118.9 thousand beds (the population of the Republic is 9.6 million people).

23. The Byelorussian SSR has a ramified network of maternity hospitals, midwife and gynaecological departments in hospitals. There are over 600 women's consultation centers, children's polyclinics and out-patient posts in the Republic. A Mother-and-Child Care Research Center is functioning in the Republic over many decades.

24. The State pays attention to constant improvement of housing conditions of large families. In February 1980 the Council of Ministers of the BSSR and the Council of the Trade-Unions of Byelorussia adopted a resolution which gives the right to receive a state residential appartement in the first place to families with three and more children or in case of plural confinement.

25. Close attention is paid to improve medical service to women in rural areas. Nowadays the Republic has 6 regional hospitals with 5.6 thousand beds, 6 regional children's hospitals with 2.2 thousand beds, 136 district hospitals with 29.7 thousand beds, 472 local hospitals with 16.2 thousand beds, 220 rural out-patient centers, 3,011 feldscher-midwife posts.

Rural dwellers also receive, if necessary, specialized medical assistance at all city hospitals, dispensaries, clinics affiliated with scientific and research medical institutions and medical higher schools.

The average span of life of people in Byelorussia during the years of Soviet power has almost doubled. Before the Great October socialist revolution it was about 37 years, nowadays it exceeds 72 years. The average life span of the Byelorussian women has reached 76 years.

27. High personal esteem and social prestige of women in a socialist society are connected not only with their broad participation in social production, political and social life but with their active role in the life of their families.

The equality of rights in a family is based on the constitutional provision affirming the equal rights of women and men in all spheres of state, political, economic, social and cultural life of the country. Article 51 of the Constitution of the BSSR declares inter alia: "The family enjoys the protection of the state.

Marriage is based on the free consent of the woman and the man; the spouses are completely equal in their family relations".

28. The Code of the Byelorussian SSR on Marriage and the Family regulates the procedure and conditions for entering into marriage, personal and property relations which arise between spouses in the family, relation dealing with the adoption, guardianship, curatorship, reception for the upbringing of children and other questions.

Marriage to be registered requires mutual consent of the persons who are getting married and the attainment by them of the marital age (Article 15 of the Code of the Byelorussian SSR on Marriage and the Family). The marital age is 18.

29. In Article 216 of the Code of the Byelorussian SSR on Marriage and the Family is reported that "entering into marriage Soviet citizens and foreigners does not involve the change of the citizenship". Each of the spouses is free to choose the occupation, profession or trade and place of residence (Article 20 of the Code on Marriage and the Family).

30. Property acquired by the spouses during their marriage is considered to be their common property. The spouses have equal rights to the possession, use and disposal of the property. They enjoy equal rights to the property even if one of them has not had an independent earning because of being engaged in running the household or taking care of the children, or for any other valid reasons (Article 21 of the Code on Marriage and the Family).

31. The marriage may be dissolved by a court on the application of one or both of the spouses. The dissolution of a marriage is conducted in a court hearing, therefore the court takes measures to reconcile the spouses and has the right to postpone the hearing, giving the partners a period of time for reconciliation. When rendering a decision to dissolve a marriage the court takes measures, where necessary, to protect the interests of children who are minors and of a spouse who is incapable of working (Article 35 of the Code on Marriage and the Family).

32. The father and the mother enjoy equal rights and obligations towards their children. In accordance with Article 64 of the Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR "Citizens of the Byelorussian SSR are obliged to concern themselves with the upbringing of children, to train them for socially useful work and to raise them as worthy members of the socialist society".

33. Concern for a further consolidation of the family is determined in the Soviet Law as one of the most important task of the Soviet State.

#### Y. Education and Vocational Training

34. Women in the Byelorussian SSR have an equal right with men to education. The right of citizens to education "is ensured by free provision of all forms of education, by the institution of universal, compulsory secondary education and broad development of vocational, specialized secondary and higher education, in which instruction is oriented toward practical activity and production; by the development of extramural, correspondence and evening courses; by the provision of state scholarships and grants and privileges for students; by the free issue of school textbooks; by the opportunity to attend a school where teaching is in the native language; and by the provision of facilities for self-education" (Article 43 of the Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR).

35. The Law of the Byelorussian SSR on Universal, Compulsory Secondary Education, adopted in December 1974 by the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian SSR in accordance with the Constitution also provides for all citizens free and equal access to all forms of education irrespective of their race or nationality, sex, beliefs, property or social status. Part of the pupils and students are completely maintained by the state, the state provides scholarship grants and other financial aid to the pupils of secondary specialized educational establishments and students of higher learning institutions; all schooling in the Byelorussian SSR is co-educational.

36. Young people finishing their education in 8th grade school have an opportunity to obtain secondary education in the following ways: general secondary school with daytime and eveningtime (two shifts) studying course, specialized secondary school and secondary vocational-technical school, giving general secondary education.

37. Achievements of the developed socialism and further improvement of all system of education permitted to ensure the transition to universal secondary education during the Tenth Five-Year Plan period (1971-1975) of the development of the national economy. Now practically all young people after 8th grade school are continuing their education in high general education schools, in specialized secondary vocational-technical schools.

38. New schools for 347,000 schoolchildren including schools in rural areas for 208,000 children have been built in the Byelorussian SSR for five last years only. In the 1978/79 school year there were 7575 general educational schools attended by 1574.5 thousand children. Free school text-books are provided for the pupils of all general secondary educational schools.

39. The system of vocational-technical schools gives a broad opportunity to obtain secondary education alongside with vocational training. It allows to receive professions alongside with general secondary education. 210 vocational and technical schools of Byelorussia enrolled 38,000 girls or 28 per cent of

the total number of schoolchildren (in 1975 - 25 per cent). In 1980 the number of vocational and technical schools will grow to 221.

40. Vocational and technical school graduates work practically in all branches of the national economy: instrument-making, electronic, engineering, chemical and radio industry; transport, communication, light and food industry. In agriculture: field-crop cultivation, vegetable-growing, cattle-breeding, in the sphere of communal and other services.

41. Training women directly at enterprise, at schools of advanced methods of labour, at all kinds of courses is also of great importance. A large number of new forms of training and retraining of high level qualification women-workers have been introduced last years: school training centers, school shops, work shops, laboratories and others.

42. In the Byelorussian SSR women have equal access and opportunities with men to higher education. Data about the number of women-students at higher learning institutions and secondary specialized schools follows below.<sup>1)</sup>

	1975/76 school year	1978/79 school year
Percentage of women in the total number of students at the higher learning institutions	53.0	54.0
including higher learning establishments of		
industry and construction, transport and communication	40.0	42.0
agriculture	32.0	36.0
national economy	73.0	73.0
health, physical culture and sport	51.0	54.0
education, art and cinematograph	71.0	71.0
Percentage of women in the total number of students of specialized secondary educational establishments	55.0	58.0
including educational establishments of		
industry and construction, transport and communication	47.0	52.0
agriculture	40.0	42.0
national economy	94.0	95.0
health, physical culture and sport	85.0	90.0
education, art	72.0	74.0

<sup>1)</sup>National Economy of the Byelorussian SSR. Statistical year-book.  
Minsk, "Belarus" 1979, page 242.



43. Soviet Law guarantees to every graduate a job in accordance with his profession and the payment in accordance with the quantity and quality of his work. Conditions for vocational perfections are also guaranteed.

44. Having equal access and opportunities with men in obtaining secondary and higher education, vocational and professional training women play an important role in science and public education. In the total number of teachers and school principals women account for 73.4 per cent, including principals of secondary schools - 69.2 per cent.

Here is shown the number of women in the Byelorussian SSR among the scientists<sup>1)</sup>

	1975	1978
Total number of women-scientists	12612	14459
including candidates and doctors of science	2569	2877
Number of women-scientists having academic rank of academician, corresponding member, professor	40	56
assistant professor	657	775
senior scientist-worker	330	390
junior scientist-worker	561	656

45. Professional perfection and labour activity of women are provided by implementation of compulsory secondary education, broad development of the network of specialized secondary learning establishments and institutions, by ensuring high level of general and vocational training as well as by developing the system of evening and extra-mural learning establishments. Students combining study with work are granted a broad privileges (short work-week, paid leaves for the period of examinations, preparation of draft diploma, pregnancy and maternity leaves). All these measures give the opportunities for raising the level of the education and general culture of women which is necessary not only for getting an advanced vocation but for the social work and upbringing children.

46. Further creation and extention of opportunities and of necessary conditions for widespread involving women in the social life is considered as the most important task of Soviet State.

47. Women of the Byelorussian SSR support unanimously aims and tasks of the UN Decade for Women within the frame-work of which broad measures are taken to ensure genuine equality women with men, their active involvment in the social life, deepening the international cooperation based on peace, equality, justice, elimination of the colonialism, neocolonialism and racism.

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<sup>1)</sup> National Economy of the Byelorussian SSR.  
Statistical Year-Book. Minsk, "Belarus", 1979, page 29.