



UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL



Distr.
GENERAL

E/1980/6/Add.15
7 April 1980

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON
ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Reports submitted in accordance with Council resolution
1988 (LX) by States Parties to the Covenant, concerning
rights covered by articles 10-12

DENMARK

[1 March 1980]

Article 10: Protection of the family, mothers and children

Re A: Protection of the family

Reference is made to the report of 23 December 1977 submitted by the Government of Denmark regarding article 9.

Re A(1)

The Child and Family Allowances Act, No. 236, of 2 June 1967, most recently amended by Act of 13 September 1978

The Social Assistance Act, No. 333 of 19 July 1974, which entered into force on 1 April 1976

The Public Relief Act, No. 169, of 31 May 1961, with subsequent amendments

The Child and Youth Welfare Act, No. 193, of 4 June 1964, with subsequent amendments

The Invalidity and National Pensioners Welfare Act, No. 229, of 6 June 1968, with subsequent amendments

The Home Help Act No. 230, of 6 June 1968, with subsequent amendments

The Social Assistance Act, in which previous separate social laws have been codified, is based on the principle of a one-string system

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In connexion with devolution of special welfare services to district and country authorities, the Social Assistance Act has been amended, effective from 1 January 1980. The amendments (sections 48 (2), 95a and 112) are reviewed in this report.

Re A(3) and (4)

In addition to semi-annual adjustments of child allowances to the cost-of-living index, provision has been made by law for welfare adjustments consequent upon VAT increases from 15 per cent to 18 per cent in 1977 and to 20-1/4 per cent in 1978.

Rates as at 1 April 1979:

General allowance	kr. 471 per quarter
Increased allowance	kr. 708 per quarter
Additional allowance	kr. 541 per quarter

The full amount of these allowances is paid to families with a taxable annual income of kr. 132,000. For higher incomes the allowance is reduced or entitlement lapses.

Special children's allowances are paid, as of 1 April 1979, at quarterly rates of kr. 1,890, kr. 1,140 and kr. 570, respectively.

Youth allowance to young persons of age 16 or 17 years, is paid at the maximum rate of kr. 2,200 per year. Full youth allowance is normally not obtainable where the household income exceeds kr. 70,000 and the young persons' own income is in excess of kr. 6,000.

Eligibility for assistance under the Social Assistance Act

The Social Assistance Act applies to any person resident in Denmark who, because of his own or his family's circumstances, is in need of advice, financial or practical assistance, support for development or restoration of working capacity, or care, special treatment or support for upbringing (sect. 1).

The right to permanent maintenance assistance is contingent on Danish citizenship. A woman who is or was last married to a Danish citizen is treated equally with Danish citizens (sect. 2).

Under agreements with other States or with international organizations, persons who are not Danish citizens may be granted the right to permanent maintenance assistance while resident in Denmark (sect. 3).

Where a person who is not a Danish citizen and is not entitled to assistance in pursuance of agreements with other States or otherwise is in need of permanent maintenance assistance, the Minister for Social Affairs or the authority empowered by him to act on his behalf will decide whether the person concerned shall be repatriated (sect. 3).

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The Minister for Social Affairs has laid down regulations under which persons in public service or holding public office shall notify the social welfare committee if, in the exercise of their public functions, they become aware of circumstances which suggest that a person is in need of social assistance (sect. 19)..

Forms of assistance

The local social welfare committee may offer regular guidance and advice to single persons or families. It is the duty of the committee, through reaching-out case-work, to make such an offer to any person who is assumed to be in need thereof (sect. 28).

It is the duty of the social welfare committee to arrange accommodation for homeless families against payment in an amount exceeding neither the rental value nor the normal cost of housing in the locality for a family of the size concerned (sect. 31 (1)).

It is the duty of the social welfare committee to look into the conditions under which children are living and to support parents in the upbringing and care of their children (sect. 32).

Where a child is assumed to be in need of support, the social welfare committee shall offer special guidance and support to the person in whom parental authority is vested or who is actually taking care of the child.

The social welfare committee, if necessary, out of consideration for the welfare of the child (sect. 33), shall make recommendations and directions with regard to the care and treatment of the child, assign a personal adviser to the child, or possibly, arrange for temporary placement of the child away from the home. The social welfare committee may defray the cost of such measures. Payment for welfare services is charged according to special principles. The rates are fixed separately for each type of assistance, taking into account the financial circumstances of the person concerned (sects. 7, 46 (2), 66 (2) and 100 of the Social Assistance Act and sundry administrative regulations).

Where a person, due to illness, pregnancy and confinement, failing opportunities for employment, separation or divorce, service as a conscript, or for any other reason is temporarily debarred from making enough money to support himself/herself or the family, and the cost thereof is not covered through benefits or pensions, public support is granted in an amount to counteract an appreciable lowering of the previous standard of living of the person or persons concerned (sect. 37 (1)).

It is a precondition for grant of assistance that the applicant as well as the spouse have made adequate use of their possibilities to sign on for work, (sect. 38 (2)).

In addition, assistance may be granted to meet non-recurrent expenses for which reasonable ground is seen, (sect. 40).

Assistance for education or training may be granted where deemed necessary to enable a person in future to make his own living and support his family and where grant of such assistance is possible under the relevant general provisions, (sect. 42).

Assistance may be granted for medical treatment, medicines and dental treatment where the cost thereof is not refundable under other legislation (sect. 46 (1)) and, if the applicant is devoid of means to cover the cost himself, assistance for removal where this serves to improve the applicant's or the family's housing and working conditions (sect. 47 (1)).

To ensure that a child can remain in the home in spite of a chronic physical or mental handicap, provision has been made for grant of assistance to meet the additional cost involved (sect. 48).

Persons with severe physical or mental handicaps who are staying in their own homes have the right to assistance to cover the additional cost of support. Furthermore, home-help may be provided for occasional relief of persons who in the home are caring for a child or an adult suffering from physical or mental disorders (sect. 52).

Temporary home-help may be provided for the performance of ordinary household tasks when needed because of illness, child-birth or convalescence.

It is the duty of local government authorities to provide home-help by persons trained especially for that task (sect. 50).

If the social welfare committee is not in a position to make home-help available to a family in need thereof, a grant may be made to cover the cost of a domestic help employed by the family itself (sect. 56 (1)).

It is the duty of local authorities to provide adequate accommodation for children and young persons in day institutions (sect. 68).

In addition, the social welfare committee may make arrangement for day care in private homes (sect. 64). Payment for private day care is charged, for children under school age at the rate of 35 per cent and for children over school age at the rate of 25 per cent of the cost of institutional care. For membership in leisure and youth clubs the rate is 20 per cent. In these calculations, the expenditure of institutions for charges on and maintenance of premises are left out of account. Free or partially free places may be granted on social or educational grounds.

Where a child with severe physical or mental handicaps is accommodated in a day institution, the charge to parents is reduced by 50 per cent, it may be further reduced or waived for social or educational reasons. The county authority shall provide adequate accommodation in special day institutions for children and young persons who, because of severe physical or mental handicaps, are in need of support, treatment etc. which cannot be provided in ordinary day institutions (sect. 95 a). Accommodation in a special day institution is free if dictated mainly by need for treatment.

As of 1 January 1979 the coverage of needs for accommodation in ordinary day institutions was 29.6 per cent for children aged 0-2 years and 43.3 per cent for children aged 3-6 years. Seven hundred twenty-five children were on the waiting list for admission to special day institutions.

Re B: Maternity protection

Re B(1)

Act No. 262, of 7 June 1972, with subsequent amendments, contains, in part 12, sections 33-37, provisions governing the right to maternity benefit. The right covers women who are wage or salary earners, self-employed or participating in a family enterprise.

The Social Assistance Act (sects. 28, 37, 38, 42, 46, 47, 50 and 51); cf. reply re article 10A above.

The Prenatal and Obstetric Care Act, No. 431, of 3 September 1975. A copy in Danish is enclosed.

For details, see Report by the Government of Denmark under Article 40 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: Additional Information, October 1979, p. 36, last paragraph, and p. 37, first paragraph.

Re B(2)

Care in maternity homes is provided free of charge for pregnant women and mothers faced with special problems during the period around childbirth. The maternity homes serve also as convalescent homes for mothers with small children. (Social Assistance Act, sects. 101-104).

Re B(3) and (4)

By Act No. 161, of 12 April 1978, and Act No. 162, of 12 April 1978, Danish legislation has been brought into line with the EC Council Directive of 9 February 1976 on implementation of the principle of equal treatment of men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions. Copies in Danish of the two Acts, which entered into force on 1 July 1978, are enclosed.

Under those Acts discrimination against and dismissal of women on account of pregnancy is unlawful. This does not mean, however, that women are debarred from protection in connexion with pregnancy and child-birth.

Under section 7 of the Legal Relationship (Employers and Employees) Act, female employees who are absent from work because of pregnancy and child-birth are entitled to half pay for up to five months from the date on which they become incapacitated for work. The right covers a period of not less than three months before the expected time of child-birth and a maximum of three months after child-birth. A copy of the Act in Danish with subsequent amendments inserted - Lovbekendtgørelse No. 413, of 30 August 1971 - is enclosed.

A female employee who is not guaranteed maternity leave with pay is entitled to maternity benefit, provided out of local government funds, for a period of

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14 weeks, reckoned at the earliest from eight weeks before the expected time of child-birth and at the latest from the time of child-birth. As a principal rule, the rate of maternity benefit is calculated on the basis of the earned income registered by the tax authorities for the last preceding calendar year (including benefit from an unemployment fund). The maternity benefit may not, however, be less than 10 per cent of the maximum amount obtainable (kr. 1.506 per week as of 1 May 1979). A woman for whom no annual earned income is registered is entitled to maternity leave if for not less than six months within the last 12 months prior to her absence from work she earned an income, with entitlement to unemployment benefit, of not less than 10 per cent of the maximum benefit payable.

In the calculation of the earned income giving entitlement to benefit, income is included which the woman would have earned during periods when a doctor found it necessary that she be spared from work or when she was debarred from receiving unemployment benefit solely because of unemployment fund regulations concerning waiting period and eligibility for membership.

An employer paying a wage or salary - typically to an employee - during maternity leave is entitled to reimbursement out of maternity benefit provided from local government sources.

A woman who is self-employed or participates in a family enterprise is entitled to maternity benefit for a period of four weeks, reckoned from the time of child-birth. Adoptant mothers are entitled to maternity benefit for six weeks if they are wage or salary earners or if they are self-employed or assisting wives for four weeks, reckoned from the date the child is left in their care.

The right to maternity benefit is not contingent upon marital status except in the case of assisting wives. For is it contingent upon Danish citizenship.

Re C: Protection of children and young persons

Re C(1)

The Social Assistance Act, No. 333, of 19 July 1974; cf. reply re article 10A above.

The Working Environment Act, No. 681, of 23 December 1975. A copy in English is enclosed.

Re C(2)

The Health Visitor Services Act, Act No. 409, of 13 June 1973, as amended by Act No. 224, of 12 June 1975. A copy in Danish is enclosed.

Executive Order No. 162, of 27 March 1974, relating to health visitor services. A copy in Danish is enclosed.

Guidelines for the organization of health visitor services, of July 1974. A copy in Danish is enclosed.

Health visitor services are provided primarily for children under school age. Health visitors (registered nurses having undergone further training) work in collaboration with medical and social experts. Their tasks are, inter alia, to assist in preventing the occurrence of pathological conditions and, where health and development problems are suspected or recognized, to see that treatment is provided at the earliest possible stage so as to avoid as far as possible the development of defects which at a later time could pose social and/or educational problems.

Health visitor services comprise health guidance to parents, observation of children's state of health and, where necessary, arrangement for contact with medical and/or social experts, guidance and assistance, including reaching-out casework.

All health visitor services are free.

Medical examination of children aged 0-7 years old

The Medical Examination of Children Act, No. 236, of 30 April 1946, as amended by Act No. 236, of 4 June 1969. A copy in Danish is enclosed.

Executive Order No. 534, of 24 October 1978, relating to medical examination of children. A copy in Danish is enclosed.

Guidance on prophylactic medical examinations of children aged 0-7 years. A copy in Danish is enclosed.

The objectives of prophylactic medical examinations, to which all children under compulsory school age are entitled, are to help give the child the best possible conditions for a healthy development, physically, mentally and socially; to prevent disease; to detect incipient pathological conditions at an early stage; to inform the parents about needs and possibilities for stimulation - somatically, mentally and socially - at the various stages of the child's development. The scheme covers nine free prophylactic health examinations, of which three are performed during the child's first year of life. The examinations focus on the various aspects of physical and mental development between the ages of 0 and 7 years. Each examination comprises anamnesis, objective examination and an interview with the parents for the purpose of offering guidance to them.

Vaccination and immunization of children

The Vaccination and Immunization of Children Against Certain Diseases Act No. 634, of 17 December 1976. A copy in Danish is enclosed.

Executive Order No. 77, of 4 March 1977, relating to vaccination and immunization of children against certain infectious or contagious diseases. A copy in Danish is enclosed.

Guidelines of 10 March 1977 for vaccination and immunization of children against infectious or contagious diseases. A copy in Danish is enclosed.

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Vaccination or immunization against whooping cough, diphtheria, tetanus, polio and tuberculosis is offered free of charge to all persons under age 18 years.

Medical services for school children

The School Medical Services Act, No. 430, of 16 August 1974, as amended by Act No. 178, of 7 May 1975, and Act No. 634, of 17 December 1976. A copy in Danish is enclosed.

Executive Order of 5 July 1972 relating to school medical services. A copy in Danish is enclosed.

Guidelines for the organization of school medical services. A copy in Danish is enclosed.

School medical services are provided free of charge for all children of compulsory school age and for children attending nursery school.

The objectives of school medical services are to carry out prophylactic and health-promoting measures in respect of children and their school environment and to check the physical and mental state of health of the individual child.

The services provided are free prophylactic health examinations performed at regular intervals on children of certain class levels and on children in special need of such examinations. Children requiring medical treatment are referred to a general practitioner.

School dental services

The Dental Care of Children Act, promulgated by Notice No. 666, of 22 December 1977. A copy in Danish is enclosed.

Executive Order No. 432, of 22 August 1974, relating to dental care of children. A copy in Danish is enclosed.

Guidance on the scope and requirements of dental care of children, of January 1972. A copy in Danish is enclosed.

As of 1 August 1980, all children of compulsory school age will be entitled to free dental care. From 1 August 1981 the dental services scheme will be extended to cover one age class per year of children under compulsory school age until complete coverage has been achieved for all children of or under compulsory school age.

The objective of the dental services scheme is to ensure access for all children to regular prophylactic dental care and treatment, with a view to improving their state of dental health. The services provided are general prophylactic measures, including information, individual prophylactic measures, regular examination of the development of the dental system and the state of dental health, treatment for dental disease and straightening of irregular teeth to the extent necessary for keeping the dental system in a good functional state.

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Re C(2) and (3)

Any person who is aware that a child under age 18 years, is being maltreated or exposed to degrading treatment by the parents or others or is living under conditions endangering the child's health and development must notify the local social welfare committee of the matter (Social Assistance Act, sect. 20).

Any person who induces or helps a child accommodated away from the home in pursuance of the Social Assistance Act to escape or hides an escaped child is guilty of an offence (sect. 23).

Any person who places out, takes in or removes a child from family care in contravention of the provisions of the Social Assistance Act (cf. sect. 24) is guilty of an offence.

It is the duty of county authorities to provide free examination and treatment in counselling centres for maladjusted children and young persons (Social Assistance Act, sects. 87-90).

It is also the duty of county authorities to provide accommodation in institutions, including boarding houses, for children and young persons who have to be accommodated away from home or who, because of severe physical or mental handicaps, are in special need of care, treatment etc.

The county authorities are responsible for providing adequate facilities for accommodation and out-patient treatment in institutions of maladjusted children and young persons.

Assistance services for young persons can be provided until the age of 20 years, if they themselves agree thereto (Social Assistance Act, sect. 36).

With regard to counselling, guidance, supervision etc. see reply re article 10A above.

The aforementioned protective measures apply to all children and young persons resident in Denmark.

Re C(4) and (5)

Reference is made to Report by the Government of Denmark under article 40 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: Additional Information, October 1979, pp. 21-24.

Article 11: Right to an adequate standard of living

Re A: General and specific measures

Cash benefit (Social Assistance Act, sects. 37 ff.). See reply re article 10A above.

Permanent support (Social Assistance Act, sects. 43, 44 and 45).

A person in need of permanent assistance for his own and his family's support may, where such assistance cannot be provided in the form of benefits under social pension laws, be granted support in an amount equivalent to the national pension obtainable by a pensioner without any other income plus a supplement for each child, corresponding to the special child allowance obtainable pursuant to section 4 (3) of the Child and Family Allowances Act (Social Assistance Act, sect. 43 (1)).

A person receiving permanent support may be granted an additional amount towards payment of non-recurrent expenses for which there is deemed to be a reasonable ground and which cannot be covered within the limits of the aforementioned support allowance (Social Assistance Act, sect. 43 (2)).

If, exceptionally, the social welfare committee considers that support in excess of the aforementioned limit should be granted, it will submit a recommendation to that effect to the Rehabilitation and Pension Board for approval.

It is a precondition for grant of support pursuant to section 43 of the Social Assistance Act that the applicant as well as the spouse produce evidence to show that work within their capacity cannot be assigned to them. If it is found that the spouse, after undergoing training, would be able to make a substantial contribution to the support of the family, financial assistance for training can be granted under the provisions of part 9 of the Social Assistance Act.

In assessing the justification for grant of support pursuant to section 43 of the Social Assistance Act, the possession by the applicant of a minor capital will be left out of account only if he wants to preserve it for specific purposes which are deemed to be reasonable, taking his circumstances into account.

Re B: Right to adequate food

The Food Act, No. 310, of 6 June 1973, as amended by Act No. 108, of 29 March 1978. By this amendment drinking water was removed from the sphere of applicability of the Food Act.

Executive Order No. 86, of 8 March 1978, regulating the mercury content of tuna and bonito. A limit of 0.5 mg per kg fish meat is established for tuna and bonito sold as human food.

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Executive Order No. 126, of 16 March 1978, prohibiting the use of certain flavouring substances in food-stuffs. The Order came into force on 1 September 1978.

Executive Order No. 343, of 4 July 1978, on honey. In line with EC Directive. The Order came into force on 1 September 1978.

Executive Order No. 383, of 2 August 1978, on coffee extracts. In line with EC Directive. The Order will come into force on 1 July 1980.

Executive Order No. 451, of 12 September 1978, on juice from fruits and vegetables etc. In line with EC Directive.

Executive Order No. 460, of 15 September 1978, on preparations of nutrients sold as supplement to a normal diet.

Executive Order No. 519, of 16 October 1978, on labelling of prepacked peas and of prepacked food-stuffs containing a substantial amount of peas.

Executive Order No. 598, of 28 November 1978, on foods for special dietary purposes.

Executive Order No. 191, of 4 May 1979, on surface treatment of citrus fruits and bananas. In line with EC Directive.

The basic enactment is the Food Act (Act No. 310, of 6 June 1973, as amended by Act No. 108, of 29 March 1978).

Supplementary to the Food Act, special laws have been enacted and administrative regulations (in the form of executive orders) laid down with respect to a number of food-stuffs, e.g., meat, edible offal, meat and meat products, milk and milk products (butter; cheese; ice cream; canned, condensed and dry milk), margarine; eggs and egg products; fish and fish products; slaughtered poultry and slaughtered rabbits.

The Food Act contains, inter alia, provisions governing licensing, registration of importers, and designation and labelling of food.

Pursuant to the Act, retailing, packing, repacking and transport of food is subject to licence, granted by the local authority. The same applies to canteens and to boarding houses with more than 12 permanent boarders.

Furthermore, authorization must be obtained following change of ownership of an enterprise, major changes in the product or range of products handled or in the structure and layout of premises.

Pursuant to the Food Act, a list of food additives has been compiled. No substance may be entered in the list unless it does not present any health hazards and does not serve to mislead the consumer - for instance, if it has the effect of altering the nature or quality of the product. Furthermore, there must be a

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technological need for the use of the additive. The list is revised every year in the light of up-to-date knowledge.

The special law relating to fish and fish products was last revised in 1975. It covers catching, storage, transport, freezing, preservation, processing, and other treatment of fish and fish products.

Executive Order No. 376, of 27 June 1974, issued by the Ministry of the Environment, contains provisions governing certain aspects of wholesale trade in food for which there are no special laws. The grant of a licence by the local supervisory authority is required for setting up wholesale business. The supervisory authority is empowered to inspect premises, installations etc. Supervisory authority is vested in the Veterinary Service and the National Food Institute, which, if they deem necessary, may order suspension of deliveries.

The executive orders issued in pursuance of the aforementioned special laws usually contain detailed regulations with regard not only to protection of health and control of quality but production, storage, wholesale trade and sales promotion. The provisions concerned apply to both exports and imports.

Executive Order No. 368, of 27 June 1974, issued by the Ministry of the Environment, sets out regulations on control of the production of food-stuffs not covered by special laws and of food additives. For production of food-stuffs in enterprises falling within the Order, authorization by the Veterinary Service is required. For local supervisory authority, the Veterinary Service and the National Food Institute are empowered to carry out inspection and may prohibit the sale of or confiscate and destroy food which is considered to be unfit for human consumption.

Executive Order No. 389, of 27 June 1974, deals with retailing of food, including serving of food in catering establishments. For retailing of food the grant of a licence by the local supervisory authority is required. Approval must be obtained of any alteration of the layout of an enterprise which has a material effect on sanitary conditions in sales premises, food preparation rooms and storage areas, and on personal hygiene.

The Order sets out provisions governing hygiene, prevention of infection of food by personnel handling food, serving of food in restaurants, sale of food from kiosks, food vending vehicles, automatic vending machines, and itinerant sale of food. Local authorities are responsible for enforcement of the Order but may delegate any or all of their duties to local control units. Ultimate responsibility for supervising compliance with the Order rests with the Veterinary Service.

Executive Order No. 482, of 27 September 1974, issued by the Ministry of Agriculture, applies to meat intended for sale on the home market. It sets out provisions governing slaughtering and inspection of animals, meat and meat products. Ultimate responsibility for supervising compliance with the Order rests with the Veterinary Service.

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Laws relating to export of food come within the purview of the Ministry of Fisheries. All factories exporting agricultural and fish products are required to hold a licence authorising them to engage in such business.

Executive Order No. 190, of 22 May 1975, sets out provisions with regard to meat control, and Executive Order No. 281 of July 1963, subsequently amended, with regard to control of poultry. The Veterinary Service is responsible for control of meat and poultry, and the State Quality Control for Dairy Products and Eggs is the agency responsible for dairy products and eggs.

Local governments are responsible for the enforcement of regulations relating to retailing of food-stuffs on the home market. They may, however, delegate all or part of these duties to local control units.

Following a reorganization of the food control system, to be completed in 1984, all local government districts will be served by food control units.

Each of the food control units (35 in all) will be headed by a veterinarian who, assisted by specially trained technicians, will perform inspection services and take out samples for laboratory analysis and microbiological examination.

Local governments are responsible for the inspection of milk for human consumption. In this task they are assisted by their local control unit. Each herd from which milk for human consumption is obtained is examined by a veterinarian from two to four times a year. The raw milk is examined for number of bacteria, including content of thermo-resistant and psychotropic bacteria, for number of leucocytes and, under a mastitis-control scheme, for content of pathogenic bacteria. Furthermore, the content of milk fat is checked. Samples are also taken in dairies and retail shops. The Veterinary Service supervises inspection.

The head of office and the laboratory of the Veterinary Service are located in Copenhagen. Five regional offices are maintained in various parts of the country. For inspection purposes the country is divided into four areas, each of which is served by one veterinary inspector and one or two veterinary assistants.

Slaughterhouses authorised for export (they account for about 99 per cent of output) are supervised by a veterinarian who is responsible to the Ministry of Agriculture.

The day-to-day supervision of slaughterhouses etc. is carried out by a staff totalling 200 chief veterinarians, 200 assistant veterinarians and 200 technical assistants. In addition, 600 veterinarians are occupied part-time in checking meat.

The State Quality Control for Dairy Products and Eggs is responsible for control of dairy products (butter, cheese, canned, condensed and dry milk, ice cream), margarine, eggs and egg products. The agency, with head office in Copenhagen and four regional offices, is staffed by about 900 persons; of these 50 are inspectors.

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The responsibility for control of fish and fish products rests with the Inspection Service for Fish and Fish Products. This agency, with its head office in Copenhagen and 30 minor offices up and down the country, has a total staff of about 100.

The National Food Institute is part of the Ministry of the Environment. It deals with questions such as the composition of food, food additives and pollution of food. Analytical work is carried out in the Institute's own laboratory. The Institute also functions as adviser to public authorities and the food industry.

The Institute of Toxicology carries out toxicological studies and related experimental studies with regard to contaminants and food additives, in an attempt to find out whether or not these often non-nutritional substances found in or added to food are harmful to man. Furthermore, the Institute advises authorities, consumers, and trade and industry on questions of toxicology. The Institute consists of a biological, a biochemical and a pathological department. Each of these performs a range of special toxicological studies.

In order to ascertain the influence of a given substance on biological processes and to establish the quantity which can be given without causing undesirable effects, animals (mice, rats, rabbits and pigs) used in experimental studies are given daily doses of the substance - sometimes of varying strength - over a period of months. At the end of the experiment, the organs of the animals are examined post-mortem for macroscopically and microscopically detectable pathological changes. In the course of experiments, or in separate experiments, studies are conducted to see how the substance is metabolized in the organisms, whether or not it is accumulated, and how it is excreted, in order to gain comprehensive knowledge of the fate of the component when eaten. Tests of several kinds are performed for possible carcinogenic, teratogenic and mutagenic effects.

Laboratory control in the chemico-analytical field is performed in the central laboratory of the National Food Institute and in five regional laboratories, each of which covers an area with an average population of one million.

The regional laboratories, situated on the premises of five local food control units, perform analytical control of residues and other work which it is considered irrational to distribute among local laboratories, e.g. analysis of pesticides, vitamins and trace minerals. Other functions of the regional laboratories are to verify the results of analyses performed at the local level and to participate in monitoring activities organized by the central laboratory.

The most important task of the central laboratory is to co-ordinate the work of all local control laboratories and to ensure a high level of efficiency with respect to laboratory work done in food control units and regional laboratories. This implies issuing guidelines for laboratory work, prescribing methods of analysis, organizing intercalibration between laboratories etc.

Co-ordination of food control with environmental protection and public health services

The Ministry of the Environment is concerned with both environmental protection and safety and quality of food-stuffs. The fact that the responsibility for implementation of legislation in both fields rests with local authorities means that the food control units deal also with environmental questions. Close co-operation and co-ordination of activities in the two spheres are thus ensured.

Public health, on the other hand, comes within the purview of the Ministry of the Interior. In this field, too, there is frequent contact and useful co-operation at the local level between public health services and food control units.

Re B(2-10)

Reference is made to the enclosed Country Review Paper, Denmark, prepared by the Danish National FAO Committee for the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development. A copy in English is enclosed.

Re D: Right to housing

Re D(1)

The Social Assistance Act, No. 333, of 19 July 1974; cf. reply re article 10A, above.

The Housing Allowance to Pensioners Act, No. 251, of 6 June 1978. Entered into force on 1 January 1979.

The provisions governing housing are contained in the Tenants Act, the Provisional Housing Regulation Act, the Graded Rents Act and the Housing Act.

Re D(2)

A housing allowance is paid to pensioners to reduce their housing expenses and, as a result, to raise their standard of living. Further purposes of the scheme are to encourage pensioners to remain in their own homes and to level out differences in the housing costs of pensioners. In principle, the scheme covers all pensioners regardless of whether or not they rent or own their dwellings.

The main principle of the Act is that a pensioner shall pay only 15 per cent of the household income towards the cost of housing. The balance is covered, within certain limits, out of public funds in the form of a housing allowance which is tax-free. Hence, the amount payable by the pensioner is not determined by his income but by his housing cost. In 1979, the maximum cost of housing covered by the support scheme was kr. 24,100, and the maximum housing allowance kr. 12,720. A housing allowance is obtainable by any person, regardless of citizenship, who receives national pension, early pension, widow's pension or invalidity benefit.

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It is generally true to say that housing in Denmark has been heavily subsidized for many years. In political circles the question asked in recent years is whether it is a satisfactory situation that large direct and indirect general subsidies should be paid and how these subsidies should be spread over a variety of housing forms and population groups.

Serious consideration is currently being given to a proposal to reorganize and gradually phase out government housing subsidies. However, it is generally agreed at the political level that such withdrawal of subsidies would necessarily have to be effected over a period of many years in order to minimize transitional problems.

One reason why major housing subsidies are considered undesirable is that the existence of a subsidy permits to some extent the passing on of costs and the creation of extra profits.

While, in the short term, subsidies have brought down the housing costs of the individual householder, they have been a long-term factor in raising housing costs in real terms.

In principle, a distinction can be drawn between direct subsidy paid to tenants and indirect subsidy granted to owner-occupiers.

Direct subsidies for tenants

A graded rent system secures a subsidy for individual families. The amount is determined by income, level of rent, number of children etc.

New building work by non-profit housing associations is financed out of ordinary bond loans (74 per cent), tenants' deposits (3 per cent) and the granting of a non-repayable basic capital (23 per cent).

For existing non-profit housing schemes, an interest-guarantee system covers interest costs in excess of 6 per cent p.a. The guarantee system is normally phased out within 4-10 years after the loan is granted.

Special operating loans are granted in some cases to non-profit housing associations with acute difficulties in finding tenants for new housing.

No public subsidies are granted for the construction of private rental property.

Re D(3)

Technical and organizational development of the building industry over the past 15-20 years has meant increasing use of industrialized methods. The building process itself has been largely transferred from site to factory floor; site work nowadays is increasingly a question of assembling prefabricated, standard components.

The building industry has adapted its organization forms to changing conditions, too. New developments include the turnkey contractor who markets a range of specific products (building systems or practical systems).

The industry, however, is still very much a network of many small firms turning out a number of different products.

Active participation in the work of the ECE Committee on Housing, Building and Planning and its working parties as well as various other international organizations is of great benefit in the endeavours to develop and improve housing construction.

Re D(4)

Housing, water supply and sanitary conditions in rural areas present no special problems.

Re D(5)

Rent controls apply only in local government areas with a population over 20,000, and the principle of economic rents is applied to the older housing stock.

With the introduction of economic rents the rent should cover necessary operational costs and suitable yield on the value of the property.

In large properties tenant democracy has been introduced to keep tenants informed of costs and enable them to participate in decisions on future expenditure.

Tenants' legislation ensures for tenants a right to their dwellings.

Re D(6)

In 1977 figures the dwelling stock was 432 per 1,000 inhabitants and the building rate 7.0. Of the dwelling stock 85.4 per cent consisted of one- or two-family houses. Average rooms per dwelling were 4.9 and useful floor space per dwelling, 126 m².

Article 12: Right to physical and mental health

Re A

The Social Assistance Act, No. 333, of 19 July 1974. See sections 46, 50, 51 and 52 relating to medical treatment, medicines, etc., and the information submitted in reply re article 10A, above.

The National Health Insurance Act, No. 311, of 9 June 1971.

Pursuant to the Hospital Services Act, No. 324, of 19 June 1974 (a copy in Danish is enclosed), and other acts supplementary thereto, every person resident

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in Denmark (and, in certain cases, persons staying only temporarily in the country) is entitled to free hospital treatment. The right covers treatment in general, highly specialized treatment, and treatment in mental hospitals.

It is the duty of the county authority to provide free hospital treatment for its residents and in certain cases also for persons staying temporarily in the county. The county authority can provide treatment in its own hospitals or, against paying the cost thereof, in hospitals of other counties or in hospitals run by the central Government, or privately.

Patients are, to a wide extent, entitled to free transport to and from hospital for treatment.

To ensure that they provide at any time the best possible treatment for their citizens, the county authorities are required to work out a plan for their hospital service and submit it to the Ministry of the Interior for approval.

Detailed regulations governing the right of citizens to hospital treatment and the duties of county authorities to provide such treatment are laid down in executive orders and circulars issued by the Minister for the Interior.

The present number of hospitals and other institutions providing medical treatment is about 140. The total number of beds is about 42,000.

Re B: Information

Re B(C): Environmental and industrial hygiene

The purpose of the Working Environment Act, as set out in section 1 of the Act, is "to create a safe and healthy working environment".

For details on this point, reference is made to the information submitted by Denmark for the 1977/78 United Nations Yearbook; cf. Note of 25 January 1980 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

When fully developed, the Working Environment Institute, established as an integral part of the Directorate of Labour Inspection, will comprise

- (a) A department of industrial hygiene and technology;
- (b) A department of chemistry and toxicology;
- (c) A department of industrial medicine;
- (d) A department of industrial physiology and ergonomics;
- (e) A department of industrial psychology and sociology;
- (f) A technico-economic department;

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List of reference material annexed to the report*

1. Prenatal and Obstetric Care Act, No. 431, of 3 September 1975 (Danish)
2. Act No. 161, of 12 April 1978, on implementation of the principle of equal treatment of men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions (Danish)
3. Act No. 162, of 12 April 1978, on implementation of the principle of equal treatment of men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions (Danish)
4. Legal Relationship (Employers and Employees) Act No. 413 of 30 August 1971 (Danish)
5. Working Environment Act No. 681, of 23 December 1975 (English)
6. Health Visitor Services Act No. 409, of 13 June 1973, as amended by Act No. 224, of 12 June 1975 (Danish)
7. Executive Order No. 162, of 27 March 1974, relating to health visitor services (Danish)
8. Guidelines for organization of health visitor services, July 1974 (Danish)
9. Medical Examination of Children Act No. 236, of 30 April 1946, as amended by Act No. 236, of 4 June 1969 (Danish)
10. Executive Order No. 534, of 24 October 1978, relating to medical examination of children (Danish)
11. Publication entitled "Guidance on prophylactic medical examinations of children aged 0-7 years" (Danish)
12. Vaccination and Immunization of Children Against Certain Diseases, Act No. 634, of 17 December 1976 (Danish)
13. Executive Order No. 77, of 4 March 1977, relating to vaccination and immunization of children against certain infectious or contagious diseases (Danish)
14. Guidelines of 10 March 1977 for vaccination and immunization of children against infectious or contagious diseases (Danish)

* These documents are available for consultation in the files of the Secretariat as received from the Government of Denmark.

15. School Medical Services Act No. 430, of 16 August 1974, as amended by Act No. 178, of 7 May 1975, and Act No. 634, of 17 December 1976 (Danish)
16. Executive Order of 5 July 1972 relating to school medical services (Danish)
17. Guidelines for the organization of school medical services (Danish)
18. Dental Care of Children Act promulgated by Notice No. 666, of 22 December 1977 (Danish)
19. Executive Order No. 432, of 22 August 1974, relating to dental care of children (Danish)
20. Leaflet entitled "Guidance on scope and requirements of dental care of children", January 1972 (Danish)
21. Country Review Paper, Denmark, prepared by the Danish National FAO Committee for the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (English)
22. Hospital Services Act No. 324, of 19 June 1974 (Danish)

- (g) A number of service sectors for administration, workshop activities, planning of training, documentation, statistical assistance and EDP.

Among the Institute's tasks are the following: to conduct research and solve practical problems in the field of industrial medicine and to provide information and training.

Re B(5)

Home help on a permanent basis may be provided for persons who, because of chronic disease or infirmity, are in need of practical assistance (National Assistance Act, sect. 53).

Disabled persons and persons with debilities arising from disease or old age can be given financial assistance towards the cost of aids - including the additional cost of articles of clothing - which are necessary for enabling them to go to work or which, to an essential degree, can alleviate the effects of their disability or facilitate their living in the home (sect. 58). Necessary assistance can also be provided for adaptations to homes to make them better suited to the special needs of the individual (sect. 59).

Assistance can be given to cover the cost of attendance or of special equipment in service flats for invalidity or old-age pensioners (sect. 59 (2)).

The local authority provides or grants assistance for teaching of handicrafts and other occupations for invalidity or old-age pensioners and for persons over the age of 55 receiving widow's benefit (sect. 60).

Day homes and day centres

Local authorities have a duty to provide accommodation in day homes for persons needing constant supervision and care which cannot be provided in their homes by day. Moreover, it is the duty of local authorities to make day centres available for such welfare work as can best be provided in an institution (National Assistance Act, sect. 74).

Residential accommodation and specially designed flats

It is the duty of local authorities to provide residential accommodation for persons to whom assistance under the provisions of parts IV and V of the Social Assistance Act (home help, aids, adaptations of the home and welfare work) is inadequate to enable them to live in their own homes.

For persons who cannot live in their own homes but are not in need of residential care, arrangement can be made for their accommodation in a flat designed especially for chronically ill persons (sect. 79).

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Institutions for persons with severe physical or mental handicaps;
special residential accommodation

It is the duty of the county authorities to make adequate provision for institutional accommodation of severely physically or mentally handicapped adults needing special care, treatment etc. and for accommodation in special homes of fairly young people and people with disorders which require either that they live in specially designed homes or make it necessary that they are admitted periodically for convalescence or treatment (sect. 112).

Re B(6)

Reference is made to the Reports of the Government of Denmark concerning the implementation of Convention No. 102 on Minimum Standards of Social Security, resting with the Report for the period up to 30 June 1977.

By Act No. 539, of 1 November 1978, a revision of the provision of section 9 of the National Health Insurance Act relating to partial refund of the cost of chiropractic treatment has been deferred until the 1980/81 parliamentary session.

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