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

Second periodic reports submitted by States parties to the
Covenant, in accordance with Council resolution 1988 (LX),
concerning rights covered by articles 10-12

BULGARIA */

[23 February 1987]

*/ The initial report concerning rights covered by articles 10 to 12 of the Covenant submitted by the Government of Bulgaria (E/1980/6/Add.29) was considered by the Sessional Working Group of Governmental Experts on the Implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights at its 1982 session (see E/1982/WG.1/SR.8).

1. The initial report by the People's Republic of Bulgaria on the implementation of the provisions of articles 10 to 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights was submitted in late 1981 (E/1980/6/Add.29). In accordance with the General Guidelines for the preparation of second reports (G/SO/221/912), the present report therefore refers only to the most important changes that took place in national legislation and practice in the People's Republic of Bulgaria with regard to the rights covered by articles 10 to 12 of the Covenant during the period 1982-1985. As to other matters, reference should be made to the above-mentioned initial report, the statement by the Government representative of the People's Republic of Bulgaria during the introduction of the report and his replies to the questions raised during the consideration of the report by the Sessional Working Group of Governmental Experts on the Implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights at its meeting in New York on 12 April 1982.

2. During the period 1982-1985, the Government of the People's Republic of Bulgaria pursued its economic and social policy for the consistent implementation of the fundamental rights of citizens covered by articles 10 to 12 of the Covenant, in keeping with the country's growing economic possibilities. This policy was reflected both in internal legislation and in national practice. During the period in question, the Government adopted new laws and amended existing laws and other normative instruments on matters relating to the rights covered by articles 10 to 12 of the Covenant. These amendments and the new elements of the specific measures taken will be referred to in connection with the consideration of the implementation of the various articles of the Covenant.

ARTICLE 10

1. Protection and assistance to be accorded to the family

3. On 17 May 1985, the National Assembly adopted a new Family Code (Official Journal No. 41 of 28 May 1985), which entered into force on 1 July 1985 and repealed the 1968 Family Code.

4. In view of its great social significance, the draft Family Code was published in the daily press and, under a decision taken by the Council of State in accordance with article 93 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, then submitted to a popular discussion from mid-August to late November 1984, during which exceptional activity took place and 91,000 meetings were held. Of a total population of about 9 million persons, 3,512,063 took part in the discussion. Over 500,000 persons made proposals at meetings, in the media and on an individual basis. In all, 39,500 proposals were submitted to the Legislative Commission of the National Assembly; 24,500 related directly to the draft Family Code and the others to amendments to other laws and other social development problems. In addition, the Institute for Young People's Scientific Research of the Central Committee of the Dimitrov Union of the Young Communist League and the newspaper "Trud" ("Labour"), the organ of the Central Council of Bulgarian Trade Unions, conducted two public opinion surveys during the discussion and until late 1984. The above-mentioned data are contained in the report by the Legislative Commission to the National Assembly on the results of the popular discussion of the draft Family Code.

The popular discussion of the draft Family Code became a wide-ranging exchange of views on the role of the family in Bulgarian society, the strengthening and reproduction of the family, the increase in the birth rate and the support and education of children. The main point made during this exchange of views was that the founding, strengthening and development of the family is not only the responsibility of the spouses, but also an ongoing process that takes place with the assistance and support of the State and society.

Following the closure of the popular discussion, the proposals that had been made were compiled, disseminated and discussed in detail by the Legislative Commission of the National Assembly, with the participation of the other standing parliamentary commissions and representatives of mass organizations. Many of these proposals were submitted to the National Assembly for adoption and were included by the National Assembly in the final text of the Family Code. As a result of the popular discussion, amendments and additions were made to 75 of the 143 articles of the draft Family Code, thereby indicating that the discussion had greatly helped to improve the draft prior to its adoption.

5. The new Family Code guarantees fuller legal protection and the strengthening of the family.

Articles 2 to 5 of the Family Code deal with the objectives, principles and basic purposes of family protection.

The objectives referred to in article 3 of the Family Code are: to protect and strengthen the family and to ensure the harmonious development of the personality; to protect children in every respect and raise them to be devoted to their country; to instil feelings of mutual assistance, attachment and respect in members of the family and bring them up to feel responsible to one another and to society; and to protect the rights and interests of persons placed under guardianship or trusteeship. Article 5 of the Family Code expands on article 38 of the Constitution relating to the protection of the family by the State and contains explicit provisions relating to the protection of the family by the State and society. Such protection includes the establishment of conditions that are favourable to the family, the encouragement of a higher birth rate, the protection and promotion of maternity, assistance to parents for the support and education of their children and special assistance to prepare young people for married life.

6. Celebration of marriage. Under article 6 of the Family Code, only a civil marriage ceremony gives rise to the legal consequences attaching to marriage by law. A civil marriage is entered into in writing before the registry officer in the Municipal People's Council, in public and in a solemn ceremony (article 9 of the Family Code). If the young married couple so wishes, a religious ceremony may be held later, but it has no legal effect (article 6, paragraph 2, of the Family Code). From 1982 to 1985, 67,000 marriages were celebrated on average each year (7.3 marriages per thousand inhabitants).

7. Age for entering into marriage. Marriage may be entered into by men and women who are not less than 18 years old. In exceptional cases, for important reasons, a person who is not less than 16 years old may marry with the

permission of the President of the Regional Court in the person's place of residence. The President of the Regional Court gives his consent after having heard the minor concerned who wishes to contract marriage, his parents or his guardians (article 12 of the Family Code).

8. Freely consented marriage. Marriage may be entered into only if the future partners fully consent to found a family. The marriage is not celebrated until 30 days after the statement made in the Municipal People's Council. The purpose of this period is to give the persons wishing to marry enough time to give further thought to their intentions (article 10, paragraph 1, of the Family Code). The man and woman consent to marriage individually and simultaneously before the registry officer after the latter has asked them whether they agree to marry. If their answer is affirmative, the registry officer draws up a marriage certificate to be signed by the parties, two witnesses and himself. The marriage is regarded as having been celebrated when the certificate has been signed by the persons concerned and by the registry officer.

The system of requirements for and impediments to marriage is also democratic. The Family Code prohibits marriage only in the following cases: when the person wishing to marry is already bound by other marriage ties; when he is fully incapacitated; or when he has a mental illness, disability or physical illness which may endanger the life or health of future generations or the other spouse. Marriage is also prohibited between relatives in the direct line, between brothers and sisters, between collateral relatives in the fourth degree, etc. A marriage celebrated under duress is considered null and void and may be annulled by the court (article 96, paragraph 2, p. 2, of the Family Code).

Acts contrary to freedom of marriage are characterized as offences (article 177, paragraphs 1 and 2, and article 178, paragraphs 1 and 2, of the Penal Code).

9. Equality of the spouses. The new Family Code expressly provides that the spouses have the same rights and obligations in marriage (article 14). Their relations are based on mutual respect, assistance in caring for the family, understanding and fidelity (article 15 of the Family Code). Through joint efforts and in proportion to their abilities and earnings, the spouses jointly ensure the well-being of the family and the support and education of the children (article 18 of the Family Code).

10. Special assistance for young households. Article 1 of the 1979 Decree of the Council of State was amended in order to meet the housing needs of young households (Official Journal No. 63 of 1984). It provides that at least 25 per cent of all newly built dwellings will be taken over by the people's councils and administrations and turned over to the Young Households' Housing Fund to be made available to young households for occupancy or purchase (instead of the 10 per cent allocated for this purpose prior to August 1985). Under the Decree, the term "young household" means that one spouse is not yet 30 years old and the other, not yet 35. This term also applies to unmarried mothers, widows and divorced women who are not yet 35 years old and who have dependent children (Order No. 40 by the Council of Ministers of 27 July 1984, Official Journal No. 65 of 1984).

Substantial financial assistance is granted to young households by Order No. 16 issued by the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, the Council of Ministers, the Central Council of Bulgarian Trade Unions, the National Council of the Patriotic Front and the Central Committee of the Dimitrov Union of the Young Communist League on 24 April 1984 and relating to the improvement of the population's standard of living. Under article 12 of this Order, young households have been entitled since 1 July 1985 to obtain a loan of up to 15,000 leva to build or buy a dwelling without making a down payment and with a repayment period of up to 30 years. Young couples are exempted from paying back 3,000 leva of the loan when a second child is born four years at the latest after the first and 4,000 leva more when a third child is born. Loans of up to 5,000 leva are granted to young households with a repayment period of up to 10 years. Young couples are exempted from paying back up to 50 per cent of such 5,000 leva loans when a second child is born four years at the latest after the first and from repaying the entire remaining amount when a third child is born.

11. Divorce. The State maintains the stability of the family by means of the régime it has established with regard to the dissolution of marriage by divorce, which is decreed as a result of the complete and irretrievable breakdown of the marriage or when the spouses jointly reach a serious and irreversible agreement to divorce by mutual consent, without having to indicate the grounds for the dissolution of the marriage. An application for divorce by mutual consent may be filed three years after the celebration of the marriage (articles 99 to 102 of the Family Code).

In the last two years for which final data are available, the number of divorces increased slightly, from 13,282 in 1982 to 14,546 in 1983, i.e. 20 per cent of all marriages. The number of divorces is, moreover, larger in towns (11,802) than in villages (2,744) (1984 Statistical Yearbook of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, p. 72). There are various reasons for this slow increase in the number of divorces, including the massive entry of women into the work force; the strengthening of women's economic independence, so that their economic reliance on men, who, in the past, supported them and their children, no longer requires them to be patient and unconditionally submissive; emigration; and the courts' rather liberal attitude towards divorce under the 1968 Family Code. One of the purposes of the new 1985 Family Code is to establish legal measures to prevent ill-considered and hasty divorces and to help reduce the number of divorces in order to guarantee a normal family environment for the support and education of children.

2. Special protection for mothers

12. Supplementary maternity leave. The 1984 amendment and addition to article 60 of the Labour Code (Official Journal No. 44 of 1984) substantially increased the amount of supplementary leave granted to mothers to enable them to raise young children. Such leave is granted to workers and employees after they have used up their pregnancy and maternity leave (120 days for the first child, 150 days for the second child, 180 days for the third child and 150 days for the fourth and each subsequent child, in accordance with article 60, paragraph 1, of the Labour Code). Before article 60 of the Labour Code was amended in June 1984, supplementary leave amounted to 6 months for the first child, 7 months for the second child, 8 months for the third child and 6 months for the fourth and each subsequent child. Under the

amendments to article 60, paragraph 4, of the Labour Code, such leave is granted until the first, second or third child has reached the age of two; the amount of such leave for the fourth and each subsequent child continues to be six months in addition to pregnancy and maternity leave.

In view of the unfavourable demographic trend which has prevailed in the country in recent years and which determines the main objective of the State's demographic policy, namely, to encourage the birth of a second and a third child, the increase in the amount of leave granted is a major social component of the State's demographic policy for increasing the birth rate. The actual amount of supplementary leave has thus increased considerably to about 15.5 months for the first child, 13.5 months for the second child and 11.5 months for the third child.

During the period when the mother benefits from such leave, the State Social Insurance Fund gives her an allowance which is equal to the minimum national wage (110 leva).

In the event of the birth of twins, when one is the second or third child in the family (article 60, paragraph 5, of the Labour Code), supplementary leave is granted until they have reached the age of three. The social reason for granting more supplementary leave in such a case is that twins are more difficult to raise and more services have to be provided for their support and education than for two or three children born in succession.

Major changes have been made in respect of the use of supplementary maternity leave. Article 60, paragraph 6, of the Labour Code provides that the father or one of the parents of the mother or the father of the child may also benefit from such leave, with the mother's consent. This widening of the circle of persons who may benefit from such leave is justified from the social point of view and was dictated by necessity. Many women, particularly those who are highly qualified, do not wish to use such leave so as to avoid compromising their professional status by being absent from their work for a lengthy period of time. Article 60, paragraph 6, of the Labour Code allowing such leave to be used by close relatives of the mother of the child was formulated to cover these and similar cases.

All maternity leave is granted to mothers and to adoptive mothers on the same terms and for equal periods of time (article 60, paragraphs 3-6, of the Labour Code).

Supplementary maternity leave is granted not only to workers and employees, but also to women who are pursuing their studies at conventional or technical higher education establishments or preparing their doctoral theses and to women who give birth within six months of leaving their jobs (article 36 of the Decree on measures to increase the birth rate). Under the amendment to the Decree on measures to increase the birth rate (Official Journal No. 51 of 29 June 1984), the length of such leave, which was 10 months for the first child, 12 months for the second child and 14 months for the third child, was extended until the child reached the age of two years.

According to data supplied by the Social Information Committee, pregnancy, maternity and supplementary maternity allowances increased from 1982 to 1984 as follows:

	1982	1983	1984
	(in millions)		
Pregnancy and maternity leave	62	62.2	63.4
Supplementary maternity leave	94.9	94.8	98.1

13. Monthly allowance for children. Under the 1984 amendment to the Decree on measures to increase the birth rate, the monthly allowance for children increased substantially for the first child (15 leva). The allowance is doubled to 30 leva when a second child is born. The monthly allowance amounts to 30 leva for the second child and to 55 leva for the third child (article 2 of the Decree on measures to increase the birth rate).

The allowance is twice as high for physically or mentally handicapped children and for the children of unmarried mothers (article 2, paragraph 2, of the Decree on measures to increase the birth rate).

Monthly allowances for the children of unmarried mothers and unmarried adoptive mothers, i.e. mothers who raise their children on their own and who are not married, have increased substantially. These women receive the following monthly allowances for their children: 40 leva for the first child; 60 leva after the birth or adoption of a second child; 110 leva for the third child; and 30 leva for each subsequent child. In addition to monthly children's allowances, unmarried mothers and unmarried adoptive mothers who are unemployed receive monthly assistance equal to the minimum national wage (110 leva) until the child has reached the age of two years and, in the event of the birth of twins, where one is the second or third child, until the children have reached the age of three years (articles 3 and 3 (a) of the Decree on measures to increase the birth rate). Monthly allowances for unmarried mothers and unmarried adoptive mothers and monthly assistance have been increased because these women live by themselves without material support from a husband (the children's father) and need assistance for the care and education of their children.

From 1982 to 1984, total family allowances continued to increase. They amounted to 504.7 million leva in 1982; 504.9 million leva in 1983; and 507.6 million leva in 1984 (according to data supplied by the Social Information Committee).

14. One-time allowances paid when a child is born are as follows: 100 leva for the first child; 250 leva for the second child; and 500 leva for the third child. The total amount of birth allowances paid from 1982 to 1984 was as follows: 24.1 million leva in 1982; 23.9 million leva in 1983; and 24.4 million leva in 1984 (according to data supplied by the Social Information Committee).

3. Special protection for children and adolescents

15. Obligation of parents to support their children

Parents are under an obligation to support their children until the children have attained their majority (18 years), whether or not they are fit

to work or are able to support themselves (article 82 of the Family Code). The amount of support depends on the beneficiary's needs and the means of the person providing such support (article 84 of the Family Code).

16. Under Order No. 16 of 24 April 1984 (p. 13, paragraph (a)), a free supply of medicaments was introduced on 1 July 1984 for sick children between the ages of three and six years.

17. In 1983, the Ministry of Public Health and the Central Council of Bulgarian Trade Unions enacted a new regulation on prior and periodical medical examinations (Official Journal Nos. 21, 22 and 39 of 1983). The part of the regulation concerning the hiring of persons between the ages of 15 and 18 years allows such persons to have access only to easy work following a complete medical examination. Such persons are allowed to work only if such an examination establishes that they are in good physical condition and good health and fit to do the work for which they are applying without impairing their health (article 2 of the regulation, in conjunction with article 112, paragraph 4, and article 120, paragraph 1, of the Labour Code).

ARTICLE 11

1. Right to an adequate standard of living

Order No. 16 of 24 April 1984 provides for measures to improve the population's standard of living.

18. On 1 September 1984, the minimum monthly wage was increased from 100 to 110 leva and, on 1 October 1985, from 110 leva to 120 leva. On 1 October 1984, the minimum wage of young specialists was increased as follows: specialists with advanced training, from 155 to 170 leva; specialists with semi-advanced and specialized secondary education training, from 120 and 135 to 145 leva; and staff with general secondary education training, from 120 to 135 leva.

19. It is planned to increase the basic wage of workers and employees who have completed secondary or more advanced studies, who are highly skilled and who have made a substantial contribution to the manufacture of high-quality products, as well as to give these categories of workers individual wages not based on the wage rate (for workers) or the standard wage scale (for employees).

20. The basic salaries of medical and teaching staff in primary and secondary schools were also raised by 5 to 8 per cent on 1 September 1984. Additional payments were granted to physicians, dentists and middle-level medical staff (nurses, midwives) for complicated operations and medical treatment. Additional payments for highly qualified professors and directors of teaching establishments were also increased.

21. Minimum pension payments were also increased on 1 September 1984: retirement and old age pensions, 10 per cent; disability pensions, 12 to 20 per cent; minimum inheritance pensions, 100 per cent (from 20 to 40 leva); social welfare pensions, 150 per cent (from 20 to 50 leva); allowances for persons who receive disability pensions and who still require assistance from other persons, 120 per cent (from 20 to 35 leva), etc.

All individual pensions amounting to less than 60 leva, all inheritance pensions amounting to less than 50 leva and minimum disability pensions were increased by 10 leva per month on 1 October 1985. Retirement pensions paid as of 31 December 1976 were increased by 15 per cent on 1 January 1986. An increase of 10 to 12.5 per cent went into effect on 1 January 1987 for pensions paid after 1 January 1977. A 15 per cent increase was planned as of 1 July 1986 for military disability, civilian disability and popular pensions.

The average pension payment increased from 38 leva in 1972 to 82 leva in 1984.

22. Data which relate to the improvement of the population's standard of living between 1982 and 1984 and which are expressed in terms of nominal and real wages are as follows (1952 = base 100):

<u>Nominal wages</u>	<u>Real wages</u>
1982 - 366.7	1982 - 354.1
1983 - 371.5	1983 - 353.4
1984 - 384.1	1984 - 362.9.

Social consumption funds (health, social welfare insurance, recreation, etc.) increased in terms of volume per inhabitant as follows (1952 = base 100):

1982 - 506.6
1983 - 517.7
1984 - 535.3

(data taken from the 1985 Statistical Yearbook, Sofia, p. 169.)

Social consumption funds also increased in terms of volume and absolute figures per inhabitant. In 1972, expenditure amounted to 320 leva per inhabitant per year; in 1983, to 770 leva; and, in 1985, it was expected to amount to over 800 leva on average for the year; this represents a definite increase in the population's real income.

23. During the period under review, the population's housing needs were met more satisfactorily. During the period 1972-1984, about 750,000 new dwellings were made available to the population and the dwelling space per inhabitant increased as follows: 15.1 m² in 1981; 15.4 m² in 1982; 15.8 m² in 1983; and 16.1 m² in 1984.

In 1984, 99.98 per cent of the population lived in areas with electric power and 97.90 per cent in areas with water supplies and drainage (1985 Statistical Yearbook, p. 171).

24. Despite constraints imposed by developments in the world economy, retail prices for basic foodstuffs have not changed. The prices of bread, flour, rice, vermicelli, macaroni, sugar, sunflower oil, eggs, milk and milk products, vegetables, fruit and fruit preserves have been the same for the past 15 to 20 years.

In the past three years, the country has been stricken by drought that is unusual in this geographical region (hot, dry summers and dry, harsh winters). This has had serious adverse effects on agriculture, on other economic sectors and on electric power, which has had to be restricted because it is in short supply. In order to offset the damage to the national economy, the prices of some products, particularly import items, were increased in 1985 as follows: petrol and diesel fuel, 35 per cent; imported beverages with a high alcohol content, 2.5 times; imported cigarettes, 35 per cent; coffee, 50 per cent; passenger cars, 12 per cent; electric power consumed by households, 41 per cent; drinking water, 60 per cent.

In order to compensate for the effects of the higher price of the above-mentioned items, particularly on low-income population groups, measures were taken to increase minimum wages and pensions (see paragraphs 18 and 21 above). When the new prices were set, the Council of Ministers expressly decided "not to allow any change in the price of staple items such as bread, flour, sugar, sunflower oil, dry beans, rice, macaroni, eggs, perishable delicatessen items, fish, milk, yoghurt, kachkaval, cheese, dietetic products, baby food, vegetables, fruit and fruit preserves, ordinary beer, non-alcoholic beverages, clothing, shoes and other food and non-food products. In view of the need to raise prices because of unfavourable climatic conditions, the Government's basic approach is to keep the effects of this increase to a bare minimum".

2. The national food programme

25. During the period under review, the Government continued to implement its policy of improving the structure of food consumption. To this end, food production continued to be planned on the basis of physiological standards with a view to satisfying nutritional needs. A health policy relating to scientific nutrition standards and the establishment of rational nutrition standards for the population was implemented and food products were subjected to very strict medical checks.

26. As a result of the Government's policy, the structure of food consumption continued to improve. Consumption of staple food items increased per capita in 1980, 1982 and 1984 as follows:

	<u>1980</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>1984</u>
Bread and breadstuffs	216.0	201.6	201.6
Semolina (kg)	4.3	4.3	4.2
Meat (kg)	61.2	69.4	71.0
Fish (kg)	6.9	7.8	7.9
Plant and animal fats (kg)	20.8	22.1	22.2
Milk (l)	169	185	186
Eggs	204	231	237
Sugar (kg)	34.7	35.4	35.5
Vegetables (kg)	94	105	104
Fruit (kg)	106	108	116

(data taken from the 1985 Statistical Yearbook, p. 191.)

The calorie content of the foodstuffs consumed on average per day per capita also rose. In 1978, food consumed per day per capita contained 3,481 calories, including 2,652 calories (76.2 per cent) from plant products and 829 calories (23.8 per cent) from animal products, while, in 1982, it contained 3,648 calories, including 2,706 calories (74.18 per cent) from plant products and 942 calories (25.82 per cent) from animal products.

ARTICLE 12

Right to physical and mental health

1. Right to physical and mental health

27. The State guarantees the right of citizens to good physical and mental health by creating sufficient health establishments, expanding the health establishment network, improving their equipment by means of modern medical technology and providing highly qualified medical staff.

The number of health establishments has increased. In 1980, the country had 184 hospitals with 74,032 hospital beds and, in 1983, 186 hospitals with 74,740 hospital beds. In 1980, there were 3,758 outpatient institutions and polyclinics with 5,411 beds and, in 1983, 3,845 outpatient institutions and polyclinics with 5,774 beds. In 1980, there were 186 balneotherapy sanatoriums with 18,554 beds and, in 1983, 196 balneotherapy sanatoriums with 21,199 beds (data taken from the 1984 Statistical Yearbook, pp. 456-457).

During the period 1982-1984, the number of hospital beds per 10,000 persons also increased. In 1982 and 1983, the figure was 90 and, in 1984, 91. The number of sanatorium beds per 10,000 persons also rose during this period from 21 in 1982 to 24 in 1983 and 1984.

The number of doctors and stomatologists providing health care for the population also increased. In 1982, the country had one doctor per 387 persons; in 1983, one per 373 persons; and, in 1984, one per 362 persons. In 1982, there was one stomatologist per 1,717 persons; in 1983, one per 1,639 persons and, in 1984, one per 1,596 persons (data taken from the 1985 Statistical Yearbook, p. 174).

During this period, the total number of medical staff with advanced and secondary training continued to increase, as shown by the following data:

	1979	1981	1982	1983
Doctors	21 249	22 088	23 081	24 026
Stomatologists	4 641	4 984	5 201	5 460
Pharmacists	3 551	3 804	3 965	4 144
Health officers	7 116	7 538	7 555	7 674
Midwives	7 795	7 894	7 996	8 096
Nurses	43 645	46 396	47 369	48 739
Total	87 997	92 704	95 167	98 139

(data taken from the 1984 Statistical Yearbook of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, p. 458.)

Activities by the medical authorities to protect and maintain the population's physical and mental health are based on preventive measures aimed at establishing and maintaining the necessary conditions for disease prevention and the restoration and strengthening of the population's health.

2. Reduction of the stillbirth rate and of infant mortality and improved care for the healthy development of the child

28. Despite some slight fluctuations during this period, the number of stillborn children dropped steadily. In 1982, the number of stillborn children per 1,000 births was 7.3; in 1983, 7.0; and in 1984, 6.8.

The number of infant deaths also declined. In 1982, the rate was 18.2 per 1,000 live births; in 1983, 16.5; and in 1984, 16.1.

The number of women's out-patient services (specialized health services to monitor pregnancy) increased. In 1981, there were 257; in 1982, 334; and, in 1983, 337. Women's out-patient services were also set up in some health establishments and took the form of unified health services which monitor the health of women, mothers and newborn children. In 1983, there were 1,618 women's and children's out-patient services in the country (1984 Statistical Yearbook, p.458).

29. There was a steady increase in the number of specialized health services (children's out-patient clinics) which monitor the health and development of very young children. In 1981, there were 404 and, in 1984, 601, i.e. 197 more. In 1981, the proportion of children below the age of one month who were being kept under observation was 94.6 and in 1984, 97.8.

The trend towards a decline in the number of stillbirths and in the infant mortality rate is the result of the constant efforts the State is making, through health establishments and medical staff, to ensure proper treatment for pregnant women and delivery in appropriate and healthy conditions, as well as medical and health care for newborn babies.

30. Improvement of environmental and industrial hygiene

In accordance with article 31 of the Constitution, the protection of the environment continues to be one of the major goals of the Government's policy. In the past four years, 360 million leva have been spent on average each year for this purpose, as against 192 million leva during the period 1976-1980. Funds for this purpose were allocated for the construction of water treatment plants, water and air conservation and soil protection and reclamation measures. With a view to raising the population's standard of living, the quality of the environment in built-up areas and enterprises is constantly being improved. There are many possibilities for the year-round use of natural resources for recreation, tourism and medical care in accordance with ecological requirements.

Industrial hygiene was improved as part of the 1981-1985 National Industrial Safety and Hygiene Programme adopted by the National Assembly under the five-year plan for the country's social and economic development. The Programme provides, inter alia, for the production of individual means of protection (glasses, gloves, helmets, work clothes), for dust removal equipment and for noise abatement and it is being successfully implemented.

Measures to improve working conditions in enterprises are provided for in collective bargaining contracts and the social development plans of the labour collectives. These measures are financed by resources from enterprise funds.

In addition to the implementation of existing industrial hygiene and safety regulations, Bulgarian State industrial hygiene and safety standards have been formulated and introduced in accordance with CMEA and other international standards.

31. Prevention, treatment and control of epidemic, occupational and other diseases

The immunization programme of the Bulgarian People's Republic which was introduced in 1980 was still in force during the period under review. It provides for immunization and re-immunization against diphtheria, poliomyelitis, tuberculosis, tetanus, etc.

A network for the medical care and treatment of workers was set up and is being expanded. Such health establishments are operated by the Institute for Occupational Hygiene and Diseases, which is part of the Ministry of Public Health, and by the occupational diseases clinics, which are part of the Academy of Medicine.

32. Creation of conditions to ensure to all medical service and medical attention in the event of sickness (see above, article 12, paragraph 1)

The population receives free medical care, which is provided by health establishments, namely, hospitals, polyclinics, specialized dispensaries and health services in villages, enterprises, administrations and organizations. Specialized emergency medical treatment units have been set up throughout the country. In 1983, there were 92 such units, with 500 doctors and 1,030 middle-level medical assistants. In 1983, they gave medical attention to 2,006,000 persons who were ill or who had been in accidents. As of 1 July 1984, free medicaments have been available for the home or out-patient treatment of children up to the age of six years.

Annex

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS */

- A. Family Code
- B. Amendments and additions to the Labour Code, the Pensions Act, etc.
- C. Decree No. 2004 of 15 June 1984
- D. Order No. 28 of 14 June 1984
- E. Decree No. 2427 of 6 August 1984
- F. Orders No. 53 of 14 September 1985 and No. 56 of 19 September 1985

*/ These documents, which have been submitted by the Government of Bulgaria in Bulgarian, are available for consultation in the files of the United Nations Centre for Human Rights.