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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 to 12

BULGARIA

[1 February 1982]

I. ARTICLE 10. PROTECTION OF THE FAMILY, MOTHERS AND CHILDREN

A. Principal legislative instruments

1. The principal legislative instruments are:

(a) Constitution of the People's Republic of Bulgaria (Official Gazette, No. 39, of 18 May 1971), articles 38, 39, 45 and 47;

(b) Family Code, 1968 (Official Gazette, No. 23, of 22 May 1968, as amended and supplemented);

(c) Labour Code, 1951 (Official Gazette, No. 91, of 13 November 1951, as amended and supplemented), articles 112 to 121;

(d) Decree for the encouragement of the birth rate, 1968 (Official Gazette, No. 15, of February 1968, as amended and supplemented), articles 1 to 6;

(e) Decree on the provision of housing for young newly-married couples (Official Gazette, No. 67, of 24 August 1978).

* E/1982/30.

B. Protection and assistance accorded to the family

1. Constitutional provisions concerning protection and assistance accorded to the family.

2. In Bulgaria protection of the family is elevated to the status of a constitutional provision. Article 38, paragraph 1, of the Constitution states that "Marriage and the family are under the protection of the State". The Family Code is also based on this principle. Article 1 of that Code establishes three main goals sought by the regulation of family relationships: the protection and strengthening of the family as the basic unit of society; the education of children; and the development of mutual help, affection and respect among all members of the family. In addition, article 1, paragraph 3, of the Family Code specifies that society, through the State and the public organizations, protects the family and promotes the improvement of the material and cultural level of its members, and particularly the socialist and communist upbringing of the children. For the purpose of protecting and strengthening the family, the idea underlying the Family Code is reflected in its specific provisions, such as: free and voluntary nature of marriage (arts. 3 and 6); stability of marriage and viability of the family ensured by the definition of conditions and reasons for entry into marriage (arts. 8, 9 and 10); determination of the rights and duties of spouses (arts. 11 to 14); arrangements and conditions for the dissolution of marriage (arts. 15 to 29); adoption procedure (arts. 46 to 58); relations between parents and children (arts. 59 to 65); maintenance obligations (arts. 79 to 89), etc.

3. The Family Code proclaims the duty not only of the State but of society as a whole to protect and assist the family. Consequently, it also mentions in this connexion the public organizations which are required to reinforce and develop such activities by educational methods (art. 1, para. 3, of the Family Code).

2. Marriage

4. According to article 2 of the Family Code, only civil marriage produces the legal consequences associated with marriage by law. Marriages are ceremonially concluded in writing before the civil registrar in the corresponding communal (district) people's council or urban administration (art. 4, para. 1, of the Family Code). After the civil marriage, a religious ceremony may be held, if the parties so desire. This ceremony has no legal significance (art. 2, para. 2, of the Family Code).

3. Age at marriage

5. Men and women who have attained the age of 18 may enter into marriage. In exceptional cases, when pressing reasons exist, persons who have attained the age of 16 may enter into marriage, with the permission of the chairman of the district court of the person's place of residence, given after hearing the minor and his or her parents or guardian (art. 8 of the Family Code).

4. Freely expressed consent to enter into marriage

6. A marriage may be concluded only if the future spouses have freely expressed their wish to found a family. For this reason, the Family Code specifies that the consent of the man and woman to enter into marriage must be given privately and simultaneously in the presence of the civil registrar. When such consent has been expressed - publicly and ceremonially - the marriage certificate is drawn up and signed by the two parties by both witnesses and by the registrar. The registrar then declares that the marriage has been solemnized (arts. 3 to 6). The general system of requirements for and impediments to marriage is also very democratic. It comprises a bare minimum of absolutely necessary limitations. Otherwise, marriage is permitted for all citizens. There are no impediments of a social, national, racial or religious character. Coercion makes a marriage invalid (arts. 3 and 8 of the Family Code).

7. Actions which affect the freedom of marriage are declared to be crimes: coercion of any person to enter into marriage, in which case the marriage is invalid (art. 177, para. 1 of the Penal Code); abduction of a female with the aim of forcing her to enter into marriage (art. 177, para. 2, of the Penal Code); acceptance of a fee from parents or other relatives in order to obtain permission for their daughter or relative to marry as well as intervention in the payment of such a fee (art. 178, paras. 1 and 2, of the Penal Code). The basic principle underlying the family law is equality of rights of citizens in family relationships, irrespective of nationality, race, sex or religious affiliation. This principle echoes the constitutional principle of the equality of citizens before the law and the inadmissibility of any privileges or restrictions of rights based on education, social status or material situation (art. 35 of the Constitution). The Family Code does not specifically lay down this principle, but it is implicit throughout the family law. This can be seen from the fact that there are no differences, limitations or advantages of any kind on this basis.

5. Divorce

8. The State maintains the stability of the family by establishing provisions governing the break-up of the family as a result of the dissolution of the marriage. Divorce is permitted in the event of a complete and irreparable collapse of the marriage, when both spouses have given their considered and unshakeable mutual consent. In this case, at least two years must have elapsed since the marriage was contracted (arts. 21 to 29 of the Family Code).

6. Obligation of parents to provide maintenance for their children

9. Parents are obliged to provide materially for their children under the age of 18, under the age of 20 in the case of children attending regular (day-time) courses at secondary educational establishments or under the age of 25 in the case of children studying at higher educational establishments or equivalent establishments (art. 58 of the Family Code). The amount of financial maintenance to be provided depends on the needs of the person who is entitled to maintenance

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and on the means of the person who is obliged to provide material support (art. 80 of the Family Code).

7. Measures to facilitate the establishment of a family

10. Upon marriage, young couples may obtain credit from the State Credit Institute to help them to meet their housing or other needs. Housing for young newly-wed couples is available from communal or district people's councils and urban administrations (art. 1 of the Decree on the provision of housing for young newly-married couples). Each year, they are allocated at least 10 per cent of the total envisaged under the plan for the creation of housing for the calendar year (art. 1 of the Decree).

11. One-room accommodation is allocated to these young couples. This housing is not rented to other persons in need and is not sold. It is reserved for young newly-married couples.

C. Special protection for mothers

1. The Constitutional instruction on special protection for mothers

12. According to article 37 of the Constitution, mothers enjoy the special protection and care of the State and the economic and public organizations. Mothers are guaranteed paid leave before and after childbirth and receive, free of charge, obstetrical and medical care and accommodation in maternity homes; they are assigned to lighter work and the system of children's institutions and enterprises providing communal and everyday services is being expanded. On the basis of this fundamental constitutional instruction, existing legislation contains an ample system of laws which amounts to an impressive national programme with a pronounced practical bias towards improving the protection of mothers in Bulgaria. As dictated by the constitutional norm, the implementation of this programme involves not only the State and its organs, but also the economic and public organizations, that is, all of society. The programme's main features and the policy stipulated in this area are set forth in a number of guidelines.

2. Preferential treatment for pregnant women in job placement and prohibition of their dismissal

13. In job placement, all other things being equal, preference is given to pregnant women. The Labour Code sets forth specific measures on the exercise of that right. An enterprise may not refuse to conclude a labour contract with a pregnant woman if there is a vacant post available, bearing in mind the fact that she is pregnant. Such a refusal is illegal and the pregnant woman may bring the matter before a court, whose decision may serve as an appointment order (art. 119, para. 1, of the Labour Code). On the other hand, in accordance with article 119, paragraph 2, of the Labour Code, if a pregnant manual or non-manual worker is dismissed after the fourth month of pregnancy as a result of the final closure of an

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enterprise or the completion of seasonal work, the higher organizations must find her suitable work, if she so wishes, at another enterprise. Even if she does not want this, she is entitled to receive financial compensation for losses because of pregnancy or childbirth.

14. The Labour Code contains a number of special rules for protection in the event that a work contract with a pregnant woman or a mother with a small child is terminated. An enterprise, establishment or organization may not dismiss a female manual or non-manual worker (with or without warning) and may not change the terms of a labour contract concluded with her for an indefinite period once pregnancy has been established or, in the case of a mother, until her child has reached the age of eight months, as is the case with a female manual or non-manual worker whose husband is engaged in active military service, except in the event of a serious offence or the final closure of an undertaking, with the permission of the appropriate labour inspectorate, each case being dealt with separately. Regardless of the seriousness of an offence, a female manual or non-manual worker on pregnancy and confinement, maternity, or any other leave may not be dismissed and the terms of her work contract may not be changed (arts. 35 and 36 of the Labour Code).

3. Employment of pregnant women

15. In order to protect the female body from harmful influences and to ensure that the pregnancy develops normally, all female manual, non-manual and agricultural workers employed in harmful or difficult conditions are transferred during their pregnancy to lighter, suitable work with a shorter working day or their working conditions are made easier, depending on their skills. The post occupied before being redeployed is retained. If in her new post the woman receives a remuneration amounting to less than the average monthly nominal salary which she received for the 12 months prior to being placed in that post, she receives a supplementary allowance from the Social Insurance to make up the difference. This allowance is paid from the day the pregnant woman is placed in the post up to the start of her leave on the grounds of temporary incapacity for work as a result of pregnancy and confinement (arts. 118, 118a and 115a of the Labour Code).

4. Pre-confinement and post-confinement leave

16. All female manual and non-manual workers and women working as members of agricultural co-operatives are entitled to paid maternity leave for an equal period of time and under equal conditions without any requirement as regards the length of previous service. The duration of such leave depends on birth order: for the first, fourth and subsequent children, it is 120 days, for the second child - 150 days and for the third - 180 days. During pregnancy and confinement leave, the mother receives financial compensation equal to 100 per cent of her nominal remuneration. In order to guarantee that the mother remains healthy and the pregnancy develops normally, 45 days of such leave must be taken before confinement. Working women who adopt children enjoy the same rights (art. 60, paras. 1-3, and art. 156 of the Labour Code).

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5. Additional leave to look after a small child

17. A working mother is entitled to additional leave to look after a small child, which is granted at her request after the maternity leave expires, in accordance with article 60, paragraphs 1 to 3, of the Labour Code. Its duration is as follows: 6 months for the first, fourth and subsequent children, 7 months for the second, and 8 months for the third child. If during that leave the child does not attend

a nursery, the mother receives financial compensation equal to the minimum wage, which in Bulgaria is currently 100 leva. That amount represents more than half the average wage in all sectors of the economy.

18. Today, all working women (over 1,839,000 women) enjoy maternity benefits. By way of comparison one can cite the following: up to 1944, the year that the rule of the people was consolidated, only 54,357 women received maternity benefits and they were given considerably shorter leave (84 days) and less financial compensation (40-80 leva); in addition, they were first required to pay insurance contributions.

19. One significant allowance for working women is the guaranteed minimum amount of financial compensation during pregnancy, confinement and time spent looking after a small child, which is not less than the minimum wage in Bulgaria.

20. Single mothers have extensive rights. So that such women may have the same opportunities as those in families where both parents look after the children, single mothers are entitled to maternity aid amounting to the above-mentioned sum until the child is two years old. This aid is paid whether or not the mother works (arts. 3 and 3a of the Decree for the encouragement of the birth rate).

21. Thus, paid leave for pregnancy, confinement and looking after a small child guaranteed by the State totals as follows:

<u>Birth order</u>	<u>Maternity leave</u>	<u>Payment</u>	<u>Leave for looking after a child</u>	<u>Payment</u>	<u>Total paid leave</u>
1st, 4th and subsequent children	120 days (4 months)	100 per cent of earnings while employed	6 months	Minimum wage	10 months
2nd child	150 days (5 months)	- " -	7 months	- " -	12 months
3rd child	180 days (8 months)	- " -	8 months	- " -	14 months

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22. Apart from these benefits, every working mother who so desires may, when her paid leave expires, take leave without pay until the child is three years old. During this period she receives partial payments amounting to 10 leva per month. The administration is obliged to grant such leave, which counts in full towards her length of service at work. During this leave, the mother keeps her job, which also gives her labour rights, including the right to paid annual leave at another enterprise, establishment or organization, if she so desires. This second labour contract may be a contract for work to be done at home (art. 25, para. 4, of the 1958 Instruction on remuneration earned during idle time substitution and so forth, as amended, published in Official Gazette, No. 34 of 1980). Furthermore, mothers of children between three and six years old who wish to take work home in order to be able to look after their children but who are permanently employed in an enterprise or organization which is not in a position to provide them with such work, are entitled to take leave without pay in order to conclude a second work contract with another enterprise for work at home. The enterprise where they are permanently employed is obliged to grant such leave and keep their job open for them until the children are six years old and while they are working at home (art. 2 of resolution No. 38 of the Council of Ministers of 7 July 1980, published in Official Gazette, No. 57, 1980).

23. The Labour Code contains a number of other measures to protect pregnant women and mothers with small children. During this period they may not work overtime or at night, travel on assignment and so forth. Mothers are allowed to take off up to two hours a day with pay in order to feed a child up to eight months old; mothers of twins may take three hours a day. If they continue to breastfeed the child after that age, this time off is extended by one additional hour a day and, in the case of twins, by two hours a day for as long as the child needs it (art. 62 of the Labour Code).

6. Lump-sum allowances on the birth of a child

24. Along with the financial compensation for pregnancy and confinement, all Bulgarian citizens on the birth of a live child are entitled to lump-sum assistance, regardless of whether they work. The amount of such assistance varies according to how many live children the mother has: for the first, fourth and subsequent children an allowance of 100 leva is paid; for the second child - 250 leva; and for the third - 500 leva.

7. Allowances also paid to students for pregnancy, confinement and looking after young children

25. Concern for the social protection of the family also extends to those who are not legible for maintenance through a form of social benefit.

26. Students at higher, semi-higher and secondary specialized educational institutions, as well as women who give birth up to six months after completing their education, are entitled to receive a monthly maternity allowance. This allowance amounts to 90 leva a month, i.e., it is almost the same as the minimum

wage in Bulgaria. The period over which the allowance is paid varies according to birth order: for the first, fourth and subsequent children, it is 10 months; for the second child - 12 months; and for the third, 14 months. Thus, social benefits also cover a large number of young mothers and families of students, who are guaranteed a normal income to support their children and families, in addition to other benefits such as financial compensation, grants, free education and so forth (art. 36 of the Decree for the encouragement of the birth rate).

8. Pregnancy and confinement allowances for non-working women

27. There is also maternity protection for women who have stopped working as well as for women who have not worked at all. Thus, women who have a fixed-term work contract or have been released from work for one reason or another and who give birth to a child six months after the termination of their work contract or after the termination of a legal relationship providing security are entitled to financial compensation for pregnancy, confinement or looking after a child for a period of 10 months for the first, fourth and subsequent children, 12 months for the second child and 14 months for the third child. This allowance is also paid at the same rate as the minimum wage in our country. Maternity allowances are paid at the mother's place of residence by the communal people's council.

28. Rights and privileges are also provided for housewives who have not had the chance to start work. If they give birth, a certain period (the 12 to 18 months associated with childbirth and looking after the children) depending on the number of previous children, is counted as a period of active service at work upon retirement, and, until the child reaches the age of three, they are entitled to an allowance of 10 leva a month, which is paid by the local people's councils (government organs).

9. Monthly supplementary allowances for children of working parents

29. In Bulgaria monthly supplementary allowances for children are one of the fundamental aspects of the State's social security programme. The funds designated for these supplementary allowances occupy second place in the budget after pensions and constitute approximately 19 per cent of all expenditures on social security. Families of manual and non-manual workers and collective farmers receive the following monthly supplementary allowances for children in addition to remuneration for work, regardless of the parents' income:

For the first, fourth and subsequent children:	15 leva
For the second child:	25 leva
For the third child:	45 leva

30. Monthly supplementary allowances are paid until the child reaches 16 years of age. If after this age the child continues to study but does not receive student grants, an allowance of 10 leva a month is awarded.

10. Monthly allowances for students

31. Spouses of students are entitled to an allowance of 30 leva a month, which is equal to 30 per cent of the minimum wage in Bulgaria, for each child up to the age of 16 years. These allowances are awarded by educational institutions in the form of public grants (art. 3c of the Decree for the encouragement of the birth rate).

32. Young families in which the husband is engaged in active military service receive monthly allowances of 30 leva for each child in order to assist mothers (art. 3d of the Decree for the encouragement of the birth rate).

11. Financial compensation for sickness and caring for sick children

33. Both parents are entitled to 60 days a year to care for sick children up to the age of 16. During this period the parent receives 100 per cent of his or her salary to care for children up to the age of 7 and that percentage of his or her salary equivalent to compensation for sickness to care for children older than 7 years. When an unweaned child enters hospital with its mother, the mother is granted paid leave for the entire period during which she is in hospital with the child. Paid leave is also granted to enable parents to care for healthy children who have been released from kindergarten when a quarantine has been imposed. If a sick child needs a longer period of parental care, leave without pay may also be granted for the period exceeding 60 days, but is considered part of normal length of service (art. 40 of the Rules for the implementation of part III of the Labour Code).

12. Other rights related to maternity and childhood and care for the young

34. The wide range of children's institutions is an important, long-range form of social assistance for the care and raising of children.

35. This includes crèches, kindergartens, boarding schools and schools with after-school facilities and other institutions to help parents with the care and raising of children. The services of these institutions are financed through the State's social expenditure and are provided to the population free of charge or on the basis of partial payment of a minimal fee.

36. Crèches accept children from the age of eight months to three years. The crèches in the health care system provide high-quality specialized medical observation and service. Kindergartens care for children from three to seven years of age and are part of the system of the Ministry of Education. The system of kindergartens is constantly expanding. At present more than 75 per cent of children attend kindergartens and more than 18 per cent are looked after in crèches. The fees for crèches and kindergartens are based on the parents' income and the number of children in the family. Children's institutions not only assist in the care and upbringing of children, but also has the effect of increasing the size

of the family budget. The highest fees paid by parents represent one quarter of the actual expenditure per child in crèches and approximately three quarters of the actual expenditure for kindergartens. If a family has a second child attending a kindergarten, the fee is halved for that child. Parents with three or more children enjoy this privilege.

37. Schools organize extended days for pupils boarding and after-school facilities, meals in school cafeterias, and after-school tutoring for pupils. They also provide various leisure and recreation activities for children and young people during summer and winter vacations. Primary schools give special attention to providing care, particularly for pupils in the first to the fourth classes. Training provided in extended-day programmes is free of charge.

13. International conventions for the protection of working mothers

38. Bulgaria has ratified a number of international conventions of the International Labour Organisation for the protection of workers, including working mothers. The following deserve special mention: Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention No. 111, 1958; Equal Remuneration Convention, No. 100, 1951; Underground Work (Women), Convention No. 45, 1955; Maternity Protection Convention, No. 3. National legislation and practice broadly reflect the provisions of these international conventions and their implementation does not present any problem.

D. Special protection for children and young persons

1. The Constitution and special protection for children and young persons

39. In accordance with the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the family, school, State organs and public organizations take particular care to ensure the health, intellectual, moral, aesthetic, cultural and physical development of children, adolescents and young persons (art. 39 and art. 47, para. 4), without any discrimination on the basis of nationality, origin, religion, sex, race, social status or material situation (art. 35). Children born out of wedlock have equal rights with those born in wedlock (art. 38, para. 4, of the Constitution). No difference in the protection afforded to either group is permitted. As children they are entitled to the same care and protection from the State. A comprehensive national policy for the special protection of children and adolescents, and young persons is being pursued in Bulgaria in order to implement these constitutional provisions.

40. In accordance with article 59, paragraph 4, of the Family Code, "Parents are obliged to care for children and prepare them for generally useful activity". This is a legal and moral obligation of parents. In most cases this obligation is carried out not only voluntarily and conscientiously, but also with great love and affection, and ensures that children are given abundant care and material and moral support, creating a proper atmosphere for them to grow up and mature.

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2. Care and education of children separated from their mothers or deprived of a family - physically, mentally or socially handicapped children

41. Bulgarian law provides for three forms of child rearing to replace the family:

(a) Adoption (arts. 46 to 58 of the Family Code). For adoption the definite agreement of the parents is required if the child has parents; a court permits adoption only when adoption is in the interest of the child, after it has gathered information about the prospective adopter and the child to be adopted, considered the opinion of the appropriate people's council and heard the decision of the procurator;

(b) Placing the child in a State medical child-care institution (if the child suffers from a handicap or illness) or in an educational institution: homes for mothers and children (for children up to the age of three years); homes for children of pre-school age (from three to seven years); homes for pupils from the first to the eighth grade; homes for pupils from the ninth to the eleventh grades; residential homes for children of pre-school age who are slow developers and pupils from the first to the eighth grade; reform schools for children from 7 to 18 years of age who have displayed or seem likely to display anti-social behaviour; and other such institutions. These homes admit orphans and children whose parents have been deprived of their parental rights by a court decision or whose parents are divorced. They also admit children whose parents are unable to look after them because they are sick, under sentence, deprived of liberty, live in a poor domestic environment, etc.;

(c) Placing the child in the care of another family - with the permission of a court after the divorce of the parents (art. 29 of the Family Code), because of limitation or deprivation of parental rights (arts. 63 to 65 of the Family Code) or on the decision of a guardianship agency (art. 67 of the Family Code). In such cases the consent of the third party to take the child into his family, care for it and raise it is required.

3. Protection against neglect of parental responsibilities

42. Article 36 of the Family Code contains a special provision under which, if the behaviour of a parent threatens the person, upbringing, health or property of a child, a district court may, ex officio or at the request of the procurator or of the other parent, take appropriate measures in the interests of the child and, if necessary, place it in a suitable institution.

43. In particularly serious cases, the district court, meeting in open session, with the participation of the court assessors and after hearing the decision of the procurator, may deprive a parent of parental rights.

44. The provisions of articles 181 and 182 of the Penal Code also serve to protect the rights of children.

"Any person who neglects his obligations towards a spouse, ascendant or descendant unable to care for himself and thus places him in serious difficulties, in such a way that this act constitutes a serious crime, shall be punished by corrective labour and a public reprimand." (art. 181 of the Penal Code).

"A parent or guardian who leaves a person under his parental control or guardianship without supervision and the necessary care and thus endangers his physical, emotional or moral development, shall be punished by deprivation of liberty for a maximum of one year or by corrective labour and a public reprimand." (art. 182).

4. Education

45. Compulsory eight-year fundamental education has been introduced in Bulgaria. Approximately 95 per cent of the young people who have completed fundamental education go on to attend other schools. In practice, therefore, there is also universal secondary education, for which the State creates all the necessary conditions in accordance with article 45, paragraph 4, of the Constitution. Education at all types of educational institutions is free of charge (art. 45, paras. 1, 4, 5 and 6, of the Constitution). It is provided at State educational institutions.

5. Prohibition of child labour; minimum age for employment

46. Child labour is prohibited. A number of provisions of the labour legislation provide special labour protection for young people and create favourable conditions for introducing young people to the work force. Under article 112, paragraph 1, of the Labour Code, the recruitment of persons under 16 years of age is prohibited. This is the minimum age for employment. In exceptional cases, persons aged 15 or 16 years may be hired for light work with the permission of the Labour Inspectorate of the District Council of Bulgarian Trade Unions. Lists approved by the Council of Ministers specifically define the types of work which are considered difficult and harmful to the health and development of young persons and for which it is prohibited to employ young persons aged 15 or 16. Under article 113 of the Labour Code and the regulation governing its implementation, young people 13 years of age may, with the permission of the Labour Inspectorate, work as apprentices or participate in performances for young people only in the field of art (theatre, opera, ballet, circus, etc). Young people from 16 to 18 years of age may engage in work which is not difficult or harmful to their health and which will not be detrimental to their future physical, moral and intellectual development. For this reason, the special list approved by the Central Council of Bulgarian Trade Unions and the Ministry of Health defines in detail the production processes and types of work which are difficult and harmful to health, and for which young people from 16 to 18 years of age may not be employed.

47. The Labour Inspectorate of the District Council of Trade Unions grants permission to recruit young persons in industry and at places where they may work until the age of 18 only after a thorough medical examination which takes into account the industry, enterprise and type of work to be done.

6. Penalties for violating the established minimum age for employment

48. The hiring of young people in violation of the established requirements concerning the minimum age for employment and without the required permission from the Labour Inspectorate and the medical authorities, constitutes a gross violation of labour legislation. It is punishable under article 171 of the Labour Code by a fine of up to 200 leva and of up to 300 leva for repeated violations. Furthermore, labour contracts concluded in such cases are void and declared invalid by the Labour Inspectorate (art. 21, para. 2, of the Labour Code).

7. Preliminary and periodic medical examinations

49. Article 120, paragraph 1, of the Labour Code specifies that persons under 18 years of age, regardless of their type of work, must undergo a compulsory, detailed preliminary medical examination. According to article 120, paragraph 3, they must also undergo a periodic medical examination. The intervals at which such examinations are conducted (ranging from three months to one year) depend on the nature of the production process and on the working conditions. Preliminary medical examinations are conducted by medical specialists and the necessary X-rays and laboratory tests are made (arts. 2 to 12 of Regulation A-87 concerning preliminary and periodic medical examinations, published in Izvestia, issue No. 80, 1958; amended text published in issue No. 8, 1960). Preliminary and periodic medical examinations are free of charge.

8. Prohibition of night work and overtime

50. According to article 112, paragraph 2, of the Labour Code, night work is prohibited for persons under 18 years of age. Only in exceptional circumstances (force majeure) hindering the normal functioning of the enterprise, establishment or organization may persons under 18 years of age be assigned to supplementary night work, with the agreement of the Labour Inspectorate and only temporarily, as long as reasons for this measure prevail. Article 116 of the Labour Code prohibits overtime work by persons under 16 years of age.

9. Safe and hygienic working conditions

51. In order to ensure completely safe and hygienic working conditions, before starting work young people are required to undergo obligatory introductory industrial instruction and training to learn the basic rules of technical safety and occupational hygiene. Only after having successfully completed that training may a young person begin to work independently. In addition, periodic instruction is provided.

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52. In order to inform persons under 18 years of age about the young people's labour protection regulations relating to the permissible age, hours of work, night work and overtime, leave, etc., and to facilitate monitoring of their observance, every enterprise is obliged to make an accurate listing of employees under 18 years of age.

10. International conventions concerning the minimum age and labour protection for young people

53. Bulgaria has ratified a number of international conventions adopted by the International Labour Organisation concerning the minimum age and labour protection for young people. Among them, mention should be made of the following conventions on the minimum age for employment: the Minimum Age (Industry) Convention (No. 5, 1919), the Minimum Age (Sea) Convention (No. 7, 1920), the Minimum Age (Agriculture) Convention (No. 10, 1921), the Minimum Age (Trimmers and Stokers) Convention (No. 15, 1921), the Minimum Age (Sea) Convention (Revised) (No. 58, 1936), the Minimum Age (Industry) Convention (Revised) (No. 59, 1937), the Minimum Age (Non-Industrial Employment) Convention (Revised) (No. 60, 1937), the Minimum Age (Fishermen) Convention (No. 112, 1959), and the Minimum Age Convention (No. 138, 1973); the following conventions on preliminary and periodic medical examinations: the Medical Examination of Young Persons (Sea) Convention (No. 16, 1921), the Medical Examination of Young Persons (Industry) Convention (No. 77, 1946), the Medical Examination of Young Persons (Non-Industrial Occupations) Convention (No. 78, 1946), the Medical Examination (Fishermen) Convention (No. 113, 1959), the Medical Examination of Young Persons (Underground Work) Convention (No. 124, 1965); and the following conventions on the night work of children: the Night Work of Young Persons (Industry) Convention (No. 6, 1919) and the Night Work of Young Persons (Non-Industrial Occupations) Convention (No. 79, 1946). Domestic legislation and national policies offer a broad range of actions to implement these international instruments, and there are no problems whatsoever connected with their application.

II. ARTICLE 11. THE RIGHT TO AN ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING

A. Principal legislative instruments

54. The principal legislative acts are:

(a) Constitution of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, article 3;

(b) National Assembly decision on the implementation of the national programme for the well-being of the people, adopted at the fifth session of the Sixth National Assembly (December 1972, Official Gazette, No. 101, of 26 December 1972).

B. The right to an adequate standard of living

1. The planned foundations of State policy on guaranteeing an adequate standard of living

55. Guaranteeing an adequate standard of living and constantly raising it is the foundation of the State's domestic policy. It is mentioned in article 3 of the Constitution, which states that one of the main ways in which the State serves the people is by "creating conditions conducive to the continuous improvement of the people's welfare ...". This basic principle is designed to facilitate the all-round improvement of the people's standard of living, i.e. the inclusion and improvement of all aspects of the people's life: earned income, income from social consumption funds, working conditions, price stability, housing construction, medical care, education and culture, communal facilities, and others. These questions are dealt with on a planned basis. They are central to the laws adopted by the National Assembly relating to the five-year, one-year and the recently initiated two-year plans for the country's social and economic development and to the State's yearly budgets. These laws specify, for the appropriate period of time, the main ways of improving the people's standard of living and the resources allocated for this purpose.

56. At its fifth session, the Sixth National Assembly (December 1972) adopted a decision on implementing the national programme for raising the people's standard of living. On the strength of that decision, a comprehensive programme to improve the standard of living, approved by the December (1972) Plenum of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, was adopted as a "national programme and the basis for State policy" (part 1 of the decision). By that decision, the National Assembly obliged the deputies, the State and the other governmental and economic bodies and organizations to carry out the programme through their activities. Since that time, the State's whole activity and its domestic economic and social policy have been aimed at fulfilling the requirements of the December programme of 1972.

57. Within their spheres of competence, State organs and public organizations give constant consideration to and adopt general and specific measures for guaranteeing the necessary standard of living and the constant improvement of the living conditions of all categories and social groups of the population. The State's entire economic, social and cultural policy is aimed at this basic goal. Special consideration is given to improving the standard of living and living conditions of the lowest paid categories of workers.

58. General and specific measures taken by the State and other organs to improve the standard of living and living conditions have resulted primarily in an increase in the earnings and remuneration of all categories and groups of workers, especially those with the lowest income, in the development of a broad system of pensions, medical care and other social services, in the organization and provision to the population of free and reduced-price services subsidized by the State, in the provision of various tax and other allowances, and in the organization and direction of the country's economy in such a way as to meet the people's material and cultural needs more fully.

2. The national minimum wage

59. One of the most important steps within the system of general and specific measures is the establishment of a national minimum monthly wage, which rises constantly as the economy grows and the social productivity of labour increases. In 1956, the minimum wage was 40 leva; in 1960 it was increased to 50 leva, in 1966 to 65 leva and in 1973 to 80 leva. The minimum wage was raised most recently in 1979, when the wages and earnings of workers were increased by Decree No. 50 of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party and the Council of Ministers, dated 10 November 1979. By that decree, the minimum wage was raised from 80 to 100 leva a month. According to development projections, it is expected to reach 120 leva by 1985.

60. In essence, the minimum wage is the statutory wage paid to the least skilled manual and non-manual workers in normal working conditions, and is the basis of the wage system. It is established for the normal work time specified by law or for the fulfilment of the planned production norm. According to Decree No. 50 of 10 November 1979, for unpleasant and other specific working conditions, overtime work, production exceeding the norm, lengthy periods of work and others, in addition to remuneration, including the minimum wage, an increment for specific conditions of work, length of service, etc. is received. Consequently, there are few manual and non-manual workers receiving only the minimum statutory wage.

61. At each stage of the country's development, the following requirements are given priority when determining and increasing the minimum statutory wage:
(a) it must be large enough to enable the least skilled manual and non-manual workers and their families to meet all their food, clothing, housing and cultural and other requirements and (b) it should allow that category of the labour force to make its productive contribution.

62. Needs are determined through various forms of research to establish model budgets for various types of family. In working out the model budgets for minimum living requirements, various scientific or socially recognized norms and standards relating to the consumption of food products, clothing, housing, furniture, expenditure on apartments, use of cultural facilities, etc., are employed. Gross revenue from the minimum wage is not subject to tax.

63. There is currently a definite national trend towards a gradual decline in the absolute number and relative percentage of manual and non-manual workers receiving the minimum wage. This was achieved through a policy of gradual limitation and restriction of the use of unskilled and semi-skilled labour, the introduction of scientific and technological innovations and improvements in the education and skills of workers.

64. Low-income families enjoy the free or reduced-price services of children's facilities organized and supported by the State. Students receive free lunches and breakfasts at school, free textbooks, grants, and so forth.

3. Wages of other manual and non-manual workers

65. The wages of other workers are determined in accordance with the quantity and quality of their work (art. 41, para. 1, of the Constitution). The wage level is determined by the Council of Ministers (arts. 67 and 68 of the Labour Code) and is raised periodically. Over the past 20 years, the basic wages of manual and non-manual workers were steadily increased several times: in 1959, from 6 per cent to 25 per cent; in 1966, from 8.2 per cent to 18 per cent; in 1973, from 17.5 per cent to 26 per cent; in 1979, from 25 per cent to 30 per cent. There is also a policy of parallel increases in various types of wage supplements - for unpleasant and other specific working conditions, for higher qualifications than required, for length of service, and a number of other factors.

4. Retail price stability

66. The Government's basic concern is to raise not only the nominal wage but also its purchasing power and workers' real earnings. Consequently, in addition to raising wages, the Government follows an unswerving policy of stabilizing retail prices and prices of food, goods and services which the people need every day: clothing, rent, transportation, etc. These prices are determined in a centralized and planned manner by the Council of Ministers and the Central Pricing Board of the State Planning Committee.

67. Notwithstanding the influence of objective world economic processes on national production expenditures, retail prices of basic food stuffs have remained stable for a decade. For example, the prices of bread, flour, rice, vermicelli, macaroni and other products have not changed for over 20 years; the prices of meat and meat products, milk and milk products, sugar and sugar products and others have remained stable for over 10 years. At the same time, retail prices of important commodities have declined several times, including those of food products intended for certain age and social groups.

68. In accordance with the social policy of the Party and the Government, the level of retail prices of certain food products, such as children's food and other products, does not change; it remains below or equivalent to production costs in order to protect the interests of certain social groups of the population.

69. In cases when it has been necessary to bring the retail prices of certain food products into line with objective conditions for the development of the economy or the enhancement of its effectiveness, the Party and the Government have enacted appropriate measures to increase the earnings and improve the standard of living of workers. For example, when retail and wholesale prices were brought into line with objective conditions for the economy's development in November 1979, monetary incomes (statutory wages, pensions, remuneration of young specialists, higher minimum wage, increments for children, and others) were increased. And the Government entirely underwrote the cost of increased food prices for cafeterias, children's institutions, hospitals, and sanatoria.

70. The prevention of price violations and price fixing, in the case of all goods and services and in the case of foodstuffs, is the responsibility of special price supervision organs, ministries, other government departments, communal people's councils and of the Committee for State and National Control and the public organizations. Special governmental control relating to price stability and pricing is exercised, organized and co-ordinated by the Central Pricing Board of the State Planning Committee, which has a special organ dealing with price control - the State Price Inspectorate. The Central Pricing Board co-ordinates its price control and pricing activities with the Committee for State and National Control, with other supervisory organs and with the Central Council of Bulgarian Trade Unions.

5. Social consumption funds

71. The State allocates large amounts from the national income to social consumption funds, which provide education, health care and social security without charge and finance a number of other social activities producing a direct improvement in the standard of living of the people. The per capita expenditure of money from these funds is constantly increasing - for example, from 420 leva in 1975 and to 619 leva in 1980. This means that in 1980 each Bulgarian citizen received an average of 52 leva a month (i.e. more than half the national minimum monthly wage in Bulgaria). This undoubtedly increases the national income of the population. In future years, it is planned to increase such expenditure.

72. As a result of the policy pursued by the State, real per capita income rose by 12.7 per cent in the last five years alone.

6. Housing

73. The situation is improving as regards the provision of housing to the population. During the period from 1975 to 1980, 352,000 new dwellings were constructed - i.e. over 100,000 more than in the period from 1971 to 1975. The following table shows the housing available for each 1,000 inhabitants and the constant increase over the years:

	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>
Number of dwellings	280	282	287	293	300	307
Useful area m ²	14 328	24 532	15 727	16 090	16 520	16 987
Total area m ²	11 901	12 050	13 331	13 598	13 919	14 276

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7. Adoption of the national programme and public nutrition

74. Measures of three types are being taken to improve the food consumption pattern:

(a) Planning of food production in accordance with physiological norms of food requirements. Quotas are established, which each year gradually bring food production into line with scientific norms;

(b) Health education among broad strata of the population to teach scientific principles of nutrition for the gradual introduction of a healthy diet;

(c) Medical inspection of public catering and recommendations concerning the full use of scientific means for the improvement of nutrition.

75. Special attention is paid to the production of dairy products and other food for children. Considerable importance is attached to health education concerning scientific principles of nutrition at women's and children's clinics. Greater medical supervision is being provided of nutrition at children's communities - at crèches, kindergartens and schools.

76. Official standards have been approved in Bulgaria for all manufactured foodstuffs; these are compulsory and include specifications regarding nutritional value and food safety. The official standards are drawn up in agreement with the Ministry of Health. This Ministry also gives its approval to food production technology. This requirement creates a sound hygienic basis for the production of foodstuffs.

77. Constant control is exercised over the production of food products. The organs of State veterinary control continuously inspect the production of food of animal origin. The organs of State sanitary control make periodic sanitary checks ("control of control"). In quality control, an important role is played by the control organs of the State Committee on Standardization.

78. Sanitary regulations have also been approved to govern the use of pesticides and food additives and to regulate enterprises concerned with public catering, trade in food products and the main branches of the food industry.

79. Health education is provided on a planned and continuous basis to teach broad sectors of the population scientific principles of nutrition.

80. The principles of nutrition are studied at educational establishments providing training for senior and intermediate medical personnel. An appropriate amount of time is also devoted to the study of nutrition in the specialized technical branches of the food and public catering industry.

81. Short courses on the scientific principles of nutrition (minimum sanitary courses) are provided for workers in public catering.

82. As a result of the policy pursued by the State, the consumption of basic food and non-food products is constantly increasing and the pattern of consumption is improving. In 1980, the per capita consumption of basic food products was as follows: meat and meat products - 62.5 kg; milk - 196 litres; eggs - 203; fruit and vegetables - 204 kg; sugar and sugar products - 34 kg. The average caloric content of the food products consumed is also improving. In 1973, the daily average was 3,413 calories per person, including 2,773 (91.2 per cent) from products of vegetable origin and 640 (18.8 per cent) from products of animal origin. In 1978, however, the figure was 3,481, including 2,652 (76.2 per cent) from products of vegetable origin and 829 (23.8 per cent) from products of animal origin.

III. ARTICLE 12. THE RIGHT TO PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

A. Principal legislative instruments

83. The principal legislative instruments are:

- (a) Constitution of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, article 47;
- (b) Public Health Law - published in Official Gazette, No. 88, of 6 November 1973, revised in Official Gazette, No. 92, of 1973, amended in Official Gazette, No. 63 of 1973;
- (c) Rules for the implementation of the Public Health Law, published in Official Gazette, No. 31, of 19 April 1974.

B. Right to physical and mental health

84. The right to good physical and mental health is a basic right of citizens in Bulgaria, embodied in article 47 of the Constitution. The State guarantees this right by providing, since March 1951, high-quality medical care without charge. In order to protect this right, the State cares for the health of the population in a number of ways, by organizing general health and other medical facilities and services in adequate quantities and suitable locations and by providing medical education and information to the population through the State organs and with the help of public organizations. In this connexion, at the end of 1979 Bulgaria possessed: 184 hospitals with 73,000 places; 3,741 general out-patient clinics with about 600 places; 185 sanatoria and health resorts with about 19,000 places; 2,872 maternity and paediatric clinics (Statistical Yearbook of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, 1980, pp. 584-587). These medical facilities exist throughout the country in all the population centres, and not only in the main cities. The aim is to locate them as near as possible to the public - that is to those for whom the medical care is provided. These facilities have modern medical equipment. Medical and sanitary care is provided there by highly skilled medical personnel. According to figures for 1979, Bulgaria has: 21,249 physicians, 4,641 dentists, 3,551 pharmacists, 7,116 medical workers, 7,795 midwives and 43,645 nurses - that is a total of about 90,000 persons with intermediate and

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advanced medical training (see Statistical Yearbook, 1980, p. 456). Medical arrangements to preserve and restore the health of the population are based on preventive measures designed to establish and maintain the necessary conditions for the prevention of disease and the restoration and improvement of the people's health. The organization of medicine in Bulgaria and the arrangements for protecting the citizens' constitutional right to good physical and mental health are set out in detail in the 1973 Public Health Law and the 1974 Rules for its implementation.

C. Measures to protect the right to good physical and mental health

1. The provision for the reduction of the stillbirth rate and of infant mortality and for the healthy development of the child

85. The raising of a healthy and happy younger generation is a very responsible task, to which the State attaches top priority. This can be seen from its consistent and determined policy aimed at the further improvement of medical and social facilities for children, pregnant women, mothers and women.

86. The medical workers' efforts in this direction have two main aims: the further development and improvement of preventive and diagnostic facilities at paediatric and obstetrical-gynaecological establishments. The result has been an improvement in the material and technical facilities provided for the medical care of children, pregnant women and mothers. An Institute of Obstetrics and Gynaecology has established itself as a contemporary, powerful and modern body, and on 1 June 1979 work was started on the construction of a new multidisciplinary hospital, to be the basis for an Institute of Paediatrics. Modern technology and up-to-date equipment were provided for the units constructed in 1980 for the diagnosis and intensive care of serious children's diseases. The number of places at paediatric facilities increased from 9.1 per thousand to 10.4 per thousand in 1979. Mortality at children's facilities declined to 0.68 per cent and in maternal facilities to 0.2 per cent in 1979.

87. The years of the seventh five-year plan (1976-1980) were especially fruitful - particularly 1979, which was the International Year of the Child, and 1980. In 1979, child mortality dropped to a record low - 19.8 per cent. This trend continued and, according to preliminary data, the figure for 1980 was 19.9 per cent. During the seventh five-year plan, peri-natal child mortality (the number of stillborn children and the number of children who die before reaching the age of seven, expressed as a figure per thousand) declined by 2.9 points and amounted to 146 in 1979, compared with a decline of 1.5 points over the previous five-year period. Bulgaria has the lowest peri-natal mortality of all the Balkan countries. Child mortality is one of the indicators showing the state of health of the population and provides important evidence of the success of the general health care provided for children.

88. During the seventh five-year plan, the care of children in paediatric units was strengthened and expanded. The number of such units rose from 1,008 in 1975 to 1,069 in 1979; 1,150 children are looked after by one unit paediatrician in the cities.

89. Paediatric clinics have traditionally engaged in efforts to improve the health of children and play the most important preventive role in paediatric care. The number of such clinics increased from 2,655 in 1975 to 2,872 in 1979. Special attention is given to children at high medical/social risk; depending on the home circumstances, such children are sent to children's facilities (mothers' and children's homes) or (depending on the situation) are given special attention in a home setting.

90. Children's nutrition has improved and in 1980 there was an increase in the amounts of food and milk produced which were of suitable quality and quantity for children.

91. The national two-year survey initiated on 1 January 1980 will permit a further improvement in the care of pregnant women and the rearing and upbringing of children of pre-school age. The network of preventive children's facilities is continuing to expand - crèches and "mother's and children's homes", which have recently attained a high rate of growth. The number of places available at permanent crèches is expanding rapidly: from 63,973 in 1975 to 76,235 in 1979 (an increase of 12,262). During the same period, the number of places available at "mother's and children's homes" increased from 3,836 to 4,820. New homes were constructed in a number of the main cities (Blagoevgrad, Vidin, Pleven, Khaskovo and Kurdzhali) and homes will shortly be opened in Silistra, Yambol, Ruse and Varna.

92. The success of child health care can be seen from the positive tendency towards a strengthening of children's physical and mental health and from the changing figures for pupils' physical well-being. For example, while in 1975 the basic medical check-up revealed 196.4 cases of illness or abnormality for every 1,000 pupils examined, in 1979 this figure had dropped to 148.1 per thousand. Additional measures are being adopted to protect the mental and physical health of six-year-old children in their first year of schooling. Measures to improve the learning environment and educational process are being undertaken in conjunction with the Ministry of Education.

93. A number of major events in 1979 - the International Year of the Child - and 1980 had a particular bearing on child health care. In 1979, pursuant to Council of Ministers Decree No. 38 of 31 July 1979 for the further improvement of child health care (Official Gazette, No. 63, of 1979), free medical care was introduced for pregnant women and children aged up to three years. Bulgaria hosted the twentieth conference of Ministers of Health from the socialist countries, which was devoted to peri-natal problems, in addition to meetings of experts from the socialist countries on the problems of the healthy child. A third seminar was held on the organization of maternal and child health care, with the participation of senior officials from health ministers in Tunisia, Algeria, Nigeria, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mali, Mauritania, Chad, Viet Nam, Ecuador, Zaire, the Congo, Portugal, etc.

2. The improvement of all aspects of environmental and industrial hygiene

94. Protecting and preserving nature, the water, air and soil is decreed in article 31 of the Constitution as being one of the obligations of State bodies and enterprises, co-operatives and public organizations, and is a duty of every citizen. Special legislation has been enacted to expand on this constitutional provision: the Act on the Protection of the Air, Water and Soil from Pollution (Official Gazette, No. 84, of 1963), the Nature Protection Act (Official Gazette, No. 47, of 1967) and others. A series of State and public bodies was set up for this purpose: a Parliamentary Standing Commission on the protection of the environment has been set up and operates under the aegis of the National Assembly, a Council on the Protection and Restoration of the Natural Environment under the aegis of the Council of State, a Committee on the Protection of the Natural Environment under the aegis of the Council of Ministers, and a National Committee on the Protection of the Natural Environment, with branches in the provinces, under the aegis of the Fatherland Front's National Council.

95. The years 1976-1980 saw extensive activity aimed at the protection of the environment. The Council of State adopted "Basic guidelines on the protection and restoration of the natural environment in Bulgaria", "Basic guidelines on the protection, restitution and improvement of the natural environment in land tracts on the Black Sea, the Bulgarian coast and the Danube River", "Basic provisions to enhance the campaign against erosion", "Basic guidelines for the improvement, cultivation and rational utilization of medicinal plants in Bulgaria", "Basic provisions to develop hunting in Bulgaria" and "Guidelines on alleviating damage to the human environment from vehicular transport", which clearly set out the strategy and main objectives involved in protecting, restoring and improving the environment in Bulgaria.

96. The Unified Plan for Bulgaria's socio-economic development contains a special section entitled "Protection of the natural environment".

97. The creation of healthy and safe working conditions through the introduction of modern science and technology is proclaimed as a basic right of working people in article 4, paragraph 2, of the Constitution. It is elaborated on in chapter VII (arts. 101-104) of the Labour Code and in a number of legally binding instruments. An important component of this right is the enjoyment of healthy working conditions. The specifications to which health standards at the workplace must conform, on the basis of the principles set forth in article 41, paragraph 2, of the Constitution and articles 101-104 of the Labour Code, have been endorsed by the Ministry of Health and the Central Council of Bulgarian Trade Unions as a component of labour protection.

98. The policy of the State on occupational hygiene and industrial sanitation is of a planned character. Since 1971 the National Assembly has adopted national programmes on occupational hygiene and safety as part of its five-year plans for socio-economic development. Such programmes were adopted in the context of the sixth five-year plan (1971-1975) and the seventh (1976-1980). Another such programme has been developed as part of the eighth five-year plan (1981-1985).

The State is setting aside substantial sums to implement this programme, which provides for a planned and integrated attempt to bring the constituent parts of the work environment and work process into line with health, labour safety and ergonomic standards and requirements, and is leading to a reduction in industrial accidents and occupational diseases.

99. Definite progress in the implementation of the national programme was made during the period covered by the most recent five-year plan. As a result working conditions are constantly improving. A growing number of people are working in conditions that meet health and hygiene standards and requirements.

100. Work safety and hygiene programmes drawn up by all ministries, authorities, provincial people's Councils and organizations pursuant to decision No. 156 of 25 July 1980 of the Council of Ministers and the Central Council of Bulgarian Trade Unions form an inseparable point of the united plan for socio-economic development during the eighth five-year programming cycle.

101. There is a mandatory link between these programmes and the remaining sections of the plan, ensuring compliance with work hygiene measures leading to a general improvement in working conditions.

3. The prevention, treatment and control of epidemic, endemic, occupational and other diseases

102. Following the latest advances in the fields of immunology and vaccine production, changes were made in the Bulgarian vaccination programme in 1980. The new, more up-to-date immunization programme meets the requirements of maintaining vaccine effectiveness while reducing the antigen load on the organism. The following schedule is adopted for compulsory immunization and reimmunization:

(a) Immunization against:

- (i) Tuberculosis - between birth and 2 months;
- (ii) Diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough - after the third month, three times at 30-day intervals;
- (iii) Poliomyelitis - after the third month, three times at a minimum interval of 45 days;
- (iv) Measles - after 12 months;
- (v) Mumps - after 14 months.

(b) Reimmunization against:

- (i) Diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough - at 2 years;
- (ii) Poliomyelitis - at 2, 3 and 7 years;
- (iii) Diphtheria and tetanus - at 7 and 12 years;
- (iv) Tuberculosis - at 7, 14 and 17 years;
- (v) Tetanus - at 17, with later reimmunizations at 25, 35, 45, 55, 65 and 75 years.

103. Anti-smallpox vaccination and revaccination have been excluded from the programme.

104. The prevention of occupational injuries throughout the country is organized and supervised by the Ministry of Health. A special full-time commission to lead the campaign against silicosis and vibration-caused diseases has been set up under the aegis of the Ministry of Health with representatives from the other agencies involved. Efforts in this area are governed by the National Health Act, and the regulations on its implementation are contained in a series of directives and instructions from the Ministry of Health.

105. It is now mandatory in Bulgaria to report, investigate, record and account for occupational injuries. The determination that a disease is occupation-related is made by specialized diagnostic commissions attached to the provincial hospitals.

106. A network of medical institutions to provide workers with preventive care and treatment has been established and continues to grow. These institutions are under the technical authority of the Institute of Hygiene and Occupational Diseases and the occupational clinics attached to the Academy of Medicine.

107. The national work safety and hygiene programme is leading in practice to a reduction in work risks and a drop in occupational injuries.

108. The legal provisions governing occupational diseases in Bulgaria are constructed around "lists". A special table details 30 occupational diseases, giving an indication of the occupational hazards and the occupations with which they are normally associated. In general, occupation-relatedness can be ascertained from the table, even when an occupational hazard is not listed or the disease is associated with other occupations or activities, provided they have caused it. The table of occupational diseases dates from 1958 (Bulletin, No. 5, 1958), and has since been periodically supplemented, to keep pace with developments in science and manufacturing industry, in 1964 and 1974 (Official Gazette, No. 18, of 1964 and No. 6, of 1974). There is also legislation establishing a procedure for identifying occupational diseases: recognition of the existence of an occupational risk, and a causal relationship between the work activity and the occupational hazard are required in order for a disease to be legally classified as an occupational disease (art. 159 of the Labour Code, Regulation No. 64 on the application of the Pensions Act, etc.).

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109. Bulgaria has ratified ILO Conventions Nos. 18 of 1925 and 42 of 1935 on Occupational Diseases. The provisions of these international instruments go far beyond the limits of Bulgarian legislation and practice, and their implementation poses no problems.

4. The creation of conditions which would assure medical service and medical attention in the event of sickness (see above under art. 12, sect. B)

110. Free, qualified and specialized outpatient assistance is available close in hand to the entire Bulgarian population. The country has more than 3,700 outpatient facilities in operation, including urban and regional polyclinics - both independent and associated with hospitals - dental facilities, specialized clinics and a large number of medical units and posts staffed by doctors or medical assistants in rural areas. First aid is given in posts, departments and units purpose-built for first aid and emergency health care.

111. The 75-year plan devoted special attention to reinforcing the front line in health care. The number of medical units was increased to 3,397; 1,746 for general therapy and factory-based treatment; 1,336 for paediatric and in-school treatment; and 315 for obstetrical and gynaecological services. A significant amount of new building took place, and a large number of outpatient polyclinics were reconstructed, modernized and fitted with highly effective medical equipment and technology. Specialized medical care was brought closer to the rural population, while at certain centres of the regional and community system 89 category IV and V polyclinics were set up. Top specialists from the regional hospitals - obstetricians and gynaecologists, surgeons, neurologists, ear, nose and throat specialists, radiologists, etc. work there with the regular staff of general practitioners, paediatricians and dentists several times a week, in accordance with an established graph. In 1979 the polyclinics were responsible for 6.4 examinations by physicians and 2 by dentists per inhabitant, while physicians made 0.5 house calls per inhabitant.

112. Treatment at clinics is provided mainly to healthy and basically healthy priority groups: pregnant women, children, school-children, workers and patients with highly infectious or problematic illnesses. Free medicinal supplies for outpatient care are provided to all pregnant women, children under the age of three and a great many victims of venereal diseases. The list of diseases which can be treated free of charge in the home is constantly growing.

113. In order to provide modern in-patient medical care for those who need it, the material base of the country's treatment and preventive care facilities is being enhanced by means of phased new building and reconstruction programmes. During the 75-year plan a new provincial hospital in the town of Kurdzhali, the extension to the Sofia Provincial Hospital, a new surgical wing in Stara Zagora and district hospitals in Botevgrad, Svishtov, Malko Turnovo and Panagyurishte came into operation. During that period, 90 hospital beds were provided per 10,000 inhabitants and improvements were made in the utilization of the beds

available. Further reconstruction and modernization of hospital facilities is occurring alongside new building, under the capital investment programme for the eighth five-year plan.

114. It is still Bulgaria's policy to strengthen basic and specialized departments and continue the development of intensive care departments and units - general and specialized - for severe cardiovascular ailments (myocardial infarcts, severe rhythmic disruptions, cerebrovascular diseases, etc.) and to provide intensive care for children, pregnant women, new mothers, etc.

115. A series of new prophylactic, diagnostic, therapeutic and rehabilitative methods have been introduced in treatment and preventive care facilities, with the active co-operation of the senior specialists in the Republic and accredited regional consulting specialists from the Academy of Medicine.

116. To improve the quality and level of medical attention given to the seriously ill, to children and to new mothers, a two-tier system has been introduced under which all patient care is provided by doctors and nurses (midwives).

117. There are plans to extend the two-tier system for the treatment of patients in district and urban hospitals and hospitals for workers, to streamline the process of diagnosis, prevention and treatment, to enhance the organization, mechanization and centralization of auxiliary activities in hospital institutions and to raise the level of qualifications among senior and intermediate medical staff.

118. The development and strengthening of the first aid system is continuing. The policy of providing independent, specialized first aid services with regular, full-time staff in independent first aid posts and in the departments of provincial hospitals is continuing, so as to provide the basic structure for modern, highly qualified medical attention at the pre-hospital stage.