

Translated from Russian

Information from the Republic of Belarus on the implementation of United Nations General Assembly resolution 76/139, “Preparations for and celebration of the observance of the thirtieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family”

Family-oriented efforts to support the use of new technologies, including improving work-family balance and promoting parenting education

A number of legal safeguards are provided by law for workers with family responsibilities. These facilitate the creation of favourable conditions for combining professional and parental functions. Furthermore, their implementation is mandatory for all employers.

In 2020, a provision on telecommuting was included in the Labour Code. Employers and workers have shown an active interest in implementing the provision on this form of labour relations. A draft law has been developed that proposes to supplement the Labour Code with norms regulating the possibility of telecommuting both temporarily and periodically.

In addition, in 2020 a new article was added to the Labour Code whereby the employer is obliged to provide paternity leave (not more than 14 calendar days), without pay, at the request of the child’s father (or stepfather) upon the birth of a child to be cared for by the family.

The leave is granted at the father’s request within six months after the birth of the child. During this period, both parents are able to care for the newborn at the same time, which also helps bring the family closer together.

The provision of one additional day off work per week for parents raising children has been in effect since 1992, in order to balance the interests of employers and workers alike and to meet children’s need for parental attention.

A draft law proposes to supplement the Labour Code with a norm that establishes the alternative option of reduced working days, with a one-hour reduction, in agreement with the employer. In other words, parents raising children will be entitled either to one additional day off work or to a one-hour shorter workday.

The “Parent-Friendly Company” initiative is being implemented with the support of the United Nations Population Fund in order to develop favourable working conditions for workers with family responsibilities and to harmoniously combine professional functions with equal parenting. The initiative is aimed at supplementing collective agreements with norms that help to reconcile professional and family responsibilities, and at monitoring the fulfilment by employers of their

obligations to workers who are also parents.

Family-oriented policies and programmes that facilitate inclusive urbanization and access to affordable housing, the promotion of intergenerational living arrangements and other measures

Housing policy in Belarus is socially oriented. Every year about 4 million square metres of housing are made available, including 4,387,300 square metres in 2021 for citizens registered as being in need of better housing conditions. Of the commissioned housing for people on waiting lists, 1,778,550 square meters were built with State support.

The construction of housing for families with many children, most of whom are young families, is subject to special monitoring.

Families with children who improve their housing conditions by building (reconstructing) or purchasing housing are supported by the State in the form of preferential loans and by financial assistance from the State in repaying the debt on those loans.

Families with many children are granted preferential loans at 1 per cent per annum on a fast-track basis. Young families with two minor children are also eligible for preferential loans at 5 per cent per annum on a first-come, first-served basis.

Families with many children are also eligible for a fast-tracked subsidy to pay a portion of the interest on loans, as well as subsidies for repayment of the loan principal.

Families with two or more children, when one parent is the recipient of a childcare allowance for a child under 3 years of age, are granted a deferment of repayment of the debt on the preferential loan, including interest on the use of the loan, for the period that the allowance is received.

The “Housing construction” State programme for 2021–2025 is planned to provide 4.5 million square metres of housing, including almost 1.5 million square metres of housing with State support, in 2025.

Measures to promote the sustainable management of climate change for families

In order to create a favourable environment, foster respect for the environment and promote inclusive and family-oriented urbanization, arrangements and repairs are made for sports and children’s playgrounds and for container sites for separate waste collection, trees and shrubs are planted, lawns are designed and surface water body areas are fitted out for recreation, sports and tourism.

Work continues on improving the system for monitoring ambient air quality and sources of pollution, and on establishing charging stations for electric cars.

Compulsory medical insurance measures are being provided and implemented for workers

against various adverse factors in the course of their employment.

Strategies and programmes that promote orderly migration, including family reunification policies

The result for Belarus in 2021 on Sustainable Development Goal indicator 10.7.2, “Number of countries that have implemented well-managed migration policies”, was 86.7 per cent and coded as “Meets”.

The Legal Status of Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons in the Republic of Belarus Act establishes norms that allow foreign citizens and stateless persons to obtain temporary and permanent residence permits in Belarus in connection with family reunification.

Accordingly, a temporary residence permit is issued to foreigners if they are spouses or close relatives of citizens of the Republic of Belarus or foreigners permanently residing in Belarus.

Permits for permanent residence are issued to foreigners who have the right to family reunification, namely: a spouse; children under 18 years old, except for those who have acquired full legal capacity; children over 18 years old with disabilities who are unmarried, dependent on a citizen of Belarus or on a foreigner permanently residing in Belarus; and parents with disabilities who are dependent on a citizen of Belarus or on a foreigner permanently residing in Belarus.

In some cases, the right to family reunification may be granted to the stepmother, stepfather or step-siblings of citizens of the Republic of Belarus and of foreigners permanently residing in Belarus.

Family-oriented policies to respond to current demographic trends, including ageing, and support for all generations in the family, including older persons

State family policy in Belarus is aimed at supporting the social institution of the traditional family, and support for families with children is one of the priority areas of social policy.

Sociological studies show that Belarusians place a high value on the family: 98 per cent of the population considers the family the most important part of life. Families are home to about 80 percent of the country’s total population.

The main link in financial support for families is the State benefits system, which covers more than 423,000 children, or every fourth child in the country. In 2021, expenditure on benefits for families with children amounted to 2.7 billion roubles, or 1.5 per cent of the country’s gross domestic product.

Belarus is one of the few countries where it is possible to be on maternity leave to take care of a child up to 3 years of age and receive the full amount of the State benefit for this entire period, regardless of whether the child is registered in a preschool educational institution.

Families with many children receive special care and attention from the State. The country

implements a family capital programme upon the birth (adoption) of a third or subsequent child.

Measures are being implemented to support the family, targeting its different generations and covering different stages of life. For example, the greater involvement of women in raising children at an active age is subsequently taken into account in the pension provisions.

The demographic situation is characterized by a steady and intensive process of population ageing in Belarus. In this regard, special attention is paid to extending the active longevity of citizens of the older generation.

The “Active Longevity-2030” national strategy was developed based on analysis of demographic forecasts and also takes international recommendations into account. It is aimed at forming a society for people of all ages and creating conditions for the fullest and most effective realization of the potential of senior citizens and sustainable improvement in their quality of life.

Preparing for the thirtieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family (outreach events)

In early 2022, Belarus took an important step toward protecting the traditional family: the updated Constitution enshrined the concept of marriage as the union of a woman and a man.

In order to emphasize the important role of the father in the upbringing of children, a Presidential decree established Father’s Day (21 October) as a holiday.

Educational institutions are implementing programmes aimed at shaping young people’s appreciation of the institution of marriage and the family. Pedagogical education programmes for parents (parents’ universities) are being introduced in order to build parenting competencies and strengthen child-parent relationships.

Projects at local social service centres, such as “Daddy School”, “The Art of Being a Mom”, and “Family as a Value”, are aimed at supporting the acquisition of skills for respectful and positive interaction with children as well as harmonizing spousal and parent-child relationships.

Thematic events aimed at promoting family life and responsible parenthood are held annually as part of the celebration of Family Day, Mother’s Day and International Children’s Day. It has become an annual tradition for the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection to hold the “Family of the Year” national contest.

The information space plays an important role in promoting traditional family values. In addition to traditional forms of topical presentations in the media, use is also made of the Internet and social networks. Social advertising is created and disseminated aimed at strengthening families and family values and promoting responsible parenthood.
