

**BIRTH CONTROL IN BELARUS AND CHINA:
CURRENT POLICY**

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Belarus and China are experiencing a decline of the total fertility rate (TFR). On the one hand, this was a natural response to the increasing role of women in society, on the labor market and increasing women's participation in education. As a result women are marrying and have children later in their life, which leads to a decrease in the number of children born. On the other hand, scientists state the role of the policy on childbearing, the strength of which is difficult to calculate although. Today, one can observe a rapid strengthening of bilateral relations in economic, social and other areas of regulation. Belarus and China had different birth control vectors. In the conditions of protracted depopulation in the Republic of Belarus, stimulation of the birth rate has become a priority goal of the state policy. Rapid population growth in China posed a threat to economic, food, and even environmental security. This led to the adoption of drastic measures to limit the number of children born in Chinese families. This paper focuses on how similar are birth control policies in Belarus and China. The choice of countries is also due to the fact that today both countries set the goal to stabilize the population in order to ensure sustainable economic development and improvement in the quality of life. The paper presents a description and analysis of legal acts that regulate demographic processes, as well as specific areas of support for families with children. It was revealed that Belarus provides multilateral (mostly financial) assistance not only for the birth of a child, but also for his upbringing. The system is designed so that a woman cares for a child 3 years after his birth. In China, in the face of fierce competition in the labor market, women go to work after maternity leave. They are forced to use the services of pre-school education, even if they are expensive. As a result, the decision to give birth to a child is weighed in terms of the economic possibilities of families. In China, measures may vary depending on the territory; in Belarus, politics is one for all. It is difficult to assess in which country the policy is more effective. The total fertility rate for the past 25 years is very similar.

Keywords: Birth control, Family policy, Demographic policy.

În Belarus și China se observă o tendință de scădere a ratei totale de fertilitate. Pe de o parte, aceasta prezintă un răspuns firesc la creșterea rolului femeilor în societate, pe piața muncii și gradului de implicare a fetelor în procesul educațional. Drept urmare, se constată majorarea vârstei la căsătorie și naștere, precum și reducerea numărului de copii născuți. Pe de altă parte, cercetătorii indică influența politicilor asupra natalității, efectul cărora este foarte dificil de evaluat. Anterior, Belarus și China aveau vectori diferiți în controlul natalității. În condițiile depopulării în Republica Belarus, stimularea natalității a devenit o prioritate a politicii de stat. În China, creșterea rapidă a populației a reprezentat o amenințare pentru securitatea economică, alimentară și chiar pentru mediu. Aceasta a dus la adoptarea unor măsuri drastice pentru a limita numărul de copii născuți în familiile chineze. Cu toate acestea, acum ambele țări au un singur obiectiv – stabilizarea numărului populației pentru a asigura o dezvoltare economică durabilă și a îmbunătăți calitatea vieții oamenilor. În acest articol se analizează cât de asemănătoare este politica de control al natalității în aceste două țări. Alegerea țărilor se datorează și faptului că astăzi interacțiunea dintre China și Belarus crește rapid în multe domenii, inclusiv în domeniile economic și social. Articolul prezintă o descriere și o analiză a actelor juridice care reglementează procesele demografice, precum și zonele specifice de sprijin a familiilor cu copii. S-a dezvăluit că Belarus oferă o asistență multilaterală

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(preponderent financiară) nu numai pentru nașterea unui copil, ci și pentru educația sa. Sistemul este conceput astfel încât, de regulă, o femeie să aibă grijă de un copil până la 3 ani de la naștere. În China, în condițiile concurenței acerbe pe piața muncii, femeile merg la muncă după concediul de maternitate. Ele sunt obligate să utilizeze serviciile educației preșcolare, în pofida faptului că acestea sunt destul de costisitoare. Drept urmare, decizia de a naște un copil este cântărită în ceea ce privește posibilitățile economice ale familiilor. În China, măsurile pot varia în funcție de teritoriu, în Belarus, politica este una pentru toți. Este dificil de evaluat în ce țară politica este mai eficientă. Totodată, rata totală de fertilitate din ultimii 25 de ani se menține la un nivel similar în ambele țări.

Cuvinte-cheie: controlul nașterii, politica familială, politica demografică.

В Беларуси и Китае наблюдается падение суммарного коэффициента рождаемости. С одной стороны, это стало естественным откликом на возрастание роли женщины в обществе, на рынке труда и расширении вовлеченности девушек в образовательный процесс. Как результат, наблюдается более поздний возраст вступления в брак и рождения детей, а также сокращение числа рождений. С другой стороны, ученые указывают на влияние на рождаемость политики, силу которого оценить очень сложно. Ранее Беларусь и Китай имели разные векторы регулирования рождаемости. В условиях затяжной депопуляции в Республике Беларусь стимулирование рождаемости стало безусловным приоритетом государственной политики. В Китае быстрые темпы роста населения выступили угрозой экономической, продовольственной и даже экологической безопасности. Это обусловило принятие кардинальных мер по ограничению числа рожденных детей в китайских семьях. Однако сейчас обе страны ставят перед собой одну цель – стабилизировать численность населения в целях обеспечения устойчивого развития экономики и повышения качества жизни людей. Насколько схожа политика в области регулирования рождаемости в двух странах рассматривается в данной статье. Выбор стран обусловлен также и тем, что сегодня все более стремительно укрепляется взаимодействие между Китаем и Беларусью во многих сферах, в том числе экономической, социальной и др. В статье представлено описание и анализ правовых актов, которые регулируют демографические процессы, а также конкретных направлений поддержки семей с детьми. Выявлено, что в Беларуси предоставляется многосторонняя (в большей степени финансовая) помощь не только при рождении ребенка, но и для его воспитания. Система устроена так, что, как правило, женщина ухаживает за ребенком 3 года после его рождения. В Китае в условиях жесткой конкуренции на рынке труда женщины выходят на работу по истечении декретных отпусков. Они вынуждены пользоваться услугами дошкольного образования даже, если они стоят дорого. Как следствие, решение о рождении ребенка взвешивается с точки зрения экономических возможностей семей. В Китае меры могут различаться в зависимости от территории, в Беларуси политика едина для всех. Сложно оценить в какой стране политика более эффективна. Суммарный коэффициент рождаемости уже на протяжении 25 лет очень схож.

Ключевые слова: регулирование рождаемости, семейная политика, демографическая политика.

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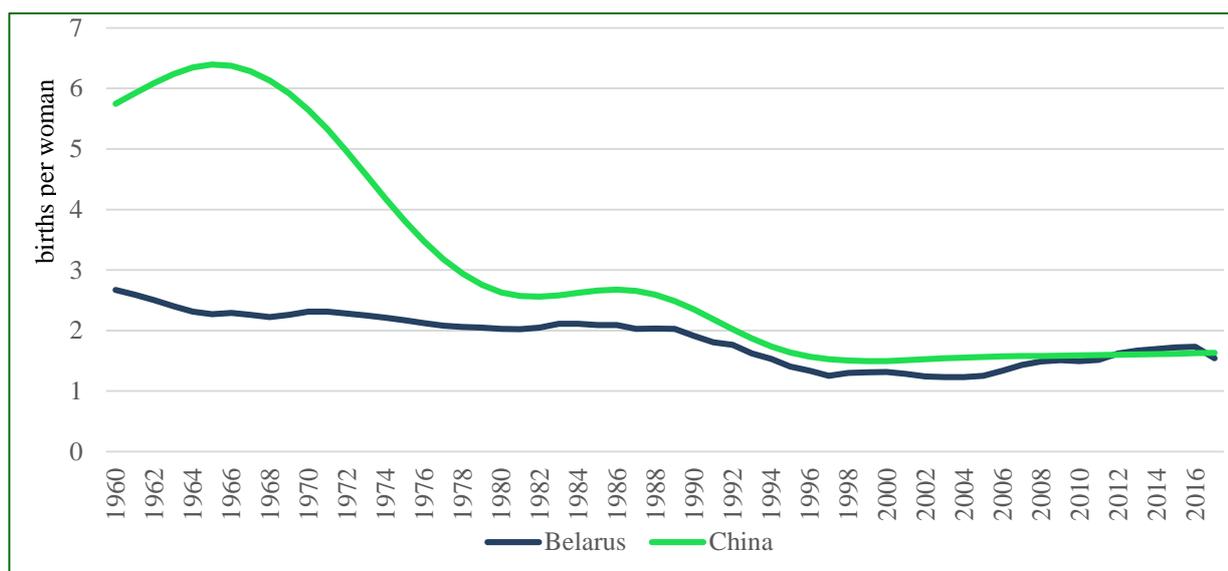
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Introduction. Belarus and China had different birth control vectors. Nevertheless, the total fertility rate in Belarus and China is at the same level more than 25 years (Graph 1).

Today, both countries have the goal to stabilize the population in order to ensure sustainable economic development and improvement in the quality of life.

It is important to underline, that nowadays women are under double pressure: they have to work and they have to take care of the family [1]. The results of studies conducted in China showed a 7% reduction in wages with each subsequent child [2]. There is a problem of choice between working and raising children [3].



Graph 1. Total fertility rate in Belarus and China, births per woman

Source: According to World Bank database.

In this situation, state policy aimed at supporting both labor and child rearing comes forward.

In addition, both Belarusian and Chinese scientists say that a number of important factors has an influence on the birth rate. Among them are the socio-economic, structural (transformation of the population structure) and individual factors [4; 5].

Modern Chinese authors focus on breastfeeding policy as one of the important factors in improving babies' health [6]. For example, in both countries, there is the possibility to take two maternity leaves for breastfeeding for working women (up to 1 year old in China, up to 1.5 years old in Belarus). However, it takes 30 minutes to get to the child and back to work. This provides an additional incentive for the decision to switch to artificial feeding. There is an acute problem with the availability of rooms for breastfeeding in public places.

Infrastructure becomes an essential part of family and children support policy. However, infrastructure development is not always properly implemented.

In Belarus, changes in the population structure are already hindering and will hinder in the next decade the achieving of the objective to increase the number of births.

The mean age at childbearing continues to increase. In 2017, the mean age at childbearing was 29.2 years. At the same time, the number of women aged 20-29 years in 2017 compared to 2010 decreased by more than 130 thousand people, which led to a reduction in the number of first childbirth.

In the past 2 years, the situation has become even more complicated. The effect of socio-economic factors decreased, the effect of structural factors intensified, especially in rural areas [4]. As a result, in 2016-2017 there was a decrease in the number of births. The number of first childbirth decreased both in absolute and relative terms from 50.9 thousand (42.8% of all births) in 2015 to 41.2 thousand in 2017 (40.2% of all births).

The situation was mitigated by the fact that a large cohort of children who was born at the mid-1980s continues to remain in reproductive age. Despite the fact that the total number of women aged 15-49 years since 2004 has been steadily declining, the number of women aged 30-34 years old is increasing. Timely implementation of demographic policy measures stimulated the birth in this cohort of women from 30.7 thousand in 2015 to 31.9 thousand children born in 2016. However, due to a general decline in the birth rate in 2017, the number of children born to mothers aged 30-34 years – declined up to 29.1 thousand.

In China due to the "One-child" policy there was a transition from the traditional to the modern type of the population replacement with moderate rates of demographic processes development. As a result, TFR decreased from 3.8 in 1975 to 1.6 births per woman at present. Such a small family in a

traditionally large, peasant and Confucian country is the effect of a special super-efficient government population planning policy. That proves the possibility of applying management and ideological decisions, in addition to the direct economic mechanism.

Since 2014, as a result of the fertility policy adjustment, there has been a significant increase in the number of births, especially in 2016, when the number of newborns exceeded 17.86 million, it was the highest figure since 2000.

However, over the past 40 years, especially in the post-reform years, irreversible changes have occurred in the mentality and value orientations of the new generations of Chinese. A different post-traditional model of family and family relations have been formed with later marriages and one-child family. A significant number of young married couples make a conscious choice in favor of childlessness. The motivations for such a choice are connected both with the unwillingness to bear responsibility, self-centeredness and the hedonistic values of the "little emperors" generation, as well as with economic considerations.

How government policy in Belarus and China helps families with children, thereby stimulating fertility, is considered below.

Special program

During the collapse of the USSR, Belarus was in the process of the demographic transition. The depopulation, started in 1994, was the result of a dramatic decline in birth rates, which took place in the process of rising mortality. Then, at state level, there was an awareness of the necessity to provide the legal foundation in the demographic sphere. In the period of 1994-1999 family law had the legal basis in: the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus (1994), the Marriage and Family Code (1999), the Law protecting Children's Rights (1993), as well as a number of other Laws, Decrees and Regulations.

The guarantees provided by the Labour Code (1972, amended), with the prohibition to terminate employment contract, providing maternity leave to take care of a child under 3 years, the regulation of night work, overtime work etc. have become a real support for parents. In 1995, there was issued a Decree, which developed additional measures for the protection of motherhood and childhood, providing one paid day off for single mothers and mothers with many children.

Despite the benefits and guarantees, the reproductive attitudes of the population have been transformed in the direction of reducing the real number of children born. As a result, the TFR decreased from 2 in 1989 to 1.2-1.3 births per woman in 1996.

There was a strong issue to develop a set of measures aimed at increasing the birth rate.

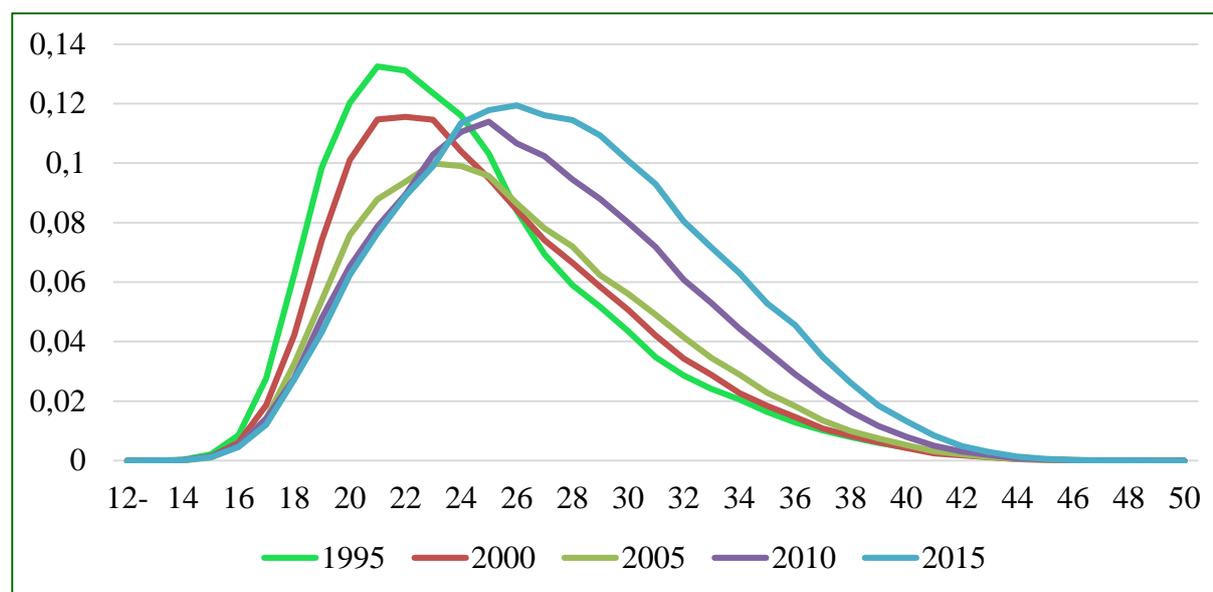
A breakthrough in the demographic policy was the adoption of the Law "On Demographic Security" in 2002, which established the legal and organizational framework for regulating demographic processes. In accordance with this Law, the National Program for Demographic Security for 2007-2010 was developed and approved [7]. The main goal was to prevent future worsening of the demographic situation.

The implementation of the measures of the program led to increase the TFR to 1.5 births per woman, although this was not enough.

The next National Program of Demographic Security of the Republic of Belarus for 2011-2015, among others, set the goal to increase the birth rate and strengthen the socio-economic support for families in connection with birth and upbringing of children [8]. According to the achievement of all the targets, the program was a success. TFR in 2015 was 1.7 births per woman. In comparison with the decrease of fertility at the beginning of 2000s, the intensity of fertility increased in almost all ages (Graph 2). At the same time, the mean age at childbearing significantly increased from 25.6 in 2000 to 28.6 in 2015.

Currently, the National Program "People's Health and Demographic Security for 2016-2020" is a continuation of the National Programs, which is aimed to stabilize the population, by increasing the birth rate by improving mother and child health care system, developing support systems for families with children and improving their living conditions [9].

In China, population issue has always been a strategic issue. Currently, the emphasis is on measures of birth control and reducing child and infant mortality with a flexible approach to employment issues and the status of women in society, and in the long term it is planned to solve the problems of the aging population and the development of the social security system.



Graph 2. The Age-Specific Fertility Rates in Belarus

Source: According to the HFD database.

In accordance with the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, the Law "On population and fertility planning" (as amended on December 27, 2015) was adopted in 2001 with the aim of coordinated development of population and economy, society, resources, environment, promotion of fertility planning, protection of rights and legitimate interests of citizens, promotion of family well-being, prosperity of the nation and social progress [10].

According to the latter, the government develops a plan for the development of population and includes it in the national socio-economic development plan.

Currently, in order to actively and effectively respond to the changes in population trends and its deep impact on economic and social development, supporting China's long-term sustainable development, the National Population Development Plan for 2016-2030 has been adopted [11]. This document prescribes the general requirements, main goals, strategic orientation and tasks of the national population during the planning period and it acts as a program document defining the development of the population over the next 15 years. This is an important basis for the full implementation of work in the field of socio-demographic development.

In 2017, the population of China was 1,394 million people. Since 2000, the annually population growth was no more than 0.57%, what is half less than the population growth from 1990 to 2000. In fact, this reflects the fact that China faces a decrease in the number of children born. TFR is 1.6 birth per woman of reproductive age.

The policy of restricting the number of children in China was associated with both budgetary expenditures and limited natural resources, worsening environmental conditions, and the goal, which lies in raising the standard of living of the people.

The basis for obtaining a positive effect from the government policy in China is to ensure a balance of interests of the population and the government. The goal of the policy of restricting the number of children is to improve the health of the next generation. Thus, family planning implements the goal of both economic development and improvement of the quality of life of the population and provides an organizational and management basis for birth control [12]. The positive effect was achieved due to the following implemented measures:

- ✓ Family planning policy is integrated into the general management system; party and economic bodies are created at all levels from medical teams to special birth control committees), birth rates are included in the target indicators of socio-economic development programs.

- ✓ Systematic propaganda is carried out through its daily and widespread infiltration into the mass consciousness.

- ✓ There has been implemented an integrated approach to measures of economic and material

incentives for families with children: if there is one child in the family, the family is exempted from paying taxes on upbringing and education, and even receives a monthly allowance of 10% of salary; if there are more children, the family is deprived of certain opportunities for medical and domestic services, labor insurance, and is also obliged to pay a fine.

✓ The social control system worked: material incentives are complemented with moral, negative sanctions are complemented with positive. For example, issuing to families voluntarily pledging to have only one child, "Certificate of Honor for Single-Child Parents".

✓ Family planning policies were distinguished by continuity, consistency and flexibility.

However, government family planning for 40 years was one of the main factors in the formation of disproportions in the age and sex structure of the population (the excess of men over women, the decrease of the working age population and the growth in the number of older people, decrease of the average size of the Chinese family to 3.1 people (2010 census) compared with 4.23 in 1988 [13]. The necessity to adjust the "one-child" policy has become obvious.

In 2011, a new concept of the demographic policy "one married couple – two children" was proposed, if one of the spouses is an only child in the family. About 1 million married couples fall under this policy. In fact, permission to have a second child was obtained at the end of 2015, and the corresponding amendments to the "Population and Family Planning Law" entered into force on January 1, 2016. The "Regulations" abolished maternity leave due to the late marriage and childbirth, as well as stimulating birth control measures were cancelled, currently the use of contraceptive measures is carried out conscientiously.

Currently the fine for unplanned birth of a child is imposed only on those families in which the child was born less than four years after the birth of the first and the age of the mother is less than 28 years. It is planned, that such measures will help to change the demographic situation in the country for the better, at the same time it is expected that it will not cause a sharp jump in the birth rate. The authorities, while easing the birth control policy, see the second child as an asset that in the future will ensure not only the stability of the pension system, but also social stability.

However, the main factors of birth control today are no longer act as administrative restrictions, but the socio-economic conditions of the population.

The reluctance to have children, among other reasons, is due to the fact that only women who work in big cities can feel socially protected in China. [14; 15] There is a serious problem for residents of remote (rural) areas, where there is a high unemployment rate and there is no social insurance. For the rural population there are almost no guarantees for pregnancy and childbirth.

Measures that promote the compatibility between work and family life of parents (labor guarantees for employees with children, encouraging fathers to become involved in the process of child-care, encouraging the expansion of the range of child-care services).

A wide range of pro-natalist policies to stimulate fertility are being implemented in Belarus today.

Belarus has kept the Soviet rules on parental leave related to the birth of children. The duration of maternity leave is regulated by law and is not connected with work experience, position or other aspects of labor relations. Maternity leave is provided to women for a period of 126 or 140 calendar days (in case of complicated childbirth). Maternity leave begins 70 calendar days before the childbirth and ends 56 days after (70 days in case of birth of two or more children or complicated childbirth). Since, at the time of maternity leave, the date of birth of the child can not be predicted, the woman takes the maternal leave at 30 weeks pregnant.

As the Minister of Labor and Social Protection, I.A. Kostevich rightly pointed out at the last meeting of the National Council on Gender Policy (Minsk, May 14, 2018): "Belarus is one of the few countries that have left parental leave for children under three years old, realizing how important it is for the mother and child's health" [16].

Usually, women take a maternity leave. Only 1% of men apply for parental leave for children aged up to 3 years. Involving fathers in the process of childcare is a stimulating measure, which ensures the possibility of preserving women's labor potential and the compatibility between work and family life.

In Belarus, organizational and legal conditions are created for the practical using of certain flexible forms of employment (flexible working hours, home-based work), there have been developed recommendations for employers on how to use them.

However, it is too early to judge the effectiveness of the implementation of policies aimed at supporting the competitiveness of women with children in the labor market. Lack of flexible working hours and the low availability to childcare services for children under 3 years old is an obstacle for women who are ready to take full time work. In addition, when a woman starts to work full-time before the child is 3 years old, the amount of childcare benefit is reduced by half. As a result, only 10-13% of women start to work before the child reaches the age of 3 years [17].

Currently in Belarus, the number of children under 5 years with preschool education is 100% [18]. The network of preschool education is represented by more than 3.8 thousand institutions, which educate 426.2 thousand children. Private kindergartens appear: currently there are only 10, 6 of them are located in Minsk.

The number of children under two years attending nursery and nursery groups was just over 1% of all children attending kindergartens. The low number of children under 2 years with preschool education is due to poorly developed system of providing services for this group of children.

In Belarus, parents pay only the cost of feeding the child, an exception being private kindergartens.

In China the period of maternity leave depends on the age of the future mother. After 23 years, mother is considered of "advanced maternal age", so maternity leave is 120 days, up to 23 years – 90 days; in case of birth of twins or complicated childbirth – + 15 days; for cesarean section – + 30 days. The total period is from 90 to 180 days. The future mother is allowed to take the maternity leave from the seventh month of pregnancy. Usually, future mother can go on a maternity leave two weeks before the delivery, as prolonged absence from work is discouraged and it is punishable by sanctions affecting career growth and bonuses.

The Law "On population and fertility planning" of the People's Republic of China provides a number of other incentives.

Citizens who follow the late marriage and late childbirth policy can receive encouragement in the form of extended leave, in connection with marriage and maternity leave and other types of benefits.

In accordance with the version of the Law "On population and fertility planning", which entered into force on January 1, 2016, several changes were adopted, such as the cancellation of maternity leave due to late marriage and late childbirth, the cancellation of the benefits due to the fact that there is already a child, as well as the extension of maternity leave and the provision of parental leave for the father to stimulate fertility. Specific measures are being taken in provinces, autonomous regions and cities of central subordination in accordance with the Law "On population and fertility planning", approved by Standing Committee of the National People's Congress.

The Labor Code clearly defines that a woman has the right to take maternity leave for 90 or more days. Usually, a pregnant woman goes on a maternity leave two weeks before the delivery, and goes back to work after 2.5 months after giving birth. In cases of late marriage and childbirth, maternity leave is extended to 4 months. If the future mother has a sick-list this time is paid like a sick-leave.

Maternity benefit's amounts vary by region. Attention should be paid to the fact that maternity benefit is not paid simultaneously with the salary, due to maternity leave. The payment will be made according to the higher cost of the benefit.

If pregnancy is more than 7 months, then the employer is obliged to provide a break for one hour, and cannot make the future mother work the night shifts. In case of obtaining a permit from work, at the request of the employee herself, the employing company may apply for providing maternal leave to the employee for two and a half months. Maternity benefit is paid in the amount of 80% of the basic salary of a woman per month.

The time for examinations of pregnant women, including examination during the first 12 weeks, which coincides with working time is fully paid.

A woman has the right to take 6.5 months maternity leave for breastfeeding if she has applied for maternity leave and has the permission of the organization. Salary is paid in the amount of 80% of the salary of an employee during the period of breastfeeding, if employee wants to extend the maternity leave in case of special circumstances, future mother has to provide a medical certificate. Salary rate for the extension of the maternity leave for breastfeeding is 70% of the employee's salary.

Unlike Belarus, China has very high costs for raising a child, including kindergartens. According to a study by Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences in 2004, the direct costs of raising one child before

graduating from a university in the Xuhui district of Shanghai are about 480,000 CNY (about 58,000 USD). The average cost of raising children in Shanghai can be estimated at 1.66 million CNY (about \$ 246,000). [19]. According to the statistics from The State Family Planning Committee, there is a number of reasons why Chinese women do not want to have a second child: the economic burden is 74.5%, the need to pay much attention to child-care is more than 60%. Such factors as increasing costs on raising a child, a desire for career growth, and a higher standard of living have a restraining effect on the implementation of reproductive attitudes. The cost of raising children in Chinese families is about 50% of total family income. The main part of the expenses consist of education costs [20].

Financial transfers (family allowances, child-care allowances for social and public services, tax deductions for families with children).

The solution of the problem how to increase the birth rate should be closely linked to the ensuring a high quality of life for mother and child. Currently, young parents are stimulated through effective economic incentives for childbirth and child rearing, which creates a significant burden on the Social Protection Fund. More than 20% of the Fund's expenses are accounted for the payment of temporary disability, maternity, family, child care, and disabled person care benefits.

A significant form of social support for families with children in Belarus are maternity, family and temporary disability allowances (table 1).

Table 1

Benefits for families raising children in Belarus

Maternal		Parental	
maternity benefit	average daily salary for 126 or 140 calendar days	childbirth	1 - 10 minimum subsistence budget; 2 + - 14 minimum subsistence budget;
registration before the 12th week of pregnancy	minimum subsistence budget	child care for a child up to 3 years	1 - 35% of the average salary; 2+ - 40% of the average salary; disabled person - 45% of the average salary; in the Chernobyl NPP zone - 150% of the amount of the allowance;
Temporary disability		for a child aged 3-18 years while raising a child under 3 years old	50% of minimum subsistence budget;
to care for a sick child up to 14 years old, a disabled child up to 18 years old	average daily salary for all days of sick leave	For children aged 3-18 years from certain categories of families (disabled parent, parent involved in regular service, disabled child, child with HIV)	50% of minimum subsistence budget; disabled child and child with HIV - 70% of minimum subsistence budget;
to care for a child up to 14 years old, a disabled child up to 18 years old, in case the person caring for a child is ill		to care for a disabled child under the age of 18 (if the parents are not employed or work part-time)	1 and 2 degree of invalidity- 100% of minimum subsistence budget; 3 and 4 degree of invalidity- 120% of minimum subsistence budget;
to care for a disabled child up to 18 years for his sanatorium-resort treatment, medical rehabilitation			

*average per capita minimum subsistence budget is 206,58 BYN or 85 euro (the 1st May, 2018)

The amount of benefit is regularly reviewed and increased. The most serious changes occurred on January 1, 2013, after the Law "On State Benefits for Families Raising Children" entered into force, in accordance with which monthly allowances for childcare for children aged up to 3 years were significantly increased. Earlier the amount of allowance was 100% of the subsistence minimum budget (in accordance with Article 13 of Law No. 1898-XII of October 30, 1992 "On State Benefits for Families Raising Children"), i.e. 880 thousand rubles, then the new Law connected the allowance to the average monthly salary in the country. Thus, the benefit for the first child increased by 60% (35% of the average monthly salary); for the second and subsequent child by 80% (40% of the average monthly wage).

This was an effective incentive for giving a birth to a second child and another children, especially in rural areas. In 2013, rural fertility was the maximum for the entire 2000s.

In order to strengthen government support for the population of low-income and difficult-to-live families, state targeted social assistance has been strengthened since 2012 in Belarus [21].

For families with twins or more children, such assistance is provided regardless of the size of the average per capita income. Such families are also eligible for a free babysitting service until the children reach 3 years old.

In 2017, state targeted social assistance in the total amount of 87.9 million BYN was provided to 310.2 thousand people, among this, 28 thousand children were provided with food worth 22.1 million BYN.

The main recipients of monthly and one-time social benefits are traditionally large and incomplete families raising minor children, which was 67% in 2017. Among families, provided with food, large families hold the leading position with 42%.

Awareness of the possibility of facing a decrease in the birth rate has set to the government new challenges in finding additional incentives to support families with children. From January 1, 2015, a new monthly allowance for families with children aged from 3 to 18 years has been introduced during the period of raising a child.

A breakthrough in family policy was the introduction of a fundamentally new measure of long-term support for large families – the amount of \$ 10,000 at birth, when family gives birth or adopts third or more children. As at January 1, 2018, 47 405 "family capital" deposit accounts were opened in ASC "ASB Belarusbank" in the amount of 474.05 million dollars. Families can use the funds when the child reaches 18 years old to improve their living conditions; to get education or social services, to form a cumulative (additional) pension for a mother (stepmother) in an entire family, a parent in an incomplete family, and also to receive early health services.

For the certain categories of citizens (mostly low-income and large families, families with disabled children) a number of other benefits is provided: textbooks fees; preferences for admission, the right to receive a loan on favorable terms for tuition fees, the provision of essential drugs, tax incentives.

Today in China, the provision of medical care and the payment of material benefits during the period of maternity leave is regulated by the Temporary Rules for Pregnancy and Birth Insurance of Employees. Contributions for pregnancy and childbirth insurance are made by the enterprise to the social insurance bodies in a certain proportion of the company's wage fund. In Beijing, pregnancy and childbirth insurance is now 0.8% and it is paid by the company [22].

Recipients of social guarantees are employees of both sexes (mother or father).

Pregnancy insurance is paid by the employing company in the amount of 0.6% of the base value of the city where the organization is registered. The term of the required insurance premiums varies from place to place. For example, in Beijing it is required that the continuity of contributions should last for at least 9 months, in Guangzhou city – the period of accumulative contributions is over a year, and in Shanghai if an employee has made a contribution in the month of birth of the child, he is considered insured.

For insured workers, there is a system of reimbursement for the costs of pregnancy, medical obstetric care, surgery, treatment in the clinic and the provision of medicine. The amount of compensation for medical expenses is set at a time, excessive costs are not reimbursed by Pregnancy and childbirth insurance. The amount of compensation is set according to the province, city

or village. For example, in the Shaoxing city (Zhejiang Province), the allowance for uncomplicated childbirth is 2.5 thousand yuan (US \$ 380), for complicated childbirth and the delivery of more than one child – 3.5 thousand yuan (530 US dollars), cesarean section – 5,000 yuan (\$ 760).

Due to planned fertility policy, some types of medical care costs are also reimbursed, for example premature birth and sterilization costs. In Shaoxing city, the reimbursement amount ranges from 0.5 to 3 thousand yuan.

The maternity benefit itself is understood as the salary for the period of pregnancy and childbirth. Pregnancy benefits are calculated and issued by the relevant social insurance authority, based on the average monthly wage of the employee in the previous year. In Shaoxing city there is established the number of days for transferring benefits in some cases: childbirth after 7 months of pregnancy (including 7 months) – 128 days, for complicated childbirth – 143 days, for caesarean section – 143 days, for multiple births – 15 days for each child, abortion up to 4 months of pregnancy – 15 days, with abortion less than 4 months of pregnancy (inclusive) – 42 days. Childcare allowance which is provided to the father is paid within 15 days.

If a woman had an uncomplicated childbirth, she spent 3,500 CNY (1,000 CNY above the norm) on medical care, the average monthly salary for the previous year was 4,500 CNY, then she receives an allowance of $4,500 \div 30 \times 128 + (3,500 - 1,000) = 21,700$ CNY.

Previously, the government issued the “Certificate of Honor for Single-Child Parents” to parents who, throughout their lives, had brought only one child during the period when the government encouraged the birth of one child by one married couple. Since January 1, 2016, after changing the family planning policy, spouses who gave birth to one child on a voluntary basis don't receive anymore the “Certificate of Honor for Single-Child Parents” and they are not eligible to receive appropriate benefits. Those who have already received the “Certificate of Honor for Single-Child Parents” continue to enjoy benefits according with the established provisions and criteria in the field of family planning.

According to state regulations, the provisions of provinces, autonomous regions, cities of central subordination, there is a number of benefits for families who have a “Certificate of Honor for Parents of an Only Child”.

In accordance with the directive “On Further Work on Planned Fertility”, issued by the CPC Central Committee and the State Council of the People's Republic of China, from 1982, childcare benefit for one child is paid throughout China in the amount of 10 CNY, 50% of the amount is paid by each parent's company per month. For example, currently in Guangdong province, the following benefits are established in accordance with the Regulation “On Population and Family Planning” [23]:

- workers and employees, residents of cities and towns, are paid a one-time child health benefit every month, starting from the date of issue of the “Certificate of Honor for Single-Child Parents” and until the child reaches the age of fourteen. The amount of child health benefit and incentive payments are made in the amount of 50% by the employing organization of each parent. The question of benefits for those who do not work is decided on a comprehensive basis by local people's governments. For residents of cities and towns, family planning allowance is paid according to certain criteria (usually, the payment is 1,000 CNY and above) for parents of an only child who have reached the age of 60 for men and 55 for women;

- residents of rural areas receive benefits or old-age pension from local people's governments;
- in case of death or disability of an only child, and if married couples no longer have or have not adopted a child, the government pays benefits;

- under equal conditions, first of all, they provide care for families with an only child, primarily when there are questions about employment, living quarters, helping the poor, taking a child to kindergarten and school, medical care for a child, etc.;

- extension of the duration of maternity leave for 35 days, with the exception of maternity leave, set by the state; the husband has the right to receive parental leave for child care for 10 days. Maternity and parental leave are fully paid.

On January 1, 2016, in the Regulation “On Population and Family Planning” in Guangzhou province, in Chapter 3 “On Birth Control” a number of articles restricting the category of increasing the planned fertility and the category of late marriage and childbirth was also canceled. In this

regulation, stimulating contraceptive measures was also abolished, and currently the use of contraceptive measures is carried out on a voluntary basis.

If the provisions of laws, subordination or departmental acts provided for the use by the company-employer individual incentive measures for parents who have an only child throughout their life, the company has to take these measures.

If the staff or organization is the leader in the results of work and achievements in the field of planned fertility, the amended legislation provides the declaration of gratitude and the provision of material rewards.

Planned childbirth incentive payments in administrative and non-manufacturing organizations are covered by the organization's annual budget in the amount of 5 percent of the average salary of employees for the previous year at the county location (city, district). Planned childbirth incentive payments can be received in the amount of not more than 2% of annual taxable income.

In case of injury due to an accident or the death of an only child, local people's governments are required to provide the necessary assistance to the parents.

Older people, who should receive benefits or who need to be given an assistance in accordance with the birth planning policy during the period when the state encourages the birth of one child by one couple, continue to receive appropriate benefits and assistance.

Local people's governments at all levels provide to rural households, which follow fertility planning policies, support for the development of the agriculture with money, technology, training, benefits; poor households following fertility planning policies are given high priority by providing loans to struggle against poverty, providing jobs, implement projects to struggle against poverty, and provide social assistance.

Special measures

One of the main measures to implement the government family policy in the Republic of Belarus is to create conditions for economic independence and growth of family well-being, including lending and partial subsidization of families building and purchasing housing, maintaining preferential housing for young and large families [4].

To a greater extent, housing support becomes an incentive for the birth of third and subsequent children. But there is no special research.

As at 2011-2015 in terms of housing policy financial assistance of the government was provided to 55 thousand large families, especially, in repayment of debts on concessional and non-concessional loans for housing construction.

In China in order to respect human rights and the principles of gender equality, to minimize abuse of women and girls, the Law prohibits discrimination against women who have given birth to girls or against infertile women, as well as discrimination, abuse or abandonment of newborn girls. The use of ultrasound technology and other technical methods for determining the sex of embryos for non-medical purposes is strictly prohibited; artificial termination of pregnancy based on the choice of the sex of the child, not for medical purposes is strictly prohibited.

Conclusion. In recent decades, birth control policy in Belarus and China has been carried out in different ways, both organizationally and strategically.

The birth control policy in modern Belarus is part of the demographic policy and has a pro-natalistic goal. In China, for nearly 40 years, a birth control policy has been pursued. Only since 2016, due to the transformation of policy in China, a number of articles has been cancelled, limiting the category of increasing the planned fertility and the category of late marriage and childbirth.

In Belarus and China, families with children are a special object of the government policy. Belarus has focused on alleviating economic difficulties for families with children, especially in the first years after the childbirth. The Republic of Belarus has developed a system of government support for families with children, which includes various types of benefits. The way of supporting families with children also includes assistance to large families (with 3 or more children) for the school year, provision of a social and maternity benefits.

A fairly effective measure was financial assistance to families (especially those with many children) in purchasing housing.

In general, the system works in such a way that a woman can be on parental leave until the child is 3 years old: the whole period is paid for benefits, nursery places are few, private kindergartens are more the exception and the payment is very high relative to the average wage.

A whole layer of support for large families allows to stimulate the birth of the 3 children in the last years. Although the effect of new measures is manifested only in the first years and rather accelerates the birth of the next child, than influencing the change in family attitudes.

In China, there is no such comprehensive targeted support for families with children as in Belarus. As there is no preferential housing loans.

The system of financial support in China includes both universal benefits, and those that depend on the territory of residence or assignment to certain categories.

It should be noted that patriarchal value systems continues to be maintained in Belarus: it is provided a long-term maternity leave to take care for a child under 3 years old, 99% of mothers and only 1% of fathers or other relatives are provided with parental leave. In China women are provided only with maternity leave, so they have no opportunity to lose their qualifications due to the long leave from the work process. However, it complicates and increases the cost of childcare.

In China, measures may vary by territory. There is no differentiation in Belarus. This, in turn, does not allow to take into account the peculiarities of reproductive attitudes, for example, in the city and the village (in rural areas the amount of the allowance coincides with the size of the average salary of a woman, in the city there is an urgent need for infrastructure development and flexible employment conditions).

In both countries, there is a lack of flexibility in the ability to combine both childcare and professional implementation, and there is poorly developed gender quality, which is the basis of birth control programs in developed countries.

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