

SUMMARIES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE TREATIES

The summaries available hereunder are designed to meet a practical need, that of supplying the public at large with concise descriptions of the Council of Europe treaties. The summaries are necessarily short and can therefore only give a first introduction to the main features of each treaty.

Subject-matter: **PROTECTION OF ANIMALS**

European Convention for the Protection of Animals during International Transport ([ETS No. 65](#)), open for signature, in Paris, on 13 December 1968.

Entry into force: 20 February 1971.

The Convention sets compulsory norms for space, ventilation and hygiene, transportation means, food and water, loading and unloading of animals and veterinary assistance for the international transport of animals.

* * *

European Convention for the Protection of Animals kept for Farming Purposes ([ETS No. 87](#)), open to signature, in Strasbourg, on 10 March 1976.

Entry into force: 10 September 1978.

The Convention applies to animals bred or kept for the production of food, wool, skin or fur or for other farming purposes. It concerns in particular animals in intensive stock-farming systems.

The protection guaranteed by the Convention aims to avoid unnecessary suffering or injury, having regard to the condition of housing, food or administered care. To preserve well-being of animals, the Convention imposes on Parties the obligations to inspect the condition and state of health of animals and the technical equipment used in intensive stock-farming systems.

The Convention establishes Standing Committee which monitors its application. The Committee is responsible for the elaboration and adoption of the recommendations to the Parties, to express an advisory opinion, to facilitate a friendly settlement of any difficulty which may arise between Parties concerning the implementation of this Convention and to submit to the Committee of Ministers a report on its work and on the functioning of the Convention.

* * *

European Convention for the Protection of Animals for Slaughter ([ETS No. 102](#)), open for signature, in Strasbourg, on 10 May 1979.

Entry into force: 11 June 1982.

The main purpose of the Convention is to help harmonise methods of slaughter in Europe and make them more humane. The first set of provisions impose a number of obligations concerning the treatment of animals in slaughterhouses: use of suitable equipment for unloading animals; no brutalising or ill-treatment of animals, and in particular no striking of sensitive parts of their bodies; lairaging and care for animals which are not slaughtered immediately on arrival; provision of the requisite facilities at slaughterhouses.

As regards the slaughter operation, the Convention stipulates that all animals must be stunned before being bled. Stunning of large animals must be effected by means of a pistol (an instrument which administers a blow or penetrates at the level of the brain), by electro-narcosis or by gas. The use of a poleaxe, hammer or puntilla is prohibited by the Convention. Furthermore, large animals must neither be suspended nor have their movements restricted before being stunned. Where there are exceptions to these rules (ritual slaughter, emergency slaughter, slaughter of poultry and rabbits, etc.), slaughter must be done in such a way as to spare

the animals any unnecessary suffering. These last provisions apply equally to slaughter in places other than slaughterhouses.

* * *

Additional Protocol to the European Convention for the Protection of Animals during International Transport ([ETS No. 103](#)), open for signature, in Strasbourg, on 10 May 1979.

Entry into force: 7 November 1989.

The Additional Protocol amends the Convention (ETS No. 65) to allow the European Union to become a Contracting Party to this Convention by signing it.

* * *

Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats ([ETS No. 104](#)), open for signature, in Bern, on 19 September 1979.

Entry into force: 1 June 1982.

The Convention aims to ensure conservation of wild flora and fauna species and their habitats. Special attention is given to endangered and vulnerable species, including endangered and vulnerable migratory species specified in appendices.

The Parties undertake to take all appropriate measures to ensure the conservation of the habitats of the wild flora and fauna species. Such measures should be included in the Parties planning and development policies and pollution control, with particular attention to the conservation of wild flora and fauna. The Parties undertake to promote education and disseminate general information concerning the need to conserve species of wild flora and fauna and their habitats.

The Convention establishes a Standing Committee on which the Parties are represented by their delegates. The Committee's principal task is to monitor the provisions of this Convention in the light of development of the wild flora and the assessment of its needs. For this purpose, the Standing Committee is especially competent to make recommendations to the Parties and amendments to the appendices where these protected species are specified.

* * *

European Convention for the Protection of Vertebrate Animals used for Experimental and other Scientific Purposes ([ETS No. 123](#)), open for signature, in Strasbourg, on 18 March 1986.

Entry into force: 1 January 1991.

The Convention is designed primarily to reduce both the number of experiments and the number of animals used for such purposes. It encourages Parties not to experiment on animals except where there is no alternative. All research into alternative methods should be encouraged. Animals to be experimented on should be selected on the basis of clearly established quantitative criteria and must be well cared for and spared avoidable suffering whenever possible.

To this end, the Convention lays down a number of principles which are to be considered only as a starting point. The Parties meet regularly to examine the application of the Convention and, if appropriate, to extend or strengthen its provisions.

* * *

European Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals ([ETS No. 125](#)), open for signature, in Strasbourg, on 13 November 1987.

Entry into force: 1 May 1992.

The Convention aims essentially at assuring the welfare of animals, and in particular, of pet animals kept for private enjoyment and companionship.

Animals belonging to threatened species, and protected by other conventions, in particular, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, opened for signature in Washington, on 3 March 1973, and the Bern Convention (ETS No. 104), opened for signature on 19 September 1979, are thus excluded from the provisions of this text.

The Parties meet regularly to examine the application of the Convention and, if appropriate, to extend or strengthen its provisions.

* * *

Protocol of Amendment to the European Convention for the Protection of Animals kept for Farming Purposes ([ETS No. 145](#)), open for signature, in Strasbourg, on 6 February 1992.

Entry into force: The Protocol will enter into force when all the Parties to the Convention have ratified it.

The Protocol extends the scope of the Convention (ETS No. 87) to apply also to certain aspects of developments in the area of animal husbandry, in particular in respect of biotechnology, and to the killing of animals on the farm. At the same time, it adapts some provisions of the Convention to the evolving situation in respect of animal husbandry.

* * *

Protocol of Amendment to the European Convention for the Protection of Vertebrate Animals used for Experimental and other Scientific Purposes ([ETS No. 170](#)), open for signature, in Strasbourg, on 22 June 1998.

Entry into force: 2 December 2005.

Thanks to the introduction of a simplified procedure, this text helps up-dating the terms of the Convention, to take account of the development of scientific understanding and practice since the Convention (ETS No. 123) was opened for signature in 1986. These terms concern the norms set by the convention for care and accommodation of laboratory animals, as well as the presentation of statistical data on animal experimentation.

* * *

European Convention for the Protection of Animals during International Transport (Revised) ([ETS No. 193](#)), open for signature, in Chisinau, on 6 November 2003.

Entry into force: 14 March 2006.

The revised Convention builds on the lessons learnt from the last 30 years of experience and scientific results made available during this period. It contains provisions designed to overcome defects and to facilitate the implementation of the principles of the Convention. It was built as a framework convention laying down essential principles applying to all species. It provides for technical protocols which can be amended following a simplified procedure, facilitating thereby their updating in the light of scientific evidence and experience acquired.

The revised Convention provides for the denunciation of the original Convention (ETS No. 65) which ensures that the Parties are thus not simultaneously bound by contradictory undertakings.