



European Convention on the Social Protection of Farmers

Strasbourg, 6.V.1974

The member States of the Council of Europe, signatory hereto,

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve greater unity between its members, in particular for the purpose of facilitating their economic and social progress;

Considering that the improvement of living conditions of farmers through the implementation of appropriate measures can contribute to social progress in Europe;

Recalling that the aim of the European Social Charter, also drawn up within the Council of Europe and opened to signature by member States on 18 October 1961, is to improve the standard of living and to promote the social well-being of both their urban and rural populations;

Considering that the special conditions and characteristics of farming as well as the changes taking place in the farming world require the adoption of appropriate measures to promote the social well-being of farmers;

Considering, in consequence, that measures should be taken to extend and to reinforce the social protection of farmers, the members of their families and, where appropriate, their paid employees, with due regard to the social needs of these persons and to the special conditions of farming,

Have agreed as follows:

Part I

Article 1

Each Contracting Party undertakes to apply the provisions of this Convention to its nationals, resident in its territory.

Article 2

For the purposes of this Convention, the term "farmer" means any self-employed person occupied exclusively or mainly in agriculture, horticulture, forestry, viticulture or other similar work, it being understood that he may be assisted in such work by members of his family and/or paid employees.

Part II

Article 3

Each Contracting Party shall ensure to farmers, the members of their families and, where appropriate, their paid employees, social protection comparable to that enjoyed by other groups of the population, account being taken of the provisions of Articles 4 to 13 of this Convention.

Article 4

- 1 Each Contracting Party shall apply, as far as appropriate, to farmers and persons entitled through them, the social security standards laid down by its laws for the other protected categories of the population.
- 2 Without prejudice to the provisions of paragraph 1 of this article, each Contracting Party shall grant farmers, within appropriate conditions and time-limits, social security protection in respect of at least four of the following contingencies: sickness, maternity, invalidity, old age, death, occupational injuries and diseases and family commitments.

Article 5

- 1 Each Contracting Party shall ensure that when a farmer ceases farming for structural or other reasons to be determined by the Contracting Party, he, the members of his family and, where appropriate, any of his paid employees, shall benefit from appropriate measures.

These measures shall include:

- a the provision of facilities to enable them to take up a new activity preferably in their own region, in particular, arrangements for vocational guidance, training and re-training;
 - b the payment of temporary allowances to enable them to prepare for another activity;
 - c the maintenance of acquired rights and of rights in the course of acquisition with regard to social security;
 - d the payment of fair compensation or appropriate grants to a farmer who, because of his age, has difficulty in taking up another activity, provided that his ceasing farming contributes towards structural improvement.
- 2 Cessation of farming is not to be interpreted, for the purposes of this article, as excluding the retention by the farmer of a limited area of land for his personal needs.
 - 3 Each Contracting Party shall ensure that when a farmer only partially ceases farming for structural or other reasons to be determined by the Contracting Party, he, the members of his family, and, where appropriate, any of his paid employees, shall benefit from the measures mentioned in sub-paragraphs a, b and c of paragraph 1 above, suitably modified to meet needs.

Article 6

Each Contracting Party shall take appropriate measures to make farmers aware of the objectives of its farming policy, to consult, where appropriate, with farming interests in relation to this policy and to keep farmers informed of relevant international developments in farming.

Article 7

In the formulation of its regional development policy, each Contracting Party shall take account of the problems caused by the loss of employment in farming areas, in particular with a view to creating new employment there.

Article 8

- 1 Each Contracting Party shall take appropriate measures with a view to:
 - a assuring the provision of adequate socio-cultural facilities in farming areas;
 - b encouraging the improvement of living and sanitary conditions in farm buildings for the benefit of farmers, the members of their families and, where appropriate, their paid employees;
 - c granting advantages such as long-term loans, subsidies or low interest loans to farmers, to facilitate, *inter alia*, the implementation of the measures referred to in sub-paragraph b above.
- 2 Each Contracting Party shall also take appropriate measures to make it possible for farmers in areas to be specified by it, to continue farming and to contribute, at the same time, to the upkeep and protection of the countryside, nature conservation, the development of recreational facilities and the maintenance of a suitable demographic balance in those areas.

Article 9

Each Contracting Party shall take or encourage appropriate measures to guarantee to children resident in farming areas an education and a training of a level equivalent to that enjoyed by children in urban areas. These measures shall relate particularly to:

- a grants for the construction of such school buildings as are necessary for the gradual abolition of classes comprising children of all ages;
- b transport to and from schools;
- c the appointment of sufficient qualified teachers to schools in farming areas.

Article 10

Each Contracting Party shall take or encourage measures to benefit young persons in farming areas, particularly with a view to:

- a securing that qualified counsellors are available to give vocational guidance appropriate to their needs, including before school leaving age;
- b ensuring that they receive such general education and vocational training as will give them opportunities equal to those enjoyed by other young persons as regards integration into working life;
- c creating or improving, as necessary, vocational schools, training and further training centres and farming colleges;
- d providing them with educational grants under such conditions as will afford them opportunities equal to those enjoyed by other young persons.

Article 11

Each Contracting Party shall encourage the provision, in farming areas, of advisory and information services dealing with farming matters and the evolution of the labour market in other sectors of the economy.

Article 12

Each Contracting Party, in order to ensure as favourable working conditions on farms as possible, shall facilitate and encourage various forms of co-operation, mutual assistance between farmers and, where appropriate, supply of temporary helpers.

Article 13

With a view to facilitating the tasks inherent in family life on farms, each Contracting Party shall encourage:

- a the use of facilities intended to simplify and lighten household tasks;
- b the provision of home aid and family help services.

Article 14

The provisions of this Convention shall not prejudice the provisions of any international conventions or agreements which are already in force or may come into force under which more favourable treatment would be accorded to the persons referred to in this Convention.

Part III

Article 15

- 1 This Convention shall be open to signature by the member States of the Council of Europe. It shall be subject to ratification, acceptance or approval. Instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval shall be deposited with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.
- 2 This Convention shall enter into force three months after the date of the deposit of the third instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval.
- 3 In respect of a signatory State ratifying, accepting or approving subsequently, the Convention shall enter into force three months after the date of the deposit of its instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval.

Article 16

- 1 After the entry into force of the Convention, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe may invite any non-member State to accede thereto.
- 2 Such accession shall be effected by depositing with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe an instrument of accession which shall take effect three months after the date of its deposit.

Article 17

- 1 Any State may, at the time of signature or when depositing its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession specify the territory or territories to which this Convention shall apply.

- 2 Any State may, when depositing its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession or at any later date, by declaration addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, extend this Convention to any other territory or territories specified in the declaration and for whose international relations it is responsible or on whose behalf it is authorised to give undertakings.
- 3 Any declaration made in pursuance of the preceding paragraph may, in respect of any territory mentioned in such declaration, be withdrawn. Such withdrawal shall take effect six months after the date of receipt by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe of the declaration of withdrawal.

Article 18

Any State may, at the time of signature or when depositing its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession or at any later date, by declaration addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, extend the benefit of this Convention, or of those provisions thereof which it shall specify, to persons other than its nationals, resident in the territory or territories specified in accordance with Article 17 and designated in the declaration.

Article 19

- 1 Any State may, at the time of signature or when depositing its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, declare that it avails itself of one or more of the reservations provided for in the annex to this Convention. No other reservation shall be admissible.
- 2 Any State may wholly or partly withdraw a reservation it has made in accordance with the foregoing paragraph by means of a declaration addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe which shall become effective as from the date of its receipt.

Article 20

- 1 No Contracting Party may denounce this Convention before the end of a period of four years from the date on which the Convention entered into force for it or before the end of any successive period of three years.
- 2 Such denunciation shall be effected by means of a notification addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and shall take effect six months after the date of receipt by the Secretary General of such notification.

Article 21

The Secretary General of the Council of Europe shall notify member States of the Council of Europe and any State which has acceded to this Convention of:

- a any signature;
- b any deposit of an instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession;
- c any date of entry into force of this Convention in accordance with Article 15 thereof;
- d any declaration received in pursuance of the provisions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of Article 17;
- e any declaration received in pursuance of the provisions of Article 18;

- f any reservation made in pursuance of the provisions of paragraph 1 of Article 19;
- g the withdrawal of any reservation carried out in pursuance of the provisions of paragraph 2 of Article 19;
- h any notification received in pursuance of the provisions of Article 20 and the date on which denunciation takes effect.

In witness whereof the undersigned, being duly authorised thereto, have signed this Convention.

Done at Strasbourg, this 6th day of May 1974, in English and French, both texts being equally authoritative, in a single copy which shall remain deposited in the archives of the Council of Europe. The Secretary General of the Council of Europe shall transmit certified copies to each of the signatory and acceding States.