

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY!

HelpAge Deutschland

Statement on social protection at the 11th session of the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing, 30 March 2021, afternoon meeting

This is a statement by HelpAge Deutschland or HelpAge Germany on social protection. [We would like to thank the panelists/**for drawing attention to **]

Social pensions, that is, non-contributory pensions for older persons, have spread in the global South. However, half of the Southern countries still do not have a social pension. This leaves many persons in the informal sector and in rural areas in poverty. Social insurance only applies to the minority of formal workers, and also has a gender bias.

Moreover, many of the existing social pensions are deficient. 40% of the social pensions are not based on statute. And many older persons are not eligible to pensions because the qualifying age has been set much too high. Also, benefit levels tend to be meagre.

Why are social pensions so rare and insufficient? One reason is the massive gap in existing legal instruments. The right to social security is laid down in Article 9 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. But this is the shortest article in the Covenant. It names only one instrument, social insurance, and no standards.

Why is this so? The article was worded more than half a century ago, at a time, when social pensions were not yet on global agendas.

Therefore, HelpAge Germany calls for a Convention of the Rights of Older Persons that explicates the right to social security in a more substantial way, naming non-contributory pensions and setting standards.

Thank you very much.

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