



## **Proposal letter collective labor agreement Convenience Food Industry 2025-2026**

### **1. Duration**

We propose a collective labor agreement with a duration of one year, from April 1, 2025, to April 1, 2026. A longer duration is negotiable, depending on the agreements we can make with each other.

### **2. Salary**

FNV proposes a structural increase in salaries and salary scales of 7% as of April 1.

### **3. Automatic Price Compensation**

In addition, to compensate for future inflation arrears, we want to introduce automatic price compensation (APC). This means that, to compensate for the increase in the cost of living, salaries will be indexed by applying a system of price compensation. That is, each time on 1 January, gross salaries will be adjusted according to the change in the consumer price index (CPI). The adjustment is made on the basis of the CBS consumer price index figure (all households series, derived October-October). The adjustment is equal to the change in the figure for the October-October period. In the application of this price indexation scheme, the provisional CBS consumer price index figures are used if the final figures are not yet known. This means that any retrospective adjustments made to the provisional consumer price index figure for a given month are not taken into account. Where adjustments are negative, the rate is not applied but frozen and offset against future increases. Given the proposed effective date of the APC on 1 January 2026, this means that gross salaries will be structurally adjusted first on 1 January 2026.

### **4. Minimum wage to €16**

The FNV aims for the minimum wage to be at least 60% of the median wage, which would mean that the lowest hourly wage in the collective agreement should be at least €16. This is currently not the case in the Convenience Food Industry sector. We propose to jointly agree on a trajectory to achieve this target amount in the coming years. In line with this, we also want to abolish the start-up scale.

### **5. Abolishing the entry-level salary scale**

Every employee who is classified in scale A may first be placed in the introductory scale for one year, according to the CAO Convenience Food Industry. This scale amounts to 92% of the starting salary in scale A. The gross hourly wage in scale A starts at €14.47 and the WMUL must be €14.06 gross per hour, so this does not reach the 92% (€13.31). We find it unacceptable that any force in A can still be classified in a starting scale first and then be employed on a WMUL basis. With the current tightness in the labour market, this possibility is unacceptable.

### **6. Pension**

We propose that the agreement made on 6 June 2024 in the mandated consultation New Pension

Scheme about additional parental and birth leave becoming pensionable be included in the collective agreement (Article 38 and Article 41).

### **7. Overtime pay for part-time employees**

The ECJ has ruled that an employer may not discriminate between full-time and part-time workers with regard to overtime pay. A part-time worker must receive overtime pay equal to full-time workers on all hours above their contract hours. We propose to amend Article 21 in line with this ruling. And delete Annex H from the collective agreement.

### **8. Extension of the RVU (Early Retirement Scheme)**

The FNV wants to make it possible for workers with heavy work to receive benefits to retire earlier up to three years before AOW date. The current scheme expires on 31-12-2025. We propose to include the new scheme permanently in the collective bargaining agreement, taking advantage of maximum tax opportunities.

### **9. Permanent work as the norm**

Workload is a problem in the Convenience Food Industry. Issues contributing to work pressure include frequent change of temporary workers, language problems and the large flexible shell. To improve quality, permanent work must become the norm again. We therefore propose the following:

- We propose to amend Article 19.2 (on permanent employment after two years). We argue that the continuity to permanent workers in the companies brings an improvement in workload. Besides, it is not desirable to leave temporary workers who want permanent employment for the duration of two years in an insecure contract. Our proposal is that a temporary worker who performs more than 9 months of a year (12 months) of work under an insecure contract should be offered an employment contract by the hiring company.
- We propose to reduce the layer of flexible employment contracts to a maximum of 25% of the total number of employees per site. The large flexible shell currently used at a large number of sites is bad for the sector and the quality of work. If business circumstances make a higher percentage necessary, this will only happen after consultation with the trade unions.

### **10. Clarification of collective labor agreement text**

In Article 22.1 on overtime, we propose to replace 'on a day' with 'per shift'. This is because a shift is sometimes divided across two different days.

*We reserve the right to present additional or amended proposals during the discussions.*