

Defence

What do I need to know before I start?

In March 1948, five countries – Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom – signed the Treaty on Economic, Social and Cultural Collaboration and Collective Self-Defence, or Brussels Treaty, creating thereby a regional defence alliance which led to the establishment of the Western Union (WU). The Brussels Treaty implied an unconditional mutual defence commitment should any of its signatories be victim of an armed attack. This European initiative convinced the United States (followed by Canada) to participate to these security arrangements, which led to the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty in 1949 and to the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The military organization established by the Brussels Treaty was to be incorporated into NATO to avoid duplication of efforts, and it was proposed (by French Minister René Pleven) to establish a European Defence Community (EDC), which would lead to the creation of a European Army that would fall under a single military and political authority, along with the gradual integration of Germany into the scheme. The Pleven Plan was eventually rejected by the French National Assembly in August 1954, and the Brussels Treaty was consequently amended at the Paris Conference, transforming the WU into the Western European Union (WEU) to include Italy and Germany. In October 1970, the European Political Cooperation (EPC) was set up following the foreign ministers' approval of the Luxembourg Report, so as to coordinate their positions on diplomatic issues and to agree on common actions. The Single European Act of 1986 addressed the EPC and its relations to the Community (Title III), and recognized the need for member states “to co-ordinate their positions more closely on the political and economic aspects of security” (1986; Art. 30.6). The EPC was replaced with the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) with the Maastricht Treaty (1992) while the EU could request the WEU to implement defence policy decisions. The Petersberg Declaration (1992) extended WEU activities to the ‘Petersberg Tasks’, which included humanitarian and rescue tasks, peace management as well as crisis management tasks. The Petersberg Tasks were transferred to the EU in 1999 at the Cologne European Council, which formally launched the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). With the advent of the Lisbon Treaty, the ESDP became the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), which is an integral part of the wider Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The WEU on the other hand was abolished in May 2011 so as to avoid duplication considering EU’s increasing role in defence policy and the CSDP enables nowadays the Community to undertake peace-keeping operations, to prevent conflicts and to strengthen international security. Permanent political and military structures were established by decision of the Nice European Council of 2000 to enable the Community to assume its responsibilities.

Languages: Please be aware that although most documents available in our Archives are in French, English or German, some may be in other EU languages. In order to check the languages used in a fonds, please refer to our holdings page. Additionally, some fonds may contain a few files in a language other than those listed in the description.

What can I find at the HAEU?

Relating specifically to the development of a common defence policy, the fonds available at the HAEU are:

1) EU institutions

[ECSC High Authority](#) and the [Special Council of Ministers of the ECSC](#)

For early defence matters, you may look at the inventory of the ECSC High Authority, particularly in the section '[Relations Extérieures](#)', where you will find several files on defence policy, to the establishment of a [European Defence Community](#) and to the relations of the Community's institutions with [NATO](#). You may also look at the inventory of the ECSC Special Council of Ministers.

[Council of Ministers](#)

In the HAEU inventory, defence policy matters discussed in the Council of Ministers are assembled in the section 'Relations Extérieures' or 'Relations avec Pays tiers'. The fonds of the Council of Ministers being organized by year, you need to browse the fonds of each separate year to access the specific section on external relations where discussions on defence issues vis-à-vis third countries gradually evolved (example for the year [1962](#) and [1973](#)).

[Commission](#)

In the Commission's fonds, you will not find a specific section on defence policy but these matters, including the establishment of a [European Defence Community](#), were discussed in the [DG External Relations](#) and, with respect to nuclear defence, in the [DG for EURATOM](#) (example of relevant files [1](#), [2](#), [3](#)). In addition, you might want to look into the sections relating to the [Secretariat-General](#) and the [Cabinets](#).

[European Parliament](#)

Concerning the early years of the Parliament and the preceding Common Assembly, you might find it useful to consult the reports of the [parliamentary commission for political affairs and external relations](#). The fonds of the three parliamentary legislatures does not include a special section on defence policy but you may look into the proceedings and reports of the meetings of the parliamentary delegations to third countries, which include discussions on enlargement

matters (for the [1st](#), [2nd](#) and [3rd](#) legislature), the proceedings and reports of the meetings of the parliamentary commission for external economic relations (for the [1st](#), [2nd](#) and [3rd](#) legislature) as well as those of the parliamentary commission for political affairs (for the [1st](#), [2nd](#), and [3rd](#)).

[European Court of Auditors](#)

You might find it interesting to consult the ECA's [annual reports](#) (1977-1997), [special reports](#) (1978-1991) and [opinions](#) (1977-1997) as well as [internal documents](#), including [information documents](#) (1977-1994) and [working documents](#) (1977-1994).

[Economic and Social Committee](#)

With regard to the nuclear field in particular, you may look at the fonds of the Economic and Social Committee which includes a section on the work of a specialized section for nuclear problems. As with the Council of Ministers, the fonds of the Committee is organized by year and you need to browse each separate year to access the section for nuclear problems (example for the year [1971](#)).

2) *Corporate Bodies*

[Assembly of Western European Union \(WEU\)](#)

In order to understand the origins and early developments of a common defence policy in Europe, it is of utmost importance to consult the fonds of the WEU, founded as an unconditional mutual defence commitment (the Brussels Treaty) in the early years of European integration. The fonds of the WEU includes the Assembly's [proceedings from 1957 to 2010](#), the different [texts](#) adopted by the Assembly, as well as documents pertaining to [aerospace policy and to the atomic domain in the context of defence](#).

3) *Individuals*

[Angel Viñas](#)

You may look into Viñas' private fonds, which contains several files related to the development of the Community's [Common Foreign and Security Policy](#), which includes [defence policy](#) and [European armament](#) policy, as well as some files on [EU-WEU relations](#). The fonds also includes files related to his career within the European Commission from his position as Director for Asia and Latin America Affairs and then as Head of the EC Delegation to the UN to his position as Director for Multilateral Relations in the Commission and finally in the Directorate dealing with Human Rights.

[Noël Salter](#)

Salter's fonds includes several files on the Community's political affairs, to the different steps taken towards a [political union](#), to the [Western European Union](#), to the Community's position in the [transatlantic alliance](#) within NATO and to [defence issues in the Commonwealth](#). The fonds also includes press-cuttings related to the [European Defence Community](#) (more: [1](#), [2](#)) and to the [European defence strategy and nuclear policy](#).

[Jean Monnet](#)

You may look into the fonds '[Jean Monnet American Sources](#)' which includes material pertaining to the American perspective on the development of a [European Defence Community \(EDC\)](#), on the work of the [WEU](#). You may also look at the fonds '[Jean Monnet Duchêne Sources](#)' which also includes files on the [EDC](#), to [European defence and to the idea of a European Political Community](#).

[Emanuele Gazzo](#)

Gazzo's private fonds includes numerous [dossiers](#) (notes, reports, speeches and press-cuttings) concerning the development of a common European defence policy in the context of the [WEU](#) and [NATO](#).

[Fernand Dehousse](#)

Dehousse's private fonds includes [documentation](#) concerning the WEU and to the European Defence Community (EDC), particularly on the Belgian Socialist Party and the Socialist Movement for the United States of Europe in this context.

[Ivan Matteo Lombardo](#)

You may look into Lombardo's private archives, which includes various files on the [EDC](#), to its different [committees and working groups](#), and to the [elaboration and negotiations of the Brussels Treaty](#).

[Pier Virgilio Dastoli](#)

You may take a look at Dastoli's private fonds as it includes some files on the development of a [common security and defence policy](#) in the context of Spinelli's action committee.

[Paul-Henri Spaak](#)

Having held the position of minister for foreign affairs for three mandates in Belgium, Spaak was involved in the development and negotiations leading to the Brussels Treaty and the EDC. You may look into his private fonds to gain additional information on the Community's defence

policy and the Belgian position in this context, particularly in the section related to his [third mandate as minister for foreign affairs](#) (example [1](#), [2](#), [3](#)).

4) *Collections*

[French Ministry for Foreign Affairs](#)

It can be useful to look into the collection 'Ministère des Affaires étrangères français' to know more about the development of a [European common defence policy and the EDC](#), as well as the position and role of the French government in [the transatlantic alliance](#). In addition, you may consult the fonds related to the [French inter-ministerial committee for European issues](#), which includes files pertaining to the French position in the development of the [European Defence Community](#) (EDC).

5) *Oral History*

In addition, take a look at the [oral history holdings](#), which comprise numerous interviews of European politicians and officials, including important figures and officials active in the development of a common defence policy at the European level. Below, you can find a (non-exhaustive) list of persons interviewed who addressed the topic of security and defence in the Community.

[Jacques Delors](#)

[Claude Cheysson](#)

[Winrich Behr](#)

[Christopher Audland](#)

[Bernard Clappier](#)

[Paul Delouvrier](#)

[Fernand Chaussebourg](#)

[Ulrich De Maizière](#)

[André De Staercke](#)

[Robert Bowie](#)

[Robert Verdier](#)

[Giulio Andreotti](#)

[Gérard Jaquet](#)

[Richard Mayne](#)

[Arthur Hartmann](#)

[Hervé Alphand](#)

[Willem Riphagen](#)

[Carlo Russo](#)

[Gilles Martinet](#)

[François Valéry](#)

[Douglas Dillon](#)

[Emile Noël](#)

[Leonard Tennyson](#)

[Martin Hillenbrand](#)

[Marinus Van Der Goes Van Naters](#)

[Etienne Hirsch](#)

[Antoine Pinay](#)

[Fritz Hellwig](#)

[Hans Apel](#)