

Employment

What do I need to know before I start?

The issue of employment was one of the areas of the wider social policy that developed on a European level from the early years of European integration. The provisions of the Treaty of Paris (1951) already included commitments to the improvement of workers' living conditions and training assistance, while the Treaty of Rome (1957) contained 'Social Provisions' (1957; Art. 117-123) as well as provisions for the establishment of a European Social Fund (1957; Art. 123-128), mainly aimed at the harmonization of health and safety standards for Community workers. Recognizing an imbalance between the Community's economic welfare and its citizens' quality of life, the latter adopted its first Social Action Programs (SAPs) in January 1974, leading to a series of directives aimed at the improvement of workers' living conditions. The Single European Act (SEA) introduced provisions for the harmonisation of health and safety conditions at work and allowed for social partners at a European level to negotiate collective agreements and to establish a Community policy for economic and social cohesion. A Charter of Fundamental Social Rights, first opposed by the British administration, was appended to the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992, establishing new areas of social policy regulations for the Community, including health, safety, gender equality, collective bargaining, social security, social exclusion as well as workers' right to participate in their companies' management. The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, proclaimed in Nice in 2000, fully recognized workers' social rights in the Community, and the Lisbon Treaty (2009) clearly recognized EU Social Policy as an area of shared competence between the Community and its Member States. Full employment and solidarity between generations were part of the EU's social objectives set out by the Treaty (Art. 3), which recognized the Social Charter as legally binding (Art. 6). Today, responsibility for employment and social policy lies primarily with national governments while EU funding supports and complements their efforts.

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?

Related specifically to European employment policy-building and policy-making, the fonds available at the HAEU are:

1) *EU institutions*

[ECSC High Authority](#)

For early social policy initiatives in the Community, you may look into the fonds of the ECSC High Authority, which includes a section '[Division Travail et Affaires sociales](#)' concerned with [employment](#) but also other social issues such as health and safety.

[Council of Ministers](#)

In the HAEU inventory, matters related to social and employment policy discussed in the Council of Ministers are assembled in the section '*Activités de la CEE: Politique sociale*' or simply 'Question Sociale'. The fonds of the Council of Ministers being organized by years, you need to browse the fonds of each separate year to access the specific section concerned with employment and social policy (example for the year [1958](#) and [1972](#)).

[Commission](#)

In the Commission's fonds, you will find a specific section for the [DGV Affaires sociales](#) which carries out the employment policies of the Commission. In addition, you might want to look into the sections related to the [Secretariat-General](#) and the [Cabinets](#).

[European Parliament](#)

You can find in the European Parliament's fonds relevant information on the development of a common social policy, including in the area of employment, and the role played by the Parliament in this context. For the Parliament's early history in employment policy, you may consult the fonds of the Common Assembly, which includes a section on the [parliamentary commission for social affairs](#) in which employment issues (workers' rights and free movement across member states) were discussed early on. You may also consult in this context the sections concerned with the several following parliamentary commissions for social affairs ([1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#)). The fonds of the European Parliament includes the proceedings and reports of the parliamentary commission for social affairs and employment (for the [1st](#), [2nd](#), and [3rd](#) legislature), which are relevant in understanding the gradual development of EU's employment policy and the role of the Parliament in this context. In addition, there is a [sub-fonds](#) containing numerous press-cuttings dealing with employment and social policies which can be useful to consult.

[European Court of Auditors](#)

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

[European Court of Justice](#)

According to the nature of the ECJ, this fonds include documents dealing with judicial affairs, namely procedure dossiers and sentences. You might find it interesting to consult some of its dossiers dealing with employment issues, such as the case [43/75](#) concerned with equal pay between men and women workers, and the case [152/73](#) concerned with equal opportunity between Community workers.

[European Investment Bank](#)

You might find it interesting to consult the sub-fonds that includes the [annual reports](#) as well as the sub-fonds '[Aides, dons et subsides exceptionnels](#)' and '[Publications](#)'. In addition, you might want to look into the section devoted to [EIB projects signed between 1959 and 1971](#) to learn more about social projects and programs financed within EU Member States.

[Economic and Social Committee](#)

Similarly to the fonds of the Council of Ministers, the inventory is organized by years, each including a special section for social affairs ([example](#) for 1962), which deals among others with the development of employment policies.

[Centre européen pour le développement de la formation professionnelle \(CEDEFOP\)](#)

The European centre for the development of vocational training was established in 1975 to support the Commission in promoting the development of education and vocational training at the European level, which is closely related to employment policies. In the CEDEFOP's fonds, you can find numerous documents related to the development of a common social policy in the Community, in the field of education and employment in particular.

[European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions](#) (EuroFound)

The regulation creating the Foundation was adopted on 26 May 1975 (EEC 1365/75) and the Agency became operational in 1976 with the aim to 'pursue ideas on the medium and long-term improvement of living and working conditions in the light of practical experience and to identify factors leading to change'. The fonds of [EuroFound](#) include numerous files of the Foundation's meetings and activities, which all relate to the development of common social policies in the

Community, including those aimed at the improvement of working conditions and the promotion of workers' rights.

2) *Corporate bodies*

[Organization for European Economic Cooperation \(OEEC\)](#)

The OEEC included a Manpower and Social Affairs Committee which was mostly concerned with employment, foreign workers, women workers and man power aspects of economic development in member countries. It can therefore be useful to consult the [section](#) dedicated to this Committee to learn more about social policy initiatives taken beyond the realm of EU institutions in the area of employment.

[European Science Foundation \(ESF\)](#)

You might find it interesting to look into the work of the [ESF Executive Council](#), which often discussed the mobility and employment of scientists in Europe, as well as into papers of the [Social Sciences Standing Committee](#) concerned with employment.

[Youth Forum of the European Communities](#)

The YFEC's fonds includes working documents, minutes of meetings and correspondence pertaining to the activities of its steering group on [Education, Training and Employment](#), which can be useful to consult to analyze initiatives taken in the field of employment beyond the Community's institutions.

[Groupe du Parti socialiste européen au Parlement européen](#) (Political Groups of the European Parliament)

It can be useful to look into the fonds of the GPSE as it was very active in promoting social policy in general and employment policies in particular. The fonds of the GPSE includes the group's [official documents from 1955 to 1991](#), documents related to its relations with the [Council of Europe's Assembly from 1956 to 1963](#), incoming [correspondence](#) of the GPSE presidency and secretariat from 1989 to 1991, the GPSE [publications](#), as well as [files](#) pertaining to the group's relations with other political groups within a national, international and European context.

3) *Individuals*

[Michel Richonnier](#)

It can be very useful to consult Richonnier's fonds, which includes various files related to his work in the DG for social affairs in developing a common [employment policy](#) in the Community.

[Peter Sutherland](#)

Appointed in the first Delors Commission, Sutherland was among others responsible for the Social Affairs Portfolio. In this context, the fonds [Peter Sutherland's Commission Papers](#) include a specific section '[Competition, Social Affairs, Education and Training](#)' related to the role he played in the first Delors Commission, as well as [files](#) (briefings, information notes and reports) related to the development of a common social policy including in the area of employment.

[David White](#)

The [David White Papers](#) comprise files related to David White's time when he worked in [employment policy](#) in DG V and in the General Secretariat and when he reported to the Commission on meetings of Coreper and of the Council.

[Roland Tavitian](#)

It can prove also useful to consult Roland Tavitian's private fonds, which includes [files](#) related to his work in the Commission's DG for social affairs, particularly pertaining to [employment](#) policies.

4) *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 employment policies at the European level. Below, you can find a list of persons interviewed who addressed the topic of employment at the European level.

[Ezio Toffanin](#)

[Barrie Wilson](#)

[Heinz Henze](#)

[Carlo Savoini](#)

[Padraig Flynn](#)

[Pierre Wathelet](#)

[Jacqueline Nonon](#)

Jean Degimbe
Annette Bosscher