

Public Health & Food Safety

What do I need to know before I start?

Public Health & Food Safety are policy areas of the Community's wider social policy, which finds its origins in the Treaty of Rome establishing the EEC (1957) that contained 'Social Provisions' (1957; Art. 117-123) as well as provisions for the establishment of a European Social Fund (1957; Art. 123-128). Early social policy developments were limited to the harmonization of health and safety standards for Community workers but a first Social Action Programs (SAPs) was established in January 1974, leading to a series of directives aimed at the improvement of workers' living conditions. In 1978, the Council of the European Communities passed a resolution on the first Action Programme on Safety and Health at Work in the EU, the predecessor of today's Strategic Framework. The Jacques Delors Commission presented to the Community in 1989 a Charter of Fundamental Social Rights, appended to the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992 which set out 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 of participation in their companies' management. Today, the Commission's policies on public health and food safety are carried out by its DG SANTE, whose aims are to protect and improve public health, ensure Europe's food is safe and wholesome, and protect the health and welfare of farm animals as well as that of crops and forests.

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?

Specifically concerned with European social policy building and policy-making in public health and food safety, the fonds available at the HAEU are:

1) *EU institutions*

[ECSC High Authority](#)

For early social policy initiatives, including the areas of public health and food safety, 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 and other social issues such as health and safety.

[Council of Ministers](#)

In the HAEU inventory, matters pertaining to social policy, including the areas of public health and food safety, discussed in the Council of Ministers are assembled into the section '*Activités de la CEE: Politique sociale*' or simply 'Question Sociale'. 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 social policy, which is concerned with health and safety issues (example for the year [1959](#)).

[Commission](#)

In the Commission's fonds, you will find a specific section for the [DGV Affaires sociales](#), where issues pertaining to public health and food safety are discussed. In addition, you might want to look into the sections relating 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 areas of public health and food safety, and the role played by the Parliament in this context. For the Parliament's early history in social policy, you may consult the fonds of the Common Assembly, which includes a section on the [parliamentary commission for social affairs](#), where issues of workers' health and safety were discussed. You may also consult in this context the sections concerned with the several 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), and of the parliamentary commission for the environment, public health and consumer protection (for the [1st](#), [2nd](#), and [3rd](#) legislature) which are all relevant in understanding the gradual development of EU's social policy in the areas of public health and food safety and the role of the Parliament in this context. In addition, related to food safety in particular, for the [1st](#) legislature, the fonds includes the proceedings and reports of the parliamentary commission of inquiry into toxic substances, and for the [2nd](#) legislature, those of the parliamentary commission of inquiry into quality issues in the meat sector.

[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).

[European Court of Justice](#)

According to the nature of the ECJ, this fonds includes documents dealing with judicial affairs, namely procedure dossiers and judicial sentences. You might find it interesting to consult some of its dossiers dealing with public health and food safety issues, such as the case [251/78](#)

concerned with sanitary control of animal foodstuffs and case [35/76](#) concerning sanitary control of imported animals and meat.

[European Investment Bank](#)

You might find it interesting to consult the sub-fonds that includes the [annual reports](#) as well as the sub-fonds '[Publications](#)'.

[Economic and Social Committee](#)

As with the fonds of the Council of Ministers, the inventory is organized by year, each including a special section for social affairs ([example](#) for 1962) which deals amongst other things, with issues pertaining to public health and food safety.

[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 on the Foundation's meetings and activities, which all relate to the development of common social policies, also in the area of public health (focusing particularly on workers).

2) *Individuals*

[Emile Noel](#)

In his private fonds, you can find a specific section relating to the [EU's social and health policy](#), but also his notes on the European Council and Commission meetings, as well as documents on the [work of the different DGs](#) of the Commission, during his time as Secretary-General.

[Michel Richonnier](#)

It can be very useful to consult Richonnier's fonds, which includes various [files](#) concerning his work in the Commission and the Community's actions in the field of health, including the [proceedings](#) of the meetings of the Council of the European Communities for Health.

[Enrico Gibellieri](#)

Gibellieri's fonds includes numerous files on [health and safety at work](#), particularly during his time in the Consultative Committee for [hygiene, health and safety](#) in the workplace and in the [European Trade Union Technical Bureau for Health and Safety](#) (TUTB).

3) *Oral History*

In addition, take a look at the [oral history holdings](#), which comprise numerous interviews of European politicians and officials, including important figures active in the development of health & safety policies on a European level. Below, you can find a list of persons interviewed who addressed the topic of health & food safety.

[Carmen Díez De Rivera Icaza](#)

[Peter Stief-Tauch](#)

[Georges Debunne](#)

[Pierre Wathelet](#)

[Santiago Carrillo Solares](#)

[Ezio Toffanin](#)

[Jean Flory](#)

[Raymond Lacombe](#)

[Henri-Marie Varenne](#)

[Jean Degimbe](#)