

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003306/25
to the Commission
Emmanouil Fragkos (ECR)
(27 August 2025)**

Subject: European standards for personal hygiene spaces

Public toilets can be a source of transmission of microbes through indirect contact. Germs such as E. coli, salmonella or staphylococcus can be transmitted from a seat or other surfaces, especially if there is contact with broken or irritated skin. Fungi that cause skin or genital infections are transmitted more easily in warm and humid environments.

Some viruses, such as those that cause gastroenteritis, can also be spread via contaminated surfaces (e.g. toilet bowls, door handles) and then contact with the mouth. Transmission occurs mainly via the hands. Good hygiene, avoiding direct contact with surfaces and using a disinfectant or seat cover substantially reduce the risk.

The ideal public toilet to reduce these risks would include automatic cleaning systems and touch free taps, the availability of disposable seat covers, soap and water, hand sanitiser and surfaces made of easy-to-clean materials that do not harbour germs. This limits contact with pathogens and improves the user experience.

In view of the above:

1. Does the Commission consider that public toilets in the EU should follow uniform high hygiene standards?
2. Is the Commission considering the adoption of a 'HygieneScore' system so that citizens know in advance the level of hygiene of each facility?

Submitted: 27.8.2025

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Séjourné on behalf of the European Commission
(20 October 2025)**

The Commission recognises the importance of maintaining high hygiene standards in public toilets to prevent the transmission of microbes and ensure a safe and healthy environment for citizens.

There are currently no European Standards relating to hygiene in public toilets and the Commission does not plan to implement a 'hygiene score'.

The Commission notes however that similar efforts have been made in other sectors, such as railways and mobile cabins, where standards have been developed to ensure high hygiene standards.

For example, the European standard EN 17863:2023 provides requirements for hygiene and cleanliness on railway vehicles, including toilets and hand wash facilities, while EN 16194:2023 sets out requirements for mobile non-sewer-connected toilet cabins, including minimum quality requirements and on-site service standards.

While there is no general guidance on hygiene available, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) offers a variety of sources regarding hand-hygiene, mainly related to healthcare settings ⁽¹⁾.

However, it is important to promote general hand-wash and hygiene rules for the prevention on communicable diseases and educational material for the public is available ⁽²⁾. In addition, ECDC promotes World Hand Hygiene Day ⁽³⁾.

⁽¹⁾ <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications-data/directory-guidance-prevention-and-control/core-requirements-healthcare-settings-0>.

⁽²⁾ <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/Handwashing-poster.pdf>.

⁽³⁾ <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/news-events/world-hand-hygiene-day-2024>.