



**ANNEX 7 to the tender specifications**

**EEA WRITING MANUAL**



February 2014

# EEA writing manual

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Why project managers should engage COM early in drafting reports

Historically, EEA project managers have engaged the Communications Programme (COM) at the very end of the report writing process. At that stage, the opportunities and incentives to alter the report are limited: a launch deadline is fast approaching; the info in the report is getting dated; editing resources are limited; and having already invested a lot of time, an author may be unwilling to rewrite large sections.

This would not matter too much if all reports were well planned, written and presented. Unfortunately, incomplete knowledge of EU editorial rules often means that a lot of time is required on correcting needless small errors. And weak planning can mean that substantial changes to structure and language are needed. The result is EEA products that don't fulfil their potential.

Using this manual when drafting reports should significantly reduce the amount of copyediting (small changes to formatting, style and language) needed, reducing the chance of errors and leaving more time for editors to focus on the substance.

In addition, however, project managers are really encouraged to engage with COM from the very beginning of report development, ideally via a meeting. COM can help identify the main project goals, target audiences, core messages, appropriate product type, style of language, structure, and so on. Doing this at the start helps avoid lots of redrafting at the end (or a disappointing end product).

Engaging COM early also provides more time to develop spin-off products, identify additional media to communicate key messages and exploit synergies with other projects. And COM can even help draft key segments, such as the executive summary or foreword, that need to be really clear and targeted.

So, please, if you are preparing a report, use this manual and make full use of COM assistance.

## 1.2 Editing capacity and processes

The Editing Project Manager in COM manages the editing of most EEA reports and other products, distributing the work among:

- in-house editors;
- external editors engaged under a framework contract;
- the EU Publications Office in Brussels.

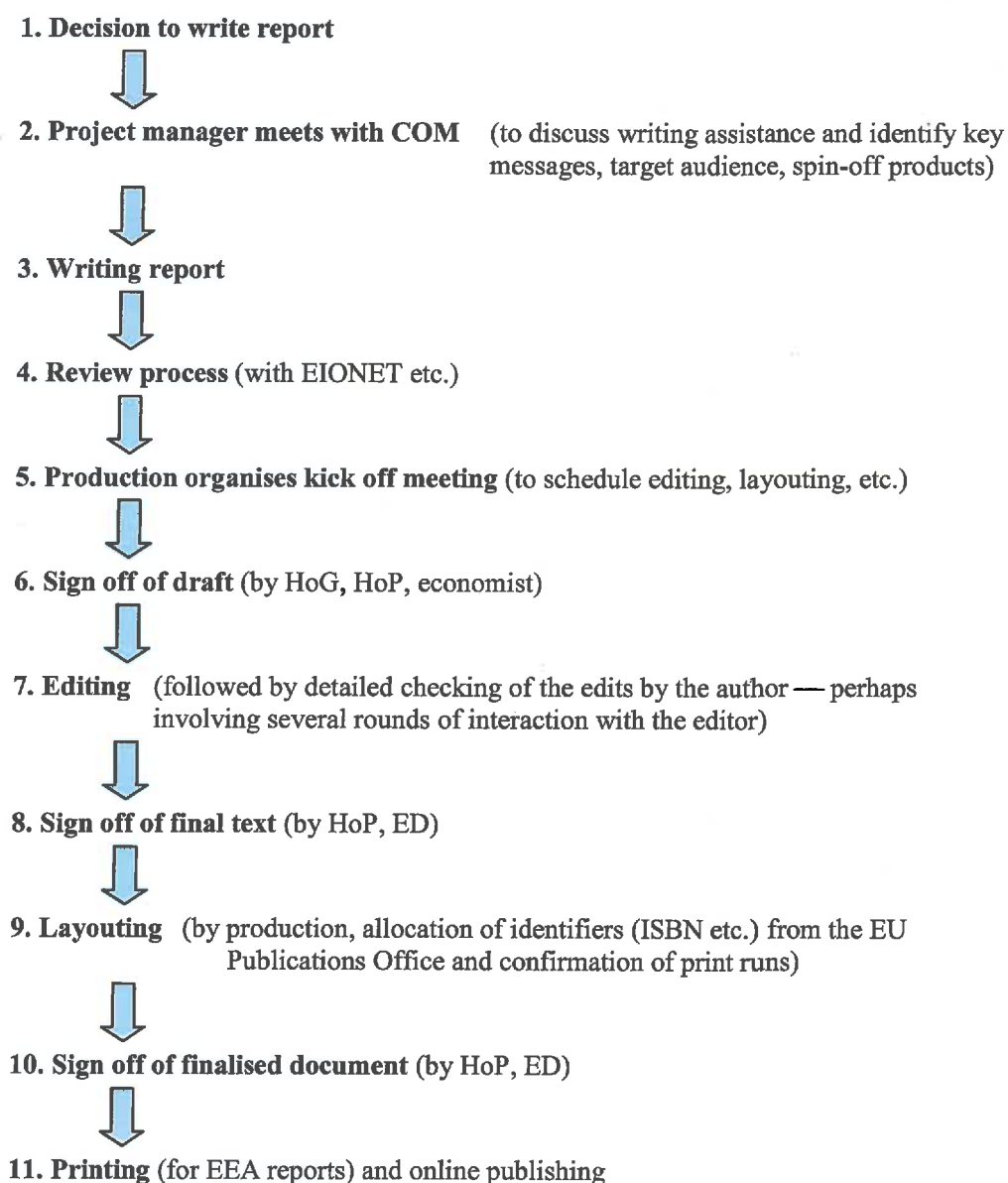
The Editing Project Manager normally allocates and schedules editing at the 'kick off' meeting organised by OSE some weeks before the scheduled completion of the report. In order for the workload to be organised and budgeted, **it's really important that project managers give the editing project manager as much information as possible, as early as possible about editing needs and changes to timelines.**

Project managers should also be aware that **editing is an interactive process**. After editing, they will receive the text back with tracked changes and questions. At this point, **they should read the text thoroughly, accept the changes they think are right and query any they don't like**. Where there is a question in the text from the editor, the

author can provide an answer and ask the editor to draft suitable text or draft such text and ask the editor to review it.

The point is: unless the changes are very minor and the project manager is a native English speaker, **the in house editor will normally need to check the text a second time** (perhaps more). And if the group manager or programme manager makes subsequent amendments, these should be entered using tracked changes and reviewed by the editor.

The timeline below shows the **report development process**. COM is involved at steps 2 and 7, and also prepares spin-off products (highlight, press release, articles, web or social media outputs, etc.) during the final stages before the report launch.



### 1.3 Using this manual

This manual aims to provide the writing and editorial guidelines needed to prepare EEA reports and other products. It is primarily based on the relevant sections of the EU's Interinstitutional Style Guide (available online at <http://publications.europa.eu/code/en/en-000100.htm>) but also includes the limited number of EEA-specific formatting rules and guidelines.

*Before starting to write, it is really useful to read the stuff in Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5.1.*

The material in the remainder of the document is more of a reference guide, providing answers to specific editorial questions.

If you can't find an answer to a query, please contact the Editing Project Manager in COM. Besides providing you with an answer, it will enable COM to update the manual with useful information.

## 2 Recommendations for writing effectively

There is a pretty useful and brief EU document on writing clearly, available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/translation/writing/clear\\_writing/how\\_to\\_write\\_clearly\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/translation/writing/clear_writing/how_to_write_clearly_en.pdf)

Here are a few key points:

- **Start by determining your key messages and target audience.** This is obviously going to influence the type of report or other product, style of language, length and structure, etc.
- **Keep sentences and paragraphs short.** Cut out unnecessary words. And don't hesitate to split sentences and paragraphs where possible.
- **Use verbs not nouns.** Verb forms are normally shorter and livelier, and tend to streamline sentences by removing prepositions.
- **Use active verbs not passive formulations, where possible.** This compels the author to identify the actor and tends to simplify sentences.

To illustrate the last two points, compare the following sentences:

'A recommendation was made by the European Parliament that consideration be given to a simplification of the procedure'

'The European Parliament recommended that Member States consider simplifying the procedure'.

- **Use subheadings to break up long passages of text.** This obviously allows a reader to scan the structure of a text quickly and understand the flow of argumentation. But it's often also useful for the writer, compelling him or her to clarify what each section of text is supposed to convey.
- **Sometimes use bulleted lists rather than long, heavy paragraphs.** Again, this is much easier for a reader to scan and comprehend and compels the author to be clear.



- **Write a really good executive summary.** Most people aren't going to read the whole report but it would be nice if they read the whole executive summary. These can take different forms but definitely don't have to summarise the whole document. It may well be better to leave out a description of methodology and focus instead on key findings.
- **If you want writing guidance and assistance, ask COM for help.** It makes sense to do so before investing a lot of time in drafting, rather than afterwards.

## 3 Report structure and presentation

### 3.1 Chapters, sections, sub-sections, annexes

When referring in the text to other parts of a document, it is important for clarity to use the right terminology. The document is divided into chapters, which are themselves divided into sections, which are divided into sub-sections. Anything lower than that in the hierarchy is also called a subsection. (As such, the present paragraph is in section 2.2 of these guidelines.)

## 1 Chapter (heading 1, Arial 20, bold)

### 1.1 Section (heading 2, Arial 12, bold)

#### 1.1.1 Sub-section (heading 3, Times New Roman 11, bold and italics)

**Map, figure and box titles appear in Arial 11, bold**

Body text is written in normal Times New Roman 11

It is important that the structure of the document be clear. It should be obvious what level each portion of text has in the hierarchy. Likewise, references in the text to other parts of the document should use the right terminology.

If you are using Word to prepare the document then you should preferably use the styles settings to assign the format for the different headings. It is also better to use the 'Body text' style for the main text in the document, rather than just the 'Normal' setting.

#### *Unnumbered headings*

EEA documents do not use a fourth level of hierarchy (e.g. 1.1.1.1) but long sub-sections can be broken up using unnumbered headings. These should be presented as above and below (i.e. bold and italicised). Unnumbered headings can be inserted anywhere in the text, helping clarify the flow of ideas without interfering with the chapter/section/sub-section structure of the document.

#### *Annexes*

Where additional information is presented at the back of a report, it is normally grouped in 'annexes', rather than 'appendices'. The annexes are numbered using Arabic numerals, i.e. Annex 1, Annex 2, ...

### 3.2 Tables of contents

Reports normally contain a table of contents at the start. If there are many sub-sections, it may be preferable, for clarity, only to include the first two or three levels of the structural hierarchy.

### 3.3 Maps, figures and tables

EEA reports often contain graphs, text boxes, tables, and images of different sorts. In terms of terminology, these are clustered into five groups: maps, figures, tables, photos and boxes.

All are numbered sequentially, according to the chapter in which they are located. Thus the maps appearing in Chapter 1 of a report will be entitled 'Map 1.1 [title]', 'Map 1.2 [title]'. The figures appearing in Chapter 2 would be entitled 'Figure 2.1 [title]', 'Figure 2.1 [title]' and so on.

For clarity, references to maps, figures and tables in the text of a report should refer to the number. For example, the text should read 'Map 2.1 illustrates the variation in SO<sub>x</sub> concentrations...' rather than 'The map below illustrates...'.<sup>1</sup>

### 3.4 Preface, foreword and introduction

There is often confusion among these three preliminary texts, including in the terminology between languages. The distinction in English is shown below.

**The preface** is not part of the text so is usually placed before the contents page. Written by the author personally, it concerns the work as a whole. The preface may be printed in a different typeface from that used for the main text.

**The foreword**, like the preface, may be placed before the contents page. It is written by someone other than the author, often a prominent public figure, and comprises background information on the work and/or the author. It too may be printed in a different typeface.

**The introduction** is placed after the contents page and is considered part of the text. It is primarily a preparation for, or explanation of, the text itself.

## 4 Footnotes, references and bibliographies

### 4.1 References to footnotes

References to footnotes are presented as a digit in superscript between parentheses, preceded by a space and followed by any punctuation. The reference should not appear in bold or italic, regardless of the style of surrounding text:

References to the Commission Regulation (<sup>1</sup>) also appear in the Council communication (<sup>2</sup>) but not in text of the Court of Justice (<sup>3</sup>).

Where a note appears more than once and always has the same meaning, an asterisk can be used rather than a number:

All figures from Eurostat (\*).

Where a reference to a footnote appears in a table, map or figure, with the footnote itself immediately below, lower case letters should be used in place of numbers.

		2005			2020		
	Unit	Offsh.	Onsh.	Mtn	Offsh.	Onsh.	Mtn
Rated power	MW	3	2	2	8	2	2
Turnkey costs <sup>(a)</sup>	Euros/kW	1600	1000	1100	1080	720	792

(<sup>a</sup>) Cost within 10 km of the coast and less than 15 m water depth.

## 4.2 Footnotes

Footnotes normally appear at the bottom of the page, in numerical order, with asterisked notes appearing at the top:

- (\*) Interim Commission decision.
- (<sup>1</sup>) These prices are the result of applying a maximum reduction.
- (<sup>2</sup>) For the current marketing year, this price is increased by a special premium.

Note that footnotes always end with a full stop.

In the case of identical footnotes, use 'See note xx, page yy' rather than *idem* or *ibid.*, which could cause confusion.

## 4.3 Textual citations of source literature

- References to source literature are cited using the **author's surname and the year of publication**, for example (Smith, 1991). The text reference is complemented with a complete reference in the bibliography at the end of the chapter or at the end of the publication.
- Where the **author is mentioned in the text**, it is only necessary to put the year of the publication in brackets, for example, 'Smith (1991) sets out six different approaches for valuing ecosystem services.'
- **Where an author has two or more publications cited from the same year**, they should be listed as a, b, etc., for example (Smith, 1991a).
- **Where a source has two authors** they should both be cited in the reference, for example (Smith and Webb, 1991).
- **Where a source has more than two authors**, the first to appear in the full bibliographic description should be cited, along with 'et al.' (in normal print, not italics) and the year. For example (Smith et al., 1991).
- **Where an organisation is designated as the author** it's normally better to use an acronym or abbreviation to keep the reference short (and it's not necessary to list all the different organisations involved). For example (Unesco, 1991).
- **Where several references are cited concurrently**, they should appear in the same parentheses and be separated by semi-colons, for example (Smith, 1991; Webb, 2001).

- **Where several references by the same author are cited concurrently**, the author need not be repeated but the year of each publication should be included, separated by 'and' (for two publications) and using commas (for more than two publications), for example (Smith, 1991, 1995a and 1995b).
- **Where the reference refers to a web page**, the year of publication cited in the text reference should normally be the last access date (see rule 11 under 'bibliographic references' below), for example (WTO, 2010).
- **Sources should not be referenced using footnotes**. If, for some reason, it is necessary to cite a source in a footnote then the full reference should also be included in the bibliography to allow readers to have a quick overview of the source literature.
- **Web addresses should not be cited in the text or in footnotes**. A web page should be cited like other sources, using an author and year of publication in the text and a full reference in the bibliography (as explained below).

#### 4.4 Bibliographic references

- **References to a complete work should comprise (in this order):**
  - the author's surname followed by a comma;
  - the author's initial(s), each followed by a full stop and separated by a space, with the final initial followed by a full stop and a comma;
  - the year of publication, followed by a comma;
  - the title of the work in italics and, where appropriate, edition number, followed by a comma;
  - the publisher and place of publication, followed by a full stop:

Smith, J. K., 1991, *Valuing ecosystem services — A guidebook for policymakers*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

  - Note that bibliographic references always form one long sentence broken up with commas. Full stops are only used after initials and in abbreviations such as 'ed.'.
- **References to a work with multiple authors**
  - **Two authors** should be referred to using the surname and initial(s), separated by 'and'

Smith, J. K. and Webb, P., 1991, *Valuing ecosystem services — A guidebook for policymakers*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

  - **More than two authors** should be listed using surname and initial with all but the last two separated by commas:

Smith, J. K., Webb, P., Haskins, Q. R., Barker, M. and Merton, J., 1991. *Valuing ecosystem services — A guidebook for policymakers*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- **References to a work compiled by one or more editors**
  - The designation '(ed.)' should appear in brackets after the editor's name

Smith, J. K. (ed.), 1991, *Valuing ecosystem services — A guidebook for policymakers*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

- Where there is more than one editor, the designation '(eds)' should be used (NB there is no full stop in 'eds')

Smith, J. K., Webb, P., Haskins, Q. R., Barker, M. and Merton, J. (eds), 1991, *Valuing Ecosystem Services — A Guidebook for Policymakers*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

- **References to an unpublished paper**

- The title should appear in single quotation marks and not in italics

Smith, J. K., 1991, 'Valuing ecosystem services — A guidebook for policymakers', EEA European Topic Centre on Nature Protection and Biodiversity, Paris.

- **References to a chapter in collections of essays or articles**

- The chapter should be cited with single quotation marks, followed by a full stop.
- The publication should be preceded by 'in:' and then be referenced as normal (although the date doesn't need repeating unless the essay was originally published elsewhere at an earlier date).

Smith, J. K., 1991, 'Valuing environmental services using the contingent valuation method', in: Webb, P. (ed.), *Valuing ecosystem services — A guidebook for policymakers*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

- If the essays are by a single author then it's not necessary to repeat the author's name

Smith, J. K., 1991, 'Valuing environmental services using the contingent valuation method', in: *Valuing ecosystem services — A guidebook for policymakers*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

- **References to an article in a journal should comprise:**

- the article in single quotation marks (not italics), followed by a comma;
- the name of the journal in italics, followed by a comma;
- the volume/edition number and relevant pages (not italics).

Smith, J. K., 1991, 'Valuing environmental services using the contingent valuation method', *Ecosystem Valuation*, (45) 23–44.

- **References where the organisation is designated as the author**

- If an acronym has been used in the text reference then this should be repeated in the reference list.
- The full name of the authoring organisation should be spelt out after the title of the publication for clarity (if this differs from the publisher).

WHC, 1991, *World heritage cultural landscape — A handbook for conservation and management*, World Heritage Centre, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, Paris.

- **References to EEA publications**

- EEA reports and technical reports are assigned a publication number, which should be included in the reference.
- It's not necessary to cite the location of the publisher in this instance.

EEA, 1991, *Valuing ecosystem services — A guidebook for policymakers*, EEA Technical Report No 4/2001, European Environment Agency.

- **References to EU regulations, directives and communications**

- Titles should be presented as set out in the Official Journal and should not be in italics.
- The Official Journal reference can be useful for the reader or a hyperlink can be added in an electronic version.

EC, 2009, Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (OJ L 20, 26.1.2010, p. 7).

- For Communications it can be useful to include the COM reference and date.

EC, 2008, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions '20 20 by 2020 — Europe's climate change opportunity' (COM(2008) 30 final of 23 January 2008).

- **References to print documents available online**

- Where a web link is included in a reference to provide easy access to a print document, this should appear at the end of the reference and be indicated in parentheses.
- The full address should be cited (including 'http://')
- After the link it is necessary to include the date that the web page was last accessed. The date should be preceded by the word 'accessed' and followed by a full stop.
- It's much better to link directly to the relevant PDF, rather than to a page with lots of other reports.

EEA, 1991, *Valuing ecosystem services — A guidebook for policymakers*, EEA Technical Report No 4/2001, European Environment Agency (<http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/valuing-ecosystem-service>) accessed 20 April 2010.

- **References to web pages**

- Where the reference is to a specific page, the title of the page should be presented in inverted commas, followed by the internet address in brackets and the access date.

WWF, 2010, 'Coal power station opposition goes global' ([http://www.wwf.org.uk/news\\_feed.cfm?4164/Coal-power-station-opposition-goes-global](http://www.wwf.org.uk/news_feed.cfm?4164/Coal-power-station-opposition-goes-global)) accessed 25 August 2010.

- In many cases, **organisations or databases are referenced using their web page.**

NEC, 2010, 'National emission ceilings (NEC) directive inventory' (<http://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/data/national-emission-ceilings-nec-directive-inventory-5>) accessed 25 August 2010.

Forest Europe, 2010, 'Forest Europe — Ministerial conference on the protection of forests in Europe' (<http://www.foresteurope.org>) accessed 25 August 2010.

## 5 Spelling

### 5.1 Basics

Generally, the first entry in the Concise Oxford English Dictionary should be followed. **If you don't have a copy of the OED, get one.**

An important exception relates to words ending in '-ize' or '-ization'. The preferred spelling is with an 's'. Hence, 'standardize' and 'standardization' are spelt 'standardise' and 'standardisation'. To help avoid errors, it is helpful to have the spell checker on your word processing software set on 'UK English'.

### 5.2 Tricky plurals

Singular	Plural
addendum	addenda
appendix	appendices
bacterium	bacteria
consortium	consortia
corrigendum	corrigenda
criterion	criteria
datum	data (takes plural verb)
focus	focuses (focal points); foci (mathematics)
formula	formulas (politics); formulae (science)
forum	forums (avoid fora)
index	indexes (books); indices (science, economics)
maximum	maximums; maxima (science)
medium	mediums (life sciences, art); media (press, communications)
memorandum	memoranda
microfiche	microfiche (technically same as singular)
phenomenon	phenomena
plus	pluses
premium	premiums
referendum	referendums
spectrum	spectrums (politics) spectra (science)
surplus	surpluses
symposium	symposia
vortex	vortices

### 5.3 Confusion between English words

Check typescripts for errors involving the words below:

dependent (adj.)	dependant (noun) also: independent, dependence, dependency
------------------	---

license (verb)	licence (noun)
maintain (verb)	maintenance (noun)
premiss, premisses (propositions)	premises (building)
practise (verb)	practice (noun)
principal (adj./noun)	principle (noun only)

In British usage (unlike US), a final -l is doubled after a single vowel on adding -ing or -ed. For example:

total, totalling, totalled

level, levelling, levelled

The only exception is parallel, which becomes paralleled.

Other consonants only double if the last syllable of the root verb is stressed. For example:

admit, admitting, admitted

benefit, benefiting, benefited

combat, combating, combated

enter, entering, entered

refer, referring, referred

Exception: some verbs ending in -p (e.g. handicapped, worshipped). Note also: focus, focuses, focusing.

In data-processing usage avoid the forms 'input(t)ed' and 'output(t)ed'. Instead, use 'input' and 'output': e.g. '70 000 items of data were input last month'.

However, note the verb 'to format' which takes the forms 'formatted' and 'formatting'.

Note also: age, ageing.

## 5.4 Latin phrases and abbreviations

Latin should be used sparingly as even the common phrases are often misused or misunderstood.

Latin words should usually be printed in italic but common Latin phrases do not require italics. Generally, if a term is listed in the Oxford English Dictionary then it can be printed without italics (e.g., ad hoc, per capita, status quo, versus).

Common abbreviations are as follows:

c.f. = compare

e.g. = for example

et al. = and others (note punctuation)

etc. = et cetera

i.e. = that is to say



NB = nota bene ('please note')

Note that a comma is not used after 'e.g.' and 'i.e.'

Writers often confuse the abbreviations 'e.g.' and 'i.e.'. Use 'e.g.' when you want to give an example (or several examples) of something just mentioned:

'Local authorities have introduced congestion charging in several European cities, e.g. London.'

Use 'i.e.' to explain briefly what you just said, or say the same thing in other words.

'Local authorities have introduced congestion charging in one European city, i.e. London.'

The term 'etc.' should be used sparingly. It is better to introduce a series of examples with 'such as', 'for example' or 'e.g.' In this context, 'etc.' shouldn't be used at the end because it's redundant. For example:

'The analysis will provide essential background information on aspects of integrated risk management (e.g. future scenarios, cost-benefit analysis, etc.).'

becomes

'The analysis will provide essential background information on aspects of integrated risk management, such as future scenarios and cost-benefit analysis.'

## 5.5 Useful terms

The table below sets out the correct spelling, capitalisation and hyphenation of terms frequently used in EEA documents.

If you don't find a term here, contact the Editing Project Manager in COM, who can provide an answer and update this list to include it.

advice (noun)	decision-maker
advise (verb)	ecosystem, ecotourism
AirWatch	eco-efficiency
base year	Eionet
biannual (twice a year)	email
biennial (every two years)	environment-friendly
bioenergy	exceedance
clearing house	Eye on Earth
cold water (noun)	fact sheet
cold-water (adj.)	focused, focusing
coordinate	follow-up (noun)
cooperate	follow up (verb)
database	freshwater
data set	groundwater

home page	power plant
hot spot(s)	practice (noun)
hydropower	practise (verb)
index, indexes (reports)	programme
index, indices (science, economics)	run-off
know-how	salt-water (adjective)
interrelationship	salt water (noun)
judgement, judgemental	sea bottom
land cover	sea coast
landfill	seafood
landmine	seaweed
land take	sea ice
land use	sea lane
licence (noun)	sea level
license (verb)	seawater
long-term (adjective)	short-term (adj.)
low-lying	short term (noun)
Member State (of the EU)	side-effect
member country (of the EEA)	Sixth Environment Action Programme (6EAP)
metadata	socio-economic
microbiology	soil sealing
microorganism	task force
multiannual	time-frame
Natura 2000	tonne
offset	waste paper
-oriented	wastewater
organise, organisation (although many international bodies are spelt with a 'z', e.g. World Health Organization)	water meter
phosphorous (adjective)	WaterWatch
photochemical	web-based
physico-chemical	website
point source emissions	widespread
policymaker	wood waste
policy measures	worldwide

## 6 Singulars and plurals

Bodies and institutions (and most countries) usually take a singular verb:

The United States is ...

The Council is ...

An exception is made where the individual members of the body are emphasised:

The police have failed ...

A majority were ...

A number of people are ...

but:

The majority is ...

The number of people is ...

‘Data’ and ‘staff’ should be treated as plural, for example: ‘These data do not support the conclusion that staff are unhappy with the new canteen.’

Percentages can be treated as either singular or plural.

Sums of money take a singular verb:

EUR 2 million was made available, of which 56 % has been ...

Only 10 % of those eligible were likely to ...

‘None’ may take either a singular or a plural verb.

The sciences of mathematics, dynamics, kinetics, statistics and economics are singular.

‘Statistics’ meaning simply ‘figures’ is plural.

‘Economics’ in the sense of ‘commercial viability’ as in ‘the economics of the new process were studied in depth’.

## 7 Punctuation

The explanations below aim to address common uncertainties about the use of punctuation in (English) EU texts.

### 7.1 Full stop (.)

The full stop is deleted from headings.

‘Etc.’ only needs one point if it ends a sentence.

Abbreviations are followed by a point unless the last letter of the word is included (a contraction), for example, Dr, Mrs, Ltd, but Co., Art., Chap.

‘No’ as in ‘No 1’ (a contraction of ‘numero’, not an abbreviation) is never followed by a point.

Footnotes always end with a full stop.

## 7.2 Comma (,)

Bracketing commas must always come in pairs. For example,

‘Dr. Hans Bruyninckx, Executive Director of the European Environment Agency, said that...’

not

‘Dr. Hans Bruyninckx, Executive Director of the European Environment Agency said that...’

In list, a serial comma is not used before ‘and’ except in cases where its exclusion could lead to confusion. For example:

‘for breakfast the canteen offered cereal, fruit and toast.’

‘for breakfast the canteen offered cereal, fruit, and bacon and eggs.’

## 7.3 Colon (:)

Do not use colons at the end of headings or to introduce a table or graph set in text.

In English, there is no space between a colon or semicolon and the preceding letter. The first letter after a colon should not be capitalised.

## 7.4 Semicolon (;)

Semicolons are normally used at the end of subparagraphs, as follows:

1. To strengthen security the Executive Director decided:
  - (a) to approve the additional posts requested under the programme budget;
  - (b) to approve the proposed revised funding arrangements as follows:
    - (i) the resource requirements for 2004 would continue to be funded under the arrangements established in resolution 56/255;
    - (ii) the additional resource requirements for 2004 would be met from the regular budget appropriation.

Semicolons are also used in lists to separate items that include commas. For example:

‘The EU has agencies located across Europe, including in Copenhagen, Denmark; Lisbon, Portugal; and London, United Kingdom.’

Note that in such sentences, it is not necessary to commence the list with a colon. In addition, a semicolon should be used prior to the ‘and’ that introduces the last item on the list.

## 7.5 Parentheses ( )

The opening parenthesis is never preceded by a comma.

(It is seldom useful to include a whole sentence within parentheses but where this occurs the full stop must be placed before the closing parenthesis, as shown here.)

## 7.6 Square brackets [ ]

Square brackets are seldom used in EEA reports. They are appropriate, however, to introduce additional information clarifying a quote, for example:

He said that, 'Although a date has not been set, we [heads of EU agencies] expect to meet soon to discuss ways to strengthen partnership between EU agencies and the European Commission.'

They are also used in bibliographies to bracket information about when a web reference was last accessed (see section 4.4 above).

Don't use square brackets to enclose text already in parentheses. If it is necessary to use brackets within brackets then both should be round.

## 7.7 Quotation marks (" ")

Single quotation marks should always be used, except for quotes within quotes. For example:

She said, 'The Executive Director told me that the conference was "extremely productive".'

Do not enclose titles of books, newspapers or foreign expressions in quotation marks as they are usually displayed in italic. It is not necessary to use quotation marks as well as bold or italic.

## 7.8 Hyphens, dashes and subtraction marks (–)

Hyphens, dashes and subtraction marks look pretty similar but they differ in terms of the length of the horizontal bar and the spacing around them.

**Hyphens** are used to join together certain words, including compound adjectives and nouns. In Microsoft Word they are created by pressing the 'minus' key. There is no space either side of a hyphen. For example:

The main tool for creating a resource-efficient economy is capacity-building.

### *Useful rules for hyphens*

- Hyphenate nouns composed of participle plus preposition, for example: 'They discussed the buying-in of sugar'.
- Adverbs modifying the following adjective do not generally need a hyphen, for example: 'Newly industrialised developing countries'.
- Compound attributive adjectives always take a hyphen: 'Up-to-date statistics, long-term policies, foot-and-mouth disease'. An exception is 'value added tax'.

- Note that the hyphenation of terms can vary depending on their usage. For example ‘out-of-date statistics’ becomes ‘the statistics were out of date’ when the adjective is used predicatively. Likewise, ‘long-term problems’ becomes ‘problems in the long term’, when the adjective becomes a noun.
- Prefixes also take a hyphen, for example: ‘anti-American’, ‘non-cooperative’, ‘co-responsibility levy’, ‘co-funded’, ‘self-employed’. Exceptions exist where the prefix has become part of the word by usage, for example: ‘coordination’, ‘subsection’, ‘reshuffle’.
- Compound compass points are hyphenated, for example, ‘south-east Europe’.

**En dashes** are longer than hyphens and are used to convey ranges. In Word they are created by holding the ‘Ctrl’ key down and pressing the minus key on the far right of the keyboard (above the numeric keypad). There are no spaces either side of the dash. For example:

Output in the period 1990–2000 increased by more than 30 %.

**Em dashes** are the longest type of dash and are used as an alternative to commas or parentheses in running text to stress or clarify a point. In Word they are created by holding the ‘Ctrl’ and ‘Alt’ keys down and pressing the minus key on the far right of the keyboard (above the numeric keypad). A space should be used before and after the em dash. For example:

The global economy can — by definition — only keep growing in the long term if we add ever more value to a fixed throughput of resources.

**Subtraction marks** are similar in appearance to en dashes but should have a space on either side. For example:

At night the temperature fell to – 5 °C.

5 – 3 = 2

## 7.9 Ellipsis (...)

Ellipses are used to indicate an omission in a passage of text, for example:

The Treaty of Lisbon provides that, ‘The Union shall develop a special relationship with neighbouring countries ... founded on the values of the Union ...’

Note that when replacing one or more words in the middle of a sentence, it is preceded and followed by a normal space. And where it falls at the end of a sentence there is no final full stop.

It can also be used to replace a line, sentence or paragraph of the text.

Don’t use an ellipsis as an alternative to ‘etc.’

## 7.10 Solidus (/)

The solidus, also known variously as an oblique stroke, a slash or a shilling stroke, is used for alternatives (and/or), to mean ‘per’ (km/day) and fractions (19/100).

Marketing years, financial years, etc. that do not coincide with calendar years are denoted by a solidus, e.g. 1991/1992, which is 12 months, rather than by a hyphen, e.g. 1991–1992, which means two years.

### 7.11 Question mark (?)

Use a question mark after an announcement in a sentence that what follows is a question, and after a 'semi-indirect' question. For example:

We should ask ourselves: will it affect EU trade, and if so, how? Can the impact be measured?

Do not use a question mark in indirect speech:

We should ask ourselves whether it will affect EU trade.

No question mark is necessary after a request or instruction disguised as a question out of courtesy. For example:

Would you please sign and return the attached form.

### 7.12 Apostrophe (')

Some place names containing a possessive omit the apostrophe: Earls Court, Kings Cross, while others retain it: St John's Wood, King's Lynn. See the Oxford writers' dictionary for individual cases.

No apostrophe is necessary in abbreviations such as MEPs, UFOs, 1920s, or in the following: bus, cello, flu, fridge, phone, plane, teens.

### 7.13 Ampersand (&)

The ampersand is a substitute for the word 'and'. It can sometimes be useful in tables where space is limited but it should generally be avoided. Don't use it in titles, headings or normal text.

## 8 Italics and bold

### 8.1 Italics

The use of italics is restricted to:

- book, film or play titles;
- names of periodicals ('the' in connection with the title should be lower case roman (normal type) unless it is known that the article belongs to the title, e.g. *The Times*);
- words and short phrases from foreign languages (e.g. *Länder*, *carte blanche*), except for proper names, names of persons, institutions and places, and not usually for foreign quotation or foreign words assimilated into current English (e.g. *café*, *alias*, *detour*) — see section 5.4 regarding italicisation of Latin words;
- names of ships;

- formulae in mathematical works;
- scientific (Latin) names of flora and fauna;
- the foreword, epilogue, publisher's note and, in general, any section of a work which was not written by the author.

Use quotation marks to cite quotations from books and periodicals rather than italic. The simultaneous use of italic and quotation marks must be avoided.

## 8.2 Bold

Bold type is often used in headings and titles. It can also be used in running text to show changes of subject, to highlight keywords or for emphasis in the same way that some other languages use italic. However, it should be used sparingly.

If the text is already in bold roman, words to be emphasised should be in normal (non-bold) roman characters.

Do not overuse typographical variations for emphasis. It can have a detrimental effect on getting the message across quickly and clearly, as shown in the following examples.

**Mr Paul Chatterton** invited **Mr Mark Godfrey** to explain the **financial situation** with regard to the **provisional annual budget** to the members of the **Executive Committee** in order to **approve and sign** the agreement to **fund the building** of a **new sports centre** on waste ground next to the **comprehensive school**.

Do not use underlined text for emphasis.

# 9 Capitalisation

## 9.1 General rules

In general, use capitals sparingly. They are often employed excessively so when in doubt use lower case. The general rules for capitalisation are listed below.

- Proper names: Smith is a baker; Baker is a smith.
- Prefixes and titles forming a compound name: Sir Leon Brittan; the Bishop of Ely.
- Recognised geographical names and political divisions, such as the North Pole or Northern Ireland, but northern England.
- 'River', 'sea' and 'ocean' are capitalised when they form part of the true name, e.g., the Yellow River, the Atlantic Ocean, the Aral Sea. 'River' should be used in lower case if merely an identifier (e.g. the Thames river) but in upper case if it precedes the name (e.g. the River Thames).
- For proper names of periods and historical events: Carboniferous, Classical, Byzantine, Dark Ages, First World War.
- For proper names of institutions, movements: Council of Europe, Christianity, the Crown.



- For party denominations and organisations such as Socialist Group, Fianna Fáil Party, but not for ideologies more generally, such as liberal, socialist, etc.
- For the title of specific office holders, for example, ‘Prof. Jacqueline McGlade, Executive Director of the European Environment Agency’ but not for offices generally, for example ‘a meeting of the executive directors of EU agencies’.
- For trade names, names of ships: the Spitfire, the Cutty Sark (this is a name, not a make), Ford Cortina, Persil.
- For compass points, do not use capitals for north, north-west, north-western, etc., unless part of an administrative or political unit (North Rhine-Westphalia, East Midlands, western Europe, central and eastern Europe, east European countries). Compound compass points are hyphenated and, in official designations, each part is capitalised (the North-West Frontier).
- For full names of international agreements, conferences, conventions, etc.: International Coffee Agreement, Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

## 9.2 References to EU legislation

In references to EU legislation, write Regulation, Decision, Directive, Annex and Article with capitals if they refer to specific acts.

Use lower case for references to regulations, directives, etc. in a generalised sense and when referring to proposed legislation (i.e. draft regulation, a possible new directive on ...).

## 9.3 References to EU programmes

EU programmes take lower case. Titles can also be written within quotation marks with initial capital on the first word and the word programme outside the quotation marks:

the programme on research and development in advanced communications technologies in Europe; the high-temperature materials programme; the ‘Europe against cancer’ programme.

## 9.4 Publications: journals, newspapers and periodicals

Journal, newspapers and periodicals normally take a capital on each main word: *Daily Mail*, *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, *European Economy*. However, most EU publications take a capital only on the first word and on any proper nouns (and often on adjectives formed from proper nouns): *Synopsis of the work of the Court of Justice of the European Communities*.

Figure, Number, Plate (Fig., No, Pl.) and Amendment, Volume, Chapter, Section, Article (Vol., Chap., Sect., Art.) should always have an initial capital when followed by a numeral; conversely, paragraph, point, line, etc. should not be capitalised.

## 9.5 Miscellaneous

In botanical works, etc., the name of the genus and species appears with initial capitals, in italic. For example, ‘The Western Gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla*) is a great ape and the most populous species of the genus *Gorilla*.’[

Major EU reports (e.g. the General Report, Agricultural Report, Competition Policy Report, Annual Economic Report) should also be capitalised.

Not all adjectives derived from proper nouns take a capital: arabic (numerals), french (chalk, polish, windows), morocco (leather), roman (type).

volt, watt, ampere, centigrade (but Celsius, Fahrenheit);

honourable Member (of EP);

Member State, non-member country;

Third World, North-South dialogue;

integrated Mediterranean programmes (IMPs);

Multifibre Arrangement; New Community Instrument; Edinburgh Summit;

Director-General, Directorate-General (but use lower case in a generalised sense).

## 10 Numbers, dates and time

### 10.1 Writing numbers out in full or with digits

All numbers that appear at the beginning of a sentence should be written out in full.

Whole numbers from one to nine should be written out in full. Thereafter, digits should be used.

Where numbers in the same sentence fall above and below this limit use figures for both: '9 to 11', not 'nine to 11'.

This also applies to ordinal numbers, which should be written out for first to ninth and then proceed as 10th, 11th, ... 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, etc.

Note that ordinal numbers are not written with superscript (i.e. '10th', not '10<sup>th</sup>').

Fractions: insert hyphens when used as an adverb or adjective (two-thirds complete, a two-thirds increase) but not when used as a noun (an increase of two thirds).

Digits should be used for ages and before or after an abbreviation or symbol: 7 years old, 6 kg, 5 °C, 5 %, EUR 3 million, £2.

Digits should also be used for pagination: p. 250, Fig. 5, footnote 6, Chapter 7.

### 10.2 Rules for digits

Multiples of 1 000 should be separated using a space, not a comma. E.g. two million is written as 2 000 000 not 2,000,000.

A full stop should be used as the decimal separator, not a comma. Thus 'two and a half' is expressed as 2.5 not 2,5.

Use billion to mean 1 000 million. To avoid ambiguity with former usage, define this in an abbreviations list or at first mention (by putting 1 000 million in brackets).

In statistics each decimal place, even if zero, adds to accuracy: 3.5 % is not the same as 3.50 % or 3½ %. The fraction is more approximate.

### 10.3 Percentages and percentage points

Percentages should normally be presented as a digit and the percentage symbol: 5 %.

If written out in full (e.g. at the beginning of a sentence) then the correct spelling is ‘per cent’, e.g. ‘Five per cent of children are overweight.’

Make the distinction between ‘%’ and ‘percentage point(s)’. For example, ‘In 2006, 60 % of voters took part in local elections, which represented an increase of 3 percentage points on the turnout in 2002.’ This is different from saying, ‘In 2006, 60 % of voters took part in local elections, which represented a 3 % increase on the turnout in 2002.’

### 10.4 Ranges of numbers

To ensure clarity, ranges of numbers should not be elided, e.g. ‘312–317’, not ‘312–7’.

Ranges can be expressed using:

- an en dash, e.g. ‘10–20’;
- ‘from ... to ...’, e.g. ‘from 10 to 20’;
- ‘between ... and ...’, e.g. ‘between 10 and 20’.

Do not mix these up, e.g. ‘from 10–20’.

### 10.5 Currencies

Currencies can be expressed using the currency’s name, the ISO code or, in some instances, the currency symbol. The circumstances in which each is used are as follows.

The **currency name** (e.g. ‘euro’) is used where a monetary unit is referred to generally but an amount is not included. It is written in letters, using the plural as appropriate and it is not capitalised. For example:

‘an amount in euros’

‘a sum in pounds sterling’

The **ISO code** (e.g. ‘EUR’) is used to accompany an amount. It is followed by a fixed space (ctrl+shift+space) and the amount in figures, as follows.

‘The amount required is EUR 12 500.’

‘A sum of GBP 300 was received and GBP 250 was spent.’

The ISO code is also used in table headings. Here it should be used with any relevant multiplier (preferably in parentheses) in roman type:

‘(EUR)’

‘(million EUR)’

**Currency symbols** (e.g. ‘€’) should only be used in less formal contexts, such as web pages. There is no space between the symbol and the figures that follow. For example:

‘The amount required is €12 500.’

Currency symbols should not be used where there is any ambiguity about which currency is under discussion. For example, the ‘\$’ symbol is used for various currencies, such as the Australian, US and Zimbabwean dollars.

Where **ranges of money** are expressed, it is not necessary to repeat the ISO code or currency symbol. For example:

‘The work was projected to cost EUR 500–1 000.’

Not:

‘The work was projected to cost EUR 500–EUR 1 000.’

## 10.6 Dates

Dates in text should be presented in their full form, for example, ‘6 June 1992’. Note that it is ‘6’ not ‘6<sup>th</sup>’ or ‘06’. There is also no comma separating day, month or year.

Likewise, write: ‘Wednesday 25 June 1997’ (no comma after day of the week).

In footnotes dates should be abbreviated, for example, ‘6.6.1992’. Note that it is not ‘6.6.92’.

1991/1992 refers to one year (a marketing year, financial year, academic year).

1991–1992 refers to the two years.

Avoid beginning a sentence with a year: for example, instead of ‘1992 ...’ write ‘The year 1992 ...’

Write: ‘The 1990s’, not ‘the 1990’s’ and never use ‘the nineties’.

## 10.7 Time

Either the 24-hour system or 12-hour system with a.m. and p.m. are acceptable.

The 24-hour systems should be presented as, ‘17.30’ (without ‘h’ or ‘hrs’). The full hour is written with zero minutes: 14.00

The 12-hour system should be presented as ‘5.30 p.m.’. Use ‘12 noon’ and ‘midnight’.

# 11 Abbreviations and acronyms

## 11.1 General rules for abbreviations and acronyms

In general, abbreviations and acronyms (words formed from the initial letters of other words, e.g. EEA) should be written out in full the first time they occur in a document, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses.

If a document contains numerous abbreviations and acronyms, it is often very useful to include a list of them after the table of contents or at the end of the document if there is no table of contents.

Abbreviations and acronyms should not be used for names or titles that occur only once or twice in a text. However, when the entity referred to is better known by the abbreviation or acronym, it may be preferable to include the abbreviation even if the name occurs only once.

It is useful to distinguish between different types of abbreviation and acronym:

- In a **true abbreviation**, the end of the word is cut off (e.g. vol., co., inc.) and replaced with a full stop.
- In a **contraction** or **suspension**, the interior of the word is removed (e.g. Mr, Dr, contd) and there is no full stop at the end.
- An **acronym** is a word formed from the initial letters of other words (e.g. the EU). There are no full stops between or after the letters.
- A **true acronym** can be pronounced as a word (e.g. Unesco, UNEP).
- An **initialism** is pronounced as individual letters (e.g. the EEA).

## 11.2 Capitalisation of acronyms

An acronym, contraction or abbreviation, including names of programmes, of up to five letters is printed in capitals (e.g. EEC, COST, AIDS).

Where an acronym, contraction or abbreviation, including names of programmes, of six letters or more can be pronounced (e.g. 'true acronyms'), it is printed in upper and lower case (e.g. Unesco, Esprit).

## 11.3 Plurals, possessives and the definite article

Acronyms of names that are used in the plural should be written as they are spoken (e.g. OCTs, SMEs, not OCT, SME, etc. unless used as an adjective).

The definite article ('the') should be used before initialisms (e.g. 'he works for the BBC') but not before true acronyms (e.g. 'she works for NATO').

It is normal practice to use the possessive after an acronym or initialism (e.g. 'The BBC's war correspondent summarised the day's activities in his evening report.')

## 11.4 Units of weight and measure and compass points

Like other abbreviations and contractions, units of weight and measure should normally be written out in full on their first appearance, although very common units, such as cm<sup>2</sup>, kg and km, need not be written out.

Units of measurement and scientific symbols, such as 'ha', 'km' and 'mg', do not need a final full point. They are not closed up to figures and do not have plurals: 4 ha, 9 m, 20 psi, 55 dB(A), 2000 kc/s.

'No' is a symbol and does not take a final full point, but does take a plural 's'.

Cardinal compass bearings are also abbreviated without a point, always capitals (54 °E), but should be written out where confusion is possible.

## 11.5 Commonly used abbreviations and acronyms

A list of commonly used abbreviations, symbols and contractions is available on the Interinstitutional Style Guide website:

<http://publications.europa.eu/code/en/en-5000300.htm>.

A list of commonly used acronyms is also available there:

<http://publications.europa.eu/code/en/en-5000400.htm>

Key EEA abbreviations and acronyms *[this section to be developed further]*

## 12 Lists

There are four basic types of list, with slightly varying punctuation. These four types are explained and illustrated below.

In most EEA texts, lists are simply presented as bullet points. In more formal documents, where a list may consist of several layers of sub-lists, the hierarchy of lists is introduced using numbers, letters, dashes and bullets.

The listed points would thus appear as follows.

Xxxxxxxx:

1. xxxxxx:
  - (a) xxxx:
    - xxxx;
    - xxxx:
      - xxxx;
      - xxxx;
  - (b) xxxx;
2. xxxx.

### 12.1 Lists of short items

Lists of short items (without main verbs) should be introduced by a full sentence and have the following features:

- an introductory colon
- no initial capitals
- no punctuation (very short items) or a comma after each item
- a full stop at the end.

### 12.2 Lists where each item completes the introductory sentence

Where each item completes the introductory sentence, you should:

- begin with an introductory colon;
- start each item with a small letter;
- end each item with a semicolon;
- close with a full stop.

Try to avoid running the sentence on after the list of points.

### **12.3 Lists where all items are complete sentences**

If all items are complete statements without a grammatical link to the introductory sentence, proceed as follows:

- introduce the list with a colon;
- label each item with the appropriate bullet, number or letter;
- start each item with a small letter;
- end each one with a semicolon;
- put a full stop at the end.

### **12.4 Lists where one or more items consist of several sentences**

If any one item consists of several complete sentences, announce the list with a main sentence and continue as indicated below.

- Do not introduce the list with a colon.
- Label each item with the appropriate bullet, number or letter.
- Begin each item with a capital letter.
- End each statement with a full stop. This allows several sentences to be included under a single item without throwing punctuation into confusion.

This latter type is the mainstay of administrative writing. The list of points may extend over several pages, making it essential not to introduce it with an incomplete sentence or colon.

## **13 Spacing**

The rules for spacing around punctuation are presented below.

When preparing texts in Microsoft Word, a soft space (which breaks across lines) is entered by simply pressing the 'space bar', whereas a hard space (which does not break across lines) is entered by holding 'Ctrl' and 'Shift' and pressing the 'space bar'.





Typographic mark	Spacing
<b>Punctuation marks and symbols</b>	
,	xx,■xx
;	xx;■xx
.	xx.■xx
:	xx:■xx
!	xx!■xx
?	xx?■xx
-	xx-xx
—	xx■—■xx
/	xx/xx
( )	xx■(xx)■xx
[ ]	xx■[xx]■xx
‘ ’	xx■‘xx’■xx
“ ”	xx■“xx”■xx
%	00□%
+	+□00
—	—□00
±	±□00
°C (°F)	00□°C
°N	00□°N
°	00°
&	xx■&■xx
<b>Footnote reference and footnotes</b>	
xx (¹)	xx□(¹)

NB:

■ = soft space.

□ = fixed space.

# 14 Names of countries, nationalities, capitals and currencies

## 14.1 Using the correct name for countries

It's important to use the correct name for countries because in some cases these are the focus of dispute. A very useful list of countries, nationalities, capitals and currencies is available on the Interinstitutional Style Guide website:  
<http://publications.europa.eu/code/en/en-5000500.htm>

It is normally fine in EEA contexts to use the short form of the country name.

While it is appropriate to use the definite article ('the') for some countries in running text (e.g. 'Amsterdam is the capital of the Netherlands'), it need not be included in tables.

Use 'Ireland', not 'Republic of Ireland' or 'Irish Republic'.

Use 'the Netherlands' not Holland, which is only part of the Netherlands (the provinces of North and South Holland); a capital T is not necessary on 'the'.

Use 'United Kingdom' for the Member State, not 'Great Britain', which comprises England, Scotland and Wales; these three together with Northern Ireland are the constituent parts of the United Kingdom. The purely geographical term 'British Isles' includes Ireland and the Crown Dependencies (the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands, which are not part of the United Kingdom).

Use 'the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia' not 'Macedonia' or 'FYROM'. The short form of the name is the same as the long form. The ISO code is MKD. Note that according to EU rules, the first two words of the name ('the' and 'former') are in lower case but the remainder begin with a capital. In alphabetised lists, the country is listed under 'f'.

The term 'Republic of Kosovo' and the usage of the flag or coat of arms must be avoided, even if incoming correspondence from Kosovan authorities refers to or includes them. The first time Kosovo is mentioned in official Commission documents, it must be footnoted with a qualifier: 'under UNSCR 1244/99'. All subsequent mentions can then be of 'Kosovo' alone. Also, the word 'country' should be avoided when referring to Kosovo. Please use alternative words, such as 'beneficiaries' or 'partners'.

In listing countries, instead of the previous formulation 'Serbia including Kosovo under UNSCR 1244/99', the following listing used in the Commission's March Communication on the Western Balkans (COM(2008)127) should be used:

'Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as Kosovo under UNSC Resolution 1244/99.'

## 14.2 Ordering of countries in lists

In general, countries should be listed in the **alphabetical order of their geographical names in the original language(s)**: Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden, United Kingdom. For example:

‘The meeting was attended by representatives of the Germany, France, Austria, Sweden and the United Kingdom.’

Obviously, this does not apply where there is a clear reason for ranking them differently. For example:

‘Emissions were highest in Austria, followed by the United Kingdom, France and Germany.’

Lists of non-member countries or a mixture of non-member countries combined and Member States should simply proceed in alphabetical order (in the language of the publication). For example:

‘The meeting was attended by representatives of Australia, France, Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom.’

