



# European Commission **Style Guide**



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# **Style Guide**

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# Introduction

The *Commission Style Guide* was launched in March 2019, with the aim of improving consistency, clarity and clear writing in the Commission on a daily basis. The guide is tailored to the Commission’s needs and contains rules for drafting in English, clear writing principles, document templates, instructions on the visual appearance of documents, lists of EU bodies and Directorates-General, and advice on forms of address.

The *Commission Style Guide* is the standard for **internal documents, drafts** and **communication** (both external and internal) in the Commission. It is updated regularly and focuses on clear writing, templates and selected formatting issues. It **does not replace** the *Interinstitutional Style Guide*. Moreover, the two guides are aligned with one another.

The *Interinstitutional Style Guide* follows the style rules and conventions agreed jointly by the EU institutions and bodies. It remains the reference guide for all legal texts and external communication products. Its website exists in all the official languages and is updated regularly. You will also find there complementary information, such as the official names of the institutions, countries, currencies and other reference information.

# 11 GOLDEN RULES

## for style and consistency

1.



### The European Union uses UK/Irish spelling only

#### *Do not write this*

realize, defense, center, behavior, advisor

#### *Instead, write this*

realise, defence, centre, behaviour, adviser

2.



### Spelling and listing of Member States, European Union institutions and international organisations

Member States should as a rule be listed in the official protocol order, shown in the right-hand column. If exceptionally you decide to rank them in ascending or descending order based on certain criteria, please make this clear.

The order and spelling of European Union institutions has to follow that set out in Article 13 of the Treaty on European Union, i.e. European Parliament, European Council, Council, European Commission, Court of Justice of the European Union, European Central Bank and Court of Auditors. All European Union institutions have to be referred to in full when mentioned for the first time in a text.

For international organisations, please follow their own practice of spelling.

#### *Do not write this*

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, etc.  
(alphabetical order in English)

Council and Parliament

Commission, Parliament and Council

World Health Organisation

#### *Instead, write this*

Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden.

(alphabetical order in Member States' own languages)

European Parliament and Council

European Parliament, Council and European Commission

World Health Organization

### 3. ABC Use of acronyms

As a general rule, avoid where possible the use of acronyms – they do not help a text to be understood by a broader audience. If exceptionally you still need to use acronyms, please always make sure to explain them and keep their use to a minimum. Except for well-known acronyms and initialisms, write out the full term followed by the abbreviation in brackets on its first mention in a document (or, where necessary, in long reports, on its first mention in each section).

#### *Do not write this*

The ETS should enable the MS to meet their climate target.

#### *Instead, write this*

The emissions trading scheme (ETS) should enable the Member States to meet their climate target.

### 4. Use of hyphens

#### *Do not write this*

Secretary General, Secretariat General,  
Director General, Directorate General, Vice  
President

inter-institutional, inter-service

on-line, co-operation, co-ordination,  
re-assessment

*ex-ante, ex-post*

#### *Instead, write this*

Secretary-General, Secretariat-General,  
Director-General, Directorate-General, Vice-  
President

interinstitutional, interservice

online, cooperation, coordination,  
reassessment

*ex ante, ex post*

### 5. Aa Use of capital letters

Use capitals for a particular institution or person, but small letters for groups of institutions or people. Exception: references to permanent EU bodies/formations (e.g. 'College of Commissioners', 'Directorates-General', 'Cabinets') and to official functions within the EU institutions (e.g. 'Members of the Commission', 'Directors-General') always take a capital letter, whether in the singular or the plural. See Annex B for a list of EU bodies and functions.

#### *Do not write this*

The Commission and the other EU  
Institutions

members of the commission

college of commissioners

members of cabinet

article 55 of the Treaty on the functioning of  
the EU

Commission delegated directive (EU)  
2018/741

The draft Regulation on the allocation of  
fishing opportunities

#### *Instead, write this*

The Commission and the other EU  
institutions

Members of the Commission

College of Commissioners

Members of Cabinet

Article 55 of the Treaty on the Functioning of  
the European Union

Commission Delegated Directive (EU)  
2018/741

The draft regulation on the allocation of  
fishing opportunities



## 6.

### References to the Treaties and to EU legislation

Always use a Treaty's full title the first time it is mentioned. Thereafter, it is common usage to cite the Treaties using a shortened form or abbreviation. Paragraphs and subparagraphs that are officially designated by numbers or letters are cited in brackets closed up to the number of the Article (note: no spaces).

When referring to EU legislation, the different parts of the full title of an act (title, number, author, date and subject of the title) are not separated by commas, and the subject of the title is not followed by a comma.

#### *Do not write this*

Art 107 (3d) TFEU ...

Regulation (EU), 2016/679, of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 27 April 2016, on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data

#### *Instead, write this*

Article 107(3)(d) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ... (TFEU after first reference)

Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data

## 7.

### Presentation of amounts, currencies and percentages

Thousands are separated by a 'non-breaking' space (Ctrl+Shift+Space) in most types of documents. Decimals are preceded by a point, not a comma, except for texts in the Official Journal. Currency abbreviations always come before the amount; put a 'non-breaking' space between the two. Do not put a space between the number and the percentage sign. However, in official (legal and non-legal) publications a non-breaking space is added automatically before the percentage symbol, in accordance with the relevant ISO norm.

Like 'pound', 'dollar' or any other currency name in English, the word 'euro' is written in lower case with no initial capital. When the monetary unit is accompanied by an amount, use the code for the currency followed by a 'non-breaking' space and the amount in figures. When no amount is included, spell out the currency in letters.

While practice may differ for other currencies, the plural of euro is euro (without 's').

#### *Do not write this*

15.000  
1.250.568

350€

234 000\$US

a sum in euros

12.1 %

#### *Instead, write this*

15 000 or 15,000  
1 250 568 or 1,250,568

EUR 350 (all legal texts)  
€350 (use in graphics and popular works, promotional publications, press releases)

USD 234 000

a sum in euro

12.1%

8.



## Presentation of time and dates

Use the 24-hour system (or 12-hour system with a.m. and p.m.):

- 17.30 without h or hrs (or 5.30 p.m.) (always use a point);
- avoid leading zeros (e.g. 9.00, not 09.00);
- the full hour is written with zero minutes: 12.00 (midday), 14.00, 24.00 (midnight);
- when using the 12-hour system, write 2 p.m., 2 o'clock or 2.30 p.m., but not 2.00 p.m.

There is only one correct way to write dates in running text.

### *Do not write this*

The meeting takes place at 09:00 am

1st January 2019  
The 1st of January 2019  
01/01/2019

### *Instead, write this*

The meeting takes place at 9.00  
(24-hour system)

The meeting takes place at 9 a.m.  
(12-hour system)

1 January 2019

9.



## Punctuation

A full stop marks the end of a sentence. All footnotes end with a full stop, except those consisting solely of an internet or email address. Do not use a full stop at the end of a heading.

No further full stop is required if a sentence ends with an ellipsis (...), with an abbreviation that takes a point (e.g. 'etc.') or with a quotation complete in itself that ends in a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark before the closing quote.

### *Do not write this*

Steve Jobs said: 'Stay hungry. Stay foolish.'

### *Instead, write this*

Steve Jobs said: 'Stay hungry. Stay foolish.'

10.



## Use of quotation marks and dashes

Quotation marks should be smart ('...') rather than straight ('...'). Use single quotation marks for quotations, but use double quotation marks for quotations within quotations.

### *Do not write this*

The American government favours 'a two-way street in arms procurement'.

"The American government favours 'a two-way street' in arms procurement", the US representative said.

### *Instead, write this*

The American government favours 'a two-way street in arms procurement'.

'The American government favours "a two-way street" in arms procurement', the US representative said.

Short (or 'en') dashes may be used to punctuate a sentence instead of commas or brackets. They increase the contrast or emphasis of the text thus set off. However, use sparingly; use no more than one in a sentence, or – if used with inserted phrases – one set of paired dashes.

## 11.



### Consistency in documents

Always be consistent in the spelling and formatting of texts. Ensure the consistent use of fonts for all elements of a document. This applies to both the body of a document as well as its header/footer (including footnotes and page numbers). For documents drafted in Eurolook format, always use Times New Roman as the default font.

The visual identity of the European Commission and the other institutions must be respected and implemented at all times, including in working documents. Please consult Part One of this style guide for further guidance on style and consistency of texts drafted in English.



# 10 CLEAR WRITING principles

Correct and consistent style will help keep your document clear, but applying these clear writing tips will make your documents even better.

1.



## Think before you write, think of your reader

Be clear in your own mind.

- Why are you writing?
- What is your main message?
- Who is your audience?
- What is their level of knowledge?

This will help you decide what vocabulary to use and how strict you need to be about filtering out jargon.

What are readers trying to learn from your document? Imagine the questions they might ask. This will help you decide what to include and what to leave out. A clear, well-structured text should answer the following [seven questions](#).

1. **What** is being done?
2. **Who** is doing it (to whom)?
3. **When** is it being done?
4. **Where** is it being done?
5. **How** is it being done?
6. **Why** is it being done?
7. **How** much is involved (resources, time, etc.)?

2.



## Structure your document

### (a) Visual devices

Use descriptive subheadings and add graphs/tables if information can be expressed visually.

Use bullet points (or add roman numerals in running text) to make lists clearer and leave plenty of white space to improve readability. Take care that each bulleted list item is a grammatically correct continuation of the introduction to the list (same part of speech).

#### *Do not write this*

To improve conviction rates, Member States should step up efforts to investigate and prosecute the crime, substantially improve the collection of reliable data, better tackle the methods used by the perpetrators, conduct a study to analyse the impact of targeted awareness raising and training measures, and focus on the early identification of victims.

#### *Instead, write this*

To improve conviction rates, Member States should:

- step up efforts to investigate and prosecute the crime;
- substantially improve the collection of reliable data;
- better tackle the methods used by the perpetrators;
- conduct a study to analyse the impact of targeted awareness raising and training measures; and
- focus on the early identification of victims.

### (b) Flow of ideas

Make sure the ideas in paragraphs flow logically. Aim for three sentences per paragraph and try to limit the number of ideas within a paragraph.

To make sure your sentences link with each other, start each sentence with information that is known (i.e. has been mentioned above) and then add new elements to it in the second half of the sentence. Use transition words to link paragraphs (i.e. moreover, furthermore, therefore, however).

Explain new ideas and do not bury important information in the middle of sentences; giving sentences strong endings will help them flow.

#### *Do not write this*

The programme promotes access to finance for small businesses. Loans and venture capital are the main types of finance in question.

As most pupils aged 17 or 18 do not yet know what they would eventually like to be, often choices based on the wrong motivations are made. For instance...

#### *Instead, write this*

The programme promotes access to finance for small businesses. The main types of finance in question are loans and venture capital.

As most pupils aged 17 or 18 do not yet know what they would eventually like to be, they often make choices based on the wrong motivations. For instance...

### (c) Introduction and conclusion

The introduction should tell readers what the topic is, why they should read it, and what you want them to think about / consider doing / react to. It is much better to open with a compelling story, example or question that illustrates the impact of the measures discussed in your document than to offer general observations or platitudes.

Make your conclusion concise and to the point: sum up, say why this is important, then say what happens next.

3.



### Keep it short and simple

Aim for an average sentence length of **15-20 words**. Check this using [Word's readability tool](#).

If a sentence becomes longer than 25 words, think about splitting it, but do not sacrifice the words that make the logical link to the previous sentence – this also risks making your text hard to understand.

A good way to keep sentences short is to have just **one main idea per sentence**.

#### *Do not write this*

The evaluation aims to assess how the programme has worked so far and whether its implementation is helping to achieve the policy objectives set in the legal basis because otherwise the beneficiary will not be eligible for continued funding.  
(39 words)

Analysis confirms that access to finance, country-wide, is critical, and that access to energy is dramatically needed in rural areas whereas specific value-chains offer opportunities in cities mainly, where reliable social and economic facilities (housing, water) are also essential to provide a conducive investment climate.  
(45 words)

#### *Instead, write this*

The evaluation aims to assess how the programme has worked so far and whether it is helping achieve the policy objectives set in the legal basis.

If the programme is not achieving its objectives, the beneficiary will not be eligible for continued funding.  
(26 + 17 words)

Analysis confirms that throughout the country access to finance is critical.

It also shows that access to energy is dramatically needed in rural areas which lack the specific value-chains that offer opportunities in cities.

Reliable social and economic facilities (housing, water) are also essential to provide a conducive investment climate.  
(11 + 23 + 16 words)

Opt for short words instead of long ones and avoid long-winded phrases or constructions.

in view of the fact that

concerning, regarding, relating to

notwithstanding the fact that

in the event that

because

on

although

if

## 4.



### Use verbs instead of nouns

Verbs keep your text lively, are shorter and show the action more clearly than heavy noun phrases (for example, 'implementing' is easier to read than 'the implementation of').

#### *Do not write this*

**Analysis** of efficiency can **be carried out** at various levels.

The second policy package focused on **the clarification of** the legal framework and **enhancement of** cooperation between enforcement authorities.

#### *Instead, write this*

Efficiency can be **analysed** at various levels.

The second policy package focused on **clarifying** the legal framework and **strengthening** cooperation between enforcement authorities.

## 5.



### Prefer active verbs to passive ones

Sentences are usually clearer and grammatically simpler if verbs are in the **active form** rather than the passive. Naming the agent to show who is performing the action can also help clarify your thinking.

#### *Do not write this*

Under the fourth policy package specific enforcement measures **are provided for**.

A report on data protection standards in the EU **has been issued by** the Commission.

#### *Instead, write this*

The fourth policy package **provides for** specific enforcement measures.

The **Commission has issued** a report on data protection standards in the EU.

The passive can be useful if you wish to focus on what was done rather than who did it.

**No comprehensive measures have been adopted.**

The passive can also make the sentence easier to read if the subject of the sentence is long or complex. Just do not overdo it!

The relative novelty of the system, lack of awareness among potential users and technical and administrative difficulties may explain the current shortcomings.

The current shortcomings may be explained by the relative novelty of the system, lack of awareness among potential users and technical and administrative difficulties.

## 6.



### Be precise, not vague

Abstract language can be vague and alienate your readers. Keep your message and thinking clear by replacing unclear and ambiguous language with precise words.

#### *Do not write this*

Further **salary progression** was **suspended**.

These measures will **have a positive impact on** performance in the sector.

The DG may propose to the Commission to exclude from EU financing certain expenditure **with regard to the sectors concerned**.

#### *Instead, write this*

Pay was **frozen**.

These measures will **improve/boost** performance in the sector.

The Director-General may propose to the Commission that certain spending **in these sectors** be excluded from EU financing.

## 7. Know your false friends

False friends are words in two languages that look similar but mean something different. Using the wrong word can make your meaning unclear or even change it.

### *Do not write this*

The Commission must make use of the possibilities **foreseen** in Article 42.

**Important** traffic problems are to be expected in the European Quarter.

This project has a two-week **delay**.

### *Instead, write this*

The Commission must make use of the possibilities **laid down** in Article 42.

**Major** traffic problems are expected in the European Quarter.

This project has a two-week **deadline**.

## 8. Beware of jargon

In-house jargon can alienate non-expert readers. Avoid jargon wherever possible, but if you have to use a jargon term then explain it in plain language at first use. Remember that EU or technical terms you use every day may be considered jargon by readers who are not experts in your field.

### *Do not write this*

This document sets out the **modalities** for participation in the programme.

Return legislation is part of the **Schengen acquis**.

### *Instead, write this*

This document sets out the **detailed arrangements** for participation in the programme.

Return legislation is part of **EU law** on **border-free travel**.

Try not to use administrative or corporate jargon, and opt for plain language instead.

The Commission's aim is to **incentivise** private-sector participation in this programme

Information must be **disseminated** to the relevant **actors**.

The Commission wishes to **encourage** private-sector participation in this programme.

Information must be **sent to/shared with** the relevant **groups**.



## 9. ABC Avoid abbreviations and acronyms

Too many obscure abbreviations can make your document incomprehensible. Spell out abbreviations and acronyms at first use, and avoid them if possible (or if used less than three times in a section). Try replacing the acronym with its core element (for example 'the Agency', 'the programme') if you have already explained the acronym earlier in the text.

### *Do not write this*

In 2016, **EMSA** implemented the **IMS** pilot project to increase **IUU** deterrence in all **MS**.

### *Instead, write this*

In 2016, the **Agency** implemented the **integrated maritime services** pilot project to help deter **illegal fishing** across the EU.

## 10.



## Revise and check

Remember to reread your text.

- Does it flow?
- Are your ideas expressed logically?
- Have you answered your readers' questions?
- Is your vocabulary appropriate to your audience and the purpose of your text?
- Have additions from other authors introduced any duplication or contradictions?

Always run the spellchecker, but still reread carefully because it will not always pick up wrongly used but correctly spelled words.

### *Do not write this*

The funding programme targeted aid agencies working in the Middle **Ease**.

These texts may be used as examples for training **curses**.

### *Instead, write this*

The funding programme targeted aid agencies working in the Middle **East**.

These texts may be used as examples for training **courses**.

## More help is out there!

Check the [Writer's toolbox](#) for more clear writing resources.

See [Claire's weekly tips](#) for more examples of all these 10 principles.

# Part One

## *Style guide for publications in English*

Part One of this style guide contains style recommendations that should be followed when drafting documents in English. For reasons of stylistic consistency, this guide bases its instructions and advice on the variety of English which is the standard usage in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

# A – Spelling

## 1. Conventions

### (a) English spelling

Follow the standard usage of the United Kingdom and Ireland. As a general rule, the first spelling given on the [Oxford Dictionaries website](#) should be followed. An exception to this rule is the spelling of ‘-iz-’ words (see below).

### (b) -is-/ -iz- spelling

Use the -is- spelling. Both spellings are correct, but this rule is to be followed for the sake of consistency in EU texts.

Note, however, that the names of bodies in other English-speaking countries retain the original spellings, e.g. (US) Department of Defense, Australian Labor Party. For international organisations, follow their own practice, e.g. World Health Organization.

### (c) The -yse form

is the only correct spelling for words such as paralyse and analyse.

### (d) When adding -able

Drop a final silent -e at the end of the stem (debate – debatable, conceive – conceivable) unless it would change the pronunciation of the preceding consonant (changeable, traceable); the only common exceptions are sizeable and saleable (sizable and salable are US spellings).

### (e) Double consonants

Follow the convention of doubling a final -l after a short vowel on adding -ing or -ed to verbs (sole exception: parallel, paralleled) and adding -er to make nouns from verbs:

**level, levelling, levelled, leveller  
travel, travelling, travelled, traveller**

Other consonants double only if the last syllable of the root verb is stressed or carries a strong secondary stress:

**admit, admitting, admitted  
format, formatting, formatted  
refer, referring, referred**

but

**benefit, benefiting, benefited  
combat, combating, combated  
focus, focusing, focused  
target, targeting, targeted**

Exception: a few verbs ending in -p (e.g. handicapped, kidnapped, worshipped, but not developed).

### (f) Judg[e]ment

Judgment is used in legal contexts, judgement in all other contexts.

### (g) 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’.

### (h) Accents and diacritics in personal names should be reproduced

## 2. Tricky plurals

Follow the list below:

<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
addendum	addenda
appendix	appendices (books) appendixes (anatomy)
bacterium	bacteria
bureau	bureaux
consortium	consortia
corrigendum	corrigenda
criterion	criteria
curriculum	curricula
embargo	embargoes
euro	euro
focus	foci (mathematics, science) focuses (other contexts)
formula	formulae (science) formulas (politics)
forum	forums (fora only in relation to ancient Rome)
genus	genera
index	indexes (books) indices (science, economics)
maximum	maxima (mathematics, science) maximums (other contexts)
medium	media (press, communications, IT) mediums (life sciences, art)
memorandum	memorandums or memoranda
minimum	minima (mathematics, science) minimums (other contexts)
moratorium	moratoriums or moratoria
papyrus	papyri or papyruses
phenomenon	phenomena
plus	pluses
premium	premiums
referendum	referendums or referenda
scenario	scenarios
spectrum	spectra (science) spectrums (politics)
symposium	symposiums or symposia
vortex	vortices

### 3. Interference effects and in-house words, expressions and constructions

Especially in texts intended for the general public, care should be taken to avoid interference effects and the use of in-house words, expressions, constructions and meanings that are not generally recognised outside the EU institutions. Many of these are the result of confusion between English words and those from other languages (particularly French).

<i>Frequently misused term</i>	<i>Alternative</i>
according to	in accordance with
adequate	appropriate
(legal) base	(legal) basis
coherent	consistent
debriefed	briefed or informed
define	establish or lay down
detached	seconded
different	various
disincentivise	discourage
dispose of	have
ensure	provide for
foresee	envisage or provide for
guarantee	ensure
in case	if
in case of	in the case/event of
incentivise	encourage
incite	encourage
modalities	detailed arrangements
modify	amend
modulation	reduction
nominate	appoint
planification	planning
precise	specify
retain	select

# B – Verbs

## 1. Singular or plural agreement?

**(a) Collective nouns take the singular when the emphasis is on the whole entity:**

The government is considering the matter.

The Commission was not informed.

Use the plural when the emphasis is on individual members:

The police have failed to trace the goods.

A majority of the committee were in favour.

**(b) Sums of money can take a singular or plural verb:**

EUR 2 million were/was made available.

**(c) Percentages and fractions of countable nouns take a plural verb:**

Three quarters of the flowers were used.

75% of the flowers were used.

but uncountable nouns take a singular verb:

Three quarters of the flour was used.

75% of the flour was used.

**(d) Countries and organisations with a plural name take the singular:**

The Netherlands is reconsidering its position.

The United Nations was unable to reach agreement.

**(e) Words ending in -ics**

are singular when used to denote a scientific discipline or body of knowledge (mathematics, statistics, economics) but plural in all other contexts.

Economics is commonly regarded as a soft science.

The economics of the new process were studied in depth.

**(f) Data can be used as a plural or a singular noun**

**(g) Multiple subject. Use a singular verb when a multiple subject clearly forms a whole:**

Checking and stamping the forms is the job of the customs authorities.

## 2. Tenses of minutes and summary records

Unlike some other languages, these are written as reported speech following the sequence of tenses, with the past tense replacing the present and the other tenses shifting accordingly. For example:

**Dutch spokesman: 'We are concerned by the number of exceptions which have been included.'**

In reported speech, this becomes:

**The Dutch delegation was concerned by the number of exceptions that had been included.**

## 3. When and when not to use 'shall'

Use 'shall' only in the enacting provisions in legislation, contracts and the like in order to impose an obligation or a requirement.

**The T2 declaration form shall be used for all such consignments. The following products shall be clearly labelled, indicating ...**

Here, 'shall' means the same as 'must'.

Don't use 'shall' in the non-enacting terms of legislation, such as recitals or the explanatory memorandum. 'Should', which expresses the idea of a recommendation rather than an obligation, is a better fit in recitals.

**The aim and substance of the existing rules should therefore be maintained in this Regulation, but updated to take account of the rules on better regulation.**

Don't use 'shall' in subordinate clauses in enacting terms.

**Applicants who are required to register under paragraph 1 shall do so within 10 days**

Don't use 'shall' in indirect quotations or paraphrases of provisions. Use an appropriate alternative such as 'must', 'has/have to', 'is/are required to'..

**Article 114(5) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union clearly states that a Member State must notify the Commission if it deems it necessary to introduce national provisions ...**

Don't use 'shall' to indicate habitual actions in an administrative procedure. Use 'will' or the present tense.

**Once it has received all the relevant information from the Member States, the Commission drafts/will draft a summary report.**

# C – Punctuation

## 1. Full stop

A full stop marks the end of a sentence. All footnotes end with a full stop, except those consisting solely of an internet or email address. Do not use a full stop at the end of a heading.

No further full stop is required if a sentence ends with an ellipsis (...), with an abbreviation that takes a point (e.g. 'etc.') or with a quotation complete in itself that ends in a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark before the closing quote:

**Steve Jobs said: 'Stay hungry. Stay foolish.'**

'Truncations' (in which the end of the word is deleted) are followed by a full stop (for example Co., Art., Chap.), but contractions (in which the middle of the word is removed) are not (for example Dr, Ms, Ltd). See also Section H.

Run-in side heads, i.e. headings that are followed by more text on the same line that does not form part of the heading, are followed by a full stop, not a colon.

**Engaging citizens.** The year 2013 was designated the European Year of Citizens.

However, a colon may be used in a two-part heading:

**Security Union: Commission publishes report**

## 2. Question mark

Every question that expects a separate answer should be followed by a question mark. The next word should begin with a capital letter. There should be no space between the question mark and the preceding word, letter or number.

A question mark is used at the end of a direct question:

**How will this affect EU trade?**

However, question marks are not used in indirect speech:

**We should ask ourselves how this policy will affect EU trade.**

Do not use a question mark after a request or instruction disguised as a question out of courtesy:

**Would you please sign and return the attached form.**

## 3. Exclamation mark

An exclamation mark is used after an exclamatory word, phrase or sentence such as 'Look!' or 'How we laughed!' Such exclamatory expressions are appropriate in texts that directly address the reader or audience, such as speeches or informal instructions, but are usually out of place in formal texts.

There should be no space between the exclamation mark and the preceding word, letter or number.

The imperative does not require an exclamation mark, but one may be used to add exclamatory force to a statement or a command.

In mathematical and statistical texts, the exclamation mark identifies a factorial. Here too, there should be no space between the exclamation mark and the preceding number:

**6! = 6 x 5 x 4 x 3 x 2 x 1**



## 4. Colon

A colon is most often used to indicate that an expansion, qualification, quotation or explanation is about to follow.

Do not use a colon at the end of a heading or to introduce a table or graph set in text matter (e.g. 'as illustrated in the figure below:'). As a manuscript may not reflect the position of graphs or tables as they will appear in a proof, it is better to number them and refer to them in the text via their number.

**The price per hour is shown in Figure 1.**

Colons in running text should not be followed by a capital letter, except at the start of a quotation, as in the example below. There should be no space between the colon and the preceding word, letter or number:

**To conclude, Mr Smith asked: 'To what extent does this reflect reality?'**

## 5. Semicolon

Use a semicolon rather than a comma to combine two sentences into one without a linking conjunction. There should be no space between the semicolon and the preceding word, letter or number:

**The committee dealing with the question of commas agreed on a final text; the issue of semicolons was not considered.**

When items in a series are long and complex or involve internal punctuation, they should be separated by semicolons for the sake of clarity:

**The membership of the international commission was constituted as follows: France, 4, which had 3 members in 2018; Germany, 5, whose membership remained stable; and Italy, 3, whose membership increased from 1 in 2018.**

## 6. Comma

### (a) Items in a series

In a list of two items, these are separated by 'and' or 'or':

**The committee identified two errors in the document: the date of implementation and the regulation number.**

In a list of three or more items, a comma is used to separate them, except for the final two which are separated by 'and' or 'or':

**Robin mowed the lawn, Sam did the cooking and Kim lazed around.**

**The committee considered sugar, beef and milk products.**

An additional comma (known as the Oxford comma or serial comma) can be used before the final item to help clarify the sense:

**... sugar, beef and other meats, and milk products.**

A comma also comes before 'etc.' in a series:

**... sugar, beef, milk products, etc.**

but not if no series is involved:

**They discussed milk products etc., then moved on to sugar.**

Commas also divide adjectives in series:

**moderate, stable prices**

but not if the adjectives do not form a series:

**stable agricultural prices**

## **(b) Linked sentences**

Use a comma to separate two sentences linked by a conjunction such as 'but', 'yet', 'while' or 'so' to form a single sentence:

**The committee dealing with the question of commas agreed on a final text, but the issue of semicolons was not considered.**

Where there is no conjunction, use a semicolon (see Section C5 above):

**The committee dealing with the question of commas agreed on a final text; the issue of semicolons was not considered.**

Note that if the subject of the second sentence is omitted, or if the conjunction is 'and', 'or' or 'but', the comma is not obligatory:

**The committee dealing with the question of commas agreed on a final text[,] but did not consider the issue of semicolons.**

**The committee dealing with the question of commas agreed on a final text[,] and the Council approved it.**

## **(c) Parenthetical and introductory phrases**

Parenthetical phrases may be created by setting off part of the sentence with a comma (or commas) while retaining the normal word order. The following are possible:

**The committee adopted the proposal despite the hesitation of some members.**

**The committee adopted the proposal, despite the hesitation of some members.**

Without the comma, the phrase 'despite the hesitation of some members' forms part of the statement. With the comma, the phrase complements it, i.e. the sentence retains its sense if the phrase is omitted. The comma is therefore correctly left out in the following sentence:

**Phrases must not be set off by commas if this changes the intended meaning of the sentence.**

However, a comma is required if the phrase has a separate emphasis simply by virtue of being moved out of position, for example to the beginning of the sentence:

**If this changes the intended meaning of the sentence, phrases must not be set off by commas.**

Note, though, that short introductory phrases (typically two to three words) need not have any separate emphasis of their own, i.e. they may be run into the rest of the sentence. Both the following are possible:

**In 2012, the committee took three decisions.**

**In 2012 the committee took three decisions.**

Parenthetical phrases (but not introductory phrases) may sometimes be marked by round brackets (see Section C7(a) below) or dashes (see Section C8(a) below).

#### **(d) Commas in relative clauses**

Commas are used to make an important distinction between two types of relative construction, often known as 'defining' and 'non-defining' relative clauses. Compare the following sentences:

**The auditors were not able to identify the cows which were on the mountain pasture at the time of the audit.**

**The auditors were not able to identify the cows, which were on the mountain pasture at the time of the audit.**

In the first case – without a comma – the relative clause (which were on the mountain ...) tells us which cows we are talking about. Probably, the auditors had been able to identify other cows (the ones at the farm); it was just the ones on the mountain that had escaped identification. This is called a defining relative clause.

In the second case – with a comma – the relative clause is non-defining. It adds extra information about the cows, but does not identify which ones are being talked about. In this case, the implication is that the auditors had not been able to identify any cows at all, because they were all on the mountain.

Where the presence or absence of a comma changes the meaning of the text, there is a risk that it will be misunderstood. Consider rewriting the text to remove all possible doubt:

**The auditors were only able to identify the cows which were at the farm at the time of the audit; they were unable to identify those which were on the mountain pasture.**

**The auditors were not able to identify the cows, because they were on the mountain pasture at the time of the audit.**

Non-defining relative clauses are also used parenthetically. Compare the following:

**My uncle, who lives in America, is rich.**

**My uncle who lives in America is rich.**

In the first case, I only have one uncle (he lives in America, by the way) and he is rich. In the second case, I have a number of uncles, but the one that lives in America is rich; we know which uncle is being referred to because he is defined by the relative clause.

Note that the relative pronoun 'that' can be used (instead of 'which' or 'who') in defining relative clauses, but not in non-defining relative clauses. Therefore we can have:

**The auditors were not able to identify the cows that were on the mountain pasture at the time of the audit..**

but not:

**The auditors were not able to identify the cows, that were on the mountain pasture at the time of the audit.**

## 7. Brackets

### (a) Round brackets

These are used, much like commas (see Section C6(c) above), to admit an insertion into the text which is not essential to its sense:

**The committee approved the 2019 budget (which was finalised on 3 January 2018).**

Never put a comma before the opening bracket. If a whole sentence is in brackets, the full stop must be placed before the closing bracket.

A second set of round brackets (not square brackets) can be used to set off text that itself contains text in brackets:

**The conclusions of the analysis (in particular regarding fair trade, the environment and transport (including green cars)) highlighted the following:**

However, to avoid confusion, it may be better to use dashes (see Section C8(a) below):

**The conclusions of the analysis – in particular regarding fair trade, the environment and transport (including green cars) – highlighted the following:**

Where possible, consider breaking up long, complicated sentences into a series of short sentences.

When citing numbered paragraphs from legislation, use a pair of brackets closed up to the article number:

**Article 3(1), Article 3(1)(a), Article 3a(1), etc.**

### (b) Square brackets

These are used to make editorial insertions in quoted material:

**‘They [the members of the committee] voted in favour of the proposal.’**

They may also be used in administrative drafting to indicate optional passages or those still open to discussion.

In mathematical formulae (but not in text), square brackets are used to enclose round brackets:

**$7[4ab - (2nm \times 6bm) \times nm] + 7a = 1240$**

## 8. Dashes and hyphens

### (a) Instead of commas and brackets

Short (‘en’) dashes may be used to punctuate a sentence instead of commas or brackets (see Sections C6(c) and C7(a) above). They increase the contrast or emphasis of the text thus set off. However, use sparingly; use no more than one in a sentence, or – if used with inserted phrases – one set of paired dashes. Avoid using dashes in legislation.

When citing titles of publications or documents, use a dash to separate the title from the subtitle.

The long (or ‘em’) dash can also be used as a bullet point in lists.

## (b) Hyphens

As a general rule, the form used on the [Oxford Dictionaries website](#) should be followed.

### (i) Hyphenate

- nouns composed of a participle plus preposition:

**They discussed the buying-in of sugar.**

- compound adjectives preceding the noun that they qualify:

**up-to-date statistics, long-term policies, foot-and-mouth disease**

- Exception: value added tax.

### Do not hyphenate

- adverb-adjective modifiers when the adverb ends in -ly:

**newly industrialised developing countries**

- adverb-adjective modifiers when 'ever' is followed by a comparative adjective:

**ever closer union**

Many phrases are treated as compounds, and thus need a hyphen, only when used as modifiers:

**up-to-date statistics, but the statistics are up to date**

**long-term effects, but effects in the long term**

Other adjectives always take a hyphen:

**carbon-neutral energy sources, and energy sources that are carbon-neutral**

### (ii) Prefixes also take a hyphen

**anti-American, non-cooperative, co-responsibility levy, co-funded, self-employed**

unless the prefix has become part of the word by usage:

**cooperation, coordination, subsection, reshuffle, email**

### (iii) Either 'en' dashes or hyphens are used to join related or contrasting pairs

**the Brussels–Paris route / the Brussels-Paris route**

**a current–voltage graph / a current-voltage graph**

**the height–depth ratio / the height-depth ratio**

### (iv) Either 'en' dashes or hyphens are used to replace the word 'to' in a number or date range

**2010–2014 / 2010-2014**

## 9. Quotation marks

Quotation marks should be smart (‘...’) rather than straight ('...').

Use single quotation marks for quotations, but use double quotation marks for quotations within quotations. If there should be yet another quotation within the second quotation, revert to single quotation marks.

Punctuation must be placed according to the sense; if it belongs to the quotation, it is included inside the quotation marks, otherwise it is not.

**The American government favours ‘a two-way street in arms procurement’.**

However, if the quotation itself contains a concluding mark, no full stop is required after the quotation mark.

**Walther Rathenau once said: ‘We stand or fall on our economic performance.’**

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

Generally, use quotation marks as sparingly as possible. Some languages make frequent use of quotation marks for nouns in apposition (often programme or committee names etc.), as in *le Conseil «Agriculture»* or *Komitee „Menschliche Faktoren“*. It is usually preferable to omit the quotation marks and reverse the order:

**the Agriculture Council, the Human Factors Committee, etc.**

Quotation marks should not be used in combination with ‘so-called’ to highlight the description that follows (e.g. ‘The resolution was passed by the so-called “European legislator”’). First, the use of quotation marks makes the expression ‘so-called’ redundant, and second, the combination of both devices strongly implies that the authors wish to distance themselves from the term used or cast doubt on its accuracy or correctness.

## 10. Ellipsis

An ellipsis is three points indicating an omission in the text. If an ellipsis falls at the end of a sentence there is no final full stop. However, if followed by another punctuation mark (e.g. question mark, colon, semicolon or quotation mark), the punctuation mark should be closed up to the ellipsis.

- When placed at the beginning of the text, it is followed by a normal space.
- When replacing one or more words in the middle of a sentence, it is preceded by a ‘non-breaking’ space and followed by a normal space.
- When replacing one or more words at the end of a sentence, it is preceded by a ‘non-breaking’ space.

The points are not enclosed in brackets:

**‘The objectives of the Union shall be achieved ... while respecting the principle of subsidiarity.’**

However, see Section J6 on the use of the ellipsis in a quotation to replace a line or paragraph of the text.

Do not use an ellipsis to replace or reinforce the word ‘etc’.

## 11. Forward slash

The forward slash may be used to mean 'per' (km/h) and in fractions (19/100).

Marketing years, financial years, etc. that do not coincide with calendar years are denoted by a forward slash, e.g. 1991/1992, which is 12 months, rather than by an 'en' dash or hyphen, e.g. 2013-2014, which means 2 years.

The forward slash is often used to give alternatives, as in 'yes/no/maybe'. It is closed up when separating single words, but is written with a space either side when one or more of the alternatives is a compound term, e.g.:

**Brussels/Luxembourg**

but

**police car / fire engine / ambulance**

## 12. Apostrophe

**(a) The possessive form of any singular noun and of plural nouns not ending in the letter 's' is marked by an apostrophe followed by the letter 's':**

**actress's pay**

**the owner's car**

**women's rights**

After a plural ending in the letter 's', however, the possessive 's' is omitted:

**footballers' earnings**

There is no apostrophe in possessive pronouns:

**its (as distinct from it's, i.e. 'it is'), ours, theirs, yours**

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 *New Oxford Dictionary for Writers and Editors* for individual cases.

Nouns ending in -s, including proper names and abbreviations, generally form their singular possessive with -s, just like any other nouns:

**Mr Jones's paper;**

**Helios's future is uncertain;**

**AWACS's success**

The -s after terminal s' now tends to be omitted only with classical and biblical names, e.g. Odysseus' companions, Moses' basket. However, this may also be an option for other nouns if the s's combination sounds awkward. Alternatively a preposition can be used:

**Siemens's annual accounts => Siemens' annual accounts**

**Soissons's 900th anniversary => the 900th anniversary of Soissons**

## (b) Contractions

Apostrophes are also used to indicate contractions, i.e. where one or more letters have been omitted from a word or where two words have been joined together. Contractions are common in informal texts, but should not be used in formal texts. Examples:

**don't = do not**

**it's = it is (as distinct from the possessive pronoun 'its')**

**who's = who is (as distinct from the possessive pronoun 'whose')**

**you're = you are (as distinct from the possessive pronoun 'your')**

## (c) The plurals of single lower-case letters take an apostrophe to avoid misunderstanding:

**Dot your i's.**

**Mind your p's and q's.**

## 13. Lists

Use automatic numbering wherever possible, since it is much easier to amend a list if the numbers are automatically adjusted.

For the list items themselves, take care that each is a grammatically correct continuation of the introduction to the list. Do not change syntactical horses in midstream, for example by switching from noun to verb. Avoid running the sentence on after the list of points, either by incorporating the final phrase in the introductory sentence or by starting a new sentence.

The four basic types of list are illustrated below. In multi-level lists, follow the same rules for each level.

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

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

Where each item completes the introductory sentence, you should:

- begin with the introductory colon;
- label each item with the appropriate bullet, number or letter;
- end each item with a semicolon;
- close with a full stop.

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 lower-case letter;
- end each one with a semicolon;
- put a full stop at the end.



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

1. Do not introduce the list with a colon.
2. Label each item with the appropriate bullet, number or letter.
3. Begin each item with a capital letter.
4. 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.

# D – Upper and lower case

## (a) General

The basic rule is that proper nouns have an initial capital but common nouns do not. Initial capitals are often employed to excess in commercial and administrative circles, but they can be visually distracting and are often unnecessary, so should be used sparingly. When in doubt use lower case.

## (b) Proper names and titles

Use initial capitals for proper nouns:

**Mr Goldsmith is a baker but Mr Baker is a goldsmith.**  
**Sir Francis Drake**  
**the Archbishop of Canterbury**  
**Dame Judi Dench**  
**honourable Member (of the European Parliament)**

## (c) Programmes, policies, agendas, strategies, action plans, frameworks, etc.

These should be in lower case:

**the programme on research and development in advanced communications technologies in Europe**  
**Europe 2020 strategy**  
**common agricultural policy**  
**EU action plan on urban mobility**

## (d) Acronyms/initialisms

The existence of an acronym or initialism does not mean that initial capitals must be used when the corresponding expression is written out in full:

**non-governmental organisation (NGO)**  
but  
**European Central Bank (ECB) (as this is the official name of the institution)**

## (e) Titles of organisations, institutions, departments, sections, office holders, functions, committees, delegations, etc.

Use initial capitals on all nouns and adjectives when referring to the name in full.

**Publications and Dissemination Directorate**  
**Business Development and Support Unit**  
**Editorial Partnerships Section**  
**Future Policies Working Group**  
**President of the Council**  
**Director-General for Agriculture**  
**Council of Europe**  
**European Development Fund**

**Markets in Crop Products Directorate**

**President of the French Republic**

**Vice-Chair of the Committee on International Relations (but refer back to the chair, the vice-chair of the committee)**

Use capitals for a particular institution or person, but small letters for groups of institutions or people. Exception: references to permanent EU bodies/formations (e.g. 'College of Commissioners', 'Directorates-General', 'Cabinets') and to official functions within the EU institutions (e.g. 'Members of the Commission', 'Directors-General') always take a capital letter, whether in the singular or the plural. See Annex B for a list of EU bodies and functions.

Ad hoc groups (e.g. the Polish delegation to a meeting) do not require the use of capitals.

For long names that read more like a description than a real title use an initial capital for the head word and lower case for the rest:

**Committee for the adaptation to technical progress of the Directive on the introduction of recording equipment in road transport (tachograph)**

**Joint FAO/EU working party on forest and forest product statistics**

Names of institutions reproduced in a foreign language should retain the capitalisation of the original language, e.g. Banque centrale du Luxembourg. If you translate the name directly then English capitalisation rules apply, e.g. the Central bank of Luxembourg.

## **(f) References to EU legislation**

Always write Regulation, Decision, Directive, Annex and Article (followed by a number) with capitals if they refer to specific acts:

**On 14 March 2018, the European Parliament and the Council adopted Directive (EU) 2018/10.**

**The competences of the European Union are defined in Articles 2 to 6 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).**

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 ...):

**The European Commission monitors the implementation of EU directives.**

**Several organisations have asked the Commission to propose a new regulation on artificial intelligence.**

## **(g) Full names of international agreements, conferences, conventions, etc.**

Nouns and adjectives have an initial capital when using the full name:

**International Coffee Agreement**

**Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe**

**General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade**

but use lower case when referring back to the agreement, the conference, etc.

## (h) Publications

Titles of books, journals, newspapers and periodicals normally take a capital on each word except articles, prepositions and conjunctions, and when cited are written in italics:

*New York Times, Cambridge Journal of Economics, European Economy, PM2 Project Management Methodology Guide, Commission Style Guide*

However, for long titles and subtitles use a capital only on the first word, on any proper nouns and on any adjectives formed from proper nouns:

*Economic and budgetary outlook for the European Union 2017*

*Handbook on European law relating to asylum, borders and immigration*

Likewise, titles of papers included in journals or as chapters in books, along with newspaper articles, take a capital only on the first word, on any proper nouns and on any adjectives formed from proper nouns. They are written in roman type in quotation marks.

## (i) Periods, events, festivals, seasons

Use initial capitals for periods such as:

**Second World War**

**Dark Ages**

and events such as:

**International Year of the Child**

**European Job Day**

**Second UN Development Decade**

**Edinburgh Festival**

Use capitals for days of the week, months and feast days:

**Tuesday, August, Ascension Day, pre-Christmas business**

Do not use capitals, however, for the 2018/2019 marketing year, the 2019 budget year, and so on.

Do not use capitals for spring, summer, autumn or winter.

## (j) Graphics, tables and cross references

Figure (Fig.), Number (No), Volume (Vol.), Part, Chapter (Chap.), Section (Sect.), Article (Art.) should always have an initial capital when followed by a numeral; conversely, paragraph, point and line should not be capitalised. The abbreviations shown here should be spelt out in running text:

**see page 250**

**as shown in Figure 5**

**refer to footnote 6**

see also the following chapter/section

### (k) Party denominations and organisations

Use capitals for their names:

**Socialist Group, Fianna Fáil Party**

but

**liberal, socialist, etc.**

For political groups in the European Parliament, see:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/aboutparliament/en/007f2537e0/Political-groups.html>

### (l) State or state?

Generally use lower case, e.g.:

**state-owned**

**reasons of state**

**nation states**

**the Arab states**

except in an abstract or legal sense, e.g.:

**the separation of Church and State**

and in the following instances, which are rooted in the Treaties:

**Member States** (*when referring to EU Member States*)

**State aid**

**Heads of State or Government** (*when referring to the heads of state or government of all of the Member States as a group*)

### (m) Geographical names and political divisions

Use initial capitals for proper nouns:

**North Pole**

**River Plate**

**Trafalgar Square**

**Third World**

**North Rhine-Westphalia**

**Northern Ireland**

**East Midlands**

**the North-West Frontier**

but lower case when describing a geographical area:

**northern England**

**western, central and eastern Europe**

**central European countries**

**Industry is concentrated in the north of the country.**

NUTS (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics) region names do not follow these rules as they refer to the name of the authority for each region.

The South East is an administrative region of England, but do not use capitals in the general expression 'Rain is forecast for London and the south-east'.

Adjectival forms of points of the compass are not capitalised unless they form part of a proper name, e.g. an administrative or political unit or a distinct regional entity. Hence southern Africa, northern France, eastern Europe but South Africa, Northern Ireland, East Indies. Noun forms are capitalised when they refer to geopolitical concepts (the West, the East) or geographical concepts (the North of England, the South of France), but not otherwise (the sun rises in the east and sets in the west). Compass bearings are abbreviated without a point (54° E).

Compound compass points follow the same rule and are hyphenated. Hence south-eastern Europe but the North-West Passage, South-East Asia; they are always abbreviated as capitals without points (NW France).

## **(n) Proprietary names and generic terms**

Proprietary names (or trade names) are normally capitalised, for example:

**Airbus**

**Mercedes**

**Zara**

**Lego**

unless they have become generic terms, such as

**aspirin**

**gramophone**

**linoleum**

**nylon**

**celluloid**

Note:

**internet**

**the web**

### **(o) Botanical works**

The name of the genus appears with initial capitals, in italics (e.g. *Rosa*, *Felis*).

### **(p) Adjectives derived from proper nouns**

Not all adjectives derived from proper nouns take a capital:

**arabic (numerals)**

**french (chalk, polish, windows)**

**morocco (leather)**

**roman (type)**

### **(q) Hyphenated constructions**

Where constructions starting with one letter followed by a hyphen appear as a heading or at the beginning of a sentence, the letter preceding the hyphen should remain in lower case, e.g. 'e-Evidence' or 'o-Toluidine'.

### **(r) Headings and subheadings**

All headings and subheadings within a document take a capital only on the first word, on any proper nouns and on any adjectives formed from proper nouns.

# E – Numbers, dates, time and currencies

## (a) Figures or words?

Spell out the numbers one to nine, use digits thereafter; however, where numbers in a range fall above and below this limit use figures for both: '9 to 11', not 'nine to 11'.

Note that you should always use figures for statistics (3 new officials were appointed in 2002, 6 in 2003 and ...), for votes (12 delegations were in favour, 7 against and 6 abstained), for ranges denoted by a hyphen and for serial numbers unless you are quoting a source that does otherwise.

Note also that the numbers 1 to 9 are not spelt out in the following cases: seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years. However, it is two decades, three centuries.

Always use figures with units of measurement that are denoted by symbols or abbreviations:

**EUR 50, 250 kW, 205 µg, 5 °C**

The converse does not hold. If the units of measurement are spelled out, the numbers do not also have to be spelled out but may be written with figures:

**250 kilowatts, 500 metres**

With 'hundred' and 'thousand' there is a choice of using figures or words:

**300 or three hundred but not 3 hundred**

**EUR 3 000 or three thousand euro but not EUR 3 thousand**

Million and billion, however, may be combined with figures:

**2.5 million, 3 million, 31 billion**

Figures must be used in a series of stated quantities: 6 kg, 11 metres, 28 000 tonnes.

When two numbers are adjacent, spell out one of them:

**90 fifty-gramme weights, seventy 25-cent stamps**

A sentence starting with a figure will often look out of place. Consider writing it out in full or inverting the word order:

**'During 1992 ...'**

**'Altogether 92 cases were found ...'**

**'Of the total, EUR 55 million was spent on ...'**

However, a sentence beginning with a percentage may start with a figure:

**'32% of the funds'**

## (b) Ordinal numbers

First, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth (one to nine inclusive written in full) but

**10th, 11th, ... 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, etc.**



However, the ‘first to ninth’ rule does not always apply to ordinal numbers. For example:

**5th place, 2nd edition, 9th century**

but

**third country, the third meeting of the committee, third party, first world, first and foremost, the second time**

In addition, in some legal documents, dates and reference to dates are written out in full:

**This Directive shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.**

**The thirty-first day of December, nineteen hundred and eighty-one.**

### (c) Groupings of thousands

Thousands are separated by a ‘non-breaking’ space (Ctrl+Shift+Space).

**15 000**

Separation by comma is only allowed in press releases, webpages, infographics and audiovisual products. Note: for tables and graphics embedded in documents, thousands should be separated by a hard space.

### (d) Billion

‘Billion’ is used to designate a thousand million (and not a million million) and ‘trillion’ a million million. Note that the words ‘million’, ‘billion’ and ‘trillion’ can be combined with figures: 3 000 million.

### (e) Abbreviating ‘million’ and ‘billion’

Do not use abbreviations like mio, bio, k, mill. The letters ‘m’ and ‘bn’ can be used for sums of money to avoid frequent repetitions of million, billion; this applies particularly in tables where space is limited. The abbreviation is preceded by a ‘non-breaking’ space:

**€230 000 m, \$370 000 bn, £490 bn**

### (f) 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). Avoid combining figures and words:

**two-thirds completed (not  $\frac{2}{3}$  completed)**

When using figures for a fraction, use the fraction symbol where possible and close it up to any previous figure, e.g. 1½ years.

### (g) Decimal separator

Decimals are preceded by a point, not a comma. For technical reasons, however, the EU Publications Office will replace points with commas in English documents that are to appear in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

### (h) Percentages

15% (the symbol is not preceded by a space\*). In words write ‘per cent’ (two words, no point).

- 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

(\*) However, in official (legal and non-legal) publications a non-breaking space is added automatically before the percentage symbol, in accordance with the relevant ISO norm.

more approximate.

- Make the distinction between ‘%’ and the arithmetic difference between two percentages, i.e. the ‘percentage point(s)’.

### (i) Pagination

p. 250, pp. 250-255, Figure 5, footnote 6.

### (j) Dates

#### (i) Decades

The 1990s (no apostrophe; never use ‘the nineties’, etc.).

#### (ii) Dates

Dates in the text should always be given in their full form (6 June 2012; day in figures followed by a ‘non-breaking’ space, month spelled out, year in figures), except for references to the Official Journal, which should always be abbreviated. In footnotes, be consistent. When abbreviating, do not use leading zeros and write out the year in full, i.e. 6.6.2012, not 06.06.12.

Wednesday 15 May 2019 (no comma after the day of the week).

Avoid redundancy. If the year in question is absolutely clear from the context, the year number may be left out: ‘on 23 July 2018, the committee adopted ... but subsequently on 2 August, it decided.’

#### (iii) Time spans

Use a closed-up hyphen (see Sections C8 and C11) for year ranges:

**1939-1945, 2015-2021 (but in legislative texts, use ‘to’ rather than a hyphen: 2015 to 2021)**

The word ‘inclusive’ is not added after the date, as it is superfluous in all expressions of time.

1991/1992 = one year: marketing year, financial year, academic year (see Section C11). Note:

**‘from 1990 to 1995’ (not ‘from 1990-1995’)**

**‘between 1990 and 1995’ (not ‘between 1990-1995’)**

**‘At its meeting from 23 to 25 July.’ (not ‘... 23-25 July ...’)**

**‘At its meeting on 23 and 24 July.’ (not ‘... 23/24 July ...’)**

**1 May 2018 to 30 April 2019 (preferable to: 1 May 2018-30 April 2019)**

#### (iv) Dates as qualifiers

Dates and time spans precede the expression they qualify:

**‘The 2007-2013 work programme’ (not ‘The work programme 2007-2013 ...’)**

**‘The 2012/2013 financial year’ (not ‘The financial year 2012/2013 ...’)**

**‘The 2014 action plan’ (not ‘The action plan 2014 ...’)**

### **'The 2012 annual report' (not 'The annual report 2012 ...')**

However, when referring to a specific document or event, dates and time spans should be written exactly as they appear in the title:

**HMRC Annual Report and Accounts 2015-16**

**Innovate Finance Global Summit 2017**

**Hull City of Culture 2017**

Instead of writing 'the 2006-2010 period', consider omitting the word 'period' and simply writing 'from 2006 to 2010' or 'between 2006 and 2010'.

### **(k) Time**

Use the 24-hour system (or 12-hour system with a.m. and p.m.):

- 17.30 without h or hrs (or 5.30 p.m.) (always use a point);
- avoid leading zeros (e.g. 9.00, not 09.00);
- the full hour is written with zero minutes: 12.00 (midday), 14.00, 24.00 (midnight).

When using the 12-hour system, write 2 p.m., 2 o'clock or 2.30 p.m., but not 2.00 p.m.

### **(l) Currencies**

When the monetary unit is accompanied by an amount, use either the ISO code or the currency symbol if a symbol is in use, and if you can reproduce it easily.

The ISO code is compulsory in all legal texts. It is followed by a 'non-breaking' space and the amount in figures:

**The amount required is EUR 12 500.**

**A sum of USD 300 was spent.**

In graphics, popular works, promotional publications, and press releases the currency symbol (€, \$, etc.) should be used. It is closed up to the figure:

**The amount required is €12,500.**

**A sum of \$300 was spent.**

While practice may differ for other currencies, the plural of euro is euro (without 's').

# F – Inclusive language

***These are general guidelines. Please be aware that this is an evolving and sensitive area of language.***

## 1. Gender-neutral language

Much existing EU legislation is not gender neutral and the masculine pronouns 'he' etc. are used generically to include women. However, gender-neutral language is nowadays preferred wherever possible.

In practice, gender-neutral drafting means two things:

- avoiding nouns that appear to assume that a man rather than a woman will perform a particular role: 'chairman' is the most obvious example;
- avoiding gender-specific pronouns for people who may be either male or female.

### (a) Noun forms

Gender-neutral noun forms ('chair', 'spokesperson', etc.) are preferred.

For certain occupations, a substitute for a gender-specific term is now commonly used to refer to persons working in those occupations, e.g. we now write 'firefighters' instead of 'firemen' and 'police officer' instead of 'policeman' or 'policewoman'. Note that the terms 'tradesperson' and 'craftsperson' are commonly used instead of 'tradesman' and 'craftsman' by local government authorities advertising jobs to both men and women.

### (b) Pronouns

If the text clearly refers to a specific individual on a particular occasion, and you know the gender of the person concerned, use a gender-specific pronoun:

**The High Representative / Vice-President (Ms Mogherini) voiced her objections.**

**The President of the Commission (Mr Juncker) said that he welcomed the common position reached at the Council.**

Otherwise, depending on the circumstances, consider the following alternatives.

**In instructions, use the second person or the imperative:**

**You should first turn on your computer.**

or

**First turn on your computer.**

instead of

**The user should first turn on his/her computer.**

**Where possible draft in the plural; this is very common in English to render general concepts:**

**Researchers must be objective about their findings.**

**This does not apply when passengers miss connecting flights for which they have reservations.**

**Omit the pronoun altogether:**

**The chair expressed ~~his/her/its~~ dissent.**

The spokesperson voiced ~~his/her~~ opposition to the amendment.

**Substitute 'the' or 'that' for the possessive pronoun:**

**A member of the Court of Auditors may be deprived of the right to a pension. (instead of 'his' right)**

In current usage, third person plural pronouns (they/them/their/theirs) are often used to refer back to singular nouns:

**This does not apply when a passenger misses a connecting flight for which they have a reservation.**

**Identify the person responsible and take their advice.**

This device should be used only when the reference is absolutely clear. It was formerly perceived as grammatically incorrect, but is now widely used.

**Use 'he' or 'she':**

**This does not apply when a passenger misses a connecting flight for which he or she has a reservation.**

This becomes clumsy if repeated too frequently and should be used with caution. If its use is really necessary, prefer 'he or she' to 'he/she', '(s)he' or 's/he', which should be avoided.

**Repeat the noun:**

**This does not apply when a passenger misses a connecting flight for which that passenger has a reservation.**

This can be cumbersome and look excessively formal, but may be a useful technique in a longer sentence.

## 2. Language used to refer to people with disabilities

- Person-first language, which emphasises the person rather than the disability (e.g. 'people/persons with disabilities'), is generally preferred, although other forms are also acceptable (e.g. 'disabled people/persons'). Avoid collective nouns such as 'the disabled'.
- Use neutral expressions instead of negative or passive phrases. For example, use 'person with a mental health condition' instead of 'person suffering from a mental disorder', and 'wheelchair user' instead of 'person confined to a wheelchair'.

## 3. Other aspects of inclusive language

- When referring to relationships, the terms 'spouse' or 'partner', depending on the context, are generally preferred over 'husband' or 'wife'.
- When referring to the LGBTIQ+ community, avoid outdated terminology such as 'homosexuals', use 'gay people' instead. Refer to 'transgender people/persons' instead of 'transgenders'.
- Use terms such as 'first name', 'forename' or 'given name' rather than 'Christian name'.
- Use expressions such as 'older people/persons' rather than 'old people/persons' or 'the elderly', and avoid language which suggests that being older is an undesirable state.

# G – Italics

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

The use of italics is restricted to the following cases.

## (i) Titles of electronic or printed publications, white and green papers, films and plays if written in full

*Official Journal of the European Union*

NB: Short and abbreviated titles are in roman:

the Official Journal

## (ii) Words and short phrases from foreign languages with their appropriate accents

*acquis, carte blanche, Länder, raison d'être*

but not proper names (names of persons, institutions, places, etc.), and not usually foreign quotations. Not all foreign words are italicised, however; a number have been assimilated into current English and are written in roman:

alias, démarche, detour, ad hoc, per capita, per se, vis-à-vis, etc.

## (iii) Names of ships, aircraft and other vehicles

the *Cutty Sark*

HMS *Beagle*

the *SS Normandie*

## (iv) Formulae in mathematical works

NB: Authors should take particular care to distinguish between l (the lower case letter), 1 (the figure one) and I (the roman numeral or capital letter) and between O (the capital letter) and 0 (zero).

## (v) The names of flora and fauna; genus and species must be in italics, and other taxonomic ranks are also often italicised

Order	<i>Rosales</i>	<i>Carnivora</i>
Family	<i>Rosaceae</i>	<i>Felidae</i>
Genus	<i>Rosa</i>	<i>Felis</i>
Species	<i>Rosa moschata</i>	<i>Felis catus</i>

The genus name should be spelt out in full on first occurrence and subsequently abbreviated: *Escherichia coli*, abbreviated *E. coli*.

## (vi) The parties' names in cases before the Court of Justice, but not the 'v'

Case C-287/87 *Commission v Greece* [1990] ECR I-125

## Latin abbreviations and phrases

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

### (i) Write all Latin abbreviations in roman

**e.g., et al., et seq., ibid., i.e., NB, op. cit.**

**(ii) Latin words should usually be printed in italics (e.g. *ex ante*), but certain common Latin phrases take roman (refer to the *New Oxford Dictionary for Writers and Editors* for italic or roman style)**

Examples of roman:

**ad hoc, ad infinitum, per capita, pro forma, status quo**

Latin phrases are not hyphenated when used adjectivally, e.g. ad hoc meeting.

# H – Abbreviations and symbols

Acronyms and abbreviations should be avoided in all Commission documents. If using abbreviations is absolutely necessary, the prime consideration should be to help the reader. First, they should be easily understood. So when an abbreviation that may not be familiar to readers first occurs, it is best to write out the full term followed by the abbreviation in brackets:

**Nearly zero-energy buildings (NZEBS) have very high energy performance.**

If your document contains a lot of abbreviations, consider including a list of them and their meanings at the beginning or end of the document.

Second, they should not be used needlessly. If an abbreviation occurs only once or twice, it is best to dispense with it altogether and use the full form. In repeated references, it is also often possible to use a short form instead of an abbreviation:

**The emissions trading scheme is in operation throughout the EU ... The scheme involves constant monitoring of emissions trading activities.**

**Acronyms** are words formed from the first (or first few) letters of a series of words, and are pronounced as words (Benelux, NATO, etc.). They never take full stops. Some of these are formed from French titles (e.g. Cedefop).

**Initialisms** are formed from the initial letters of a series of words and each separate letter is pronounced (BBC, MEP, USA, etc.).

As a general principle, acronyms and initialisms do not have a full stop between the capitals. Thus abbreviations for countries (UK, US) and for the European Union (EU) should be written without stops.

Except for well-known acronyms and initialisms, write out the full term followed by the abbreviation in brackets on its first mention in a document (or, where necessary, in long reports, on its first mention in each section):

**The emissions trading scheme (ETS) should enable the EU to meet its Kyoto target.**

Generally speaking, acronyms do not take a definite article (NATO, REACH, etc.), but initialisms do (the UK, the BBC, the EU, etc.). However, established usage may be different, particularly for the names of companies (ICI, IBM, etc.) and universities (UEA, UCL, etc.).

Acronyms with up to five letters are uppercased:

**AIDS, COST, ECHO, EFTA, NASA, NATO, SHAPE, TRIPS**

**Exceptions: Tacis and Phare, which are no longer considered acronyms**

Acronyms with six letters or more should normally be written with an initial capital followed by lower case. Thus:

**Benelux, Esprit, Helios, Interreg, Resider**

Exceptions: organisations that themselves use upper case (such as UNESCO and UNCTAD) and other acronyms conventionally written in upper case.

Note the difference between a **truncation**, in which the end of the word is deleted (for example vol., co. or inc.), and a **contraction**, in which the interior of the word is removed (for example Mr, Dr, contd or Ltd). Truncations take a full stop, but contractions do not.

'No' as in 'No 1' is a contraction of 'numero'. It is never followed by a full stop, and its plural is Nos (no point).

Do not abbreviate Article to 'Art.' in running text. Avoid using the § sign, which means 'section' in English but 'paragraph' in other languages, unless the section referred to is itself marked by such a symbol. For example, 'l'article 3 §1' should read



‘Article 3(1)’ in English.

Plurals of acronyms, initialisms and figures do not take an apostrophe unless they are in the possessive:

**MEPs, OCTs, SMEs, 1920s, 747s**

but

**MEPs’ salaries**

While an abbreviation ending in ‘S’ should also take an ‘s’ for the plural form, e.g. SOSs, this may look clumsy if used frequently within the same text. In such cases, one possibility is to allow the abbreviation to stand for both the singular and the plural form, e.g. PES (public employment service(s)) or RES (renewable energy source(s)), though care should always be taken to avoid ambiguity and the full plural term may be preferable.

**Units of measurement and scientific symbols** such as ‘ha’, ‘km’, ‘mg’, etc. do not need a final full stop. They are not closed up to figures and do not have plurals:

**4 ha, 9 m, 20 psi, 55 dB(A), 2 000 kc/s**

# I – Referring to the European Union, its institutions and Member States

The European Union is referred to systematically as ‘the Union’ in the Treaties and in legislation. This practice should be avoided in other texts: use either the full form (European Union) or the abbreviation ‘EU’. Do not refer to the European Union as ‘Europe’.

The European Communities were absorbed by the European Union on 1 December 2009 (entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty), so references to ‘Community policy/institutions/legislation’ should read ‘European Union/EU policy/institutions/legislation’. Retain ‘the (European) Community/ies’ only for historical references. The European Atomic Energy Community continues to exist, and is always abbreviated as ‘Euratom’.

The European Commission should be referred to in full when mentioned for the first time in a text. Thereafter, use ‘Commission’ and not ‘EC’ or ‘COM’. The same rule applies to references to the other institutions of the European Union, including the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council of the European Union.

# J – References

## 1. References to the Official Journal

Reference to the Official Journal can be made in three different ways:

### Long form

The long form is: *Official Journal of the European Union* (in italics)  
It is used:

#### (a) in the text:

**Two members of the Board of Appeal and two alternates shall be appointed by the Management Board of the Authority from a shortlist proposed by the European Commission, following a public call for expressions of interest published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*, and after consultation of the Board of Supervisors.**

#### (b) in the formula for the entry into force of an act:

**This Regulation shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.**

#### (c) in corrigenda as a reference to the original Official Journal concerned (see also under ‘Abbreviated form’).

NB: For publications up to and including 31 January 2003, reference should be made to the *Official Journal of the European Communities*.

### Short form

The short form is: Official Journal (not italics).  
It is used:

#### (a) in footnotes as follows:

(<sup>1</sup>) See page ... of this Official Journal.  
(<sup>1</sup>) Not yet published in the Official Journal.

#### (b) in less formal texts.

### Abbreviated form

The abbreviated form is: OJ L, OJ L ... I, OJ C, OJ C ... A, OJ C ... E (discontinued as of 1 April 2014), OJ C ... I.  
It is used:

#### (a) in footnotes making reference to Official Journal numbers:

(<sup>1</sup>) OJ L 222, 20.8.2018, p. 1.  
(<sup>1</sup>) OJ C 48 A, 24.2.2015.

#### (b) in tables:

OJ L 345, 23.12.2018, p. 18

#### (c) in corrigenda, the abbreviated form in brackets is used in the table of contents on the cover (see also under ‘Long form’).

NB: Official Journal references have changed over the course of time, as [new series](#) were created: 1968 (series L and C), 1978 (series S), 1991 (C ... A series), 1999 (C ... E series), 2016 (L ... I series and C ... I series).

## 2. References to the Treaties

### Citation forms

Always use a Treaty's full title the first time it is mentioned in legislation:

**... the procedure laid down in Article 269 of the Treaty establishing the European Community ... (Article 2(2) of Council Decision 2000/597/EC, Euratom)**

However, the Treaty of Amsterdam or the Treaty of Lisbon may be cited as such:

**... five years after the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon ...**

On the other hand, it is common usage in legal writing (e.g. commentaries, grounds of judgments) to cite the Treaties using a shortened form or abbreviation:

**The wording of Article 17 Euratom reflects ...**

**Under the terms of Article 97 TFEU the Commission can ...**

**The arrangements for a rapid decision under Article 30(2) TEU allow ...**

This form can be used practically anywhere, especially if the full title is given when it first occurs.

### Citing subdivisions of articles

Paragraphs and subparagraphs that are officially designated by numbers or letters are cited as follows (note: no spaces):

**Article 107(3)(d) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ...**

Subdivisions of an article that are not identified by a number or letter are cited as follows: 'nth (sub)paragraph of Article XX'

**The first paragraph of Article 110 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ...**

## 3. References to EU legislation

### Presentation of references

In publications other than the Official Journal, act titles can be more loosely quoted. However, it should be noted that the different parts of the full title of an act (title, number, author, date and subject of the title) are not separated by commas, and the subject of the title is not followed by a comma. Of course, it is perfectly acceptable to use commas necessitated by syntax within the subject of the title.

Following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty on 1 December 2009, the abbreviation 'EU' was introduced. 'EC', however, continues to be used where acts published before that date are referred to / quoted / mentioned.

**Regulation (EU) 2018/858 provides that ...**

**Council Regulation (EC) No 1186/2009 of 16 November 2009 on setting up a Community system of reliefs from customs duty provides that ...**

**Council Regulation (EC) No 1186/2009 on setting up a Community system of reliefs from customs duty provides that ...**

**Regulation (EC) No 1186/2009 on setting up a Community system of reliefs from customs duty provides that ...**

### Use of 'and' and 'to'

Where several regulations, articles, etc. are grouped together, use of 'and' and 'to' is determined according to the following rules:

#### 1. for two numbers, use 'and' and list the numbers:

**Regulations (EU) 2015/17 and (EU) 2015/18 (acts with the same domain)**

**Regulations (EU) 2015/17, (EU) 2015/18 and (EU, Euratom) 2015/623 (acts with different domains)**

**Articles 2 and 3**

#### 2. thereafter:

**Articles 2 to 8**

When referring to acts, however, always mention each act individually.

Where several articles, paragraphs or subparagraphs are mentioned, which are consecutively numbered, distinction has to be made between 'Articles 2, 3 and 4' (which excludes additional articles like Article 3a, 3b, etc.) and 'Articles 2 to 4' (which includes all articles added later). This also concerns paragraphs, points, etc.

To avoid any confusion, a hyphen should not be used to denote a range; a format such as 'Regulations (EU) 2016/52-2016/56' could mean either 2016/52 and 2016/56, or 2016/52 to 2016/56. For reasons of precision it is therefore necessary to use only 'and' or 'to'.

## 4. References to cases before the Court of Justice and the General Court

### Publications of the Court of Justice of the European Union

The Court of Justice of the European Union adopted a method of citing case-law combining the European case-law identifier (ECLI) (without the acronym 'ECLI' itself) with the usual name of the decision and the case's number in the register. It is applicable to all case-law since 1954. It has gradually been brought into use by each EU Court/Tribunal since the first half of 2014, and was harmonised as between the Courts of the European Union in 2016:

**judgment of 12 July 2005, *Schempp*, C-403/03, EU:C:2005:446, paragraph 19**

If the decision has not been published in full in the reports, the formula 'not published' is used:

**judgment of 6 June 2007, *Walderdorff v Commission*, T-442/04, not published, EU:T:2007:161**

### Publications other than those of the Court of Justice of the European Union

Case-law may also be cited in publications that are not produced by the Court of Justice of the European Union: general publications, legal acts published in the Official Journal (in particular Commission decisions relating to State aid or mergers, etc.).

As such publications are aimed at a non-specialist public, the citation method contains extra information.

NB: The communications of the Court of Justice of the European Union in the Official Journal have to follow the citation rules of the Court of Justice.

As of 1 January 2015, the method for referencing case-law gives a certain amount of leeway to the author of the body text, but standardises the footnote citing the ECLI.

## Body text

The case-law reference must include at least:

- the decision type (judgment, order, etc.); and
- the name of the court.

If they are useful in the context, the following elements may be added:

- the usual name of the case; and
- the date of the decision.

## Footnote

The standardised format always contains the following elements, in the order shown below:

- the decision type (judgment, order, etc.); and
- the name of the court;
- the date of the decision;
- the usual name of the case;
- the number of the case;
- the ECLI of the decision; and
- if necessary, any particularly pertinent paragraph(s).

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**Regulation (EC) No 304/2003 was annulled by the Court of Justice <sup>(1)</sup> ...**

**<sup>(1)</sup> Judgment of the Court of Justice of 10 January 2006, *Commission v Parliament and Council*, C-178/03, ECLI:EU:C:2006:4, paragraphs 60 to 65.**

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**In its judgment of 10 January 2006 in Case *Commission v Parliament and Council* <sup>(1)</sup>, the Court of Justice annulled Regulation (EC) No 304/2003 ...**

**<sup>(1)</sup> Judgment of the Court of Justice of 10 January 2006, *Commission v Parliament and Council*, C-178/03, ECLI:EU:C:2006:4, paragraph 60.**

If the same decision is mentioned several times in the document, it is best to decide, on its first occurrence, how it should be referred to thereafter:

**Regulation (EC) No 304/2003 was annulled by the Court of Justice <sup>(1)</sup> (hereinafter referred to as the '*Commission v Parliament and Council* judgment')** ...

**In its judgment of 10 January 2006 in Case *Commission v Parliament and Council* <sup>(1)</sup> (hereinafter referred to as the '*judgment of 10 January 2006*'), the Court of Justice annulled Regulation (EC) No 304/2003 ...**

**Regulation (EC) No 304/2003 was annulled by the Court of Justice <sup>(1)</sup> (hereinafter referred to as the '*judgment in Case C-178/03*') ...**

This citation method also applies both to references to decisions of the Court of Justice that were previously published on paper in the European Court Reports (ECR) and to those that, more recently, have only been published in digital format.

## 5. Bibliographic references

### Reference to a complete work

The following order should be adopted:

1. author's surname and initial(s) or first name followed by a comma;
2. title of the work in italics and, where appropriate, edition number;
3. publisher, place of publication, year of publication, relevant pages, etc.:

**Butcher, J., *Copy-editing: The Cambridge handbook*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1975, p. 17.**

### Reference to part of a work (contribution or article) or an unpublished paper or mimeograph

The following order should be adopted:

1. author's surname and initial(s) or first name followed by a comma;
2. title of the contribution, article, unpublished paper or mimeograph, within quotation marks;
3. title of the work in italics; where appropriate the number of the edition;
4. publisher, place of publication, year of publication, relevant page(s):

**Hamm, E., 'Return of the English breakfast', *International Cuisine*, Vol. X, No 1, Unwin, London, 1980, pp. 31-34.**

### Reference to a periodical or one of a series

The following order should be adopted:

1. if known, title of the article (within quotation marks);
2. title of the periodical or the series (in italics);
3. number, date or frequency;
4. publisher, place of publication, year of publication:

**'Economic transformation in Hungary and Poland', *European Economy* No 43, March 1990, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg, 1990, pp. 151-167.**

NB: Since 1.7.2009: 'Publications Office of the European Union'. Make sure that the original name is kept for publications issued before that date.

### General

References are cited in the text using the author's surname and year of publication, for example (Barrett, 1991), and the bibliography is printed in alphabetical order. Where an author has two or more publications cited from the same year, they should be listed as a, b, and so on, for example (Barrett, 1991a).

For convenience, the usual abbreviations should be used: cont., p., Vol., etc. Any explanatory information such as publishing frequency, place of publication, etc., should be given in English, even if the publication is only available in another language.

**Buigues, P., 'Les enjeux sectoriels du marché intérieur', *Revue d'économie industrielle*, No 45, monthly, Brussels, 1988.**

## 6. Quotations

A quotation is made up of:

1. quoted passages from other works;
2. words and thoughts of third parties reported in the text.

Typography offers two alternatives for dealing with quotations:

1. use of italics or a smaller type size for longer passages;
2. use of quotation marks for shorter quotations.

Ordinary quotations (those made up of words or phrases quoted directly by an individual) are incorporated into the running text in quotation marks.

Use single quotation marks, with double quotation marks for quotations within quotations.

**'Xxxxx xxxxxx "xx xxxx xxx" xxx xxxxx.'**

If a word or part of a quotation is omitted from the text, it should be replaced by three points (ellipsis). It is preceded by a 'non-breaking' space and followed by a normal space or relevant punctuation sign.

**'Xxxxx ... xxx.'**

If the quoted matter already contains an ellipsis any editorial ellipsis should be placed within square brackets.

**'Xxxxx xxxxx ... xxx xxxxx [...] xxx xxxx.'**

NB: If your document is intended for publication, and you do not use square brackets to indicate the passages omitted from a quotation, the editorial services of the Publications Office, being unable to distinguish between editorial omissions and ellipses used for effect in the original document, will have to use a conventional formula: the ellipses are always preceded by a normal space and followed by a normal space or punctuation sign.

Where a line or paragraph is omitted and replaced by an ellipsis, the ellipsis should be placed within square brackets on a separate line.

**'Xxx xxxxx xxx.**

**[...]**

**Xxxxxxx xx x xxx.'**

## 7. Footnote references

Use the *Insert footnote/endnote* function of your word processor to insert footnotes.

Follow the rules set out below as regards the choice of symbol (figure, asterisk or letter) and positioning with regard to punctuation. **However, there is no need to insert brackets or manually reformat references to include them.** If further formatting is needed, it will be done at the printing stage.



References to footnotes can take the forms set out below. If a text has multiple language versions, the footnotes will appear in an identical way in all of them.

- figure in superscript between brackets with same value as the text, preceded by a thin space and followed by any punctuation:

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

- asterisk in superscript between brackets with same value as text, preceded by a thin space and followed by any punctuation; this sign is employed for a note which, in a given work or periodical, appears more than once and which always has the same meaning.

**All figures from Eurostat (\*)**.

- exceptionally, a lower case superscript letter may be used in tables with figures in very small print so as to avoid errors and confusion.

Footnotes are generally numbered by page and placed at the foot of the corresponding page in smaller characters than the body of the text (generally by two points) separated from the text by a short rule and line space. They may also be numbered continuously or grouped at the end of the chapter or volume.

The reference to a footnote (including the brackets) is always composed in light roman (even in texts or titles written in italics or bold).

When a reference to a footnote appears in a table, the note must form part of the table and consequently appear within the frame of the table.

## Order of footnotes

Other elements can feature at the bottom of a page: asterisk, NB, source(s). The order is identical in all the language versions:

**(\*) 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.**

**NB: Provisional figures.**

**Source: European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development.**

NB:

- Numbered notes, including a note introduced by the asterisk, are separated from the following notes by a thin line space.
- Footnotes always end with a full stop.

In the case of identical footnotes, for publications other than the Official Journal, the formula 'see note x, page y', should be used rather than *idem* or *ibidem*, which could cause confusion.

# Part Two

## *Standard documents in English*

Part Two contains templates of standard documents produced in the European Commission. The templates in this style guide provide guidance that can be used as a blueprint against which to check your own documents. While the templates featured in this edition are a useful point of reference, always make sure to draft your documents by using the latest templates available in Eurolook and by working from a new and clean document. Please see Annex A for guidance on the European Commission's visual identity. Concerning templates on a range of other documents such as leaflets, factsheets, newsletters, please refer to DG Communication's intranet material:

<https://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/corp/comm/VisualIdentity/Pages/Templates.aspx>

# A – General guidelines on the use of Eurolook

Eurolook is a Commission-specific module that is fully integrated into Microsoft Word. It allows users easily to create letters, internal notes, reports and speeches in the 24 languages of the European Union. The Eurolook toolbar offers quick access to main functions such as numbering, lists, table of contents and footnotes.

Eurolook guarantees:

- compliance with the standards of the Commission;
- the harmonisation of documents within the Commission and easy exchange, modification and compiling of documents;
- easy layout of complicated texts, even without knowing most of Microsoft Word's functions.

Most of the templates in this section were produced with the available Eurolook templates in Microsoft Word. It is strongly recommended that you always work from a new and clean document when using Eurolook. When you create a document in Eurolook, you will be prompted to provide the author's name. By doing so, all author-related data (e.g. Directorate, Unit, contact details) will be automatically inserted in the document.

Not working from a new document increases the risk that the document will be corrupted. When copy-pasting text from old or non-standardised documents, please make sure to use the paste option 'keep text only' to avoid unintended format changes. Also, always verify that the font used is consistent throughout the document, including footnotes and page numbers.

Eurolook received a comprehensive makeover with the introduction of Windows 10 on Commission computers. It has been adapted to reflect the templates provided in this style guide. However, please be aware that Eurolook is designed to be updated regularly and will evolve together with the visual identity of the Commission. Hence, while the templates featured in this edition are a useful point of reference, always make sure to draft your documents using the latest templates available in Eurolook.

All acts to be submitted to the decision-making process, including communications, reports and staff working documents, must be produced using LegisWrite. Similar to Eurolook, LegisWrite is a Commission-specific add-in to Microsoft Word. While Eurolook and LegisWrite are largely consistent in terms of formatting, please be aware of the remaining differences that follow from the specific characteristics of legislative drafting and decision-making.

In accordance with the guidelines on document registration – Ares(2018)5874624 – any document that meets the registration criteria must be registered in Ares. When preparing Eurolook documents (notes, letters, reports) to be registered, the date field is left empty since the registration date shown in the Ares stamp is the only date to be considered.

# B – Notes

## 1. Eurolook note



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL XX

Directorate X – name of Directorate  
DG.X.X – name of Unit

Brussels  
DG.X.X/XX

**NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF**

**TYPE THE ADDRESSEE(S) HERE**

**Subject:**     Type subject here

**Ref.:**   Type the reference here

Type your text here

Type signature here

**Enclosure:**         List the enclosure(s) here

**c.c.:**               Type the recipient(s) you are copying to. Use Shift+Return to add lines.

Commission européenne/Europese Commissie, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË — Tel. +32 22991111  
Office: BERL XX/XXX — Tel. direct line +32 229 XXXXX

Firstname.LASTNAME@ec.europa.eu

## 2. Note from the Secretary-General



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

The Secretary-General

Brussels  
SG/MS

### NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF

**MR/MS X, DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE LEGAL SERVICE**  
**MR/MS X, DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR COMMUNICATION**  
**MR/MS X, HEAD OF THE EUROPEAN POLITICAL STRATEGY CENTRE**  
**MR/MS X, DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR HUMAN RESOURCES AND SECURITY**  
**MR/MS X, DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR INFORMATICS**  
**MR/MS X, DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR BUDGET**

**Subject:**      Type subject here

Type your text here

First name Last name

**Enclosures:**      Type number of documents enclosed

**c.c.:**              Type the recipient(s) you are copying to. Use Shift+Return to add lines.

Commission européenne/Europese Commissie, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË — Tel. +32 22991111  
Office: BERL 13/178 — Tel. direct line +32 229 81230

Firstname.LASTNAME@ec.europa.eu

### 3. Joint note including the Secretary-General

NB: The name of the signatory with the higher hierarchical position must be shown on the left.



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
SECRETARIAT-GENERAL  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL XX  
The Secretary-General  
Director-General for XX

Brussels

**NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF**

**TYPE THE ADDRESSEE(S) HERE**

**Subject:**      **Type subject here**

Type your text here

First name Last name

XXXXXXXXXX

Enclosures:    Type number of documents enclosed

c.c.:            Type the recipient(s) you are copying to. Use Shift+Return to add lines.

Commission européenne/Europese Commissie, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË

# C – Letters

## 1. Eurolook letter

NB: When signing a letter on someone's behalf, write pp (which stands for *per procurationem*, Latin for 'through the agency of') before your signature, with the name of the person on whose behalf you are signing printed below. Decisions in the form of a letter are drafted in Word in a specific Eurolook format.



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General XX

Brussels  
DG.X.X/XX

Type your form of address here, e.g. Dear Mr/Ms [surname]

Type your text here

Type closing here, e.g. Yours sincerely,

Type signature here

**Contact:** Use the 'Add Contact' function to add contact information or manually type your contact information here.

**Enclosure:** List the enclosure(s) here. Use Shift+Return to add lines.

**c.c.:** Type the recipient(s) you are copying to. Use Shift+Return to add lines.

Add address of the letter here

Commission européenne/Europese Commissie, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË — Tel. +32 22991111  
Office: BERL XX/XXX — Tel. direct line +32 229 XXXXX

Firstname.LASTNAME@ec.europa.eu

## 2. Letter from the Secretary-General



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

The Secretary-General

Brussels  
SG/MS

Type your form of address here, e.g. Dear Mr/Ms [surname]

Type your text here

Yours sincerely,

First name Last name

**Contact:** Use the 'Add Contact' function to add contact information or manually type your contact information here.

**Enclosure:** List the enclosure(s) here. Use Shift+Return to add lines.

**c.c.:** Type the recipient(s) you are copying to. Use Shift+Return to add lines.

Add address of the letter here

Commission européenne/Europese Commissie, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË — Tel. +32 22991111  
Office: BERL 13/178 - Tel. direct line +32 229 81230

Firstname.LASTNAME@ec.europa.eu



# D – Briefings

## 1. Steering brief

Event  
Place, date

### Steering brief

#### **Scene setter**

Who, where, when, what's at stake, why/why now<sup>1</sup>

***Political situation (in Member State the interlocutor represents)***

Xxx

***Economic situation (in Member State the interlocutor represents)***

Xxx

- Xxx

- Xxx

#### ***Objectives of the meeting***

- What we want:

- Xxx

- Xxx

- What the interlocutor wants:

- Xxx

- Xxx

#### **Key messages**

Xxx

#### ***On topic 1***

- Xxx

- Xxx

- Xxx

- Xxx

#### ***On topic 2***

- Xxx

- Xxx

#### ***On topic 3***

- Xxx

- Xxx

**Contact(s) – briefing coordination: Xxx (SG.A.4), tel.:**

**Contact(s) – briefing contribution: Xxx (DG), tel.:**

---

<sup>1</sup> Xxx

## 2. Topics for discussion

Event	Place, date
1. The first meeting of the committee	London, 1945
2. The second meeting of the committee	Paris, 1946
3. The third meeting of the committee	Geneva, 1947
4. The fourth meeting of the committee	Brussels, 1948
5. The fifth meeting of the committee	London, 1949
6. The sixth meeting of the committee	Paris, 1950
7. The seventh meeting of the committee	Geneva, 1951
8. The eighth meeting of the committee	Brussels, 1952
9. The ninth meeting of the committee	London, 1953
10. The tenth meeting of the committee	Paris, 1954
11. The eleventh meeting of the committee	Geneva, 1955
12. The twelfth meeting of the committee	Brussels, 1956
13. The thirteenth meeting of the committee	London, 1957
14. The fourteenth meeting of the committee	Paris, 1958
15. The fifteenth meeting of the committee	Geneva, 1959
16. The sixteenth meeting of the committee	Brussels, 1960
17. The seventeenth meeting of the committee	London, 1961
18. The eighteenth meeting of the committee	Paris, 1962
19. The nineteenth meeting of the committee	Geneva, 1963
20. The twentieth meeting of the committee	Brussels, 1964
21. The twenty-first meeting of the committee	London, 1965
22. The twenty-second meeting of the committee	Paris, 1966
23. The twenty-third meeting of the committee	Geneva, 1967
24. The twenty-fourth meeting of the committee	Brussels, 1968
25. The twenty-fifth meeting of the committee	London, 1969
26. The twenty-sixth meeting of the committee	Paris, 1970
27. The twenty-seventh meeting of the committee	Geneva, 1971
28. The twenty-eighth meeting of the committee	Brussels, 1972
29. The twenty-ninth meeting of the committee	London, 1973
30. The thirtieth meeting of the committee	Paris, 1974
31. The thirty-first meeting of the committee	Geneva, 1975
32. The thirty-second meeting of the committee	Brussels, 1976
33. The thirty-third meeting of the committee	London, 1977
34. The thirty-fourth meeting of the committee	Paris, 1978
35. The thirty-fifth meeting of the committee	Geneva, 1979
36. The thirty-sixth meeting of the committee	Brussels, 1980
37. The thirty-seventh meeting of the committee	London, 1981
38. The thirty-eighth meeting of the committee	Paris, 1982
39. The thirty-ninth meeting of the committee	Geneva, 1983
40. The fortieth meeting of the committee	Brussels, 1984
41. The forty-first meeting of the committee	London, 1985
42. The forty-second meeting of the committee	Paris, 1986
43. The forty-third meeting of the committee	Geneva, 1987
44. The forty-fourth meeting of the committee	Brussels, 1988
45. The forty-fifth meeting of the committee	London, 1989
46. The forty-sixth meeting of the committee	Paris, 1990
47. The forty-seventh meeting of the committee	Geneva, 1991
48. The forty-eighth meeting of the committee	Brussels, 1992
49. The forty-ninth meeting of the committee	London, 1993
50. The fiftieth meeting of the committee	Paris, 1994
51. The fifty-first meeting of the committee	Geneva, 1995
52. The fifty-second meeting of the committee	Brussels, 1996
53. The fifty-third meeting of the committee	London, 1997
54. The fifty-fourth meeting of the committee	Paris, 1998
55. The fifty-fifth meeting of the committee	Geneva, 1999
56. The fifty-sixth meeting of the committee	Brussels, 2000
57. The fifty-seventh meeting of the committee	London, 2001
58. The fifty-eighth meeting of the committee	Paris, 2002
59. The fifty-ninth meeting of the committee	Geneva, 2003
60. The sixtieth meeting of the committee	Brussels, 2004
61. The sixty-first meeting of the committee	London, 2005
62. The sixty-second meeting of the committee	Paris, 2006
63. The sixty-third meeting of the committee	Geneva, 2007
64. The sixty-fourth meeting of the committee	Brussels, 2008
65. The sixty-fifth meeting of the committee	London, 2009
66. The sixty-sixth meeting of the committee	Paris, 2010
67. The sixty-seventh meeting of the committee	Geneva, 2011
68. The sixty-eighth meeting of the committee	Brussels, 2012
69. The sixty-ninth meeting of the committee	London, 2013
70. The seventieth meeting of the committee	Paris, 2014
71. The seventy-first meeting of the committee	Geneva, 2015
72. The seventy-second meeting of the committee	Brussels, 2016
73. The seventy-third meeting of the committee	London, 2017
74. The seventy-fourth meeting of the committee	Paris, 2018
75. The seventy-fifth meeting of the committee	Geneva, 2019
76. The seventy-sixth meeting of the committee	Brussels, 2020
77. The seventy-seventh meeting of the committee	London, 2021
78. The seventy-eighth meeting of the committee	Paris, 2022
79. The seventy-ninth meeting of the committee	Geneva, 2023
80. The eightieth meeting of the committee	Brussels, 2024
81. The eighty-first meeting of the committee	London, 2025
82. The eighty-second meeting of the committee	Paris, 2026
83. The eighty-third meeting of the committee	Geneva, 2027
84. The eighty-fourth meeting of the committee	Brussels, 2028
85. The eighty-fifth meeting of the committee	London, 2029
86. The eighty-sixth meeting of the committee	Paris, 2030
87. The eighty-seventh meeting of the committee	Geneva, 2031
88. The eighty-eighth meeting of the committee	Brussels, 2032
89. The eighty-ninth meeting of the committee	London, 2033
90. The ninetieth meeting of the committee	Paris, 2034
91. The ninety-first meeting of the committee	Geneva, 2035
92. The ninety-second meeting of the committee	Brussels, 2036
93. The ninety-third meeting of the committee	London, 2037
94. The ninety-fourth meeting of the committee	Paris, 2038
95. The ninety-fifth meeting of the committee	Geneva, 2039
96. The ninety-sixth meeting of the committee	Brussels, 2040
97. The ninety-seventh meeting of the committee	London, 2041
98. The ninety-eighth meeting of the committee	Paris, 2042
99. The ninety-ninth meeting of the committee	Geneva, 2043
100. The hundredth meeting of the committee	Brussels, 2044

**[Topic Xxx]**

XXX

XXX

## Sub-topic 1

XXX

## Main messages

- Xxx
- Xxx
- Xxx
- Xxx

## Defensives

### Question

- $X_{xx}$
- $X_{xx}$

## Background

### ***Sub-topic***

Xxxx

- $X_{xxx}$   
 $- X_{xxx}$

**Contact(s) – briefing coordination: Xxx (SG.A.4), tel.:**

**Contact(s) – briefing contribution: Xxx (DG), tel.:**

2. Briefing template – CV

Event  
Place, date

CVs


CV of ... name, function, position..... 2

CV of ... name, function, position..... 3

CV of ... name, function, position..... 4

Event  
Place, date

CV of ... name,  
function, position



Xxx

- Xxx
- XXXX-XXXX

Xxxxxx

Xxxxxxxxxx

CV

2/4

# E – Minutes



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL XX

Directorate X – name of Directorate  
DG.X.X – name of Unit

Brussels  
DG.X.X/XX

TYPE TITLE OF MEETING HERE

TYPE DATE OF MEETING HERE

----

## MINUTES

**Participants:** Type names of participants here

Type summary of meeting here (write in continuous text & use paragraphs for structuring)

*Next meeting (name of meeting): date of next meeting. Contact: name, telephone number*

Commission européenne/Europese Commissie, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË — Tel. +32 22991111  
Office: BERL XX/XXX — Tel. direct line +32 229 XXXXX

Firstname.LASTNAME@ec.europa.eu

# F – Interservice consultations

## 1. Answer to an interservice consultation

NB: For long answers only; short answers can be encoded directly in Decide Consultation



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL XX

Directorate X – name of Directorate  
DG.X.X – name of Unit

Brussels  
DG.X.X/XX

**NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF**

**TYPE THE ADDRESSEE(S) HERE**

**Subject:** Interservice consultation on XX (Add the type and title of the draft act or staff working document)

Decide consultation ref.: ISC/2019/...

Directorate-General XX gives a **positive opinion** subject to the following comments / gives a **negative opinion** for the following reasons: Choose the appropriate answer type.  
Type comments/reasons here

Type signature here

**Contact:** Type contact here

**Enclosures:** Type number of enclosures here

**c.c.:** Type the recipient(s) you are copying to

Commission européenne/Europese Commissie, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË — Tel. +32 22991111  
Office: BERL XX/XXX — Tel. direct line +32 229 XXXXX

Firstname.LASTNAME@ec.europa.eu

## 2. Cover note to launch an interservice consultation



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL XX

Directorate X – name of Directorate  
DG.X.X – name of Unit

Brussels  
DG.X.X/XX

NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF

TYPE THE ADDRESSEE(S) HERE

**Subject:** Interservice consultation on XX Add the type and title  
of the draft act or staff working document here

Please find enclosed the file X. It aims at XX.

I seek your approval on this file X through the interservice consultation  
involving all European Commission departments concerned.

I would be grateful to receive your approval or comments within 10-15 working  
days. Choose appropriate time limit depending of the number of pages.

Type signature here

Enclosures: Type number of enclosures here

c.c.: Type the recipient(s) you are copying to

Commission européenne/Europese Commissie, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË — Tel. +32 22991111  
Office: BERL XX/XXX — Tel. direct line +32 229 XXXXX

Firstname.LASTNAME@ec.europa.eu

### 3. Cover note to launch a fast-track interservice consultation



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL XX

Directorate X – name of Directorate  
DG.X.X – name of Unit

Brussels  
DG.X.X/XX

NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF

TYPE THE ADDRESSEE(S) HERE

**Subject:** Fast-track interservice consultation on XX Add the type and title of the draft act or staff working document here

Please find enclosed the file X. It aims at XX.

I seek your approval on this file X through a fast-track interservice consultation meeting involving all European Commission departments concerned. Type here reasons for handling it via fast-track procedure. The Secretariat-General authorised the use of the fast-track procedure on [date].

The Secretariat-General will chair the meeting and draft its minutes. You will find the practical arrangements about the time and venue of this meeting in Decide Consultation.

Please confirm your department's attendance and/or add your comments in Decide Consultation prior to the meeting.

Type signature here

Enclosures: Type number of enclosures here

c.c.: Type the recipient(s) you are copying to

Commission européenne/Europese Commissie, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË — Tel. +32 22991111  
Office: BERL XX/XXX — Tel. direct line +32 229 XXXXX

Firstname.LASTNAME@ec.europa.eu

## 4. Minutes of a fast-track interservice consultation meeting

NB: Only to be used by the Secretariat-General



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

Directorate X – name of Directorate  
SG.X.X – name of Unit

Brussels  
SG.X.X/XX

### FAST-TRACK INTERSERVICE CONSULTATION TYPE DATE OF MEETING HERE

#### MINUTES

**Subject:** Add the type and title of the draft act or staff working document here

**Participants:** Type names of participants here

The Secretariat-General authorised the use of the fast-track procedure for the interservice consultation on file X. The fast-track meeting took place on type date here and was chaired by type chair and Unit here. An overview of the consulted departments and their opinion is available in the Annex.

The following issues are drawn to the attention of the political level:  
Type issues here.

The minutes were approved by the participants on add date.

Type signature here

**Contact:** Type contact here

**Enclosures:** Type number of enclosures here

**c.c.:** Type the recipient(s) you are copying to

Commission européenne/Europese Commissie, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË — Tel. +32 22991111  
Office: BERL XX/XXX — Tel. direct line +32 229 XXXXX

Firstname.LASTNAME@ec.europa.eu



ANNEX

ANNEX  
Only add rows of consulted departments

DG	ANSWER TYPE			COMMENTS  Type here a brief description and if/how outstanding issues were resolved during the meeting
	Positive opinion	Positive opinion with comments	Negative opinion	
AAE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
AGRI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
BUDG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
CLIMA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
CNECT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
COMM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
COMP	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
DEVCO	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
DGT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
DIGIT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
EAC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ECFIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ECHO	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
EEAS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
EMPL	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ENER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ENV	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
EPSC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

EPSO	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ESTAT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
FISMA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
FPI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
GROW	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
HOME	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
HR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
IAS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
JRC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
JUST	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
MARE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
MOVE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
NEAR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
OLAF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
OP	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
REGIO	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
RTD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
SANTE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
SCIC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
SG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
SJ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
TAXUD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

TF50	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
TRADE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

# G – Invitation to a Project Team meeting



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

The Secretary-General

Brussels  
SG/MS

**NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF**  
**TYPE THE ADDRESSEE(S) HERE**

**Subject:**     **Type subject here**

Type content here

I am pleased to invite you to a Project Team meeting to prepare specific aspects of XX. The meeting will take place on:

**Type date, time  
place**

The meeting will be chaired by XX. State who can participate in the meeting. Example: Members of the Commission may be accompanied by their Head of Cabinet and/or Director-General. Members of the Commission unable to attend a meeting may be replaced by their Head of Cabinet as an observer. Other people may participate at the invitation of XX. A guidance paper for the discussion will follow at a later stage.

I would be grateful if you could confirm who will be attending the meeting to XX by XX at the latest.

First name Last name

**Annex:**     List annexed document(s) here

**Contact:**     Type name here, tel. xxxxx

**c.c.:**         Type recipients here (type position here)  
Add others in order of precedence below

Commission européenne/Europese Commissie, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË — Tel. +32 22991111  
Office: BERL 13/178 — Tel. direct line +32 229 81230

Firstname.LASTNAME@ec.europa.eu

# H – Requests for access to documents

To facilitate your work, the Secretariat-General has prepared a number of standard letters to be used when launching specific administrative actions. Please consider these standard letters as templates and adapt them to the case with which you are dealing.

## List of available templates:

- Acknowledgement of receipt
- Acknowledgement of receipt via Ask the EU
- Documents erroneously sent out: declaration by the applicant
- Officials requesting documents via web form
- Request submitted by a Member State
- Request submitted by a subnational territorial entity (acknowledgement of receipt)
- Postal address request
- Standard reply why a postal address is requested
- Standard reply for not real postal address
- Request for clarification
- Wide-scope requests: proposal for a fair solution
- Wide-scope requests: unilateral restriction
- Wide-scope request: partial access meaningless
- Referrals by a Member State – Acknowledgment of receipt
- Referrals by a Member State – Notification of acceptance
- Referrals by a Member State – Notification of non/partial acceptance
- Member State consultation
- Member State consultation Directive 2015/1535
- Third-party consultation
- Holding reply (extension of time)
- Positive reply
- Partial access – basic model
- Partial access – Personal data redacted – EU or EEA
- Partial access – Personal data redacted – Third country
- Negative reply – basic model
- Negative reply – third-party documents
- No documents held
- Note from DG to SG stating that no (further) documents are held
- Request for declassification of documents

### All templates can be downloaded here:

<https://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/sg/docinter/Pages/letters.aspx>

NB: We recommend checking the above web page regularly, as templates are updated on a rolling basis.

# I – Reports

## 1. Eurolook report – short

NB: The templates in this section do not concern reports in the field of decision-making (i.e. soft law reports), which have to be produced with LegisWrite.



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL XX

Directorate X – name of Directorate  
DG.X.X – name of Unit

Type the document title here

Type your text here

Commission européenne/Europese Commissie, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË — Tel. +32 22991111  
Office: BERL XX/XXX — Tel. direct line +32 229 XXXXX

Firstname.LASTNAME@ec.europa.eu

2. Eurolook report – long



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL XX

Directorate X – name of Directorate  
DG.X.X – name of Unit

Type the document title here

Date:  
Version: 0.1  
Authors: Type the authors of the document here.  
Revised by: Type the revisors here.  
Approved by: Type the approving persons here.  
Public: Type the target audience here.  
Reference Number: Type the reference number of the document here.

## Table of contents

No table of contents entries found.

## Document history

Version	Date	Comment
0.1	XX/XX/2019	Document created by

Type your text here

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PAGE 3/4

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# J – Speech



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL XX

Directorate X – name of Directorate  
DG.X.X – name of Unit

**Name of the speaker**  
Function of the speaker

**Title**

Event or context in which the speech is given

**Location and date of the speech, e.g. Brussels, 23 February 2019**

Type your text here

Commission européenne/Europese Commissie, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË — Tel. +32 22991111  
Office: BERL XX/XXX — Tel. direct line +32 229 XXXXX

Firstname.LASTNAME@ec.europa.eu

# Annex

The annex includes further useful material on matters such as visual identity, precedence order and forms of address.



# A – The European Commission's visual identity

## 1. General context

In August 2011, the European Commission firmly committed to moving swiftly towards a single visual identity, applicable to the institution as a whole, and to putting an end to the creation of multiple and confusing new logos, visual identities and graphic charters. The aim was to ensure that the Commission has a strong and coherent visual identity.

This approach is explained in detail in the [note for the attention of the Directors-General on a common visual identity for the European Commission of 23 November 2011](#). It notably states that there should be no separate logos outside the common visual identity for any Directorate-General, Unit, action, product or programme, unless explicitly authorised. The visual identity applies to external and internal communication.

Having a single visual identity has not only enhanced the effectiveness of the Commission's communication but has also cut the costs associated with the development and production of graphic charters. It has also led to simplified implementation rules.

## 2. The key elements of the single visual identity

The use and graphical application of the visual identity are explained in the [visual identity manual](#). The manual establishes the basic principles to be applied to the entire range of communication products. The single visual identity must be observed whenever European Commission staff, external partners or stakeholders communicate on behalf of the European Commission, or on any of its actions, activities or programmes.

In short, the key elements are as follows.

1. The visual identity is constructed around the **European Commission logo**. This is based on two elements: the European flag and a graphic element inspired by the Berlaymont, the headquarters of the European Commission.



The logo exists in three variations: the standard, horizontal and mute.



See the manual for rules on when and how each version should be used.

2. The **typographies** used in the visual identity are as follows.

- Professional print publications:
  - main: EC Square Sans Pro
  - secondary: Garamond
- Web pages, web applications, PPT presentations, emails, editable documents:
  - Verdana or Arial
- Working documents generated by special IT applications:
  - the current font remains applicable (Times New Roman)
- Eurolook documents:
  - the current font remains applicable (Times New Roman)

3. Common layout elements for all types of documents:

- the standard logo (1)
- the footer box (2)
- typography (3)
- top white (or coloured) banner (4)
- a 'separation' line (4)

### The standard logo

The standard logo is the main logo for general use, unless the use of the horizontal or mute variations is justified. The standard logo's flag is always centred. It works in combination with the footer box of the same width. No logo other than the Commission logo can appear on the Commission's communication products (apart from specific authorised exceptions – the list of exceptions is available on DG Communication's dedicated [intranet page](#)).

### The footer box

This is an extension of the logo and is always placed at the bottom of the page to indicate the policy area or strategy. Its purpose is to create a virtual vertical axis (see on the right, in yellow) which symmetrically balances the document. The logo and its footer thus form the backbone of the graphic identity. When the footer box contains no text, its height is 1/2 of the flag in the logo. On small documents where the logo is too close to the bottom of the page, its height is 1/4 of the flag.

In the case of documents created for different European Commission policies, the footer box, twice as high (same size as flag), can change colour depending on the colour palette. Policy areas can choose a colour to acquire a degree of distinction within the corporate look and feel. There is, however, no exclusivity regarding the choice of colours, which means that a colour can be chosen by more than one Directorate-General. The footer box does not refer only to policies. It can also contain the name of an EU programme, a political initiative, an event etc.

### The typography

To make the page more dynamic, the texts will be freely positioned in the area, but will be justified (either flush left or flush right, ragged or on one of the ascenders or descenders of one or more letters) on one or two of the vertical axes. Where possible, and in an effort to add contrast, there is a requirement to highlight a word / part of a phrase by significantly increasing the size of the letter's body. This word will also be in colour.

### The top banner of the document

The banner is an essential element on the cover of any document and presentation. It acts as breathing space, a 'showcase' for the



logo and a constant and unchangeable visual element. It can be white or EC corporate blue (the same blue as the EU flag) or the same colour as the policy colour that is displayed in both the footer box and the bottom line of the logo.

There must always be clear contrast between the banner and the rest of the page (a **'separation' line**). The banner can sit above solid colour backgrounds, pictures or an illustration.

The **header for back covers** is always of the same colour as the one of the policy. The use of a white header on back covers is not allowed.

The rules for the application of these elements are explained in the section on publications in the visual identity manual.



### 3. Non-standard application of the logo

The standard logo always appears with its flag top centred except in clearly defined cases (see manual).

The horizontal logo can be used when the standard logo cannot be applied due to space, visibility or other specific reasons. Cases for the use of the horizontal logo identified so far are signposting of buildings, email newsletters, presentation slides and some gadgets like USB keys. When the horizontal logo is used, the footer box and the principle that the EU flag within the logo has to be centred at the top do not apply.

The mute logo is strictly for multilingual publications and for very specific pre-printed stationery that is designed for multilingual use. This includes folders for multilingual use, envelopes and pre-printed document templates of the Spokesperson's Service. When the mute logo is placed with the logo's flag top centred, the footer box should be applied as in the case of the standard logo. When the mute logo is placed elsewhere, the footer box does not apply.


For more detailed information about the visual identity rules and examples of layout for various types of products (publications, leaflets, presentations, social media content, etc.) consult the [visual identity manual](#). If you have any questions or comments, write to the visual identity team in DG Communication ([comm-visual-identity@ec.europa.eu](mailto:comm-visual-identity@ec.europa.eu)).

# B – Protocol order

## 1. Precedence of EU institutions and bodies

Only the first seven institutions on this list are proper institutions according to the Treaty on European Union. The following six are Union bodies and services.

- |     |   |   |
|-----|---|---|
| 1.  |    | <i>European Parliament</i>                    |
| 2.  |    | <i>European Council</i>                       |
| 3.  |    | <i>Council of the European Union</i>          |
| 4.  |   | <i>European Commission</i>                    |
| 5.  |  | <i>Court of Justice of the European Union</i> |
| 6.  |  | <i>European Central Bank</i>                  |
| 7.  |  | <i>European Court of Auditors</i>             |
| 8.  |  | <i>European Economic and Social Committee</i> |
| 9.  |  | <i>Committee of the Regions</i>               |
| 10. |  | <i>European Investment Bank</i>               |

- |       |   |  |
|-------|---|--|
| 11.   |  | <b>European External Action Service</b>    |
| <hr/> |   |  |
| 12.   |  | <b>European Ombudsman</b>                  |
| <hr/> |   |  |
| 13.   |  | <b>European Data Protection Supervisor</b> |
| <hr/> |   |  |

## Precedence of functions in the European Union institutions

1. *President of the European Parliament*
2. *President of the European Council*
3. *Members of the European Council, including the President of the European Commission*  
Among the Members of the European Council the order of precedence is the following:  
(a) *Head of State or Government of the rotating Presidency;*  
(b) *other Heads of State according to the order of Presidencies;*  
(c) *other Heads of Government according to the order of Presidencies, as well as the President of the Commission.*
4. *Presidents of the Council of the European Union acting in that capacity*  
(rotating Presidency as well as the High Representative when acting as President of the Foreign Affairs Council)
5. *President of the Court of Justice*
6. *President of the European Central Bank*
7. *President of the Court of Auditors*
8. *High Representative (acting in that capacity)*
9. *Ministers acting as Members of the Council*
10. *Vice-Presidents of the European Parliament and the European Commission*
11. *President of the Economic and Social Committee*
12. *President of the Committee of the Regions*
13. *President of the European Investment Bank*
14. *Vice-President of the European Central Bank*
15. *Members of the European Commission and the European Parliament*
16. *Judges and Advocates-General of the Court of Justice*
17. *President of the General Court*
18. *European Ombudsman*
19. *Members of the Board of Directors of the European Central Bank*
20. *Members of the European Court of Auditors*
21. *Permanent Representatives*
22. *Vice-Presidents of the European Economic and Social Committee*
23. *Vice-Presidents of the European Committee of the Regions*
24. *Vice-Presidents of the European Investment Bank*
25. *Members of the General Court*
26. *European Data Protection Supervisor*
27. *Members of the European Economic and Social Committee*
28. *Members of the European Committee of the Regions*
29. *Registrar of the Court of Justice, Secretaries-General and Registrars of the European institutions, bodies and services*
30. *Assistant European Data Protection Supervisor*
31. *Directors-General of the European institutions, bodies and services*
32. *Directors of the European institutions, bodies and services*

## 2. Precedence within the European Commission

### Between Members of the College

1. *President of the European Commission*
2. *Executive Vice-Presidents (order determined by the President)*
3. *Vice-Presidents (order determined by the President)*
4. *Other Members of the Commission (by seniority within the College, or by age in the event of equal seniority)*

For the current Commission, the order of precedence is the following (\*):

1. *President Ursula von der Leyen*
2. *Executive Vice-President Frans Timmermans*
3. *Executive Vice-President Margrethe Vestager*
4. *Executive Vice-President Valdis Dombrovskis*
5. *Vice-President / High Representative Josep Borell Fontelles*
6. *Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič*
7. *Vice-President Věra Jourová*
8. *Vice-President Dubravka Šuica*
9. *Vice-President Margaritis Schinas*
10. *Johannes Hahn*
11. *Phil Hogan*
12. *Mariya Gabriel*
13. *Nicolas Schmit*
14. *Paolo Gentiloni*
15. *Janusz Wojciechowski*
16. *Thierry Breton*
17. *Elisa Ferreira*
18. *Stella Kyriakides*
19. *Didier Reynders*
20. *Helena Dalli*
21. *Ylva Johansson*
22. *Janez Lenarčič*
23. *Adina-Ioana Vălean*
24. *Olivér Várhegyi*
25. *Jutta Urpilainen*
26. *Kadri Simson*
27. *Virginijus Sinkevičius*

### Between Commission officials

1. *Secretary-General*
2. *Head of Cabinet of the President*
3. *Director-General / Senior Adviser*
4. *Head of Cabinet*
5. *Deputy Secretary-General / Deputy Director-General*
6. *Director / Principal Adviser*
7. *Head of Unit*

NB: In each group, the order of precedence is based on grade (and then step if necessary). No other titles than those mentioned above are recognised for establishing the order of precedence among staff.

The Protocol Service can always be consulted regarding the order of precedence.

(\*) Decision of the President of 1 December 2019 on the organisation of responsibilities of the Members of the Commission.

## Between Commission departments (\*)

### Presidential services

1. *Secretariat-General*
2. *Legal Service*
3. *Directorate-General for Communication, including the Spokesperson's Service*
4. *Inspire, Debate, Engage and Accelerate Action*
5. *Task Force for Relations with the United Kingdom*

### Other central services

6. *Directorate-General for Budget*
7. *Directorate-General for Human Resources and Security*
8. *Directorate-General for Informatics*
9. *Internal Audit Service*
10. *European Anti-Fraud Office*

### Other Directorates-General

11. *Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs*
12. *Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs*
13. *Directorate-General for Defence Industry and Space*
14. *Directorate-General for Competition*
15. *Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion*
16. *Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development*
17. *Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport*
18. *Directorate-General for Energy*
19. *Directorate-General for Environment*
20. *Directorate-General for Climate Action*
21. *Directorate-General for Research and Innovation*
22. *Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology*
23. *Joint Research Centre*
24. *Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries*
25. *Directorate-General for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union*
26. *Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy*
27. *Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support*
28. *Directorate-General for Taxation and Customs Union*
29. *Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture*
30. *Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety*
31. *Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs*
32. *Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers*
33. *Directorate-General for Trade*
34. *Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations*
35. *Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development*
36. *Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations*
37. *Eurostat*
38. *Directorate-General for Interpretation*
39. *Directorate-General for Translation*

### Other Commission services and offices

40. *Publications Office of the European Union*
41. *Service for Foreign Policy Instruments*
42. *Office for the Administration and Payment of Individual Entitlements*
43. *Office for Infrastructure and Logistics in Brussels*
44. *Office for Infrastructure and Logistics in Luxembourg*
45. *European Personnel Selection Office*

(\*) See the Note of the Secretary-General of 24 February 2010 (SEC(2010)167), Section 9.6 of the *Interinstitutional Style Guide* and the Communication to the Commission of 21 November 2018 'Streamlining and strengthening corporate governance within the European Commission', C(2018)7704.

### 3. Establishing order of precedence

#### Countries are placed before organisations

A Head of State / Government or Minister of a country is placed respectively before a President, Member of College / Parliament of an EU institution or of other international organisations. A representative of an organisation is placed as the last of equals within the same category. The host of the meeting or event is placed first.

#### Political level has precedence over civil servants

#### European Commissioners are ranked as ministers

#### Ambassadors

During an official visit or meeting involving the authorities in the country of residence, Ambassadors (including Heads of EU Delegations) are ranked immediately after the political level and as the first of the civil servants. Heads of Representation are also ranked immediately after the political level and ahead of all officials during official visits or meetings with the authorities of the Member State to which they are accredited.

#### Equivalence between different administrations

When precedence needs to be established between persons working in different administrations and where titles do not necessarily correspond, the relative level of responsibility within each administration is then used to establish an order of precedence.



# C – Forms of address

The following guidelines are based on a document provided by the Commission's Protocol Service. It provides guidelines for forms of address in English. These guidelines were revised in early 2019. They are also available in French and German:

<https://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/sg/protocol/Pages/concepts.aspx>

## Head of State

### President

<i>Oral address</i>	President or Mister/Madam President (in the US) or Sir/Madam (pronounced 'Ma'am') or Excellency
<i>On envelope</i>	His/Her Excellency Mister/Madam [name and surname], President of [State]
<i>Written salutation</i>	President, or Mister/Madam President (in the US), or Excellency,
<i>In letter text</i>	Sir/Madam or Your Excellency
<i>Complimentary close</i>	I have the honour to be, Sir/Madam, respectfully yours, or I have the honour to be, Sir/Madam, most respectfully,

### Emperor/Empress

<i>Oral address</i>	Your (Imperial) Majesty
<i>On envelope</i>	His/Her Imperial Majesty [name], Emperor/Empress of [State]
<i>Written salutation</i>	Your dignified Majesty,
<i>In letter text</i>	First address: Your Majesty Subsequently: Sir/Madam
<i>Complimentary close</i>	I have the honour to remain, your Imperial Majesty's (good and) loyal friend,

## King/Queen

<i>Oral address</i>	First address: Your Majesty Subsequently: Sir/Madam (pronounced 'Ma'am')  NB for Belgium: The Queen of the Belgians is only to be addressed as Your Majesty
<i>On envelope</i>	To His/Her Majesty King/Queen [name] of [State/people] or To His/Her Majesty The King/Queen of [State/people]
<i>Written salutation</i>	Your Majesty,
<i>In letter text</i>	First address: Your Majesty Subsequently: Sir/Madam
<i>Complimentary close</i>	I have the honour to remain, your Majesty's (good and) loyal friend,

## The Pope

<i>Oral address</i>	Your Holiness
<i>On envelope</i>	His Holiness Pope Francis Vatican City
<i>Written salutation</i>	Your Holiness,
<i>In letter text</i>	Your Holiness
<i>Complimentary close</i>	I have the honour to remain, your Holiness's (good and) loyal friend,

## Prince/Princess (Sovereign Monarchs)

<i>Oral address</i>	First address: Your Royal/Serene Highness Subsequently: Sir/Madam (pronounced 'Ma'am')
<i>On envelope</i>	His/Her Royal/Serene Highness Prince/Princess [name] of [State]
<i>Written salutation</i>	Your Royal/Serene Highness, or Sir/Madam,
<i>In letter text</i>	First address: Your Royal/Serene Highness Subsequently: Sir/Madam
<i>Complimentary close</i>	I remain, Your Royal/Serene Highness, yours very truly, or I have the honour to be, your Royal/Serene Highness's (good and) loyal friend, or Yours faithfully,

## Governments

### Head of Government

<i>Oral address</i>	Prime Minister/Chancellor or Excellency
<i>On envelope</i>	<b>Commonwealth:</b> The Rt. Hon. [name and surname] MP, Prime Minister of [State] <b>Others:</b> His/Her Excellency Mr/Ms [name and surname], Prime Minister/Chancellor of [State]
<i>Written salutation</i>	Dear Prime Minister/Chancellor, or Excellency,
<i>In letter text</i>	you
<i>Complimentary close</i>	Yours sincerely, [used when the recipient is addressed by name] Yours faithfully, [used when the recipient is <b>not</b> addressed by name] For a very formal letter: I remain, Sir/Madam, yours faithfully,

### Minister

<i>Oral address</i>	Minister or Sir/Madam (pronounced 'Ma'am') <b>Foreign Affairs:</b> Excellency
<i>On envelope</i>	<b>Commonwealth:</b> The Rt. Hon. [name and surname], Minister of [portfolio] of [State] <b>Others:</b> Mr/Ms [name and surname], Minister of [portfolio] of [State] Foreign Affairs: His/Her Excellency Mr/Ms [name and surname], Minister for Foreign Affairs of [State]
<i>Written salutation</i>	Sir/Madam, or Dear Minister, <b>Foreign Affairs:</b> <b>UK:</b> Dear Foreign Secretary, or <b>US:</b> Dear Secretary of State, or Excellency,
<i>In letter text</i>	you
<i>Complimentary close</i>	Yours sincerely, [used when the recipient is addressed by name] Yours faithfully, [used when the recipient is <b>not</b> addressed by name] For a very formal letter: I remain, Sir/Madam/your Excellency, yours faithfully,

## Institutions

### President of a European institution

<i>Oral address</i>	President
<i>On envelope</i>	Mr/Ms [name and surname], President of the European [institution]
<i>Written salutation</i>	Dear President,
<i>In letter text</i>	you
<i>Complimentary close</i>	Yours sincerely,

### (First) Vice-President/Member of the European Commission

<i>Oral address</i>	(First) Vice-President/Commissioner
<i>On envelope</i>	Mr/Ms [name and surname], (First) Vice-President/Member of the European Commission
<i>Written salutation</i>	Dear (First) Vice-President/Commissioner,
<i>In letter text</i>	you
<i>Complimentary close</i>	Yours sincerely,

### Vice-President/Member of the European Parliament

<i>Oral address</i>	Vice-President or Sir/Madam (pronounced 'Ma'am')
<i>On envelope</i>	Mr/Ms [name and surname], Vice-President/Member of the European Parliament
<i>Written salutation</i>	Dear Vice-President, or Dear Mr/Ms [name and surname],
<i>In letter text</i>	you
<i>Complimentary close</i>	Yours sincerely,

## Diplomacy

### Ambassador, Head of Mission and Permanent Representative

<i>Oral address</i>	Ambassador or Excellency
<i>On envelope</i>	His/Her Excellency Mr/Ms [name and surname], Ambassador of [State A] to [State B] or His/Her Excellency Ambassador [name and surname], Permanent Representative of [Member State] to the European Union or His/Her Excellency Ambassador [name and surname], Head of the Mission of [State] to the European Union
<i>Written salutation</i>	Dear Ambassador, or Excellency,
<i>In letter text</i>	you
<i>Complimentary close</i>	Yours sincerely, [used when the recipient is addressed by name] or Yours faithfully, [used when the recipient is <b>not</b> addressed by name]

## Notes

- *One's own Ambassador is usually not referred to as 'Excellency'.*
- *A letter starting with 'Dear' and including the name of the recipient should finish with 'yours sincerely'.*
- *A letter starting with 'Sir/Madam/Excellency etc.' should finish with 'yours faithfully'.*

For any questions on specific cases, for instance for letters to representatives of religious communities or to members of nobility, please contact the Protocol Service: [sg-protocole@ec.europa.eu](mailto:sg-protocole@ec.europa.eu).





