European Environment Agency

EEA writing manual

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Russia's war against Ukraine

In line with the European Union's position, please use the wording 'Russia's war against Ukraine' when referring to the ongoing situation regarding these two countries.

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1 Introduction to the EEA writing manual

1.1 Effective communication is well-planned

The EEA aims to support sustainable development by helping Europe's environment significantly and measurably improve. We contribute to this goal by providing timely, targeted, relevant and reliable information to policymaking agents and the public.

Most of the time, that information comes through in our products: the reports, briefings, indicators and more which define our Agency's role.

Good planning is essential to ensuring your report or briefing makes it to the production process on time and in good shape. A well-planned product also has a better chance of meeting the specific needs of the audience for whom it is written and of making an impact.

When planning, it is essential to be clear about the specific purpose of your product and to understand your audience and their needs. You should also be aware of the time required to gather all relevant data and information and secure copyright permissions where necessary. Only then can you begin to draft and prepare your visuals.

Each product type also has a specific template — you must draft your content in the appropriate one — and a relevant workflow.

The EEA publishing guide, which complements this writing manual, provides clear guidelines to EEA staff, members of Eionet and partners. These guidelines describe in detail how to produce effective and timely EEA products, and contain an overview of EEA publication types and their associated templates and workflows.

Tone of voice

Writing an EEA publication for policymakers is not the same as writing an article for an academic journal. They have different objectives and require different approaches. In a publication, you should present your findings in clear language to a non research-trained person would understand. This applies to traditional reports as well as products designed for the web, like briefings.

We also use a specific tone of voice. The EEA is:

- Confident but not prescriptive
- Solution-oriented
- Unambiguous
- Inclusive
- Factual
- Friendly but not familiar

Feedback from our stakeholders is clear. Policymakers prefer environmental information in products of 30 pages or less.

They also prefer plain English, which means doing away with jargon and misinformation (Plain English Campaign). So do we.

We agree that everyone should have access to clear and concise information. This is not about dumbing down — it's about speaking up and being heard.

The European Commission has developed guidelines on 'How to write clearly' — guidelines specifically for staff, which emphasise the following:

Think before you write. Clear writing starts with and depends on clear thinking

- Focus on the reader. Be direct and interesting
- Kiss: keep it short and simple
- Get your document into shape
- Make sense: structure your sentences
- Cut out excess nouns: verb forms are livelier;
- Prefer active verbs to passive ones
- Be concrete, not abstract
- Beware of false friends, jargon and abbreviations
- Revise and check

More information about the EU website on writing clearly is available here. Writing training is available for authors, as is training on the production process and workflows.

1.2 About the editing and quality checking process

The EEA produces approximately 60 publications each year, as well as many other products. These are all edited before being published, most by our external contractors, although some edits are still handled in-house.

Editing begins when:

- the text is ready for edit, including an executive summary for a report and a complete set of references;
- the text has been through relevant consultations (Eionet/other relevant EEA thematic department);
- the text has been approved by the relevant Head of Unit/Head of Department; and
- an editing timeline is agreed upon.

At submission of the manuscript for edit, authors must disclose whether AI-assisted technologies have been used to produce any part of the work in question.

A description of the technologies used, including the name of the tool(s) and what they were used for, should be included. The use of AI tools for language support (checking grammar, spelling) and reference management does not need to be disclosed.

Once editing has started, the content is 'locked'. This means no changes should be introduced during the edit.

The editors normally conduct a 'substantive' edit. As well as ensuring your manuscript is consistent, clear and accurate, they will also suggest changes to titles and headings, language and style. Editing is conducted in line with the EEA writing manual and a full citation/reference check is carried out. Editing is performed in Word, using track changes and comments.

Next, a quality check is carried out. The manuscript is proofread to make sure that the edit has been done to EEA standards before it is returned to the product owner. This is done in-house by a COM1 editor.

Please note that a quality checker's job is to ensure that the product's language and tone adhere to EEA guidelines. This means that they will rewrite sentences (e.g. from passive language to active) without altering the intended meaning, always working in 'suggested edits' mode. If you assess that the quality checker has accidentally changed the meaning, you may reject their suggested edit. It is also common for the quality checker to request clarifications; we encourage you to respond to them and rewrite sentences accordingly, as this often results in a better product.

Upon receipt of the edited and proofread text, the product owner should go through it and deal with track changes and comments. This can be an intensive process involving several rounds of interaction with our in-house editors, so sufficient time should be built into the workflow at this stage.

1.3 Structuring your work

You can find templates for reports, briefings and indicators on the publishing portal.

Reports

There are various ways to structure a report. A popular method sets maximum numbers of pages for the different sections of a report. One example is the World Health Organisation that employs a 1:5:50 approach: a report includes one page of main messages, up to five pages of executive summary and up to 50 pages of main text.

We like this format and it makes sense given our audience's feedback. We have adapted this to the EEA's needs, although we prefer the 1:3:80 rule, i.e. one page of main messages, up to three pages of executive summary and a maximum of 80 pages of main text.

The Word template for writing EEA reports embraces this approach, so ensure you use it when you begin drafting. This section of the writing manual takes you through the various sections of a standard EEA report.

1.3.1 Title page

Input the title (and subtitle) of your document here. This is where you should also include other information, such as the version number, date, activity code and author name. A metadata table is included here for this information. In the final version of the report, a cover image and the EEA logo will be included.

Titles should use sentence case, i.e. only the first word is capitalised. Titles and subtitles should be separated by an em dash:

> *Preventing waste in Europe — progress and challenges with a focus on food waste.*

1.3.2 Table of contents

A table of contents should **generally** only include the first two levels of report hierarchy, i.e. Chapter 1, Section 1.1. In some cases, it may be necessary to include a third level, i.e. Section 1.1.1.

1.3.3 Foreword/preface

Forewords are mostly associated with published books and are normally written by well-known people who were not involved in developing the books. Only flagship EEA publications or joint reports written with other organisations should contain a foreword. The foreword should be kept to a maximum of one page.

A preface is written for one's own work and allows an author to address the intended audience directly. A preface often acknowledges contributions and assistance provided. EEA publications do not generally contain prefaces.

1.3.4 Acknowledgements

EEA employees and external experts who have contributed to EEA publications will not be mentioned by name in the acknowledgements. This decision is motivated by the need to further emphasise the independent and institutional nature of EEA publications. EEA staff members will also not be mentioned by name in (European) Topic Centre reports and EEA technical reports and documents.

EEA publications will have the following generic acknowledgement added by default:

> The European Environment Agency (EEA) would like to thank [its partners from the European Environment Information and Observation Network (EEA member countries and European Topic Centres)], [its Scientific Committee], [other EU agencies /name], [EU institutions /name e.g. European Commission Directorate General for Environment/Climate Action] and [international organisations /name of an organisation] for their valuable contributions and input. [amend/delete as appropriate].

When there is a need for a certain publication to mention contributions from a specific (European) Topic Centre or another external key contributing institution, the following sentence may be added to the end of the generic acknowledgement:

> In particular, the EEA would like to acknowledge the contributions from (E)TC [name of (E)TC and/or particular institute under (E)TC] for this publication.

The acknowledgements must be an integral part of the manuscript and signed-off by the relevant Head of Department before delivery to COM for production.

Joint publications produced by the EEA will follow EEA policy on acknowledgements. Joint publications produced by EEA partners will follow the partner entities' guidelines on acknowledgements.guidelines on acknowledgements.

1.3.5 Artificial intelligence use

EEA products which have used AI will have the following generic statement added by default:

'AI was used in the production of content for this [report/briefing]. The [language model; chatbot; image creator] [name(s) of tool(s)] [was/were] used to [describe how and in what way the AI tools were used]. The EEA takes full responsibility for the content of the [report/briefing].'

1.3.6 Key messages

This is the 1 in 1:3:80. It should be presented as a list of bullet points that reflect what you, the author, think the findings of your publication mean for your audience. Please see Section 1.3.8 'Extracting, organising and confirming key messages'.

Carry out these three steps to develop your key messages:

1. Write down the three main points you want to make in your chapter
2. Draft your chapter based on these three points
3. Revisit the three points on the basis of your completed chapter and amend them, if necessary, according to what you have learned while writing your chapter.

1.3.7 Executive summary

Your executive summary is the 3 in 1:3:80, i.e. it should be three pages at most. It condenses your findings so that your audience can quickly find out if the publication will be useful to them. Start your executive summary by outlining the issues you were looking at, using language and examples your audience will understand. Then, sum up the answers you found to these issues. A good tactic is to begin paragraphs with a key message from your findings.

An executive summary is not an academic abstract; it's much more like a newspaper article. The most interesting stuff goes at the top, followed by the background and context and less important information further down. This is not the place for more than a line or two about your approach, methods and other technical details. Those can be explained elsewhere; we recommend using Chapter 1 for this purpose.

Concentrate on getting the essence of your research across succinctly but not cryptically.

1.3.8 Main body of the report

This is the 80 in 1:3:80. **The main body of your report should be no longer than 80 pages**.

Chapter 1 of your report/assessment should contain a short introduction that sets out the general scope and purpose as well as technical objectives and methodology. This is where you should identify any problems or limitations in the scope or methodology. You can also mention other relevant EEA products here.

To make your report/assessment easy to read and understand, begin each subsequent chapter with two or three key messages from the chapter. Key messages are the lessons important decisionmakers can take from your research.

Remember, key messages are not summaries or key facts. Instead, they tell your audience what you think the findings mean for them. The messages may not even appear in the text: they are what people can conclude from your report/assessment. This is your chance, based on your research, to tell decision makers what implications your work has for theirs.

1.3.8 Extracting, organising and confirming key messages

- Develop key messages for each chapter of your draft report/assessment and place them at the top of each chapter. Focus on expressing clear conclusions based on what you've learned.
- These are now your key messages for the chapter.
- Organise all of your key messages on one page so that they work for the full report/assessment and can help you draft the executive summary.
- Consider how your key messages relate to other EEA work, in particular those with cross-cutting messages. Think about your reader again:
- Who are my readers?
- What are the takeaways they need from what I have learned while developing this report/assessment?
- What does this really mean for my reader?
- Develop messages that reflect the overall points of the report/assessment. Then, spell them out so that your readers can interpret the points correctly.

This is not to say that you have to come up with definitive recommendations from research that just doesn't offer them. Be as concrete as you can. If you are not ready to draw more conclusions, do not fall back on 'more research is needed'. **Use your main messages to define the questions that still need to be asked**.

1.3.9 Conclusions

Include a short concluding chapter that provides a final word to the reader, summing up the findings of the report/assessment. It must be linked to the rest of the report/assessment and should not introduce any new material. The conclusions are different from the executive summary: they do not discuss context or background.

If there are any proposals or recommendations, include them here. The conclusions should be no longer than two or three pages.

1.3.10 List of abbreviations

Include a list of all the abbreviations used in your work. This should include the abbreviations themselves plus full definitions. These should all be defined the first time you use them in the report/assessment as well.

1.3.11 References

A reference list should always appear at the end of the report/assessment. It should contain references to any work cited or quoted in the text. The references should be listed in alphabetical order by surname (or organisation if the surname is not available) and then by date. Where neither are available, use the title (See Sections 3.4 and 3.5).

In some long reports, the reference list can be split up per chapter at the end of the report.

1.3.12 Annexes

Additional information should be presented at the back of a report/assessment as 'Annexes' (See Section 2.1).

Briefings

Online briefings provide decision makers with a summary of the main points concerning a topic. They consist of a short introduction, up to five key messages and a main body text. They must also include at least one visual.

We apply strict character counts to briefings, so that they fit the online format:

- Introduction — no more than 250 characters without spaces
- Key messages — maximum of five bullet points, for a total of approximately 750 characters without spaces
- Main text — no more than 11,000 characters without spaces

Altogether a maximum of 12,000 characters without spaces, which amounts to 8 pages, excluding the bibliographic references.

Please see the publishing guide for an overview of the briefing workflow. The Word template for writing EEA briefings embraces this approach, so ensure you use it when you begin drafting.

1.4 Inclusive writing

The EEA aspires to reflect the EU's efforts to be diverse and inclusive. One way we do this is by using specific words in our writing. Please follow these language conventions:

- Use 'they' instead of 'he' or 'she' when referring to a person whose gender is unclear
- Use 'EU residents' or 'people who live in the EU' instead of 'EU citizens', unless specifically referring to those with European citizenship
- Use 'the elderly', not 'old people'
- Use 'indigenous' or 'aboriginal', not 'native'
- Use 'people with disabilities', not 'disabled people'
- Use 'migrants/migration', not 'illegal immigrants/immigration'



2 Presentation of the report

2.1 Chapters, sections and annexes

A report is divided into chapters, which are themselves divided into sections. Use an initial capital to cross reference other parts of a report (e.g. Chapter 3, Annex 1, Section 3.1, Section 3.1.1). **It is important to structure your report this way as a rule**.

The following fonts are used for the different elements of a report:

1. Chapter (heading 1, Roboto 22)

1.1 Heading 2, Roboto 16

1.1.1 Heading 3, Roboto 14, italics

Map, figure, Image and box titles appear in Roboto (body) 11, bold.

Body text is written in Roboto (body) 11.

You should use the Word template to prepare your report. In the template, use the styles settings to assign the format for the different headings. It is also better to use the 'Body text' style for the main text in the document rather than the 'Normal' style.

Unnumbered headings

EEA reports do not use a fourth level of hierarchy (e.g. 1.1.1.1) but long sub-sections can be broken up using unnumbered headings. These can be inserted anywhere in the text and should use the body text style — and be bold and italicised as above.

Annexes

Additional information is presented at the back of a report as 'Annexes'. Annexes are numbered using Arabic numerals, i.e. Annex 1, Annex 2, etc.

2.2 Figures, maps, images, tables and boxes

Features such as figures, maps, images, tables and boxes must be numbered separately and sequentially by chapter. For example, the first occurrence of each feature in Chapter 3 would be Figure 3.1, Map 3.1, Image 3.1, Table 3.1 and Box 3.1. See Section 2.2.5 for figures and tables in boxes.

In annexes, features are numbered by annex. For example, the first table in Annex 3 would be Table A3.1.

Captions: Each feature should have a caption at the top (except images, where the caption appears below the feature), with no full stop at the end. The caption consists of the feature number and a brief description, e.g. Figure 3.1 Effect of energy from renewable sources on consumption of fossil fuels.

Notes: These go under the feature and might include, for example, explanatory notes and abbreviation definitions. General notes should come first, followed by abbreviations on a separate line, for example:

Notes: **Data reported by all countries.**

Mtoe, million tonnes of oil equivalent.

Source(s): These go under the notes and should be acknowledged as follows:

1. Material directly reproduced from another source, e.g.
   Source: Reproduced from IEA, 2015. You may have to obtain permission from the publisher to reproduce material.

2. Material from another source that you have adapted or added to, e.g.
   Source: Adapted from IEA, 2015.

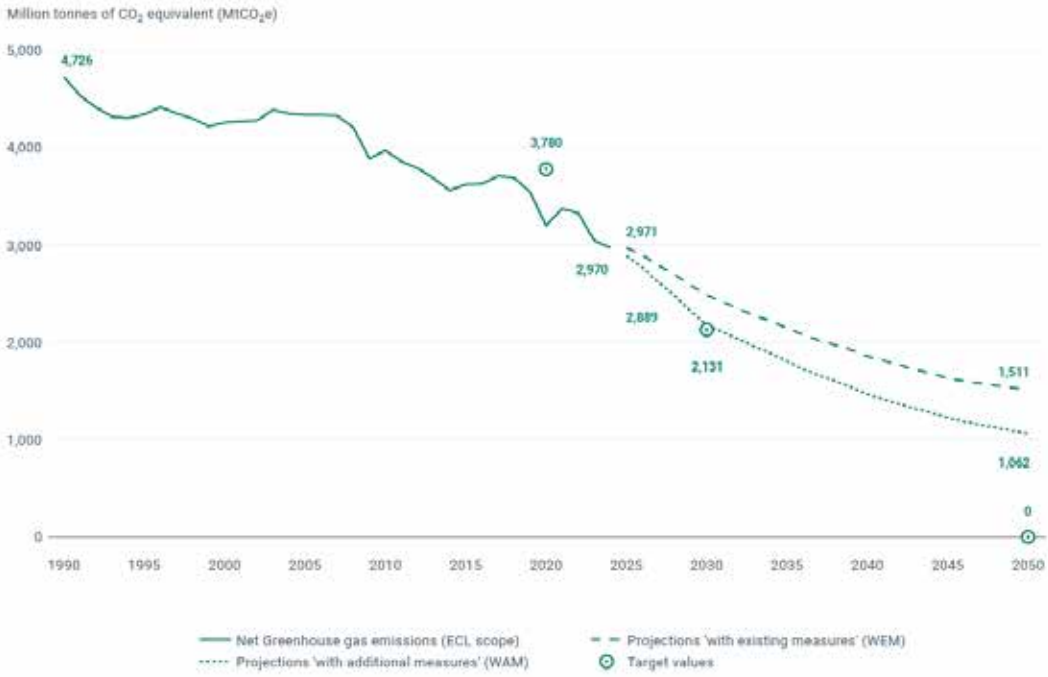
3. Original material compiled from data in one or more sources, e.g.
   Source: Author's compilation based on data from IEA, 2015.

Notes and sources end with a full stop.

2.2.1 Figures

Figures are diagrams (bar charts, line graphs, pie charts, etc.) and infographics. They should always be cited in the text by number, e.g. 'Figure 1.1 shows that…' or '… reduced the consumption of fossil fuels (Figure 1.1)'. See example of a figure below.

Figure 1.1 **Progress towards achieving climate targets, EU**



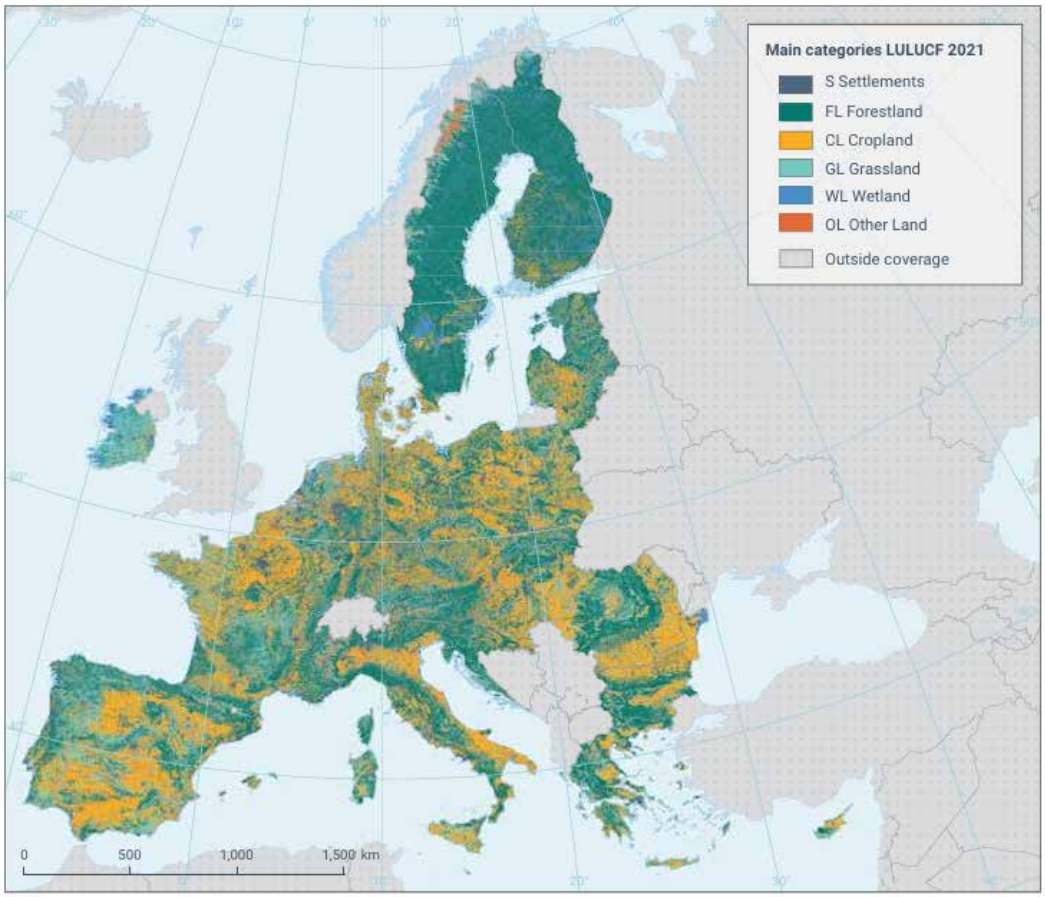
Notes: In this figure, the EU total net greenhouse gas emissions refer to the emissions under the scope of the European Climate Law (ECL), taking into account emissions and removals from the land use, land use change and forestry sector (LULUCF) sector and GHG emissions from international aviation and maritime, as regulated by EU law.
Access the interactive chart here.

Source: EEA.

2.2.2 Maps

All maps — from a map showing the Member States of the EU to a map outlining urban sprawl around a city centre — should be cited in the text by number. See example of a map below.

Map 5.1 **2021 LULUCF instance dataset, illustrating both the extent of production and six main LULUCF categories mapped**



Reference data: © EuroGeographics, © FAO (UN), © TurkStat Source: European Commission – Eurostat/GISCO

Source: CLCplus LULUCF Instance 2021 at 100m (URL to dataset not available), Copernicus Land Monitoring Service (EEA/CLMS).

2.2.3 Images

Images may be photographs, illustrations, etc.

Images that appear at the start of a chapter to illustrate the topic do not need a caption or a number. However, the artist, photographer or copyright holder should be acknowledged either below or overlaying the image, e.g. '© J. Smith' or '© International Energy Agency'. It is not sufficient to acknowledge the source as a reference (e.g. IEA, 2015), as the publisher of the reference may not hold the copyright to the image. You can find more information on copyright at the Photography or Writing, editing and storytelling intranet pages.

Images that are used to illustrate points in the text should be numbered and have a caption and an acknowledgement below. They should also be cited in the text.

2.2.4 Tables

Tables should be numbered and have a caption at the top, and notes and sources (if appropriate) below. They should be cited in the text. Example of a table below.

Table 2.3 **The diversity of policy instrument types applied to food waste, that are included in EU-27 Member States' WPPs, by number of types per WPP**

4 types	3 types	2 types	1 type
19%	37%	33%	7%

Note: The sum does not equal 100% because one Member State did not propose any prevention measures; consequently, no associated policy instruments were included.

Sources: WPPs of EU-27 countries; EEA, 2025.

2.2.5 Boxes

Boxes are usually numbered and have a caption above, and notes and sources (if appropriate) below. It is helpful to cite them in the text, but it is not necessary if it is obvious that they are simply illustrating or summarising text, e.g. a 'key points' box at the end of a chapter. If the only box in a chapter is a 'key points' box, there is no need to number it.

Boxes may include other features, e.g. tables and figures. These should be numbered consecutively with other figures and tables in the text, as long as they are clearly referred to within the box.

Beware of overusing boxes. They can take the reader's attention away from the main text. Use them only to present important information, or to add information that is not in the main text. Example of a box below.

Box 5.8

Case study: Brussels' Cuisines de Quartier

Inspired by the Quebec 'Réseau des Cuisines collectives', Cuisines de Quartiers (Neighbourhood Kitchens) are a critical element of Brussels' efforts to realise a fair, sustainable and healthy food system. The expertise and facilities of the neighbourhood kitchens are available for use by self-organised groups of community members who define for themselves how to use the spaces. They may use them to prepare low-cost meals, process unsold produce, preserve seasonal vegetables, provide support for a local market gardener or make snacks for children.

The movement's primary objective is to boost food autonomy and access to quality food for all. In realising this objective, it also facilitates the development of a positive dynamic around food production at the neighbourhood level. Social ties are strengthened and social cohesion built by creating an environment where neighbours can cook together.



A Cuisines de Quartier shared kitchen, Brussels, Belgium.
Source: © Cuisines de Quartier asbl

3 Footnotes, references and bibliographies

3.1 References to footnotes

In text, footnote markers are styled as a superscript digit in superscript parentheses. They are preceded by a fixed space and followed by any punctuation, for example:

> References to the Commission Regulation [1] also appear in the Council communication [2] but not in the text of the Court of Justice [3].

The footnote marker should always be in roman text. It should never appear in bold or italics — not even in a heading.

Features may also have footnotes specific to them. These should use lower case letters and be set immediately below the feature, not at the foot of the page:

Table 3.1 Consumption of fossil fuels in the EU-27

Fuel type	2016	2018	2020	2022
Solid	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Gaseous	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Other [a]	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Total	**3,000,000**	**3,000,000**	**3,000,000**	**3,000,000**

Notes: ***Figures are in million tonnes of oil equivalent.***
[a] Includes petroleum products, petrol and diesel.

Source: ***EEA, 2015.***

3.2 Footnotes

Footnotes should be used sparingly. Please avoid using these with online publications. If you are writing a web-based publication please consider alternative methods, such as hyperlinks.

Footnotes appear at the foot of the page and continue in numerical order throughout the document. Add a tab between the footnote number and the text as following:

(2) For the current marketing year, this price is increased by a special premium.

It is acceptable to repeat the same footnote with a different number, because it is helpful for the reader to have the explanation appear on the same page as the footnote marker. However, if identical footnotes appear on pages close together, refer back to the first footnote, e.g. see footnote [2].

Footnotes should not be used for references to source material, which should be cited in the text as usual and included in the reference list. If using the numerical

referencing style (see Section 3.4), the author should distinguish between a citation/reference and a footnote by using different numbering conventions. For example, the citations could be numbered: (1), (2), (3), etc., while footnotes should use roman numerals: (i), (ii), (iii).

If a footnote links to a webpage for information purposes only, then you may include the URL of the homepage in a footnote.

3.3 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is 'the practice of taking someone else's work and ideas and passing them off as one's own' (Concise Oxford English Dictionary, 2016). It applies equally to words, images, data and figures.

Plagiarism is fraudulent because it essentially involves stealing even if it is done unintentionally.

It is simple to avoid plagiarism by citing sources and providing full bibliographic references for the source material in the references section of a report or assessment. This acknowledges that some of the material or ideas used in the text have been borrowed and gives due credit to the original authors. It also allows readers to find the original source. See below for more information on referencing correctly.

The use of one's own work from previous publications or documents should also be fully referenced in order to avoid self-plagiarism.

The EEA has a policy on plagiarism which is designed to help avoid accusations of plagiarism once our reports are published. The COM programme is aware that not all plagiarism is intentional, so it is of vital importance that authors cite anything that they think could have already been published elsewhere.

To help identify plagiarism, COM uses the iThenticate software to run a plagiarism check on EEA texts. The software locates instances of possible plagiarism within the text by comparing it to already published material available online. Where there is a match, the offending text is highlighted and the author will be contacted discreetly to provide the necessary bibliographic information.

We believe that the EEA plagiarism policy, combined with the use of the anti-plagiarism software, will help EEA authors become more aware of plagiarism. While we are very proud of the EEA's record on plagiarism, ultimately, the use of iThenticate could lead to even fewer instances of plagiarised work being published.

3.4 Textual citations of source literature

A citation is a reference to someone else's work that appears in the main text of a publication. The citation must always be accompanied by a complete reference in the bibliography at the end of the publication.

The EEA uses Zotero for reference management, but you are not obliged to use it for your publication. You can find more information and guidance around using Zotero here. There are two citation styles in use in EEA products. The majority of products will take the standard style, which is described in detail below. Some products, in particular, those that contain many citations over a short portion of text, such as the

8th EAP report or Europe's environment, take a numerical style. This is described at the end of this section.

Below, you'll find different types of citations in the standard EEA style and examples of how to use them.

- All citations should include the **author's surname and the publication year** in brackets.

  'Researchers argue that we have recently entered a new geological epoch: the Anthropocene' (Crutzen, 2002).

- **When an organisation is designated as the author**, it is normally better to use an acronym or abbreviation to keep the reference short.

  'Total demand for food, feed and fibre is projected to grow by about 60% between now and 2050' (FAO, 2012).

- **When the author's name occurs naturally in the text**, it is only necessary to include the publication year in brackets.

  'Smith (1991) sets out six different approaches for valuing ecosystem services.'

- **When a source has two authors**, they should be cited in the reference. The individual references should be separated by 'and'. When the authors are organisations, they should be separated by a semi-colon.

  'Ecosystem-based management differs from traditional approaches that address single concerns e.g. species, sectors or activities' (McLeod and Leslie, 2009).

- **When the EEA produces a report jointly with another organisation**, both organisations should be included in the citation.

  '(EEA-JRC, 2025).'

- **When a source has more than two authors**, the first author should be cited in the reference, followed by et al.

  'Hazardous chemicals have been detected in human populations and linked to environmental and dietary exposures' (Smolders et al., 2015).

- **When several references are cited concurrently**, they should appear in the same parentheses and be separated by semi-colons. When the publications are by the same author, the name need not be repeated, but the publication years should be separated by commas.

  'Forests are affected by storm patterns, pests, diseases, droughts and forest fires' (EEA, 2012a; IPCC, 2014a).

  'The current proportion of people aged 65 years and over already exceeds 17.5% and is projected to reach 29.5% by 2060' (Eurostat, 2008, 2010, 2011).

- **When an author cannot be identified**, the reference publication should be cited by the title (in italics).

  Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary (11th ed.) (2005)

- **When a date cannot be identified**, write 'undated' in brackets.

  'Smith (undated) wrote that…'

- **When a report is forthcoming**, write 'forthcoming' in brackets.

  '…the well-being effects of increased access to green spaces' (EEA, forthcoming).

- **When quoting a specific section of work**, page numbers should be included (see also Section 3.3 'Plagiarism').

  'Many of today's environmental challenges are characterised by their complexity' (EEA, 2015, p. 33).

- **Web addresses should not be cited in the text or in footnotes**, unless they are the URLs of a website homepage provided for information purposes only (e.g. a project website). When the reference refers to a web page, the year of publication cited in the text reference should normally be the last access date.

  'The main categories are provisioning services; regulating and maintenance services; and cultural services (CICES, 2013).'

- **When a figure or other image is reproduced** or data from a source other than the EEA are used, a reference to the original work must be included (see also Section 3.3 'Plagiarism').

For direct quotations, the following rules apply:

- **Quotations of up to four lines** should be placed in single quotation marks within the text.

  Crutzen (2002) states that 'We have recently entered a new geological epoch: the Anthropocene.'

- **Longer quotations** should be introduced by a colon followed by an empty line and should appear without quotation marks. They should also be indented from the left margin by three tab spaces and include the appropriate reference at the end of the quotation:

  > What is clear, however, is that transforming key systems such as the transport, energy, housing and food systems lies at the heart of long-term remedies. We will need to find ways to make them fundamentally sustainable, by decarbonising them, making them much more resource efficient and making them compatible with ecosystem resilience. Also relevant is the redesign of the systems that have steered these provisioning systems and have created unsustainable lock-ins: finance, fiscal, health, legal and education (EEA, 2015, p. 7).

Numerical citation style

For certain publications that contain many citations in a short space, we have developed a new, numerical citation style. This is styled as follows:

> 'Technological innovation led to substantial decreases in GHG emissions linked to specific industrial production processes' [8].

The references in such publications should follow the referencing styles detailed below in Section 3.5.

3.5 Bibliographic references

A bibliography or reference list should always appear at the end of a report/assessment. It should contain references to any work cited or quoted in the text. The references should be listed in alphabetical order by surname (or organisation if the surname is not available) and then by date. Where neither are available, the title should be used.

References to a complete work should comprise of (in this order):

- the author's surname, followed by a comma;
- the author's initial(s), each followed by a full stop and separated by a space, with the final initial followed by a full stop and a comma;
- the publication year, followed by a comma;
- the title of the work in italics and, where appropriate, the edition number, followed by a comma;
- the publisher and place of publication, followed by a full stop; or
- the relevant page number(s), followed by a full stop.

Note: Bibliographic references always form one long sentence broken up with commas. Full stops are only used after initials and in abbreviations such as ed.

- **References to a work with one author**

  Ciriacy-Wantrup, S. V., 1952, *Resource conservation: economics and policies,* University of California Press, Berkeley, California, USA.

- **References to a work with multiple authors**

  - **Two authors** should be referenced using their surnames and initial(s), separated by 'and'.

  Lawrence, D. and Hisdal, H., 2011, *Hydrological projections for floods in Norway under a future climate,* Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate, Oslo, Norway.

  - **More than two authors** should be referenced using the surnames and initials of the first author and the words 'et al.':

    Rayment, M., et al., 2009, *The economic benefit of environmental policy*, final report to European Commission DG ENV, Brussels.

  - **For joint reports**, please use both organisations in the reference, for example:

    EEA-JRC, 2025, *Zero pollution monitoring and outlook 2025*, EEA-JRC Report 13/2024, European Environment Agency and Joint Research Centre.

- **References to a work compiled by one or more editors**

  - The designation '(ed.)' should appear in brackets after the editor's name.

  Stern, N. H. (ed), 2007, *The economics of climate change: the Stern review,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.

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

Willems, P., Olsson, J. et al. (eds), 2012, *Impacts of climate change on rainfall extremes and urban drainage systems*, IWA Publishing, London.

- **References to an unpublished paper**

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

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

- **References to a forthcoming publication**

  - The word 'forthcoming' should replace the date.

EEA, forthcoming, *Trends and projections in Europe 2026*, European Environment Agency.

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

  - After the author name(s), the chapter should be cited with single quotation marks, followed by a comma. The publication should be preceded by 'in:' and then be referenced as normal (although the date doesn't need repeating, unless the essay was originally published elsewhere at an earlier date). If the essays are by a single author, it is not necessary to repeat the author's name.

Tiner, R. W., 2013, 'Wetlands', in: Encyclopedia of Environmental Management, Taylor & Francis.

- **References to an article in a journal**

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

Crutzen, P. J., 2002, 'Geology of mankind', *Nature* 415 (6867), pp. 23-27.

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

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

UNEP, 2012b, T*he global chemicals outlook: towards sound management of chemicals*, United Nations Environment Programme, Geneva, Switzerland.

- **References to EEA publications**

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

EEA, 2014a, *Air quality in Europe — 2014 report,* EEA Report No 5/2014, European Environment Agency.

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

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

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

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

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

Note that citations of European Commission communications ('COM'), staff working documents (SWD) and other unclassified ('SEC') documents should refer to the European Commission (EC) as author. Citations of European Union Regulations, Directives and Decisions should refer to the European Union (EU) as author.

- **References to print documents available online**

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

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

- **References to web pages**

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

  EC, 2014g, 'European Green Capital', European Green Capital (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/europeangreencapital/index_en.htm) accessed 9 March 2017.

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

  NEC, 2010, 'National emission ceilings (NEC) directive inventory' (http://www.eea.europa.eu/ data-and-maps/data/national-emission-ceilings- nec-directive-inventory-12) accessed 9 March 2017.

3.6 Sources, copyright and photo credits

Figures and tables

All figures (charts, maps, infographics) that are based on data must include source information and a link or links to the data used. Please see the following example of how to cite sources in figures. Tables that contain data must also include source information and should follow the same style.

Figure 5.2 **Illustration of the current CLMS portfolio of high-resolution datasets relevant for the LULUCF sector**



Note: HRL VLCC stands for the new High Resolution Layer (HRL), Vegetated Land Cover Characteristics (VLCC). This follows a more consistent grouping of all vegetation related CLMS HRLs into one overarching category. More details are provided in Annex 3.

Source: CLMS, 2025, Courtesy CLMS, see https://land.copernicus.eu/en/products for more detailed information and data access.

Photos and other images

All photographs and other images, such as cartoons or artworks, must credit the copyright owner. Please see the following example of how to do this.

Figure 2.6 **A free-flowing river**



4 Spelling

4.1 Conventions

As a rule, use the first spelling in the Concise Oxford English Dictionary (OED), with the exception of -is-/-iz words. The EEA uses UK spelling and the -is spelling for words such as organise, organisation (unless part of a proper name, e.g. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations).

Set the language in your document to 'English (UK)' and the spellchecker will find misspellings.

In UK English, a final letter -l is doubled when -ing or -ed endings are added to verbs:

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

The exception is parallel, which becomes paralleling, paralleled.

When adding -able endings to verbs, drop the final silent -e at the end of the stem (conceivable, debatable), unless it would change the pronunciation of the preceding consonant (changeable, traceable). The only common exceptions are sizeable and saleable. Other consonants double only if the root verb is stressed or has a strong secondary stress, so:

- admit, admitting, admitted
- format, formatting, formatted
- commit, committing, committed
- refer, referring, referred

but:

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

The exceptions are some verbs ending in -p (e.g. handicapped, kidnapped, worshipped but not developed).

In data-processing usage, use 'input' and 'output', e.g. 'Over 70,000 items of data were input last month'. However, note that the verb 'to format' takes the forms above.

Note also: age, ageing.

4.2 Preferred spelling

Where there is an alternative, use the following preferred spelling (non-exhaustive):

Preferred spelling	Comments
acknowledgement	Alternative: acknoledgment
exceedance	pl. exceedances
judgement (all contexts except legal)	judgment, other than in legal contexts, is the US spelling
judgment (legal contexts only)	
orient/oriented	alternative: orientate/orientated
preventive	alternative: preventative
programme (all contexts except computing)	program, other than in computing contexts, is the US spelling
program (computing contexts only)	
sulphur	sulfur is the US spelling and is used in chemistry, but not by us
tonne (=1,000 kg)	ton may be misinterpreted as imperial ton (2,240 lb or 1,016.05 kg)

4.3 Easy-to-confuse words

There are several words in English that have similar spelling yet different meanings and can be easily confused (non-exhaustive):

advise (v.)	advice (n.)
biannual (twice a year)	biennial (every 2 years)
dependent (adj.)	dependant (n.)
license (v.)	licence (n.)
maintain (v.)	maintenance (n.)
phosphorus (n.)	phosphorous (adj.)
practise (v.)	practice (n.)
premise (proposition or statement)	premises (building(s))
principal (adj., n., main or most important)	principle (n., a guiding belief or idea)

4.4 Tricky plurals

Some plurals of English words derived from Latin can cause problems. For example, 'data' is actually the plural of datum, which is why it usually takes a plural verb. The EEA uses the plural. If in doubt, use the following non-exhaustive list.

Singular	Plural
addendum	addenda
appendix	appendices (books); appendixes (anatomy)
bacterium	bacteria
bureau	bureaux

Singular	Plural
consortium	consortia
corrigendum	corrigenda
criterion	criteria
curriculum	curricula
datum	data (in technical writing)
focus	foci (mathematics, science); focuses (other contexts)
formula	formulas (politics); formulae (science)
forum	forums or fora
genus	genera
index	indexes (books); indices (science, economics)
maximum	maxima (mathematics, science); maximums (other contexts)
medium	mediums (life sciences, art); media (press, communications, IT)
memorandum	memorandums or memoranda
moratorium	moratoriums or moratoria
phenomenon	phenomena
plus	pluses
premium	premiums
referendum	referendums or referenda
spectrum	spectrums (politics); spectra (science)

4.5 Latin

Latin words, phrases and abbreviations should be used as little as possible. When used, common phrases should be written in roman, (e.g. et al., ad hoc, inter alia, per capita, pro forma, status quo, versus). Less commonly-used examples should be written in italics (e.g. *ex ante*, *in situ*). Latin phrases are not hyphenated when used as adjectives (e.g. ad hoc meeting).

The common abbreviations are:

c.f.	compare
e.g.	for example
et al.	and others (an abbreviation of *et alia*) — note punctuation and only use in reference citations
etc.	and so forth (an abbreviation of *et cetera*)
i.e.	that is, or that is to say
NB	please note (an abbreviation of *nota bene*)

Do not confuse e.g. and i.e. Use 'e.g.' to give an example of something just mentioned:

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

Use 'i.e.' to briefly explain what you just wrote or say the same thing in different words:

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

Note that there is no comma after e.g. or i.e.

Use 'etc.' sparingly. It is better to introduce a series of examples with 'such as' or 'e.g.', in which case there is no need for 'etc.' For example:

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

becomes:

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

4.6 Commonly misused terms

Words that look and sound similar in English and another language but that have different meanings are known as false friends and can lead to misunderstandings. These and other commonly misused terms are listed below. Note that they depend entirely on context and meaning, so not all are necessarily wrong.

Commonly misused term	Suggested alternative(s)
actor	use a more specific noun, e.g. participant, stakeholder
actual	current, present
adequate	appropriate, suitable, fitting
articulate (v.)	coordinate, connect, structure
assist	attend, participate
attend	wait for, expect
attribute to	allocate to, give to, assign to
axis	usually a transport axis, e.g. a road
in case (of)	for, if, when, where, in the case of, in the event of
coherent/coherency	consistent/consistency
concerning	with regard to, in terms of
control (v.)	audit, check, inspect
define	establish, set out
delay	deadline, time limit
elaborate (v.)	compile, draft, draw up, prepare
engaged	involved in
eventual	possible, potential
foresee	envisage, plan (for), provide (for), contemplate, expect, predict
in the frame of	in connection with, in the context of
harmonise, homogenise	standardise, make uniform
important	large, significant
incite	encourage
intervention	activity, contribution, explanation
modality	procedure, method, mode

Commonly misused term	Suggested alternative(s)
perspective	outlook, prospects
planification	planning
request to	ask to, request that
respect (v.)	comply with, adhere to
semester	half-year, six months, six-month period
so-called	known as (or delete)
third country	non-Member State
trimester	quarter, three months, three-month period
unborn child	foetus
valorise	put a value on, accentuate, enhance, upgrade



5 Singulars and plurals

- **Collective nouns take a singular verb** when the emphasis is on the whole.
  - The Commission is considering the matter.
- **Collective nouns take a plural verb** when the emphasis is on individual members.
  - A majority of farmers were in favour.
  - A number of people are already recycling.
- **Percentages and fractions** can be singular or plural. Countable nouns take a plural verb.
  - More than three-quarters of the sandbags were used.
  - More than 75% of the sandbags were used.
- **Uncountable nouns** take a singular verb.
  - Over three-quarters of the grit was used.
  - Over 75% of the grit was used.
- **Sums of money** can take a singular or plural verb.
  - EUR 2 million was [were] made available for flood defences.
- **Countries and organisations** with a plural name take the singular.
  - The United Nations is coordinating the response to the crisis.
  - The Netherlands is cooperating with its neighbours.
- **Words ending in -ics** are singular when referring to a scientific discipline or body of knowledge (economics, mathematics, statistics) but plural in other contexts.
  - For many, statistics is a difficult subject.
  - Statistics are available to support that assertion.
- In EEA reports, **data** are treated as plural.
  - Data are also available to support that assertion.
- When a **multiple subject** clearly forms a whole, use a singular verb.
  - Capturing, tagging and monitoring the birds is done by a team of trained volunteers.

6 Punctuation

6.1 Full stop (.)

A full stop marks the end of a sentence. **Footnotes always end with a full stop.**

Headings do not end in a full stop, except for run-in side headings, which are followed by text on the same line. For example:

> **Flood protection.** A number of measures have been taken…

An additional full stop is not needed in the following cases (unless the sentence ends with parentheses):

- a sentence that ends with an ellipsis …;
- an abbreviation that takes a full stop, e.g. etc.;
- following a quotation that forms a full sentence and ends in a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark before the closing quote mark. For example:

  > The Minister for the Environment said, 'Measures are in place to ensure that this does not happen again.'

Abbreviations that are truncations are followed by a full stop (Art., Co.) but contractions (in which the middle of the word is removed) are not (Dr, Ms, Ltd). See also Section 9.1.

'No' as an abbreviation for number is a contraction of '*numero*' and therefore does not take a full stop.

6.2 Comma (,)

6.2.1 Serial comma

The comma is used to separate items in a series, except for the final two items, which are separated by 'and' or 'or'. However, if including that comma helps to clarify the meaning, then it may be used like so:

> The commodities under consideration are sugar, beef and milk products.

> The commodities under consideration are sugar, beef and sheep meat, and milk products.

Add a comma before etc. in a series (beef, sheep meat, pig meat, etc.) but not if there is no series (milk products etc.). See Section 4.5 'Latin' on the use of etc.

Commas are also used to separate adjectives in a series (inflated, volatile oil prices) but not if the adjectives do not form a series (stable agricultural prices).

6.2.2 Other uses of commas

Linking independent clauses

A comma is used to separate two short sentences, or clauses, linked by a conjunction such as 'but', 'so', 'while' or 'yet' to form a single sentence:

> Ministers agreed on flood protection measures, but planning regulations were not discussed.

If there is no conjunction, use a semicolon:

> Ministers agreed on flood protection measures; planning regulations were not discussed.

If the subject of the second sentence is omitted or if the conjunction is 'and' or 'but', the comma is optional:

> Ministers agreed on flood protection measures[,] but did not discuss planning regulations.

6.2.3 Introductory and parenthetical phrases

Parenthetical (bracketing) phrases are created by setting off part of the sentence with commas while retaining the normal word order. The text set off by commas is not essential to the meaning of the sentence but provides additional information:

> Leena Ylä-Mononen, Executive Director of the European Environment Agency, said that…

Note that there must be a pair of commas if the parenthetical text comes in the middle of the sentence.

Following short introductory phrases at the beginning of a sentence, the comma is optional:

> In 2015[,] several initiatives were set up …

6.2.4 Relative clauses

Commas are used to distinguish between defining and non-defining relative clauses.

- **Defining**: The auditors were unable to identify the sheep that were on the hill pasture.

- **Non-defining**: The auditors were unable to identify the sheep, which were on the hill pasture.

The first sentence defines exactly which sheep we are talking about — the ones on the hill pasture. There are probably other sheep on the farm in low-lying fields. The second sentence gives additional information about the sheep but does not define them. We assume that all the sheep are out on the hill pasture.

6.3 Colon (:)

A colon indicates that an expansion, explanation, qualification or quotation will follow. It can also be used to introduce a list.

A colon should not be used at the end of a heading or to introduce a figure or other feature in running text. Figures and other features should be numbered and cited by number (see Section 2.2).

Colons in running text should not be followed by a capital letter and there should be no spaces between the preceding word or number and the colon.

6.4 Semicolon (;)

A semicolon is used to combine two short sentences or clauses into one without a linking conjunction, for example:

> Ministers agreed on flood protection measures; planning regulations were not discussed.

For clarity, use semicolons to separate items in a list that are long and complex or involve internal punctuation:

> The EU has agencies in a number of European cities, including Copenhagen, Denmark; Lisbon, Portugal and Parma, Italy.

Semicolons are also used at the end of items in displayed lists (see Section 10.2).

6.5 Brackets ([…])

6.5.1 Round brackets

Round brackets, or parentheses, are used to include information in the text that is not essential to its understanding:

> The auditors were unable to identify the sheep (which were on the hill pasture).

There should never be a comma before the opening bracket. (It is seldom useful to enclose a whole sentence within brackets, but, if you do so, the full stop must come before the closing brackets, as here.)

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

> The conclusions (particularly with reference to poultry (including free-range hens)) highlighted the following...

However, for clarity, it would be better to use parenthetical dashes (see Section 6.7.1):

> The conclusions — particularly with reference to poultry (including free-range hens) — highlighted the following…

When citing numbered paragraphs from legislation, enclose the paragraph number in a pair of brackets, closed up to the article number: Article 3(1), Article 5(1)(a), Article 7a(1).

6.5.2 Square brackets

These are used to insert, for example, a clarification in a quote to make it clear that it is not part of the quote:

> 'We [heads of EU agencies] expect to meet soon to discuss…'

In mathematical formulae, square brackets are used to enclose round brackets:

> *2[4ab – (2c × 4d)] + 6e = 780*

6.6 Quotation marks ('…')

Use single quotation marks for quotes and double quotation marks for a quote within a quote.

Punctuation depends on the sense. If the punctuation belongs to the quotation, it is included in the quotation mark, otherwise it is not:

> The EU favours a 'carrot-and-stick approach'.

> The Minister for the Environment said, 'Measures are in place to ensure that this does not happen again.'

However, if the quotation itself contains a concluding mark (full stop, question mark or exclamation mark), there is no need for a full stop after the quotation mark (see Section 6.1).

Long quotations styled as block quotes do not need quotation marks at the beginning and end (see Section 3.4).

Do not put the titles of books, newspapers or foreign expressions in quotation marks. These are usually set in italics.

6.7 Dashes and hyphens (—, -)

6.7.1 Em dashes

Spaced long (or 'em') dashes can be used parenthetically to punctuate a sentence, increasing the contrast or emphasis on the text set off. However, use them sparingly. Use no more than one per sentence, or — if setting off inserted text — one set of paired em dashes:

> The conclusions — particularly with reference to poultry (including free-range hens) — highlighted the following…

An em dash is also used to separate the title from the subtitle of a publication.

> **Writing tip**
>
> EM dash: crtl + alt + minus

6.7.2 Hyphens

Hyphenate the following:

- 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)
- points of the compass: north-east, south-west
- prefixes that have not become part of the word through usage: anti-American, co-funded, e-commerce, self-employed
- number ranges (e.g. 2014-2020)
- expressions including coordinating or contrasting pairs (e.g. cost-benefit analysis, Brussels-Paris route, north-south divide)

Do not hyphenate the following:

- compound adjectives following the noun that they qualify: 'The statistics are up to date';
- adverbs ending in -ly modifying the following adjective: '…newly industrialised developing countries';
- prefixes that have become part of the word through usage: antibiotic, cooperation, coordination, email.

Compound nouns used as adjectives before a noun need **not** be hyphenated if there is no risk of confusion: land use changes, public sector organisations.

For preferred usage, see the following non-exhaustive list.

One word	Hyphenated	Two words
bioenergy	cold-water (adj.)	base year
coordinate	Directorate-General	clearing house
cooperate	eco-efficiency	cold water (n.)
database	follow-up (n.)	follow up (v.)
dataset	know-how (n.)	home page
decisionmaker	long-term (adj.)	land cover
ecosystem, ecotourism	low-lying (adj.)	
email	physico-chemical	
factsheet		
freshwater		
groundwater		
heatwave		
homepage		
hotspot		

One word	Hyphenated	Two words
hydropower	salt-water (adj.)	land take
interrelationship	sea-level (adj.)	land use (n., adj.)
landfill	short-term (adj.)	point source (emissions)
landmine	socio-economic	policy measures
metadata	time-frame (n.)	power plant
microbiology	web-based (adj.)	public sector (n., adj.)
microorganism	well-being	salt water (n.)
multiannual	well-known (adj.)	sea bottom
offset		sea coast
photochemical		sea floor
policymaker		sea ice
runoff (n.)		sea level
seafood		side effect (n.)
seawater		soil sealing
seaweed		task force
timeframe		waste paper
wastewater		water meter
website		wood waste
widespread		
worldwide		

6.8 Ellipsis (…)

An ellipsis indicates an omission in the text, usually in quotes. If it falls at the end of a sentence, there is no need for a concluding full stop. However, if it is followed by another punctuation mark (e.g. a question mark, colon or quotation mark), that mark should be closed up to the ellipsis. The ellipsis should not be enclosed in square brackets:

> The Treaty of Lisbon provides that, 'The Union shall develop a special relationship with neighbouring countries…founded on the values of the Union…'

When it falls at the start of a sentence, the ellipsis is preceded by a fixed (hard) space. In the middle of a sentence, it is preceded by a fixed space and followed by a normal space. At the end of a sentence, it is preceded by a fixed space.

Writing tip

Fixed space: Ctrl + shift + spacebar

6.9 Forward slash (/)

The solidus or forward slash is used to mean 'per' (km/day) and in fractions (19/100).

Marketing years and financial years that do not coincide with calendar years but span them are denoted by a forward slash (e.g. 2014/2015), which signifies a 12 month period, rather than by a hyphen (e.g. 2014-2015), which signifies two years (see also Section 8.8).

6.10 Question mark (?)

Use a question mark at the end of a direct question:

> How will this affect EU trade?

However, do not use a question mark in indirect speech:

> We should ask ourselves how this will affect EU trade.

There is no need for a question mark after a request or instruction disguised as a question out of courtesy.

6.11 Apostrophe (')

6.11.1 Possessive

The apostrophe, followed by the letter -s, is used in the possessive form of singular nouns and plural nouns not ending in the letter -s:

- the author's views (singular)
- women's rights (plural)
- the MEP's expenses (singular)

After plural nouns ending in the letter -s, the letter -s following the apostrophe is omitted:

- farmers' concerns
- MEPs' expenses

There is no apostrophe in possessive pronouns: its, ours, theirs, yours.

Note the distinction between 'its' (possessive) and the contraction 'it's' (meaning 'it is' or 'it has').

6.11.2 Contractions

Apostrophes are also used to indicate contractions in which one or more letters have been omitted or two words have been joined (e.g. don't, it's, you're). Contractions are **not** used in formal writing, other than when quoting someone's direct speech.

6.12 Ampersand (&)

The symbol is a substitute for the word 'and'. **Avoid using it**, except where it is part of a proper name (e.g. Marks & Spencer) or in certain abbreviations (e.g. R&D, i.e. research and development).

7 Italics and bold

7.1 Italics

Use italics in the following cases:

- titles of electronic and print publications, white and green papers and journals, when written in full (e.g. *The European environment — state and outlook 2020*) but not short or abbreviated titles (e.g. SOER 2020);
- foreign words and phrases that have not been assimilated into English (e.g. *Länder*, *raison d'être*) but not those that have (e.g. alias, vis à vis), or proper names or quotations in a foreign language;
- species binomials — genus and species should be italic and spelt out in full at first mention (e.g. *Pinus sylvestris*), and abbreviated afterwards (*P. sylvestris*);
- formulae in mathematics.

7.2 Bold

Bold text, sometimes referred to as emphasized text, should only be used to convey information labels and should always be paired with a colon (:). Example:

Name: Dr. Jane Smith
Phone: 207-555-5555

Bold may also be used to label a topic within a table or chart without a colon as long as no other non-bold words follow the words which are in bold. No other use of bold text should be used. No other use of bold text is acceptable.

7.3 Capital letters

It is impossible to be fully consistent with a given style regarding capital letters as there are always exceptions. You should follow the rules laid out in this section where possible, but if unsure, check to see how the entity in question spells the name.

Proper nouns take a capital letter and common nouns do not. Use capitals sparingly, as overuse can be visually distracting. If in doubt, use lower case. The following table is a non-exhaustive guide to preferred capitalisation:

biodiversity strategy for 2030
Carboniferous Period
common agricultural policy
Conference of the Parties
Named directives: Birds Directive, Energy Efficiency Directive, Habitats Directive, Renewable Energy Directive, Water Framework Directive
named directorates-general: Directorate-General for Environment
Eionet

Europe: central, eastern, western
European Green Deal
Green Party
Ice Age
member country (of the EEA)
Member State (of the EU)
Natura 2000
seasons: spring, summer, autumn winter
Eighth Environment Action Programme
zero pollution action plan

Note: Only EU legislation (Decision, Directive, Regulation) takes capital letters; action plans, strategies and policies do not.

7.3.1 Proper nouns and titles

Use initial capitals: the honourable Member (of the European Parliament), Minister of the Environment.

7.3.2 Institutions, office bearers, etc.

Use initial capitals for the titles of organisations, directorates, units, sections, office bearers, committees and delegations when written in full (e.g. Vice Chair of the Committee on International Relations) but not for the titles when used in general (e.g. the vice chair, the committee).

Unnamed directorates-general, sections and units take lower case.

The Council presidency takes a lower case -p, as it is general, but named presidencies are capitalised (e.g. the Latvian Presidency).

7.3.4 Full names of international agreements, conferences and conventions

The full names take initial capitals (e.g. International Coffee Agreement, General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe) but use lower case when referring back to the agreement or conference.

7.3.5 Periods and events

Use initial capitals for periods (e.g. Carboniferous Period, Ice Age, Second World War) and events (e.g. International Year of Soils, European Week for Safety and Health).

7.3.6 Party denominations

Use initial capitals for party names (e.g. Green Party, Fianna Fáil Party) but not for ideologies (liberal, socialist).

7.3.7 Countries and states

Use initial capitals for EU Member States but not for EEA member countries.

7.3.8 Geographical names and political divisions

Use initial capitals for proper names (e.g. East Midlands, Lake Constance, North Rhine-Westphalia, North Pole, North-East Atlantic) but lower case when describing geographical areas (western, central and eastern Europe).

Note: River Thames becomes Thames river.

Points of the compass are lower case (north, north-west, etc.) unless they are part of a proper name: South Africa, Northern Ireland but southern Africa, south-west Ireland. Points of the compass and their derived forms (north-western, etc.) are not capitalised unless they form part of a proper name. The derived forms are hyphenated.

7.3.9 Trade names

Trade or proprietary names are capitalised (e.g. Land Rover, Neurofen, Samsung Galaxy), but not generic names (e.g. ibuprofen) or names that have become generic (e.g. aspirin, linoleum, nylon).

7.3.10 The internet

The internet and the web or worldwide web are lower case as is the intranet.

7.4 References to EU legislation

Capitalise Regulation, Decision, Directive, Annex and Article when referring to a specific document (e.g. the Habitats Directive, Directive 92/43/EC).

Use lower case for general references to regulations, directives and proposed legislation (e.g. a draft regulation).

Capitalise European Green Deal and Eighth Environment Action Programme.

7.5 References to EU programmes

Generally, use lower case for programmes, policies, agendas, strategies and action plans: common agricultural policy, Europe 2020 strategy.

However, make sure that you capitalise correctly when names do not follow this rule, e.g. European Green Deal, Natura 2000, Eighth Environment Action Programme (8th EAP). Also, pay attention to abbreviations.

7.6 Publications

Capitalise and italicise the names of journals, newspapers and periodicals: European Journal of Forest Research, Sunday Herald, The Guardian, Le Monde.

However, EU and EEA publications take a capital only in the first word and on proper nouns: Interinstitutional style guide, Estimating the impact of cliamte change on European healthcare, Opportunities for innovation in the bioeconomy.

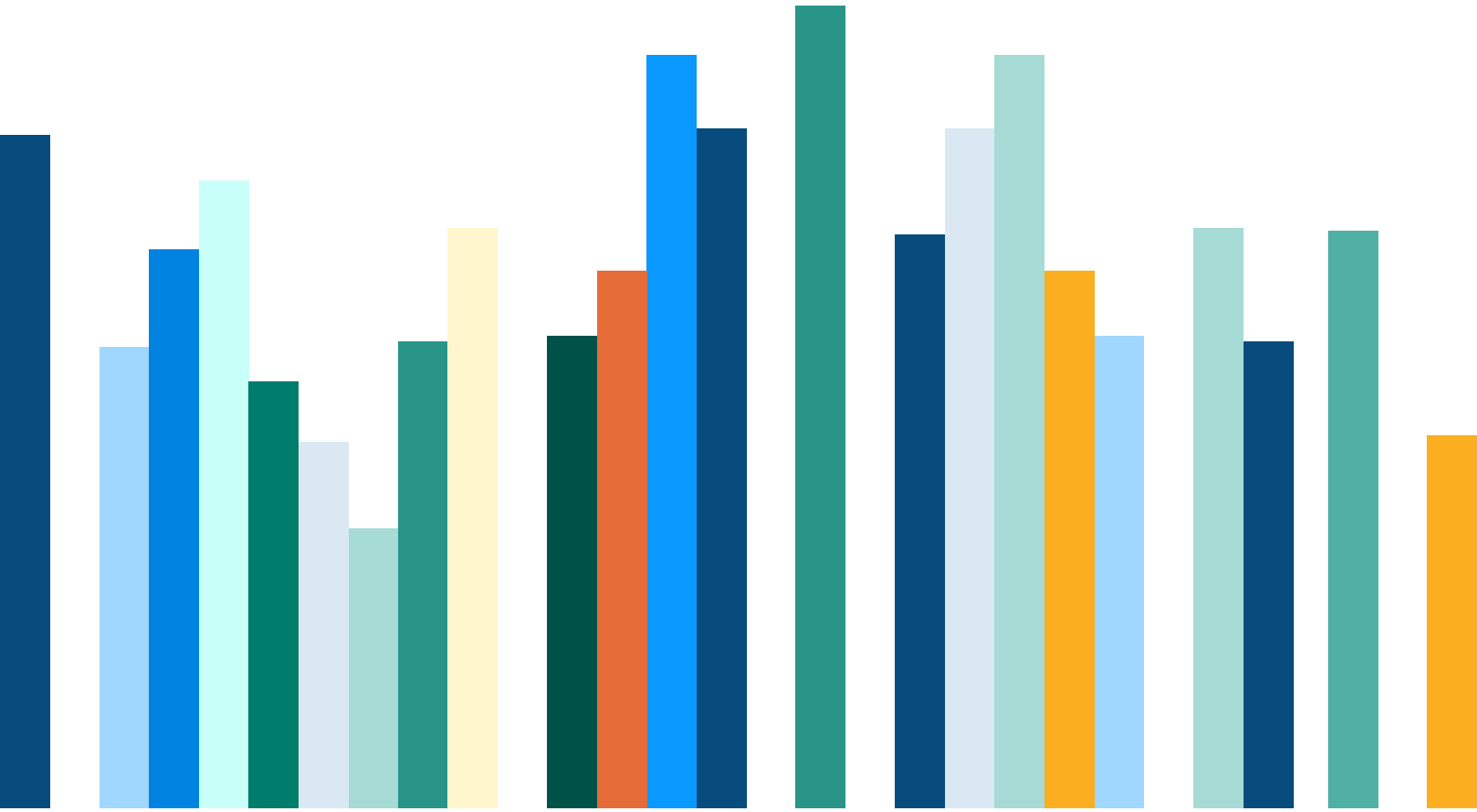
Note: Just because a noun is abbreviated it does not mean that it will take initial capitals: the common agricultural policy (CAP) is lower case, but the European Central Bank (ECB) takes initial capitals in full because it is a proper noun.

7.7 Cross-references

Use initial capitals for cross-references followed by a number (e.g. Figure 3.4, Chapter 2, Section 4.1) but not for references to footnotes or pages (e.g. see footnote 15, see page 96).

7.8 Reference to EEA departments and units

Capitalise the first letter of EEA departments and units but not 'and' (e.g. Communication and Networking, Publishing and Web).



8 Numbers, dates and time

8.1 Words or digits

Write out **one to nine** in full and use digits from 10 onwards. However, where numbers in a range fall above and below 10, use digits for both or all, i.e. 'between 9 and 11':

> Two out of six countries had between 9 and 15 provinces affected by flooding.

Use a comma to indicate thousands: 10, 100, 1,000, 10,000, 100,000, 1,000,000

Use a full stop to separate whole numbers from decimals: 1.5, 15.09

Round hundreds and thousands can be written in digits or words as long as a consistent rule is followed (e.g. three hundred or 300), but millions and billions are usually written with digits (e.g. 2.5 million, 5 billion).

Use a normal hyphen to indicate negative numbers (e.g. -5, -0.7).
Note: there is no space between the negative sign and the number.

Use digits with units, whether abbreviated or not: 5°C, 5%, 50km, 500 metres.
Note: there is no space between the digit and the unit when abbreviated

Treat time as a unit and use digits: 6 seconds, 4 hours, 2 years.

Where two numbers are adjacent, spell out one: ten 2-kg weights.

Avoid starting a sentence with digits: either write the number out in full or turn the sentence around so that it starts with a word. However, it is acceptable to begin a sentence with a percentage in digits.

8.2 Ranges of numbers

For clarity, do not elide (omit or join together) number ranges: 113-117 (not 113-17)

Use a hyphen in number ranges, except in the following contexts:

- from 10 to 20 (not from 10-20)
- between 10 and 20 (not between 10-20).

8.3 Ordinal numbers

These follow the same rule as cardinal numbers: first, second, … ninth, 10th, … 101st.

The exceptions are centuries (e.g. 9th century) and editions of books (e.g. 3rd edition).

Ordinal numbers should be in roman and not superscript.

8.4 Million, billion and trillion

Billion is 1,000 million, and trillion is 1 million million.

For clarity's sake, define in parentheses the first time you use the number.

Million and billion can be abbreviated to 'm' and 'bn' to save space in tables or to avoid a lot of repetition in lists of numbers: EUR 100,000m, GBP 500bn.

8.5 Fractions and decimals

Fractions are hyphenated when used as an adverb or adjective (e.g. a two-thirds increase) but not when used as a noun (e.g. an increase of two thirds).

In publications in English, a full stop is used to separate whole numbers from decimals (not a comma).

8.6 Percentages

In statistics, each decimal place, even if zero, adds to accuracy, so 3.5% is not the same as 3.50%. Do not add or remove zeros to make numbers look consistent.

When comparing percentages, clarify the distinction between absolute percentages and percentage points. For example, 'In 2015, transport accounted for 25% of EU greenhouse gas emissions, which is a decrease of three percentage points compared with emissions in 2005.' (i.e. transport accounted for 28% of greenhouse gas emissions in 2005). This is **not** the same as 'In 2015, transport accounted for 25% of EU greenhouse gas emissions, which is a decrease of 3% compared with emissions in 2005.'

When writing ranges of percentages, include the % sign only after the upper limit of the range, i.e. 10-20%.

8.7 Units of measurement

Units should be defined in full at first usage unless it is a commonly used unit. For example, 'million tonnes of oil equivalent (Mtoe)' would be defined, whereas 'cm' would not.

Unit	Description
A	ampere
°C	degree Celsius
cd	candela
cm	centimetre (use cm^3, not cc)
CO_2e	carbon dioxide equivalent
dB	decibel
g	gram
h	hour
ha	hectare
hl	hectolitre

Unit	Description
Hz	hertz
J	joule
kg	kilogram
kJ	kilojoule
km	kilometre
kW	kilowatt
kWh	kilowatt-hour
l	litre
m	metre
mg	milligram
min	minute
ml	millilitre
mm	millimetre
N	newton
nm	nanometre
s	second
t	tonne
tkm	tonne-kilometre
toe	tonne of oil equivalent
V	volt
W	watt

Digits and abbreviated units, % symbols and degree symbols should be displayed as follows: 5°C, 5%, 50km, 5.5ha (see Section 6.8).
Note: there is no space between the digits and the unit when abbreviated.

Hyphenate adjectival units: 50-m rows, 2-kg weights.

Use a solidus (forward slash) in compound units: km/h, not km h−1 (also see Section 6.9). For clarity, use no more than one solidus in a compound unit: m/s per day, not m/s/day. For more complex compound units, you may separate different components of the unit with a space: Mt CO_2e.

8.8 Dates

In text, dates should be given in full (e.g. 24 March 2016 — no commas), whereas in references to the Official Journal, they should be abbreviated (e.g. 24.3.2016). In footnotes, they can be either in full or abbreviated, providing a consistent style is followed.

When including the day of the week, there is no need for a comma: Thursday 24 March 2016.

Use the 1990s — not 'the nineties' or 'the 90's'. Avoid beginning a sentence with a year: instead, write 'The year 2016…' or turn the sentence around.

In time spans, the years should both be written in full, and a single hyphen with no spaces should separate the two years: 2014-2020, not 2014-20.

Note: 2013-2014 is two years, whereas 2013/2014 is one academic, financial or marketing year.

Dates and time spans precede the expression that they qualify: ‘the 2014-2020 work programme’ (not ‘the work programme 2014-2020’) or the 2013-2017 time period.

8.9 Time

The 24-hour system should be used in all cases.

The 24-hour system is written: 09.30 (no ‘h’ or ‘hrs’). The full hour is written with zero minutes: 12.00 (midday), 14.00, 00.00 (midnight).

8.10 Currencies

Currencies can be expressed using the currency's name, the ISO code or the symbol in less formal contexts. See Section 11.1 for the ISO codes for EU currencies.

Use the currency's name when it is referred to generally: 'a sum in euros'.
Note: one euro, two euros.

Use the ISO code for sums of money: 'EUR 12,500', 'EUR 10 million', USD 800. Note the **fixed space** between the ISO code and the digit. In a range, there is no need to repeat the ISO code: ‘EUR 1,000 1,500’.

The ISO code is also used in table headings, along with any multiplier: '(EUR)', '(million EUR)'.

9 Abbreviations and acronyms

9.1 Conventions

This is complicated but you should avoid overusing abbreviations and acronyms, as too many can make the text difficult to read. Please include a list of abbreviations and acronyms at the end of your report.

Spell out any abbreviations in full at first mention in the executive summary and again in each subsequent chapter, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses, e.g. Eighth Environment Action programme (8th EAP) For subsequent uses, provide a brief description of the abbreviation: 'the ZPAP policy instrument'. Avoid using the abbreviation many times in short succession.

If an abbreviation is first used in a text feature (e.g. table, figure, box), define it again at first mention in the text.

If an abbreviation is only ever used in text features and never in running text, define it at first mention and include it in the list of abbreviations.

There are three different types of abbreviation:

- In a true abbreviation, the end of the word is cut off (truncated) and replaced with a full stop (e.g. vol., ed.).
- In a contraction, the interior of the word is removed, but the first and last letters remain, so there is no full stop (e.g. Dr, Ltd, No).
- An acronym is formed from the initial letters of the word, and a true acronym can be pronounced (e.g. NATO, Unesco, Eionet). (See Section 9.2 for information on capitalisation of acronyms). An initialism is an acronym that is pronounced as the individual letters (e.g. the BBC, the EEA).

Upper case abbreviations do not take full stops but lower case abbreviations usually do (e.g. a.m., p.m.).

Note that, 'No' (for number) is a contraction of 'Numero', so it does not take a full stop. The plural is 'Nos'.

9.2 Capitalisation

An initialism (cannot be pronounced) is all in upper case, regardless of the number of letters.

An acronym that can be pronounced is in upper case up to and including five letters (e.g. UNEP). In all other cases, it appears in title case (e.g. Corine, Esprit, Eionet).

9.3 Plurals, possessives and the definite and indefinite articles

Acronyms and abbreviations are treated as normal nouns. Hence, they take the plural (e.g. SMEs) and the possessive (e.g. the BBC's environment correspondent).

As a general rule, use the definite article (the) with initialisms (e.g. 'She works for the EEA') but not with acronyms (e.g. 'He works for NATO'). However, note that there are some exceptions in the names of companies (e.g. IBM, not the IBM) and universities and research institutions (e.g. UEA — not the UEA).

Assume that abbreviations will be read as such rather than as the term in full (e.g. 'an HP', not 'a HP').

9.4 Units and compass points

Commonly used units (e.g. cm, km, ha) need not be defined at first mention, though it can be helpful to define uncommon units. Less commonly used units should be defined at first mention (e.g. megatonnes carbon dioxide equivalent ($MtCO_2e$)).

Units do not take a full stop and do not have plurals (e.g. 5ha, 55dB(A)).

Points of the compass and bearings are always upper case without full stops (e.g. NW, 54°E).

9.5 Commonly used abbreviations and acronyms

8th EAP	Eighth Environment Action Programme
CAP	common agricultural policy
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEAP	circular economy action plan
CHP	combined heat and power
CICES	Common International Classification of Ecosystem Services
CLC	Corine Land Cover
CO_2e	Carbon dioxide equivalent
Cordis	Community Research and Development Information Service
Corine	Coordination of Information on the Environment
DG	Directorate-General
EEA	European Environment Agency **For clarity**: do not abbreviate European Economic Area
EEA-32	The 27 EU Member States plus Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey
EEA-38	The EEA-32 countries plus six cooperating countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Serbia and Kosovo (under UN Security Council Resolution 1244/99)
EEA-39	The EEA-32 countries plus six cooperating countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, North Macedonia, Serbia and Kosovo (under UN Security Council Resolution 1244/99)

EEA-40	The EEA-32 countries plus eight cooperating countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Ukraine and Kosovo (under UN Security Council Resolution 1244/99))
EED	Energy Efficiency Directive
EFTA	European Free Trade Area
EIA	environmental impact assessment
Eionet	European Environmental Information and Observation Network
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ETC BE	European Topic Centre on Biodiversity and Ecosystems
ETC CA	European Topic Centre on Climate Change Adaptation and LULUCF
ETC CE	European Topic Centre on Circular Economy and Resources
ETC CM	European Topic Centre on Climate Change Mitigation
ETC DI	European Topic Centre on Data Integration and Digitalisation
ETC HE	European Topic Centre on Human Health and the Environment
ETC ST	European Topic Centre on Sustainability Trends, Prospects and Responses
EU	European Union
EU-27	the 27 EU Member States
EUNIS	European Nature Information System
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FRMP	flood risk management plan
GDP	gross domestic product
GHG	greenhouse gas
GIS	geographic information system
GPS	global positioning system
ICT	information and communication technologies
IEA	International Energy Agency
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
JRC	Joint Research Centre (of the European Commission)
ktoe	kilotonne of oil equivalent
LPG	liquefied petroleum gas
LRTAP	Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution
LULUCF	land use, land use change and forestry
Mtoe	million tonnes of oil equivalent
NDC	nationally determined contributions
NEAP	national energy and climate plans
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NOx	nitrogen oxides
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics

NVZ	nitrate vulnerable zone
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PM	particulate matter
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 µm or less
PM_{10}	particulate matter with a diameter of 10 µm or less
PoM	programme of measures
R&D	research and development
RBMP	river basin management plan
RDP	rural development programme
RED	Renewable Energy Directive
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	strategic environmental assessment
SOER	State of the Environment Report
SOx	Sulphur oxides
SPA	Special Protection Area
TEN-E	Trans-European Energy Network
TEN-T	Trans-European Transport Network
TERM	Transport and Environment Reporting Mechanism
toe	tonne of oil equivalent
UN	United Nations
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UN Environment	United Nations Environment Programme
Unesco	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WHO	World Health Organization
WISE	Water Information System for Europe
WTO	World Trade Organization
ZPAP	zero pollution action plan

Note: For expressions that are not commonly used by non-research trained readers, such as 'combined heat and power', 'environment impact assessment', 'flood risk management plan', etc. write out in full unless the phrase occurs many times in quick succession.

10 Lists

10.1 Lists in running text

These work only for short lists of items. Introduce the list with a colon. If appropriate, number items in parentheses and separate with commas or semicolons.
For example:

> This is a systematic process consisting of: (1) mapping of ecosystems, (2) assessment of ecosystem condition, and (3) assessment of ecosystem service delivery.

> This is a systematic three-step process: (1) mapping of ecosystems; (2) assessment of ecosystem condition; and (3) assessment of ecosystem service delivery.

For longer lists of longer items, use a displayed list.

10.2 Displayed lists

These may be numbered or bulleted. There is rarely a need for any other type of list (e.g. alphabetised).

Use bulleted lists as a rule and reserve numbered lists for items that are prioritised or where the number is stated in the introductory sentence. The introductory sentence should describe the list:

> Ecosystem monitoring and assessment is a systematic three-step process:
>
> 1. mapping of ecosystems;
> 2. assessment of ecosystem condition;
> 3. assessment of ecosystem service delivery.

For list items that are not full sentences, even if quite long, introduce the list with a colon and begin each item with a lower case letter and end with a semicolon. The exception here is the last item, which takes a full stop.

> The aims of ecosystem monitoring and assessment are to:
>
> - create an inventory of ecosystem conditions across Europe;
> - understand the causes of ecosystem degradation;
> - devise measures to prevent further degradation and restore conditions;
> - ensure the delivery of ecosystem services.

For list items that are full sentences, even if quite short, introduce the list with a colon or full stop and begin each item with a capital letter and end with a full stop.

The key impacts of climate change on European ecosystems and biodiversity are listed below:

- The timing of seasonal events in plants and a nimals is changing (for example the breeding seasons of insects).
- Many plant and animal species are shifting their distribution to higher latitudes and altitudes.
- Almost 20% of species and 12% of habitats are potentially under threat.

For lists that come directly below a heading, regardless of whether or not the items are full sentences, begin each with a capital letter and end with a full stop.

Avoid sub lists as far as possible. Where their use is unavoidable, use lower case roman numerals for numbered sub lists (i, ii, iii, etc.) and open circles for bulleted sub lists.



11 Countries

11.1 Correct names for countries and states

The names of countries can be subject to dispute, so it is important to use the correct name. In EEA publications, the short form is used throughout (e.g. Austria and not AT). The EU Interinstitutional style guide has a full list of countries (in order of the short form), country codes, capitals, nationalities, currencies and currency codes.

Below is a list of the EU Member States and candidate countries, their country codes, currencies and currency codes. Note that, at the time of writing, the EU has 27 Member States.

Short name	Country code	Currency	Currency code
Member States			
Austria	AT	euro	EUR
Belgium	BE	euro	EUR
Bulgaria	BG	lev (pl. leva)	BGN
Croatia	HR	kuna (no pl.)	HRK
Cyprus	CY	euro	EUR
Czechia	CZ	Czech koruna (pl. koruny)	CZK
Denmark	DK	Danish krone (pl. kroner)	DKK
Estonia	EE	euro	EUR
Finland	FI	euro	EUR
France	FR	euro	EUR
Germany	DE	euro	EUR
Greece	EL	euro	EUR
Hungary	HU	forint (no pl.)	HUF
Ireland	IE	euro	EUR
Italy	IT	euro	EUR
Latvia	LV	euro	EUR
Lithuania	LT	euro	EUR
Luxembourg	LU	euro	EUR
Malta	MT	euro	EUR
Netherlands	NL	euro	EUR
Poland	PL	zloty (pl. zlotys)	PLN
Portugal	PT	euro	EUR
Romania	RO	Romanian leu (pl. lei)	RON
Slovakia	SK	euro	EUR
Slovenia	SI	euro	EUR

Short name	Country code	Currency	Currency code
Spain	ES	euro	EUR
Sweden	SE	Swedish krona (pl. kronor)	SEK
Candidate countries			
Albania	AL	lek (no pl.)	ALL
North Macedonia	MK	denar (pl. denars)	MKD
Moldova	MD	Moldovan leu	MDL
Montenegro	ME	euro	EUR
Serbia	RS	Serbian dinar	RSD
Türkiye	TR	Turkish lira (no pl.)	TRY
Ukraine	UA	Hryvnia	UAH

While it is appropriate to use the definite article in the names of some countries in running text (i.e. the Netherlands, the United Kingdom), it need not be included in tables or in addresses.

Use Czechia, not the Czech Republic. Use Slovakia, not the Slovak Republic.

Use Ireland, not Republic of Ireland, Irish Republic, Southern Ireland or Éire.

Use the Netherlands, not Holland, which is only part of the Netherlands. Note that there is no need for a capital T on 'the'.

Use 'North Macedonia', not 'Macedonia' or ‘FYROM’. In alphabetised lists, list under 'N'.

Do not use the term 'Republic of Kosovo'. The first time Kosovo is mentioned, it should be footnoted with the qualifier 'under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244/99'. Avoid using 'country' or 'state' in references to Kosovo: use instead 'partner' or ‘beneficiary', as appropriate.

Use Türkiye not Turkey

Use United Kingdom, not Great Britain, which does not include Northern Ireland.

The purely geographical term 'British Isles' includes Ireland, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands, which are not part of the United Kingdom.

Use United States for the noun, not US or USA. US may be used as the adjective, e.g. US dollar.

When using the abbreviation 'EU-27', please define it at first mention: '...in the 27 EU Member States (EU-27).'

If referring to the countries in the EU before the accession of Croatia in 2013, please use EU-27_2007 and be sure to define it at first mention: '...in the 27 Member States between 1 January 2007 and 30 June 2023 (EU-27_2007)

When using the abbreviation 'EU-28', which includes the United Kingdom before it left the EU, define it at first mention: '… in the 28 EU Member States (EU-28)'.

11.2 Ordering countries in lists

Unless there is a good reason for not doing so, countries should be listed in alphabetical order in English, regardless of whether they are EU Member States or not.

However, this does not apply where there is a good reason for ranking countries differently, for example:

> Emissions were highest in Austria, followed by France and Germany.

11.3 EEA member countries

The EEA currently has 32 member countries: the 27 EU Member States plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Türkiye.

When using the abbreviation 'EEA-32', define it at first mention: '… in the 32 EEA member countries (EEA-32)'.

The eight cooperating countries are: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine, as well as Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244/99.

When using the abbreviation 'EEA-40', define it at first mention: '… in the 32 EEA member countries and eight cooperating countries (EEA-40)'.

11.4 Names of cities and regions

Use the anglicised forms of well-known city and region names (e.g. Prague, not Praha). If there is no anglicised form, use the name in the original language with correct accents (e.g. Malmö).

12 Writing for web-based publications

(Adapted from the EU Information Providers Guide: The EU Internet Handbook)

12.1 Users

Who is the target audience and what do you want them to do with the information once they have read it?

Imagine the questions your audience will want answered (who, why, what, how, when etc.) and structure your text around them.

Offer readers a next step to help them on their way i.e. find out more, contact us, frequently asked questions, etc.

12.2 Writing for the public

Your web text should be written and presented differently to print text. It is generally more informal and conversational.

You should use words the general public understands. This means steering clear of EU terminology and jargon where possible. This approach works equally well when writing for an expert audience, especially as many experts will be reading in a language that is not their own.

12.3 Content

Make sure the page has just one main subject and make the subject clear for your audience.

Place key information at the top of the page.

Only write essential content, i.e. what the reader really needs to know, using short, functional prose and simple, accessible language. This is especially relevant for readers viewing content on mobile devices. It also makes for quicker and easier translation.

Do not repeat background information existing elsewhere on your site or on the web: link to it instead.

Use plenty of meaningful subheadings to break up the text, then demonstrate how different sections link to each other.

Keep paragraphs short. Three or four lines is a good length. Your paragraphs should each contain one well-formed idea.

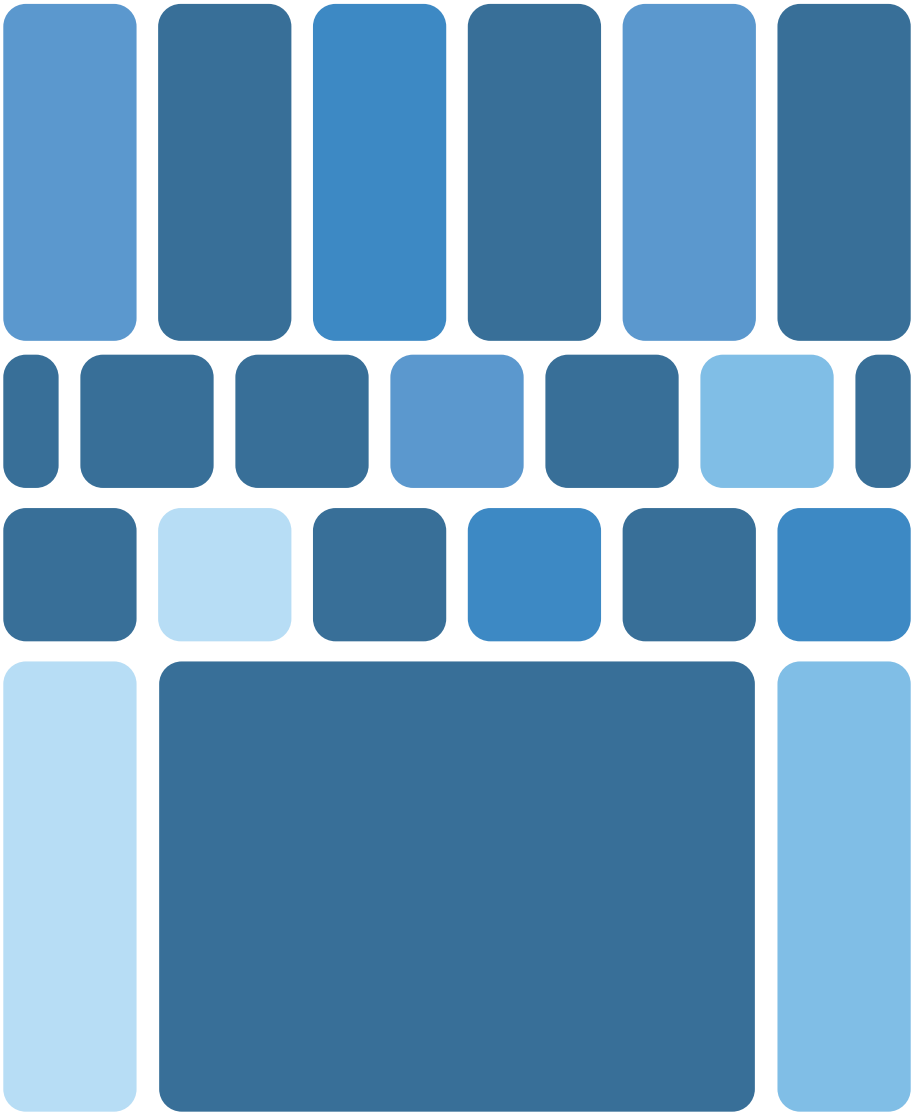
Buttons or link titles should use sentence case, unless a proper noun is included. If using a proper noun on the button or link, capitalise all first letters.

Use bullet lists or tables when listing three or more items.

12.4 Search engine optimisation

Your page will be much more easily found if short, meaningful keywords are included, preferably at the beginning:

- Title
- Meta description tag
- Links (i.e. links over keywords, not just URLs)
- Headings



13 Artificial intelligence

13.1 Disclosure for use in publications

The EEA has developed guidelines for the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools at the EEA. All authors wishing to use generative AI tools when preparing content for an EEA publication should familiarise themselves with these guidelines.

In addition, the following AI disclosure notice has been prepared and will be included in the colophon of EEA reports and on briefing web pages.

Draft AI disclaimer for EEA products

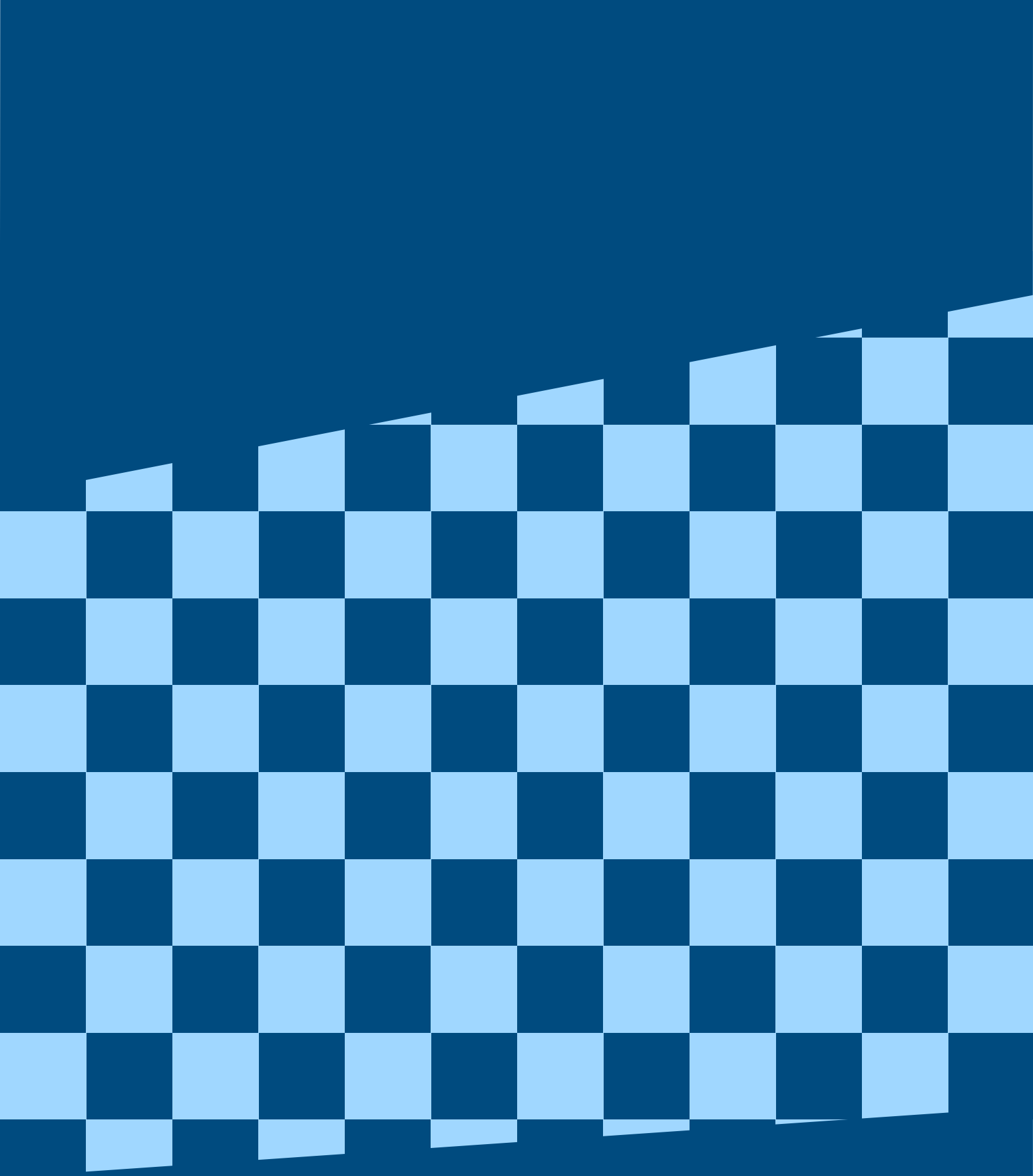
For the template:

At submission of the manuscript for edit, authors must disclose whether AI-assisted technologies have been used to produce any part of the work in question.
A description of the technologies used, including the name of the tool(s) in question, and what they were used for should be included. The use of AI tools for language support (checking grammar, spelling) and reference management does not need to be disclosed.

- Were AI-assisted technologies used in the production of this [report/briefing/indicator]?
- If so, please name the tool(s) used:
- Please describe for what purpose the tool(s) in question were used and, if necessary, include any prompts.

For the final product if AI is used:

'AI was used in the production of content for this [report/briefing/indicator]. The [language model; chatbot; image creator] [name(s) of tool(s)] [was/were] used to [describe how and in what way the AI tools were used]. The content for this [report/briefing/indicator] reflects the information and state of knowledge available on the date it was adopted or endorsed; it is not necessarily comprehensive, complete, accurate or up to date; it is not to be interpreted as professional or legal advice. The EEA consequently accepts no responsibility for the content of the [report/briefing/indicator] and the use that may be made of it.'



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