



COUNCIL OF EUROPE **ENGLISH** **STYLE GUIDE**

**Better English and style,
in print and online**

2025

COUNCIL OF EUROPE **ENGLISH STYLE GUIDE 2025**

Better English and style
in print and online

Editorial Unit
Publications and Visual
Identity Division

French edition:

Typomémo du Conseil de l'Europe – édition 2025

The *Council of Europe English style guide* and the *Typomémo français* are available in electronic form (PDF) on the DGA intranet pages:

- on the DGS portal, in the “Useful links” rubric;
- on the [Publications production](#) page, in the “Resources” rubric.

They are also available in the [Administrative Handbook](#).

A paper version can be printed using the in-house SCRIB printing system. For complete instructions, please consult the guide “How to print the *English style guide* using SCRIB”, available in the [Administrative Handbook](#).

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Contents

FOREWORD	5
Acknowledgements	5
Changes since the previous edition	5
GENERAL INFORMATION	7
Sources and reference works	7
References	8
Online references	11
Footnotes and endnotes	12
Drafting in English	12
Numbers, figures, numerals	15
Text formatting	16
Titles and sub-titles	16
Lists	17
Punctuation	18
Commonly misused words and expressions in English	19
HOUSE STYLE – ALPHABETICAL LISTING	23
APPENDICES	45
Appendix 1a: 46 member states of the Council of Europe	45
Appendix 1b: relevant non-member states of the Council of Europe	48
Appendix 2: common abbreviations	50
Appendix 3: commonly used foreign words, Latinisms and a few abbreviations	58
Appendix 4: helpful information for commissioning departments	61

Direct links to the alphabetical listing

[A](#) | [B](#) | [C](#) | [D](#) | [E](#) | [F](#) | [G](#) | [H](#) | [I](#) | [J](#) | [K](#) | [L](#) | [M](#) | [N](#) | [O](#) | [P](#) | [Q](#) | [R](#) | [S](#) | [T](#) | [U](#) | [V](#) | [W](#) | [X](#) | [Y](#) | [Z](#)

Foreword

The *Council of Europe English style guide* is for anyone who writes, prepares, translates, types, lays out, corrects, copy-edits or proofreads documents or publications for the Council of Europe, in-house or externally.

It is intended to offer clear guidance on typographical, linguistic and stylistic issues and is based upon rules and standards used in the printing and publishing industries. The inherent challenge in such an undertaking is twofold: to summarise, in one volume, a number of useful rules and guidelines, and to do so without reproducing information that can be easily found in the reference works cited at the beginning of this guide.

The main objective is to improve the quality of texts produced within the Organisation, both on paper and in electronic format, making them more coherent and easier to understand. It is our intention to produce a new, updated edition every two or three years.

We strongly encourage the users of this guide to send any questions and/or suggestions to the following e-mail address, mentioning “Style guide 2025” in the subject line: Editorial-Unit@coe.int.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to all those who devoted some of their precious time to this new edition, and in particular the dedicated members of the different departments of the Organisation and our external copy-editors and proofreaders, whose pertinent – and often difficult – questions help point us in the right direction to improve this work. Special thanks to the English Translation team for their invaluable input.

Changes since the previous edition

All significant changes since the previous edition (2021) are indicated **in dark red** in the PDF. This is to make it easier for the regular user to pick out the updated sections.

There is a new section in this edition: “**Commonly misused words and expressions in English**”. It provides helpful guidance for the correct usage of vocabulary and expressions that can cause trouble for writers and editors. The Editorial Unit and the Translation Department will update this section regularly.

Editorial Unit
Publications and Visual Identity Division
Council of Europe

General information

Sources and reference works

Main reference works

Entries in this style guide are limited to questions not covered in the works listed below. References are to the latest edition unless otherwise specified.

- ▶ *Oxford dictionary of English* (ODE), Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- ▶ *New Oxford style manual*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
This new edition contains “New Hart’s rules” and “New Oxford dictionary for writers and editors”.
- ▶ *Butcher’s copy-editing: the Cambridge handbook for editors, copy-editors and proofreaders* (4th edn) Butcher J., Drake C. and Leach M., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- ▶ *New Oxford spelling dictionary*, Oxford University Press, Oxford (for spelling and word division).
- ▶ *The Council of Europe French-English legal dictionary*
Bridge F. H. S. (1994), Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg.

General works

For questions concerning English grammar and syntax:

- ▶ *Fowler’s dictionary of modern English usage*
Butterfield J. (ed.), Oxford University Press, Oxford.

For proof correction, use the following:

- ▶ British Standard 5261-2:2005, “Copy preparation and proof correction. Specification for typographic requirements, marks for copy preparation and proof correction, proofing procedure”, British Standards Institution, London.

Helpful Council of Europe websites

- ▶ Treaty Office website: www.coe.int/en/web/conventions.
- ▶ Committee of Ministers adopted texts: www.coe.int/en/web/cm/adopted-texts.
- ▶ Parliamentary Assembly documents: semantic-pace.net.
- ▶ HUDOC (European Court of Human Rights case-law database): <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/>.
- ▶ Congress of Local and Regional Authorities: www.coe.int/en/web/congress/adopted-texts.

Inclusive language

For information on the use of non-binary or non-sexist language in English, see the Council of Europe’s “Guidelines for the use of language as a driver of inclusivity” at: <https://rm.coe.int/guidelines-for-the-use-of-language-as-a-driver-of-inclusivity/1680aec235>.

Language Policy of the Council of Europe

The new Language Policy of the Council of Europe aims to ensure respect for, and the promotion of, the bilingualism provided for under Article 12 of the Organisation’s Statute. It is available at: <https://rm.coe.int/council-of-europe-language-policy/4880284f1d>.

References

Bibliography is the citing of reference works in a consistent and accurate manner in order to offer proof or justification for what an author is writing, give credit to others whose works contributed to the writing of a book and enable readers to identify and locate the works cited.

Plagiarism is taking credit for someone else's work, in the form of texts, unique ideas, images or music, whether intentionally or not. This includes using quotations or parts of a work without acknowledging the original author or artist.

Giving credit for the work, images and ideas used in a publication is an ethical and legal obligation.

If there is any doubt about the true origin of text, images or ideas presented in a publication, please contact the Editorial Unit. Please note that the Editorial Unit uses software to detect plagiarism and text drafted by artificial intelligence.

Reference list or bibliography

The most common types of list used in Council of Europe documents are:

- ▶ a list entitled "References", which gives the exact details of works to which the author refers directly in the text; all in-text references should have a corresponding entry in the reference list, and vice versa;
- ▶ a "Bibliography" presents works that are related to the subject matter of the work and used in its drafting (like a selected reading list). A list following these guidelines is generally sufficient when the author does not refer directly to sources in the body of the text;
- ▶ a hybrid "Bibliography" combining the two previous lists under two separate sub-headings: "References" and "Further reading".

The list comes at the back of the work or at the end of each article or contribution in the case of multi-author works.

House style

Council of Europe style is to prefer the author–date (Harvard) system for references. We strongly recommend using this system from the outset, as imposing it upon an existing manuscript with an inconsistent or insufficient alternative entails a large number of changes, longer production times and increased cost. Multi-author works with separate bibliographies for each contribution should use the same system throughout.

Do not put bibliographical references in footnotes. References in footnotes take up a great deal of space on the page and very quickly become repetitive and unmanageable. In long works with many references, identical references take up space needlessly, variations of similar references appear by mistake, and so-called solutions such as "op. cit.", "see note (number)" or "*supra*" referring to previous references are either useless to the reader or unmanageable for those producing the work.

Be advised: the Editorial Unit will apply these practices whenever necessary, thus increasing the cost and production time of publications/documents should this advice be ignored.

How to reference works using the author–date (Harvard) system

When authors refer to or reproduce another's work in the body of their texts, a "short-form" reference is inserted, in parentheses, providing the name of the author/editor and the year of publication for that work, with no punctuation between the two. The complete bibliographical references are grouped together in an alphabetical list at the end of the work. Readers can consult this list for more information on the author's sources.

	Rule	Examples
In-text author–date reference	If more than one in-text reference is given, they should be in alphabetical order separated by a comma.	(Bell 2000) (Bell 2000, Nelson 2022)
	If two or more references have the same author/editor and publication year, each should have a lower-case letter (roman type) added to the year to distinguish them.	(Bell 2003a) (Bell 2003b)
	Page numbers may be inserted after a colon for precision.	(Bell 2003b: 251-8)
Reference list		Bell J. (2000), <i>The state of human trafficking in the world</i> , Oxford University Press, Oxford. Bell J. (2003a), "Human trafficking in Europe", <i>Human rights today</i> , Oxford University Press, Oxford. Bell J. (2003b), "Smuggling groups in the crossfire", <i>The fight against human trafficking</i> , Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

How to compile a reference list

Entries are listed in alphabetical order by author/editor. Put multiple works by the same author/editor in date order (earliest first). Then put in date order any works where the same author/editor is the first named (of three or more); these should be cited as "[Author] et al."

Complete bibliographical references in the compiled list should follow this format. Commas separate each piece of information and a full stop closes the reference.

① Author (date), ② Title, ③ Publisher, ④ Place of publication.

Koppy E. D. (2010), *Proofreading*, Tallulah Press, Tallulah.

	Rule	Examples
1. Author (date)		
Names	Author/editor's surname first, then initial(s); no punctuation between the author's surname and initial(s) or the date. Initials take points and a space between each if more than one. The date of the publication follows the name in parentheses and is separated from the title by a comma.	Bell J. (2020)
	List authors/editors with compound names according to the first of their surnames.	Pozo Martín F. (2015)
	For names with prefixes (de, van, von, etc.), list according to the surname and put the prefix after the initial, in parentheses.	Boer-Buquicchio M. (de) (2016)

	Institutions and organisations can appear as the editor of works when no author(s) can be identified.	World Health Organization (WHO) (1999)
	If no author/editor can be identified, put the title of the work first. Do not use "Anonymous" as the author's name.	<i>A tail of a lost puppy</i> (2020), Oaktree Press.
	If no date is available, insert "n.d." (no date) in parentheses.	Smiff M. (n.d.)
Multi-author works	Up to three authors – put the names as they appear on the cover of the work. More than three authors – put the first name to appear on the cover of the work, followed by "et al." (roman).	Witherspoon M. and Merry P. (1924), <i>Ersatz upbringing</i> , Pingu Publishing, Cheswick. Irvine Q. et al. (2007), <i>Lopsided geometry</i> , Fiddlers, Tottenham.
Editors, translators	In compilations and compendiums, the editor's name appears first, followed by "(ed.)" (plural "(eds)"). To indicate a translator's name, add "(tr.)" (plural "(trs)") after the title, followed by the name.	Wedley H. and Stanley P. (eds) (2010), <i>Antidisestablishmentarianism today</i> , O'Reilly, Cork. Rubikk E. (1990), <i>Life in a cube</i> , (tr.) Moore S., Lubrik, Sussex.
2. Title		
Complete works	Titles of books (ISBN publications) should be in italics (no quotation marks), with initial capitals on the first word of the title and on proper nouns only (see min. caps).	<i>History of the Council of Europe</i>
Newspapers	Titles of newspapers should also be in italics, but they keep the capitals of their registered name.	<i>The Guardian</i> <i>The Times</i>
Series	Put series titles in roman type (capitals on all significant words) and the number in the series after the title.	Author (date), Title, Series Title No. in series, Publisher, Place of publication. Evermore R. (2012), <i>Webliography</i> , Editorial Studies No. 7, Ps & Qs Publishing, London.
Journals	Titles of articles in periodicals and journals take quotation marks, followed by the journal name (in italics), (volume) number and page numbers.	Author (date), "Title", Title of journal, Volume number, Issue number [if pertinent], page numbers. Creese A. and Blackledge A. (2010), "Translanguaging in the bilingual classroom: a pedagogy for learning and teaching?", <i>Modern Language Journal</i> , Vol. 94, Issue 1, pp. 103-15.
Part of a work	Titles of articles, contributions, chapters, dissertations, booklets, reports or unpublished works should be in roman min. caps, in quotation marks followed by "in" and information on the larger work.	Author (date), "Title", in Author/ editor, Title of work, Publisher, Place of publication. Hamm E. B. (1980), "A nostalgic analysis of the English breakfast", in Sauce H. P. (ed.), <i>Cooking nation</i> , Unwin, London.
Editions	As necessary, put the edition number in parentheses after the title, no comma before.	Wise G. (2012), <i>Penny wise, euro foolish</i> (9th edn), Bankish, London.

Foreign-language titles and translations	Works should be cited as referred to by the author. If the original language is not English, there are two possibilities: either a reference to an English translation, if available, can be given in addition, or a translation of the title in English can be given in roman min. caps, in square brackets. The original-language edition may be specified if the main reference is to a translation.	Sartre J.-P. (1945), <i>L'âge de raison</i>, Gallimard, Paris; English translation: <i>The age of reason</i>, Knopf, New York (1947). Rugen I. (1999), <i>Ferien bei mir</i> [Holidays at my place], Stumpf, Berlin. Nonante J. D. (2000), <i>Insignificant social diseases</i>, Nailer, New York [French orig. <i>Maladies sociales insignifiantes</i>, Brouette, Paris, 1989].
3. Publisher	Provide the full name of the publishing company of the publication or journal.	
4. Place	Provide the city where the publishing company is located.	

Capitalisation in bibliographies

Initial capitals in the titles of published works present a particular problem in bibliographies, where the reader is confronted with many different styles. To avoid inconsistency, experience has shown that the easiest approach to this problem is to harmonise along the lines of Council of Europe practice. This means book and article titles in bibliographies and reference lists should have initial capitals on the first word of the title and on proper nouns only, but not on the other words (see [min. caps](#)). The titles of newspapers and journals should keep the capitals of their registered name.

Do not change initial capitals for the foreign-language titles of books, organisations, etc., as they may not follow the same rules as English titles. Check titles on the internet or with a native speaker if in doubt.

Online references

	Note	Examples
Websites	References to websites might contain any of the information given above for bibliographical entries. Follow the basic template chosen, but add the URL (uniform resource locator, or internet address), preceded by “, available at”, and provide the date accessed. Sometimes it can be difficult to find an author and/or date of publication for website information. Give as much information as possible, for example using the website organisation as the author, so that the information can be found as easily as possible. Titles of websites are in roman, unless the site has a printed version, such as newspapers: <i>The Guardian</i>. ! Do not use a URL that directly opens a third-party PDF. Web addresses must lead to sites where readers can download PDFs themselves. ! Do not provide URLs to paid or members-only content. These will be removed.	Online publications World Health Organization (2024), <i>World health statistics 2024: monitoring health for the SDGs</i>, WHO publications, available at: www.who.int/publications/item/9789240094703, accessed 2 February 2025. Websites Council of Europe, Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists, available at: https://fom.coe.int/en/accueil. Article on website Council of Europe (2023), “Media freedom in Europe in 2023 – Partners’ report”, Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists, available at: https://fom.coe.int/en/rapports/detail/18.

URLs	If the URL begins with “www”, leave off the preceding “http://” or “https://”, which is unsightly and takes up space. Avoid using excessively long URLs. They are useless in printed documents.	Helpful hint: to shorten long Council of Europe URLs, use the intranet tool: How to generate short url – Web Resources .
Hyperlinks	Keep in mind the nature of your publication or document when inserting hyperlinks into the running text of a manuscript. Hyperlinks are useless in a printed version. Be sure that hyperlinks lead to a page where PDFs can be downloaded and do not open a third-party PDF directly.	

Footnotes and endnotes

Use sparingly. Incorporate information into the body of the text if relevant, and delete otherwise. Footnotes clutter up the page and make the work more difficult to read. Very long and/or numerous footnotes cause serious technical problems at layout, especially when used in tables. Avoid them entirely on title pages, headings, display elements and so on.

Keep footnotes in tables to a minimum. Notes in tables should be referenced using either symbols or lower-case letters and should appear at the foot of the table, not at the foot of the page. This is to avoid both confusion between the footnotes in tables with those in the text and technical difficulties at layout.

Do not put bibliographical references in footnotes. Use the author–date system in conjunction with a reference list at the end of the work/article. This style should be consistently applied throughout, particularly in multi-author works.

Footnotes v. endnotes. Footnotes and endnotes serve different purposes, depending on the type of publication, the information they contain and the intended readership. Most non-specialist literature uses footnotes, which are easier for the reader to consult.

Style and formatting

Footnote cues: use superscript numbers as footnote cues in the body of the text, not symbols (*, §, †, ‡). Footnotes should be numbered continuously from “1” to “n” throughout the book. Footnote cues should be placed after any punctuation. Do not put brackets around footnote cues.

Footnotes: each note begins with a number, not superscript, followed by a full stop and a single space. Do not use a hanging-indent paragraph format for footnote text. The footnote should be in a smaller typeface (8-point notes for 10-point body text, for example).

Drafting in English

The Council of Europe uses standard British English. Be sure to set the “proofing language” of your Word file to British English before you start writing to benefit from Word’s editing tools.

Capitalisation

There is a trend in British English away from capital letters. Book titles, for example, are often no longer capitalised throughout and have only an initial capital on the first word and proper nouns (see [min. caps](#)). This is standard Council of Europe practice.

When the reference is specific (singular and plural)	In general use
the Ukrainian Chairmanship/Presidency	the chairmanship/presidency
the Swiss Government	the government

the Prime Minister of Canada	the prime minister
the Committee of Experts on Social Affairs	the committee
the European Youth Centre	the centre
the Labour Act	the act
the Warsaw Declaration	the declaration
Articles 2 and 3	several articles
the Finnish and Russian Governments	two governments

For official titles, only put capitals on each important word when it is complete or in a commonly accepted short form. This rule applies when referring to an institution, committee or other body, action plan, campaign, project, programme, process, strategy, job title, legal instrument, article, session or geographical formations such as rivers, mountains, bodies of water, etc. See [Headline style](#).

Helpful info

- ▶ The use of an acronym/initialism does not justify the use of initial capitals in the full form when none of the words used would otherwise require initial capitals (information and communication technologies, ICTs).
- ▶ Do not change capitalisation within quotations.
- ▶ In titles and headings, put a capital letter after an en dash, but not after a colon.

Council of Europe style

The following are generally in lower case: titles of draft documents or draft agreements, member, paragraph, meeting, partner for democracy (status).

The following are well-established Council of Europe short forms that can be used when the context ensures that the reference is clear. Note the use of capital letters.

the Convention	the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (European Convention on Human Rights)
the Court	the European Court of Human Rights
the Charter	the (revised) European Social Charter
the Assembly	the Parliamentary Assembly
the Bureau	the Bureau of the Parliamentary Assembly
the Organisation	the Council of Europe
the Congress	the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities
1st/2nd/3rd/4th Summit	1st/2nd/3rd/4th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe

In relation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, “Representative”, “Substitute”, “Special guest” and “Observer” take initial capitals when referring to people, as opposed to states or other entities: “Damien Abad, Representative, Group of the European People’s Party”; “Raivo Aeg, Substitute, Group of the European People’s Party”; “Relations and contacts with observer states, such as Canada”.

Statutory texts

“Party” or “contracting party” are lower case, unless in a convention or other legal instrument, or with the title of such an agreement (State Party to the European Convention on Human Rights).

When the text of a convention and other legal instrument refers to itself (this Convention/Recommendation, etc.), initial capitals should be used. The same rule applies in the text of an explanatory memorandum/report relating directly to such a text.

State or state?

"State" is only capitalised in conventions and the adopted texts of the Committee of Ministers, the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities. **This rule does not apply to other texts and documents.**

Spelling

Consult the latest edition of the *Oxford dictionary of English* for spelling and some elements of style. Failing this, check the *New Oxford spelling dictionary* and *New Oxford style manual*, then the other sources listed above as necessary.

Internet search results can indicate predominant, if not necessarily correct, usage. Use with caution.

Helpful info

- ▶ Use the "-ise" spelling for verbs rather than the "-ize" variant.
- ▶ For "practice", "licence" and other c/s words, spell with "c" for the noun, "s" for the verb (think of "advice" and "advise", where the pronunciation acts as a reminder).
- ▶ Use -ct-, rather than -x- in "connection", "reflection", etc.
- ▶ Spell "co-operate", "co-ordinate", "unco-ordinated", etc., with hyphens.

For borrowed words which now form part of the English language, form the plural with an "s" as in English. For example: forums, memorandums v. fora, memoranda.

Hyphenation

Always make sure the correct language option is set in word-processing and DTP software.

When to hyphenate:

- ▶ to separate prefixes where vowels might otherwise be pronounced as a diphthong: re-enter, co-opt; or with other letter combinations where the pronunciation might be ambiguous: co-production;
- ▶ where the second element of a compound word takes a capital: pan-European, anti-Maastricht;
- ▶ with compound adjectives, to clarify the sense: consider the difference between "a little-used car" and "a little used car" (example from *The Economist style guide*);
- ▶ with "well + adjective" before a noun: a well-read woman, a well-meaning idea; but not after a noun: I like my steaks well done;
- ▶ when using a compound adjective as a modifier: "20th-century history", but "in the 20th century"; "decision-making authority", but "responsible for decision making"; "awareness-raising measure", but "awareness raising on human rights";
- ▶ with nouns based on phrasal verbs ("to hold up a bank", but "a hold-up at the bank"; "to follow up an issue", but "the follow-up on the issue"; "to set up a mechanism", but "the set-up");

When not to hyphenate:

- ▶ in adverb + adjective combinations where the adverb ends in "-ly" ("a happily married couple");
- ▶ with fractions when spelt out and used as a noun ("The rent takes up two thirds of their income."); insert hyphens when used as an adverb or adjective ("two-thirds complete", "a two-thirds increase").

Compound words

It is difficult to lay down rules about the use of the hyphen in compound words, since preferences vary between users and hyphens are often dropped in words accepted into daily speech. As a basic rule, "cyber" and "inter" are always attached (no hyphen), but other prefixes that have no existence as separate words, such as "ex" or "non", may be either hyphenated or run together, in which case look in the *New Oxford spelling dictionary* to make sure.

Numbers, figures, numerals

House style

For cardinals and ordinals, set one to nine in letters, 10 and after in figures. Prefer all figures in an enumeration.

Hard (non-breaking) spaces, not commas, separate thousands: 4 000, 500 000; but points separate decimals: 26.5, 426.25. Use an en dash as a minus sign for negative numbers.

Avoid starting a sentence with a figure. For example, write “The year 1988 was momentous”, instead of “1988 was a momentous year”; “Some 48 people were involved”, instead of “48 people were involved”.

Numbers which form part of a compound modifier, such as “an eight-member committee” or “a 21-gun salute”, should follow general house-style rules given above.

Abbreviate “number” as “No.” (“No. 1”, plural “Nos. 1 and 2”). Initial capital, the “o” should not be written in superscript, point after the “o” (or the “s” in Nos.) and a non-breaking space before the number. Practice at the European Court of Human Rights is at variance with the rest of the Council of Europe (“application no.”) and should be brought into line with general practice in any publications not emanating from the Court itself.

For millions or billions, use the figure followed by the word: 7 million, 8 billion.

Special cases and exceptions

	Rule	Examples
Ages, quantities, dimensions, units	Always given in figures (especially before an abbreviation).	Children aged 5 and above, 6 kg, 3 metres, 9 tonnes
Centuries	Ordinals denoting centuries, should always be in figures.	19th century
Series of conferences, sessions, etc.	Numbered with figures.	18th Conference of European Ministers of Education, 44th Ordinary Session
Percentages	Prefer the symbol “%”, no space between the figure and the symbol. Repeat the percentage symbol in ranges linked by “to” or “and”, but not when linked with a hyphen.	from 50% to 60% between 50% and 60% 30-40%
Degrees	Use figures with the degree symbol for temperature, alcohol content, angles and latitude and longitude. No space between the figure and the symbol.	25°C Strasbourg is 48° 34’ 24” N by 7° 45’ 8” E
Pagination, etc.	Use figures	p. 250 Fig. 5 footnote 6
Ranges	A range of numbers may be elided; use “to” in case of ambiguity, particularly with measurements, which may use a descending as well as an ascending scale. ! Note that Council of Europe house style is to use a hyphen, and not an en dash, in a range of numbers.	pp. 312-17 Write either “from 50 to 100” or “50-100”
Roman numerals	Use only for titles of chapters, appendices and book or document sections, and royalty.	Chapter I Appendix II Charles III

Text formatting

Italics

Do not use italics for emphasis. If the sentence does not convey the right stress without italics, rephrase it.

Do not use italics for quotations.

Foreign words that have not yet been sufficiently assimilated into the English language are italicised. Convention, not logic, generally determines which words meet this assimilation criterion. See individual words in [Appendix 3: commonly used foreign words, Latinisms and a few abbreviations](#) or, failing this, the *New Oxford style manual*. This applies to foreign words used in a general sense, not to proper names or, more specifically, the names of regions, districts, administrations, courts, organisations or bodies, which should appear in roman (upright) type (with a possible translation in brackets). *Land/Länder*, for example, are set in italics because they are used in a general sense; “Bundestag”, however, is in roman type.

Use italics for the full titles of court cases (European Court of Human Rights and other), including the “v.”, *Campbell v. the United Kingdom*. In references to cases such as “the Campbell case”, leave the case name in roman type, see [court cases](#).

The titles of books, periodicals, journals, plays, poems, films, artwork and websites are italicised, as are ship names and biological names (see [biological names](#)). For more on the use of italics in bibliographies, see [References](#).

When a title or other piece of text is italicised, any words that, according to the above rules, should be printed in italics are usually set instead in roman type (a sort of “reverse italics”).

Bold and underline

There should be no bold or underlining in the body of the text. Use bold for headings and table headers.

Superscript, subscript

Superscript type is primarily used for footnote/endnote cues in Council of Europe publications (see [Footnotes and endnotes](#)), but both superscript and subscript type can obviously be used in mathematical, chemical or other formulas where appropriate.

Do not use superscript for ordinals (1st, 2nd, 3rd) or abbreviations/contractions (Dr, Mr, Mrs).

Accents and diacritical marks

There are no diacritics (accents) in the English language. However, they are used for some foreign or borrowed words. These are covered in the reference works cited above; if not, it is usually because the word is not naturalised in English, in which case it takes italics and its normal accents. Partly naturalised words, like “rosé”, are in roman type with accents.

Keep accents on proper names except for geographical names with anglicised spellings (Reykjavik, Zurich).

Displayed quotes/extracts

Quotes of three lines or more should be displayed: indent paragraph, font size reduced by 1 or 2 points, no quotation marks, text in roman type. Indicate the source in brackets after/underneath the quotation.

Titles and sub-titles

Headline style

Also known as “smart caps”. The practice of putting initial capitals on all important words in titles of works and headings, as opposed to sentence style, or “min. caps”. Council of Europe practice is to use smart caps for the titles of conventions and charters: European Convention for the Protection of the Audiovisual Heritage. See [Capitalisation](#).

min. caps

Also called “sentence style”. The practice of putting initial capitals on the first word and on proper nouns only in titles of works and in headings. This is standard Council of Europe practice: “Youth work participation”.

Lists

As with all text, lists should be grammatically sound and employ logical punctuation. They should enhance readability, so pay attention to not making them overly complicated. The items of a list must be equal and consistent (nouns, verbs or full sentences). Ensure consistency and avoid mixing different styles of bullet markers.

Lists require an introductory sentence, which will determine the punctuation and formatting needed thereafter.

Example

The weather in Strasbourg is:

- rainy
- cold
- snowy.

In truth, a list as short as that above does not need to be bulleted and could generally be included in the main text. Longer lists need a little more care.

In the example below, the colon keeps the text that follows “open” and the entries intact, as it would do in running text. The entries in the list do not need initial capital letters and full stops because each one follows on logically from the introductory sentence. End with a full stop after the last entry.

Example

The committee recommended:

- allowing more voting rights for workers and increased holiday allowances;
- extending the consultation period for redundancies;
- capping the number of members of the executive board.

In the example below, full sentences are included in the list so the list is not introduced by a colon – a full stop ends the introductory sentence – and each entry in the following list starts with a capital letter and ends in a full stop, as all normal full sentences should.

Example

The committee recommended the following points for approval at the next meeting.

- Workers should be given greater voting rights and increased holiday allowances.
- The consultation period for redundancies should be extended by two months.
- The number of members of the executive board should be capped for the next three years.

When opting not to use bulleted lists, use appropriate punctuation to ensure a list of items in running text is fully understandable.

Example

The colour combinations chosen for the fabrics, in order of popularity, were blue, mauve and white; red, white and blue; and green, black and grey.

If the above were presented with commas instead of semi-colons, it would be utterly confusing.

Punctuation

Name	Character	Notes
Apostrophe	'	Used to: ▶ indicate possession (John's book; the boys' coats); ▶ replace a missing letter (can't; she's; wouldn't). Be careful not to use the diacritics used for grave (è) and acute (é) accents, often mistaken on non-English keyboards for apostrophes: (') ('). Never use two apostrophes for double quote marks.
Colon	:	Used to: ▶ precede a list of items, a quotation or explanation; ▶ divide a sentence into two parts that contrast with or balance each other; ▶ separate hours and minutes – 4:30 p.m.; ▶ indicate page numbers in an author–date reference.
Comma	,	Used to indicate a pause between parts of a sentence ("Naturally, I left") or to separate items in a list ("orange, blue and red"). Note that house style does not use the serial "Oxford" comma. "The programme is being implemented in France, Germany, the Netherlands and Ukraine."
Ellipsis	...	An ellipsis indicates when part of a quoted text is not reproduced. This is represented by three points (space before and after). Do not use an ellipsis at the beginning or end of quoted matter (by definition an extract), unless you wish to indicate a pause at the end of reported speech ("suspension points"). Do not use enclosing square brackets or parentheses, or add a fourth full stop. Be wary of changing the meaning of a quote by including or omitting punctuation before or after an ellipsis.
En dash (or en rule)	–	Used to: ▶ introduce a parenthesis, either paired or singly: "The Council of Europe – founded by 10 states in 1949 – does not always receive the recognition it deserves." A space should be typed either side of the en dash; ▶ introduce listed items or sub-paragraphs; ▶ express a connection or relation of equality between two nouns in a compound modifier: editor–author collaboration (use a hyphen if the elements are adjectives: Sino-Soviet); ▶ represent a minus sign on negative numbers: "The temperatures dropped to –20°C."
Hyphen	-	Used to: ▶ add a prefix or join a compound word: anti-nuclear movement, broad-brush; ▶ indicate a range of numbers or period of time: 300-400 participants, 1990-95, 20-24 January; ▶ separate a range of numbers; ▶ indicate word breaks at the end of a line (soft hyphen, automatically inserted by word-processing software if the hyphenation option is activated).

Name	Character	Notes
Quotation marks (or inverted commas)	" "	Use double, "smart" quotation marks in all instances, except for quotes within quotes, which take single quotation marks: "What Collins termed 'digital nomads' in his latest book." Never use two apostrophes for double quotation marks.
Semi-colon	;	Used to: ▶ link two closely connected parts of a sentence neither of which depends logically on the other and where there is no connecting conjunction (I like apples; my brother likes oranges.). ▶ separate items in a list where the introductory sentence ends with a colon and each entry follows on logically from that sentence. ▶ used to separate items in a complicated sentence where commas alone would lead to confusion and/or where commas are already used (red, white and blue; green, black and grey; and dark orange.).
Square brackets	[]	Explanatory text added to a quotation, which does not form part of the quoted matter, should be placed within square brackets. For example: "the aim of the [European Social] Charter is ...". Do not use square brackets for ellipses.

Commonly misused words and expressions in English

Many words fall in and out of fashion and many have their original meaning or use corrupted over time. Good writing is not repetitive, flows for the reader and avoids clichés and jargon.

Thinking harder about the use of words can improve writing no end and lead to fewer queries at the editing stage.

accept

Avoid confusion with "agree". These two words are not synonyms. You accept something which is offered to you: he was found guilty of accepting bribes. Other meanings include regarding with approval: he accepted the compliment; taking on a responsibility: she accepted her new role; coping emotionally: he never really accepted his mother's death; and believing to be valid or correct: I accept your version of the facts.

However, when the meaning is "agree", "consent" or "assent" you should say "agree": he agreed to transport the goods in his lorry, his employer agreed to reinstate him.

action

Do not use this term as a synonym for "project", "programme", "measure" or "activity". This usage is common in "institutional English", but is awkward, unnatural and even misleading for English speakers, particularly in the plural form. Here the term is a mass noun (no plural form) and the general meaning is "the fact or process of doing something, typically to achieve an aim" (*Oxford dictionary of English*). Prefer the alternatives given above, when appropriate.

As a count noun (with a plural form), "action" simply means "a deed" or "a thing done" ("He is accountable for his actions") and should not be confused with the terms listed above.

actor

When speaking of "a participant in an action or process", it is often better to avoid this term and be specific. "International actors", for example, can be understood as famous film stars. Consider: participant, decision maker, stakeholder, member, activist, advocate, proponent, leader, partner, associate, contributor, player, party, figure, professional, a person involved in, etc.

Anglo-Saxon

This term should not be used in any context other than “relating to or denoting the Germanic inhabitants of England from their arrival in the 5th century up to the Norman Conquest” (*Oxford dictionary of English*).

It is often used in French to refer to any English-speaking group, particularly in a political context, or the wider sphere of influence that includes the UK, the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. This usage does not translate into English.

appendices

This is the accepted British English term. Do not use “annexes” for separate sections of a document that provide extra information.

as well as ≠ and

The word “and” is a simple conjunction of elements, but “as well as” places greater emphasis on the expression preceding it than on the one following it, which is assumed. For example:

- ▶ “Human rights apply online and offline.” No real hierarchy in the presentation.
- ▶ “Human rights apply online as well as offline.” “Online” is emphasised here: it is assumed that human rights apply offline, and the author wants to stress that they apply online, too.

Furthermore, “as well as” is not a simple translation of the French *ainsi que*. Viable alternatives include: “and”, “along with”, “in addition to” and “also”.

both ... and ...

The golden rule is that the parts of the sentence following each of these words should be an exact match grammatically – they should be completely interchangeable.

“He was subjected to both mental and physical abuse” or “He was subjected both to mental and to physical abuse”, but not “He was subjected both to mental and physical abuse” (because the terms are not interchangeable).

compare to v. compare with

To compare to means to liken to, to consider (two or more things) to be comparable or alike in quality, size, etc.: he’s a good writer, but I wouldn’t compare him to Shakespeare.

To compare with means to weigh up the respective qualities of (two or more things), to consider the differences between them: the DNA experts compared sample A with sample B and found that they came from different people.

competence/competency

These are synonyms when referring to the ability to do something in general. Ensure consistency and note the plural forms: competences and competencies.

“Competence”, as a mass noun, can designate the legal authority of a court or other body to intervene in a particular matter.

damage(s)

damage (singular) is the loss, harm or injury suffered.

damages (plural) means the money awarded to someone by way of compensation for the damage or loss sustained.

develop ≠ write, draft, create or set up

Unlike *développer* (in French), the English verb “to develop” (“grow or cause to grow and become more mature, advanced or elaborate” *Oxford dictionary of English*) cannot be used to mean to write, draft, draw up, devise, prepare, compile, set up or create. Prefer one of the aforementioned terms.

digitise v. digitalise

“Digitise” means to convert information, documents, etc. to a digital format whereas “digitalise” is about transforming processes and activities in order to take advantage of digital technologies.

disabled

Prefer “people with disabilities”.

elaborate ≠ write or draft

Unlike *élaborer* in French, the English verb “to elaborate” cannot be used to mean “to initially draft”. It means to develop or present (a theory, policy, system, etc.) in further detail. Prefer one of the following, as appropriate: to write, draft, draw up, devise, prepare, compile, etc.

foster

As a verb meaning “to encourage the development of (something, especially something desirable)” (*Oxford dictionary of English*). Therefore, we can foster learning but not hate speech.

Also avoid frequent overuse and repetition. Synonyms: encourage, promote, further, advance, contribute to, espouse, stimulate, champion.

handicapped

Prefer “people with disabilities”.

impact (on) (verb)

This is a case of a verb being formed from what was originally only a noun. Its use splits opinion widely, so pay attention to avoiding overuse.

Synonyms: affect, influence, have an effect on, make an impact; be affected/influenced by.

Prefer to avoid the adjective “impactful”.

interlocutors

Prefer terms such as “talking partners”, “contacts”, “persons spoken to by the delegation”, etc.

latter

In English, this means the second of two previously mentioned things. To have a “latter”, there must be a “former”. It cannot be used as a literal translation of the French *ce dernier*.

modalities

Often used to translate the French *modalités*; prefer “procedures”, “arrangements” or “methods”.

recall

In English, this means to “remember” or “recollect”, not “remind”: I don’t recall ever seeing him before.

The Committee of Ministers/Parliamentary Assembly does not recall; the Committee of Ministers/Parliament Assembly reiterates, points out, observes, notes, states, etc. It may be unnecessary to use this introductory phrase in English: it is often sufficient just to make the statement.

regard/regards

“With regard to” (not regards to). Not to be confused with “as regards”.

respect

Respect for (not of) human rights. A leader cannot gain the respect of his people without having any respect for them.

sectoral

Relating to a distinct part or area, derived from “sector”. Not “sectorial”: “of or like a sector” (*Oxford dictionary of English*).

service

A system or organisation that is responsible for a certain type of activity. Do not use for “department”.

Third World

Initial capitals. The expression is outdated, however, and should only be used in a historical context. Alternatives abound, but none is universally accepted: “developing/developed world”, “majority/minority world”, “the global south/north”, low-/middle-/high-income countries” and “lean/fat world”. Each captures a unique aspect of reality and can be considered according to the context.

transform

This verb should only be used with a direct object and not as an intransitive verb (in this case, opt for verbs such as “turn (into)”, “mutate”, “morph”, “develop”).

Grammar and punctuation issues

Transitive verbs

Transitive verbs take an object, not a clause. This is a common error that can make your writing unclear for readers. If you have doubts look in your dictionary.

Examples (please note the direct object)

allow: the statistics do not allow **us** to draw conclusions

avoid: avoid **risk** or avoid **doing something**, but not “avoid that...”

enable: enable **the Assembly** to

inform: inform **member states** that

notify: notify **the committee** of the decision

Mass nouns

Mass nouns cannot be used in the plural or with an indefinite article in English.

Commonly misused mass nouns

- ▶ information (never **informations**)
- ▶ action
- ▶ training (I have a training course next week.)
- ▶ orientation
- ▶ aid
- ▶ knowledge
- ▶ advice (never **advices**)

Possessive apostrophe

To be used with care. As it denotes possession, its use in an expression such as “human rights’ perspective” would be incorrect, as “human rights” has an adjectival function.

Correct usage:

Committee of Ministers Recommendation on ..., but the Ministers’ Deputies

House style – Alphabetical listing

A

abbreviations

- ▶ See [Appendix 2: common abbreviations](#).

above-mentioned

- ▶ Hyphenate.

acquis

- ▶ The EU or Community *acquis* is the whole body of EU legislation.

acronyms

- ▶ See [Appendix 2: common abbreviations](#).

act (legislative)

- ▶ To harmonise practice and avoid confusion, use British standards when translating the titles of legislation from non-English-speaking countries into English, following the example of the European Court of Human Rights.
 - Use “law” if followed by a number or a date, or the full title of the legislation: Law on the Duty of Vigilance; Law No. 315.
 - Use “act” for short titles: Administrative Court Act.
 - Capitalise both “act” and “law” only if the name appears in full, otherwise use lower case (“section 28 of the recent act refers to ...”).

article v. section

- article: of a convention, code, decree, constitution (initial capital if followed by a number: Article 25 of the Criminal Code).
- section: of an act, law or ordinance (no initial capital letter on section, even when followed by a number: section 2 of the Administrative Court Act).

bill v. act or law

- A bill is a draft law presented to a legislative body for discussion.
- An act or law is a legislative text that has been passed or adopted by a legislative body.

paragraphs, articles, sections, etc.

- Paragraph(s): write out in full (Article 6, paragraph 2, of the Convention).
- Do not use section/subsection marks “§” or “§§” unless they appear in quoted matter. Note that usage at the Court and the European Committee of Social Rights differs here.
- Short form: use a full stop between the article/section and the paragraph (Article 6.2 of the Convention).

action plan

- ▶ Full titles of action plans, campaigns, processes, projects, programmes and strategies take initial capital letters on all significant words and no inverted commas: the Council of Europe Disability Action Plan. Lower case otherwise.

AD

- ▶ In dates, AD and BC look better in small capitals, with a non-breaking space between the year and the period marker: Columbus sailed to the New World in AD 1492. Note that AD precedes the year, whereas BC follows the year (333 BC).

ad hoc

- ▶ Roman, lower case unless part of the title of a committee, in which case “Ad hoc”, with capital “A” and lower-case “h”. Never hyphenate.

administration

- ▶ Lower case for general use. When referring to a government: “the US Administration,” use an initial capital as this is analogous to “the German Government”.

adopted texts of Council of Europe organs and institutions

▶ **Committee of Ministers**

Recommendation

- up to and including Recommendation No. R (2000) 13: “Recommendation No. R”, followed by the year in parentheses (a space on either side of the parentheses), followed by the number;
- from Recommendation Rec(2000)14 onwards: “Recommendation Rec”, followed by the year in parentheses (no space either side of the parentheses), followed by the number.

Resolution

- up to and including Resolution (2000) 6: “Resolution”, followed by the year in parentheses (a space on either side of the parentheses), followed by the number;
- from Resolution Res(2000)7 onwards: “Resolution Res” followed by the year in parentheses (no space either side of the parentheses), followed by the number.

As from 1 January 2007, all Committee of Ministers recommendations and resolutions take the prefix “CM/” before “Rec” or “Res”. The designation of recommendations and resolutions adopted in the framework of partial agreements does not change, however, as these are adopted by the contracting parties to the partial agreements, not by the Committee of Ministers as such. Therefore:

- CM/Rec(2007)1, CM/Res(2007)1, but ResAP(2007)1.

▶ **Parliamentary Assembly**

Recommendation, resolution, opinion, order

Spaces should be inserted between the number and date, title in inverted commas:

Resolution 2581 (2025) “The need for a renewed rules-based international order”.

NB the Parliamentary Assembly no longer adopts orders: the last was No. 587, adopted on 2 April 2003.

aforemention(ed)

- ▶ No hyphen.

al-

- ▶ Lower case and hyphen for the definite article (“al-Qaeda”, “al-Jazeera”, “al-Aqsa”), but capital A for kin group (“Al Fayed”).

a.m.

- ▶ ante meridiem means “before noon”, i.e. before 12 o’clock midday. Lower case, full stops, non-breaking space before: “10 a.m.” Leave off double zeros for full hours. NB 12 a.m. denotes midnight and 12 p.m. denotes midday/noon. To avoid confusion, prefer “12 midday/noon” and “12 midnight”.

ambassador

- ▶ Capitalise when referring to a particular ambassador, otherwise use lower case: “the French Ambassador”, but “the ambassador was present at the meeting”.

antigypsyism

antisemitism

anti-terrorism

appendix

- ▶ Lower case except when followed by a number. Always write out in full. Plural: appendices (in anatomy: appendixes).

article

- ▶ Always written out in full. Initial capital if followed by a number. When giving the paragraph, write in full (Article 6, paragraph 2) or use a full stop to separate the numbers (Article 6.2).

artificial intelligence (AI)

- ▶ Lower case.

NB Only texts that have been drafted, or images created, by a human can be covered by copyright. The publishing industry requires authors to clearly indicate any text or images generated by AI. The AI tools used must be mentioned.

Ashkali

- ▶ Invariable. Ethnic group from South-East Europe.

asylum seeker (noun)/asylum-seeking (adj.)

audiovisual

- ▶ One word, no hyphen.

awareness raising

- ▶ Do not hyphenate when used as a noun. As with other constructions (decision making, policy making, etc.), hyphenate when used as a modifier: awareness-raising campaign.

B

Balkan Wars

- ▶ Two wars in South-East Europe in 1912-13. Not the “war in the Balkans”. See also [Yugoslav Wars](#).

Baltic states

- ▶ Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania.

the Bar

BC

- ▶ See [AD](#).

Belarus

- ▶ Formerly “Byelorussia”, name changed in 1992, but may be correct in a historical context. Adjective: Belarusian; use Belarusian for the language and people.

Berset, Alain

- ▶ Secretary General of the Council of Europe, elected in June 2024.

bibliography

- ▶ See General information – [References](#).

big data

big tech

bilingualism

- ▶ The Council of Europe has two official languages: French and English (the Statute (ETS No. 1), Article 12). The Organisation must ensure that its documents and texts are distributed in both languages. See [Language Policy](#).

biological names

- ▶ A genus and its subdivisions are printed in italics (usually two, sometimes three words). The first letter of the first word is capitalised. Examples from Council of Europe publications: *Ursus arctos* (brown bear), *Marsilea quadrifolia* (four-leaf clover), *Canis lupus* (wolf).
- ▶ Divisions larger than genus (phylum, class, order and family) have an initial capital but are printed in roman. Examples from *The Chicago Manual of Style*: Chordata, Chondrichthyes, Monotremata, Hominidae, Carnivora. If anglicised they drop the capital: hominids, carnivores.

bis

- ▶ Roman. Same for “ter”, “quater”, “quinquies”, “sexies”, “septies”, “octies”, “novies” and “decies”.

bloc

- ▶ Never “block” when referring to a group of countries or political parties (Soviet bloc, Eastern bloc).

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- ▶ With “z”. Not hyphenated. Avoid the abbreviations “BiH” and “B&H”. See [Appendix 1a: 46 member states of the Council of Europe](#) for more information.

Bretton Woods institutions

- ▶ The World Bank and its sister organisation, the International Monetary Fund, were created at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, in 1944. They are referred to as the Bretton Woods institutions.

budget

- ▶ Generally lower case: 2015 budget, but Council of Europe Programme and Budget; Ordinary Budget.

bureau (pl. bureaux)

- ▶ Capitalised when referring to the Bureau of the Parliamentary Assembly or the Congress.

C

campaign titles

- ▶ Capitalise every important word in the title of a campaign, no need for inverted commas.

capitalisation

- ▶ See General information – [Capitalisation](#).

cardinal points

- ▶ North(ern), east(ern), south(ern), west(ern), when used in a general sense, take no initial capital. Use “northern England”, “south-eastern France”, “the west of Ireland”, etc. to describe areas defined by their location relative to another point within the area of reference. In other words, when used in a purely geographical sense, these terms and their composed forms are written in lower case.
- ▶ For names of countries or where a region has a defined boundary, some official status and/or political/historical significance, use a capital: Eastern bloc, North America, North Korea, South Africa, East Anglia, the North Caucasus, South-East Asia.

- ▶ Since the blurring of the distinction between “western” and “eastern” Europe, capitals are no longer necessary. Likewise for “central and eastern Europe”.
- ▶ However, a distinction is still made between “North” and “South”, and “East” and “West”, respectively, as economic and political entities. For example, it is understood that Australia lies in the south but does not form part of the South.

case file

case law

caseload

Caucasus

- ▶ Northern Caucasus and Southern Caucasus take initial capitals.

central and eastern Europe

- ▶ Lower case; see [cardinal points](#).

CETS/ETS

- ▶ From 2004, the European Treaty Series (ETS Nos. 1 to 193) is continued by the Council of Europe Treaty Series (CETS No. 194 and following). Leave off initial zeros.

chair

- ▶ Prefer “chair” to gender-specific titles such as “chairman” and the neutral “chairperson”. **NB as of July 2025, the Committee of Ministers uses “presidency” and “president”, not “chairmanship” or “chair”.**

chapter

- ▶ Do not abbreviate. Initial capital when followed by a number.

Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union

- ▶ EU charter, not to be confused with the European Convention on Human Rights.

Chechnya

- ▶ Adjective: Chechen.

childcare

- ▶ One word, no hyphen.

code

- ▶ Upper case if part of a title. Prefer “Criminal Code” to “Penal Code”. See [act](#).

committee

- ▶ Lower case unless in a title.

conferences

- ▶ The theme of a conference, seminar or symposium can be cited in inverted commas, in min. caps, but never directly after the word “on”. Prefer “entitled” in such cases: the conference entitled “Invasive and alien fauna” took place in Tallinn.

conflict of interest

- ▶ Plural: conflicts of interest.

Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe

- ▶ Short form: the Congress.

constitution

- ▶ Lower case except when used with the name of a given country (the Lithuanian Constitution or the Constitution of Lithuania) or in a full title of a given document.

contracting states/parties

- ▶ Initial capitals only when used within the text of conventions or with the title of a convention (Contracting Parties to the European Convention on Human Rights); lower case elsewhere.

convention

- ▶ Initial capital only if part of a full title; lower case in most circumstances. Two exceptions exist: “the Convention” as the short form of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (European Convention on Human Rights), and within the text of a convention which is referring to itself.
- ▶ For the full list of Council of Europe conventions, consult the Treaty Office website: [Full list – Treaty Office \(coe.int\)](https://www.coe.int/t/treaties/).

Frequently used short forms for Council of Europe conventions

Short form	Long form	ETS/CETS No.	Notes
Bern Convention	Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats	ETS No. 104	
Convention 108/108+	Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data Protocol amending the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data	ETS No. 108 CETS No. 223	
Cybercrime Convention	Convention on Cybercrime	ETS No. 185	Also (but less frequently) known as the Budapest Convention.
European Convention for the Prevention of Torture	European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	ETS No. 126	
Faro Convention	Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society	CETS No. 199	
Istanbul Convention	Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence	CETS No. 210	
Landscape Convention	Council of Europe Landscape Convention	ETS No. 176	Previously “European Landscape Convention”.
Lanzarote Convention	Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse	CETS No. 201	
Lisbon Recognition Convention	Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region	ETS No. 165	

Short form	Long form	ETS/CETS No.	Notes
Macolin Convention	Council of Europe Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions	CETS No. 215	
Medicrime Convention	Council of Europe Convention on the Counterfeiting of Medical Products and Similar Crimes involving Threats to Public Health	CETS No. 211	MEDICRIME
Oviedo Convention	Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Dignity of the Human Being with regard to the Application of Biology and Medicine: Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine	ETS No. 164	Also known as the Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine.
Saint-Denis Convention	Council of Europe Convention on an Integrated Safety, Security and Service Approach at Football Matches and Other Sports Events	CETS No. 218	
<u>the</u> Charter (or Social Charter) <u>the</u> revised Charter ! Do not use “the Charter” for any other Council of Europe texts.	European Social Charter European Social Charter (revised)	ETS No. 35 ETS No. 163	Also referred to as “the revised European Social Charter”. Lower-case “r”.
<u>the</u> Convention	Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms or European Convention on Human Rights	ETS No. 5	Both the long and shorter form of the convention are accepted in Council of Europe publications. The only accepted abbreviation is “the Convention”.
<u>the</u> Framework Convention	Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities	ETS No. 157	Also abbreviated to FCNM.
Warsaw Convention	Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism	CETS No. 196	

co-operate/co-operation

- Hyphenate.

co-ordinate/co-ordination

- Hyphenate.

copyright

- Copyright is the legal right of an author, or publisher, to print, publish or distribute written works. Music, photography and art are also protected by copyright. All Council of Europe documents must properly cite all sources of quotations, tables and images. Permission from the rights holder may be required.
- Text or images generated by artificial intelligence cannot be covered by copyright. They should be clearly indicated with the name of the AI used.

co-rapporteur

- ▶ Hyphenate.

coronavirus

Côte d'Ivoire

- ▶ Prefer this name, the official name of the country as registered with the United Nations; ~~Ivory Coast~~.

Council of Europe

- ▶ The "Organisation" is an accepted short form in certain contexts. No other variants should be used.

counter-terrorism

- ▶ Hyphenate.

country names

- ▶ The Council of Europe uses the official names of countries as registered with the United Nations. See [Appendix 1a: 46 member states of the Council of Europe](#) for more details.

court

- ▶ When the title of a court is in a foreign language, do not attempt to translate it, because specific legal concepts linked to the name may not be carried over; at first mention it may be useful to provide a "descriptive" translation, however.
- ▶ Lower case for "court of appeal", "appellate court", etc. The following in upper case:
 - European Court of Human Rights (can be shortened to: the Court, the European Court or the Strasbourg Court, never ECtHR);
 - Supreme Court;
 - Constitutional Court;
 - Court of Cassation;
 - Court of Justice of the European Union (Luxembourg) – short form: the Court of Justice; formerly the Court of Justice of the European Communities;
 - International Criminal Court (set up by the Rome Statute, situated in The Hague);
 - International Court of Justice (The Hague).

court cases

- ▶ Cite European Court of Human Rights cases with the following minimum information: *Pierre v. France*, Application No. 55555/05, judgment/decision of 1 May 2009.
- ▶ Use the definite article before "United Kingdom" and "Netherlands". Initial capital on "Others", *Smith and Others v. the Netherlands*. Only the full titles of court cases are in italics.

Covid-19

Crimea

cryptocurrency

- ▶ One word, no hyphen.

currencies

- ▶ Currency names do not take initial capitals. They are normally written out in full, except for euros (€), UK pounds (£), US dollars (US\$) and Japanese yen (¥), where the symbols may be used if no confusion is likely. The symbols are placed before the figure, with no space: €64, £500, US\$25, ¥15 600.
- ▶ Otherwise use the full name once, followed by the ISO 4217 (www.iso.org/iso-4217-currency-codes.html) currency code in brackets ("100 Turkish lira (TRY)"); thereafter, use the ISO code before the number with a non-breaking space between them ("TRY 100").

curriculum

- ▶ Plural: curriculums or curricula, usage must be consistent.

cyber

- ▶ This prefix almost never takes a hyphen in compound words ("cybercrime", "cyberbullying", etc.).

Cyrillic names

- ▶ The transliteration of Cyrillic names and words in general is different in English and French (Putin/ Poutine). Beware of accepting the French spelling of Cyrillic names. Follow BBC usage.

D

Daesh

data

- ▶ Treat as plural.

dates and time

- ▶ Dates: in full: Wednesday 9 October 2024 (no comma after the day of the week or before the year, use numerals, not ordinals). Without the day: 9 October 2024.
- ▶ Consecutive dates should be linked with "to" (The conference took place from 11 to 15 April 2016), or "and" if only two days are involved. If the date is added in parentheses a hyphen may be used: the Helsinki Summit (2-8 June 1989). Do not use numbers for months, to avoid confusion between the European and US conventions.
- ▶ Always use "and" with "between" (between 1999 and 2003) and "to" with "from" (from 1999 to 2003).
- ▶ Note that "1990-91" is not the same as "1990/91". The former denotes a span of time over two calendar years, whereas the latter denotes a one-year period (a financial year, an academic year, etc.).
- ▶ For decades, insert an "s" after the year in figures, without an apostrophe: the 1960s.
- ▶ For centuries, use figures, not words: the 20th century. In adjectival use, a hyphen should be inserted: 20th-century art. Note that Roman numerals are used in French.
- ▶ Time: use the 12-hour system plus "a.m." (*ante meridiem*) or "p.m." (*post meridiem*). Note the non-breaking space before a.m./p.m. and the full stops. Initial zeros are unnecessary (and unsightly). Conventionally, 12 p.m. is noon. Midnight is understood as the beginning of the new day (corresponding to 00:00 in the 24-hour system) but clarify by specifying the date. A colon separates hours and minutes: 8:30 a.m.

decimal points

- ▶ The decimal is indicated by a point/full stop in English; replace any decimal commas (French usage).

decision maker/making

- ▶ No hyphen unless used as a modifier: decision-making process.

declaration

- ▶ Initial capital when using the full name or the number: Declaration on Intercultural Dialogue and Conflict Prevention, Declaration No. 59.

degree

- ▶ For temperatures, specify Celsius or Fahrenheit: 0°C = 32°F. Use the degree sign (ALT+0176) rather than a superscript letter or number. See [Numbers, figures, numerals – Degrees](#).

département

- ▶ A French administrative zone within a region. There is no exact English equivalent, so leave in French and italicise.

D'Hondt method

- ▶ Method for allocating seats in party-list proportional representation. Capital "D". After Victor D'Hondt.

document

- ▶ Normally lower case, but the working documents of the Assembly, when the number is given, take a capital (Document 13221).

Donbas

Dr

- ▶ A contraction of "doctor". Ending in the same letter as the complete word, it takes no point afterwards.

E

east(ern)

- ▶ See [cardinal points](#).

ed.

- ▶ Abbreviation of "editor" or "edited by" in references. Being an abbreviation rather than a contraction, it takes a point afterwards. However, the plural – "eds" – does not need a point, being a contraction of "editors".

e-mail

- ▶ Hyphenate; capitalise at the beginning of a sentence, but not in a list. Do not shorten to "mail".

embassy

- ▶ Initial capitals if full name specified: Embassy of the United States of America.

empire

- ▶ Capitals for "British Empire", "Ottoman Empire", "Roman Empire" and other historically attested empires; lower case for less official usages: the Soviet empire.

etc.

- ▶ Used at the end of a list (at least two items) to indicate that further, similar items are also included. The reader should therefore be able to infer other items based on the common traits of those presented. Prefer "etc." to suspension points. See [Appendix 3: commonly used foreign words, Latinisms and a few abbreviations](#).
- ▶ Takes a comma before, a full stop after. "Etc" is followed by only one full stop if it comes at the end of a sentence; leave full stop if followed by any other punctuation.
- ▶ A list that ends with "etc." should not begin with "for example", "such as" or "including".

ETS

- ▶ See [CETS/ETS](#).

euro

- ▶ No initial capital. Plural "euros". Symbol "€" (ALT+0128) with no space before the figure if the figure is quoted. Prefer "€" to "EUR" (ISO practice), but EUR is acceptable if consistent. See [currencies](#).

euro area

- ▶ Denotes the group of countries having adopted the euro as their official currency, avoid ~~euroland~~ and ~~eurozone~~.

European flag

- ▶ The European flag was devised by the Council of Europe but is also used by the European Union.

euroregions

- ▶ Lower case unless referring to a specific, established region (Adriatic Euroregion).

explanatory memorandum/report

- ▶ Apply the same rules for initial capitals on the following terms: Contracting Party/State, Convention, Party, Recommendation, State, State Party, etc. as within the text with which they are associated (see General information – [Capitalisation](#)). Although these reports are not statutory texts, they exist only in relation to such a text and should therefore follow the same rules.

F

fascism

- ▶ Lower case in most usages.

federal government/federal parliament

- ▶ Lower case, except when followed by “of” and a country name.

federation

- ▶ Lower case, except when part of a country name: Russian Federation.

figures

- ▶ For numbers, see General information – [Numbers, figures, numerals](#).

final declaration

- ▶ A final declaration, concluding document or similar summing-up document is often adopted at conferences. Phrases such as the “Vienna Concluding Document”, “the Helsinki Declaration”, “the Lisbon Final Declaration” are treated as titles and capitalised.

fractions

- ▶ Written out in full (one half, two thirds, etc.). Hyphenate only when used as an adverb or an adjective (two-thirds full, one-quarter increase). When in a list of statistics, write in figures.

G

G7 – Group of Seven

- ▶ The G7 is a forum comprising seven major industrialised nations: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

G20 – Group of 20

- ▶ The G20 comprises 19 of the world’s largest economies, plus the European Union and the African Union, and plays a key role in global economic governance. Its members are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, the European Union and the African Union.

Geneva Conventions

- ▶ Use upper case Roman numerals to number the different conventions: Geneva Convention I, Geneva Convention II, etc.

geographical names

- ▶ Prefer the anglicised versions of place names (Reykjavik, Zurich). Exceptions are covered under individual words or in Appendix 1.

government

- ▶ Lower case unless used with the name of one or more countries: the British Government, the Government of Britain or the British and Finnish Governments. Treat as singular: "The government is working on the issue."

grassroots

- ▶ One word.

greater Europe

- ▶ Lower-case "g". Generally considered to cover the geographical area occupied by Council of Europe member states, as opposed to Europe in the sense of the European Union. See [pan-European](#).

guidelines

- ▶ Titles of Committee of Ministers guidelines are in min. caps and do not take quotation marks (Guidelines of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on child-friendly justice). Initial capital only when full title is cited.

H

Hamas

head of state

- ▶ Lower case.

healthcare

- ▶ One word.

Hemicycle

- ▶ Not to be used for the Parliamentary Assembly debating chamber in the Palais de l'Europe (the Chamber).

Hezbollah

Holocaust, the

- ▶ Initial capital when referring to the mass murder of Jews by the Nazi regime; lower case elsewhere: nuclear holocaust.

hyperlinks

- ▶ See [General information](#) – [References](#).

I

inasmuch/insofar/insomuch

- ▶ One word.

inclusive language

- ▶ See the Council of Europe's "[Guidelines for the use of language as a driver of inclusivity](#)".

index

- ▶ Normal plural is "indexes". Use "indices" only in a scientific context.

inter

- ▶ This prefix almost never takes a hyphen in compound words: interinstitutional, interracial, interreligious. See [interparliamentary](#).

internet

- ▶ Treat as a common noun with a lower-case initial instead of capital, to tally with common usage.

interparliamentary

- ▶ No hyphen, except for Inter-Parliamentary Union.

intranet

- ▶ When used as a common noun, no initial capital.

Iron Curtain

J

jobseeker

judgment

- ▶ In-house use is without the “e” in all contexts.

K

Koran

Kosovo

- ▶ Prefer the use of “Kosovo” as an adjective in terms such as “Kosovo authorities” or “Kosovo Albanian(s)”; avoid “Kosovan” or “Kosovar”.
- ▶ All occurrences of this term must bear an asterisk in official texts, publications and documents of the Council of Europe. The first occurrence must be accompanied by the following disclaimer in a footnote:
 - * All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.
- ▶ All subsequent occurrences bear only an asterisk. Note the asterisk is placed immediately after the word “Kosovo” and not following the punctuation like other footnote cues.

L

Lachin Corridor

- ▶ The Lachin Corridor was a strategic mountain pass in Azerbaijan, connecting Armenia with the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

Land

- ▶ Initial capital, italics. Plural *Länder*. One of the constituent states of the Federal Republic of Germany. The “new *Länder*” are those born out of the former German Democratic Republic.

Language Policy of the Council of Europe

- ▶ The Language Policy of the Council of Europe aims to ensure respect for, and the promotion of, the bilingualism provided for under Article 12 of the Organisation’s Statute. Approved by the Committee of Ministers in July 2025, it was signed by the Secretary General on 26 August 2025, <https://rm.coe.int/council-of-europe-language-policy/4880284f1d>

law

- ▶ See [act \(legislative\)](#).

logo

- ▶ The Council of Europe's policy on the use of logos is managed by the Publications and Visual Identity Division.

long term/short term

- ▶ Hyphenate only when used as a modifier: "in the long term", but "long-term unemployment".

Ltd

- ▶ A contraction of "Limited" after a company name – no point afterwards.

M

Mahmoud Abbas

- ▶ Also known as Abu Mazen; President of the Palestinian National Authority.

media (the)

- ▶ The main means of mass communication (broadcasting, publishing and the internet) regarded collectively. Treated as either singular or plural: freedom of the media, their demands were publicised by the media.

member state

- ▶ Lower case in publications. Initial capital on "State" only in statutory texts, conventions and treaties.

microeconomic

- ▶ No hyphen.

Middle East

- ▶ No hyphen. Translated as *Proche orient* or *Moyen orient* in French.

min. caps

- ▶ Also known as "sentence style". Title style where only the first word is capitalised and the rest of the title is in lower case, except proper nouns: "Youth policy in Serbia".

minister

- ▶ Normally lower case, except when the full title (including country name) is given: a government minister, the minister for culture, the German Minister for Health, the Russian Foreign Minister, etc.
- ▶ The minister for culture, for health, etc., but minister of the interior, minister of state, minister of justice.

ministry

- ▶ Lower case.

money laundering

- ▶ Two words, no hyphen unless used as a modifier: money-laundering activities.

Mr

- ▶ A contraction of "mister". Ending in the same letter as the complete word, it takes no point afterwards.

Mrs

- ▶ No point afterwards.

Ms

- ▶ A neutral alternative to Mrs or Miss. No point afterwards.

multi-/multi

- ▶ Hyphenate where two vowels meet: multi-ethnic. No hyphen otherwise: multicultural.

N

Nagorno-Karabakh

- ▶ Use the “Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” rather than the “~~conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan~~”. See also [Lachin Corridor](#).

Nazi, Nazism

- ▶ Capital “N”. National Socialism also takes initial capitals; neo-Nazi.

NEET

- ▶ Acronym of UK origin for “not in education, employment or training”; check word order closely. Not to be used as a noun.

Neighbourhood Partnership

newly independent states

- ▶ No need for capitals.

No.

- ▶ To abbreviate “number”, point afterwards. Note the plural also takes a point: “Nos.”.

non-refoulement

- ▶ Italics, hyphenate. French for not turning foreigners back at borders, not refusing entry onto the national territory. Used particularly in connection with refugees and asylum seekers.

north(ern), north-east(ern), north-west(ern)

- ▶ See [cardinal points](#).

North Macedonia

- ▶ Full name: Republic of North Macedonia. Formerly “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”.
- ▶ In Council of Europe reports and official or statutory texts published after 12 February 2019 referring to the state of affairs of or events in this country prior to the entry into force of the name-changing agreement, the former name should be used with a footnote, as follows:
 1. As of 12 February 2019, the official name of this country has changed to North Macedonia.

numerals

- ▶ See [Numbers, figures, numerals](#).

O

official titles

- ▶ Official titles take initial capitals when the reference is specific and complete. Compare: the president, the President of the French Republic. See General information – [Capitalisation](#). If referring to people who no longer hold an official title, their former title remains in upper case: the former Vice President of the United States Al Gore.

ombudsman/ombudswoman

- ▶ No italics, and no initial capital. Plural ombudsmen/women. See [Inclusive language](#).

online

- ▶ No hyphen.

organisation

- ▶ Prefer British spelling with an “s”, but do not change in quotations or in names of organisations spelt with a “z”. Capital “O” used when the Council of Europe is being referred to: the Organisation.

P

p.

- ▶ To abbreviate “page” in references. Point afterwards. Plural: “pp.”.

Palais de l’Europe

- ▶ Headquarters of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. No italics in English. Short form: the Palais.

pan-European

- ▶ Lower-case “p”. This adjective can be used to distinguish between the European Union area/member states and the Council of Europe area/member states. See [greater Europe](#).

paragraph

- ▶ Lower-case “p”, even when a number is cited. Avoid abbreviation “para.” unless space is an issue (tables, charts, footnotes). Always put commas around paragraph number in expressions such as “Article 10, paragraph 2, states”. As a short form, we recommend using the full-stop abbreviation (Article 12.5) when necessary, and to avoid the use of “§” or parentheses.

parliament

- ▶ Lower case. Initial capital only in full names: the Lithuanian Parliament.
- ▶ The names of parliaments of different countries (the Sejm in Poland) take initial capitals and are not italicised. See also [government](#).

partial agreement

- ▶ Takes initial capitals only in a full title: Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Register of Damage Caused by the Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

partner for democracy status

- ▶ Lower case. Status granted to parliamentary delegations from non-member states by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

part-session

- ▶ Hyphenate. The Parliamentary Assembly holds one session per year, divided into four part-sessions (January, April, June and September).

party

- ▶ Initial capital only when referring to the full name of a political party (Conservative Party). See [Capitalisation](#) and [state party](#). “Party” or “contracting party” are lower case, unless in a convention or other legal instrument, or with the title of such an agreement (State Party to the European Convention on Human Rights).

peacekeeper/peacekeeping

- ▶ One word.

Pejčinović Burić, Marija

- ▶ Secretary General of the Council of Europe from 2019 to 2024.

pharmacopoeia

- ▶ No ligature for “oe”. Capital “P” for the European Pharmacopoeia.

plagiarism

- ▶ See General information – [References](#).

p.m.

- ▶ post meridiem means “after noon”, that is after 12 o’clock midday. See also [a.m.](#)

policy maker/making

- ▶ Two words; hyphenate only when used as a modifier: policy-making decisions.

politics

- ▶ In the abstract, singular: “Politics is the skilled use of blunt objects.” (Lester B. Pearson); company/party politics are plural.

Pope, the

- ▶ Initial capital when referring to the Bishop of Rome as head of the Roman Catholic Church.

population

- ▶ Treat as singular.

president

- ▶ See [official titles](#).

prince, princess

- ▶ Upper case when full title is used (Prince Edward, the Princess of Wales); lower case for other uses. See General information – [Capitalisation](#).

professor

- ▶ Initial capital only when followed by a name.

program/programme

- ▶ In British English, “program” is used for computer software, “programme” otherwise.

project

- ▶ Use smart caps for titles, no inverted commas.

Prokuratura

- ▶ Prosecutor’s Office in certain former Soviet bloc countries. Prefer this term, which conveys the specifics of a different legal system, to a translation. Initial capital and italics.

protocol

- ▶ Lower case except when used as part of the full title: Protocol No. 16 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

Q

quotations

- ▶ Text taken directly from another source must be presented in quote marks and properly cited (author and source). This applies to illustrations also.

R

rapporteur

- ▶ No initial capital unless followed by the committee title: Rapporteur for the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights.

recommendation

- ▶ See [adopted texts of Council of Europe organs and institutions](#).

refoulement

- ▶ Italics. French word used in English to refer to the act of turning foreigners back at borders. See [non-refoulement](#).

regime

- ▶ Roman type, no accent.

the Register of Damage Caused by the Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine

- ▶ Enlarged partial agreement. See Resolution CM/Res(2023)3. Short form: the Register.

republic

- ▶ Initial capital only when used as part of the name of a country (French Republic, Republic of Moldova).

resolution

- ▶ See [adopted texts of Council of Europe organs and institutions](#).

rights holder

- ▶ Two words, no hyphen. "Rights" plural.

road map

- ▶ Two words. No hyphen.

Roma

- ▶ General term which refers to the three groups of Roma people: Roma, Sinti and Kale. Adjective "Roma", language "Romani".
- ▶ The following text should appear as a footnote at the first usage:
 1. The term "Roma and Travellers" is used at the Council of Europe to encompass the wide diversity of the groups covered by the work of the Council of Europe in this field: on the one hand a) Roma, Sinti/Manush, Calé, Kaale, Romanichals, Boyash/Rudari; b) Balkan Egyptians (Egyptians and Ashkali); c) Eastern groups (Dom, Lom and Abdal); and, on the other hand, groups such as Travellers, Yenish, and the populations designated under the administrative term "Gens du voyage", as well as persons who identify themselves as Gypsies. The present is an explanatory footnote, not a definition of the terms Roma and/or Travellers.
- ▶ For further details, please see the latest version of the "Descriptive glossary of terms relating to Roma issues" ([SG/Inf\(2015\) 16 final](#)). See also [Travellers](#).

Rome, Treaty of

- ▶ The founding treaty of the EC (1957); not ~~Rome Treaty~~.

S

Sami

- ▶ Indigenous people of the Scandinavian Peninsula, the Kola Peninsula, Karelia and Finland. Refers to the language as well. "Lapp" may be considered derogatory.

Schengen area

- ▶ Area without internal borders established [by the European Union] in accordance with the 1985 Schengen Agreement and the 1990 Schengen Convention.

secretariat

- ▶ Takes initial capital only when referring to the Council of Europe Secretariat.

Secretary General

- ▶ The Council of Europe has two secretaries general – the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly. Two capitals, no hyphen. Plural: Secretaries General.

seminar

- ▶ The title of a conference, seminar or symposium can be cited in inverted commas, in min. caps, but never directly after the word “on”. Prefer “entitled” in such cases; see [action plan](#) and [conferences](#).

senate

- ▶ Initial capital when part of a title (French Senate).

session

- ▶ No initial capital unless part of a title (2002 Ordinary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly).

Sharia Law

Shiite

- ▶ Adjective. Capital “s”, no apostrophe. Derived from the noun “Shia”, a branch of Islam.

Sinn Fein

- ▶ No accent, initial capitals (in Irish: Sinn Féin).

sociocultural

socio-economic

- ▶ Hyphenate.

South-East Europe

- ▶ Short form: SEE. Various forms of the term exist across international institutions and their programmes. Prefer the form above within the Council of Europe. See [cardinal points](#).
- ▶ Depending on the institutional framework, this name is used to describe the area comprising some or all of the following entities or parts thereof: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Kosovo*, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Türkiye.
- ▶ The Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe (no hyphen) was replaced in 2008 by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC).

south(ern), south-east(ern)/south-west(ern)

- ▶ See [cardinal points](#).

spokesman/spokeswoman/spokesperson

state

- ▶ In publications, reports or generally any type of document not listed below, “state” is always lower case (state, member state, special guest state, observer state, state party, etc.).
- ▶ In statutory texts (ETS and CETS legal instruments, adopted texts of the Committee of Ministers, Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, judgments and decisions of the European Court of Human Rights), however, an initial capital letter is used (State, member State, non-member State, observer State, etc.).
- ▶ Terms such as “interstate”, “non-state” and “stateless” are lower case in all contexts.

state party

- ▶ Lower case; plural “states parties”. Initial capitals in the text of conventions and other legal instruments or when used with the full title of a convention (State Party to the European Convention on Human Rights).

sub

- ▶ Follow *Oxford dictionary of English* for hyphenation. Exceptions: sub-committee, sub-heading, sub-paragraph and sub-title.

Summit, 1st/2nd/3rd/4th

- ▶ The full title is 1st/2nd/3rd/4th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe (do not add “of the Member States”). Vienna/Strasbourg/Warsaw/Reykjavik Summit or 1st/2nd/3rd/4th Summit are acceptable short forms.

symposium

- ▶ The theme of a conference, seminar or symposium can be cited in inverted commas, in min. caps, but never directly after the word “on”. Prefer “entitled” in such cases. See [action plan](#) and [conferences](#).

T

Taliban

- ▶ Treat as plural.

telephone numbers

- ▶ Keep telephone numbers as written in the country of origin as far as possible. For international numbers, a “+” symbol precedes the country code, followed by a slash, and a “(0)” generally precedes the area code or the number to be dialled in the country: +33/(0)4 16 22 18 18.

temperature

- ▶ See General information – [Numbers, figures, numerals](#).

time

- ▶ See [dates and time](#).

titles (of jobs)

- ▶ See [official titles](#).

tonne(s)

- ▶ The term for a metric ton, 1 000 kg. US/imperial “tons” are not equal to a 1 000 kg, so only use “tons” if the context demands it. However, “The book contained a ton [or tons] of useful information”.

transatlantic

- ▶ No hyphen, no capital “a”.

Transcaucasia

- ▶ Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia.

Travellers

- ▶ This term refers to an ethnically Irish nomadic people. They mostly live in Ireland and the United Kingdom. This term is not a translation of “gens de voyage” and should not be used as an alternative. See [Roma](#).

Türkiye

- ▶ Türkiye/Republic of Türkiye as of June 2022, adjective “Turkish”. See [Appendix 1a: 46 member states of the Council of Europe](#).

twofold

- ▶ No hyphen.

U

United Nations

- ▶ Initialism: UN can be used occasionally to avoid too much repetition.

USA, US

- ▶ These initialisms can be used for variety where “United States of America” would be too long, or to avoid repetition. “USA” should be used as a noun referring to the country; US can be used as both noun and adjective, and in conjunction with the dollar sign to designate the currency of the USA.

V

videoconference

- ▶ One word, no hyphen.

W

war

- ▶ Capitalise First/Second World War, Gulf War, Falklands War; also Cold War (in keeping with Iron Curtain).

Warsaw Pact

web page

website

- ▶ One word.

well-being

- ▶ Hyphenate.

west(ern)

- ▶ See [cardinal points](#).

Western Balkans

- ▶ Use the term “Western Balkans” when referring to the region but avoid using it as a modifier before “countries”, prefer “countries of the Western Balkans”.

whistle-blower

- ▶ Hyphenate.

working group

- ▶ Lower case unless part of a title.

World Bank

worldwide

- ▶ No hyphen. One word, except in World Wide Web and World Wide Fund for Nature.

X

–

Y

Youth Partnership

- ▶ Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth.

Yugoslav Wars

- ▶ A series of wars in the territory of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia that took place between 1991 and 2001. Not to be confused with the “Balkan Wars” (see [Balkan Wars](#)).

Yugoslavia

- ▶ Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: 1943-1991. Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: 1992-2003, composed of the republics of Serbia and Montenegro.

Z

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Appendices

Appendix 1a: 46 member states of the Council of Europe

State	Currency	Language(s)	Adjective(s)	Capital city	Parliament (diacritics inexact)	Pertinent information
Albania	lek	Albanian	Albanian	Tirana	Kuvendi Popullor	
Andorra	euro	Catalan	Andorran	Andorra la Vella	Consell General de les Valls	
Armenia	dram	Armenian	Armenian	Yerevan	Azgayin Zhoghov	
Austria*	euro	German	Austrian	Vienna	Bundesversammlung	
Azerbaijan	manat	Azerbaijani	Azerbaijani	Baku	Milli Mejlis	
Belgium*	euro	Dutch, French, German	Belgian	Brussels	Senaat/Sénat	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	convertible mark	Bosnian Croatian Serbian	Bosnian, Herzegovinian	Sarajevo	Skupstina	With “z”. Not hyphenated. Avoid the abbreviations “BiH” and “B&H”. Grammatically singular, e.g. “Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country divided into two entities ...”. The two constituent entities are the Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Its three constituent peoples are the Bosniacs, Croats and Serbs. The three can be referred to as Bosnian. Do not refer to the Republika Srpska as RS.
Bulgaria*	lev (leva)	Bulgarian	Bulgarian	Sofia	Narodno Sobranie	
Croatia*	euro	Croatian	Croatian	Zagreb	Sabor	
Cyprus*	euro	Greek, Turkish	Cypriot	Nicosia	Vouli Antiprosopon	
Czech Republic*	koruna (koruny)	Czech	Czech	Prague	Parlament	As of January 2024, the short form “Czechia” should be used: 1. for nameplates displayed at all meetings taking place under the auspices of the Council of Europe; 2. on Council of Europe websites, especially the pages related to member states. Please note that the name “Czech Republic” will continue to be used in publications of the Council of Europe and in relation to the constitution, the name of the Permanent Representation and the ambassador’s title, protocol lists, etc.
Denmark*	krone (kroner)	Danish	Danish	Copenhagen	Folketing	
Estonia*	euro	Estonian	Estonian	Tallinn	Riigikogu	
Finland*	euro	Finnish, Swedish	Finnish	Helsinki	Eduskunta	
France*	euro	French	French	Paris	Assemblée nationale	
Georgia	lari	Georgian	Georgian	Tbilisi	Sakartvelos Parlamenti	

State	Currency	Language(s)	Adjective(s)	Capital city	Parliament (diacritics inexact)	Pertinent information
Germany*	euro	German	German	Berlin	Parlament	Until 3 October 1990: the Federal Republic of Germany ("West Germany") and the German Democratic Republic ("East Germany").
Greece*	euro	Greek	Greek	Athens	Vouli ton Ellinon	
Hungary*	forint	Hungarian	Hungarian	Budapest	Országgyűlés	
Iceland	króna (krónur)	Icelandic	Icelandic	Reykjavík	Althing	
Ireland*	euro	Irish, English	Irish	Dublin	Parliament or Oireachtas	
Italy*	euro	Italian	Italian	Rome	Parlamento	
Latvia*	euro	Latvian	Latvian	Riga	Saeima	
Liechtenstein	franc	German	of Liechtenstein	Vaduz	Landtag	
Lithuania*	euro	Lithuanian	Lithuanian	Vilnius	Seimas	
Luxembourg*	euro	Luxembourgish, French, German	Luxembourgish, of Luxembourg	Luxembourg	Chambre des Députés	
Malta*	euro	Maltese, English	Maltese	Valletta	Parlament	
Republic of Moldova	leu (pl. lei)	Moldovan	Moldovan	Chişinău	Parlamentul	The official designation is the "Republic of Moldova", but it should appear under "m" in alphabetical listings. The Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova/ Transnistria is situated in north-east Moldova, between the Dniester River and the Ukrainian border.
Monaco	euro	French	Monégasque	Monaco Monte Carlo	Conseil National	
Montenegro	euro	Montenegrin	Montenegrin	Podgorica	Skupština Crne Gore	
Netherlands*	euro	Dutch	Dutch	Amsterdam	Staten-Generaal	Referred to in singular. Listed under "n" in alphabetical lists. Lower-case "t" except when at the beginning of a sentence or in a vertical list.
North Macedonia	denar	Macedonian	Macedonian (for culture, language, people)	Skopje	Sobranie	Full name: Republic of North Macedonia. Formerly "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" (changed by Agreement of 17 June 2018, entered into force on 12 February 2019). In Council of Europe reports and official or statutory texts published after 12 February 2019 referring to the state of affairs of or events in this country prior to the entry into force of the name-changing agreement, the former name should be used with a footnote, as follows: 1. As of 12 February 2019, the official name of this country has changed to North Macedonia.

State	Currency	Language(s)	Adjective(s)	Capital city	Parliament (diacritics inexact)	Pertinent information
Norway	kroner (pl. kroner)	Norwegian	Norwegian	Oslo	Storting	
Poland*	zloty	Polish	Polish	Warsaw	Sejm (lower chamber)	
Portugal*	euro	Portuguese	Portuguese	Lisbon	Assembleia da Republica	
Romania*	leu (pl. lei)	Romanian	Romanian	Bucharest	Parlament	
San Marino	euro	Italian	San Marinese	San Marino	Consiglio Grande e Generale	
Serbia	Serbian dinar	Serbian	Serbian	Belgrade	Narodna skupština	
Slovak Republic*	euro	Slovakian	Slovakian	Bratislava	Narodna Rada Slovenskej Republiky	"Slovakia" is a recognised short form.
Republic of Slovenia*	euro	Slovenian	Slovenian	Ljubljana	Drzavni Zbor	"Slovenia" is a recognised short form. Listed under "s" in alphabetical listings.
Spain*	euro	Spanish, Catalan, Basque, Galician	Spanish	Madrid	Las Cortes Generales	
Sweden*	krona (pl. kronor)	Swedish	Swedish	Stockholm	Riksdag	
Switzerland	franc	French, German, Italian, Romansh	Swiss	Bern	Federal Assembly Bundesversammlung Assemblée Fédérale Assemblea Federale	
Türkiye, Republic of	lira	Turkish	Turkish	Ankara	Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi	Country name "Türkiye" as of 1 June 2022. To avoid any anachronism, the name "Turkey" should be used in reference to events prior to June 2022.
Ukraine	hryvnia	Ukrainian	Ukrainian	Kyiv	Verkhovna Rada	Crimea, Donbas, Kyiv, Luhansk, Odessa
United Kingdom	pound	English	British	London	Parliament	The United Kingdom comprises England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The island called (Great) Britain comprises England, Scotland and Wales.

* indicates that the country is also a member state of the European Union.

Appendix 1b: relevant non-member states of the Council of Europe

State	Currency	Language(s)	Adjective	Capital city	Parliament	Pertinent information
Belarus	rouble	Belarusian	Belarusian	Minsk	National Assembly (bicameral: House of Representatives and Senate)	Formerly "Byelorussia", name changed in 1992, but may be correct in a historical context. The special guest status of the Belarusian National Assembly was suspended on 13 January 1997.
Canada	Canadian dollar	English, French	Canadian	Ottawa	Parliament (bicameral: House of Commons and Senate)	Observer status with the Council of Europe (since 1996). Observer status with the Parliamentary Assembly granted to the national parliament in 1997.
Holy See	euro	Latin	Vatican; of the Vatican	Vatican City	–	Observer status with the Council of Europe (since 1970).
Israel	new Israeli shekel	Hebrew	Israeli	Jerusalem	Knesset (unicameral)	Observer status with the Parliamentary Assembly granted to the Knesset in 1957.
Japan	yen	Japanese	Japanese	Tokyo	Kokkai or Diet (bicameral: Shugi-in (House of Representatives), Sangi-in (House of Councillors))	Observer status with the Council of Europe (since 1996).
Jordan, Hashemite Kingdom of	dinar	Arabic	Jordanian	Amman	Parliament (bicameral: Chamber of Deputies and Senate)	Partner for democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly granted to the parliament in 2016.
Kazakhstan	tenge	Kazakh, Russian	Kazakh	Nur-Sultan	Parliament (bicameral: Mazhilis, Senate)	
Kosovo	euro	Albanian (official), Bosnian, Serbian	Kosovo, of Kosovo	Pristina	Parliament	All occurrences of the term "Kosovo" must bear an asterisk in official texts, publications and documents of the Council of Europe. The first occurrence must be accompanied by the following disclaimer in a footnote: * All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo. Prefer the use of "Kosovo" as an adjective in terms such as "Kosovo authorities" or "Kosovo Albanian(s); avoid "Kosovan" or "Kosovar".
Kyrgyz Republic (Kyrgyzstan)	som	Kyrgyz, Russian	Kyrgyz	Bishkek	Supreme Council (bicameral: Legislative Assembly, Assembly of People's Representatives)	Partner for democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly granted to the parliament in 2014.

State	Currency	Language(s)	Adjective	Capital city	Parliament	Pertinent information
Mexico	peso	Spanish	Mexican	Mexico City	National Congress (bicameral: Federal Chamber of Deputies, Senate)	Observer status with the Council of Europe (since 1999). Observer status with the Parliamentary Assembly granted to the national parliament in 1999.
Morocco, Kingdom of	dirham	Arabic, Berber	Moroccan	Rabat	Parliament (bicameral: House of Representatives, House of Councillors)	Partner for democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly (since 2011). Partner for local democracy status with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities granted in 2019.
Palestine*	–	Arabic	Palestinian	Jerusalem (East)	National Council	Partner for democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly granted to the Palestinian National Council in 2011.
Russian Federation	rouble	Russian	Russian	Moscow	Duma (no italics)	The Russian Federation, member of the Council of Europe since 28 February 1996, was expelled from the Organisation on 16 March 2022 following its aggression against Ukraine.
Tunisia	dinar	Arabic, Berber, French	Tunisian	Tunis	Assembly of the Representatives of the People	Neighbourhood Partnership 2022-2025. Partner for local democracy status with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities granted in 2019.
United States of America*	American dollar	English	American	Washington DC	Congress (bicameral: House of Representatives, Senate)	Observer status with the Council of Europe (since 1996).

* This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of Council of Europe member states on this issue.

Appendix 2: common abbreviations

Abbreviations should normally be avoided in running text. Especially avoid abbreviating general descriptive terms to save time when drafting; it can quickly become out of hand.

They can, however, be used to avoid repetition over several sentences or to save space in tables, charts or footnotes, for example. In such cases the following rules apply.

Initials

Initials before a surname take points and a following space (J. S. Bach). Initials follow the same rules in bibliographies but come after the surname (Evermore R. C.). See General information – [References](#).

Acronyms and initialisms

Acronyms and initialisms are abbreviations formed with the first letters of a name or common noun comprising several words. An **acronym** is pronounced as a word (UNESCO, NATO), while in an **initialism** each individual letter is pronounced (BBC, OSCE).

Unless the acronym or initialism is well known (EU, USA), always use the full title the first time it appears, followed by the abbreviation in brackets (The Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB)). Acronyms and initialisms should be written in all capitals, subject to the following conditions:

- ▶ if an organisation/institution makes consistent use of a different style for the acronym/initialism which makes up its name, the name of a sub-entity, body or a treaty or convention for which it is responsible, we must respect their choice. Failing this, try the relevant website, if available;
- ▶ if an acronym/initialism is an abbreviated form of the name of anything other than an organisation (a syndrome such as Aids), refer to generally accepted practice in the relevant professional fields.

The plural of abbreviations is formed by adding an “s” (lower case, no apostrophe): MPs, NGOs. Acronyms/initialisms that are usually used in the plural should be written as they are spoken (ICTs, SMEs – not ICT, SME) unless they are used as a modifier).

The definite article is used with initialisms: the OSCE, the IMF, but not with acronyms: NATO, UNESCO. The World Health Organization is an exception: WHO not ~~the~~ WHO.

Official texts

In adopted texts, conventions, treaties and other official texts or legal instruments of equal legal value in English and French, certain abbreviations should be avoided. For example, “EU” (European Union) and “EP” (European Parliament) are relatively frequent in English, but are not used as commonly in French, so they should not be used. This does not hold for publications or other documents.

Punctuation

No full stops

- ▶ in **contractions**, where the short form contains the first and last letters of the complete word. (For example: Mr, Dr, Ltd, eds). The plural of “vol.”, however, is “vols.”, just as the plural of “No.” is “Nos.”.

Full stops

- ▶ in **abbreviations** where the short form does not contain the last letter of the complete word. (For example: pp., No. (not “no”), ed. (for “editor” or “edited by”). By this logic, “Rt Hon.” has a stop at the end only. Note that “St” is used for “Saint”, but “St.” for “street”.

Measurements

There is neither a full stop nor “s” on the abbreviated forms of units of weight and measurement in the plural: kg, km, ha, ft, yd, etc. Add a non-breaking space between the number and the unit. Write out the full unit of weight or measurement in running text.

Abbreviation	Full unit of weight or measurement
ft	foot (plural: feet)
ha	hectare(s)
kg	kilogram(s)
km	kilometre(s)
yd	yard(s)

For areas (square miles, for example) and volumes (such as cubic metres), the superscript figures ² and ³ should be used only in technical and scientific contexts. Prefer “square kilometres” or “sq. km” to “km²”.

op. cit., ibid., cf., p., pp., etc.

These abbreviations, and others, are covered in [Appendix 3: commonly used foreign words, Latinisms and a few abbreviations](#).

Abbreviations specific to the Council of Europe

Short form	Long form	Notes
Assembly	the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe	Only use the shortest form “the Assembly” in PACE texts. In other contexts, use “the Parliamentary Assembly”.
CAHDI	Committee of Legal Advisers on Public International Law	
CAI	Committee on Artificial Intelligence	Formerly CAHAI (Ad hoc Committee on Artificial Intelligence).
CDADI	Steering Committee on Anti-discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion	
CDCPP	Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape	
CDCT	Council of Europe Committee on Counter-Terrorism	Until 2018, this was the Committee of Experts on Terrorism (CODEXTER).
CDMSI	Steering Committee on Media and Information Society	Formerly CDMM (Steering Committee on the Mass Media).
CEB	Council of Europe Development Bank	Formerly the Social Development Fund.
CEMAT	Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Spatial/Regional Planning	
CEPEJ	European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice	
CETS	Council of Europe Treaty Series	CETS No. 194 and following. See ETS .
CINGO	Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations of the Council of Europe	Also known as the “Conference of INGOs”.
Congress	Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe	Formerly the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (14 October 2003).
CPT	European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	Not to be used for the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.
ECRI	European Commission against Racism and Intolerance	

Short form	Long form	Notes
ECML	European Centre for Modern Languages	
EDQM	European Directorate for the Quality of Medicines & HealthCare	
EPAS	Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport	
ETS	European Treaty Series	See CETS .
EUR-OPA	Co-operation Group for the Prevention of, Protection against, and Organisation of Relief in Major Natural and Technological Disasters	Also known as the EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement or the European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement. The original title “Open Partial Agreement on the Prevention of, Protection against, and Organisation of Relief in Major Natural and Technological Disasters” is no longer in use but figures in the list of treaties on the Treaty Office web page.
Eurimages	European Support Fund for the Co-production and Distribution of Creative Cinematographic and Audiovisual Works	
EYC or “the centre”	European Youth Centre	
EYF	European Youth Foundation	
GRECO	Group of States against Corruption	
GRETA	Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings	
GREVIO	Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence	
HELP	Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals	
MONEYVAL	Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism	
North-South Centre	European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity	
OHTE	Observatory on History Teaching in Europe	
PACE	Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe	The acronym “PACE” can be used as a modifier but not to replace the noun, which is generally shortened to “the Parliamentary Assembly” or “the Assembly” in running text.
Parliamentary Assembly	Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe	In PACE texts, use “the Assembly”.
Pompidou Group	Council of Europe International Co-operation Group on Drugs and Addictions	Previously known as the Co-operation Group to Combat Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in Drugs (see CM/Res(2021)4).
the Register	the Register of Damage Caused by the Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine	
SRSg	Special Representative of the Secretary General	

Short form	Long form	Notes
Venice Commission	European Commission for Democracy through Law	
Youth Partnership	Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth	

Abbreviations that should not be used in Council of Europe texts

Do not use	Rule
CLRAE	Do not abbreviate the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe to "CLRAE". Use "the Congress" instead.
CM	Do not abbreviate "Committee of Ministers" to "CM" or "Ministers". In running text, use "the Committee" instead.
CoE	Do not abbreviate "Council of Europe" to "CoE". Use "the Organisation" instead.
the Council	Do not abbreviate "Council of Europe" to "the Council". Use "the Organisation" instead.
EE	"EC" could stand for "European Community", "European Commission", "European Council", etc. so do not use it.
ECHR	Do not use ECHR as an abbreviation of the European Convention on Human Rights. Use "the Convention". Do not use ECHR as an abbreviation of the European Court of Human Rights. Use "the Court", "the European Court" or "the Strasbourg Court". Exception: "ECHR" is sometimes used in bibliographies when referring to a volume of the European Court of Human Rights publication of judgments and reports – e.g. "ECHR 2000-X", which is correct if the usage is clear and consistent.
ECtHR	Do not use ECtHR as an abbreviation of the European Court of Human Rights. Use "the Court", "the European Court" or "the Strasbourg Court".

General abbreviations

The abbreviations presented below are the ones seen most frequently in Council of Europe texts.

Short form	Long form	Notes
Aids	acquired immunodeficiency syndrome	Initial capital only. See also HIV/Aids below.
AML/CFT	anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism	The C sometimes stands for “combating”.
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations	
BRICS	Brazil, Russian Federation, India, China, South Africa	Originally BRIC until South Africa joined in 2010. At the time of compiling this guide, the association also includes Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy	of the European Union.
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	The CEDAW short form is also used for the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women; be careful to make it clear from context which is meant.
CEFTA	Central European Free Trade Agreement	
CEI	Central European Initiative	
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy	of the European Union.
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States	
COP	Conference of the Parties	Many conventions (including some from the Council of Europe) have a COP, but in practice “COP” usually means the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, usually followed by a number (e.g. COP 27).
CSO	civil society organisation	
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development	
ECB	European Central Bank	
ECDC	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control	
EEA	European Economic Area	Not “European Economic Space (EES)”, which is a mistranslation from French.
EFTA	European Free Trade Association	
EPO	European Patent Organisation	This organisation’s secretariat is called the European Patent Office. The abbreviations “EPOrg” and “EPOff” are used to avoid confusion.
EU	European Union	In adopted texts, always spell out “European Union” in full. Do not abbreviate “European Union” when it is presented along with the Council of Europe: “The Council of Europe and the European Union are working together on many projects.”

Short form	Long form	Notes
Europol	European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation	
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	
Frontex	European Border and Coast Guard Agency	Formerly the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union.
HIV/Aids	human immunodeficiency virus acquired immunodeficiency syndrome	
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency	
IATA	International Air Transport Association	
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development	Part of the World Bank Group.
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization	
ICC	International Criminal Court	
ICJ	International Court of Justice	
ICT	information and communication technology	Plural: ICTs.
IDPs	internally displaced persons internally displaced people	Both are acceptable but use must be consistent within a document.
IIDH	International Institute for Human Rights	Also known as the René Cassin Foundation. Initialism from the French <i>Institut international pour les droits de l'homme</i> .
ILO	International Labour Organization	The secretariat of the ILO is the International Labour Office (not abbreviated).
IMF	International Monetary Fund	
IMO	International Maritime Organization	
INGO	international non-governmental organisation	
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organization	
IOF	International Organisation of La Francophonie	
IOM	International Organization for Migration	Also known as the UN Migration Agency.
IPA	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance	of the European Union.
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change	
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union	
IRA	Irish Republican Army	

Short form	Long form	Notes
ISBN	international standard book number	All Council of Europe commercial publications have an ISBN (print and web editions of the same document have different ISBNs). ISBNs have 13 digits in five groups and are usually printed with separators, either dashes: 978-92-871-1981-3 (the style preferred at the Council of Europe); or spaces: 0 226 10390 0. The ISBN should appear on the imprint page together with copyright information and country of printing, and on the back cover.
ISO	International Organization for Standardization	
ISSN	international standard serial number	An eight-digit number that identifies periodical publications as such, including electronic serials.
ITU	International Telecommunication Union	
Kyoto Protocol	Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	
LGBT	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender	Variations include: ► LGBTI (I: intersex); ► LGBTQ (Q: queer or questioning); ► LGBTQA (A: asexual); ► combinations of these and more (the “more” being represented with a + symbol: LGBTQIA+).
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières	Not to be confused with Médecins du monde.
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration	of the United States of America.
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization	
NEET	not in education, employment or training	Not to be used as a noun.
NGO	non-governmental organisation	Plural: NGOs.
NHRI	national human rights institution	
OAS	Organization of American States	
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights	Usually associated with OSCE (OSCE/ODIHR).
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	
OIC	Organisation of Islamic Cooperation	Formerly the Organization of the Islamic Conference.
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe	
PKK	Kurdistan Workers' Party	

Short form	Long form	Notes
SDG	United Nations Sustainable Development Goal	From the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
SEE	South-East Europe	
SLAPP	strategic lawsuit against public participation	
SMEs	small and medium-sized enterprises	
SOGI	sexual orientation and gender identity	
SOGIESC	sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics	
TVET	technical and vocational education and training	
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme	
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS	
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	
UNDCP	United Nations International Drug Control Programme	
UNDOF	United Nations Disengagement Observer Force	
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme	
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe	
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme	
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	See also COP , above.
UNFICYP	United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus	
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund	
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Also known as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the UN Refugee Agency.
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund	
UNIDIR	United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research	
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon	
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime	Also known as the Office on Drugs and Crime.

Short form	Long form	Notes
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	
UPU	Universal Postal Union	
USSR	Union of Soviet and Socialist Republics	Prefer “Soviet Union”, but USSR is allowed for variety.
WADA	World Anti-Doping Agency	
WCO	World Customs Organization	
WHO	World Health Organization	Not the WHO.
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization	
WTO	World Trade Organization	
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature	Changed from “World Wildlife Fund” in 1986, although the United States and Canada have retained the former name.

Appendix 3: commonly used foreign words, Latinisms and a few abbreviations

Foreign words are usually italicised in English, but can be written in roman if they are very commonly used. This appendix gives a list of common examples, their meanings and whether or not they should be italicised. Avoid Latinisms if there is a clear English equivalent. For anything not in this list, refer first to the *New Oxford style manual*.

Word	Meaning and use	Typographical indications
a contrario	(Latin) “by or from contraries”, used of an argument based on contrast	Roman, two words
a fortiori	(Latin) “with a yet stronger reason than a conclusion previously accepted”	Roman, two words
a posteriori	(Latin) “proceeding from experiences to the deduction of probable causes”	Roman, two words
a priori	(Latin) “based on deduction rather than observation”	Roman, two words
<i>acquis</i>	(Latin) short for “ <i>acquis communautaire</i> ”	Italics
ad hoc	(Latin) “for this purpose”	Roman
<i>amicus curiae</i>	(Latin) “friend of the court” – impartial adviser to a court of law, plural “ <i>amici curiae</i> ”	Roman
avant-garde	(French) “advanced guard”; avant-gardist, avant-gardism	Roman, hyphenated
bis	Same for “ter”, “quater”, “quinquies”, “sexies”, “septies”, “octies”, “novies” and “decies”	Roman
bona fide	(Latin) “genuine, real”	Roman
cf.	Abbreviation of <i>confer</i> (Latin) “compare with”	Roman
<i>de facto</i>	(Latin) “in actual fact”	Italics
<i>de jure</i>	(Latin) “rightfully, by right”	Italics
e.g.	Abbreviation of <i>exempli gratia</i> (Latin) “for example” Prefer “for example”, “for instance” or “such as”	Comma before, not after. Full form: italics, abbr.: roman
et al.	Abbreviation of <i>et alii</i> (Latin) “and others”	Full form: italics, abbr.: roman

Word	Meaning and use	Typographical indications
etc.	Abbreviation of <i>et cetera</i> (Latin) “and other things”. Used at the end of a list (at least two items) to indicate that further, similar items are also included. The reader should therefore be able to infer other items based on the common traits of those presented. Prefer “etc.” to suspension points. A list that ends with “etc.” should not begin with “for example”, “such as” or “including”.	Roman, comma before, a point after; “etc” is followed by only one point if it comes at the end of a sentence; leave point if followed by any other punctuation. Avoid “&c.”
<i>ex ante</i>	(Latin) “based on forecasts rather than actual results”	Italics
<i>ex officio</i>	(Latin) “by virtue of one’s status or position”	Italics
<i>ex parte</i>	(Latin) “in the interests of one party only”	Italics
<i>ex post factum</i>	(Latin) “after the fact”	Italics
exequatur	(Latin) “official recognition of a foreign state’s representative”	Roman
ff.	“folios”, “following pages”; prefer to “et seq.”	Roman
<i>force majeure</i>	(French) “superior strength” – unforeseeable circumstances that prevent fulfilment of a contract.	Italics
<i>forum non conveniens</i>	(Latin) “forum not agreeing”. Discretionary power that allows courts to dismiss a case where another court is better suited to hear the case.	Italics
glasnost	(Russian) “publicity”, “openness”. An official policy of the former Soviet Union emphasising candour with regard to discussion of social problems and shortcomings.	Roman, no initial capital
habeas corpus	A writ requiring a person to be brought before court to determine lawfulness of detention; abbr. “hab. corp.”.	Roman
i.e.	Abbreviation of <i>id est</i> (Latin) “that is”, “namely”. Prefer either of these two unless space is a big concern. In fact, consider whether any addition is necessary at all; often it is needless in the context. Do not confuse with “e.g.”	Comma before Full form: italics, abbr.: roman
ibid.	Abbreviation of <i>ibidem</i> (Latin) “in the same source”. Used to avoid repetition of a reference (strictly speaking only the title of a work, but the author’s name can be presumed) in bibliographic matter when citing more than one identical work in uninterrupted succession. Prefer abbreviation.	Full form: italics, abbr.: roman
<i>idem</i>	(Latin) “the same person”. Used to avoid repetition of an author’s name in bibliographic matter when citing more than one identical author in uninterrupted succession. Prefer the full form to the abbreviation “id.”, which is less common.	Full form: italics, abbr.: roman
<i>in absentia</i>	(Latin) in his/her/their absence	Italics
in camera	(Latin) in private; not in open court	Roman
<i>in re</i>	(Latin) in the legal case of; with regard to	Italics
<i>in situ</i>	(Latin) “in position”	Italics
<i>infra</i>	(Latin) “below”. Should be avoided in bibliographical matter for the same reasons as “op. cit.” and “supra”, below. English equivalent is perfectly satisfactory in other situations.	Italics
<i>inter alia</i>	(Latin) “among other things”	Italics
<i>intra vires</i>	(Latin) “within one’s power”	Italics

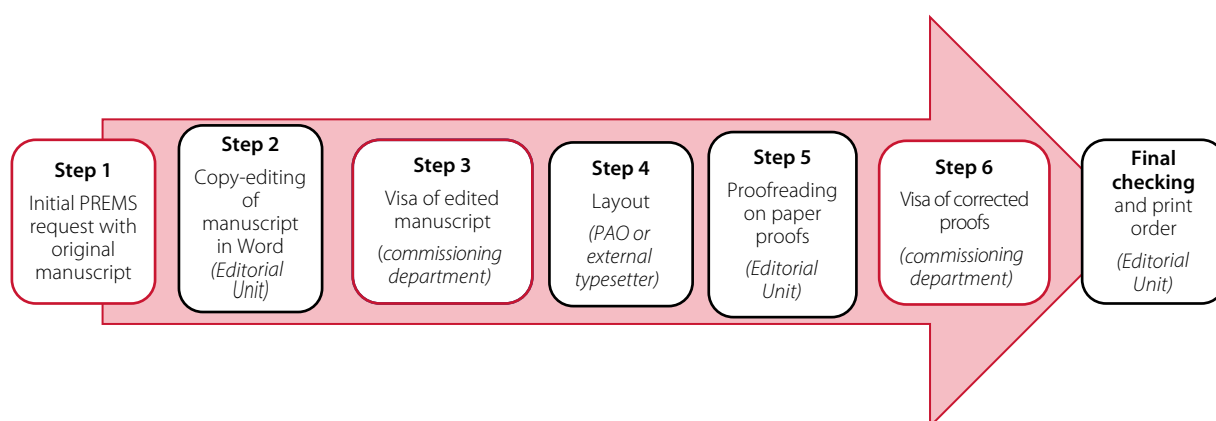
Word	Meaning and use	Typographical indications
<i>ipso facto</i>	(Latin) “by the very fact or act”	Italics
<i>ius/jus</i>	(Latin) “law”	Italics. Spelling correct with either “i” or “j”
<i>ius/jus cogens</i>	(Latin) “compelling law” – the principles which form the norms of international law from which no derogation is permitted. The English equivalent, peremptory norm or norms, is perfectly satisfactory.	Italics. Spelling correct with either “i” or “j”
jihad	(Arabic) A Muslim holy war or spiritual struggle against infidels. A crusade or struggle.	Roman, lower case. Variant spelling “jehad”
laissez-aller	(French) “absence of restraint”	Roman, hyphenated, not “laisser”
laissez-faire	(French) “let things take their own course”	Roman, hyphenated, not “laisser”
laissez-passer	(French) “pass, permit”	Roman, hyphenated, not “laisser”
loc. cit.	Abbreviation of <i>loco citato</i> (Latin) “in the cited place”. Used to avoid repeating a reference to a specific location in a work. This is often misused and misunderstood, so should be avoided; the indication is very specific, and therefore of limited use to the reader in any case.	Full form: italics, abbr.: roman
modus operandi	(Latin) “way of doing something”, plural “modi operandi”; abbr. “MO”	Roman
<i>mutatis mutandis</i>	(Latin) “making necessary alterations while not affecting the main point”	Italics
NB	Abbr. of <i>nota bene</i> (Latin) “mark well”	Roman, upper case, not followed by any punctuation
<i>oblast</i>	(Russian) An administrative territorial division within Russia and other former Soviet republics, including Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan	Italics. Kaliningrad <i>oblast</i>
op. cit.	Abbreviation of <i>opere citato</i> (Latin) “in the work quoted”. Used to avoid repeating a complete bibliographic reference, but should be avoided as it gives no indication where the initial reference is to be found.	Roman
p., pp.	Abbreviation of “page”, plural “pp.”	Roman
par excellence	(French) “pre-eminently”	Roman
per se	(Latin) “intrinsically”	Roman
perestroika	(in the former USSR) reform of the economic and political system	Roman
<i>post factum</i>	(Latin) “after the fact”	Italics
prima facie	(Latin) “from the first impression”	Roman
pro forma	(Latin) “done as a matter of form”	Roman, two words, no hyphen
<i>procès-verbal</i>	(French) “written report of proceedings”; plural <i>procès-verbaux</i>	Italics, hyphenate
quid pro quo	(Latin) “something for something”; a favour or advantage in return, plural “quid pro quos”	Roman
<i>raison d'être</i>	(French) “main purpose”	Italics
rapprochement	(French) establishment of harmonious relations	Roman

Word	Meaning and use	Typographical indications
realpolitik	(German) “politics based on realities and material needs, rather than on morals or ideals”	No capital, roman
res judicata	(Latin) “a matter judged”	Roman
<i>restitutio in integrum</i>	(Latin) “restoration to the original position”	Italics
<i>sensu stricto</i>	(Latin) “strictly speaking, in the narrow sense” NB the French say <i>stricto sensu</i>	Italics
sine qua non	(Latin) “an indispensable condition”. Used as a noun.	Roman
<i>sui generis</i>	(Latin) “of its own kind” – unique	Italics
<i>supra</i>	(Latin) “above”. Essentially the same as “ <i>infra</i> ” and “op. cit.”, above, and should therefore be avoided in bibliographical matter. English equivalent is perfectly satisfactory in other situations.	Italics
ultra vires	(Latin) “beyond one’s legal authority”	Roman
versus	(Latin) “against”; abbr. “v.” (prefer to “vs”)	Roman
vice versa	(Latin) “the order being reversed”	Roman, no hyphen or accent
vis-à-vis	(French) “in relation to”	Roman
viz	Contraction of <i>videlicet</i> (Latin), “namely”. No full stop. Prefer “namely”	Roman, comma before

Appendix 4: helpful information for commissioning departments

This section contains general information on the production of ISBN publications at the Council of Europe (see Figure 1, below), but which may also apply to other production processes. Feel free to contact the Editorial Unit (Editorial-Unit@coe.int) for more information, before starting the process or at any stage of production.

Figure 1: Publication production process (simplified)



PREMS request

[PREMS.coe.int](https://prems.coe.int)

Before making a production request, make sure you have a completed manuscript to upload into the system. Any request that does not have an attached document will be rejected. You can access PREMS at [PREMS.coe.int](https://prems.coe.int) or through the Publications and Visual Identity Division’s intranet page: [Pre-press, printing, shipments – General Services](#).

You will need to provide the following information in the request:

- ▶ type of document (ISBN or non-ISBN);
- ▶ services needed (copy-editing, layout, proofreading, printing or creation of web PDF);
- ▶ format (A4, A5, 16x24);
- ▶ any instruction that will help in the processing of your request (reprint, series, etc.).

Attribution of an ISBN number

If you have made a request for an ISBN publication, the PREMS system will send your document to the Publications and Visual Identity Division for approval.

How to visa a manuscript with corrections in Word (Step 3)

The Editorial Unit sends the corrected manuscript (Word file) to the commissioning department by e-mail or via the pre-press management system (PREMS). This file has the copy-editor's corrections in "Track Changes" and any queries or comments for the authors. Additional notes and queries may be provided in a separate file.

The commissioning department's task is to review the proposed changes, answer any questions and send a "clean" file, without Track Changes or comments, back to the Editorial Unit. The following instructions will help you do this.

Corrections in Track Changes

The modifications in Track Changes are the professional copy-editor's proposed grammatical, stylistic or factual corrections. They are based on linguistic and industry standards and Council of Europe practice. The first step is to "reject" any changes you do not accept. This will then allow you to accept all of the remaining changes with one click ("Accept all Changes"). Once you have dealt with the Track Changes, address any comments or queries.

Comments

Copy-editors often encounter questions they cannot answer alone because they concern the author's intentions. They usually ask the author to clarify ambiguous points (unexplained acronyms, incomplete or missing references, inconsistencies, contradictions, factual or linguistic issues, etc.). Please make the necessary changes in the text and delete all comments once finished.

Once all the Track Changes and comments have been removed from the file, it should be renamed (file name + "visaed") and then sent to the Editorial Unit by e-mail (Editorial-Unit@coe.int) or via PREMS.

Important: any issues relating to the text, images, charts or other illustrations must be resolved before sending the manuscript for layout. Extensive changes cannot be made after layout, so make sure that you only send the finalised manuscript back to the Editorial Unit. **Contact the Editorial Unit if in doubt.**

How to visa first proofs on paper (Step 6)

The finalised manuscript goes to a typesetter for layout according to the specifications and visual identity of the Organisation. After layout, the typesetter provides the Editorial Unit with the first proofs. A professional proofreader then proofreads the first proofs on paper or, more often, a PDF. The commissioning department must then visa the proposed modifications.

The Editorial Unit will send a scan of the proofread paper copy of the first proofs – with the proofreader's corrections, comments and questions – or an annotated PDF to the commissioning department. Please go through the document, marking any additional corrections or indicating those that you reject using Acrobat annotation tools (see below).



Please return the visaed proofs in a timely manner. Delays at this stage cannot be made up later and may compromise your deadline.

Important: author's corrections (anything that is not the typesetter's fault, such as modifications to the text) at this stage are billed; they should only be made in cases of absolute necessity. Obvious errors must be corrected, but rewriting or restructuring the work at this stage is extremely costly and time consuming.

This is usually the last time the commissioning department will see the publication before printing. Inform the Editorial Unit if you want to check the next set of proofs, after correction.

Correction symbols

Proofreaders will also insert correction symbols on paper proofs and PDFs. These symbols are directions for the typesetter.

Instruction	Symbol
Bring text down to the next line	
Bring text up to the previous line	
Increase space	
Close space	
Increase space between lines	

Covers

How to write a back-cover blurb

All publications require a back-cover blurb, as this is usually a potential reader's first contact with a book and may determine whether they purchase it or not. It is also used to present your book on the Council of Europe online bookshop and catalogue (book.coe.int). Take advantage of the opportunity this space offers to sell your publication to potential readers!

Keep it short and to the point. Do not attempt to summarise the contents. There is no need to repeat the title. Above all, avoid specialist jargon, empty verbiage and administrative formulations such as "in the framework of Plan A", "as part of Programme B", "under the auspices of C" or "as advocated in the document D". None of this will entice the reader or contribute to increasing your readership.

Generally, three paragraphs will do. The first paragraph "sets the scene", describing a situation or problematic that the book will cover in some way. The rest of the blurb can explain how the book offers some insight into the problem. Prefaces, executive summaries, introductions and conclusions are good places to find this information.

Try to answer some of the following questions and then draft your blurb accordingly.

- ▶ Who is the book intended for?
- ▶ What is the problem/situation regarding the topic at hand?
- ▶ Why should the reader feel concerned?
- ▶ What solutions, insights or improvements does the book offer?
- ▶ What is the purpose of the publication?

Important: please submit your draft blurb along with the manuscript in your PREMS request, or at the latest with the visaed manuscript. It will be reviewed by the Editorial Unit before the cover is laid out.

Cover visuals

Publication and document covers are laid out according to the visual identity of the Organisation. Photos, drawings or abstract compositions may be used to illustrate the cover. The commissioning department must choose a visual for the cover and submit the source file via PREMS. The Council of Europe has a subscription with Shutterstock.com, but other sources may be suitable if rights have been obtained.

Important: make sure that you have permission to use the visual(s); copyright may apply. If in doubt, contact the Editorial Unit.

www.coe.int

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.