



English Style Guide

A Handbook for Translators, Revisors and Authors of Government Texts

March 2017

Prime Minister's Office Publications 2/2017, Finland

The most valuable of all talents is that of never using two words when one will do.

Thomas Jefferson

Translation is not a matter of words only: it is a matter of making intelligible a whole culture.

Anthony Burgess

One should aim not at being possible to understand, but at being impossible to misunderstand.

Quintilian

The letter [text] I have written today is longer than usual because I lacked the time to make it shorter.

Blaise Pascal

Let's eat, Dad! Let's eat Dad!

A translation that is clumsy or stilted will scream its presence.

Anonymous

Without translation I would be limited to the borders of my own country.

Italo Calvino

Writing is thinking. To write well is to think clearly. That's why it's so hard.

David McCullough

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Abstract

This English Style Guide provides recommendations on the use of English in Finnish government texts. It has been drawn up for translators and revisors of such texts and for public officials drafting documents in English.

The guide is based on the European Commission's English Style Guide, published by the Commission's Directorate-General for Translation, but the focus is on recommendations and guidelines applicable in the Finnish context.

It is important to ensure consistency among documents. The guide introduces, with practical examples, the main rules and conventions that should be followed when using English in administrative documents within the government sector in Finland.

Plain language, readability and clarity are recommended whenever possible.

The guide was drawn up for writers whose mother tongue is not English and for writers with native or near native English who require guidance on the practices to be followed.

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Tiivistelmä

Tämä englannin kielenhuollon käsikirja tarjoaa suosituksia, jotka koskevat englannin kielen käyttöä Suomen valtionhallinnossa. Opas on suunnattu kääntäjille ja kielentarkastajille sekä henkilöille, jotka laativat tekstejä suoraan englanniksi.

Käsikirja perustuu Euroopan komission käännöstoimen pääosaston julkaisemaan englannin kielenhuollon oppaaseen, mutta keskittyy suosituksiin ja ohjeisiin, jotka soveltuvat Suomen oloihin.

Valtionhallinnon englanninkielisessä viestinnässä on tärkeää, että teksteissä käytetään sovittuja termejä ja ilmaisutapoja. Keskeisimmät säännöt ja menettelytavat, joita näissä englanninkielisissä asiakirjoissa tulisi soveltaa, esitetään käytännön esimerkkien avulla.

Yleisesti toivotaan, että teksteissä otettaisiin huomioon lukijakunta ja noudatettaisiin selkeää kieltä.

Opas on suunnattu henkilöille, joiden äidinkieli ei ole englanti sekä käytännön ohjeeksi englantia äidinkielenään tai toisena kielenään puhuville henkilöille.

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Referat

Den här handboken erbjuder rekommendationer för användningen av engelska i statsförvaltningens texter. Handboken riktar sig till översättare, granskare och personer som skriver texter på engelska i sitt arbete.

Handboken utgår från Europeiska kommissionens English Style Guide som ges ut av generaldirektoratet för översättning, men fokus ligger på rekommendationer och anvisningar som behövs för finländska förhållanden.

Det är viktigt att termer och uttryck används konsekvent i statsförvaltningens kommunikation. De viktigaste reglerna och skrivkonventionerna som bör följas i statsförvaltningens texter på engelska presenteras med hjälp av praktiska exempel.

Klarspråk och målgruppsanpassning rekommenderas i alla sammanhang.

Handboken är riktad till personer som inte har engelska som modersmål, men innehåller också praktiska riktlinjer för skribenter med engelska som första- eller andraspråk.

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QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Unless otherwise indicated, use the recommendations of the European Commission's English Style Guide. (https://ec.europa.eu/info/files/english-resources-english-style-guide_en)

The purpose of this **Quick Reference Guide** is to provide an easily accessible summary of common style issues. It is not intended to be definitive or exhaustive: Consult the full English Style Guide for further information and for anything not covered in this summary.

| Language variant and spelling | Default is British English . | | |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|
| | Unless otherwise noted in this style guide, use the first spelling found in Oxford Dictionaries. Always use the 's' spelling in words such as organise (NOT organize), except in the names of organisations that use the 'z' form. | | |
| Formatting | When translating follow the formatting of the original whenever possible. | | |
| Dates and times | Wednesday 15 June 2016 | | |
| | Use the 24-hour clock: The meeting starts at 9.15; the dinner is at 18.00. | | |
| | DO NOT use the Finnish week number system. Write out the dates instead. | | |
| | 1994–1996, 1998–2012, 2010s (NOT 2010's) | | |
| | "2000-luvulla" can mean the century or the first decade; avoid using '2000s' whenever a more precise expression exists. | | |
| Numbers and ranges | 1,000.00 | | |
| | For ranges, use the 'en' dash (–) and close up the numbers: 21.56–21.72, 10–15. | | |
| Currencies | USD 500, EUR 50 million | | |
| | In tables or other contexts where space is constrained, 'million' and 'billion' may be abbreviated and currency symbols used: €2.3 mill., \$1.5 bn, EUR 50 mill. | | |
| | DO NOT use <i>MEUR, mio, bio, k,</i> or similar abbreviations. | | |





| Mathematical symbols and units of measurement | Use a non-breaking space (Ctrl+Shift+Space) between a number and mathematical symbol or unit of measurement: $500 m$; $10 \div 2 = 5$; $2 \times 16 = 32$. |
|---|---|
| | Use superscript and subscript where appropriate after first spelling out if necessary: m^3 , CO_2 |
| | The per cent sign is closed up to the number: 31.5% (NOT 31.5%). |
| Capitalisation | Capitalise job titles, department names, etc.: Ministerial Adviser (NOT Advisor), Economics Department, State of Finland, the Government's decision (BUT state funding, government expenditure). |
| | Use full names of ministries: Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment (NOT MEAE) but note that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is also known as the Foreign Ministry. |
| | Acronyms or initialisms are generally capitalised, but not always when written out in full: non-governmental organisation (NGO); gross domestic product (GDP); BUT United Nations (UN). |
| | Note: generally written without full stops: <i>UK, UN, USA</i> . internet (NOT Internet) |
| Titles and honorary titles | DO NOT use <i>Mr</i> or <i>Ms</i> with titles. As a rule, avoid using them in all contexts. |
| | If academic titles are not of particular importance, do not include them. |
| | DO NOT translate Finnish honorary titles: <i>vuorineuvos Matti Meikäläinen</i> When several titles are given – <i>oikeustieteen maisteri, kansanedustaja, opetusneuvos Matti Meikäläinen</i> – usually only one title will do, at least in press releases. |
| Names of organisations, companies and people | If possible, check usage from the organisation's website or official documents: Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK), Finnish Transport Safety Agency Trafi. |
| | If no English translation exists, it may be appropriate to use a short description when first introducing the organisation or document, then use the Finnish name: Metsähallitus, the agency governing the use of state-owned land, |
| | For registered English names of Finnish companies, consult https://www.ytj.fi/en/index.html. |
| | Remember that foreign proper names are sometimes spelled differently in English than in Finnish: Aleksei Uljukajev (FI) > Alexei Ulyukayev (EN). |
| Geographical names | When the name of a Finnish geographical feature includes 'järvi', 'joki' etc., the following form is recommended Kuusijärvi > Lake Kuusijärvi. |
| | Adjectival forms of compass points are not usually capitalised: eastern Europe, northern Finland. |
| | Use capitalisation if they form part of a proper name, an administrative or political unit or a distinct regional entity: East Indies, Eastern Europe, South Ostrobothnia. |





| Contact details and other information | Email address formatting: john.doe@example.com Hallitusneuvos Tiina Turtiainen > Tiina Turtiainen, Senior Ministerial Adviser Remember to add the country code in phone number: +358 50 111 2222 | |
|--|--|--|
| | Lisätietoja > Inquiries (NOT further information, additional information) BUT, e.g. Lisätietoja ministerin ohjelmasta > More information about the Minister's programme/Read more | |
| Legislation, names of acts and decrees | The main source for translations of specific pieces of legislation is Finlex. <i>Lainsäädäntösanasto</i> (Glossary of Legislative Terms) is also useful. The main source for EU legislation is EUR-Lex. DO NOT use the <i>pykälä</i> sign §; use 'section' instead. | |
| Compound words and hyphenation | DO NOT hyphenate the following: daycare, healthcare, database, wellbeing, worldwide, jobseeker, cooperation, coordination, eGovernment, email, website, online, policymaker BUT e-services, e-insurance, e-invoice, decision-maker | |
| Quotations | For direct speech, use double quotes "", otherwise use single quotes'. | |
| Miscellaneous | Postilokero: PO Box (NOT POB or P.O. Box) saami/saamelainen (FI) > Saami (EN) | |

FOREWORD

This English Style Guide sets out recommendations on the use of English in Finnish government texts. It was compiled to provide guidelines for drafting documents in English and translating into English, and for ensuring a measure of consistency among such documents. It introduces, with practical examples, the main rules and conventions that should be followed when using English in administrative documents within the government sector in Finland. The guide is by no means exhaustive nor can it cover all linguistic or cultural variations that may apply to particular documents or circumstances.

We recommend the use of plain language when possible. Pay attention to readability and clarity. In practice this may mean splitting long sentences into two, using verbs instead of nouns and avoiding jargon words etc. Remember that the readers will include many people for whom English is not their mother tongue.

This guide is based on the **European Commission's English Style Guide**, published by the Commission's Directorate-General for Translation. Rather than replicate much of its very thorough content and detailed advice, this

guide instead restricts itself to recommendations on areas that we feel are applicable to the Finnish context and of particular relevance in view of present practice and past experience. In some cases these recommendations differ from the advice in the Commission's guide. In matters not covered in this guide, you should refer to the Commission's guide.

This English Style Guide wholly supersedes its precursor, the Government Style Guide, which was published online by the Prime Minister's Office in 2008.

Should you require further assistance, please contact us by email: englanti@vnk.fi

We also welcome any suggestions for revision or additions.

English Style Guide team March 2017

KEY POINTS

- 1. Unless otherwise indicated, use the recommendations of the European Commission's English Style Guide (https://ec.europa.eu/info/files/english-resources-english-style-guide_en).
- 2. Use British English.
- Essential sources of reference:
 - Finnish Government Termbank Valter: https://mot.kielikone.fi/mot/valter/netmot.exe?UI=fi80
 - Glossary of Legislative Terms (Lainsäädäntösanasto): http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/
 - Guide to Translating Finnish Statutes into English and Treaties into Finnish (Säädösten kääntäminen englanniksi ja valtiosopimusten suomentaminen): http://vnk.fi/kaannos-ja-kielipalvelut/sanastot.
 - Glossaries and Guidance, Prime Minister's Office: http://vnk.fi/kaannos-ja-kielipalvelut/sanastot.
- Other sources:
 - Terminology Service in the Prime Minister's Office: termineuvonta@vnk.fi or termradgivning@vnk.fi
 - Translation memories listed under Glossaries and Guidance, as above. (Please note that the material in the memories may not always reflect the current advice in this English Style Guide. The English Style Guide always takes precedence.)

1 PUNCTUATION

Changes often occur in language over time, and this applies to the use of punctuation and grammatical rules in English as much as to terms and phrases. The advice in this guide is considered current and appropriate.

Remember, too, that punctuation rules are not the same in English as in Finnish. Use discretion in how you apply the rules. The aim is to ensure readability for a wide readership, including non-native speakers, and to be consistent within a document.

| Full stop | Truncations (where the end of the word is deleted) are followed by a full stop. | Co., Art., Chap. |
|-----------|---|---|
| | Contractions (in which the middle of the word is removed) are not followed by a full stop. | Dr, Ms, Ltd |
| Colon | The word following a colon does not need to be capitalised unless it is a proper noun or in a heading or is introducing a quotation. Colons should be closed up to the preceding word, letter or number. | The firing died down as night fell: the parties gathered to discuss the situation, the townspeople breathed a sigh of relief and the firefighters collected all their gear. Finland: Land of a Thousand Lakes He asked: "What should I do?" |
| Semicolon | A semicolon instead of a comma is used to combine two sentences into one when there is no linking conjunction. | The rule is recommended; however, it is not compulsory. |
| | Semicolons should be used to separate items in a series that are long and complex or that involve internal punctuation, for the sake of clarity. | The meeting was attended by Professor Johnson, University of Bristol, United Kingdom; Dr Mäkinen, University of Helsinki, Finland; and Dr Andersson, Stockholm University, Sweden. |





| Comma | In a series, a comma should only be used before the final item if it helps to clarify the sense. | Top stories: World leaders at Mandela tribute, Obama Castro handshake and same-sex marriage date set vs. Top stories: World leaders at Mandela tribute, Obama Castro handshake, and same-sex marriage date set |
|-------|---|---|
| | Comma use with 'for example'. | When the rains fail and drought comes, the future of the millions of farmers who are practising subsistence farming and who depend on rain, for example, is put in jeopardy. |
| | | Farmers practising subsistence farming face many hardships, for example drought and flooding. |
| | Comma use with 'eli'. | Suomen talouden tuotanto eli bruttokansantuote on laskenut viimeiset kaksi vuotta. > Output, that is GDP, has decreased in Finland for the past two years. |
| | The relative pronoun 'that' can be used (instead of 'which' or 'who') in defining relative clauses, but not in non-defining relative clauses (which are preceded by a comma). | After the storm the herders were not able to find the cows that/which were in the valley before the storm began. During the roundup the herders were able to find all the cows, which were in the valley at the time the roundup began. |
| | Comma use in quoted speech. Note that comma rules in English are not the same or as strict as in Finnish. For the sake of clarity and readability, it is sometimes justified to deviate from the conventions on comma use. | "I have discussed the matter," said the Prime Minister. (NOT : "I have discussed the matter", said the Prime Minister.) |





| Dashes | Difference between Finnish and English in the use of dashes in titles and headings. | public–private partnerships, Monday–Friday, Kymijoki– Gulf of Finland River Basin District, the Estonia–Russia border |
|--------|--|---|
| | An 'en' dash (Ctrl + - on the numeric keypad) is used in English to join two words or phrases of items of equal rank. | Kustannusten nousu jatkuu — työttömyys laskee > Costs continue to rise, unemployment falls |
| | Where Finnish sometimes uses a dash to join two ideas into a single heading, a comma or other solution may be more appropriate in English. | Stefan has one great quality — he speaks German fluently. |
| | A long or 'em' dash (Alt + Ctrl + - on the numeric keypad) emphasises an interruption, leads to an afterthought or introduces a specific explanation. It is less formal than a colon and gives more attention to what follows. | Tarkastaja havaitsi, että kyseinen henkilö eli vuokralainen oli toiminut kiinteistön omistajan edustajana. > The inspector noticed that this person – the tenant – had acted as the representative of the property owner. |





| Hyphen | A hyphen can introduce a difference in meaning. | re-sign vs. resign; re-cover vs. recover; re-count vs. recount |
|--------|--|---|
| | A hyphen is used with prefixes and suffixes. | sub-Sahara Africa, a shell-like substance, ex-husband, non-industrial, president-elect |
| | Use hyphens with compound words and compound modifiers to avoid ambiguity. | cure-all, has-been, well-established rules, environment- friendly business, ill-advised action, 4-year-old child, 10-member group, person-year (BUT small and medium-sized enterprises) |
| | | Note: Laina- tai sijoitusmuotoisessa joukkorahoituksessa tarjotaan > Loan-based or investment-based crowdfunding offers (NOT Loan- or investment-based crowdfunding offers) |
| | Hyphens are not used in adverbial elements ending in -ly. | carefully prepared management plan, environmentally friendly business |
| | | DO hyphenate the following: know-how, passer-by |
| | | DO NOT hyphenate the following: daycare, healthcare, wellbeing, database, dataset, worldwide, jobseeker, cooperation, coordination, eGovernment, email, website, online, policymaker, fulltime, daytime, login (BUT to log in) |
| | | BUT e-services, e-insurance, e-invoice, decision-maker, night-time |
| | When two numbers are adjacent, spell out one of them. | 90 fifty-gram weights |
| | Hyphenate when fractions are adjectival but not when they are nouns. | There was a two-thirds increase in the use of electronic services. |
| | | Three quarters of the conference room was empty. |
| | Hyphenate when the term is adjectival but not when it is a noun. | This should be taken into account in the decision making. |
| | | This should be taken into account in the decision-making procedure. |



| Brackets | Use brackets to enclose abbreviations; write out the term in full at first. | Target 14.7 calls for increasing economic benefits to Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) from marine resources by 2030. |
|--|---|---|
| | Brackets can be used instead of commas to add explanatory information. | Metsähallitus (a state-run enterprise) is part of the administrative sector of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. |
| | When the information in parentheses ends with a closing bracket, remember to include the final bracket. | When preparing the plans, the authorities must consult the people likely to be affected (see part 2(b)). |
| | In citations brackets are closed up to the section and paragraph number. | Article 5(3)(a) |
| Question mark | A question mark is used after a direct question but not in indirect speech or after a request or instruction. | What will be the effect on trade in the coming year? This raises the question of how trade will be affected next year. Would you please sign the application and submit it by Thursday. |
| An exclamation mark is rarely used in formal texts in English. It is always closed up to the preceding word, letter or number. | | It is a great honour to stand in one of Finland's most prestigious rooms! |
| | It may sometimes be used for exclamatory words, phrases or sentences in texts that directly address the audience, such as speeches, to signal to the speaker that greater emphasis is needed. | Hello everyone, and welcome! |





| Quotation marks | Use single quotation marks (' ') except for quoted speech (""). Texts aimed at an American audience will usually use double quotation marks in all cases. | The American government favours 'a two-way street in arms procurement'. |
|-----------------|--|---|
| | When quoted speech occurs in a sentence or phrase that is itself already within double quotation marks, the quoted speech should be in single quotation marks. | "The Prime Minister's response was 'No comment'." |
| | Note that the Finnish use of a dash (—) to introduce direct speech is not used at all in English. Use quotation marks instead. | — Minulla on unelma, sanoi King. > "I have a dream," said Mr King. (NOT : "I have a dream", said Mr King.) |
| | If quoted speech is longer than one paragraph, all but the last paragraph end with no quotation marks. However, if the direct speech that is quoted is long, it may be better to indent it instead of using quotation marks. | Minister XX said: "Today's meeting went well. The Committee will announce its conclusions on Thursday. "On other matters, next Monday we shall reconvene to discuss the housing shortage and the financial crisis." |
| Forward slash | The forward slash can be ambiguous as it is not always clear whether it means 'and' or 'or'. If it is used, there are no spaces on either side. | This can refer to the clause/sentence. |
| | With unit measurements use only one such slash. | 9 kg/ha per year (NOT 9 kg/ha/yr) |
| Apostrophe | None in numerical references to decades or centuries. | 1990s (NOT 1990's) |

2 SPELLING

| Default is British English . Unless otherwise noted in this style guide, use the first spelling found in Oxford Dictionaries. | Common examples include: centre (NOT center), travelled (NOT traveled), signalling (NOT signaling), honourable (NOT honorable) |
|---|---|
| Always use the 's' spelling in words such as <i>organise</i> (NOT <i>organize</i>), except where an organisation itself uses the 'z' form. | Examples: analyse, maximise, minimise, recognise; Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe |
| | |
| | appendix, appendices |
| | index, indexes |
| | criterion, criteria |
| | curriculum, curricula |
| | forum, forums |
| | referendum, referendums |
| | Director General, Directors General |
| | Head of State and Government, Heads of State and Government |
| | this style guide, use the first spelling found in Oxford Dictionaries. Always use the 's' spelling in words such as organise (NOT organize), except where an organisation itself |

3 CAPITALISATION

| Titles of documents | For titles, capitalise the first word, proper nouns and main words but not prepositions, conjunctions and articles. | Finnish Weather: Forecasting and Models Action Plan for the Implementation of Tax Reform and Other Reforms in the Strategic Government Programme for 2014–2018 The Action Plan |
|---------------------|---|---|
| | If the title of the document has not been translated, copy the original title and then in brackets give a free translation of the title (but do not capitalise). | Toimeenpano-ohjelma maatalouden tukien korottamisesta (Action plan for increasing agricultural subsidies) The action plan |
| | In the case of long titles, do not capitalise where these read more like a description than a title. Note also that EU directives usually have long titles that are not capitalised (although the word 'Directive' is capitalised). | Joint FAO/EC working party on forest and statistics |
| | The names of Finnish acts and decrees should be written in English and capitalised. These names can usually be found on the Finlex website. | Laki ammattipätevyyden tunnustamisesta > Act on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications |
| Other | By derogation from the European Commission's English Style Guide, we maintain capitalisation for reference back to the names of organisations. | The Ministry of the Interior The Ministry |
| | Use lowercase for the word 'minister' when the names of the ministers are not mentioned. For example, at an event where several ministers from different countries will be meeting. | In addition, the ministers will discuss the On the second day of the visit, Minister Toivakka will have meetings with her Austrian counterpart |
| | Capitalise the names of ministries, departments, etc. | Ministry of Transport and Communications (NOT MTC) |
| | Capitalise the names of political parties, including the word party. | Kokoomus > National Coalition Party |





4 NAMES AND TITLES

| Honorifics | If gender needs to be indicated in conjunction with a person's name, use Mr or Ms (the use of Mrs depends on her personal choice). However, as a rule, don't use these honorifics. | NOT Mr., Ms., Mrs. |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| Job titles | As a rule, titles are lowercased when the name of the person is not mentioned. | The accounts manager released the report yesterday. |
| Academic degree | Do not include, especially in press releases, unless it is of particular importance to the text. | Accounts Manager John Major, PhD Law, |
| Finnish honorary titles | Do not translate these, but instead use the Finnish title. Note that sometimes what looks like an honorary title is in fact a job title with its own English translation. Currently the translations can vary from one ministry to the next. Consult <i>Virkanimikkeiden kääntäminen englanniksi</i> under Glossaries and Guidance, Prime Minister's Office (http://vnk.fi/kaannos-ja-kielipalvelut/sanastot). | The Finnish honorary title 'liikenneneuvos' was granted to Hallitusneuvos > Senior Ministerial Adviser |
| | Diplomatic titles incorporating '-neuvos' are not honorary titles and should be translated. | Ulkoasiainneuvos > Counsellor for Foreign Affairs |
| Geographical names | When the name of a Finnish geographical feature includes 'järvi', 'joki' etc., follow the example. | Kuusijärvi > <i>Lake Kuusijärvi</i> |
| | Compass points and adjectival forms are not usually capitalised. | eastern Europe, northern Finland |
| | Use capitalisation if they form part of a proper name, an administrative or political unit or a distinct regional entity. | East Indies, Eastern Europe, South Ostrobothnia |
| | For English names of Finnish administrative areas, consult the relevant website. | Åland (NOT Ahvenanmaa) |
| | Pietari Viipuri Holland and Great Britain are not official names. | St Petersburg (NOT St. Petersburg or Saint Petersburg) Vyborg the Netherlands, the United Kingdom |

5 NUMBERS

| Writing out numbers | As a rule, write out low numbers (up to nine) in words and larger numbers (10 and above) in figures. Do not start a sentence with a figure; write the number out in full or reformulate the sentence. | After the meeting, 16 delegations held a press conference in three languages. |
|---------------------|---|---|
| | Use commas to group thousands. | 2,000; 10,000; 2,000,000 |
| | DO NOT use spaces (if you can't use a comma, add a non-breaking space (Ctrl+Shift+Space)). | |
| Dates and times | Dates are written day-month-year (not month-day-year). | 1 July 2016 (NOT July 1, 2016) Monday 1 July 2016 |
| | No comma is used with just the month and year. | July 2016 |
| | Use the 24-hour clock. In some situations the 12-hour clock can be used if it adds clarity (10.30 am). However, to avoid confusion in the case of midday, it may be appropriate to write 12.00 noon. | |
| | Use a full stop with hours. | 9.45; 14.15 (NOT 14:15) |
| | The Finnish system of numbering the weeks of the year should not be used in English. Instead, dates should be spelled out (or a particular week referred to by its starting date, usually a Monday). | NOT weeks 20-21 BUT 16-29 May NOT week 19 BUT the week beginning 9 May |



| Time spans | Normally written as a range. | 1990–1995 from 1990 to 1995 between 1990 and 1995 in the period 1990–1995 NOT 1990 – 1995 NOT 1990-95 NOT from 1990-1995 NOT between 1990-1995 NOT in 1990-1995 |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| | A forward slash is used for financial or budget years that do not coincide with calendar years and that refer to a period of twelve months or less. | The report covers the entire budget year 2016/2017. |
| | 2000-luvulla can mean the century or the first decade; avoid using 2000s whenever a more precise expression exists. | 2000-luvulla > 21st century, the first decade of the century, the period 2000–2009 2010-luvulla > in the current decade, the second decade of this century, the period 2010–2019 |
| Fractions and percentages | The percentage symbol is written without a space in British English. | 31.5% or 31.5 per cent (NOT 31,5 %) |
| | For Finnish expressions such as 'joka kolmas vastaaja kyselyssä, follow the example given: | one in three respondents or one out of three respondents (NOT every third respondent) |
| | BUT for 'kokous pidetään joka kolmas vuosi': | the meeting is held every third year or the meeting is held once every three years |
| Decimals | Unlike the Finnish use of decimal commas, English uses the decimal point. | 0.5 NOT 0,5 or .5 29,90 euroa > EUR 29.90 |





| Ranges | The Finnish use of dots to denote a range (2030) is not an option in English. | ages 58–75; the meeting is to be held 12–15 April; we are open 9.00–16.00; EUR 20–30 million |
|--------|---|---|
| | Use an 'en' dash to denote a range in English. | DO NOT use an en dash when the words 'from' or 'between' are used: copy the section from page 5 to 20 participants should arrive between 9.00 and 9.30 |

6 ABBREVIATIONS, SYMBOLS AND UNITS OF MEASUREMENT

Abbreviations

In general, spell out names such as the European Union and the United States when used as nouns; they can be abbreviated when used as adjectives.

Acronyms and initialisms should be spelled out in full when first mentioned in a text with the abbreviation in brackets.

Acronyms and initialisms are generally capitalised, but not always when written out in full.

Some abbreviations normally take a full stop and some do not. If an abbreviation might be confused with a word, use full stops.

Articles (a, an, the) are used with abbreviations unless the abbreviation is normally pronounced as a word.

If a Finnish acronym is used, write out the full name at first mention and add the acronym in brackets, after which the acronym can be used in the text.

In some cases, the Finnish acronym is not used.

Remember:

Always check each organisation's website.

DO NOT abbreviate the English names of Finnish ministries or agencies.

When using an acronym or abbreviation, avoid repeating a word that is included in the acronym.

MoU

htv (henkilötyövuosi)

Nato/NATO

Diaarinumero (Dnro)

The Member States of the European Union decided yesterday ...

The United States has voted against ...

The World Health Organization (WHO) published its latest recommendations on swine flu.

non governmental organisation (NGO); gross domestic product (GDP); **BUT** United Nations (UN)

number, no. (**NOT** nr)

the EU, the WHO, OPEC, UNESCO

The Social Insurance Institution of Finland (Kela) is introducing Kela's funding for 2016 The Institution

the Finnish Environment Institute or the Institute (NOT SYKE or FEI)

Tekes – the Finnish Funding Agency for Innovation works Tekes promotes ...

Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry... (**NOT** *MEC*)

GPS-järjestelmä > GPS (**NOT** GPS system)

Memorandum of Understanding/ Memorandums of Understanding or Memoranda of Understanding

person-year

Use Nato in Finnish and NATO in English.

Register number (Reg. no.)



| Latin abbreviations | Write e.g. and i.e. or eg and ie In highly formal texts, avoid the use of 'etc.' in running sentences; instead use 'and so on,' for example' or other ways to convey the idea. The abbreviation can be used in brackets. | NOT eg. and ie. |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Mathematical and other symbols | Use a non-breaking space (Ctrl+Shift+Space) between a number and its unit to prevent them falling on separate lines. | The European Commission's English Style Guide has good info at http://ec.europa.eu/translation/english/guidelines/documents/styleguide_english_dgt_en.pdf |
| | Use superscript and subscript where appropriate after first spelling out if necessary. | 4 m³, CO ₂ |
| | Use space before units of measurement. | 500 metres, 500 m |
| | BUT NOT for temperatures | 5°C Note : in scientific writing use 5 °C |
| | Note that the English symbols for multiplication and division are x and \div . | $10 \div 2 = 5, 2 \times 16 = 32$ |
| | The Finnish § symbol is normally translated in legislation as 'section' (Note : lowercase 's') and in articles of association as 'article'. | The provisions in section 8 are to be complied with. Exception: Reference to a numbered article in EU law is capitalised: As laid down in Article 3. |

CURRENCIES

| Currency symbols | Use the standard currency codes (EUR, GBP, USD, etc.). DO NOT use symbols (€, £). Note that in English, the currency abbreviation always comes before the number; add a non-breaking space (Ctrl+Shift+Space) before the number. | EUR 500 |
|--------------------|--|--|
| Millions, billions | Use million and billion and add a non-breaking space after the number. | EUR 50 million (NOT 50 MEUR) Exceptions: in tables it may be appropriate to use EUR mill./EUR bn/€ mill. Sometimes it may be more appropriate to use 5,000 euros (BUT NOT 5,000 euro) instead of EUR 5,000. DO NOT use MEUR, mio, bio, k, or similar abbreviations. |

8 FOREIGN WORDS AND PHRASES

| Spelling of foreign words | Recommended spelling: Al-Qaida ISIL Quran Remember that foreign proper names are sometimes spelled differently in English. | NOT al-Qaida, al-Gu'ida, al-Qaeda, Al-Qaeda NOT ISIS, IS, Daesh, Daish, Da'ish NOT Qu'ran, Koran Aleksei Uljukajev (FI) > Alexei Ulyukayev (EN) |
|---------------------------|--|--|
|---------------------------|--|--|

9 PARTS OF SPEECH

| Active/passive voice in translation | Finnish uses passive constructions more commonly than English. The Finnish passive can often be converted into the active form in English. Use the passive voice sparingly or when there is a good reason to do so. | Ulkoministeriön suurlähetystöissä ja konsulaateissa kirjattiin vuonna 2016 noin 55 000 konsulpalvelua. > In 2016, the Foreign Ministry's diplomatic and consular missions abroad handled about 55,000 requests for consular service. |
|---|---|---|
| Inanimate agents | In English a non-living thing can perform an action. | Figure 13 illustrates/shows; Our results indicate; The meeting decided |
| Tense | Tense use often differs between Finnish and English. | Muutosprosessi on ollut käynnissä vuosina 2004–2007. > The process was handled between 2004 and 2007. (NOT: has been handled) Ministeri XX on ollut ministerinä 2 000 päivää huomenna tiistaina 13. syyskuuta. > Tomorrow, on Tuesday 13 September, Minister XX will have served 2,000 days as a minister. |
| Denominalise in English whenever possible | English often uses verbs where Finnish prefers nouns. | Tämän tutkimuksen toimeksiannossa tilattiin olemassa olevien toimintamallien kehittämisanalyysi. > This study was commissioned to create an analysis of existing procedures or This study was commissioned to analyse existing procedures or This study analyses existing procedures NOT: This study was commissioned for the creation of an analysis of existing procedures) |



| Be careful with the pronoun 'we' in translations from Finnish | Please note that if you say 'we discussed the matter with the prime minister', it means that you and someone else together discussed the matter with the prime minister. | Keskustelimme asiasta pääministeri YY kanssa. > I discussed the matter with Prime Minister YY. or Prime Minister YY and I discussed the matter. (NOT: We discussed the matter with Prime Minister YY.) |
|--|--|--|
| Certain expressions | The Finnish 'osuus' is not always 'share'. Osuus, in quantitative relations, is usually translated as 'proportion' (a part of the whole) or 'in relation to'. Be sure the meaning is proportion and not a ratio (source and examples: Lääketieteen ja luonnontieteen englantia: The Words Between, Jean Margaret Perttunen, Duodecim 2000). | Kuiva-aineen osuus tuorepainosta kasvoi toukkakehityksen aikana 20 prosentista 32 prosenttiin. > During larval development, dry weight increased in relation to fresh weight from 20% to 32%. Hevostilojen osuus yli 1 ha tiloista > Proportion of farms of over 1 ha with horses The proportion [NOT share] of [NOT from] white rats in the F2 generation was nearly 50%. |
| | A ratio is the relation between two parts of a whole. | The ratio of A to B or A and B [NOT between] is 1:2. |

10 LISTS

Lists and bullet points add to clarity. Follow the recommendations of the European Commission's English Style Guide for punctuation in lists. However, in slide presentations, minimise punctuation.

| Harmonisation on lists | Harmonise the first word in lists: either infinitive or gerund or noun – not mixed. | The objectives are to: emphasise a comprehensive approach to conflict prevention further develop the participation in strengthen the crisis management capacity stress the role of the UN in peace mediation. |
|------------------------|---|--|
| | | NOT: The objectives are: to emphasise a comprehensive approach to conflict prevention further developing the participation in the strengthening of crisis management capacity to stress the role of the UN in peace mediation. |

11 CORRESPONDENCE

| Advice on letter writing Consult Malli-ilmaisuja valtionhallinnon kirjeenvaihtoon under Glossaries (http://vnk.fi/kaannos-ja-kielipalvelut/sanastot). | nd Guidance, Prime Minister's Office |
|--|--------------------------------------|
|--|--------------------------------------|

12 CITATIONS AND REFERENCES

Generally follow the European Commission's English Style Guide unless otherwise indicated.

| Citing references | References can be given in footnotes, endnotes or in-text. | In-text citations : According to Aho and Sundberg (2010), Finns are generally supportive of voting rights. |
|-------------------|--|--|
| | | The results of the survey showed that Finns are generally supportive of voting rights (Aho & Sundberg, 2010). |
| | | Research on voting showed that in municipal elections people over 40 were more likely to vote (Aho, Sundberg and Lehtinen, 2011). Aho, Sundberg and Lehtinen (2011) found that in municipal elections. |
| | | However, Mäki and others (2012) noted that young people under 25 were particularly interested in a bioeconomy. In contrast, people earning more than EUR 80,000 per year showed more concern for Finland's position in the Union (Forssberg et al., 2012). (For four or more authors use 'and others' in sentences; et al. can be used in brackets.) |
| | | Footnotes : It has long been argued that the Finnish sauna is the best. ¹ |
| | | It has long been argued that the Finnish sauna is the best ¹ , although different versions of the sauna are found around the world. |
| | | 1 John Ahonen, The Perfect Guide to Sauna (Finland Press, 2010), pp. 36-40. |
| | Online sources should include the date, in square brackets, on which the information was accessed. | http://www.bris.ac.uk/arts/exercises/referencing/referencing%20skills/page_37.htm [Accessed 29 March 2017] |

13 GENDER-NEUTRAL LANGUAGE

Be aware of gender-neutral language. The use of singular 'they' has become increasingly common and is acceptable in many contexts. However, in legislation and other formal texts its use is not recommended.

| He, she | In contexts where the Finnish 'hän' covers both genders, it can often be cumbersome to use 'he or she'. You can overcome this by using different strategies, such as: - changing to plural - repeating the noun - reformulating the sentence to avoid the pronoun In legislation, in particular, it may be more appropriate to retain the singular 'he or she' (NOT 'he/she') despite it being cumbersome. | The user should first log in to his or her program. You should first log in to the program. Where a student refuses to undergo the examinations for ascertaining his or her state of health referred to in section 43b(1), he or she may be banned from studies until he or she consents to undergo the necessary examinations. Where students refuse to undergo the examinations for ascertaining their state of health referred to in section 43b(1), they may be banned from studies until they consent to undergo the necessary examinations. |
|-------------|---|--|
| Chairperson | Unless there is good reason to use 'chairman' or 'chairwoman', use the gender-neutral form 'chairperson'. In some cases, 'chair' may be more suitable. | Puheenjohtajan lisäksi työryhmän jäsenet ovat > In addition to the chairperson, the members of the working group are |

14 TEXT COHESION

| Reverse thinking | This means avoid mechanical translation. Follow the logic of the target language. | Jos sinulla on käynnistymässä tai suunnitteilla kokeilu > If you are planning or launching (NOT: launching or planning) Kaikki saamamme palaute on tervetullutta ja tärkeää > Feedback is valuable and most welcome (NOT: welcome and valuable) |
|------------------|---|--|
| | | päätöksenteko ja valmistelu > preparation and decision- making (NOT : decision- making and preparation) |
| | | Yhdessä ratkotaan ja pohditaan asioita > We deliberate and solve things together. (NOT: solve things and deliberate together.) |
| Text flow | Add linking words to improve cohesion in English, such as once again, as regards, accordingly, for this reason, to this end Use demonstrative pronouns (e.g. this, that, those). A range of grammar structures can make the text more interesting for the reader: | Haluaisin sanoa muutaman sanan Suomessa käytössä olevasta mallista > In this context, I would like to say a few words about the system Once again, I quite agree but, unfortunately, we do not know what will happen with |
| | pronouns (it, this, that, those, etc.) to refer back to something mentioned earlier synonyms to avoid repetition. | That is why I welcome the fact that, in spite of everything |
| Noun stacking | Long strings of nouns (usually four or more nouns and sometimes adjectives) can be ambiguous and often need to be broken up for the sake of clarity. There may even be more than one meaning, in which case it may be necessary to consult the writer. | NOT to determine a wide range of data user communication needs Is it: to determine the need for a wide range of data communication between users? Or: to determine the communication needs of a wide range of data users? |
| | | Or : to determine the need for communicating data about a wide range of users? |



| Archaic words | Avoid using: | examples: |
|---------------|--|---|
| | thereafter, therein, aforementioned, insofar as, albeit, | thereafter -> then, afterwards |
| | thus, lest, herein etc. | therein -> in that, there |
| | | thus -> so, therefore |
| | | aforementioned -> this/that, this (report/study) the (report/study); in some cases the word 'said' might be appropriate |

15 SPEECHES

| Muutosvarauksin | Translated as 'Check against delivery'. |
|---|---|
| To ensure easy readability for the speaker, try to avoid words and sentences that are too long or may involve major pronunciation problems. | Consult <i>Puheiden ilmaisuja</i> under Glossaries and Guidance, Prime Minister's Office (http://vnk.fi/kaannos-ja-kielipalvelut/sanastot). |
| Link to Useful phrases for speeches and forms of address. | |

16 PRESS RELEASES

| Heading | Press release headings in English often work well with the simple present tense. Avoid using articles in the heading. | Minister Tiilikainen to visit Algeria on a trade mission on 20–21 November Under-Secretary of State Anttonen leads trade mission to India Government proposes improvements in export financing |
|---------------------|---|--|
| Date | If space is limited, the month can be written as a number. | 11 December 2016 11/12/2016 Ministeri XX osallistuu sihteeristön kokoukseen Amsterdamissa 20.–22.10.2016 > Minister XX will participate in the meeting of the Secretariat in Amsterdam on 20–22 October 2016. |
| Embargo | Publication of a press release may be embargoed. | Julkaistavissa 14.9. klo 14.00 > Embargoed until 14.00 on 14 September Julkaisuvapaa VN:n istunnon jälkeen > Embargoed until after the government session |
| Joint press release | A Finnish press release may be headed 'Ministeriö X ja ministeriö Y tiedottavat'. | Ministeriö X ja ministeriö Y tiedottavat > Press release (NOT Press release by the Ministry X and Ministry Y or Joint press release by the Ministry) |
| Quotation | Always use double quotation marks with quoted speech. | Minister XX said: "Today's meeting went well. The Committee will announce its conclusions on Thursday." |



| Titles | In press releases, when several titles are given, use only one title, normally the most pertinent one. | oikeustieteen maisteri, kansanedustaja, hallitusneuvos Matti Meikäläinen > Matti Meikäläinen, Senior Ministerial Adviser |
|---|---|--|
| | In press releases concerning appointments, the person's academic qualifications may be given and should normally be translated. | Valtiotieteiden maisteri Juha Kiiski on torstaina 24.11.2015 nimitetty > On Thursday 24 November 2015, Juha Kiiski, M.Soc.Sc., was appointed as |
| Inquiries | At the end of press releases, there are normally contact details under the heading 'lisätietoja'. | Lisätietoja: Hallitusneuvos Tiina Turtiainen, Sisäministeriö, puh. 050 111 2222 > Inquiries: Tiina Turtiainen, Senior Ministerial Adviser, Ministry of the Interior, tel. +358 50 111 2222 (NOT further information, additional information) |
| | BUT, e.g. Lisätietoja ministerin ohjelmasta > | More information about the Minister's programme: Read more: |
| Name and job title | The job title comes after the person's name in the contact details at the foot of a press release. | Lisätietoja: Hallitusneuvos Tiina Turtiainen, Sisäministeriö, puh. 050 111 2222 > Inquiries: Tiina Turtiainen, Senior Ministerial Adviser, Ministry of the Interior, tel. +358 50 111 2222 |
| Remember to add the country code in phone number. | | puh. 050 111 2222 > tel. +358 50 111 2222 |
| Email address formatting: use the same form given in the Finnish. | | john.doe@example.com > john.doe@example.com john.doe(at)example.com > john.doe(at)example.com |
| Age | If the age of a person is mentioned, it is normally expressed without the word 'years'. | Matti Virtanen, 38, was appointed to the post. |





| Repetition of name and title | In a press release, write out the name and title in full at first mention, but then start using a shortened form (even if the source language does not do so). | Minister of the Interior Pekka Jokinen Minister Jokinen Jokinen he The summit will be held on 23 and 24 May in X. Prime Minister Juha Sipilä will attend the meeting. "Finland," says Prime Minister Sipilä, leader of the Finnish delegation. He "Discussion," says Sipilä |
|--|---|--|
| Muutosvarauksin | Translated as 'Subject to change'. NOT 'subject to change(s)' | |
| Other | 9/11 is so well known as shorthand for the attacks on 11 September 2001 that it can be used in headlines. PM can be used in headlines instead of writing 'Prime Minister'. | |
| For capitalisation, currency, titles, reference to ministries, etc. see the relevant sections elsewhere in this Style Guide. | Willister. | |

17 MISCELLANEOUS

| As a rule, do not divide words at the end of a line. | |
|--|--|
| Avoid using: inter alia, i.a., per se, aforementioned per diem | In Kela's texts, daily allowance is used for päiväraha. |
| Subject-verb agreement In theory, the verb should be singular, has left (A record <u>number</u> has left) because the subject of the sentence, according to grammar rules, is 'number' and not 'asylum seekers'. | Ennätysmäärä turvapaikanhakijoita on lähtenyt kotimaahansa. > A record number of asylum seekers <u>have</u> ¹ left to their home country/countries.² BUT: The police <u>have</u> responded to the situation. Finnish Customs <u>is</u> an efficient organisation. 1 Singular verb may be grammatically correct, but it is illogical. 2 Each person (barring a few exceptions) usually has only one home country. So again, it seems illogical to use refugees return to their countries even though that would also be grammatically correct. |
| 'muun muassa' is not always translated as 'among other things'. Sometimes it can even be omitted. | Työryhmän tehtäviin kuuluu muun muassa a, b, c, d ja e. > The duties of the working group include a, b, c, d and e. Muun muassa toiminnallisilla magneettikuvauksilla > Images produced by methods such as functional magnetic imaging Pääministeri puhui mm. inflaatiosta. > Inflation was among the issues addressed by the Prime Minister. |
| Often the Finnish 'sekä' actually translates as 'and' instead of 'as well as'. | Työryhmä keskusteli tämän vuoden talousarviosta, määrärahoista ja menoista sekä verotuloista. > The working group discussed this year's budget, appropriations, expenditure and tax revenue. (NOT The working group discussed this year's budget, appropriations and expenditure as well as tax revenue.) |
| EU:n komissio | European Commission (NOT EU Commission) |



| euroalue | euro area (NOT euro zone; NOT Euro Area) |
|---|---|
| yli/ali | over/under; more than/less than |
| vähän/suuri | slight, little, small / large, big, great |
| kuin, verrattuna | than compared to/with/against |
| firstname.lastname@xxxxxx.fi firstname.lastname(at)xxxxxxx.fi | In some cases, to avoid spam it's worth using (at) instead of the symbol '@'. |
| liite | As a rule, use appendix (pl. appendices) in preference to annex (pl. annexes). Note: EU directives have 'Annexes'. Use 'attachment' if included in an email. Use 'enclosure' if included in a letter. |
| 'criteria' is the plural of 'criterion' | criteria are |
| internet | internet (NOT Internet) |
| Latin plurals | forum/forums NOT fora |
| programme or program | Use programme for everything except computer-related programs. |
| lähtökohta | Avoid overuse of 'point of departure' or 'starting point'. Other alternatives include: premise, goal, aim, approach, basis. |

USEFUL LINKS

FINLAND

Glossary of Legislative Terms (Lainsäädäntösanasto)

http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/

Finnish Government Termbank Valter

https://mot.kielikone.fi/mot/valter/netmot.exe?UI=fi80

Glossaries and Guidance, Prime Minister's Office

http://vnk.fi/kaannos-ja-kielipalvelut/sanastot

Guide to Translating Finnish Statutes into English and Treaties into Finnish (Säädösten kääntäminen englanniksi ja valtiosopimusten suomentaminen)

http://vnk.fi/kaannos-ja-kielipalvelut/sanastot

EU

European Commission's English Style Guide

http://ec.europa.eu/translation/english/guidelines/documents/styleguide_english_dgt_en.pdf https://ec.europa.eu/info/files/english-resources-country-compendium-companion-english-style-guide_en

EU - Interinstitutional style guide

http://publications.europa.eu/code/en/en-000100.htm





European Commission / Guidelines for contractors translating into English

http://ec.europa.eu/translation/english/guidelines/en_guidelines_en.htm

INTERNATIONAL

OECD Style Guide

https://www.oecd.org/about/publishing/OECD-Style-Guide-Third-Edition.pdf

United Nations Editorial Manual

http://dd.dgacm.org/editorialmanual/

United Nations Correspondence Manual

http://archive.unu.edu/hq/library/resource/UN-correspondence-manual.pdf

UK

University of Oxford Style Guide

http://www.ox.ac.uk/public-affairs/style-guide

Government Communication Service Style Guide

https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/6.2169_CO_CP_Style-Guide_v9web.pdf

Government Digital Services style guide

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/style-guide





How to publish on gov.uk

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-publish-on-gov-uk

Inside GOV.UK: What to check before you publish

https://insidegovuk.blog.gov.uk/2014/05/29/what-to-check-before-you-publish-a-2i-checklist/

US/CANADA

Harvard Style Referencing

https://www.library.usyd.edu.au/subjects/downloads/citation/Harvard_Complete.pdf

Canadian Translation Bureau, Parliament of Canada

http://www.btb.termiumplus.gc.ca/tpv2guides/guides/wrtps/index-eng.html?lang=eng

MEDIA

Guardian and Observer style guide

http://www.guardian.co.uk/styleguide

The Telegraph Style book

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/topics/about-us/style-book/1435307/Telegraph-style-book-Aa.html

The Economist: Style Guide

http://www.economist.com/styleguide/introduction





BBC News style guide

http://www.bbc.co.uk/academy/journalism/news-style-guide

The Reuters Style Guide

http://handbook.reuters.com/?title=The_Reuters_Style_Guide

LANGUAGE

Transitional Words and Phrases

http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/Transitions.html

Linking Words

http://www.smart-words.org/linking-words/linking-words.pdf

How to write clearly (PDF)

http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/how-to-write-clearly-pbHC3010536/

Gender-neutral language

http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Towards-Best-Practice-Guidelines-for-Implementation.pdf

Academic Phrasebank, University of Manchester

http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/describing-quantities/

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