



socialprotection.org

# Blog Writing Guidelines

Blogs feature narrative, punchy, short-form written content catering to a wide online audience, including non-experts. The content must include social protection or related topics. For guidance, please refer to our social protection taxonomy, reflected in the Publications search categories.

## STRUCTURE:

### 1. Word limit:

900 – 1500 words

- The first 780-790 characters (including spaces) appear on the blog homepage. To capitalise on this, please include a teaser (see 3).

### 2. Heading:

Approximately 75 characters (including spaces)

- Narrative style heading, do not phrase as a question
- Include key google search terms pertaining to the content
- Only capitalise the first word and proper nouns
- Capitalise first word after a colon
- No full stop at the end of titles or headings

### 3. Teaser:

Up to 250 characters / 3 or 4 lines

- Describe the main findings and conclusions of the blog
- Do not repeat content from the heading
- Narrative steer that sparks interest to the reader



## Tips:

**British English:** use “s” instead of “z”:  
organisation, programme

- Use a *teaser*, *short paragraphs* and *sub-headings*
- Numbers below ten must be written as words
- Full name and acronym on first use
- Ensure you include at least one image, with **no copyrights** (all creative commons)

#### 4. Body:

- Use sub-headings every 1-3 paragraphs
- Shorter paragraphs: approximately 150 words.
- Include only key findings and arguments
- Consider what is of widest interest to online readers
- The use of numbered or bullet point lists is recommended
- Only include key summary statistics

#### 5. Level, style and tone:

- Don't assume that readers know what you mean without explanation
- Keep specialist vocabulary to a minimum, and explain all terms likely to be unfamiliar when you first use them

#### 6. References:

- Hyperlink references in text if the public access version is available: (Lawson, 2017)
- Link to the socialprotection.org landing page in the publication is on the platform
- Link to full length research that the blog may be based on
- Use et al. for citations with three or more authors
- Italicise journals articles

#### Include a reference list for cited content:

Examples:

Aker, J. (2010). *Dial 'A' for Agriculture: Using Information and Communication Technologies for Agricultural Extension in Developing Countries*, Tuft University, Economics Department and Fletcher School, Medford MA02155.

Beaman, L. et al. (2015). *Can Network Theory-based Targeting Increase Technology Adoption, North Western University*, Accessible: [http://faculty.wcas.northwestern.edu/~lab823/MNW\\_june15.pdf](http://faculty.wcas.northwestern.edu/~lab823/MNW_june15.pdf)

Suri, T. (2011). "Selection and comparative advantage in technology adoption", *Econometrica*, Accessible: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.3982/ECTA7749/abstract>

#### 6. Tables and charts:

Recommended to illustrate research findings

- Label the axis clearly
- Provide a clear and concise heading
- Provide a short explanatory paragraph to accompany the table or chart

#### 7. Image

- Must include image to accompany the post
  - Include image source details
  - The image must be free of copyrights: all creative commons. Flickr and the United Nations Photo Library are recommended sources.
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## 8. Conclusion:

End in a decisive and interesting fashion, one that sums up and encapsulates the argument.

## GRAMMAR

### 1. Spelling:

- British spelling (globalisation, labour, programme, organisation etc.)
- Adjective phrases like “high-value” in “high-value industries” are hyphenated, but not when standing on their own, e.g. “They placed a high value on the industry, thus making it a high-value industry.”
- Don’t use a hyphen after an adverb ending in –ly (e.g. “highly skilled workers”)
- Don’t refer to yourself in the third person (always “our research”, etc.)
- Commonly occurring words/phrases: euro (don’t capitalise currencies), policymaker, “the data show”, not “the data shows”

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### 2. Dates:

- Format: 17 March 2017
- 20th century (not twentieth century)

### 3. Abbreviations:

- Acronyms, initials and formulae: Explain once, at first use, then use the acronym
- Always abbreviate UK, EU, US (no full stops)
- G20 and G7 (no hyphens)
- “vs” ok in titles and headings, but “versus” within text
- Don’t use abbreviations in teasers

### 4. Punctuation:

- Use Oxford commas (“a, b, and c” rather than “a, b and c”)
- Itemise lists with commas, not semi-colons (unless list items contain commas, which is the case for using semi-colons)
- Bulleted lists should have each item begin with a capitalised word
- Single quotation marks to introduce terms, double quotation marks when quoting directly
- No comma after e.g. or i.e.

### 5. Numbers:

- Numbers below ten must be written as words
- Numbers larger than ten should be written as numerals (except at the start of sentences)
- Use %, not “percent” or “per cent”, except at the start of sentences.
- Use billion and million, not bn and mn or other abbreviations.
- Use £, \$ and € symbols (e.g. “€300 million”)