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 Theoretical Content Classification guidelines. To learn how to add a blog post, please refer to our Technical Content Classification guidelines.

STRUCTURE:

1. Word limit:

900 – 1500 words

• The first 780-790 characters (including spaces) appear on the list view of the blog listing page. To capitalise on this, please include a teaser (see 3).

2. Heading:

Approximately 75 characters (including spaces)

• Narrative style heading, do not phase 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
• Italisise 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

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.

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"

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")