

Iceland
Liechtenstein
Norway grants



Norway grants

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WRITING A (REGIONAL) REPORT

Second specialised three-day regional training
for R2G4P members

20 May 2022

Implemented by:



Government
Transparency
Institute



What the TOR should include?

Contents
Research questions
Sources
Target group
Reference style

What we want to achieve / show?

Originality

(avoid over-relying on external sources + provide own expert opinion)

(Copy-paste is not over 5% of the text - 0% if possible)

Country-specific (not general) problems/solutions

Regional comparison

New data/trends, based on innovative methodologies

(no reports older than 2 years used)

Messages related to the latest developments

Shorter, to-the-point texts

(focusing on crucial issues)

Achieve impact

(texts/messages should be able to be “packaged” into one-pagers, policy briefs, blog/FB posts, etc.)

TOR

Desktop research

Trends/Patterns

Brainstorm

Text writing

Formatting

Internal QA

Example text structure / contents

- Context / history / background
- What is the problem?
- Why it matters / why we should engage?
- Detailed analysis of the problem (statistical data, cases, key findings, etc.)
- What has been done so far to solve the problem (when and by whom)?
- What was the result of these efforts? Were the counter-measures efficient?
- Policy recommendations for further actions (reforms, procedures, legal change)

TOR

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Desktop research

(ab. 1 month per chapter / background task)

Follow latest news and developments

Research all points from the TOR, following the suggested Contents, Research questions, Sources

Extract key information and citations

TIP! Interns could help with the literature review

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Literature review (help by interns)

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Year	Author/ Organization	Title	Link	Resume / abstract	Issue 1	Issue 2
2022	EC	Title placed here	Link	Text	V	V
2019	UNCAC	Title placed here	Link	Text		V
2018	OECD	Title placed here	Link	Text	V	
2017	CSO "X"	Title placed here	Link	Text		V

(about. 1 week)

Consider what the information is telling us and summarize your conclusions

E.g. think about any patterns of behavior / how processes operate; what are the issues; what are the reasons behind them – lack of public registers, procedures, political pressure over the judiciary?

TIP! Draw a figure or bullet list with the identified trends, issues, processes, schemes, and the reasons behind them

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Organize brain-storming session with colleagues / partners

(1-2 hours)

Share and discuss your findings, which constitute of:

- a) your conclusions
- b) selected facts from the desktop research

Ask colleagues and partners if any other important aspect could be regarded, what is missing.

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Writing the text

(about 1 week per chapter / background task)

Based on the already existing conclusions (own expert opinion) and the facts (desktop research)

- Strong own expert opinion (>50% of text)
- Statements backed up by evidence and variety of sources
- Use “alleged” if needed
- 0-2% copy-paste
- Keep cutting! Ask if each section and each word is really necessary.

TOR

Desktop research

Trends/Patterns

Brainstorm

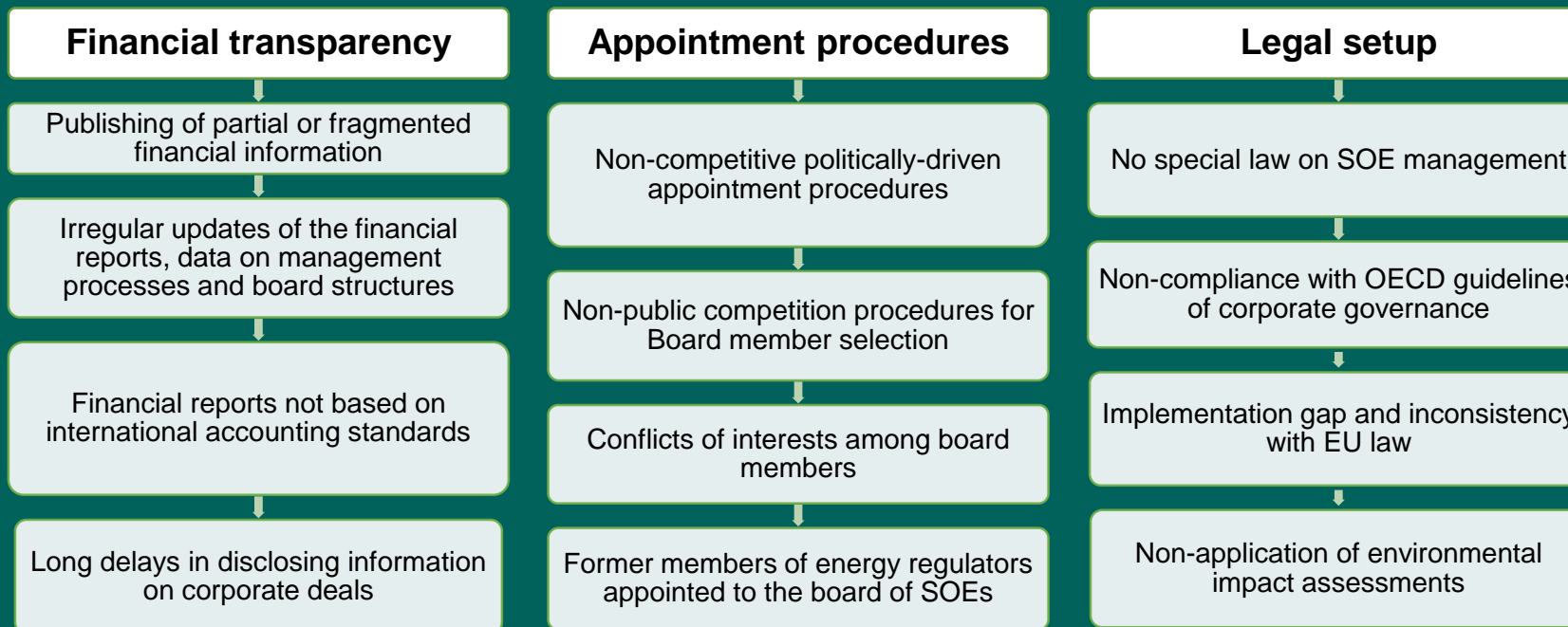
Text writing

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Use charts and figures (not only statistical ones)

Example: Management risks in energy SOEs



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Proof and clarifications

“Public prosecutor’s offices lack resources, especially expertise in financial forensics”.

Confirm statement by:

Citation to source

Evidence/statistical data to confirm the statement

Practical examples / concrete cases

“Country X introduced initial trainings and assessments of judges, with different role in the appointment and promotion processes”.

Clarify statement by:

What is the aim of the trainings?

What factors have role in appointment and promotion of judges – experience, participation in training?

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Balance between over- and under-referencing

Avoid

Too many citations
Too many facts
No own conclusions

E.g. “Law X has been changed 4 times, including Art 12, 67 and 89. The EC report regarded these changes as problematic... The report by Y stated, that the change in Art. 12 is justified...”

Expectations

Own expert opinion defining the specific issue and what needs to be done, based on few, but relevant and up-to-date facts/citations.

E.g. “The amendment of the Law for Access to Information from 12 May 2020 has been detrimental to the open governance principles, as they provide the power to all ministries to decide based on their discretion what type of information **could be declared a “state secret” or labelled as “business confidentiality”**. There is a **need for Art. 12 to include more precise definitions of what is considered public information**, in order to limit this discretionary power...”

Avoid

Overly general statements
No specific evidence to back them up
No external sources cited

E.g. “The judiciary should be strengthened with more human resources and be independent.”

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Do not underestimate the formatting !

- ✓ Footnotes written in full with the correct citation style (*Mendeley, Zotero, EndNote*)
- ✓ Figures have “Source” under them, provided in Excel
- ✓ Use of captions / automatic numbering, insert cross-references to figures in the text, headings
- ✓ Abbreviations written in full when used for the first time
- ✓ Do not leave the formatting for the last minute !

TOR

Desktop research

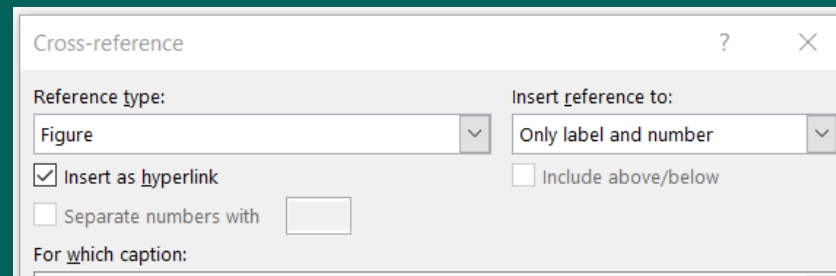
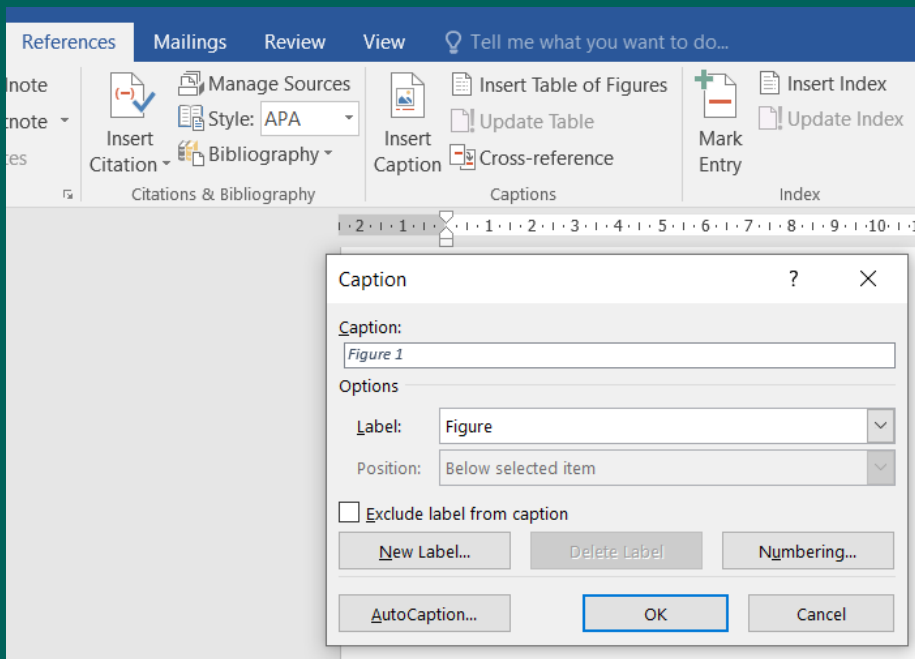
Trends/Patterns

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What to avoid?

- Texts and conclusions that are too general (could be applicable to any country)
- Policy recommendations not based on the text, preceding them
- Lack of understanding on the issue and the situation in the country, leading to non-relevant or too general policy recommendations
- Copy-paste from EC papers (especially not accompanied by own expert opinion/commentary, nor reference in footnote). Beware of inconsistent terminology, repetition or omission.
- Citing 3-4 year old research or reports
- Recycling an earlier text without adapting it properly. Older texts may be unclearly written and may not reflect new circumstances

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The key to success

Dedicate time for desktop research

(variety of information sources are referenced and accompanied by expert commentary)

State conclusions, not just facts

(state main observations at the beginning of your text)

Show common trends/patterns

at regional level / common methods (steps) of operation of a corruption scheme

Use charts and figures:

"A picture is worth a thousand words"

Formulate policy recommendations specific for your country

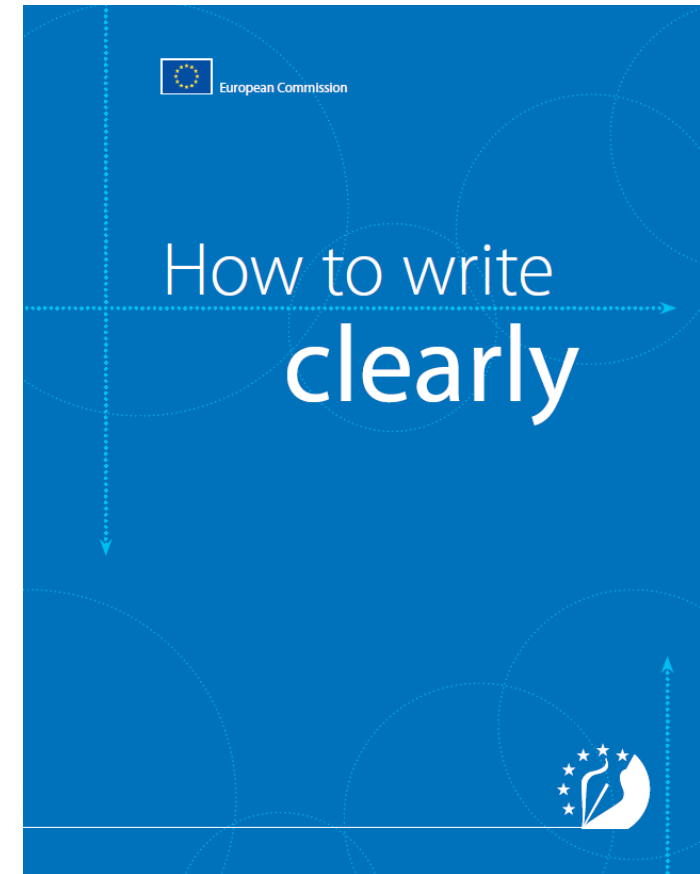
e.g. which procedure/law to be changed

Use interns

for data gathering and fixing footnotes, but provide your own expert input

Recommended reading: How to write clearly?

- <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/c2dab20c-0414-408d-87b5-dd3c6e5dd9a5>



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Thank you!

