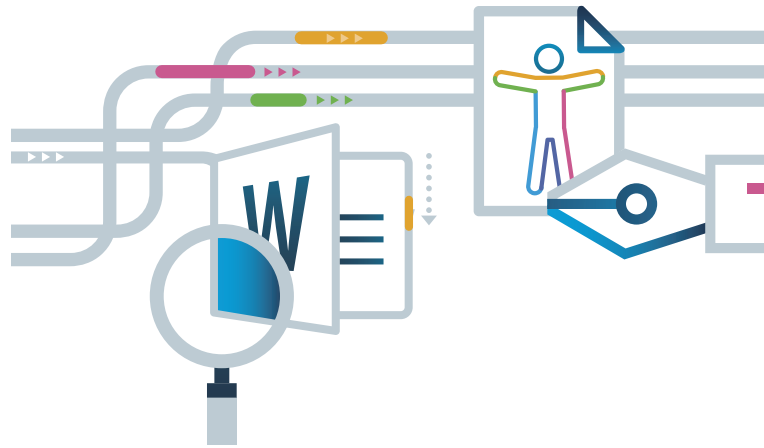


# ACCESSIBLE PUBLISHING PREPARING MS WORD MANUSCRIPTS FOR ANY ACCESSIBLE FORMAT



## ACCESSIBILITY ELEMENTS

The work on accessibility starts in the drafting phase of the manuscript. This handout contains a list of accessibility elements that should be reflected in your manuscript.

### Structure of the text

- The structure should be clearly divided into headings, chapters, sections, etc., and the entire text should appear in the correct reading order.
- Headings must be created using MS Word's standard heading styles or properly formatted custom heading styles. Paragraphs formatted as headings must be arranged in a correctly nested order: H2 headings under H1, H3 under H2, and so on. **1**
- Do not create headings by simply using a different font or applying bold, italics or another colours, etc.

### Titles, headings and labels

- These should be short and meaningful.

### Links

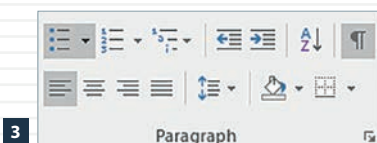
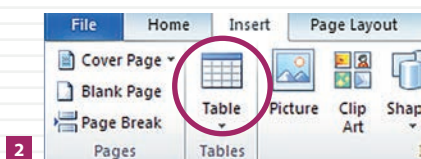
- Instead of a web address, use a descriptive text (e.g. 'About the Publications Office').
- Avoid general phrases, such as 'click here' or 'more information'.

### Tables

- Create tables using MS Word's table function and not with tabs or drawing tools. **2**
- Identify the headings clearly. Use a single row for table column headings.
- Keep the table's structure simple. Do not merge cells either vertically or horizontally.
- For complex tables, provide alternative text.
- Do not use the table format as a substitute for a list or a simple text.

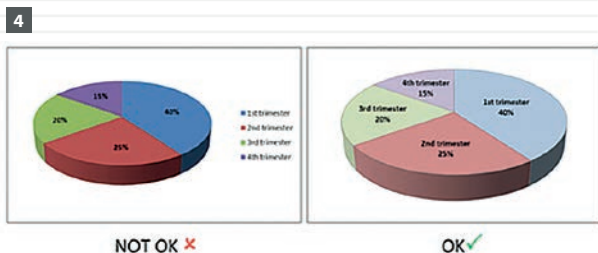
### Lists

- Use MS Word's functionality to format text as a list. **3**
- If your list has an extra consecutive paragraph, make sure it is clear that it belongs to the list and that it is not mistaken for another part of the document.







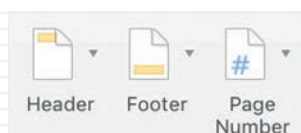
## Images and charts

- Indicate clearly in the text where the image should appear, taking into account the reading order.
- In addition to image captions, provide alternative text for all images explaining them, either as part of the manuscript or in an additional file.
- Purely illustrative images that can be skipped by screen readers should be marked as "artefact" or "decorative".
- Complex images (graphs, diagrams, screenshots, maps, etc.) may require a full explanation in a text format as well.
- Avoid redundancy. If a chart is well described in the main text and an alternative text would duplicate the same information, then the chart should be marked as "artefact" or "decorative" to be ignored by screen readers.



## Colours

- To convey information, do not use only colour, as not everybody can distinguish colours.
  - Instead of  
  - Use  
- There has to be enough contrast between the background and the text both in the whole document and in the images. 4



## Navigation elements

- The table of contents (created by using heading styles) provides a way of navigating through a meaningful sequence of content.
- Endnotes, footnotes, citations and captions should be created using MS Word tools to allow screen readers to identify them. 5

## PUBLICATION DRAFTING TOOL

Properly prepared content can be rendered into digital products in less time and with less expense. The Publications Office (OP) provides a template and related text tools to help you manage the structure and formatting of the text and include all accessibility elements from the very beginning of the editorial process (for instance, alternative text). The template is an integral part of Eurolook and, subsequently, it will be deployed on all PCs in the Commission. Look for the tool, together with its information, tutorials, guidelines and links at the European Commission' Eurolook page (<https://intragate.ec.europa.eu/eurolook/help/Content/Document%20Types/Publication%20Drafting.htm>). EU institutions and agencies will benefit from a standalone version free of charge that can be downloaded from OP's Publicare page (<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/multisite/publicare/en/page/publication-drafting-1178>).

## SERVICES OF THE PUBLICATIONS OFFICE

Once your MS Word manuscript is ready with all the accessibility elements, it can be output it in many different formats: Word, PDF, HTML or EPUB and published online. Depending on the complexity of the content, post-production intervention may be needed. The Publications Office is here to assist you from the start. At your request, and if you provide all the necessary editorial elements, we will help to make your publication fully accessible.

## CONTACTS

Are you interested in these services of the Publications Office?

Please contact [OP-accessible-publications@publications.europa.eu](mailto:OP-accessible-publications@publications.europa.eu)