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## GUIDANCE ON WRITING POLICY BRIEFS

### WHAT IS A POLICY BRIEF?

- A **short** document that presents the findings and recommendations of a research project to a policy audience (ideally 2-4 pages, excluding references/appendices)
- Aims to help policy makers to **make decisions** based on lessons learned from research
- Includes **policy advice**
- A **stand-alone** document – readers will not necessarily have knowledge of the topic, policy or literature. You need to make it clear for **non-experts**

### WHAT IS NOT A POLICY BRIEF?

- A research paper
- A document sharing knowledge and evidence, but without concrete recommendations for policy

### USEFUL RESOURCES

- [SURE guides for preparing and using evidence-based policy briefs](#)
- Examples of policy briefs (although longer than the ones envisaged for EuroAgeism)
  - One on [childhood overweight](#)
  - One on [stunting](#)
  - UNECE [Policy Briefs on Ageing](#)
- A [student's guide](#) to writing a global health policy brief.

This report reflects only the author's view, the Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.

## QUESTIONS TO ANSWER BEFORE STARTING TO DRAFT A POLICY BRIEF

- What is my audience? What type of policymakers can use my advice (for example, working at international vs local level, specialists vs generalists, professionals or managers, working on health or employment policies etc)?
- What do I want to tell policymakers?
- How can my research findings be used by policymakers?
- What is my concrete advice for policy?
- What knowledge/evidence is necessary in order to convince policymakers to follow my advice?
- What's standing in the way of policymakers acting in the way that I advise them to?
- What questions might policymakers ask me regarding my advice and/or research?

# OUTLINE FOR EUROAGEISM POLICY BRIEFS

## TITLE

- Attracts attention of the reader
- Includes keywords
- Communicates quickly the content of the brief in a memorable way

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/KEY MESSAGES

- Provides an overview of the problem and the proposed policy action
- Aims to distil the essence of the brief and entice the reader to continue reading
- You should write this last (1 maximum 2 paragraphs long)

## WHAT'S AT STAKE/INTRODUCTION

- Describes the problem, why it's important, its size, underlying factors or why current policy is not working – subtitles could help the reader navigate these points more easily
- Aims to convince the reader about necessity of policy action or reform (answers to why)

## POLICY OPTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

- Avoids technical language/jargon
- Provides at least one viable option for addressing the identified problem
- Highlights benefits/opportunities
- Provides evidence of implications/impacts on equality, cost effectiveness, etc of the suggested policy option (including tables and graphs if relevant)
- May give examples/case studies of where this option has been applied
- Synthesizes information into a series of clear, compact, coherent points that support recommended course of action rather than merely listing information
- Focuses on findings of relevant research (instead of methodology) in order to build case
- Aims to convince reader that the proposed policy action is the most preferable
- Discusses how the suggested policy action can be implemented, including important barriers, advantages/disadvantages, concrete steps

## CONCLUSION

- Summarizes in a couple of sentences the analysis and recommendation
- Should be clear, concise, balanced and defensible
- Aims to inspire action (and often includes call to action)

## CONTACT/INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION/PROJECT

- Includes personal information, funding sources, etc

## REFERENCES/APPENDICES

- Lists reliable sources used to prepare the brief and additional information about your research