

## Data in Publications

# A practical guide to user-friendly data in publications

This guide will help you with all of the data-related aspects of your publication: writing about data, creating data visualisations, and preparing and publishing data. It will provide you with tips and resources that will make the data in your publication more accessible and reusable.

Structure

Write

Visualise

Prepare Visuals

Prepare Data

Publish



## Structuring your publication

Data, visualisations and text are all important components of your publication. The following tips help you structure these components in a way that makes your publication pleasant to read and allows others to reuse them.

Introduce your data in a dedicated section

Create a consistent, logical sequence of text and visualisations

Provide a reference list of the data used in the publication

Include data visualisations in the figure list

Mention your data and data visualisations in the copyright notice

Obtain necessary permissions and credit third-party elements in the copyright notice

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## Writing about data

Writing about data and writing text for data visualisations are important but often overlooked skills. This section details some tricks and tips on how to make your copy more reader-friendly.

Use various writing techniques to make text about data more comprehensible

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Make sure the text complements the data visualisation

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For visualisations that are frequently updated, write generic text

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Write for the web

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Write in plain language

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## Creating data visualisations

Data visualisations present insights from data in a visual manner. Good data visualisations can act as centrepieces to your line of reasoning. The following tips will help you create understandable, accessible and appealing data visualisations.

Define the purpose of your data visualisation

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Choose the right type of visualisation

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Follow best design practices

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Follow best data visualisation design practices

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Use an accessible colour palette

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Write meaningful titles for your visualisations

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Write succinct visualisation legends

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State the author of the visualisation, the data source and the reuse licence

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Show the data values

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Annotate important features

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Make use of official EU geodata for maps

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Decide which interactive functionalities to offer

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Make sure your interactive charts are accessible using the keyboard

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Create visualisation designs for different screen sizes

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Keep future translations in mind

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## Preparing visualisations for publishing

Your visualisations may be reused in studies, shown in presentation slides or shared on social media. This section provides advice on how to prepare visualisations so that they can be found and reused by others.

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If necessary, obtain permission to use third-party visualisations

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License your visualisation so that others can reuse it

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Add metadata to your visualisation

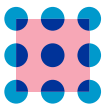
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Write alt text for your visualisation

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Export visualisations separately from the publication

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## Preparing data for publishing

Data needs to be carefully prepared before being published. The following recommendations guide you through open data practices that help you transform raw data into curated, high-quality and publication-ready datasets.

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Improve the openness of your data

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If necessary, obtain permission to use third-party data

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License your data so that others can reuse it

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Protect personal information before publishing your data

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Decide on the scope of the data you will publish

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Describe your data with metadata

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Structure your data in a machine-readable format

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Create documentation about your data

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Save your data in a machine-readable file format

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## Publishing the data and the data visualisations with your publication

Releasing your data and data visualisations as individual components makes your work more impactful. The following tips will help you publish those components so that they are easy to locate and access for further reuse.

Provide your visualisations as downloads

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Provide options to share your visualisation online

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Provide your data as a download

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Provide access to your data via an API

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Publish your data in a data catalogue

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**A prototype by the Publications Office of the European Union**

**Queries and feedback:**

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