

**commonsplace.eu style and language guide for contributors**  
**adopted on 16 February 2023**

*commonsplace.eu* is an activity of LINKS Europe, an independent foundation based in The Hague, The Netherlands. We focus on issues related to European peace and security, Europe's neighbouring regions, including Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia; North Africa and the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula.

LINKS Europe is committed to contribute to a better future by increasing understanding of complex foreign policy issues, by promoting dialogue and confidence-building as tools for helping to resolve conflict, and by engaging citizens in the process of building peace and security on the basis of solidarity and mutual respect. Through *commonsplace.eu* we aim to provide insights and analysis on different topics in our area of interest, and a platform for diverse opinions.

*commonsplace.eu* welcomes contributions in the form of op-eds, commentaries and short analyses on the themes of politics, international relations, conflict resolution, peace-building, regional transition, connectivity, or relevant cultural pieces, focusing on the EU and its neighbouring regions, namely Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia, North Africa and the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, and the Arabian Peninsula.

Please refer to the [Code of Conduct](#) for further details.

Full article submissions can be sent to the *commonsplace.eu* Deputy Editor Patrick Norén at [patrick@links-europe.eu](mailto:patrick@links-europe.eu). Sending a proposal is not necessary, although you may do so if you wish.

### General Style Guidelines

- op-eds, commentaries, and other similar opinion pieces should be **between 800 and 1000 words**, although slightly shorter pieces are also acceptable.
- There should be a **short, introductory paragraph** of approximately 100 words.
- **Do not write in large chunks of text.** Paragraphs should be absolutely no longer than 10 lines long, preferably shorter.
- **Include subtitles at appropriate points** to guide the reader and break up the article. As a recommendation, a subtitle should be included every 3-4 paragraphs.
- **External links are not permitted.** A formal bibliography or similar is not necessarily required, but if included it must remain consistent in application and style.
- **If quoting several lines of text directly and uninterrupted**, this should be written as a separate, italicised paragraph. In-paragraph quotes should not be italicised.
- **Media publications and books** should be italicised; articles (digital or print) should be in quotation marks.

## Language Guidelines

- You may write in either British or American English, but stay consistent.
- The same rule applies for other typographical debates, or spellings of place names, geographical locations, transliterations etc. Stay consistent.
- If quoting, use double quotation marks.
- The Oxford comma is not essential, but welcomed for the sake of accuracy, clarity, and a clever typographical joke.
  
- If **quoting** a piece of text that can function as a standalone sentence, the final comma must come *before* the end quotation mark; if you are quoting fragments, the comma must come *after* the end quotation mark.
  - E.g. “The Prime Minister did not expect such a development,” the report noted.
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- **Dates** shall be written in the following format: 1 January 2000; 8 February 2023; 9 May 1945 etc. No “-st”, “-rd”, or “-th” is necessary.
- If referring to an event that has occurred in the past seven days, the day of the week shall be given, followed by the date and month in brackets. E.g. “On Thursday (9 February), President Zelensky addressed the European Parliament in Brussels.”
  
- When referring to a specific person, **official titles and positions must be capitalised**. If referring to a specific person implicitly, the same rule applies. E.g. “The Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan visited Georgian President Salome Zurbishvili. Having discussed their mutual areas of interest, the Prime Minister expressed gratitude for the invitation.”
- When referring to a position or title in general, or in plural, then capitalisation is not required. E.g. “The finance ministers of Azerbaijan and Turkey came to an accord.”
  
- **Unrecognised political entities must be qualified as such**. E.g. “the self-declared Republic of Transnistria”, or, “the de facto Prime Minister of Nagorno-Karabakh Ruben Vardanyan”.

## Remuneration

Please note that there will be no remuneration for unsolicited articles. If we solicit articles, however, we may offer a fee. For regular contributors there will be a separate arrangement.