



PEP Policy Briefs

Guidelines and instructions for PEP researchers

All PEP-supported researchers must submit a draft policy brief. A satisfactory policy brief is required before the final PEP grant payment will be released*.

We recommend that you submit a draft policy brief before you commence your dissemination activities and when/if you apply for a national policy conference grant, as it will be an invaluable tool for communicating with stakeholders.

**N.B. The Publication Grant also requires publication of your PEP working paper.*

PEP expectations regarding policy briefs

A policy brief is a one-to-three-page, non-technical, visually attractive document which **conveys essential information that can help inform policy decisions**.

Policy briefs are intended for policymakers, policy advisors, and stakeholders/research users. You may also send yours to journalists/the media, and share with the general public. These people are generally busy and not familiar with scientific and technical terms.

- A. **If the deliverables of your PEP project include a policy paper**, then the contents of your policy brief must be distilled from the **policy paper analysis**; i.e. reflecting the same key elements and messages, and generally following the same structure as your policy paper.
- B. **If you do not have a policy paper**, focus on translating your findings into policy insights. It is important to **avoid** simply summarising your research project. A strong policy brief must:
 - **Emphasise the importance** (or urgency) **of the issue** that needs to be addressed, and the **need for action**, trying to reflect the “policymakers’ perspective or position, as much as possible.
 - **Position the analysis undertaken, and evidence produced, with the current policy context and debates.**
 - **Provide policymakers with the information they need to formulate sound policy**
 - **Provide a roadmap for the policy pathway or actions recommended based on the evidence generated from your analysis.**
 - **IMPORTANT:** Recommendations must be based on complete information or knowledge. If you conclude or believe that there are still important knowledge gaps that need addressing before action is taken, these should be reflected in your conclusions and roadmap (i.e., recommend preliminary steps or actions to fill these knowledge gaps).

See “Content and Structure” for more detailed guidelines.



PEP policy briefs are published on the [PEP website](#) and are read by researchers and donors, as well as journalists and policy stakeholders. PEP will use your brief to promote your project outcomes via the PEP website, newsletter, and social networks.

Once you have your PEP policy brief (in English), you can then translate it into your country's official language and **adapt the contents (messages) to the audiences you most want to reach**; see "Dissemination" for more information.

Instructions

In collaboration with you, PEP's communications staff will edit and format your team's policy brief.

- Please submit a **SHORT draft text** for your policy brief
 - Draft a Word (.doc/.docx) document using the structure described below.
 - Upload your document under "Policy Briefs" to the "Documents" section on the [PEP intranet](#) page for your project.
- Include at least one **illustration** (self-explanatory graphic, infographic or figure) to support your argument
 - Upload as a separate image (.jpg/.png) or Excel (.xls/.xlsx) file under "Other" to the "Documents" section on the [PEP intranet](#) page for your project.
- If possible, include one or two appropriate **photos** that you have the rights to use
 - Upload as a separate image (.jpg/.png) file under "Other" to the "Documents" section on the [PEP intranet](#) page for your project.

Content and Structure

Your draft PEP policy brief should be a maximum of 1500 words (see suggested word counts per section below). It should use clear headlines, plain language, action-oriented phrases (e.g. "the Government should..."), short paragraphs and the active voice.

Please organise your brief using the following structure:

1) Key messages:

- a) Two to four bullet points summarising your key messages (policy recommendations)
- b) It is easier to write this after you have finished your main text

2) Background/context (300 words)

- a) Describe the issue that needs to be addressed
- b) Include: who is affected, why it is a serious issue, what the risks are of doing nothing, etc.
- c) Identify any policies that currently seek or are planned to address this issue and whether they are working (if applicable).
- d) Select the information that will be most important and convincing to your target stakeholder

3) Outline the research project (300 words) briefly describing your:



- a) objectives,
- b) approach (who is leading, key elements such as co-production, consultations, etc.)
- c) data
- d) methodology
- e) **how your project resulted in the evidence** that informs your evaluation of the policy options.

4) **Key findings from your analysis, and how they inform policy decisions** (500 words)

- a) Summarise your most pertinent and interesting findings
 - i) Demonstrate the quality and credibility of your research
 - ii) Include simple illustrative statistics
 - iii) Include simple illustrations: You can also use a simple chart, figure or infographic to illustrate your main argument(s)
- b) Demonstrate how these findings can contribute to inform the policy debates related to the issue (in line with your policy paper analysis, if produced)
 - i) If appropriate for your project, illustrate how the evidence can compare the different policy scenarios/options available to decision-makers. A table format can provide an efficient overview, comparing multiple policy options, based on common criteria. For example:

Policy option	Impact	Cost	Political Feasibility	Risk
1. Maintain status quo	Low	Low	High	Growth stagnation
2. Targeted expansion	High	Moderate	High	Manageable fiscal exposure
3. Full-scale reform	Very high	High	Moderate	Implementation strain

5) **Conclusions and policy messages** (200 words)

- a) **Based on your findings** and demonstration above (4.b), provide clear and actionable policy messages, adapted to your audience
 - i) Be as specific as possible: what action is to be taken by whom (which Ministry, department, regulator, etc.).
 - ii) Take into account the policy context of your research (policy windows, stakeholder interests, and how it aligns with current policy priorities)

6) **Road map** (200 words)

- a) Provide the steps or measures needed to implement your recommended course of action, including:
 - i) Short-term, medium-term and long-term actions,



- ii) Resources required or enabling conditions,
- iii) Possible partners.

REMEMBER – Policy recommendations must be based on complete information or knowledge.
If you conclude or believe that there are still important knowledge gaps that need addressing before action is taken, these should be reflected in your conclusions and roadmap (i.e., recommend preliminary steps or actions to fill these knowledge gaps).

7) References/sources, if applicable.

Dissemination

A [2007 ODI/SciDev.Net study](#) found that 50% of policymakers point to insufficient dissemination of research findings to explain poor research uptake. PEP strongly encourages ALL team members to widely and enthusiastically **disseminate** the PEP policy brief to **strategic recipients** (refer to your team's Dissemination Strategy) within your country, and region, if appropriate. You should also disseminate the brief via your professional networks, as this will provide exposure and help build your reputation as an expert in your field.

Report all specific dissemination actions in the Dissemination section of your project technical report on the [PEP intranet](#). Make sure to include any examples of your target audiences sharing your brief, research findings, or policy messages.

You should also reformat and rebrand the policy brief according to your own institution's standards, and translate (if applicable) the brief for dissemination through your institution's channels. When you do so, you must include the **acknowledgement** in full (translated, if necessary) **stated in section A3 of your Research Support Grant Agreement**, beginning: "This work was carried out with financial and scientific support from the Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP)".