# Structure and content of a policy brief
Handout for session 2.3

2 or 4 pages in length (between 1000-2000 words)

**Title** (less than 12 words)
- Engaging and informative - it tells the reader what the brief is about
- If it is too long, consider breaking it up into a title and subtitle

**Executive statement/summary (10%)**
- The aim and main message of the brief
- This section should capture the reader's attention
- Outline of the structure of the brief

**Introduction (10-15%)**
- Introduce the topic and state why it is important using evidence and infographics to back up your points
- This section should make the reader want to do something about the problem
- Suggested structure:
    - The problem (what is the problem? Why is it important?)
    - Background, context (what happens, where, who is involved?)
    - Causes of current situation (why, give evidence or examples)
    - Effects of current situation (what effects does it have, give evidence or examples)
    - Outline what has been tried before (if relevant)

**About the study/project (5-10%)**
- How did the project or study aim to address the problem?
- What did you do?
- Use methodologies that will strengthen your argument, e.g. large sample size
- Highlight unique methods or data collection

**Study results (30%)**
- What did the study or project find?
- Include evidence that links directly to and provides convincing arguments for the recommendations
- Use sub-headings for each finding

**Policy implications or recommendations (30%)**
- What policy changes or actions do the results point to?
- Implications are less direct than recommendations
- Even if you don't make recommendations, you can state what others recommend: "The WHO advocates…"
- Identify 3 (most practical, relevant) recommendations and elaborate on these

**References (10%)**

> **Recommendations should be:**
> - Short
> - Practical and realistic
> - Concrete – avoid generic recommendations
> - Based on evidence
> - Clear and easy to understand
> - Written so they start with a verb, e.g. Use…, Engage..

## Other content

### Authoritative opinion-pieces and quotes
- Including an opinion piece from an authoritative voice has been shown to increase the likelihood of the policy brief being shared.
- Pull-out quotes to highlight opinions or specific points within the argument.
- Could be highlighted in a different colour text box

### Boxes
- Key points – front page
- To define technical terms if you need to use them
- To highlight case studies, stories from the research
- Clearly labelled

### Charts and graphics
- To present data and information visually
- Maps

### Photos
- High quality photos to bring a personal story to life

### Author/s information
- Contact details
- Organisation

### Acknowledgements
- Funders
- Other organisations and individuals who have supported the study/project
- Disclaimer

### References and useful links
- Sources where readers can find further information (max 4 sources)
- Web address of publications and dates for when they were accessed
- QR codes

### Logos