



norden

Easy language

Statement

- 1) Definition:

Plain language has been adapted in its content, vocabulary and structure so that it is easier to read and understand.

Statement

- 2) Its purpose is to help people that have difficulties in reading and/or understanding the common language. (The Plain-Language Centre, FAIDD, Finland)

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- 3) Three main target groups for plain language include people who for different reasons have difficulties with reading
 - foetal and childhood developmental disorders (e.g. genetic)
 - illness and aging
 - social environment (e.g. belonging in a linguistic minority)

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- 4) Persons who can benefit from the use of plain language, are persons
 - with disabilities (persons with developmental disabilities, autism, aphasia, dysphasia or multiple disabilities)
 - with a profound difficulty in reading and/or writing (dyslexia)
 - who are senior citizens of the society (alzheimer, dementia and very old persons)
 - whose mother tongue is not the language that is widely spoken in the country they are living in (immigrants and their children, bilingual persons)
 - receiving rehabilitative treatment for mental problems, marginalized persons and those who are not accustomed to read*
 - school children

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- 5) Estimated size of reader groups

The need for plain language varies in different age groups:

- children and young people 4–8 %
- people of working age 4–6 %
- people over 65 years of age 10–20 %

The target groups of plain language consist of about 4–7 % of the Finnish population.

Statement

- 6) How to write in plain language?
 - A summary of the principles:
 1. Content:
 2. Vocabulary:
 3. Simple structures:
 4. Short sentences:
 5. Coherency of the text:
 6. The layout makes the difference
 - Text
 - Pictures

Statement

- 7) The principles of plain language in Finland have mainly been developed according to two international guidelines:
 - Guidelines for Easy-to-Read Material by the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) managed by the UN.
 - Make it easy.
 - Guidelines for plain language developed by the European Association of Inclusion International, which is a non-governmental organization that defends the interests and rights of people with developmental disabilities and their families.