A guide to translating information materials into different languages.

January 2024

HSE Social Inclusion

Introduction

This guide will assist you in getting healthcare resources translated into other languages and takes you through what you may need to consider before you start the process.

It also provides information on sourcing quotes from suppliers and helpful tips to support in the design and distribution of your translated materials.

It is important for the HSE to respond to the needs of people from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

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Developing a new resource

HSE Visual Identity Guidelines

If you're developing a new resource, in any language, use HSE Visual

Identity Guidelines for all produced materials. Templates and a guide to

print, design and distribution is available at: **www.hse.ie/branding**

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Below are some examples of materials/ content that has been translated:

Web content in Ukrainian:
www.hse.ie/Ukraine

COVID-19 information and leaflets in Ukrainian:
https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/covid-19-resources-and-translations/translated-covid19-information/ukrainian-covid19-info.html

Pre-translation checklist

Before translating any existing or new resources, consider the following:

- Is a printed resource the best way to get information to the audience I am trying to reach?

- Do I have the right distribution channels, how will people receive the printed materials?

- Is the information already available?

- Should this be web/online content or a printed resource?

If you need advice, contact your local Communications team.
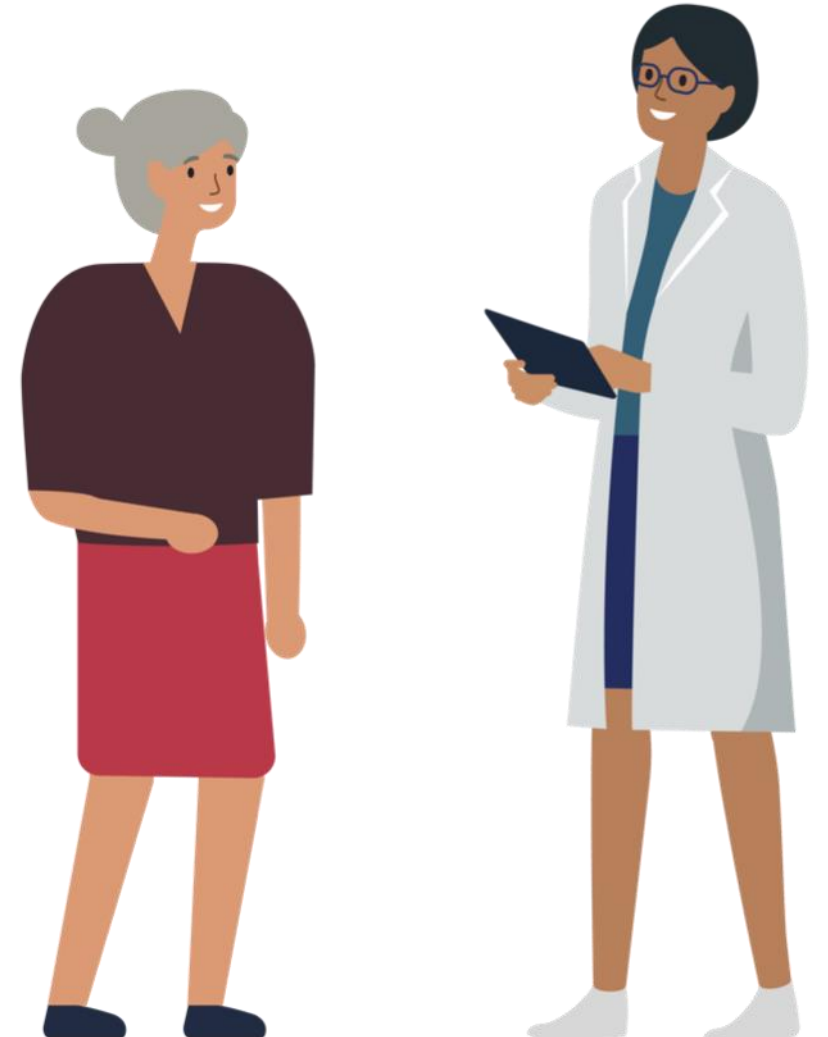
Suppliers and quotes

Suppliers

You can seek quotes from any available suppliers. The HSE Communications team keep a list of suppliers they have used, if you would like a copy of this list, please email campaigns@hse.ie

Seeking quotes

Different translation companies will have different technical requirements for how they receive the resource and how they handle amendments to the resource. Some suppliers will translate on a Word document, others will take packaged design files. Some have designers in-house that can quickly amend an existing design file with your translated text. It's a good idea to ask for detail on this with quotes so you can be sure it meets your needs and if you have the necessary format available.

Ask for the following in a quote:

- costs for translation by a native speaker

- costs for a second translator to proof the document before it is returned to you

- costs for formatting/design layout if needed

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Tips on translating your document

Check cultural context

- There are phrases or terms that are used here that might not always be obvious to someone who hasn't lived here for long. Review your document with this in mind and explain anything unique to the Irish health service.

- It's helpful when creating resources to involve the people who will use the resource and benefit from it. Before creating your resource, link with your local communications support for advice on networks who may be able to help with sense checking on look, feel, tone and accuracy.

Tips on translating your document

Design

- The name of the language and title of the resource should appear on the front of the document in both English and the translated language so that the contents can be easily and quickly identified by English speaking healthcare workers and other staff.

- It is not advised to use flags to represent languages on any materials. Languages are often spoken across national borders and flags may cause a disconnect to the content.

- If adding images, use images that are representative of the community.

- When returning files in PDF format, ask for a print ready quality format so that they can be printed.

- If uploading a PDF version to a website, make sure to update the properties of the PDF file with the translated title, author and subject of your document.

Tips on translating your document

Distribution

- Consider and plan your distribution channels before design and print.

- Standard PDF files **do not meet** requirements for accessibility legislation and so should not be uploaded to websites or used online unless intended for download and print.

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Interpreter Services

Lost in Translation? Good Practice Guidelines for HSE Staff in Planning, Managing and Assuring Quality Translations of Health Related Material into Other Languages is produced by HSE Social Inclusion and is a useful resource for local teams producing translated materials.

A guide to using Interpreter services is also available from your local Communications team.

Formatting checklist

11 font Arial	☐	logos meet brand guidelines, are clear and not distorted	☐	margins are set to normal	☐
1.5 line spacing	☐	hyperlink URLS	☐	headings are not the last line on a page	☐
headings are bold	☐	check links are correct	☐	bullets points not to run over the page	☐
headings are 14 font Arial (coloured heading)	☐	lowercase hse on hyperlinks	☐	check for blank pages	☐
insert page numbers	☐	remove full stops after hyperlinks	☐	make sure there are gaps between each of the paragraphs and consistent gaps/spacing between the sections	☐
any bullets or coloured headings match colour scheme of document	☐	bold hyperlinks and include the www.	☐	version number and date are updated (on first and last page of the doc) e.g. version x/month/year	☐
remove line spacing between sentence and list of bullets	☐	remove brackets, exclamation marks, except for languages where this is appropriate	☐	check file has no English present apart from in the title to support staff with identification	☐

It can be helpful to give the translation company a checklist for formatting.

This is a sample formatting checklist. You may adapt this for your document.

Please note that the length and formatting may change for some languages.

Translation supplier should approve formatting.

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If you need advice or more information, contact the Programmes and Campaigns team from HSE Communications on: campaigns@hse.ie