

## INFOGRAPHICS

### What is an infographic?

Infographics are visual representations of information and data through text, images, charts and diagrams. An infographic helps to communicate knowledge and explain concepts clearly and synthetically and facilitates the understanding of complex issues thanks to visual support and schematisation.

The use of infographics can benefit Communities of Practice by helping them to present its activities and outcomes in a quick, compelling, and attractive way. They are a versatile tool to raise awareness, educate and inform very diverse target audiences that improves the visibility of online messages. On the other hand, data- rich visualisations of information increase the engagement and interactions on social media and help people to remember key messages.



The digital nature of infographics means that they can be distributed face-to-face as a springboard and a prop for discussions, as well as online communications.

### Tips to prepare good infographics

The first step to create an infographic is to identify what the main purpose and the core message to spread are: what is the overall question we want to communicate and who is the target audience?

Recommendations to take into account:

- Define an engaging, interesting title for the infographic. To draw the attention of the audience, the title should arouse their curiosity. The title might highlight the relevant conclusions of available data or launch a specific question to the reader.
- Select the content to include and organise the flow of information in the infographic trying to create a story: consider what the key concepts to be highlighted are and the complementary ideas, how elements relate to each other and what the concluding information should be.
- Combine diverse visual elements and avoid long texts. Think of the charts, icons or pictures that might help to illustrate your ideas. Select data considering the most relevant information.
- Show data together with engaging headers and short explanatory texts to give context. Midori Nediger offers in the Venngage blog post “How to make an infographic in 5 steps ep-By-Step-Guide”<sup>1</sup> several examples of uses of bold, colourful text and icons to bring attention to numerical data and make numbers understandable with little contextual information. The article highlights also different types of charts and pictograms to use depending of what your goal is: comparing independent values (bar chart, column chart or bubble chart); comparing parts of a whole (pie chart, donut chart, pictogram or treemap); or show trends over time or space (line chart, area chart or timeline).
- Use creatively colours, font and font sizes, and select colours with a good contrast in order to facilitate reading.
- Be concise and keep it simple. Prioritise clarity, do not include too much information and leave white spaces; if the infographic is hard to visualise it will be more difficult for the reader to understand the message.
- Include brief references to the information sources and add the relevant hashtags or social media links that help your audience to contact you and find out more information.

<sup>1</sup> See: <https://venngage.com/blog/how-to-make-an-infographic-in-5-steps/>

**Online tools to create infographics:**

- **Piktochart** (<https://piktochart.com>) is an online tool which free version offers templates to create simple infographics. It also offers premium plans for education and non-profit organisations with the possibility to access more customizable templates and create interactive charts and maps. Its infographics editor includes a library of free icons and images and allows to upload your own. Interactive infographics can be inserted with an embed in websites and blogs.
- **Infogram** (<https://infogram.com/>) is a data visualisation and design tool that offers templates for infographics, reports and dashboards, as well as social media. The tool also includes templates of customizable charts to visualise data, which can be inserted in the infographics and other projects.
- **Canva** ([www.canva.com](http://www.canva.com)) is a drag and drop editor with free access to templates and designs for infographics, diagrams, banners, flyers and social media headers.
- **Creately** (<https://creately.com>) is a software to create diagrams and flowcharts that allows team collaboration.
- **Venngage** (<https://venngage.com/>) site with tools to create graphic images for websites, presentations, and social media that includes free templates for infographics.
- **Flaticon** (<https://www.flaticon.com>) is a large search engine of downloadable free icons and vectors that can be used in both personal and commercial designs. The majority of the resources can be used for free, provided that the icon is attributed to its author and Flaticon, whereas subscribers to the premium plan can use all icons without any attribution.
- **Pixabay** (<https://pixabay.com/>) and **Unplash** (<https://unsplash.com/>) offer free photos, illustrations, and vectors that can be used in altered and non-altered form, with some restrictions regarding images that contain identifiable people or logos. Credit to the image author is appreciated but not required.
- **Flickr** (<https://www.flickr.com/>) image hosting service that allows to filter by types of license in order to find images tagged as copyleft.
- **Gimp** (<https://www.gimp.org/>) free software to create and edit images.
- **Font library** (<https://fontlibrary.org/>): website that contains free fonts to download.

## REFERENCES

Nediger, Midori.2019. "How to Make an Infographic in 5 Steps [Step-By-Step Guide]". Available from: <https://venngage.com/blog/how-to-make-an-infographic-in-5-steps/>.