Dear Sir/Madam,

As a concerned professional and a linguist, I am writing to express my view on a particular language issue in the text of the *White Paper on Artificial Intelligence – A European approach to excellence and trust*.

Throughout the text (apart from some references in footnotes), the term *artificial intelligence* is spelled with capital letters, i.e. as *Artificial Intelligence*, be it followed by the acronym IA or not. This is wrong taking into account spelling and grammar rules of the English language, according to which only proper nouns are capitalised, unlike common nouns, which we lowercase.

Also, the existence of an acronym or initialism such as AI does not mean that initial capitals must be used when the corresponding expression is written out in full. This is done only if acronym or initialism refer to proper nouns (e.g. names). Artificial intelligence is a common noun, i.e. generic name for a person, place, or thing in a class or group, whether we define it as "a branch of computer science", "a study", "the use of computer technology", "a type of computer technology" (as in IA definitions in the English language dictionaries, see below) or "systems that display intelligent behaviour by analysing their environment and taking actions – with some degree of autonomy – to achieve specific goals", (as in the Communication on Artificial Intelligence for Europe, see below).

Keeping lowercase in such initialisms is also in line with the European Commission English Style Guide and the EU Interinstitutional Style guide.

Furthermore, none of the respectable journals and newspapers, such as The Financial Times, Economist, Politico, etc. capitalise *artificial intelligence*.

Based on the explanation above, I believe that the European Commission should harmonise in all legislative and non-legislative texts all references to AI to be lowercased when written in full. It is important to set up a good example for all subsequent and related publications, not least those prepared by the European Commission.

Please find below an excerpt from the European Commission English Style Guide on capitalisation and initialisms (point 4.4).

4 Capitalisation

4.1 General.

The basic rule is that proper nouns have an initial capital but common nouns do not. Initial capitals are often employed to excess in commercial and administrative circles, but they can be visually distracting and are often unnecessary, so should be used sparingly. When in doubt use lower case.

4.2 Proper names and titles. Use initial capitals for proper nouns:

Mr Goldsmith is a baker but Mr Baker is a goldsmith

Sir Francis Drake

the Archbishop of Canterbury

Dame Judi Dench

honourable Member (of the European Parliament)

4.3 Programmes, policies, agendas, strategies, action plans, frameworks, etc. These are in lower case:

the programme on research and development in advanced communications technologies in Europe

common agricultural policy

EU action plan on urban mobility

Europe 2020 strategy

4.4 Acronyms/initialisms. The existence of an acronym or initialism does not mean that initial capitals must be used when the corresponding expression is written out in full:

common agricultural policy (CAP)

non-governmental organisation (NGO)

but

European Central Bank (ECB) (as this is the official name of the institution)

References

1. European Commission English Style Guide, https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/styleguide_english_dgt_en.pdf
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4. Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/artificial-intelligence?q=artificial+intelligence
5. Merriam-Webster's Dictionary, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/artificial%20intelligence
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8. Collins Dictionary, https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/artificial-intelligence