

Study Pages on EU Terminology



EU terminology may have a number of unforeseeable difficulties for language learners. Nowadays, we can meet EU terms everywhere, so it is not just a case of learning them, but also recognising and correctly using them that can cause difficulties. Because EU texts contain both EU and other terms, first it has to be recognised whether we are really talking about a term designating an EU concept. This is made even more difficult by the fact that the majority of EU terms are created from common words, so some words may represent both a general and a specific EU meaning. The frequent synonyms and abbreviations in EU terminology and the French

expressions characteristic of Eurojargon may cause similar difficulties. And of course the picture becomes even more complicated if we move around between different languages! In the following pages we are going to give a short outline of the characteristics of EU terminology and its difficulties. We tried to arrange the characteristics mainly with consideration for the needs of language learners rather than aiming for the compilation of a scientific position. We selected each of the examples from the terms occurring in the units, the *EU Termbuilder* tasks and the definitions of the *Glossary of English EU Terminology*. In this way, this section not only helps with learning EU terminology, but also provides an introduction to the *Glossary*.

Recognising EU terms

The majority of EU terms is created by common words and terms receiving a new, EU meaning. This is illustrated by the following English words, which represent well-defined EU concepts in an EU context.

COMMON WORDS AND TERMS DESIGNATING AN EU CONCEPT

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| communication | a document without legal force issued by the European Commission in order to inform other EU institutions about a new strategy, a policy area or a planned measure |
| regulation | a legal act of the EU that is binding in its entirety and is directly applicable in all of the Member States, without the need to be transposed into national legislation |
| decision | a legal act of the EU that is binding in its entirety and on those to whom it is addressed |
| green paper | a discussion document without legal force published by the European Commission in order to launch a consultation process at EU level on a given topic, and often followed by the production of a white paper |

Let's imagine the situation that the same word, for example '*decision*', appears twice in the same sentence. Then we have to decide whether the particular word is used with its common meaning or as an EU term:

It was hard to make a **decision**, but, finally, the Council adopted the **decision**. ←

Here: '*decision*' is a specific EU term (a legal act of the EU)