



CATEGORIES OF COMMUNITY LEGAL ACTS

Name of Treaty	ECSC Treaty	EC Treaty	Euratom Treaty
Provision for types of legal acts	Article 14	Article 249	Article 161
	Decisions (general)	Regulation	Regulation
	Recommendation	Directive	Directive
	Decision (individual)	Decision	Decision
		Recommendation	Recommendation
	Opinion	Opinion	Opinion

Regulations and ECSC general decisions: directly applicable in all members of the European Union

Directives and ECSC recommendations: only binding to Member States as regards to the objective to be achieved, but national authorities are free to decide on how to incorporate them into their domestic legal system. Can be addressed to a firm or Member State.

Decisions and ECSC individual decisions: require a Member State, an individual or firm to perform or refrain from an action, or can confer rights or impose obligations

Recommendations: non-binding measures calling on a Member State or individual to behave in a particular way

Opinions: non-binding measures providing an assessment of a given situation or development in the Community or individual Member States. In some cases, prepare the way for subsequent, legally binding acts

Other types of legal acts

Resolutions: jointly held views and intentions by the European Council, the Council of the EU and the European Parliament regarding the overall process of integration and specific tasks within and outside the Community

Declarations: either concerned with the further development of the Community, and therefore equivalent to a resolution, or issued in the context of the Council's decision-making process and sets out the views of all or individual Council members regarding the interpretation of the Council's decisions

Action programmes: drawn up by the Council and the Commission on their own initiative and serve to put into practice the legislative programmes and general objectives laid down in the Treaties. Some programmes are legally binding while others are regarded as general guidelines representing the Community's institutions intended actions

Adapted from: Borchardt, Dr Klaus-Dieter. The ABC of Community Law, p. 64.