

To be distinguished:

The various councils in European law

I. Council of Europe

- a separate international organisation comprising all European states
- legal basis: the Statute of the Council of Europe

II. European Council

- the leading political institution of the European Union
- composition: heads of state or government of the member states + President of the Commission
- legal basis: art. 15 EU Treaty, 235 et seq. FEU Treaty

III. Council (of the European Union)

- the most powerful institution of the European Union
- composition: one representative of each member state at ministerial level
- legal basis: art. 16 EU Treaty, 237 et seq. FEU Treaty

IV. Representatives of the member states, meeting within the Council

- intergovernmental cooperation of the representatives of the governments of the member states outside the framework of the European Union but on the occasion of convening within the Council
- legal basis: public international law

Please distinguish furthermore:

V. Governments of the member states

- appointing the judges and advocat-generals and deciding about the seat of Union institutions
- legal basis: e.g. art. 19(2) EU Treaty, 253(1), 254(2), 341 FEU Treaty

VI. Intergovernmental conferences

- conference of representatives of the governments under public international law
- final decision about reforms of the Union and signing of treaties to amend the Founding Treaties of the Union
- legal basis for the convening: art. 48(4) EU Treaty