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Subject:	Report on the implementation of the Governing Board's recommendations from the five year evaluation of CEPOL

In line with Council Decision 2005/681/JHA of 20 September 2005, the Governing Board of the European Police College (CEPOL) commissioned an independent external evaluation of the implementation of said Decision and activities carried out by CEPOL.

The evaluation was carried out in 2010 and a final report was submitted to the Governing Board on 1 February 2011. Following a review of the report, the Governing Board issued its own recommendations.

This report shows the implementation status of the Governing Board recommendations.

The Agency has implemented all recommendations that were within its remit. For other recommendations, CEPOL sought input from the European Commission and Commission's comments are also included in this report.

Following the approval of this report by the Governing Board, in its 30th Governing Board meeting which took place in Vilnius, Lithuania from 12 to 13 November 2013, CEPOL is herewith submitting the report to the Council of the European Union with the request that the Council take note of the report.



Report on the implementation of the Governing Board's recommendations from the five year evaluation of CEPOL.

1. Executive summary

Following an independent external evaluation carried out in 2010, the Governing Board issued seven recommendations based on the findings of the final evaluation report. These recommendations were submitted to and taken note of by the Council of Ministers of Home Affairs and Justice.

CEPOL has complied with all recommendations that are within its remit, building an agency that consistently delivers. Streamlined processes, a more focused portfolio and strengthened operational resources have resulted in an agency that is able to deliver against its strategic goals and objectives, offering more relevant training and learning activities to a wider audience with a stable operating budget.

Today, overall satisfaction with CEPOL activities is high. In total, 94% of participants state that they are very satisfied or satisfied with the residential activities; 93% with online seminars; and 92% with the European Police Exchange Programme. In a recent stakeholder survey, 75% of stakeholders believe that CEPOL has achieved its mission to contribute to police cooperation through learning.

Participation in CEPOL activities has steadily increased from 2,280 participants in 2010 to 6,019 participants in 2012. This has been achieved, in large part, through the agency's adoption of new technology which CEPOL has used to create an e-learning platform, made up of online seminars, e-learning modules and online communities of practice.

E-learning complements residential activities enabling CEPOL to offer a portfolio of training that is closely aligned with security and organised crime threats identified at the European level. All learning is supported by CEPOL's electronic network (e-Net) which provides for an ongoing learning experience. The number of e-Net users has more than doubled since 2010 (6,244 registered users in 2010, compared with 13,189 at the end of 2012).

The establishment of a multi-annual staffing plan has resulted in a strengthening and more effective use of resources within the agency. Through internal control and quality management, the agency has improved its compliance and adopted a Balanced Scorecard. As far as possible, tasks undertaken by the agency are aligned with its work programme and have measures and targets attached. A better allocation of resources means that the agency's operational activities are better supported and sufficient staff are in place to avoid administrative shortfalls. Above all, the agency is legal, regular and operational.

The implementation of the Governing Board's recommendations has strongly contributed to CEPOL ability to achieve its strategy of 2010 – 2014 and their impact will be long-lasting, further supporting CEPOL through the elaboration and implementation of its future strategy.

2. Introduction

In line with Council Decision 2005/681/JHA of 20 September 2005, the Governing Board of the European Police College (CEPOL) commissioned an independent external evaluation of the implementation of said Decision and activities carried out by CEPOL.

The evaluation was carried out in 2010 and a final report was submitted to the Governing Board on 1 February 2011. Following a review of the report, the Governing Board issued its own recommendations.

Recommendations of the independent five year evaluation report

The independent evaluator identified seven recommendations

- Clarify the CEPOL intervention logic (i.e. purpose and mission)
- Streamline governance and rationalise structures
- Strengthen the CEPOL secretariat
- Merger of EU capacity building for law enforcement
- Assess Member State engagement with CEPOL
- Concentrate capacity building efforts
- Measure results and impacts

In its analysis of these recommendations, the Governing Board made a distinction between short-term recommendations, which could be implemented by the agency, and longer term recommendations which might require a modification of the Council Decision establishing the agency. In compiling this report, CEPOL asked the Commission for input regarding the longer-term recommendations which were the responsibility of the Commission. Their responses are included as separate text boxes in this report on the status of the implementation of the Governing Board recommendations.

3. Measures taken and corresponding impact

3.1. Clarify the CEPOL intervention logic

The Governing Board agreed with the independent evaluation report that CEPOL's intervention logic as set out in the Council Decision was not fully aligned with the logistical framework approach. At the same time, the Governing Board considered it inappropriate to limit CEPOL intervention to cross border topics only. The Governing Board recommended that the Member States and Commission develop options based on a responsive, effective

and efficient structure, with the appropriate resources to support the emergence of a European police culture.

3.1.1. Short-term Governing Board recommendations

- CEPOL should focus its activities on the most important thematic areas to maximise the quality and cost effectiveness of capacity building, to enhance overall efficiencies, impact and sustainability. The evaluation should be supported by an information management strategy of the agency.

3.1.1.1. Measures taken and impact

CEPOL has taken steps to focus its portfolio on those areas of learning that are most closely aligned with the most serious threats identified at the European level. This has resulted in fewer residential activities spanning fewer thematic areas. CEPOL applies a multi-layered approach to its and, since 2011, has complemented residential activities with online learning (i.e. e-learning and online seminars (webinars)). This has resulted in more opportunities for learning and a greater depth of learning on any given subject.

A thorough consultation process (see below – point 3.5) ensures that annual training portfolios reflect the needs of institutional stakeholders and Member States. Within this approach, CEPOL maintains a flexible approach so that it is able to rapidly respond to changing needs. For example, when in 2010 the Council tasked CEPOL with the development and delivery of training on the EU policy cycle, the agency – acting in close cooperation with its partners – was able to build a comprehensive training mechanism.

The evaluation of training takes place in two stages. All participants complete an evaluation survey at the end of each course. This is followed by a post-course evaluation conducted with line managers six months after a course. The post-course evaluation focuses on the longer term impact of the training and enables CEPOL to better understand the organisational and behavioural changes that CEPOL training imparts.

Following the recommendations of the independent evaluation, CEPOL developed – in consultation with the Commission and national contact points – an information management strategy which was presented to the Governing Board at its 27th meeting in May 2012. At this meeting, the Governing Board agreed to suspend further elaboration of the strategy pending the conclusion of discussions regarding CEPOL's future legal basis.

3.1.2. Long-term recommendations

- CEPOL, in cooperation with the European Commission, should develop an assessment of training needs according to the different levels of training and the scope of activities

- CEPOL should consider a new definition for its target group, to include an in-depth stakeholder review. All law enforcement personnel involved in the European law enforcement cooperation activities, including border guards, customs officers and civilian employees should be considered as a potential audience during this analysis.

3.1.2.1. *Measures taken and impact*

In 2011, the European Commission asked CEPOL to conduct, on its behalf, a mapping of existing law enforcement training delivered within the EU by Member States or other EU or international agencies and organisations, with a view to providing a snapshot of the current situation of law enforcement training on cross-border issues and, in particular, identifying gaps and overlaps. The exercise was designed to inform the Commission's Communication (COM (2013) 172 final of 27 March 2013) establishing a European law enforcement training scheme (LETS Communication).

Further, to build on these findings, CEPOL conducted its own strategic training needs assessment (STNA) in 2012, with a view to strengthening its capacity to deliver training, in particular with regard to delivering elements of a European law enforcement training scheme. This assessment identified how EU training needs are addressed by CEPOL, organisational gaps and offering possible solutions.

Overall, CEPOL wishes to remain at the forefront of law enforcement training and to achieve its strategic goal to function as a European law enforcement education platform on the highest level of international excellence. CEPOL recognises the role that regular training needs assessments has to play in achieving this goal and in 2013, the Governing Board mandated a working group to undertake planning, programming, training needs analysis and budgeting.

Regarding CEPOL's audience, this was defined in the Council decision establishing CEPOL as senior police officers and any formal change requires a revision the Council decision. It should be noted however that the recommendations of the mapping exercise and the LETS communication both support the expansion of CEPOL's target audience.

Further, CEPOL has taken steps to broaden access to training through the provision of e-learning.

Input from the Commission:

- The Communication on a European Law Enforcement Training Scheme (LETS) outlines an approach to identifying training needs and ensuring high quality delivery. Under the LETS, CEPOL/Europol Academy has a key role as the driving force and coordinator for implementing the Scheme.
- The Commission proposal for a new legal basis for the agency (COM(2013) 173 final, 27.3.2013) would remove the limitation to senior police officers of the current Council Decision.

3.2. Streamline governance and rationalise structures

The independent evaluation report found that CEPOL's governance arrangements were not sufficiently aligned to ensure the efficient achievement of immediate and wider objectives.

3.2.1. *Short-term Governing Board recommendations*

- Revise Governing Board working practices to focus on a more strategic level, with a better defined agenda for meetings and more use of written procedures
- A reduction to no more than two ordinary meetings of the Governing Board per year and no more than two delegates per Member State in attendance
- Attendance by Associated Countries and AEPC to be by exception only when required to contribute to the agenda
- The agency delegation should comprise the Director, Deputy Director, Head of Administration and one senior secretary
- Evaluate and revise the current structure and working procedures of Committees and Working Groups
- Establish a clear division of responsibilities between structures such as the Governing Board, Director, Presidency and Member States
- The European Commission provide the necessary elements and analysis to further evaluation future amendments of Council Decision 2005/681/JHA

3.2.1.1. *Measures taken and impact*

Starting in 2010, measures have been taken to streamline CEPOL's governance. In line with the recommendations outlined above, the Governing Board meets twice per year (once per six-month Presidency), with no more than two delegates from each Member State. The agency is represented by senior management and one management assistant.

More business is conducted by written procedure, allowing the Governing Board to use its meetings to focus on more strategic issues. The agency offers administrative assistance to the Chair of Governing Board and also organises handover meetings between Presidencies to ensure a smooth functioning and transition.

Committees were disbanded in 2011. The functioning of working groups was also reviewed and working groups were officially disbanded in 2012. A new results-oriented approach has been initiated and now each working group has a clear action plan and lifespan accompanied by specific deliverables.

Within the agency, organisational capacity has been strengthened by the redeployment of staff to the Learning, Science, Research and Development Department (LSRDD) and the

establishment of business units. Four members of staff have been redeployed from the Director's staff to LSRDD to provide better support in delivering the agency's core business. Further, by the end of 2012, the Training Unit and Programme and Project Management Unit were established in the LSRDD and the Finance Unit is now operation in the Corporate Services Department (CSD).

3.2.2. *Long-term Governing Board recommendations*

- Grant the European Commission voting rights on all matters
- Consider a potential revision of the whole structure and powers of the agency by recasting Council Decision 2005/681/JHA.
- The role of national contact point (NCP) should be reinforced and strengthened owing to the importance of the function.

3.2.3. *Measures taken and impact*

CEPOL has strengthened the role of NCPs by increasing the number of and lengthening meetings with NCPs to allow for NCPs to be better informed on strategic and operational developments. NCPs meet twice per year in person and the agency also conducts online meetings on an ad-hoc basis. The agency tries to schedule meetings sufficiently in advance of Governing Board meetings, so that Governing Board agenda items, including the annual work programme and budget, can be discussed with NCPs in a consultative manner before being tabled for Governing Board approval or adoption.

Input from the Commission

- The above-mentioned Commission proposal, in line with the practice in other Home Affairs agencies, would give the Commission voting rights in the Management Board of the new agency (Art. 13(1)). In line with the Common Approach on EU agencies, the Commission would have two voting representatives.
- The Commission has proposed a revision of the structure and powers of the agency in the above-mentioned proposal. In line with the Common Approach on EU agencies, the Management Board would be empowered to establish an Executive Board (Arts 21 and 22).

3.3. Strengthen the CEPOL Secretariat

The Governing Board agreed with the external evaluator's conclusions that the agency should be strengthened but strongly opposed the idea of merging CEPOL with another agency.

3.3.1. *Short-term recommendations*

- Centralise the administrative, budgetary and financial procedures to enable CEPOL to fulfil its complex tasks and responsibilities
- Reconsider the location of the agency

3.3.1.1. *Measures taken and impact*

CEPOL has succeeded in building a well-balanced and experienced team of professionals. While the independent evaluation noted that CEPOL had been delivering its core tasks while experiencing staff shortages, the Governing Board subsequently approved a human resources strategy for CEPOL as part of the Multi-annual Plan 2010 – 2014. The implementation of this plan has contributed to the eradication of administrative shortfalls and a better allocation of human resources within the agency to strengthen the operational business area. It should be noted that the HR strategy was implemented in part due to the introduced austerity policy, to ensure that CEPOL could continue to deliver core business whilst operating without its full complement of staff. The future implementation of the European Law Enforcement Training Scheme will result in new and additional tasks for the agency and a reinforcement of agency resources will need to be considered.

The CEPOL organisational chart has been amended and, as mentioned above, staff redeployed and units established to support the delivery of the agency's core task. A system with unit and individual activity plans – derived from the annual work programme – has been established and the implementation of annual work programme, management plans and individual activity plans is carefully monitored (see point 3.7).

In line with the recommendations, administrative, budgetary and financial procedures have been centralised. The Finance Unit has led the development of new financial processes with an amended, rationalised workflow for financial transactions introduced in September 2013.

The adoption of 16 internal control standards and the creation of an internal control plan have strengthened the agency's internal control function. A compliance assessment has shown that, overall CEPOL is in compliance with the requirements of internal control standards. Any areas identified for improvement are subject to an action plan, which ensures continuing improvement in control standards. In order to increase compliance with ICS 8 "Processes and procedures", a quality document management system was introduced envisaging the progressive centralisation of the administrative, budgetary and financial procedures to enable CEPOL to fulfil its complex tasks and responsibilities.

3.3.2. *Long-term recommendations*

- Disband a number of Working Groups, with the agency taking on remaining functionality where applicable

- Reconsider the location of the agency

As mentioned in point 3.2.1.1, all working groups were formally disbanded in 2012. Subsequently, the Governing Board approved the establishment of six project-based working groups, all of which set action plans, deliverables and lifespans.

Regarding the location of the agency, CEPOL will be relocated in the near future as the UK Home Office has communicated its intention to sell the Bramshill premises. Any decision on its location is outside of the remit of the agency. However, CEPOL stands ready to contribute to the drafting of the terms of reference for the evaluation of hosting offers from Member States.

Input from the Commission

- In its proposal for a new legal basis for the agency, the Commission took a different approach to the Governing Board as regards the external evaluator's recommendation that consideration should be given to merging agency functions with larger agencies. Indeed, the Commission took further the logic of the external evaluator by proposing a merger of CEPOL and Europol.

3.4. Merger of EU capacity building for law enforcement

The external evaluator states the need for a Commission wide strategic debate on the enhancement of a more integrated, cross-Agency capability building approach in European law enforcement training and development.

3.4.1. Short-term recommendations

- Analyse the likely impact of merging EU capacity building for law enforcement training on CEPOL and assess the resources that are needed for such an approach.

3.4.1.1. Measures taken and impact

Since 2010, CEPOL has become a full player in the EU institutional landscape, working constructively with other JHA agencies, the Commission and Council, to provide a comprehensive and relevant training portfolio. CEPOL participates in the JHA Scorecard, through which agencies coordinate their work. In addition, CEPOL offers a number of activities in cooperation with JHA agencies, such as study visits, and calls on officers in JHA agencies to provide expertise for the development and delivery of CEPOL activities.

The mapping exercise conducted by CEPOL on behalf of the Commission highlighted the need to consolidate the EU's activities and effort in the field of training, noting that overall EU coordination is lacking.

In its LETS Communication, the Commission states that rather than merging the relevant training capacities of the different agencies, CEPOL/Europol Academy will have an overall coordinating role. The Commission proposal on LETS outlines a role for CEPOL (in either independent or merged form) as ‘the driving force and coordinator for implementing the Training Scheme, in close cooperation with other EU agencies and the network of national training academies’ and aims to position CEPOL as ‘the EU centre of excellence for law enforcement learning’ and ‘the authority for professionals in this field and act as a broker for exchanging best practice.’

3.4.2. *Long-term recommendations*

- Identify and allocate appropriate financial resources for supporting law enforcement researchers and research capacity to enable CEPOL to better understand the implications for its network

3.4.2.1. *Measures taken and impact*

Under the current legal framework, CEPOL’s activities in the field of research and science are limited to the collection and dissemination of research findings.

3.5. Assess Member State engagement with CEPOL

The external evaluation showed significant differences in the level of Member State engagement with CEPOL, risking the efficient activity of CEPOL. The evaluator recommended that information streams and the frequency and content of meetings be rationalised.

3.5.1. *Recommendations*

- Improve consultation at national level to ensure a more efficient representation of Member States’ opinion
- Member States should be more committed in supporting CEPOL activities
- Adjust CEPOL programmes to reach a more balanced participation of senior police population of the Member States
- All Member States should be involved in the development of the Annual Work Programme

3.5.1.1. *Measures taken and impact*

The consultative nature of CEPOL has significantly increased since 2010 and Member States are routinely consulted on all important implementing decisions. As mentioned under point 2.2.3, NCPs are involved before consultation at Governing Board level, in particular for the development of training portfolio, annual work programme and budget. For these decisions,

the consultation process starts two years in advance and is referred to Member States three to four times before final approval.

The discrepancy in population between Member States means that some Member States cannot be engaged to the same degree as others. Also, some Member States have particular areas of interest resulting in high participation for certain activities and no participation for other activities. Overall, as mentioned above, CEPOL's training portfolio has been developed through consultation with the Member States and therefore has been adapted to reflect the needs of Member States and should, in turn, better reflect the needs of CEPOL's target audience.

Further, since 2011, CEPOL has increased the range of marketing materials available to NCPs in an effort to facilitate awareness raising of CEPOL in the Member States.

3.6. Concentrate capacity building efforts

The external evaluator recommends CEPOL concentrate capacity building in thematic terms, and in terms of type of activity. The Governing Board accepted this recommendation, placing emphasis on the strategic importance of the CEPOL portfolio to ensure alignment of all CEPOL products with EU priorities and Member State needs.

3.6.1. Recommendations

- A continual environmental analysis to ensure the alignment of CEPOL products with EU priorities (i.e. those defined in the Internal Security Strategy, OCTA and Stockholm Programme)
- The development of the Annual Work Programme based on a strategic needs analysis, followed by regular evaluation
- Focus on thematic areas of EU policy priorities and Member State needs and assure their quality level
- Further development and implementation of an exchange programme for police officers inspired by Erasmus.

3.6.1.1. Measures taken and impact

CEPOL's training approach is now fully integrated into the EU institutional landscape. A significant portion of activities stem from the new Policy Cycle for Serious and Organised Crime, or support specific EU policies such as the Strategy to Eradicate Trafficking in Human Beings.

As mentioned previously, annual work programmes are the result of a thorough consultation with institutional stakeholders and Member States. Work programmes are developed

according to CEPOL's strategy goals and all activities within the work programme are linked to CEPOL's strategic goals.

Annual work programmes document the human and financial resources required to complete a task performance indicators are attached to all work programme activities and these are reported on regularly. With regard to training activities, a description of each activity is provided with concrete outputs indicated where possible.

Regarding evaluation, which will be covered in more detail in the next section, there are three layers of evaluation. Firstly, at the highest level, CEPOL's overall performance is evaluated every five years, in accordance with the Council Decision establishing the agency. Implementation of the annual work programme is evaluated through a balanced scorecard approach and is discussed in the next section. Finally, all (residential) training activities are evaluated in two stages (see point 3.1.1.1).

The Governing Board recommendations called for further development of an exchange programme for police officers. In 2011, CEPOL took on the funding and organisation of the European Police Exchange Programme. In 2012, 293 police officers and experts took part in an exchange activity, compared with 82 in 2010. In fact, participation more than tripled once financial and organisational responsibility for the programme had been accorded to CEPOL. Exchange topics are closely linked to the thematic areas identified in the work programme and participation has now been extended to eastern European neighbouring (ENP) countries and the western Balkans. The exchange programme continues to be a popular and successful programme with 98.4% of participants rating the activity as good or very good in 2012.

3.6.1.2. Measure results and impacts

The Governing Board agreed with the recommendation of the external evaluation to establish a comprehensive and systematic monitoring framework which implies the definition of objectively verifiable indicators and the establishment of baselines for each activity and targets.

3.6.2. Recommendations

- Implementation of the Balanced Scorecard system and adoption of key performance indicators for both products and governance
- Extend use of customer satisfaction surveys

3.6.2.1. Measures taken and impact

In line with the above recommendation, the Governing Board, at its 22nd meeting in December 2010, endorsed the Balanced Scorecard for CEPOL comprising a set of 69 key performance indicators (KPIs). Following an initial implementation and subsequent review,

a simplified set of indicators were adopted. The current set comprises four KPIs corresponding to CEPOL's four strategic goals and 24 performance indicators (PIs) corresponding to 24 strategic objectives. In principle, indicators are measurable in the short, medium or long term and are consistent to enable comparisons. Data should be easily collected within reporting cycles. Currently, the results are monitored quarterly and regularly reported internally and externally to the Governing Board and other stakeholders. Indicators are reviewed annually.

The establishment of a Balanced Scorecard reporting system has meant that all activities are linked to strategic objectives and have measurable targets attached to them. As the Balanced Scorecard becomes more established, it has become easier to track CEPOL's progress not only in terms of achievements against a work programme, but also year on year achievements.

The external evaluator recommended that CEPOL measure customer satisfaction with its overall performance through a customer satisfaction survey. In 2011, CEPOL launched its first stakeholder survey, designed to measure stakeholders' perceptions on CEPOL progress against its strategic objectives. The results, which will be presented to the Governing Board at its 30th meeting in November 2013, show that 75% of stakeholders believe that CEPOL has realised its goal to contribute to European police cooperation through learning. The results of the survey will be used to further improve CEPOL's relations with stakeholders and inform the development of a future strategy.

4. Conclusion

CEPOL has implemented all the Governing Board recommendations where it has had the competence to do so. The improvements have been far-reaching and have a positive impact on CEPOL's business.

In terms of core business, CEPOL now offers a relevant and responsive training portfolio that reflects the needs of policy makers and national training institutes. This has resulted in a more focused portfolio covering fewer thematic areas. The evolution of web-based technologies has enabled CEPOL to complement its residential courses with online activities. This approach has had a positive impact on attendance from 2,300 in 2009 to 6,019 in 2012. The average number of participants per residential activity has grown from 23 in 2009 to 27 in 2012.

Improved governance has been a priority for the agency. The change management programme, initiated in 2010, has resulted in fewer but more focused Governing Board meetings, with routine business now conducted by written procedure. Committees have been disbanded and working groups now operate to strict terms and mandates. Improvements to governance structures have resulted in a reduction of overall governance costs to EUR 169,000 in 2012 from EUR 518,500 in 2009.

The agency strives to enhance efficiency. CEPOL has achieved implemented a portfolio of needs-based training to an increasing number of participants with a relatively stable operating budget (EUR 8,341,000 in 2012). Importantly, the reduction of governance costs combined with greater use of technology to facilitate training and coordination has meant that the agency has lowered the unit price of training activities. Within the agency, the creation of units and the redeployment of staff in support of core business ensure that CEPOL remains flexible to meet changing demands. Further, the newly-formed Finance Unit has contributed to the improvement of financial workflows and reporting, resulting in better budget management.

As an EU agency, CEPOL takes seriously its responsibility to be accountable and since 2010, the agency has undergone 16 audits. The change management programme has ensured compliance with internal control standards with the result that CEPOL is now legal, regular and operational.

CEPOL will continue to consult with its stakeholders on the development of its work programmes to ensure that they fully reflect EU policy and Member State needs. Through its increased presence in Council working parties and working groups, and close cooperation with EU Justice and Home Affairs partners, CEPOL can continue to strengthen the capacity of law enforcement through training.

The future scope of the agency's tasks will be determined by the evolution of the European law enforcement training scheme (LETS) as presented in the Commission LETS proposal of 27 March 2013. It is clear that the implementation of LETS will require investment to meet a wider target audience and growing demand for law enforcement training. The measures that CEPOL has taken in recent years to improve its capacity and effectiveness at delivering training make the agency to well-placed to support the implementation of LETS, however CEPOL recognises that the pending decision on its new legal framework will impact its future business.

CEPOL therefore seeks guidance from the Governing Board on its future strategic course.