



Plenary sitting

A9-0102/2023

3.4.2023

REPORT

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) for the financial year 2021
(2022/2096(DEC))

Committee on Budgetary Control

Rapporteur: Ramona Strugariu

CONTENTS

	Page
1. PROPOSAL FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DECISION.....	3
2. PROPOSAL FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DECISION.....	5
3. MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION.....	7
OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL LIBERTIES, JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS	14
INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE.....	18
FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE	19

1. PROPOSAL FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DECISION

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) for the financial year 2021 (2022/2096(DEC))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the final annual accounts of the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) for the financial year 2021,
- having regard to the Court of Auditors' annual report on EU agencies for the financial year 2021, together with the agencies' replies¹,
- having regard to the statement of assurance² as to the reliability of the accounts and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions provided by the Court of Auditors for the financial year 2021, pursuant to Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
- having regard to the Council's recommendation of 28 February 2023 on discharge to be given to the Agency in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2021 (06248/2023 – C9-0078/2023),
- having regard to Article 319 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
- having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012³, and in particular Article 70 thereof,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2015/2219 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2015 on the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) and replacing and repealing Council Decision 2005/681/JHA⁴, and in particular Article 20 thereof,
- having regard to Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/715 of 18 December 2018 on the framework financial regulation for the bodies set up under the TFEU and Euratom Treaty and referred to in Article 70 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁵, and in particular Article 105 thereof,

¹ OJ C 412, 27.10.2022, p. 12.

² OJ C 412, 27.10.2022, p. 12.

³ OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1.

⁴ OJ L 319, 4.12.2015, p. 1.

⁵ OJ L 122, 10.5.2019, p. 1.

- having regard to Rule 100 of and Annex V to its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the opinion of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control (A9-0102/2023),
1. Grants the Executive Director of the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) discharge in respect of the implementation of the Agency's budget for the financial year 2021;
 2. Sets out its observations in the resolution below;
 3. Instructs its President to forward this decision, and the resolution forming an integral part of it, to the Executive Director of the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL), the Council, the Commission and the Court of Auditors, and to arrange for their publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union* (L series).

2. PROPOSAL FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DECISION

on the closure of the accounts of the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) for the financial year 2021 (2022/2096(DEC))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the final annual accounts of the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) for the financial year 2021,
- having regard to the Court of Auditors' annual report on EU agencies for the financial year 2021, together with the agencies' replies¹,
- having regard to the statement of assurance² as to the reliability of the accounts and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions provided by the Court of Auditors for the financial year 2021, pursuant to Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
- having regard to the Council's recommendation of 28 February 2023 on discharge to be given to the Agency in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2021 (06248/2023 – C9-0078/2023),
- having regard to Article 319 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
- having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012³, and in particular Article 70 thereof,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2015/2219 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2015 on the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) and replacing and repealing Council Decision 2005/681/JHA⁴, and in particular Article 20 thereof,
- having regard to Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/715 of 18 December 2018 on the framework financial regulation for the bodies set up under the TFEU and Euratom Treaty and referred to in Article 70 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁵, and in particular Article 105 thereof,
- having regard to Rule 100 of and Annex V to its Rules of Procedure,

¹ OJ C 412, 27.10.2022, p. 12.

² OJ C 412, 27.10.2022, p. 12.

³ OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1.

⁴ OJ L 319, 4.12.2015, p. 1.

⁵ OJ L 122, 10.5.2019, p. 1.

- having regard to the opinion of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs,
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control (A9-0102/2023),
- 1. Approves the closure of the accounts of the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) for the financial year 2021;
- 2. Instructs its President to forward this decision to the Executive Director of the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL), the Council, the Commission and the Court of Auditors, and to arrange for its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union* (L series).

3. MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

with observations forming an integral part of the decision on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) for the financial year 2021 (2022/2096(DEC))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its decision on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) for the financial year 2021,
 - having regard to Rule 100 of and Annex V to its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the opinion of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control (A9-0102/2023),
- A. whereas, according to its statement of revenue and expenditure¹, the final budget of the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) (the 'Agency') for the financial year 2021 was EUR 30 044 194, representing a decrease of 1,82 % compared to 2020, whereas the Agency is financed by a contribution from the Union and external assigned revenue for specific projects;
- B. whereas the Court of Auditors (the 'Court'), in its report on the annual accounts of the Agency for the financial year 2021 (the 'Court's report'), states that it has obtained reasonable assurance that the Agency's annual accounts are reliable and that the underlying transactions are legal and regular;

Budget and financial management

1. Notes that the budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2021 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 96,78 %, representing an increase of 5,09 % compared to 2020; notes that the payment appropriations execution rate was 72,26 %, representing a decrease of 1,93 % compared to 2020; notes furthermore that the cumulated payment appropriations execution rate in the first two years (2020 and 2021) of the implementation of the four on-going multi-annual international law enforcement cooperation projects (Union External Assistance funds) was 22,25 %;
2. Notes that a budgetary amendment was adopted whereby the Agency's 2021 budget was reduced by EUR 800 000, which was returned to the Commission; acknowledges the Agency's explanation according to which the pandemic severely impacted the possibility of organising on-site law enforcement training during the first quarters of 2021, thus causing considerable underspending; underlines, however, that the Agency has effectively adapted and converted its activities to online learning, safeguarding the

¹ OJ C 216, 31.5.2022, p. 1.

implementation of its training programmes;

3. Welcomes with appreciation that the execution rate in 2021 of the C8 funds (carried forward from 2020 to 2021) was 100 %; notes, furthermore, the high amount of EUR 2 411 091 as funds carried forward from 2021 to 2022, representing 24 % of the Agency's regular budget for 2021;

Performance

4. Notes that the implementation rate of the Agency's work programme was impacted by the COVID-19 crisis, mainly with regard to onsite activities; is satisfied that a majority of targets set were achieved or exceeded; notes with appreciation the customers' satisfaction rate in 2021 with 97 % of the participants in the Agency's training activities having declared to be satisfied or very satisfied;
5. Notes that in 2021 a five-year evaluation of the Agency was performed by the Commission; welcomes the overall positive conclusions of the evaluation report and invites the Agency to implement the recommendations contained in the evaluation report;
6. Notes with appreciation that, despite the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak, the Agency continued to increase its outreach with the number of training participants increasing by 17 % compared to 2020; commends, furthermore, the Agency's exceptional results in the domain of e-learning, and the organisation of the online CEPOL Research & Science Conference, which attracted over 500 participants in spring 2021; notes that the CEPOL Exchange Programme was postponed to mid-August, with 57 % of the planned exchanges being achieved in 2021;
7. Observes that the Agency completed the second EU Strategic Training Needs Assessment (EU-STNA) identifying training priorities for law enforcement officials for the period of 2022-2025; welcomes the launch of a new CEPOL Knowledge Centre on Law Enforcement Cooperation, Information and Exchange and Interoperability (CKC INT);
8. Highlights the need for the law enforcement training at Union level to reflect the threats to the security of the Union in line with the mandate of the Agency; reiterates the importance of law enforcement training on strategies to fight racism and discrimination and to prevent racial and ethnic profiling and violence; underlines the urgent need for specialised training focusing on dangers and the proper use of AI technologies by police authorities to ensure the safety and security of citizens;
9. Welcomes the establishment of the Expert Group on Fundamental Rights with the purpose of improving the Agency's training strategy in that area and of the Expert Group on the Enhancement of Cooperation between the Agency and the Member States aiming to improve the quality and efficiency of cooperation; notes the suggestion of the Expert Group on Fundamental Rights to add fundamental rights as a cross-cutting issue to the training activities offered where applicable in both Member States and third countries with particular emphasis on fundamental rights and crime prevention;
10. Notes that, in 2021, the Agency started the implementation of the four multi-annual international projects assisting third countries in building their capacities in relevant law

enforcement policy areas;

11. Welcomes the cooperation with specialised cybercrime knowledge hubs and centres such as the European Cybercrime Centre, the European Cybercrime Training and Education Group, the European Judicial Training Network and Interpol, through the CEPOL Cybercrime Academy in addressing the growing training needs in the field of cybercrime;
12. Highlights the Agency's working arrangements with the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol), the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust), the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, the European Judicial Training Network, the Commission, and ongoing negotiations with European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction and the European Union Agency for Asylum;
13. Notes with concern that the Agency does not have working arrangements with the Commission's Directorate-General Taxation and Customs Union (DG TAXUD) which prevents the Agency from expanding the target audience of its activities to include customs and border officials; encourages the Agency to ensure that working arrangements are in place with all key bodies;
14. Encourages the Agency to better tailor its training methods to its target audience; urges the Agency to follow the results of the Commission's evaluation and adjust the training of the law enforcement officials who respond better to hands-on practical training (joint exercises, simulations, table-top exercises) than (virtual) theoretical classroom training;

Staff policy

15. Notes that, on 31 December 2021, the establishment plan was 91 % implemented, with 30 temporary agents appointed out of 33 temporary agents authorised under the Union budget (the same number of authorised posts as in 2020); notes that, in addition, 58 contract agents (of which 20 were for regular activities and 38 for externally financed capacity building projects) and seven seconded national experts (six financed from the Agency's budget and one financed under the Counter Terrorism Training Project 2) worked for the Agency in 2021; notes moreover that, on 31 December 2021, 19 interim staff were employed with tasks related to core business such as e-learning, ICT, legal and management support;
16. Underlines that the significant widening of the Agency's work with the entry into force of its current mandate has still not been followed up with a similar increase in staff numbers; notes with concern the suggestions made by the Commission to the Agency not to request new posts for the upcoming years, in spite of the necessity to have more staff; highlights in addition that in absence of additional human resources, the Agency is using contract agents on a number of tasks that would normally be executed by temporary agents; urges the Commission to reconsider its position concerning the grading of posts in order for those posts to reflect the workload and responsibilities of staff;
17. Notes with concern that the staff turnover rate remained high in 2021, at 11,8 %; appreciates the efforts undertaken by the Agency to address that issue, including by introducing a new structured exit interview; highlights the fact that the results of

conducting such interviews have revealed that the high turnover is mostly caused by the high workload and low grading of posts; underlines in addition that the Agency has been experiencing difficulties with the recruitment process, caused by both a low number of applications and a high number of successful candidates refusing the job offers; highlights the fact that the salary correction coefficient applied to remunerations offered for positions within the Agency has an extremely negative impact on the Agency's ability to reduce staff turnover, to recruit the staff it requires for the optimal implementation of its mandate, as well as to become attractive for highly skilled candidates; calls on the Commission to revise the correction coefficient in order to better reflect the economic realities of relocating to and living in the Agency's host city; further calls on the Commission and the Agency to make available additional facilities such as access to international schools, child and healthcare, in order to make working for the Agency more attractive;

18. Notes with appreciation that the Agency has implemented various modules of SYSPER and plans to continue to do so, increasing the use of more basic and optional modules;
19. Welcomes the Agency's reported gender breakdown for 2021 with 3 men and 3 women in management functions (1 senior manager and 5 middle managers), with 16 men (59 %) and 11 women (41 %) in the management board, and with 39 men (45%) and 48 women (55%) in the Agency's staff overall; commends the Agency for the gender balance achieved in 2021; is however concerned about the lack of geographical balance and that the Agency does not employ any staff from Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta and Slovenia; urges the Agency to consider with utmost priority geographical balance in its recruitment procedures and report to the discharge authority any development in that regard;
20. Welcomes the fact that in 2021 the Agency organised training activities on topics such as ethics and integrity, respect and dignity, the prevention of harassment, and wellbeing; welcomes the adoption in 2021 of the Agency's policy on protecting the dignity of the person and preventing psychological and sexual harassment; welcomes furthermore the implementation of the informal procedure with confidential counsellors; notes the Agency's reply that no harassment case was reported in 2021;

Procurement

21. Notes with concern that, since the 2019 financial year, the Court has raised new observations as regards the Agency's procurement every year; takes note of the Court's observations regarding the Agency's contract management and public procurement procedures for 2021; notes in particular that in 2021 the Agency made payments in connection with activities that took place in certain countries outside the Union; notes that such activities were not included in the scope of the framework contract based on which related payments were made; notes with concern the Court's conclusion with regard to the Agency having acted in that case in breach of Article 172 of the Financial Regulation; regrets that related payments amounting to EUR 76 590 were irregular, as concluded by the Court; notes that the Agency took the decision to make an exception covering exclusively urgent business needs in countries outside the Union, whereas that decision was registered in the Agency's registry of exceptions; further notes that the Agency used the exception procedure recurrently in order to ensure business continuity and sound financial management until the finalisation of an open procedure that resulted

in the signing of a new framework contract, with no limitations in January 2022;

22. Notes that in 2021 the Agency only had one temporary agent and one contract agent posts for procurement related procedures, two additional contract agents working on externally financed projects; notes that the Agency is using interim agents to help with the workload; highlights, with great concern, the fact that at least up to November 2022, the highest graded procurement officer was AST-5 with a recruitment grade of AST-3, a grade considered by the Agency as too low considering the responsibilities assigned to that post; underlines that the inadequate grading of such posts may impact on the quality of public procurement procedures undertaken by the Agency; calls on the Commission to urgently address those issues;

Prevention and management of conflicts of interest, and transparency

23. Notes with appreciation the Agency's existing measures and ongoing efforts to secure transparency and the prevention and management of conflicts of interest; notes with satisfaction that the declarations of interest and the CV's of most management board members and senior management are published on the Agency's website; notes with satisfaction that the format of the declarations allows the listing of professional, financial, personal and other interests that may relate to the Agency's activities; notes that the declarations on conflicts of interest and confidentiality for the remunerated experts are not published on the Agency's website; calls on the Agency to make those remaining documents available on its website as soon as possible; welcomes the fact that the annual list of expert contracts published on the Agency's website is complemented with information on the declarations on conflicts of interest and confidentiality made by experts;

Internal control

24. Notes the Agency's assessment of its internal control system and its conclusion, that it is effective, present and functioning well, and that only minor improvements are needed; calls on the Agency to explicitly incorporate in its assessment the observations of the Court and the related recommendations;
25. Notes from the Court's report several weaknesses in the Agency's internal control system, in particular in relation to procurement procedures and the management of budgetary commitments; notes with regard to procurement the Court's observation in one case whereby the lack of separation between selection criteria and award criteria compromised the principle of transparency and exposed the Agency to reputational and legal risks; notes in another case the Court's finding regarding the Agency's failure to monitor outstanding payments thus exposing itself to the risk of not meeting its financial obligations towards third parties in case of budget restrictions; calls on the Agency to report to the discharge authority about the intended measures for addressing those issues and its progress on those matters;
26. Recalls that the Court observed weaknesses in the Agency's internal control environment other than those concerning procurement in relation to the management of budgetary commitments, and welcomes the fact that the Agency took concrete steps to address those errors, including regular contract management training for project managers and other relevant staff to increase awareness and reduce the occurrence of such cases; calls on the Agency to report to the discharge authority about its progress in

this matter;

27. Notes that in October 2021, the Internal Audit Service (IAS) initiated an audit concerning the Agency's 'Human resources management and ethics in CEPOL'; notes the positive conclusion of the IAS' final audit report and the identified areas for improvement regarding recruitment, appraisal and reclassification procedures; calls on the Agency to implement the IAS recommendations;
28. Notes with concern the Agency's internal control deficiencies with regard to the lack of formalising controls over technology (e.g. ICT backup policy) and procedural framework for document management; calls on the Agency to implement, including with the help of another agency if necessary, the Commission's ARES as its document management system;

Digitalisation and green transition

29. Notes that the Agency does not have a formalised policy on cybersecurity; notes furthermore that the Agency works with CERT-EU and other partners to increase cybersecurity and the protection of digital records; acknowledges the Agency's limitation in this area given its low number of staff as per establishment plan;
30. Commends the Agency for having enhanced furthermore the LEEd platform with a number of technical developments, especially in light of the cyberattack and subsequent shutdown of the platform at the end of 2020; welcomes the rapid restoration of the LEEd platform and the implementation of outstanding online activities in the first quarter of 2021; notes furthermore that the Agency reported reaching a relatively high level of digitalisation with its processes having become paperless;
31. Encourages the Agency to work in close cooperation with ENISA (the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity); suggests that the Agency offers regularly updated cybersecurity-related training programmes for all staff within the Agency; calls on the Agency to develop its cybersecurity policy more swiftly, delivering it before 31 December 2023 and to report back to the discharge authority about the progress achieved;
32. Welcomes the launch of the new learning portfolio supporting the development of personal and business skills in January 2021, with 500 new e-learning modules and seats granted for 1000 LEEd users, then further extending the licence to 2000 seats as of October 2022;
33. Notes the Agency's efforts to reduce its environmental impact; welcomes in particular the Agency's internal rules whereby for short distances staff and participants in training activities should use alternatives to travel by air; commends the Agency for offering its staff reimbursement for the costs of using public transport;

Business continuity along crisis

34. Notes that the Agency reported that in 2021 the COVID-19 pandemic had a serious impact on its onsite activities; notes in particular the postponement to 2022 of the implementation of some of the activities planned for 2021, the cancellation without replacement of some other activities, several withdrawals of activities as well as onsite

activities converted into online activities; commends the Agency for its resilience and for its response in reallocating resources to ensure objectives are met;

35. Commends that, despite a relatively high turnover of staff, business continuity of the Agency and the safety of its staff were assured through measures such as extended teleworking and flexitime arrangements, e-workflow, recruitment of interim staff and seconded national experts and maintaining the social arrangements;

Other comments

36. Notes with concern that the issue of the Agency not having enough office space and area for operational activities is ongoing, with the Agency operating from three different locations; deplores the fact that the initial plan by the Hungarian government for a common complex for international organisations has been shelved; notes that the discussions of the Agency's executive director with the Hungarian authorities continued during 2022; calls on the Agency to keep the discharge authority informed about the developments as regards its premises and progress made in the discussions with the host Member State; welcomes the creation of an internal task force to assess options on how best to make use of the existing space;
37. Recalls that the Agency is to ensure full transparency and full respect of fundamental rights in all its activities, including those with third countries;
38. Calls on the Agency to step up its efforts and report relevant performance information to Union citizens and the general public in clear and accessible language; urges the Agency to ensure greater transparency and public accountability by better utilising media and social media channels;
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- ◦
39. Refers, for other observations of a cross-cutting nature accompanying its decision on discharge, to its resolution of ...² on the performance, financial management and control of the agencies.

² Texts adopted, P9_TA(2023)0000.

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL LIBERTIES, JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

for the Committee on Budgetary Control

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) for the financial year 2021 (2022/2096(DEC))

Rapporteur for opinion: Saskia Bricmont

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs calls on the Committee on Budgetary Control, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Welcomes the fact that the Court of Auditors ('The Court') declared the transactions underlying the annual accounts of the European Union Agency of Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) for the financial year 2021 to be legal and regular in all material respects; recalls that according to its statement of revenue and expenditure, CEPOL's budget decreased in 2021 to 30 million (1.82% compared to 2020), while members of staff increased from 84 to 95 (+13,09%) within the same period;
2. Reiterates its concern over the recurring high staff turnover rate figures, measuring at 11.8% in 2021; notes with appreciation the efforts undertaken by CEPOL in 2021 to address this issue and better identify the root causes through the introduction of a new structured exit interview; highlights that the low grading of posts was one of the main reasons identified behind the decision of former staff to leave CEPOL; underlines that in addition to low grading, the current salary correction coefficient has an extremely negative impact on CEPOL's recruitment and staff retention efforts; further highlights that among the main difficulties encountered during the recruitment process figured not only the low number of applications, but also a high number of successful candidates refusing the job offers; calls on the Commission to reconsider the salary correction coefficient it applies to the host city of CEPOL in order to better reflect the economic needs and realities on the ground, as well as to make available additional facilities to staff in order to make CEPOL more attractive to highly skilled candidates;
3. Welcomes the fact that in spite of the continuation of the pandemic situation in 2021 CEPOL effectively adapted by converting its activities online learning and carried out 396 training activities, which saw the participation of 46 340 law enforcement officers, representing an increase of 17% compared to 2020; welcomes that in 2021 the CEPOL training activities focused on key thematic areas of organised crime; notes with satisfaction the particular attention paid by CEPOL to the area of cybercrime; notes

the collaboration of CEPOL with specialised cybercrime knowledge hubs;

4. Welcomes the creation of the Expert Group on Fundamental Rights with the aim to integrating a fundamental rights dimension in all CEPOL training and events; welcomes the signature of the working Arrangement with the Fundamental Rights Agency; further welcomes the Expert Group suggestion to add Fundamental Rights as a cross cutting issue to the trainings offered by CEPOL to Member States and third countries;
5. Highlights that the law enforcement training at EU level needs to reflect the EU security threats in line with CEPOL's mandate; reinstate the importance of law enforcement training on strategies to fight racism and discrimination, and to prevent racial and ethnic profiling and violence; underlines the urgent need for specialised training focusing on dangers and the proper use of AI technologies by police authorities as a key to ensure safety and security of citizens;
6. Highlights CEPOL's working arrangements with Europol, Eurojust, Frontex, the European Judicial Training Network, the European Commission, and ongoing negotiations with European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction and the European Union Agency for Asylum; notes CEPOL's ongoing cooperation with partners from third countries, and that in 2021 CEPOL started the implementation of 4 new law enforcement training projects with partners in the Middle East and North Africa;
7. Recalls that the Court observed weaknesses in CEPOL's internal control environment other than those concerning procurements in relation to the management of budgetary commitments, and welcomes CEPOL taking concrete steps to address those errors including regular contract management training for project managers and other relevant staff to increase awareness and reduce occurrence of such cases; calls on CEPOL to report to the discharge authority about its progress in this matter;
8. Regrets the Court's findings of irregularities in payments which contravened the Financial Regulation in relation to expenses covering the organisation of CEPOL events in non-EU countries; recognises that such irregularities are linked to the unprecedented challenges that arose from the COVID-19 pandemic; takes note of CEPOL's reply that in order to ensure transparency the agency formalised the use of an exception note to reduce the use of a previous framework contract in project activities in third countries, thus covering only urgent business needs, ensuring business continuity until the signature of the new framework contract in January 2022; welcomes that in January 2022 CEPOL signed a new framework contract covering events in those countries; notes that any weaknesses identified in relation to the CEPOL procurement procedure may compromise the principle of transparency and expose the agency to reputational and legal risks;
9. Recalls that the agency shall ensure full transparency and full respect with fundamental rights in all its activities, including those with third countries.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	1.3.2023
Result of final vote	+: 63 -: 1 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Magdalena Adamowicz, Abir Al-Sahlani, Malik Azmani, Katarina Barley, Pietro Bartolo, Vladimír Bilčík, Vasile Blaga, Ioan-Rareș Bogdan, Karolin Braunsberger-Reinhold, Patrick Breyer, Saskia Bricmont, Patricia Chagnon, Caterina Chinnici, Clare Daly, Lena Düpont, Lucia Ďuriš Nicholsonová, Maria Grapini, Sylvie Guillaume, Andrzej Halicki, Evin Incir, Sophia in 't Veld, Patryk Jaki, Marina Kaljurand, Assita Kanko, Fabienne Keller, Łukasz Kohut, Moritz Körner, Alice Kuhnke, Jeroen Lenaers, Juan Fernando López Aguilar, Erik Marquardt, Nuno Melo, Maite Pagazaurtundúa, Karlo Ressler, Diana Riba i Giner, Birgit Sippel, Sara Skytvedal, Vincenzo Sofo, Tineke Strik, Ramona Strugariu, Annalisa Tardino, Tomas Tobé, Yana Toom, Milan Uhrík, Tom Vandendriessche, Jadwiga Wiśniewska, Javier Zarzalejos
Substitutes present for the final vote	Susanna Ceccardi, Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, Loucas Fourlas, Beata Kempa, Philippe Olivier, Dragoș Tudorache, Petar Vitanov, Tomáš Zdechovský
Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote	Gheorghe Falcă, Jean-François Jalkh, Petra Kammerevert, Marisa Matias, Martina Michels, Ljudmila Novak, Stanislav Polčák, Mick Wallace, Bernhard Zimniok

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

63	+
ECR	Patryk Jaki, Assita Kanko, Beata Kempa, Vincenzo Sofo, Jadwiga Wiśniewska
ID	Susanna Ceccardi, Patricia Chagnon, Jean-François Jalkh, Philippe Olivier, Annalisa Tardino, Tom Vandendriessche, Bernhard Zimniok
PPE	Magdalena Adamowicz, Vladimír Bilčík, Vasile Blaga, Ioan-Rareș Bogdan, Karolin Braunsberger-Reinhold, Lena Düpont, Gheorghe Falcă, Loucas Fourlas, Andrzej Halicki, Jeroen Lenaers, Nuno Melo, Ljudmila Novak, Stanislav Polčák, Karlo Ressler, Sara Skytvedal, Tomas Tobé, Javier Zarzalejos, Tomáš Zdechovský
Renew	Abir Al-Sahlani, Malik Azmani, Lucia Ďuriš Nicholsonová, Sophia in 't Veld, Fabienne Keller, Moritz Körner, Maite Pagazaurtundúa, Ramona Strugariu, Yana Toom, Dragoș Tudorache
S&D	Katarina Barley, Pietro Bartolo, Caterina Chinnici, Maria Grapini, Sylvie Guillaume, Evin Incir, Marina Kaljurand, Petra Kammerevert, Łukasz Kohut, Juan Fernando López Aguilar, Birgit Sippel, Petar Vitanov
The Left	Clare Daly, Marisa Matias, Martina Michels, Mick Wallace
Verts/ALE	Patrick Breyer, Saskia Bricmont, Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, Alice Kuhnke, Erik Marquardt, Diana Riba i Giner, Tineke Strik

1	-
NI	Milan Uhrík

0	0

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

Date adopted	22.3.2023
Result of final vote	+: 23 -: 0 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Gilles Boyer, Olivier Chastel, Caterina Chinnici, Ilana Cicurel, Corina Crețu, José Manuel Fernandes, Luke Ming Flanagan, Daniel Freund, Isabel García Muñoz, Monika Hohlmeier, Jean-François Jalkh, Claudiu Manda, Alin Mituța, Markus Pieper, Petri Sarvamaa, Eleni Stavrou, Angelika Winzig, Lara Wolters, Tomáš Zdechovský
Substitutes present for the final vote	Maria Grapini, Niclas Herbst, Mikuláš Peksa
Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote	Anne-Sophie Pelletier

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

23	+
ID	Jean-François Jalkh
PPE	José Manuel Fernandes, Niclas Herbst, Monika Hohlmeier, Markus Pieper, Petri Sarvamaa, Eleni Stavrou, Angelika Winzig, Tomáš Zdechovský
Renew	Gilles Boyer, Olivier Chastel, Ilana Cicurel, Alin Mituța
S&D	Caterina Chinnici, Corina Crețu, Isabel García Muñoz, Maria Grapini, Claudiu Manda, Lara Wolters
The Left	Luke Ming Flanagan, Anne-Sophie Pelletier
Vers/ALE	Daniel Freund, Mikuláš Peksa

0	-

0	0

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention