

**Consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR)  
of the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL)  
for financial year 2023**

This Consolidated Annual Activity Report has been drawn up in compliance with Article 48 of the to the Commission Delegated Regulation of 18 December 2018 on the framework financial regulation for the bodies referred to in Article 70 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council

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## Acronyms and abbreviations

AEPC	Association of European Police Colleges
ANASPOCs	Analysis Single Point of Contact
CAAR	Consolidated Annual Activity Report
CEPOL	European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training
CEP	CEPOL Exchange Programme
CA	Contract Agent
CAPASPOCs	Capacity Building Single Point of Contact
CCA	CEPOL Cybercrime Academy
CEPOL CT 2	EU/MENA Counter-terrorism Training Partnership 2
CEPOL CT INFLOW	Enhancing Information Exchange and Criminal Justice Responses to Terrorism in the Middle East and North Africa
CEPOL EUROMED Police	Enhancing operational capacities of the South Partner Countries (SPC) to fight serious and organised crime and strengthening strategic cooperation
CEPOL FI	Financial Investigation In-Service Training Programme for Western Balkan (IPA II)
CEPOL TOPCOP	Training and Operational Partnership against Organised Crime
CEPOL WB PaCT	Western Balkans Project against Crime and Terrorism
CKC	CEPOL Knowledge Centres
CNU	CEPOL National Units
COSI	Standing committee for the EU internal security
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
CT	Counter-terrorism
DG	Directorate General of the European Commission
DG Home	The Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs
DG JUST	The Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers
DG NEAR	The Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
DPO	Data Protection Office
EUAA	European Union Agency for Asylum
EC	European Commission
EC3	European Cybercrime Centre
ECA	European Court of Auditors
ECRIS	European Criminal Records Information System
ECTEG	European Cybercrime Training and Education Group
ED	Executive Director
EEAS	European External Action Service
EES	Entry Exit System
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
EIT	European Institute of Innovation & Technology
EJMP	European Joint Master Programme
EJTN	European Judicial Training Network
e-Net	Electronic Network (CEPOL's former e-learning platform & LMS, replaced by LEEd)
EMCDDA	European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction
EMPACT	European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats
ENFSI	European Network of Forensic Science Institutes
ENISA	European Union Agency for Cybersecurity
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EP	European Parliament
ESDC	European Security and Defence College
EU	European Union
eu-LISA	European Union Agency for the Operational Management of Large-Scale IT Systems in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice
EU-STNA	EU Strategic Training Needs Assessment
EUIPO	European Union Intellectual Property Office
Eurojust	European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation
Europol	European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation
ETIAS	European Travel Information and Authorisation System
FP	Framework Partners
FPI	Foreign Policy Instruments
FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights

Frontex (EBCGA)	European Border and Coast Guard Agency
HR	Human Resources
HQ	Headquarters
IAS	Internal Audit Service
ICF	Internal Control Framework
IcSP	Instrument Contributing to Stability and Peace
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
INT	Law Enforcement Cooperation, Information Exchange and Interoperability
Interpol	International Criminal Police Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
JHA	Justice and Home Affairs
JIT	Joint Investigation Team
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
LE	Law Enforcement
LEEd	Law Enforcement Education platform (CEPOL's new e-learning platform & LMS)
LETS	European Law Enforcement Training Scheme
LIBE	European Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs
LMS	Learning Management System
LTR	Lecturers, Trainers and Researchers
MB	Management Board
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MS	Member States
MTIC	Missing Trader Intra-Community (Fraud)
NCP	National Contact Points
NDICI	Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument
NOK ITC	International Training Centre of Hungary
OPC	Organised Property Crime
OLAF	European Anti-Fraud Office
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OSINT	Open Source Intelligence
OTNA	Operational Training Needs Analysis
PCC-SEE	Police Cooperation Convention for Southeast Europe
PNR	Passenger Name Record
QM	Quality Management
SIENA	Secure Information Exchange Network Application
SIRENE	Supplementary Information Request at the National Entries
SIS	Schengen Information System
SOCTA	Serious Organised Crime Threat Assessment
SPD	Single Programming Document
STNA	Strategic Training Needs Analysis
SYSPER	HR module of the European Commission
TA	Temporary Agent
TE-SAT	EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report
THB	Trafficking of Human Beings
TNA	Training Needs Assessment
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
VIS	Visa Information System
WP	Work Programme

## Management Board's analysis and assessment

The Management Board,

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/JHA;

Having regard to Management Board Decision 13/2019/MB of 22 May 2019 adopting the Financial Regulation, and in particular Article 48 thereof;

Having regard to the Consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR) for the financial year 2023 of the Authorising Officer of CEPOL;

### General Observations

1. Acknowledges that CEPOL has taken significant steps towards the implementation of the **new strategy 2023-2027**, while 2023 was a transitioning year from the previous strategy to the new one, as reflected in the work programme of the year.
2. Considers that the Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2023 represents a comprehensive and transparent account of the Agency's activities and results of the year; takes note of the **declaration of assurance of the Executive Director**.
3. Acknowledges that the **Agency successfully delivered its mandate through the year**, navigating the ongoing complexities arising from the war in Ukraine and its global repercussions. **CEPOL continued to deliver training to law enforcement community**, by making use of both onsite and online training delivery mode.
4. Notes with regards to the **budget management** that at the end of the year, CEPOL managed to implement 100% of the M€ 11.2 subsidy budget at commitment level and payments reached 87%. In total M€ 1.4 (13%) commitments, were carried forward to 2024.

With regards to the dedicated Union External Assistance funds to assist third countries in building their capacities in relevant law enforcement policy areas, takes note that in addition to the existing **M€ 23.5 multi-annual projects portfolio**, CEPOL initiated a new multi-annual agreement for EU4Security Moldova project, with a budget of **€5 500 000** over 36 months. This expansion demonstrates CEPOL's commitment to enhancing law enforcement capacities not only beyond the Union but also on the EU neighbourhood.

5. In terms of **human resources management**, takes notes of the Agency's continuous efforts to ensure business continuity while the staff fluctuation is still problematic, mainly due to country coefficient factor, which remains low despite an increase took place in 2023 from 75.6% to 86.7%.

### Observations on the operational achievements

6. Welcomes that, in terms of the delivery of its core business, CEPOL trainings were attended by **46 431 participants** which is a considerable outreach versus its limited resources; as per the objectives of the CEPOL's new strategy we expect that CEPOL will further increase this outreach via implementing a cascading mechanism that will rely on the strong support of the LE networks in the Member States.
7. Acknowledges that **Serious and Organised Crime and Cybercrime** were the most popular topics attended by almost **62%** of total number of participants in 2023.
8. Positively notes that the quality of CEPOL products as measured by the **customers' satisfaction rate** remained high with overall **96%** of participants stating that they were very satisfied or satisfied with the activities.
9. Welcomes that CEPOL published the **EU Strategic Training Needs Assessment 2022-2025** mid-term review, which identifies newly emerged strategic and EU-level training needs of law enforcement officials

for the last years of the EMPACT cycle 2022-2025. CEPOL further proactively identified emerging training needs, particularly through the EU-STNA review and regional needs analysis.

10. Notes the **strengthened EMPACT focus** as CEPOL's training addressed operational needs and training gaps identified as regards EU serious and organised crime priorities, ensuring a coordinated EU law enforcement response. CEPOL organized the EMPACT Driver's workshop, formulating policy recommendations for COSI. Also notable were the continued operation and improvement of **Knowledge Centres on Counter-Terrorism and Law Enforcement Cooperation**.
11. Positively notes the training portfolio refocus and **innovative training methods** as CEPOL adjusting the 2023 training portfolio in accordance with strategic objectives, adopted cutting-edge approaches, including the first VR training on drug trafficking and interactive workshops involving academia as well as an increased focus on Artificial Intelligence (AI) through dedicated training activities while significant progress was made in linking training to operational outcomes.
12. Recognises the continuous work of CEPOL to **strengthen fundamental rights as a horizontal topic in law enforcement training**. The focus on fundamental rights remained crucial, with increased attention to hate crimes and migration issues. CEPOL maintained a central focus on protecting fundamental rights, enhancing cooperation with DG JUST, and initiating the development of a hybrid **Diploma Course on Fundamental Rights**.
13. Recognises the advancement in training quality management as CEPOL introduced a revised evaluation system with six Training Quality Areas and a **Training Quality Index** this year, laying the groundwork for a future training policy.
14. Welcomes that CEPOL continued working on the enhancement and further development of **CEPOL Learning Management System LEEd** as CEPOL's online platform underwent a major upgrade with improved user management, security features, and a new interface with the website, ensuring improved user experience and security.
15. Commends, the continued success of the **exchange programme** which facilitated 131 exchanges and incorporated blended learning elements like pre-assignments and webinars to enhance professional quality and reach.
16. Welcomes the revamping of the research strategy as the **European Law Enforcement Research Bulletin** adopted a thematic focus for its paper editions and a more digital format, boosting collaboration through research data sharing. Positively notes that the CEPOL in cooperation with EIT took over the chairmanship of the European Union Agencies Network on Scientific Advice, **favouring the scientific and research debates**.
17. MB welcomes that, in the area of external cooperation, CEPOL continued to deliver impactful capacity-building projects with third countries in 2023, focusing on knowledge transfer, information sharing, and regional cooperation to address emerging EU security challenges. CEPOL continued to **export European know-how and foster training partnerships with Third Countries**, promoting international law enforcement cooperation instruments and expanding the availability of CEPOL training globally.
18. Notes with satisfaction that the Agency successfully maintained its certification in accordance with **ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System**, and further expanded the use of specialised **ISO 29993:2017 standard for learning services**, which continues to demonstrate that CEPOL ensures efficient operating of the quality system.

## Conclusion

The Management Board considers **CEPOL has effectively delivered the expected services in accordance with the 2023 Work Programme** and is satisfied by the overall performance of CEPOL as well as by the level and the adequacy of utilisation of the available human and financial resources.

Despite the limited financial and budget resources, CEPOL achieved excellent results, continuing to provide a substantial number of training activities and contributing to the e-learning options available to law enforcement officers in the European Union and beyond.

The Management Board expresses its appreciation to the Executive Director and his staff for their commitment and achievements in 2023.

The Management Board attaches this analysis and assessment to the CAAR for submission to the Court of Auditors, the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council by no later than 1 July, in accordance with Article 47(2) of the Financial Regulation applicable to CEPOL.

*For the Management Board*

*<< Signature on file>>*

.....

*Ms Pilar Muniesa Tomás*

*Chair of the Management Board*



## Executive Summary

### Agency in brief

CEPOL was initially founded by Council Decision 200/820/JHA of 22 December 2000 as a body financed directly by the Member States of the European Union and functioned as a network, by bringing together the national training institutes in the Member States, whose tasks include the training of senior police officers. CEPOL was later established as an agency of the European Union by Council Regulation No. 2005/681/JHA of 20 September 2005 (OJ L 256/63 of 1 October 2005).

Since 1 July 2016, the entry into force of its current legal mandate<sup>1</sup>, CEPOL's official name is 'The European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training'.

CEPOL is headed by an Executive Director, who is accountable to a Management Board. The Management Board is made up of representatives from EU Member States<sup>2</sup> and the EU Commission. The Chair of the Management Board is a representative of one of the three Member States that form the presidency of the Council of the EU and have jointly prepared the Council of the European Union's 18-month programme. The Management Board meets at least two times per year. In addition, CEPOL has dedicated National Units (CNU) in every Member State, which is the liaison body between CEPOL and its network of national training institutes for law enforcement officials in the Member States. CNU also support CEPOL's operations.

CEPOL contributes to a safer Europe by facilitating cooperation and knowledge sharing among law enforcement officials of the EU Member States and to some extent, from third countries, on issues stemming from EU priorities in the field of security; in particular, from the EU Policy Cycle on serious and organised crime. Moreover, CEPOL assesses training needs to address EU security priorities.

The agency's annual work programme is built with input from its network and other stakeholders, resulting in topical and focused activities designed to meet the needs of Member States in the priority areas of the EU internal security strategy.

CEPOL constantly strives to offer innovative and advanced training activities by integrating relevant developments in knowledge, research & technology, and by creating synergies through strengthened cooperation.

### CEPOL's Mission

CEPOL's mission is making Europe a safer place through law enforcement training and learning.

CEPOL facilitates the prevention and fight against serious and organised crime, terrorism and emerging security threats by facilitating and enhancing cross-border cooperation through vocational training.

CEPOL supports, develops, implements and coordinates standardised and specialised training in line with EU law enforcement training priorities.

### CEPOL's vision

CEPOL aspires to be the EU hub for law enforcement training to provide law enforcement officials with the skills they need to prevent and fight the crimes of today and tomorrow.

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EU) 2015/2219 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2015

<sup>2</sup> Denmark is not considered Member State in relation to CEPOL in accordance with Protocol 22 on the position of Denmark in respect of the area of freedom, security and justice, annexed to the TEU and to the TFEU.

## CEPOL's Quality Statement

To contribute to law enforcement cooperation through learning for the benefit of European citizens, CEPOL aims at consistently providing products and services that meet stakeholder expectations and the applicable regulatory requirements. CEPOL intends to provide to a variety of stakeholder groups with high quality training and learning opportunities, and is continuously learning from international good practices.

CEPOL is committed to implement internationally recognised management standards, such as ISO 9001:2015. CEPOL intends to ensure compliance with the applicable ISO 9001:2015 requirements and with the agency's Internal Control Standards.

CEPOL focuses on customers, stakeholders and other interested parties, provides leadership, engages and involves people, uses a process-based approach, encourages improvement, uses evidence-based decision-making, and manages effective stakeholder relationships.

Furthermore, CEPOL aims at enhancing services through the effective application of the agency's Management System, by continuously improving its processes, addressing risks and opportunities and ensuring the Management System is fit for purpose.



ISO 9001:2015 Certified Management System for  
CEPOL Onsite and Online Training Activities and  
Exchange Programme: Support, develop,  
implement and coordinate training for law  
enforcement officials.

## The Year at a glance

### Key conclusions on training and learning activities (executive summary of Part I)

Following the adoption of the CEPOL Strategy 2023-2027 in 2022, CEPOL faced a significant challenge in implementing the annual work programme in accordance with the previous multiannual strategy cycle while transitioning to the new priorities in 2023. CEPOL met this challenge by efficiently preparing for implementing activities to achieve the new strategic objectives and successfully delivering the capacity-building activities, as well as successfully transitioning to new strategic objectives and streamlining the organization for future efficiency.

CEPOL also conducted the mid-term review of the **EU-STNA 2022-2025 and identified the emerging training needs and reprioritised the thematic categories**. The EU-STNA together with the OTNAs carried out by the agency continues to form the fundamentals for the development of its training portfolio for law enforcement officials. To respond to the tasks set to CEPOL in the Council Conclusions on operational law enforcement cooperation, CEPOL launched a training needs analysis on regional training needs and existing bi and multilateral cooperation in the European Union. The agency also prepared a pilot instrument on addressing emerging training needs that will be tested in 2024.

In 2023 CEPOL continued to **refocus its training portfolio** on the EU **crime priorities**. Delivery of the training offer was significantly reprioritised in 2023 allowing the new initiatives to thrive. Diploma courses, development of serious and organised crime training activities, extended blended and train the trainers learning approaches were introduced to align 2024 training portfolio to the priorities outlined in the strategy.

CEPOL's Management Board guided improvements in training based on the evolving EMPACT mechanism. As coordinator of Common Horizontal Strategic Goal 6, CEPOL delivered training across all crime priorities, supported member state operations, and gained valuable insights into capacity building needs. This inspires them to explore a more systematic training approach to better equip EU law enforcement against serious and organized crime.

One of the major highlights of 2023 was the **EMPACT Driver's workshop** organised by CEPOL, which formulated policy recommendations for COSI.

Half of the onsite and online training focused on addressing operational and training gaps identified through EMPACT and relevant to EU policy priorities to tackle organised crime. Collaborating closely with external partners, notably JHA agencies, ensured full integration of training portfolios within the European response, minimizing duplication. CEPOL delivered crime-specific training across all EMPACT priorities, addressed core capability gaps, and conducted activities as regards EMPACT cooperation mechanism.

A key aspect of training implementation was the agency's significant progress in linking training to operational outcomes and adopting the latest training delivery methods. In the area of **Trafficking in Human Beings**, a comprehensive blended learning program comprising webinars, onsite courses, and online courses was successfully implemented. The first fully **virtual reality training course on drugs trafficking** had also been executed in the year.

In June 2023, CEPOL conducted a workshop focusing on **environmental crime**, which featured fully interactive sessions involving academics, placing participants at the forefront of the learning process. Attendees presented their own research findings and received feedback from both their peers and the academic experts facilitating the sessions. In October 2023, CEPOL held the first workshop for the **Heads of Law Enforcement training Institutes** resulting in an informal network of professionals, that is kept active. The same approach was applied to the workshop for **Heads of Riot Units** in November 2023 that inspired the establishment of a European Network on Crowd Control.

CEPOL remained the go-to source for training across all EU crime priorities, covering critical areas like high-risk networks, drug trafficking, human trafficking, environmental crimes, migrant smuggling, fraud, firearms, intellectual property, cybercrime, and child exploitation. Furthermore, CEPOL's commitment to advancing the utilization of **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** in law enforcement was prominently showcased in 2023 through the delivery of several webinars and the first ever dedicated workshop on AI.

In line with the CEPOL Strategy 2023-2027, CEPOL increasingly focused on providing exercises and simulation-based training courses in cross cutting areas such as financial investigations, criminal analysis, corruption, document fraud. Besides the provision of dedicated training activities these core capability gaps

or cross cutting fields received attention in all serious crimes courses. Asset identification, recovery and management techniques remained particularly relevant, given the importance of the “follow the money” approach.

The focus on protection of **fundamental rights** remained a central pillar in CEPOL training activities, even more so in the light of recent political developments on the world stage which continue to have an impact on security in the EU. While fundamental rights stay important as a horizontal topic in law enforcement training, this is especially relevant to the area of hate crime, and migration which have seen a rise since the conflict in the Near East. Cooperation with ethnic communities and other disciplines outside of law enforcement as well community policing must come to the fore in CEPOL’s training activities. Similarly, data protection remained a relevant topic. CEPOL has also strengthened its cooperation and alignment of activities with DG JUST this year and finally, CEPOL has started drafting a **concept for a hybrid Diploma Course on Fundamental Rights**, which will be outsourced in 2024.

The agency continued to provide training products on leadership practices and English language development as well as a self-paced online module for French language development, module hosted in partnership with the French Police.

Another crucial and ongoing aspect in CEPOL’s planning and implementation of training activities covering subjects beyond the EMPACT framework, are the **CEPOL Knowledge Centres on Counter-terrorism (CKC CT)** and on **Law Enforcement Cooperation, Information Exchange and Interoperability (CKC INT)** consisting of experts from the MS, the JHA Agencies and the Commission. They plan the portfolio for the coming year(s), draft the curricula and support the implementation of the training activities while at the same time doing a quality assessment. The results of the CKC training activities and webinars in 2023 were highly satisfying. Both topics have gained importance in the context of recent developments concerning international conflicts which have an impact on the safety of EU citizens in the EU. Cooperation with the Commission for the improvement of the Schengen Evaluation Training was strengthened, while SIRENE training was focused this year on the SIS Recast in online and onsite training as well as in webinars.

An important first step was made this year for the improvement of **CEPOL’s Training Quality Management**. While in 2024, a training policy will be drafted, this year the evaluation system was revised. Instead of only focusing on general satisfaction, CEPOL now measures six different Training Quality Assessment Areas (TQAAs) to obtain more information about the different elements that contribute to quality and effectiveness of training, and it has introduced a **Training Quality Index (TQI)** as an indicator for the quality of individual training activities.

The **Learning Management System (LEEd)** of CEPOL has to be moved in 2024 to a **new cloud service provider** as the previous contract is ending on 12<sup>th</sup> of March 2024. This massive undertaking required significant preparation and constant coordination throughout 2023. LEEd also had an **upgrade to a new major version** while at the same time the team made available important **enhancements** for the user management, mainly for the NLMs and Administrators. To ensure the effectiveness of this significant change, testing in the development environment was conducted continuously from April until July, culminating in the delivery of the scheduled upgrade. The upgrade was successfully completed according to the schedule without major issues.

To meet the growing requirements of CEPOL and external stakeholders, LEEd is continuously updating its core functionalities, and a **new digital workflow was introduced**, as well as an integrated and customised development for **CEPOL’s Exchange Programme**, that run successfully during 2023. The **Multitenancy concept**, that supports the integration of localised sites with separate user management and customisable structure still linked to the main CEPOL platform, was a major project running with three potential tenancies under training, that are expected to launch in 2024, while three additional ones are in the pending priority list. **Multifactor Authentication (MFA)** was introduced for all accounts beyond standard user roles that increases security for these privileged accounts and 2024 is expected to continue to roll out MFA for all users. A **new interface** was introduced between **LEEd and CEPOL’s website** reducing the workload on Communication and eLearning teams for the publication process of training activities.

On the training part, the **Moodle Workshop** ran successfully during February and the **CEPOL Digital Competencies Programme** closed its first phase, where training material was acquired and updated. During Q3 2023 we initiated the second phase of training of the CEPOL facilitators, expected to finalise in Q1 2024. Furthermore, a new approach on digital interactive self-paced training is under development with the aim to

enhance user experience and be more engaging for the participants. The documentation for this is currently under preparation with the procurement expected to be launched in Q1 2024.

Despite the various challenges mentioned, two **new online modules were delivered (EMPACT, JITs), and one is pending approval from EC (Schengen)**. These online modules were from 2022 training activities but were delayed due to the lengthy approval procedures.

**CEPOL Exchange Programme in 2023** successfully introduced the Exchange plug-in on LEEd to ease the application and matching process for participants. Under the General, CEPOL-EJTN Joint Exchange Programme and the Pilot Tutoring Exchange Programme, CEPOL successfully **implemented 131 exchanges** thereby having an implementation percentage of 109 % (versus **planned 120 exchanges**). Furthermore, to ensure its high professional quality and reachout, CEPOL introduced blended elements to the Exchange Programme with mandatory pre-assignment tasks and post-exchange international cascading webinars, so called Exchange-bites.

**The European Law Enforcement Research Bulletin** revamped its strategy in 2023. The new editorial board focused on thematic paper editions, while the general edition goes digital and gains publication frequency. Research data sharing via templates boosted collaboration, leading to a joint research report. The RSC members also provided information to feed into the dedicated LEEd research space that is currently under construction. Besides holding the chairmanship of EU-ANSA, CEPOL actively participated in the work of EU Innovation Hub and assessing the proposed Horizon projects.

In 2023 CEPOL not only managed the Call for 2024 Grants but in the end of the year advertised the Call to Establish Framework Partnerships to Implement CEPOL Training Activities and Learning Products in 2025-2028, thus setting the scene for future cooperation with law enforcement and training institutes of the Member States. The **Call for Proposals for Grant Agreements** for the Implementation of CEPOL Onsite Training Activities 2024 had been distributed to Framework Partners on 30 May 2023 with the application deadline until 17 September 2023. In the Call for Proposals CEPOL offered 35 onsite activities for grant applications mainly in the areas of EMPACT, law enforcement technologies, public order, fundamental rights, leadership and other skills. 25 Framework Partners submitted altogether 45 course applications for 27 activities. Out of the 8 uncovered courses, CEPOL proposed to implement 7 activities while the remaining activity, had to be withdrawn from the work programme without any replacement due to the lack of extra staff capacity.

In partnership with its network of training providers, following the guidance of the European Institutions (notably the European Commission), and in cooperation with other EU partners such as the European External Action Service, the European Security and Defence College and the EU JHA agencies, CEPOL has sought to export European know-how and foster fruitful training partnerships by progressively seeking to extend the **availability of CEPOL training to Third Countries**. In doing so, CEPOL has been promoting international law enforcement cooperation instruments, help widening networks of law enforcement specialists and transfer Third Countries professional experience to Europe.

Considering the limited CEPOL resources, **capacity-building with third countries** is primarily pursued via the implementation of projects. In 2020, CEPOL negotiated a EUR 23.5 million new projects portfolio, with an additional one in 2023 for EUR 5.5 million. As a result of this, CEPOL implements the following five projects for a combined amount of EUR 29 million:

- **Training and Operational Partnership against Organized Crime (TOPCOP)**
- **Enhancing Information Exchange and Criminal Justice Response to Terrorism in the Middle East and North Africa (CT INFLOW)**
- **Enhancing institutional capacity in the EU South Neighbourhood countries to fight organised crime (EUROMED Police)**
- **Partnership against Crime and Terrorism (WB PaCT).**
- **EU4Security Moldova**

These initiatives collectively represent the European Union's strategic commitment to enhancing security, fostering cooperation, and addressing emerging challenges in priority areas.

In its early strides, the **EU4Security** project was laying the groundwork to maintain sustainable and effective partnerships with the Moldovan authorities. The project implemented the first national assessment mission in late 2023 and will build on previous CEPOL actions in the country, enhancing their long-term impact.



Within the EaP region, **TOPCOP** continued to respond to the needs of Ukraine and the emerging threats of the Ukrainian war, delivering tailor-made capacity building activities. In addition, the project developed train the trainers' packages on firearms and drugs trafficking, cyber-crime and THB, ensuring the sustainability of its actions. A similar solution was established by the **EUROMED Police** project in the MENA region, with the creation of a train the trainers' course, curriculum and handbook on the topic of drug trafficking, and on e-learning methodology, facilitating knowledge cascading at national levels. Within the same region, **CT INFLOW** continues its cooperation with Libya for the creation of a fusion centre for information exchange, promoting the development of internal capacity for threat assessment and contributing to national counter terrorism efforts. The project also strives to promote information sharing among the MENA and EU partners via the EMISA (EU-MENA Information Sharing and Analysis) network, where the inclusion of judiciary actors allows for a concerted view of common counterterrorism issues.

In the Western Balkans, the **WB Pact** project promoted tangible deliverables via the establishment of the **EMPACT Support Network (ESN)** and the **Counter Terrorism Support Network (CTSN)** which serve as platforms for EU-Western Balkans countries to share best practices, transferring and cascading know-how. Recognising the imperative to connect regions and break down silos, ICU facilitated the cross-fertilization and integration of activities across regions by organising a joint ESN workshop with the involvement of EMPACT drivers and ESNs from the WB and EaP regions.

In its actions, all projects endeavoured to enhance not only the individual knowledge and skills of national officials, but also to provide the needed framework for the creation of institutional capacities, facilitating the ownership of the delivered results. In this vein, the **mentoring programme** played a crucial role, as a key element for sustained inter-institutional cooperation. The activities resulted the establishment of strong professional networks between law enforcement services of EU MSs (mentors) and the partner countries from the neighbourhood region. Furthermore, the programme led to the establishment of the memorandum of understanding between Tunisia and Italy.

Striving to align its actions with the EU policy cycle, the activities of TOPCOP, EUROMED Police, and WB PaCT became an integrated part of the **EMPACT activities** in 2023. To ensure appropriate bridging between EMPACT priorities and the implemented activities, CEPOL took the Action Leader role under the External Dimension Common Horizontal Strategic Goal (CHSG) 8 and contributed to the development of the Operational Action (OA) Plans, proposing OAs for the first time. ICU approach was rooted in collaboration which went beyond organisational silos by actively engaging the EMPACT family, Member States, and JHAAs in addressing the external dimensions of Cyber-attacks, Migrant Smuggling, CCH, IPCCGC, and Firearms. The capacity building activities were conducted in line with these pilot OAs, all with the overarching goal of uniting and bringing together the priorities of the EU and projects' partners.

## Key conclusions on management of human resources

CEPOL's establishment plan 2023 contains **33 Temporary Agents (TA)** of which **31** were in post by end 2023 (including ad-interim head of Unit, temporary replacing HoU from 16 July 2023).

In addition to the establishment plan, the Management Board approved for CEPOL regular activities **19 Contract Agents (CA)** of which 19 were in post by end 2023, including 1 post for maternity replacement and **5 SNE positions** of which **4** were in post by end 2023.

In addition, **37 CAs and 1 SNEs** were authorised for externally financed capacity building projects, of which **36 CAs** were in post by end of 2023 as well as 1 SNE.

**Staff fluctuation**, mainly due to the low correction coefficient applied to staff salaries and to relatively low grades, continues to have a significant impact on the organisation, including the opportunities and better career perspective in other agencies. Situation with regards to the correction coefficient has improved in 2023, however CEPOL's lack of higher graded TA posts, will continue to be a matter of risk since we cannot attract the best talent from the broadest possible geographical basis.

There were in total **9 resignations in 2023**, including 3 staff members, who were on unpaid leave.

Interim staff have been contracted to fill in for staff absences and to cope with peak periods. On 31 December 2023, there were 24 interims working for CEPOL. The areas covered by the interim staff are mainly those related to core business but also ICT, legal, procurement, external relations and management support. There were **7 trainees** employed on 31 December 2023.

For expert level positions dealing with specialised training in different operational areas, CEPOL uses SNEs.

In 2023 CEPOL published **12 new recruitment procedures** including 2 calls for SNE. CEPOL published vacancies attracted around 489 applications. For 2 SNE Calls, 38 nominations were received.

Regarding **geographical balance**, CEPOL continues to receive a significant number of applications from Hungarian citizens. This however does not impact on the quality of applications received and the Agency's ability to recruit suitable candidates. At the end of 2023, there were **36 Hungarian citizens** (39%) working for the agency, from a total of **91 staff** (TA, CA & SNE - CEPOL establishment plan and project related staff). There are 16 other nationalities present in CEPOL, which are relatively equally distributed. As of 31 December 2023, CEPOL only does not employ staff from Cyprus, Czech, Denmark, France, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Slovenia and Germany.

On **gender balance**, the ratio between man and women employed by CEPOL (excluding interims) is **53 females/45 males**. Women are well represented at all grades including at management level. The CEPOL management team (Executive Director, Heads of Departments and Heads of Units) on 31 December 2023 consists of **3 women and 3 men** (1 ad interim position due maternity leave).

Further details on management of human resources can be found in Part II, point 2.5.

## Key conclusions on management of financial resources

CEPOL, funded with €11 211 273 from the European Union's General Budget in 2023, successfully executed its budget in full, reaching 100% implementation for the second consecutive year, a notable achievement. The budget execution for 2022 was also exemplary at 99.17%, with minimal cancellations of payment appropriations at just 0.74% in 2023.

Throughout 2023, CEPOL maintained a modest carry forward of 13%, equivalent to €1 456 820, one of the lowest levels in the past decade. This carry forward will support payments in 2024 from the 2023 budget.

Additionally, CEPOL administers Union External Assistance funds to assist third countries in law enforcement policy areas, in alignment with Union priorities. In 2023, alongside ongoing projects, CEPOL initiated a new multi-annual agreement for the CEPOL EU4Security Moldova project, with a budget of €5 500 000 over 36 months, financed under the NDICI. This expansion demonstrates CEPOL's commitment to enhancing law enforcement capacities not only beyond the Union but also on the EU neighbourhood.

These accomplishments and financial stability position CEPOL favourably for sustained success and influence in the law enforcement and capacity-building sectors throughout 2024 and beyond.

For more detailed information on financial resource management, please refer to Part II, point 2.3.

## Key conclusions on internal control effectiveness

CEPOL conducts its operations in compliance with the applicable rules and regulations, working in an open and transparent manner, and meeting the expected high level of professional and ethical standards.

CEPOL implements the **Internal Control Framework (ICF)**, which is based on European Commission's ICF, as latest adopted by Management Board Decision 26/2018/MB.

In addition to the ICF, CEPOL is following the general **Quality Management System Standard ISO 9001:2015**, and the more specialised **ISO 29993:2017 standard for learning services** certification currently in place for 14 training courses and is subject to regular surveillance audits by an independent auditor. The latest certification audit was successfully passed in January 2023.

The Agency has systematically examined the observations and recommendations issued by internal auditors, the European Court of Auditors and the European Parliament. On this basis, it took actions as appropriate.

At the time of drafting the annual report, the European Court of Auditor's opinion on legality and regularity of transactions, as well as on reliability of annual accounts for the financial year 2023 is not available, however the so far preliminary findings do not indicate any potential material irregularities.

The agency has assessed the effectiveness of its key internal control systems during the reporting year and has concluded that the **internal control system is working effectively**. Further details regarding the assessment of the effectiveness of the internal control systems can be found in Part III.

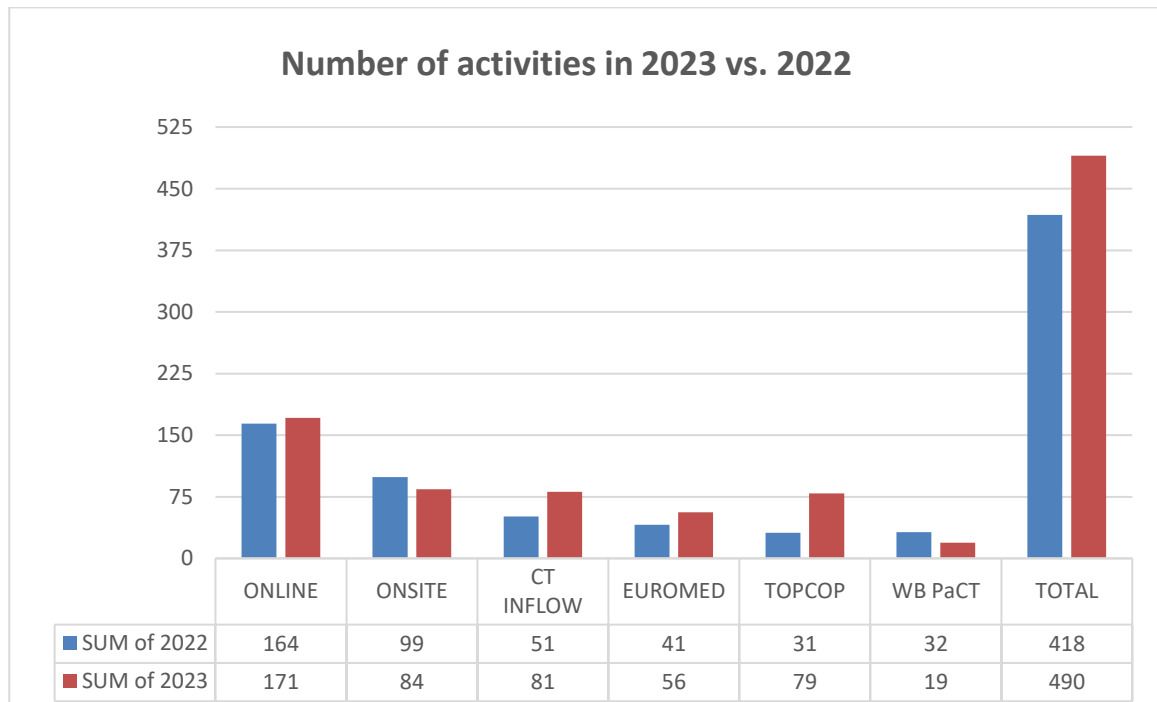
The Executive Director, in his capacity as Authorising Officer, has signed the Declaration of Assurance.



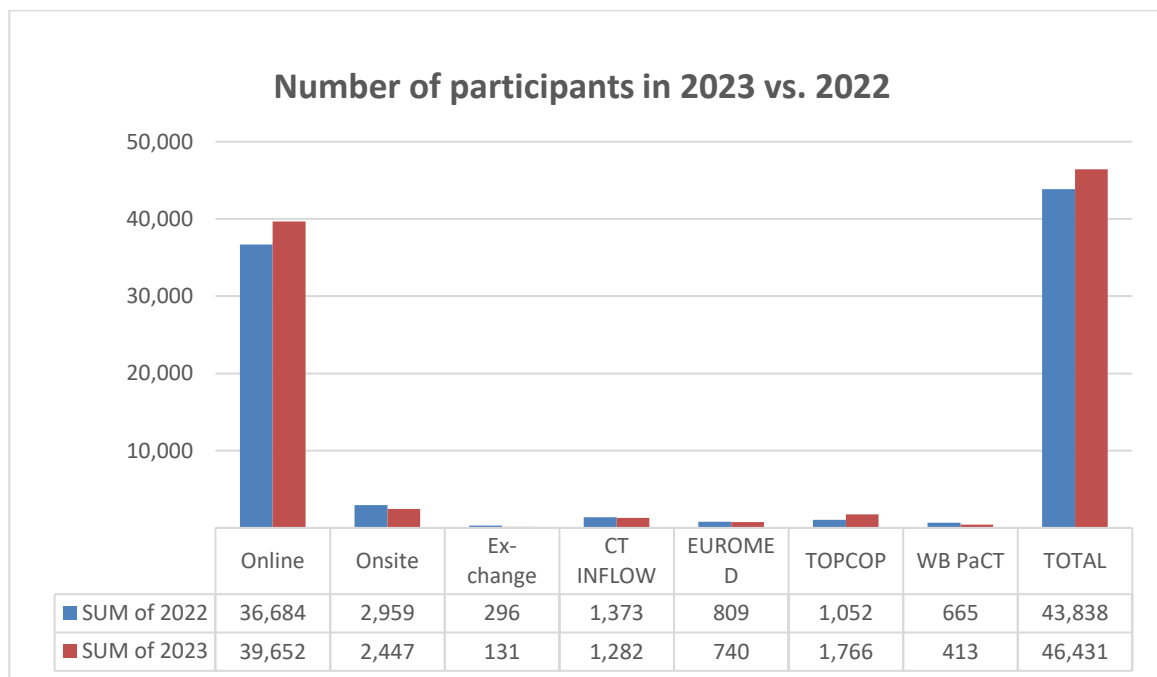
## Part I. Achievements of the year

### Year in figures

#### Number of activities implemented in 2023 vs 2022



#### Number of participants in 2023 vs 2022



## Overview of number of activities per thematic area

**Goal 2: CEPOL will further develop, support and implement training activities for the Law Enforcement Officials from the EU and, where applicable, from Third countries with particular emphasis on fundamental rights and crime prevention<sup>3</sup>**

Activity #	Activity name (thematic area)	On-site and online activities		Exchange Programme (CEP)	Total	
		Number of activities	Number of participants	Number of participants	Number of activities	Number of participants
2.1	Serious and Organised Crime	79+1 <sup>4</sup>	15 173+21 <sup>5</sup>	52	79	15 246 <sup>5</sup>
2.2	Cyber-related Crime	44	10 764	8	44	10 772
2.3	Counter-terrorism	22	2 375	10	22	2 385
2.4	Fundamental Rights and Data protection	19+1 <sup>5</sup>	2 063+126 <sup>8</sup>	0	20 <sup>8</sup>	2 189 <sup>8</sup>
2.5	Law enforcement cooperation, information exchange and interoperability	39+3 <sup>6</sup>	6 609+788 <sup>9</sup>	43	42 <sup>9</sup>	7 440 <sup>9</sup>
2.6	Leadership, Training and other skills	17	2 165	0	17	2 165
2.7	Higher Education and Research	1	25	0	1	25
2.8	Public Order and Prevention	9	711	0	9	711
2.9	Law Enforcement Techniques, Forensics and Specific Areas	16	904	18	16	922
2.10	Union missions (CSDP)	4	375	0	4	375
Total achieved in 2023		255 <sup>7</sup>	42 099	131	255 <sup>10</sup>	42 230 <sup>10</sup>

Total planned in SPD 2023	251	25 207	120	253 <sup>8</sup>	25 327 <sup>9</sup>
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<sup>3</sup> Fundamental rights and, where relevant, crime prevention will be addressed in all our thematic training activities and are therefore included horizontally in all the training activities that CEPOL implements.

<sup>4</sup> Including one carry forward onsite activity from 2022

<sup>5</sup> Including one carry forward webinar from 2022

<sup>6</sup> Including 3 carry forward webinars from 2022

<sup>7</sup> Including 5 carry forward activities and 30 planned ad-hoc webinars

<sup>8</sup> Including 34 planned ad-hoc webinars

<sup>9</sup> Including 4 080 participants in the ad hoc webinars

## Overview of CEPOL project activities 2023

### Goal 3: CEPOL will further build capacity of Third Countries by tailored made training services<sup>10</sup>

#### Activity 2.11 Prepare, design, implement & follow-up capacity building projects in 3<sup>rd</sup> Countries

Project	On-site activities (including courses, regional workshops, seminars, ...) <sup>11</sup>		Online activities (self-paced and instructor led, if applicable) <sup>12</sup>		Study visits (including Mentoring Programme)		Exchanges	Total	
	Number of activities	Number of participants	Number of activities	Number of participants	Number of activities (Study visit +Mentoring)	Number of participants (Study visit +Mentoring)	Number of exchanges	Number of activities	Number of participants
<b>2.11.1 CEPOL CT INFLOW project</b>	31	626	19	624	8 (3+5)	32 (21+11)	23	81	1282
<b>2.11.2 CEPOL EUROMED Police project<sup>13</sup></b>	17	261	11	424	18 (6+12) <sup>14</sup>	55 (31+24):	10	56	740
<b>2.11.3 CEPOL TOPCOP project</b>	20	370	15	1,369	8 (3+5) <sup>15</sup>	27 (17+10)	36	79	1766
<b>2.11.4 CEPOL WB PaCT project</b>	16	284	3	129				19	413
<b>Total achieved in 2023</b>	84	1 541	48	2 546	34	114	69	235	4 201
<b>Total planned SPD 2023</b>	77	1 248	22	565	9	57	48	156	1 870

## Participation in CEPOL activities 2014-2023

<sup>10</sup> The main budget of these activities financed based on Delegation and Agreements

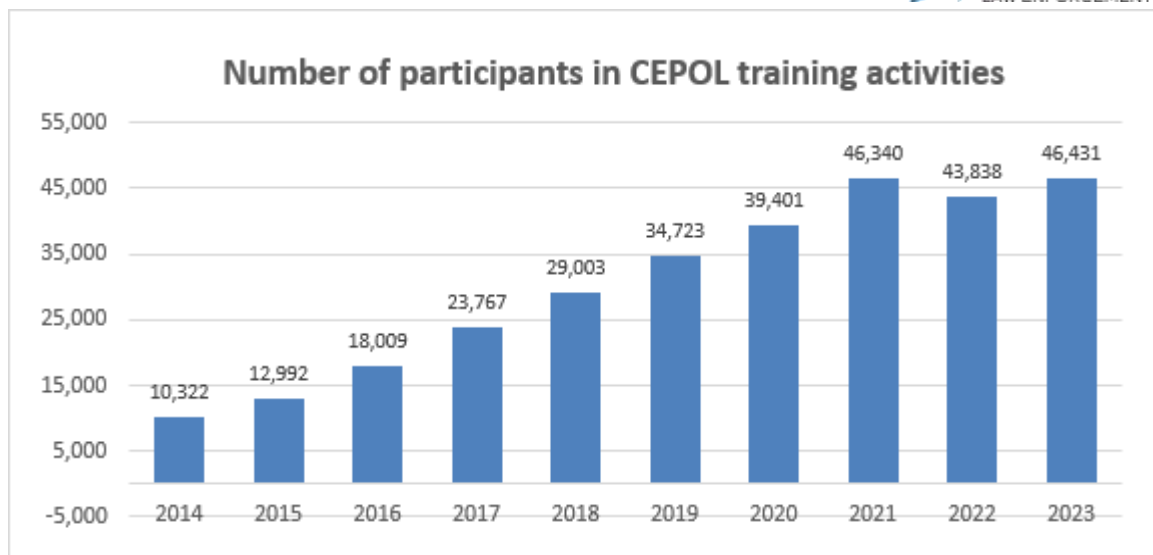
<sup>11</sup> Activities includes training courses, workshops, networking activities, working group and experts meetings.

<sup>12</sup> Activities includes webinars with and without learning objectives (such as kick-off webinars for online modules), online modules and courses, workshops, networking activities, working group and experts meetings.

<sup>13</sup> The project's planned figures may increase due to ongoing negotiations with the Contracting Authority on the Europol component.

<sup>14</sup> 5 mentoring programmes were finished, 7 mentoring programmes are continuing in year 2024.

<sup>15</sup> 2 mentoring programmes were finished, 3 mentoring on the field of National Firearms Focal Points with Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine is continuing in year 2024.



## Achievements per goals and objectives

Goal 1: CEPOL will plan and develop high quality training services focused on priority areas	
Quality Objectives <sup>16</sup>	
Key Performance Indicators	Target/Status
Number of training needs analyses/assessments completed <i>source of data: completion provided by the Analyst</i>	4/6
New developments in the area of quality assurance <sup>17</sup> <i>source of data: quality audit report</i>	1/1
Number of published articles in the European Law Enforcement Research Bulletin <i>source of data: completion provided by the Research &amp; Knowledge Management Officer</i>	15/30
Research & Science Conference organised biennially <i>source of data: completion provided by the Research &amp; Knowledge Management Officer</i>	1/N/A
Strategic objectives and areas	
1.1 Training Needs Analysis and coordination (Quality Objective)	
1.2 Ensure high quality training services by further development and upgrading of learning tools and methodologies (Quality Objective) <sup>18</sup>	
1.3 Integrate high-quality research results into education and training	

## Activity 1.1: Training needs analysis and coordination

In 2023, CEPOL completed the mid-term review of the EU-STNA 2022-2025 to ensure that new documents released after the finalisation of the EU-STNA report will also be taken into account. In practical terms, the due diligence checks on threats and training priorities looked at whether any new capability challenges and related EU level training needs have emerged.

Overall, the review confirms the validity of the EU-STNA 2022-2025. While the EU-STNA 2022-2025 was prepared during the COVID-19 pandemic, its implementation cycle coincided with the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The review conducted indicates that the core capability gaps remain relevant within the EU's current security framework. However, considering shifts in various crime domains, it proposes a slight adjustment to the prioritization and content of EU-level training priorities in thematic areas. Furthermore, the review findings strongly endorse the necessity, and even suggest an increased emphasis, on addressing the topic of high-risk criminal networks (HRCN) across training activities.

While cyberattacks, criminal finances, money laundering and asset recovery, and counterterrorism remain unchanged as the top three EU training priorities, 11 other topics changed their priority ranking. The review identified 16 new training needs related to ten thematic training areas and the need to adjust 38 existing training needs on 13 different topics. While the purpose of the mid-term review mechanism is not to disrupt

<sup>16</sup> Multi-annual objectives under this goal are marked as quality objectives in the context of ISO 9001:2015 certification, as it is directly related to the continuous improvement of CEPOL services

<sup>17</sup> Such as extending the current ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 29993:2017 certifications to new processes and training activities

<sup>18</sup> Including digitalisation of operations

the list of training needs included in the first EU-STNA 2022-2025 report, the review suggests new thematic additions on top of those already identified. Further training needs concern cyberattacks, counterterrorism, drug trafficking, migrant smuggling, trafficking in human beings, organised property crime, child sexual exploitation, border management and maritime security, and firearms trafficking.

Core capability gaps (all training activities for law enforcement across the EU should include elements concerning these horizontal aspects):

- Digital skills and use of new technologies
- High-risk criminal networks
- Financial investigations
- Cooperation, information exchange and interoperability
- Crime prevention
- Document fraud
- Forensics
- Fundamental rights and data protection

The list below presents the thematic clusters (in order of priority, as communicated by the Member States) in which EU-level training should be delivered to law enforcement officials in the last years of the EMPACT Cycle 2022-2025:

1. Cyber-attacks
2. Criminal finances, money laundering and asset recovery (Fraud, economic and financial crimes)
3. Counter-terrorism
4. Drug trafficking
5. Migrant smuggling
6. Trafficking in human beings
7. Online fraud schemes (Fraud, economic and financial crimes)
8. Organised property crime
9. Child sexual exploitation
10. Border management and maritime security
11. Firearms trafficking
12. Corruption
13. Excise fraud (Fraud, economic and financial crimes)
14. Environmental crime
15. Missing trader intra-community fraud (Fraud, economic and financial crimes)
16. Intellectual property crime, counterfeiting of goods and currencies (Fraud, economic and financial crimes)
17. External dimensions of European security
18. Other thematic areas

To gain further detailed understanding on training needs in priority areas, CEPOL conducts Operational Training Needs Analysis (OTNA). To define its 2024 training portfolio, in 2023 CEPOL completed OTNAs in the following thematic areas, in line with the strategic training priorities identified in the EU-STNA 2022-2025:

- Cyberattacks
- High-risk criminal networks
- Leadership and management
- Online fraud schemes

In 2023 CEPOL also contributed to the development of the updated Cybercrime Training Competency Framework, together with DG HOME, Europol and ECTEG, (document launched by Europol in December 2023). The OTNA on Cyberattacks, has been following the new methodology set forth by the Cybercrime Training Competency Framework, and this is set to support development of certified cybercrime and digital forensics courses by CEPOL in the near future.

CEPOL launched an ad-hoc training needs analysis in 2023 to assess training needs on bi-and multilateral cooperation and organised a workshop with the Management Board to discuss whether and how CEPOL shall step up in addressing regional training needs.

Furthermore, CEPOL concluded a feasibility study on Sectoral Qualifications Framework which concluded to take up this direction in assessing training needs and building the training portfolio.

In addition, in 2023, CEPOL launched 3 (three) OTNAs to be completed in 2024 in the areas of:

- Criminal finance, money laundering and asset recovery
- Migrant smuggling
- Trafficking in human beings.

The outcomes of these analyses will contribute to CEPOL's portfolio design between 2024 and 2026.

To ensure the highest quality of its training portfolio focusing on strategic priorities, CEPOL set up a task force on training portfolio reduction that enabled the design of the 2024 portfolio with the involvement of external stakeholders. The task force managed to reduce the portfolio by 6% adding 10 new activities and deleting 18 activities from the 2023 portfolio.

CEPOL set up the KPI task force to develop new KPIs for the final SDP 2024 and future draft SPD 2025 to ensure that performance indicators are linked to the Agency's contribution to the implementation of EU policies and to develop KPIs methodology to measure in SMARTer way the impact of CEPOL training on law enforcement.

Activity 1.1 Training needs assessment and coordination				
Objectives 2022	Results (expected outcomes)	Outputs	Indicators	Target vs. status
1.1.1. The scope of the <b>Operational Training Needs Analysis</b> <sup>19</sup> will be applied to thematic areas <b>Quality Objective</b>	<p>OTNA will provide reliable data of the performance gaps where CEPOL training is necessary, particularly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The OTNA will identify training interventions tailored for the MS needs and will constitute the basis for the CEPOL training portfolio.</li> <li>➤ Thematic areas will be analysed based on the Operational Training Needs Analysis methodology.</li> <li>➤ New OTNA methodology, adopted by CEPOL Management Board in 2020 will be applied.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The annual Operational Training Needs Analysis reports outlining the tactical level training requirements.</li> <li>➤ Reviewed EU-STNA priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ thematic areas will be assessed through the OTNA</li> </ul>	<p><u>Target:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Publish OTNAs 4</li> <li>➤ Complete EU-STNA mid-term review</li> </ul> <p><u>Status:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 4 OTNAs completed;</li> <li>➤ EU-STNA mid-term review completed;</li> <li>➤ regional TNA launched</li> </ul>
1.1.2 Conduct Feasibility study on Sectoral Qualification Framework (SQF)	The feasibility study will propose the way forward towards a SQF for LE to enable standardisation of the required learning (educational standards) and the identification of the knowledge, skill, responsibility and autonomy necessary to perform the related tasks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Developing specific sectoral qualification frameworks that are relevant for EU Law Enforcement Training Priorities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Feasibility study completed</li> </ul>	<p><u>Target:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Yes</li> </ul> <p><u>Status:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ completed</li> </ul>

<sup>19</sup> As per [MB Decision 32/2017/MB](#) of 15 November 2017

## Activity 1.2: Ensure high quality training services by further development and upgrading of learning tools and methods<sup>20</sup>

The ISO 9001:2015 certification was confirmed and continued proving that the agency has a robust quality management system, with well-designed and managed processes. In addition, CEPOL is following the more specialised ISO 29993:2017 and certification is currently in place for 14 training courses. The latest surveillance audit was successfully passed in January 2023. The external auditor confirmed that CEPOL demonstrates “good practice in design and implementation of new processes and methods”.

Both CKCs offer a wide range of relevant topics tailored to their areas of expertise, aligned with the EU-STNA and OTNAs. These serve as the foundation for their proposals for the annual training program, which undergo regular review and updating each year. The CKCs actively contribute to knowledge management by sharing expertise and exploring ways to enhance it further. They also serve as quality assessors for CKC training, ensuring continuous improvement through their feedback.

Activity 1.2 Ensure high quality training services by further development and upgrading of learning tools and methods				
Objectives 2022	Results (exp. outcomes)	Outputs	Indicators	Target vs. status
1.2.1 CEPOL will <b>further expand ISO certification</b> of its services, where relevant, depending on the budget availability and human resources <b>Quality Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Compliance with the <b>ISO 9001:2015</b> QMS as well as with requirements for learning services outside formal education according to the <b>ISO 29993:2017</b> standard for learning services, providing generic frame of reference for quality learning service.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Maintain ISO certifications</li> <li>➤ preparations for additional CEPOL courses certified in accordance with ISO 29993:2017 requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 29993:2017 for already certified courses maintained</li> <li>➤ additional courses certified to ISO 29993:2017</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <u>Target:</u> ISO 9001:2015 certification maintained</li> <li>➤ 10 courses certified to ISO 29993:2017</li> <li>➤ <u>Status:</u> Yes</li> <li>➤ Yes</li> </ul>
1.2.2 CEPOL will <b>further develop</b> its evaluation of training activities based on <b>Kirkpatrick' methodology</b> and requirement related to certification <b>Quality Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Not only the reaction but also the knowledge acquired through the training activity is measured</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Training activities are evaluated using Kirkpatrick's methodology</li> <li>➤ New evaluation methodology is developed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ CEPOL will implement entry and/or exit testing of participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <u>Target:</u> New evaluation methodology is developed</li> <li>➤ <u>Status:</u> In progress, with the introduction of Training Quality Index</li> </ul>
1.2.3 CEPOL will continue to <b>implement the CKC concept</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ CKC concept is applied</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Hybrid business model is fully operational</li> <li>➤ New CKC is proposed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ CEPOL will implement hybrid model for CKC activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <u>Target:</u> New CKC is proposed</li> <li>➤ <u>Status:</u> not achieved, 2 CKCs are maintained</li> </ul>
1.2.4 CEPOL will <b>ensure</b> the use of e-learning services <b>to better address its extended audiences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The European, crossborder dimension of law enforcement is further addressed by the enhanced access to CEPOL's online learning component;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Extended support to learning, training and research activities through continuous further development of LEEd</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ New/revised portfolio of online learning services available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <u>Target:</u> revised portfolio published on LEEd</li> <li>➤ <u>Status:</u> achieved with revised training portfolio by the Task Force</li> </ul>

<sup>20</sup> Legal basis: [Regulation \(EU\) 2015/2219](#) of the EP and of the Council on the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) [...], Art. 3(2), 4(2), 4(5)



## Activity 1.3: Integrate research results into education and training

CEPOL research saw a surge in 2023 with increased researcher engagement. Research and Science Correspondents (R&SC) co-authored a report aligned with EU-STNA/EMPACT priorities and provided valuable research consultations. CEPOL published over 30 articles in the Law Enforcement Research Bulletin, including a special edition, and is modernizing its format with online general editions and thematic printed issues. The new editorial board is in place, and access to e-books and e-journals for the LEED community significantly increased through procurement (over 100 titles available in 2024).

The CEPOL Research team has increased its focus on AI and other innovations, including by assessing the development of an AI research project, attending of high-level scientific AI and criminology conferences (AIAI, June 23 and Eurocrim, Sept 23 for e.g.) to interact and get the participants involved in CEPOL activities and boost the research actions.

The CEPOL Research Officer took over the chair of the European Union Agencies Network on Scientific Advice (EU-ANSA). The EU ANSA celebrated its 10 years of existence in November 2023 in Brussels, followed by its regular plenary session, where EIT-CEPOL took the chairmanship. The network set the scene of the 'science-policy' interface (demand vs supply) from the perspective of EU Institutions as well as Building on European science-for-policy ecosystems and interactions, especially enhancing the role of scientific advice constituted the inputs that then lead into concrete and robust policy making.

A total of 36 articles of the Law Enforcement Research Bulletin were published in 2023. A selection of the 24 best presentations have been published as contributions to the sixth Special Conference Edition of the Bulletin, published in 2023. The remaining 10 articles and productions were published in Nr. 22 of the Bulletin. New releases of specific e-book-titles were increased alongside a broad and updated range of e-journals and other e-book collections. However, there is still room for improvement to achieve the full potential.

Moreover, in 2023, CEPOL brought further the idea of the higher education in law enforcement, and in this perspective, it has established the Expert Group on Higher Education, which currently explores various alternative solutions to bring CEPOL closer to developing a new CEPOL Higher Education product. As a result of these discussions, two diploma courses started to be designed to be further granted as micro-credentials.

In 2023, the number of requests to CEPOL for engaging in or endorsing research proposals for the H2020 programme in the area of justice and security amounts to a total of eight proposals, furthermore, other requests have been also analysed, such the request to publish a book on German-English law enforcement terminology.

Activity 1.3 Integrate research results into education and training				
Objectives 2021	Results (exp. outcomes)	Outputs	Indicators	Target vs status



1.3.1 CEPOL will encourage and support the <b>inclusion of scientific knowledge to its training activities</b> and will disseminate relevant research findings	Access to research findings will support law enforcement personnel in strategic and tactical decision making; CEPOL research products will support further development of law enforcement training and education based on scientifically sound findings; Research results on fundamental rights in the context of law enforcement <sup>21</sup> will be considered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Services supporting research dissemination are provided: access to scientific journals and e-books</li> <li>➤ CEPOL will enhance visibility and accessibility on scientific knowledge resources on LEEd</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Measurable amount of downloads of online sources made available by CEPOL</li> <li>➤ delivery of a workshop for the heads of police academies</li> <li>➤ Redesign of access pages for ejournals and ebooks</li> </ul>	<u>Target:</u> ➤ 1500 <u>Status:</u> site visits 1183, downloads: 346  <u>Target:</u> ➤ 1 <u>Status:</u> ➤ achieved  <u>Target:</u> ➤ Yes  <u>Status:</u> ➤ The process of regularly sharing research articles on CEPOL social media was introduced
1.3.2 CEPOL will <b>contribute to</b> and encourage <b>the development of research relevant to law enforcement training activities</b> , with a special emphasis on its thematic priorities and e-learning/modern learning tools <sup>22</sup>	As defined in MB decision 11/2017/MB  CEPOL will, in line with the agency's limited capacity, support EU-funded research projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Requests for support of new research proposals submitted for EU-funding are assessed.</li> <li>➤ CEPOL participates in advisory boards of EU-funded research projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ CEPOL participates in EU-funded research project(s)</li> </ul>	<u>Target:</u> ➤ 3  <u>Status:</u> ➤ 3
1.3.3 CEPOL will function as a repository of law enforcement training curricula developed in the framework of EU security research		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ CEPOL will develop a methodology to map ongoing and completed EU security research projects that deliver training curricula for law enforcement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Methodology is initiated</li> </ul>	<u>Target:</u> ➤ Yes  <u>Status:</u> Achieved: data was gathered during heads of law enforcement training institutes workshop and from Research and Science correspondents during the year (resulting in a report).

**Goal 2: CEPOL will further coordinate, support and implement training activities for the Law Enforcement Officials from the EU and, where applicable, of Third countries with particular emphasis on fundamental rights and crime prevention<sup>23</sup>**

**Key Performance Indicators status**

**Target vs**

Completion/coverage rate of EMPACT priorities <i>source of data: internal reporting on completed training activities (SPD 2023 reporting tool), as reported by TRU.</i>	90%/100%
Number of active capacity building projects 4/5 <i>source of data: completion provided by ICU on the number of signed &amp; active agreements</i>	
Level of overall satisfaction with training activities per training type <i>source of data: internal reporting on completed training activities (SPD 2023 reporting tool) as reported by TRU &amp; ICU</i>	90%/96%
Number of activities (implemented vs. planned, number and %) <i>source of data: internal reporting on completed training activities (SPD 2023 reporting tool) as reported by TRU &amp; ICU</i>	90%/100%
Number of participants (actual vs. planned, number and %) <i>source of data: internal reporting on completed training activities (SPD 2023 reporting tool) as reported by TRU &amp; ICU</i>	90%/157%

<sup>21</sup> Such as FRA's EU Minorities and Discrimination surveys I & II

<sup>22</sup> As per [MB Decision 11/2017/MB](#) of 10 May 2017

<sup>23</sup> Fundamental rights, and where relevant crime prevention will be addressed in all our thematic trainings, and are therefore included horizontally in all the training activities that CEPOL implements.

### Strategic objectives and areas

Training activities in the area of:

- 2.1 **Serious and Organised Crime**
- 2.2 **Cyber-related Crime**
- 2.3 **Counter-terrorism**
- 2.4 **Fundamental Rights and Data Protection**
- 2.5 **Law enforcement cooperation, information exchange and interoperability<sup>24</sup>**
- 2.6 **Leadership, training and other skills**
- 2.7 **Higher Education and Research**
- 2.8 **Public Order and Prevention**
- 2.9 **LE Techniques, Forensics and Other Specific Areas**
- 2.10 **Union Missions (CSDP)**

Training activities to further support capacity-building of Third Countries through tailored made training services and international law enforcement cooperation projects<sup>25</sup>:

- 2.11 **Prepare, design, implement and follow-up capacity building projects in Third Countries**

## Activity 2.1 Training activities in the area of Serious and Organised Crime

In line with the expectations of the CEPOL Strategy and the guidance of the Management Board, CEPOL has further intensified its efforts to provide a comprehensive training portfolio on all areas of EMPACT – serious organised crime. Training and learning activities targeted critical training needs regarding money laundering and criminal finance, drugs trafficking, environmental crime, migrant smuggling, trafficking in human beings, excise and MTIC fraud, organised property crime, document fraud and firearms trafficking (cybercrime activities are described under point 2.2). CEPOL's robust involvement with the EMPACT mechanism ensured its training fully aligns with the EU's response to the priority crime threats. Training activities covered traditional and emerging criminal methods, with a focus on sharing the latest knowledge in intelligence, analysis, investigation, and international cooperation.

Training activities assisting the fight against serious and organised crime addressed a wide range of sub-topics such as dismantling of synthetic drug laboratories, smart border management, sophisticated techniques used for breaching document security standards, recruitment practices of human smuggling groups, old and new forms of carousel fraud, functioning of underground banking networks, new types of designer fuels, raiding tactics of illegal cigarette factories, sources of illegal weapons, programmes against sexual exploitation of THB victims. These are just a few examples of training topics that were covered by CEPOL. Illegal ivory trade, financial investigation of wildlife trafficking, illegal management of plastic waste, interviewing of child victims, the need of hard evidence in THB cases, new forms of synthetic drugs, opiate problem, the effective way of investigating mobile crime groups were also among training subjects.

Cyber aspects of serious crimes like open sources intelligence, cyber-patrolling and darknet investigations received strong attention and electronic evidence and similar horizontal elements have been naturally addressed across the spectrum of serious crime activities. The same is true to topics like the correct and harmonised use of EU cooperation tools such as European Arrest Warrant, European Investigation Order, European Freezing Order, the functioning of Joint Investigation Teams or the exploitation of Europol, Eurojust and European Public Prosecutor's Office services.

Financial investigation was treated as a cross-cutting subject given the fact that serious crimes are profit-oriented and criminal networks infiltration into legal economy poses a very serious threat to fair competition and economic freedom. The 'follow the money' approach, financial analysis, asset recovery techniques and tools therefore have been debated in all EMPACT trainings often in connection with big data analysis, undercover techniques and similar subjects. Moreover, in view of the profit-oriented nature of organised crime, special attention was paid on the integration of financial investigative techniques into serious crime

<sup>24</sup> Formerly EU Information Systems & Interoperability

<sup>25</sup> The main budget of these activities are financed based on respective Contribution Agreements

cases. In that regard a two-fold approach was followed: on the one hand criminal proceeds need to be identified and recovered, therefore effective asset recovery is essential in all crime areas. On the other hand, financial information provides essential intelligence in the structure and functioning of the criminal organisation, helping to identify key operational targets. The build-up of the criminal analysis portfolio (Operational Analysis course with Europol, Anti-Fraud Intelligence Analysis course with OLAF) enhanced this training strategy.

Training actions were designed to follow a practical oriented approach debating case studies, existing and emerging crime patterns, methods of international cooperation focusing mainly on investigative techniques and tools. The agency achieved a breakthrough in a number of areas regarding EMPACT training delivery:

- ✓ linking operational activities with EMPACT learning actions
- ✓ Implementing training activities that inspiring policy developments
- ✓ carrying out full learning programmes (combining onsite and online courses, series of webinars, testing)
- ✓ adoption of state-of-the-art delivery methods.

It is worth mentioning in this context that the CEPOL organised EMPACT Drivers' workshop concluded recommendations aiming at improving various functions of the EMPACT mechanism and it also featured in COSI discussions. In 2023 the Trafficking in Human Beings - Sexual Exploitation comprehensive learning programme and the first fully virtual training course "Combating Drug Production Crimes" were carried out. The preparation and debriefing of a THB operational action took place in LEEed connecting members of the operation, preparing them for the Joint Action Day directly contributing to achievement of operational results. Modern techniques of behaviour analysis were shared in a CEPOL drafted manual.

CEPOL's serious crime courses leverage experienced law enforcement officers from member states – middle managers and senior investigators – as trainers. This fact provided the primary appeal and the competitive advantage to CEPOL activities together with the active networking possibilities in onsite events. Experts were sharing the daily operational reality of law enforcement not academic or theoretical abstractions.

The training activities have been implemented with the strong and continuous support of the Member States' law enforcement authorities, Europol, Eurojust, Frontex, EJTN, European Commission, EUIPO, FRA, EUAA, INTERPOL and other relevant stakeholders. The agency – in line with its coordination responsibilities of EMPACT Strategic Goal 6 - put a strong emphasis on the coordination, harmonisation of EU training response in serious crimes, finding synergies with initiatives and projects of national, EU and international stakeholders.

CEPOL integrated fundamental rights and crime prevention into relevant training events. Corruption, from petty bribes to state capture by organized crime, was discussed with a focus on strengthening law enforcement integrity. Training also covered investigating procurement, healthcare, and sports corruption, along with setting up effective whistle-blower channels.

All in all, training activities addressed EU priorities on serious and organised crime were among the highest priority activities in the CEPOL training and learning portfolio. Half of the learning and training actions (30 % if cyber-enabled crime counted separately) concentrated directly on the established criminal priorities of the European Union (EMPACT) and significant part of the remaining part of training products had close links with serious crime investigation and enforcement (e.g. activities on law enforcement techniques, tools on EU cooperation, leadership practice).

Activity 2.1 Training activities in the area of Serious and Organised Crime					
Objectives 2022	Results (exp. outcomes)	Outputs	Indicators	Target status	vs
2.1.1 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>EMPACT 2022+ in general</b> for Law Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.	Having attended CEPOL learning and training activities, law enforcement officials will: ➢ Enhance their specialist skills and competencies to deal with	➢ On-site activities  ➢ Online self-paced activities (such as	➢ Number of activities (implemented vs. planned, number and %)  ➢ Number of participants (actual	<u>Planned:</u>	
2.1.2 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Trafficking of Human Beings</b> for Law Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.				➢ 70 activities	
2.1.3 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Drug Crimes</b> for Law Enforcement				➢ 6 379 participants	

Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.				
2.1.4 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Migrant Smuggling</b> for Law Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.		➤ Online instructor-led activities (such as webinars/online courses)	vs. planned, number and %)	➤ 90% satisfaction
2.1.5 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of Firearms Trafficking for Law Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.	➤ Reinforce their ability to deal with crosscutting elements in order to broaden the spectrum of investigations, particularly with regard to the financial aspects thereof, as well as the use of online tools, while upholding fundamental rights;	➤ Exchanges	➤ Satisfaction with CEPOL training in line with Kirkpatrick's methodology (%)	<u>Implemented:</u>
2.1.6 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Document Fraud</b> for Law Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.		➤ Blended training curricula		➤ 79 activities
2.1.7 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of Criminal Finances, Money Laundering and Asset Recovery for Law Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.				➤ 15 173 participants
2.1.8 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>MTIC (Missing Trader Intra-Community) Fraud</b> for Law Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.				➤ 94% satisfaction
2.1.9 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Excise Fraud</b> for Law Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.	➤ Be familiar with the latest report, researches and other key EU documents of the respective area (e.g. in the area of Drug Crimes the EMCDDA-Europol EU Drug Markets Report 2021).			
2.1.10 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Environmental Crime</b> for Law Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.				
2.1.11 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Intellectual Property Crime (IPC)</b> for Law Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.				
2.1.12 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of High Risk Criminal Networks for Law Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.				
2.1.13 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of Organised Property Crime for Law Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.				
2.1.14 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in <b>Other Serious and Organised Crime areas</b> for Law Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.				

## Activity 2.2 Training activities in the area of Cyber-related Crime

Understanding the fact that cybercrime continues to be the fastest evolving and expanding criminal area in serious organised and transnational crime, CEPOL continued to provide a robust cyber training portfolio through its CEPOL Cybercrime Academy. The learning actions were fully integrated in the EMPACT mechanism offering a wide range of products: onsite courses, online courses, series of webinars, self-paced modules, cyber-bites, e-lessons etc.

The dedicated training activities improved cybercrime knowledge and cyber capacities in Europe in the fields of the fight against Child Sexual Exploitation, Online Fraud Schemes and Cyber-Attacks. CEPOL activities

<sup>26</sup> Including Cyberbites

addressed key elements of open sources intelligence, darknet threats, electronic evidence and digital forensics but also updated cyber investigators on the new tools and cyber intelligence techniques available.

The two-week long Child Sexual Exploitation - Victim Identification training activity remained CEPOL flagship course concentrating on the demonstration of undercover investigation techniques and detailed analysis of image and video files. This course often leads to concrete operational outcomes such as the identification and through further investigative measures, the rescue of children from actual physical sexual abuse. Other activities focusing on the tracing and monitoring of child sex offenders, the crime patterns of sextortion of underage victims, the preservation and presentation of evidence in the most sensitive cases as well as the effective cooperation with international partners and the preservation of mental health of law enforcement investigators complemented this activity.

The detection of malicious files, malwares, the methodology of ransomware attacks, cryptographic protocols, encryption and decryption models were also discussed in the agency trainings together with other cyber forensics related subjects. Furthermore, the agency has been in advanced discussions with the Joint Research Center, DG HOME and ECTEG for the development of an agreement to handle a dedicated training platform for decryption training. The two-weeks long Digital Forensic Investigator course has been complemented with learning actions on mobile forensics as well as live data forensics.

Cross-cutting issues such as tracing of cryptocurrencies, blockchain analysis, open-sources intelligence methods, cross-border data disclosure received a growing attention not only in specialised cybercrime specialist targeted courses but in other technically less intensive activities.

In line with the CEPOL Strategy 2023 – 2027, the CEPOL Cybercrime Academy put a stronger emphasis on blended learning products and training of trainers in support of national level training delivery and cascading. These included train the trainers' courses on OSINT, Live Data Forensics and Advanced Windows File System forensics. These complex blended learning products provided the trainees with the skills to deliver advanced cyber topics and the materials necessary to replicate courses on national level, thus increasing the pool of specialised trainers in the field.

By recognizing the increased relevance and impact of Artificial Intelligence, on both crime and policing, CEPOL developed its first ever dedicated workshop on Artificial Intelligence. The workshop explored the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence in law enforcement practices, as well as its vulnerabilities for criminal misuse. Discussions centred on navigating evolving technologies while upholding data protection regulations and fundamental rights. A dedicated section explored the newly proposed AI EU regulation and its potential impact on law enforcement work. As AI is an increasingly relevant topic, CEPOL also delivered 2 webinars on Accountability principles for AI in the field of Internal Security and on the use of AI by law enforcement, with an aim to further enhance its AI portfolio in the coming years.

The CEPOL Cybercrime Academy took an important step in further professionalising cybercrime training across the EU by working together with Europol, the EU Commission and ECTEG in developing the latest Cybercrime Training Competency Framework. The document was published by Europol in December 2023, and it was also the basis for the development of the OTNA on Cyberattacks. Furthermore, the CEPOL Cybercrime Academy has conducted a mapping exercise of its current training portfolio to the Cybercrime Training Competency Framework with a view to identify areas for development of certified courses on digital forensics and cybercrime investigations.

In line with the Cybercrime Training Governance Model the agency continued to develop and implement relevant cyber training on the EU Level, in order to effectively and efficiently address the acute operational and strategic cyber skills gap. Cooperation with the European Commission, Europol EC3, ECTEG, EJTN, EUCTF and INTERPOL remained important and strong in 2023. The connection with Sirius, the integration of cybercrime related project results into training and daily police practice was considered imminent.

Activity 2.2 Training activities in the area of Cyber-related Crime				
Objectives 2022	Results (exp. outcomes)	Outputs	Indicators	Target status 2022 vs
2.2.1 CEPOL will implement training activities in the area of <b>Child Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if	Having attended CEPOL learning and training activities, law enforcement officials will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Identify CSE victims and describe the identification process;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ On-site activities</li> <li>➤ Online self-paced activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Number of activities (implemented vs. planned, number and %)</li> </ul>	<u>Planned:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 35 activities</li> </ul>



applicable, from Third countries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Carry out detailed analyses of image and video files and their exit data;</li> <li>➤ Manage child sex offenders;</li> <li>➤ Set up and assess undercover, financial and online investigations</li> <li>➤ Explain how international cooperation in the context of CSE investigations work.</li> <li>➤ Develop awareness raising campaigns as preventive measures where appropriate to identify the signs of potential child sexual abuse and risky online behaviour.</li> <li>➤ conduct interviews with potential victims of sexual abuse as well as potential perpetrators</li> </ul>	(such as online modules) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Online instructor-led activities (such as webinars/online courses)</li> <li>➤ Exchanges</li> <li>➤ Blended training curricula</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Number of participants (actual vs. planned, number and %)</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Satisfaction with CEPOL training in line with Kirkpatrick's methodology (%)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 2614 participants</li> <li>➤ 90% satisfaction</li> </ul> <p><u>Implemented:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 44 activities</li> <li>➤ 10 764 participants</li> <li>➤ 97% satisfaction</li> </ul>
2.2.2 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of Cyber-crime – Cyber-Attacks for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.	Having attended CEPOL learning and training activities, law enforcement officials will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Apply OSINT for cyber-investigation;</li> <li>➤ Describe and exploit available sources of open source intelligence;</li> <li>➤ Combine and cross-check information from open source with information collated from other sources, apply critical thinking during the evaluation of gained information.</li> </ul>			
2.2.3 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of Online Fraud Schemes <b>Online Fraud Schemes</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.	Having attended CEPOL learning and training activities, law enforcement officials will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ describe investigative methods on card skimming at an ATM or malware attack on a point of sales (POS) or online payment fraud;</li> <li>➤ Describe the use of internet and its tools to gather relevant information on cryptocurrencies during online investigations, especially using TOR-networks and Darkweb;</li> <li>➤ deploy the suitable tools and channels and authorities at the early stage of an investigation;</li> <li>➤ Identify prevention and repression initiatives applied in the EU concerning ATM attacks including the relevant cross-border cooperation.</li> </ul>			
2.2.4 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in <b>Other crime areas involving electronic evidence</b> for Law Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.				

## Activity 2.3 Training activities in the area of Counterterrorism

Counter-terrorism remains a crucial area for law enforcement training due to the evolving security landscape. Recent events in neighbouring countries and the Near East have heightened potential threats within the EU, making this training even more essential.

The 2023 CT training portfolio, as proposed by the CEPOL Knowledge Centre on Counter-terrorism (CKC CT), comprised of 6 onsite training activities, one of which was combined with a study visit, and a workshop related to the security threats stemming from Gaza conflict, which was implemented in 2024. In the online portfolio 3 online courses and 10 webinars were implemented.

The onsite training activities (which included 3 ISO29993-certified events) were implemented by the CKC Sector team hosted by the Czech Republic, France, the Netherlands, and Portugal, and one was implemented at the CEPOL HQ. The topics chosen by the CKC CT based on the EU-STNA covered the following topics: Prevention and Countering of Radicalisation Leading to Violent Extremism – and this was combined with a study visit to Europol and the Dutch Police; OSINT in Counter-terrorism - Train-the-Trainers (ISO 29993:2017); Dark-web and the Basics of Encryption in Counter-terrorism (ISO 29993:2017); Emerging Threats in Terrorism Financing (ISO 29993:2017); Foreign Terrorist Fighters and High Risk Individuals; CBRN-E.

The workshop on the EU Security Threats Stemming from the Hamas Attacks and the Gaza Crisis was planned and prepared in 2023, held on 08-09 February 2024 in the CEPOL HQ. It was attended and supported by participants and expert from the MS, the JHA Agencies and the Commission. The content was dedicated to Hate Crime/Speech and Counter-terrorism issues, with a focus on prevention, pursuit and prosecution. It provided a platform for exchanging information and good practice, for networking and for creating cooperation possibilities as well as for discussing a potential EU response. A report will be shared within the law enforcement community.

The online courses, which the CKC Sector implemented, included Radicalisation in Prisons and Detention Centres, Fake News and Disinformation Leading to Extremism and Prevention of Dissemination of Terrorist Content Online. The evaluation of the participants feedback showed excellent results for all activities in all 6 Training Quality Assessment Areas with a Training Quality Index (TQI) between 88% and 100%.

The 10 webinars on CT related issues, which were implemented in 2023, addressed issues like The Insider Threat; the role of FIU in counter-terrorism; the value of digital evidence and methods of lawful collection; threat assessment on the misuse of the non-profit sector (NGOs) for terrorist financing purposes; radicalisation of European children of foreign terrorist fighters and of high risk individuals in refugee camps; battlefield information exchange; The Critical Entities Resilience (CER) Directive and the Network and Information Security 2 (NIS 2) Directive; foreign terrorist fighters and high-risk individuals with a focus on specific conflict zones; The use of drones in counter-terrorism and in potential terrorist attacks; and finally, security by design – protection of public spaces from terrorist attacks.

The CKC Sector staff also attended several relevant external meetings on Counter-terrorism, advised and contributed to the training activities in the context of the external projects and installed a Virtual Training Centre on Drones on the LEEd.

Activity 2.3 Training activities in the area of Counter-terrorism				
Objectives 2023	Results (expected outcomes)	Outputs	Indicators	Target status vs
2.3.1 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Counter-terrorism</b> for Law Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.	<p>Having attended CEPOL learning and training activities, law enforcement personnel will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Increase the understanding of root causes and trends of radicalisation leading to violent extremism and/or terrorism, including in prisons, and exchange experience on combating, prevention and de-radicalisation methods while balancing the actions with the fundamental rights principles</li> <li>➢ Enhance specialist skills and competencies at strategic and tactical level to deal with cross border cooperation in counterterrorism actions while</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ On-site activities</li> <li>➢ Online self-paced activities (such as online modules)</li> <li>➢ Online instructor-led activities (such as webinars/online courses)</li> <li>➢ Exchanges</li> <li>➢ Blended training curricula</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Number of activities (implemented vs. planned, number and %)</li> <li>➢ Number of participants (actual vs. planned, number and %)</li> <li>➢ Satisfaction with CEPOL training in line with Kirkpatrick's methodology (%)</li> </ul>	<p><u>Planned:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ 23 activities</li> <li>➢ 2146 participants</li> <li>➢ 90% satisfaction</li> </ul> <p><u>Implemented:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ 22activities</li> <li>➢ 2 375 participants</li> <li>➢ 95% satisfaction</li> </ul>

	<p>balancing the actions with the fundamental rights principles;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Enhance investigators' capacity to deal with emerging financial products and services that are used to finance terrorism</li> <li>➤ Strengthen the knowledge in the area of the protection of public spaces, including in relation to threat posed by explosives and the chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials and agents.</li> <li>➤ Utilise existing instruments available to support counter-terrorism actions, particularly those established at Europol<sup>27</sup>;</li> <li>➤ Be familiar with the activities and operation of the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN), as well as the best practices and recommendations defined in relevant documents<sup>28</sup>.</li> </ul>			
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## Activity 2.4 Training activities in the area of Fundamental rights

The uncompromising respect for fundamental rights in law enforcement practice is a principle that is embraced all throughout the CEPOL training portfolio and remains reflected in all training curricula and activity programmes.

Similarly to previous years, an onsite training activity concentrated, also in 2023, on the reinforcement of ethical behaviour in police practice providing knowledge on contemporary practices on management, review and training techniques. The social and psychological motivations and biases as well as the specific investigative methods regarding hate crime were addressed by another dedicated onsite activity while a further training activity focused on the instruments of victim protection, victims' rights and the often sadly forgotten opportunities for assistance to victims and multidisciplinary cooperation. The protection of vulnerable groups and the particular requirements of handling relevant cases were also covered.

Besides the dedicated activities, fundamental rights aspects of daily law enforcement practice were discussed in crime-specific activities, typically along other closely linked subjects such as interviewing techniques, undercover operations, data protection, and police management. In 2023, **every single onsite training activity** contained post-course materials (selection of webinars) on fundamental rights topics: law enforcement and data protection, hate crime reporting, new technologies and fundamental rights. Additionally, links to training material on hate crime, racism, discrimination, domestic violence, victim protection, and gender issues were provided.

The onsite portfolio in 2023 was further complemented by a number of webinars implemented in close cooperation with the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) as well as international organisations and networks and NGOs outside of law enforcement. Among these are the Council of Europe, Children of Prisoners Europe (COPE), European LGBT Police Association (EGPA), the Israel Trauma and Resilience Centre (NATAL). The topics they touched upon included unlawful profiling, and police stops and predictive policing; unaccompanied children; data protection; several hate crime issues including specific minorities but also reporting and recording of hate crime; protection of labour exploitation victims; operational stress management for police officers, children of prisoners and, finally, anti-Semitism in the context of the Israel-Palestine conflict.

CEPOL has started regular meetings with DG JUST to discuss and align their activities. A result of these deliberations is a workshop on the impact of the Israel-Palestine conflict on EU Security, including anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim Hatred (Hate Crime/Speech), which will take place in 2024. In addition, CEPOL co-chairs the EU WG on Hate Crime Training and Capacity Building under the High-level Group on Hate Crime and Hate Speech and has proposed a Conference on Hate Crime and Hate Speech on its premises

<sup>27</sup> European Counter Terrorism Centre, including the Counter Terrorism Programme Board

<sup>28</sup> Such as the final report of the Commission Expert Group on Radicalisation (HLCEG-R)



in 2024, which will be combined with a joint meeting of the three EU Hate Crime working Groups; preparations for this event were initiated at the end of 2023.

In order to reach a higher number of law enforcement officials, CEPOL has decided to start a hybrid Diploma course on Fundamental Rights with micro-credentials, which can be used towards higher education programmes. The design and implementation of this course will be outsourced via procurement in 2024.

Activity 2.4 Training activities in the area of Fundamental Rights and Data Protection <sup>29</sup>					
Objectives 2023	Results (expected outcomes)	Outputs	Indicators	Target status	vs
<p>2.4.1 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Fundamental Rights and Management of Diversity</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.</p> <p>2.4.2 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Data Protection</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.</p> <p>2.4.3 CEPOL will implement training activities in the area of Victim Protection and Victims' Rights for Law Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.</p> <p>2.4.4 CEPOL will implement training activities in the area of Hate Crime, Racism and Discrimination for Law Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.</p> <p>2.4.5 CEPOL will implement training activities in the area of Gender Issues for Law Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.</p> <p>2.4.6 CEPOL will implement training activities in the area of Domestic Violence for Law Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.</p> <p>2.4.7 CEPOL will implement training activities in the area of Data Protection for Law Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.</p> <p>2.4.8 CEPOL will implement training activities in the area of Other Fundamental Rights related issues, where necessary, for Law</p>	<p>Through its training efforts, CEPOL supports the achievement of balanced law enforcement responses to security threats while respecting fundamental rights and police ethics, better identification, reporting, recording and prevention of fundamental rights violations, better support for victims and the provision of suitable actions, also to support the relevant EU Strategies in this area.</p> <p>Having attended CEPOL training and learning activities the participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Explain the relation between integrity, ethics and human rights;</li> <li>➤ Identify and analyse the risks and challenges of managing diversity within and outside law enforcement;</li> <li>➤ Engage in cooperation in the field in particular with regard to human rights protection and victim support;</li> <li>➤ Identify, report and record hate crime incidents;</li> <li>➤ Contribute to the development of a fair and human rights compliant LE culture.</li> <li>➤ Explain the impact and use of artificial intelligence with respect to policing mainstream child protection as well as child-sensitive approaches across the work of law enforcement officials</li> <li>➤ identify specific child rights concerns, in the context of the protection of particularly vulnerable groups and victims.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ On-site activities</li> <li>➤ Online self-paced activities (such as online modules)</li> <li>➤ Online instructor-led activities (such as webinars/online courses)</li> <li>➤ Exchanges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Number of activities (implemented vs. planned, number and %)</li> <li>➤ Number of participants (actual vs. planned, number and %)</li> <li>➤ Satisfaction with CEPOL training in line with Kirkpatrick's methodology (%)</li> </ul>	<p><u>Planned:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 7 activities</li> <li>➤ 630 participant</li> <li>➤ 90% satisfaction</li> </ul> <p><u>Implemented:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 19 activities</li> <li>➤ 2 063 participants</li> <li>➤ 95% satisfaction</li> </ul>	

<sup>29</sup> In addition to training activities falling under fundamental rights, will also be duly addressed in all CEPOL's thematic training activities delivered under other Activities of Goal 2: CEPOL will further develop, support and implement training activities for the Law Enforcement Officials from the EU and, where applicable, from Third countries with particular emphasis on fundamental rights and crime prevention

Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.				
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## Activity 2.5 Training activities in the area of Law Enforcement Cooperation, Information Exchange and Interoperability

The CKC Sector implemented six onsite training activities proposed by the CEPOL Knowledge Centre on Law Enforcement Cooperation, Information Exchange and Interoperability, which were hosted by Italy, Spain, the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia. In addition, 2 online courses took place and 17 webinars.

Cooperation with the Commission (DG Home) in the context of Schengen Evaluation and SIRENE training was considerably reinforced in 2023. A common curriculum on Schengen Evaluation training organised by Frontex and CEPOL was drafted. The SIRENE training activities were focused on the SIS Recast. While the basic SIRENE course was implemented online, the advanced SIRENE course was implemented in Spain as was a Train-the-Trainers Course on SIS Recast for Migration at the end of the year. Moreover, the two Schengen Evaluation activities were implemented in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. The Train-the-Trainers on EU Information Systems (ISO 29993:2017) was implemented onsite as well as Police Cooperation in Addressing a High Influx of Displaced Populations and Migrants. A further online course was Inter-Agency Law Enforcement Cooperation and Information Exchange within the EU. The activities reached TQIs between 88% and 100%.

The 17 webinars covered the following topics: the renewed SIS and the SIS Handbook, cooperation with EU JHA Agencies, with Third countries and with the UK, judicial cooperation and Inter-agency Judicial and Police Cooperation, EU cooperation tools and instruments, ETIAS, interoperability Art. 20 and 22, accountability principles for AI in the field of internal security, international cooperation tools for prevention and administrative proceedings, crime prevention targeting high-risk victim groups, and, finally, linking missing persons and unidentified human remains nationally and internationally.

The e-Lesson on fundamental rights safeguards in the context of interoperability was delayed due to editing, and the relevant webinar was postponed, therefore, to 2024.

The CKC Sector staff also attended relevant external meetings like the Heads of SIRENE and the Heads of SPOC meetings as well as the Interoperability Forum.

Activity 2.5 Training activities in the area of Law enforcement cooperation, information exchange and interoperability				
Objectives 2022	Results (expected outcomes)	Outputs	Indicators	Target status 2022 vs
2.5.1 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Schengen Information System (SIS)</b> <sup>30</sup> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.	By attending CEPOL learning and training activities, law enforcement officials will be able to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Strengthen professional networks</li> <li>➤ Explain the fundamental rights implications of EU information systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Number of activities (implemented vs. planned, number and %)</li> <li>➤ Number of participants (actual vs. planned, number and %)</li> <li>➤ Satisfaction with CEPOL training in line with Kirkpatrick's methodology (%)</li> </ul>	<u>Planned:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 39 activities</li> <li>➤ 5018 participants</li> </ul> <u>Implemented:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 39 activities</li> <li>➤ 6 609 participants</li> <li>➤ 95% satisfaction</li> </ul>
2.5.2 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Entry-Exit System</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Use the existing instruments and mechanisms, with a view to enhance their application and frequency of use.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ On-site activities</li> <li>➤ Online self-paced activities (such as online modules)</li> </ul>		
2.5.3 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Passenger Name Record (PNR)</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.	Specialist officials will be able to:			
2.5.4 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS)</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Explain in detail and apply the existing instruments, and cooperate on the basis of commonly applied</li> </ul>			
2.5.5 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Interoperability</b> for				

<sup>30</sup> training, which is related to the exchange of SIS supplementary information falls under the scope of training activities in the area of SIS

Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.	standards, fully in line with fundamental rights and freedoms; ➤ Apply new law enforcement investigation techniques with particular implications for Union level investigations; ➤ Strengthen professional networks; ➤ Explain the fundamental rights implications of EU information systems.			
2.5.6 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Intelligence Analysis</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.				
2.5.7 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>EU cooperation tools and mechanisms</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.				
2.5.8 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Joint Investigation Teams (JITs)</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.				
2.5.9 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Customs cooperation</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.				
2.5.10 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in <b>Other Law enforcement cooperation, information exchange and interoperability areas</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.				

## Activity 2.6 Training activities in the area of Leadership, Training and Other Skills

CEPOL further equipped the law enforcement training community by promoting interactive delivery methods and blended learning for diverse, multicultural settings. CEPOL provided a two-step “Train the Trainers” onsite course package, offered a specialised onsite workshop for organisers/managers of CEPOL and other international training activities. It is important to note that the “Train the Trainers” course package followed an exemplary blended learning methodology developed by a consortium of three Framework Partners from Greece, Austria and Portugal demonstrating that learning programmes can be implemented via grants as well. CEPOL also boosted online training for Member States by offering a workshop on Moodle, the learning management system behind LEEd. This workshop equipped activity managers with the knowledge to develop, design, and deliver courses online. Additionally, law enforcement trainers could benefit from a number of self-paced online modules on blended learning techniques and contemporary education theories.

In 2023 CEPOL continued to offer two online courses and three self-paced modules to help law enforcement officers improve their English (2 courses + 2 modules) or French (1 module) skills. These language programs targeted officers with key roles in international cooperation, equipping them for effective cross-border collaboration.

This year, CEPOL's Law Enforcement Leadership Practice shifted its focus from young talents to all practicing leaders. The seminar-style course tackled crucial topics like managing change, time, and resources; handling critical situations; and addressing motivation and communication issues. All discussions were framed within the EU security context and the growing need for leaders to understand complex transnational crime threats.

Following OTNA recommendations on digital skills development, our CEPOL Digital Competencies Certification project is now in Phase 2. We're training the first CEPOL facilitators, who will then be certified to ensure their expertise in delivering the program.

Activity 2.6 Training activities in the area of Leadership, Training and Other Skills				
Objectives 2022	Results (expected outcomes)	Outputs	Indicators	Target versus status
2.6.1 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Leadership</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.	By attending CEPOL learning and training activities in this area, future law enforcement leaders will be able to: ➤ manage law enforcement structures with a European cooperation perspective.	➤ On-site activities ➤ Online self-paced activities (such as online modules) ➤ Online instructor-led activities (such as	➤ <i>Number of activities (implemented vs. planned, number and %)</i> ➤ <i>Number of participants (actual vs. planned,</i>	<u>Planned:</u> ➤ 19 activities ➤ 2374 participants ➤ 90% satisfaction <u>Implemented:</u>
2.6.2 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Language Development</b>	By attending CEPOL learning and training activities in this area, future			

for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.	law enforcement leaders will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ cooperate at an international and specialist level while applying professional foreign language skills.</li> </ul>	webinars/online courses) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Exchanges</li> </ul>	number and %) ➤ Satisfaction with CEPOL training in line with Kirkpatrick's methodology (%)	➤ 17 activities ➤ 2 165 participants ➤ 95% satisfaction
2.6.3 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Train-the-Trainers</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.	Having attended CEPOL training and learning activities in this area, the participants will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Design training activities on the basis of good adult education practices;</li> <li>➤ Prepare effective learning environments for adult learners;</li> <li>➤ Recognise different approaches to learning;</li> <li>➤ Apply the basics of writing learning objectives.</li> </ul>			
2.6.4 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Training development, design and implementation</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.	Having attended CEPOL training and learning activities in this area, the participants will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Design CEPOL training activities on the basis of good adult education practices;</li> <li>➤ Prepare effective learning environments for adult learners;</li> <li>➤ Recognise different approaches to learning;</li> <li>➤ Prepare and implement CEPOL training activities in line with CEPOL's quality standards.</li> </ul>			

## Activity 2.7 Training activities in the area of Higher Education and Research

The workshop for Heads of Law Enforcement Training Institutes which aimed to reinforce CEPOL's role in coordination and supporting the cooperation with and between relevant stakeholders through networks, research and mobility programmes and higher education products among national training institutions. The program aligns with CEPOL's new strategy as an EU Law Enforcement Training Hub. It maps existing training institutions and programs across the EU, facilitates best practice exchange on accreditation and evaluation, explores EU-funded mobility schemes, and seeks potential collaborations to build a consortium. As a new initiative, the workshop employed diverse interactive methods to encourage discussions, experience sharing, and exploration of potential solutions alongside challenges.

Activity 2.7 Training activities in the area of Higher Education and Research				
Objectives 2022	Results (exp. outcomes)	Outputs	Indicators	Target status vs
2.7.1 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Research and Science</b> for Law Enforcement Officials of the EU, and, if applicable, of Third countries.	➤ CEPOL will have organised the next edition of the CEPOL Research & Science Conference, facilitating the exchange and networking opportunities for research scientists, law enforcement and educational professionals.	➤ On-site workshops (2 workshops under research and 1 under EMPACT environmental crime) ➤ Publication of the European Law Enforcement Research Bulletin	➤ Number of activities (implemented vs. planned, number and %) ➤ Number of participants (actual vs. planned, number and %) ➤ Number of articles published in the regular Bulletin	<u>Planned:</u> ➤ 3 workshops ➤ 102 participants ➤ 36 articles <u>Implemented:</u>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 3<sup>31</sup></li> <li>➤ 79 participants<sub>33</sub></li> <li>➤ 100% articles</li> </ul>
2.7.2 CEPOL will develop concept for <b>Higher Education</b> product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ CEPOL will deliver a complete concept for a higher education product</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Dedicated expert group meetings on higher education</li> <li>➤ Elaborated report on the new concept for higher education programme/product</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Concept delivered</i></li> </ul>	<u>Planned:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 3</li> </ul> <u>Implemented:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 2 onsite meetings</li> <li>➤ 1 online meeting</li> <li>➤ <i>Concept delivered</i></li> </ul>

## Activity 2.8 Training activities in the area of Public Order and Prevention

CEPOL provided specialized training on safety management for large-scale events, covering topics like cross-border intelligence exchange, risk assessment, tactical measures, and command practices. Security for major events like the 2024 European Championship and Olympics received dedicated focus. Additionally, public policing specialists shared their expertise in managing public order during emergencies.

CEPOL also addressed public violence prevention with a course on profiling potential lone attackers and demonstrating effective intervention methods. Case studies from recent assaults were analysed both from EU and third countries and attacks were simulated during the relevant course. Moreover, community policing-oriented training activities discussed the detection and prevention of juvenile delinquency from a multidisciplinary perspective emphasizing the need of collaboration of social, educational and police services. The course additionally examined preventive actions in the context of radicalization. The pre-activity for the course included cooperation with the Knowledge and Research Officer that shared with the participants scientific articles related to public order, as well as a webinar on fundamental rights and further reading materials. The learning process highlighted a learner-centred approach. It accommodated interactive, participatory, practical, experiential and managerial orientated principles.

In the domain of crime prevention CEPOL delivered two onsite activities. One course discussed the challenges of juvenile crime and domestic violence from its complex social perspective putting momentous emphasis on the cross-sector cooperation of various state and non-governmental services for effective prevention and management. Another activity demonstrated the role of community policing in fighting specific crimes such as anti-social behaviour, breach of order, youth criminality, clan-based crime groups. It also discussed how local officers can serve as intelligence channel between local community and police and facilitate early-warning based prevention programmes.

Activity 2.8 Training activities in the area of Public Order and Prevention				
Objectives 2022	Results (expected outcomes)	Outputs	Indicators	Target vs status

<sup>31</sup> Including also two activities reported under thematic areas 2.1 Serious and Organised Crime (Workshop on Environmental Crime) and 2.8 Public Order and Prevention (Workshop for Heads of Riot Units)



2.8.1 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Public Order</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.	By attending CEPOL learning and training activities, law enforcement officials will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Use existing instruments and mechanisms, with a view to enhance their application skills and frequency of use;</li> <li>➤ Describe in detail the existing instruments and cooperate on the basis of commonly applied standards fully in line with fundamental rights and freedoms;</li> <li>➤ Apply new methods in the area of collecting intelligence, investigation and other operational techniques;</li> <li>➤ Strengthen their professional networks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ On-site activities</li> <li>➤ Online instructor-led activities (such as webinars/online courses)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Number of activities (implemented vs. planned, number and %)</li> <li>➤ Number of participants (actual vs. planned, number and %)</li> <li>➤ Satisfaction with CEPOL training in line with Kirkpatrick's methodology (%)</li> </ul>	<u>Planned:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 6 activities</li> <li>➤ 170 participants</li> <li>➤ 90% satisfaction</li> </ul> <u>Implemented:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 9 activities</li> <li>➤ 711 participants</li> <li>➤ 95 % satisfaction</li> </ul>
2.8.2 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Crime Prevention</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.	Having attended CEPOL training and learning activities the participants will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ describe prevention activities and exchange practices on prevention;</li> <li>➤ explain roles and responsibilities of different actors involved in crime prevention;</li> <li>➤ involve relevant prevention professionals to support operational work.</li> </ul>			
2.8.3 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in <b>Other Public Order and Prevention areas</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.	By attending CEPOL learning and training activities, law enforcement officials will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Apply public order/prevention methods and tools, with a particular attention to risk analysis and assessment as well as inter-agency and international cooperation;</li> <li>➤ Strengthen their professional networks.</li> </ul>			

## Activity 2.9 Training activities in the area of Law Enforcement Techniques, Forensics and Other Specific Areas

CEPOL remained active in area of special operational techniques providing practical oriented training sessions on the correct application and improvement of technological and methodological policing solutions. These courses paid particular attention on adopting state of the art, contemporary technical solutions in line with fundamental rights.

In partnership with the European Network of Forensic Science Institutes (ENFSI) several forensic activities had been executed on the evolution of chemical and biological evidence and the developments in nanoscience, nanotechnology, artificial intelligence, biometrics. These activities handled as a key issue the clear and concise presentation of complex forensic examination results in the judiciary process. With the implementation of these activities together with the cyber- and drugs- and other forensic related courses CEPOL directly contributes to the implementation of the European Forensic Science Area (EFSA) 2.0 Action Plan that aims to shape the future of the forensic field by 2030.

In cooperation with Europol, dedicated courses have been delivered to exchange good practices on criminal analysis and witness protection with a focus on the issues of international relocation. The identification and the safe defusing of explosive devices as well as the correct handling of chemical, biological and radiological incidents had been debated in a specific course. Public security threats connected to the misuse of drones, together with the advantages of aerial control in law enforcement operations were also covered.

The portfolio was complemented by activities on undercover techniques, hostage negotiation and the management and first response to mass casualty incidents. The identification and handling of disasters' victims remains together with ante and post-mortem investigation processes, the set-up and command of DVI teams was targeted by the specific DVI course. This latter activity was directly relevant for war crime investigations as well.

In 2023 CEPOL had organised the first joint activity with OLAF on advanced financial analysis techniques. The course that demonstrated the multitude of analytical tools used for the detection and investigation of fraud enhancing the European anti-fraud architecture. Self-paced learning products on police cooperation tools (hot pursuit, mixed patrols) or criminal exploitation of social media, first response further strengthened this great variety of learning actions.

Activity 2.9 Training activities in the area of Law Enforcement Techniques, Forensics and Specific Areas					
Objectives 2022	Results (expected outcomes)	Outputs	Indicators	Target status	vs
2.9.1 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Forensics</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.	Having attended CEPOL training and learning activities the participants will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ apply current forensic practices and share experiences;</li> <li>➤ select relevant forensic service providers;</li> <li>➤ explain the possibilities and limitations of forensic science.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ On-site activities</li> <li>➤ Online self-paced activities (such as online modules)</li> <li>➤ Online instructor-led activities (such as webinars/online courses)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Number of activities (implemented vs. planned, number and %)</li> <li>➤ Number of participants (actual vs. planned, number and %)</li> <li>➤ Satisfaction with CEPOL training in line with Kirkpatrick's methodology (%)</li> </ul>	<u>Planned:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 16 activities</li> <li>➤ 1134 participants</li> <li>➤ 90% satisfaction</li> </ul> <u>Implemented:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 16 activities</li> <li>➤ 904 participants</li> <li>➤ 96% satisfaction</li> </ul>	
2.9.2 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Informant handling</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.	Having attended CEPOL training and learning activities the participants will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Apply different law enforcement techniques;</li> <li>➤ Exchange knowledge and practices on law enforcement procedures and instruments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Exchanges</li> </ul>			
2.9.3 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Witness protection</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.					
2.9.4 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in <b>Other Law Enforcement Techniques, and Other Specific Areas</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU, and, if applicable, from Third countries.					

## Activity 2.10 Training activities in the area of Union missions (CSDP)

Law enforcement officers to be deployed to an EU CSDP operation had been targeted by course on strategic advising methods and practice. The good practices of change management in host countries in view of effective cross-cultural communication and the Monitoring, Mentoring and Advising (MMA) concept had been shown through past successful and unsuccessful examples. The recent concepts of civilian CSDP compact and the EU mission in Armenia were discussed in webinars implemented in full cooperation with EEAS.

To prepare law enforcement officers for deployment, CEPOL offers a complex training module on community-oriented policing practices. This module has been completed as part of the European Commission Horizon 2020 Research & Innovation project, containing many examples from past EU and UN missions, several video interviews and series of high-quality digital learning materials.

Activity 2.10 Training activities in the area of Union missions (CSDP)				
Objectives 2022	Results (exp. outcomes)	Outputs	Indicators	Target vs status 2022
2.10.1 CEPOL will <b>implement</b> training activities in the area of <b>Union missions (CSDP)</b> for Law Enforcement Officials from the EU.	Having attended CEPOL training and learning activities the participants will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ apply the CSDP relevant legal framework;</li> <li>➤ operate in Union missions in line with their mandate and needs consistently following EU values and policies;</li> <li>➤ Explain the policy developments related to CSDP (e.g. mini-concepts).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ On-site activities</li> <li>➤ Online instructor-led activities (such as webinars/online courses)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Number of activities (implemented vs. planned, number and %)</li> <li>➤ Number of participants (actual vs. planned, number and %)</li> <li>➤ Satisfaction with CEPOL training in line with Kirkpatrick's methodology (%)</li> </ul>	<u>Planned:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 4 activities</li> <li>➤ 516 participants</li> <li>➤ 90% satisfaction</li> </ul> <u>Implemented:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 4 activities</li> <li>➤ 375 participants</li> <li>➤ 96% satisfaction</li> </ul>

## Activity 2.11 Prepare, design, implement and follow-up capacity building projects in Third Countries

CEPOL manages, in accordance with its legal basis, dedicated funds to assist third countries in building their capacities in relevant law enforcement policy areas, in line with the established priorities of the Union. In 2020, CEPOL has successfully negotiated a EUR 23.5 million project portfolio covering the entire spectrum of the EU Enlargement and Neighbourhood policy areas. An additional project (EU4Security Moldova) was launched in 2023.

### EU4Security Moldova

The project was initiated on 1 November 2023 and has a duration of 36 months (1 November 2023 – 31 October 2026). The project is funded through the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Moldova with a value of EUR 5.5 Mil. During its duration the project will improve the operational capacities of law enforcement personnel, focusing on the security/migration service in the Republic of Moldova. This initiative will strengthen national capabilities – human resources, institutions, operations, and societal awareness – to bolster stability and territorial integrity in a challenging regional security environment. A national assessment mission was implemented in December to identify and initiate collaborations with all relevant stakeholders.

### Enhancing Information Exchange and Criminal Justice Response to Terrorism in the Middle East and North Africa (CT INFLOW)

The project targets nine partners, (Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya Morocco, Tunisia, AFRIPOL, African Union, and League of Arab States) in the European Neighbourhood South region. Funded by the European Commission's Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI) with a value of EUR 7.5 Mil, it has a duration of 48 months (1 April 2020 – 31 March 2024).

As a part of the **regional networks enhancement component**, the EMISA (EU-MENA Information Sharing and Analysis) Network continues to promote the EU's external counterterrorism engagement. In 2023, the EMISA carried out expert meetings, webinars and seminars around the topics of Prison and Probation, FTF, Strategic Communications, PVE/CVE, Financing Terrorism, Nexus Terrorism Organised Crime, Cyber Threats, Critical Infrastructure, Hybrid Threats, Weapons and Explosives. These activities focused on enhancing regional efforts to combat terrorism across the EU and MENA. This initiative continues to foster a network of EU-MENA counterterrorism experts that share best practices to tackle evolving security threats. Similarly, the project continues to enhance institutional capacity for information exchange and harmonise regional practices via the Network Capacity Building meetings for single points of contact (SPoC) and counterterrorism analysts (ANASPoC), promoting joint situational awareness and operational cooperation. Similarly, the confidence building workshop for Libya and the workshop for the development of the Libyan fusion centre (DISE) addressed concrete national needs, contributing to further regional security.



These actions were complemented by the CT INFLOW's **training portfolio**, with the delivery of onsite and online activities, addressing not only the development of practical cooperation skills but also crucial trust building actions via the exchange and mentoring programmes.<sup>32</sup> From a practical standpoint, the mentoring programme has become a critical activity for facilitating international cooperation, as it enables long-term, sustained contact among individuals and their organisations.

Additionally, under the **criminal justice component**, the project carried out regional training activities and exchange visits. These, specifically aimed at judiciary actors from the MENA and EU, addressed the lack of existing frameworks for sharing judicial information. The programme supported the awareness of applicable legal mechanisms on counterterrorism, facilitating mutual legal assistance requests and boosting judicial cooperation. As a highlight of this component, the project developed a set of recommendations on the issue of victims' rights, with the intent to foster mutual cooperation on a national and international level and addressing the importance of capacity-building activities in this field. These recommendations assist the partner countries in aligning their national systems to international and EU good practises.

In all its actions, CT INFLOW takes into account emerging needs, ensuring that activities remain flexible enough to address ever-changing scenarios, while adhering to the initial OTNA results. As such, the training delivered addressed challenges brought by new technologies (AI, cryptocurrencies, drones), as well as issues related to battlefield evidence, foreign terrorist fighters, terrorism recruitment, links between terrorism and organised crime, border management, good governance and human rights. In addition, the criminal justice component developed mock trial activities, enhancing the participants' legal and practical knowledge in the working methods of different jurisdictions, thus fostering international cooperation for both judiciary and law enforcement actors.

Furthermore, and in response to identified needs, a number of activities involved both the participation of judiciary and law enforcement, seeking to enhance the complementarity of their efforts and amplify their joint capacities. Likewise, a number of actions were built on the expertise of EMISA members, ensuring a multifaceted view of common threats, improving regional ownership as a crucial element to effectively address terrorist threats.

Under the development of the **MENA Terrorism Trends and Situation (TE-SAT) Report**, the contractor finalised its activities, carrying out a number of support visits (2), study-visits (3), analyst workshops (2) and a joint simulation exercise (1). These sought to increase trust among the various partners, understanding the concept of TE-SAT and enabling information sharing for the development of the MENA TE-SAT Report. The Report is currently under approval by the Steering Committee. Finally, concerning the **Technical Supply to AFRIPOL**, the contract for delivery of services was signed in early 2023, with the final delivery of services planned for February 2024, due to delays with the necessary customs clearance. The delivery of technical IT equipment will support AFRIPOL in enhancing its information exchange capabilities with its member states, contributing to the fight against terrorism in the African territory.

### **Enhancing institutional capacity in the EU South Neighbourhood countries to fight organised crime (EUROMED Police)**

The project targets nine partners (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Tunisia, AFRIPOL, and League of Arab States) in the European Neighbourhood South (EUROMED follow-up). Funded by DG NEAR – ENI financial instrument with a value of EUR 7 Mil, and has a duration of 54 months (1 April 2020 – 30 September 2024), following the approval of a 6 months non-cost extension in 2023.

Under the **Enhancement of Regional Networks** component, the project continues to improve on existing networks furthering the technical and coordination skills of partners involved in capacity building and analysis tasks. As such, the 3rd Network Capacity Building (NCB) meeting discussed and validated a draft Training Manual on Analysis, intended to improve and harmonize analysis training via the application of a three layer learning path.

In this period, EUROMED Police carried out multiple **Training Actions** addressing the findings of the national and regional OTNA reports, and the partners emerging needs. In 2023, the project implemented online and onsite activities at regional, sub-regional, and national level, including study-visits. The trainings focused primarily on high-priority areas in line with EMPACT, namely: firearms and drugs trafficking, cybercrime, irregular migration, criminal financing, money laundering and asset recovery, analysis, document fraud,

<sup>32</sup> The number of exchange and mentoring visits are cumulated under category „Exchange” in the “Overview of CEPOL project activities 2023 Goal 3: CEPOL will further build capacity of Third Countries by tailored made training services” session.

counterfeited goods, and online trade of illicit goods. The EUROMED Knowledge, hosted within the LEED platform, continues to support these actions.

Likewise, the project continued to ensure the implementation of the exchange and mentoring activities. The **Mentoring Programme**, with its 12 mentor-mentee pairs, particularly, resulted in outstanding cooperation between the partners and the EU. As examples, it 1) enabled the participation of one MENA mentee in an EMPACT expert meeting; 2) facilitated the development of a Memorandum of Understanding between institutions in Italy and Tunisia and 3) enabled the implementation of a cybercrime training by the EU mentor in Palestine. These results clearly show the importance of trust building and networking for enhancing knowledge sharing and interinstitutional cooperation between the EU and the partners. As a part of the programme, the project organised mentoring review meeting with the involvement of CT INFLOW and TOPCOP project partners. The activity led to an in-depth exploration of best practices, facilitated insightful lessons learned from both mentors and mentees, and strategically formulated future steps for the program's advancement.

Additionally, EUROMED Police guaranteed the sustainability of its actions, providing partners with the materials and methodology to facilitate knowledge cascading at national level. As such, the project developed a new concept in the **Train the trainers** course on drug trafficking, creating a curriculum and handbook (consisting of a trainer manual and study units), jointly with EU and MENA experts. Using the developed content, the course was implemented and translated into Arabic, making it easily accessible for use in national courses. Similarly, EUROMED Police provided training on basic and advanced e-learning techniques and methodology which were used by the partners to successfully administrate several internal courses.

Considering the **EUROMED Police Threat Assessment (EMTA)**, and based on the priority crime areas previously established, Europol continued to implement capacity-building activities, including study-visits, ANASPoC training and EMTA support activities, ensuring the transfer of analytical knowledge to project partners. The EMTA Report will enhance intelligence-based operational planning in the MENA region.

Overall, the project (together with the TOPCOP and WB PaCT projects) was successful in integrating the **EMPACT community** in the delivery of activities, while also implementing the EMPACT Operational Actions on capacity-building activities under the Common Horizontal Strategic Goal 8 (OAPs 2023 on cyber-attacks, trafficking of drugs, migrant smuggling, and illicit trafficking of firearms). This represents a first step towards a coordinated operational approach, and further expands the external dimension of EMPACT, enhancing cooperation in with partners in addressing common challenges in the field of organised crime.

Importantly, EUROMED Police has already started preparations for its next phase, initiating a new OTNA cycle with implementation of sub-regional and bilateral meetings. The results will be the basis of the training portfolio for the EUROMED Police VI project.

### **Training and Operational Partnership Against Organised Crime (TOPCOP) project**

The project targets six partners (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) in the Eastern Partnership (EaP) region (cooperation with Belarus has been suspended until further notice in line with council conclusions on Belarus adopted on 12 October 2020). Funded by DG NEAR – ENI financial instrument with a value of EUR 6 Mil, it has a duration of 48 months (1 July 2020 – 30 June 2024).

The project continues to facilitate a regional dimension to information exchange, placing emphasis on a cooperative process via its **Regional Networks** component. In 2023, TOPCOP implemented a Network Capacity Building activity, with a view to strengthen existing networks and improve cooperation with JHA Agencies, in the context of combatting transnational organised crime. The project further developed the EMPACT Support Network – ESN. The goals of the ESN are: to raise awareness of partner countries about the EMPACT framework, improve regional response capacity by connecting partner countries and the EMPACT community, gather and disseminate best practices, create stronger connection between the operational level and the training level, and ensure law enforcement cooperation with other neighbourhood regions. The first joint ESN workshop with EaP and WB partners and EMPACT drivers, enabling inter-regional collaboration and the exchange of best practices is an example of such cross-regional cooperation.

In this vein, the project also ensured cooperation with the WB Pact and EUROMED Police project in the development of the Behaviour Analysis Handbook, while continuing to implement onsite and online **Training actions**, as well as several exchange activities and concluding mentoring programmes. These addressed topics such as firearms, crime scene investigation, drug trafficking, money laundering, migrant smuggling, cyber-attacks and intellectual property rights. The project proved timely in addressing some security challenges arising from the conflict in Ukraine. As such, activities aimed at Ukrainian and Moldovan

authorities addressed war crime investigations, hybrid threats and CBRN defence concerning the processing of international crimes and serious human rights violations and the use of related-evidence. In close cooperation with EUAM Ukraine, the project made available various online modules to the Ukrainian law enforcement services in Ukrainian language (e.g. forensic awareness for first responders, cybercrime and THB modules). Similarly, the project responded proactively to other requests for support and recommendations. As examples, TOPCOP conducted 1) a regional course focusing on advanced e-learning techniques and an evaluation of the Georgian MIA's Academy learning management system; 2) promoted a study visit on cross-border cooperation in drug trafficking in Romania; 3) developed train-the-trainer sessions in Moldova (firearms) and Georgia (drugs), ensuring the sustainability of the actions facilitating the cascading of knowledge at national level and 4) offered opportunities through its **mentoring programme** for the partners from Moldova and Georgia and Ukraine to create and consolidate the National Firearms Focal Points in line with the EU requirements.

Furthermore, the project continues to ensure coordination with EU Policy/ EMPACT mechanism and in this respect, it implemented activities in the areas of intellectual property rights crime, trafficking and distribution of cannabis, cocaine and heroin, migrant smuggling, firearms trafficking and cyber-attacks, which consolidated cooperation between partners, EU MSs and JHA Agencies.

Lastly, as an implementing partner, Europol continues to support the EaP countries in developing the **regional threat assessment** (EaP SOCTA) by organising study visits (3), drafting sessions (2) and one ANASPOC workshop (1).

### **Western Balkans project against Crime and Terrorism (CEPOL WB PaCT)**

The project targets six partners (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo<sup>\*33</sup>, Montenegro, North-Macedonia, Serbia) in the Western Balkans (WB) region. Funded by DG NEAR – IPAll financial instrument with a value of EUR 3 Mil, it has a duration of 36 months (19 October 2020 – 18 October 2023).

As part of the regional **networks enhancement** component, the project organised several onsite and online activities under the EMPACT Support Network (ESN) and the Counter-Terrorism Support Network (CTSN), aiming to develop sustainable partnerships and mechanisms for dialogue, consistent with the OTNA and EMPACT methodologies. The project developed also a Behavioural Analysis Handbook, jointly with the EUROMED Police and TOPCOP projects, intended to increase the effectiveness of criminal investigations, while ensuring due respect to dignity and non-discrimination principles. The project developed a coordination initiative for the Justice and Home Affairs agencies implementing EU funded capacity building activities in the Western Balkans region (JHAA WB6) remained operational. This platform increases coordination among the participating agencies, EU Delegations and Commission and enhance the relevance of training provided through projects.

In the continued development of the ESN, the implemented workshops resulted in a series of recommendations aimed at strengthening the network, namely 1) the introduction of EMPACT awareness sessions for high-level officials, enhancing the position of national EMPACT coordinators (NEC) and the development of support material in local languages facilitating the cascading of information; 2) development of EMPACT mechanism guidelines for participation, planning, communication, reporting and knowledge sharing; 3) discuss multiagency approach for EMPACT Joint Action Days (JAD); 4) organise thematic workshops for development of operational cooperation and exchange of information regarding EMPACT priorities. Similarly, the CTSN workshops continued to guarantee the sustainability of the action, by supporting curricula development on counter terrorism financing, facilitating knowledge cascading at national level. The final workshop analysed case studies and best practices, concluding with the drafting of a set of guidelines to be presented at the Strategic Cooperation Forum.

Responding to the OTNA's identification of drugs as a regional priority, the project conducted a workshop on designing and developing a curriculum for drug training. Finally, the latest revision of the **Emerging Needs Training** portfolio indicated a high-demand for digital skills training. Accordingly, the project developed and delivered a regional course on this topic covering topics of electronic evidence, and open-source intelligence/investigations. In addition, the project held multiple onsite and online activities based on the previously assessed needs and covering topics of terrorism radicalisation, OSINT, foreign terrorist fighters,

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<sup>33</sup> \*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence

migrant smuggling, international investigations and serious organised crime, and intellectual property violations related to the use of pesticides.

In 2023, a total of **4 436** law enforcement officials outside EU took part in **235** CEPOL capacity building activities on the field of organised crime and counter terrorism, under the umbrella of external cooperation projects.

Activity 2.11 Prepare, design, implement and follow-up capacity building projects in Third Countries				
Objectives 2023	Results (exp. outcomes)	Outp.	Indicators	Target vs status
2.11.1 <b>Implementation of the</b> Enhancing Information Exchange and Criminal Justice Responses to Terrorism in the Middle East and North Africa (CEPOL CT INFLOW) project	<p>Specific Outcome 1: The institutional capacity on information exchange of selected countries is reinforced enabling the swift and user-friendly exchange of terrorism-related information whilst maintaining a high standard of data protection.</p> <p>Specific Outcome 2: The institutional capacity to develop criminal justice systems that can cooperate regionally and internationally to fight terrorism is reinforced.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Residential Courses</li> <li>➤ E-Learning</li> <li>➤ CEPOL Exchange Programme</li> <li>➤ Peer-to-peer Review Programme</li> <li>➤ Strategic Cooperation Forum</li> <li>➤ Analyst's network emerging needs workshops</li> <li>➤ MENA TE-SAT support activities</li> <li>➤ Targeted delivery of technical equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Number of activities</li> <li>➤ Number of participants</li> <li>➤ Satisfaction with CEPOL training (%)</li> <li>➤ Number of Equipment delivered (actual vs. planned, number and %)</li> </ul>	<p><u>Planned</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 31 activities</li> <li>➤ 594 participants</li> <li>➤ 90% satisfaction</li> </ul> <p><u>Implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 81 activities</li> <li>➤ 1282 participants</li> <li>➤ 99% satisfaction</li> </ul>
2.11.2 <b>Implementation of the</b> Enhancing operational capacities of the South Partner Countries to fight serious and organised crime and strengthening strategic cooperation (CEPOL EUROMED Police) project	<p>Specific Outcome 1: To strengthen strategic cooperation between national law enforcement authorities in SPCs, as well as between SPCs and EU agencies</p> <p>Specific Outcome 2: To enhance the operational capacities of the Southern Partnership Countries to fight serious and organised crime</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Enhanced cooperation in SPC countries and between SPC and EU</li> <li>➤ Enhanced evidence-based identification of priority crime areas in the Southern Neighbourhood region</li> <li>➤ Training needs based on a joint permanent platform for SCP countries and EU MS Law Enforcement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Number of activities</li> <li>➤ Number of participants</li> <li>➤ Satisfaction with CEPOL training (%)</li> </ul>	<p><u>Planned</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 40 activities</li> <li>➤ 521 participants</li> <li>➤ 90% satisfaction</li> </ul> <p><u>Implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 56 activities</li> <li>➤ 740 participants</li> <li>➤ 97% satisfaction</li> </ul>
2.11.3 <b>Implementation of the</b> Training and Operational Partnership against Organised Crime (CEPOL TOPCOP) project	<p>Specific Outcome 1: To strengthen strategic and operational cooperation between law enforcement authorities in the EaP countries, EU MS and EU agencies.</p> <p>Specific Outcome 2: To build the capacity of relevant law enforcement services of the partner countries to fight against organised</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Enhanced operational and strategic cooperation with the EU Member States and Agencies including through EMPACT;</li> <li>➤ Enhanced capacities of law enforcement authorities in Eastern Partner countries to fight against organised and serious international crime on the basis of the needs analysis conducted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Number of activities (implemented vs. planned, number and %)</li> <li>➤ Number of participants (actual vs. planned, number and %)</li> <li>➤ Satisfaction with CEPOL training (%)</li> </ul>	<p><u>Planned</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 61 activities</li> <li>➤ 450 participants</li> <li>➤ 90% satisfaction</li> </ul> <p><u>Implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 79 activities</li> <li>➤ 1766 participants</li> <li>➤ 100% satisfaction</li> </ul>



	and serious international crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Enhanced intelligence-based operational planning in the countries of the Eastern Neighbourhood region.</li> </ul>		
2.11.4 <b>Implementation of the Western Balkans Project against Crime and Terrorism (WB PaCT) project</b>	<p>Specific Outcome 1: Enhanced knowledge of Western Balkans authorities of concrete law enforcement performance gaps that limit cooperation within the region and with the EU</p> <p>Specific Outcome 2: Improved capability and response by Western Balkans authorities to performance gaps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Regional assessment of law enforcement training needs conducted</li> <li>➤ Recommendations to beneficiary-level training systems provided</li> <li>➤ Course curricula for beneficiary-level training developed</li> <li>➤ Specific training delivered in agreement with Contracting Authority.</li> <li>➤ Increased knowledge of EU Policy Cycle and EMPACT priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Number of activities (implemented vs. planned, number and %)</li> <li>➤ Number of participants (actual vs. planned, number and %)</li> <li>➤ Satisfaction with CEPOL training (%)</li> </ul>	<p><u>Planned</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 10 activities</li> <li>➤ 305 participants</li> <li>➤ 85% satisfaction</li> </ul> <p><u>Implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 19 activities</li> <li>➤ 413 participants</li> <li>➤ 98% satisfaction</li> </ul>
2.11.5 <b>EU4Security Moldova</b>	Improve human capital and operational capacities for the delivery of professional security/migration service for the benefit of all residents in Moldova to the highest EU standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Continuous training programme developed</li> <li>➤ Initial training programme developed</li> <li>➤ E-learning platform is delivered</li> <li>➤ Cyber-lab is set up, procedures/policies are in place</li> <li>➤ NFFP is equipped, procedures/policies are in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Number of activities (implemented vs. planned, number and %)</li> <li>➤ Number of participants (actual vs. planned, number and %)</li> <li>➤ Satisfaction with CEPOL training (%)</li> <li>➤ Number of Equipment delivered (actual vs. planned, number and %)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Figures will be established during the inception phase in 2024</li> </ul>

## Part II. (a) Management

**Goal 3: CEPOL will be an efficient organisation promoting continuous improvement in order to meet stakeholders' satisfaction and regulatory requirements**

### Key Performance Indicators

Timely submission of the draft Single Programming Document and the Work Programme (target: Yes, Status: Yes)

*source of data: completion provided by the Planning Officer*

% of completion of the activities of the Work Programme (target: 90% status 100%)

*source of data: internal reporting on completed Work Programme activities (SPD 2023 reporting tool); 100% (253 planned vs 255 implemented training activities financed from annual subsidy)*

% of audit recommendations closed in accordance with the agreed action plan (target: 90% status 30%)

*source of data: internal/external audit follow-up reports and desk reviews; in progress, deadline by end 2024*

Quality Management System certified to be line with ISO 9001:2015 (target: Yes status: Yes)

*source of data: quality audit report*

Number of critical/very important audit recommendations addressed on time (target: 80% status: N/A, no critical/very important audit recommendations)

*source of data: internal/external audit follow-up reports and desk reviews*

Budget (N-1) payments (target: 95% status: 99%)

*source of data: report of completion provided by the Finance Sector (End of year Budget Implementation Report)*

Staff engagement (target: 60%, status based on latest survey run in 2023: 53%)

*source of data: staff engagement survey*

### Strategic objectives and areas

#### 5.1 Governance, Administration and Stakeholder Relations

##### Performance Indicators:

- Budget implementation (target: 99% for commitment, and 95% of payment – over 2 years); status 2022 budget final implementation rate: 99%; status 2023 budget: 100% for commitment, and 87% of payment, and 13% carried over to 2023)
- Average recruitment time<sup>34</sup> (target: <105 days; status 2023: 108 days)
- Implementation of the internal control plan; target: 100% status 2023: 60% (internal control officer temporary re-allocated to planning due to vacancy)
- Use of digital workflow; target: 100%, status 2023: 100% (Use of electronic payment workflow –done; Use of electronic budgeting system – done; use of PPMT – public procurement tool-done)
- Communications Sub-Strategy and Action Plan successfully implemented; status 2023: Yes; updating the communication strategy is to be achieved in the longer term under the auspices of the new overall CEPOL strategy 2023-2027
- External Relations Sub-Strategy and Action Plan successfully implemented; status 2023: in progress (JHAAN Presidency implemented successfully, the rest is being implemented in the longer term as part of the new overall CEPOL strategy 2023-2027)

## 2.1 Management Board

The Management Board held its 10th Onsite MB meeting between 25 and 26 May in Budapest and its 11th Onsite MB meeting between 23 and 24 November in Aranjuez. The MB has adopted ten decisions within the Swedish Presidency (6 via oral proceedings and 4 via written procedure), and eight decisions during the Spanish Presidency (3 via oral proceedings and 5 via written procedure).

The MB decisions are publicly available on the CEPOL website <https://www.cepola.europa.eu/about/key-documents?document=18>

The SPD 2023-2025, originally approved by MB decision 16/2022/MB on 22 November 2022, has been amended by 16/2023/MB on 05 October 2023. The amendment was made to indicate the addition of the new

<sup>34</sup> Days between opening the vacancy in the System and the decision of the AA not more than 105 days.



external project EU4Security Moldova, a non-cost extension for the external projects EUROMED Police and WB PaCT, the organizational chart for the year 2023 and to make some other clarifications.

In 2023, 56 Executive Director Decisions were taken, covering diverse topics, including awarding training hosting, establishing committees, amending financial rules, and calling for partnerships and training proposals.

## 2.1.1 Other aspects

### Stakeholder relations

Following CEPOL chairmanship of the JHAA network, chairmanship was passed to EUAA with its priorities continuing to deal with digitalization, business continuity and the implementation of the principles of the EU Green Deal, investigating inter-agency synergies and close communication among the Trio and with the entire Network. In 2023 a new staff exchange programme was launched to facilitate exchange of best practices and experiences within the JHAA network with active participation of CEPOL, that hosted staff members from Frontex, EUAA, eu-LISA.

On 30 October it was signed and entered into force the Working Arrangement with the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) allowing for exchange of expertise and access to CEPOL resources. Furthermore, preparation of working arrangements with Egypt, Moldova, Albania and discussions with CSDP missions (Ukraine, Iraq) were initiated and will continue during 2024.

Annual cooperation agreements with the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), Europol and eu-LISA were signed allowing for the implementation of joint activities and sharing experience and expertise.

### Liaison Office in Brussels

On 24 April, the Liaison Officer organised a CEPOL Annual Event for JHA Counsellors in Brussels with 32 participants from EU Member States and the European Commission. This is a key event to engage with permanent representations and allow for a quick and direct contact with policy makers.

The Liaison Officer continued to schedule regular visits within the European Commission, Council and Parliament. Furthermore, regular meetings with diplomatic representations and international organisations were implemented. All these events allowed for more visibility for CEPOL and promotion of the key strengths of the agency. On 28 September, the Liaison Officer accompanied the Executive Director to the EU-CLASI that was followed by bilateral meetings with Argentina, Bolivia and Chile and approached by Panama CLASI Presidency, Colombia, Ecuador, Brazil and Costa Rica. The Latin American and Caribbean countries showed outstanding interest in cooperation with CEPOL to receive support to fight organised criminal groups.

### Communications

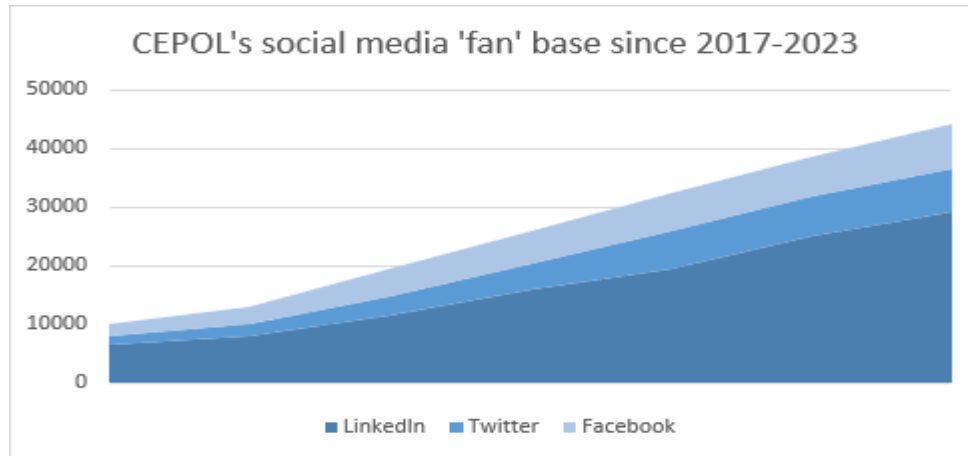
In line with CEPOL's strategy 2023-2027, the Communications team focused last year on leveraging its digital platforms, refining some communication products and spearheading several communication campaigns to effectively connect with our stakeholders and amplify CEPOL's mission. The website and social media platforms served as vital touchpoints for engaging with our audiences and disseminating information.

CEPOL's website traffic has seen a significant increase in recent years. However, unique visitors showed a noticeable decline in 2023. This coincided with the launch of our new website in late 2022, which adheres to stricter GDPR cookie consent requirements. As a result, our current web traffic data likely reflects only users who have opted in to online tracking through our analytics system.

Despite this, our web analytics revealed some interesting navigation and conversion patterns worth highlighting. The website attracted 88,000 visits. More than half of them consisted of returning visitors, indicating a strong user loyalty and satisfaction with the website's content. This was also confirmed by the high number of registered downloads - more than 12,000 last year- suggesting that visitors found valuable content and resources on the website, leading them to engage further downloading those files or materials. The growth in the number of downloads can be attributed to the team's concerted efforts in optimising content for search engines, enhancing the user experience, and regularly updating the web with relevant and compelling information. In more than 24,000 occasions, our website was a steppingstone for users to log in to LEED, in seek of further information about a training activity or the registration to it.

In 2023, CEPOL continued to demonstrate strong performance across its social media platforms, with LinkedIn growing into the Agency's most relevant social network. The attainment of 5,300 new followers only

in LinkedIn demonstrates CEPOL's strong presence in the law enforcement professional networking sphere. With more than 1,200 posts uploaded to Facebook, X (Twitter) and LinkedIn, the activity in networks aimed at maintaining visibility and engaging with the audience. CEPOL's content was displayed to social media users more than 1.29 million times last year, reflecting CEPOL's exposure and reach through its social media platforms, while our activity registered almost 74 000 positive reactions by users.



The development of communication products remained a cornerstone of the Communications Office's activities. Throughout the year, the team produced a wide range of publications including key reference materials such as the CEPOL's Training Catalogue 2023, downloaded by web users more than 1,600 times, along with four Operational Training Needs Analysis (OTNA) reports. Additionally, the communications team developed and dispatched four quarterly informative newsletters to partners, to which more than 1,000 stakeholders subscribed throughout the year.

To explain the relevance of strategic training planning and foster a sense of collective responsibility among EU law enforcement training providers, the Communications Office launched the "Stay ahead of crime" campaign. By harnessing the power of storytelling, visual design and data visualisation, the dynamic webpage produced within the frame of this campaign enhanced the audience's comprehension about the CEPOL's Strategic Training Needs Assessment.

<https://www.cepola.europa.eu/stay-ahead-of-crime/>



In addition to this campaign, the team conducted other awareness-raising campaigns about CEPOL's new blended learning method. Furthermore, three other onsite training activities were streamlined into a workshop-based format.

Last year, the team continued to raise awareness about CEPOL's strategic partnerships with law enforcement training authorities outside the EU. Social media has grown into an instrumental vehicle for driving awareness and disseminating the results achieved by the Agency through capacity-building actions with non-EU countries. In 2023, the promotional content shared through social media achieved more than 225 000 impressions, receiving more than 4 600 responses by stakeholders interested in CEPOL's international cooperation activities. In addition, the Communications Office supported the creation of 13 newsletters tailored to resonate with each project's audience segment and the production of EUROMED Police's and TOPCOP's official project videos, which accumulated more than 3,800 views in Youtube by the end of the reporting period.

When it comes to event communication, the team secured the presence of CEPOL at the Europe's Day in Budapest, with the active involvement of 650 participants at CEPOL's booth, as at the EU Security Research Event 2023 hosted in Brussels by the European Commission's Directorate General for Home Affairs and attended by over 1,000 stakeholders.

## 2.2 Major developments

### Law Enforcement Education (LEEd) platform and further digitalisation

Following the launch of [Learning platform, LEEd](#), on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020, the system is constantly being updated and adapted to cover the requirements and expectations of the law enforcement community.

In 2023, the first digitalised process on exchange (the Exchange Plugin) launched and ran successfully from January till end of the year. During this period, the respective team gathered important new functionalities and adjustments that will be integrated as new enhancements under development for year 2024. The event management plugin has also been in continuous development in 2023, the team having successfully delivered the visual/ working template of the new process that will be developed in 2024.

In July 2023, LEEd had a major upgrade while further new features were added for administrators of the LMS and main stakeholders (NLMs). This upgrade was a big project for the team as it needed a lot of testing and securing so that the new upgrade will not affect any of the content. The main priority for this year was also the server migration that needed a lot of dedication and continuous work and cooperation with the new and old providers of server infrastructure and platform, to be able to establish the new infrastructure, test and deliver the new servers by latest 12<sup>th</sup> of March 2024.

Furthermore, CEPOL worked on the establishment of national LEEd sub-platforms (tenancies) for the independent use of the MS and other stakeholders if requested. In the first month of 2022, following the ICU projects tenancy, Slovakia launched the first National LEEd Platform (NLP) in the native language covering the national needs.

During 2023, CEPOL worked with 3 new tenancies to be launched in 2024 (two from member states and one from EU Agency) and there are additionally three in pending status, to start the training following the launch of the previous ones. Additionally, CEPOL offered a tenancy for the Innovation hub to be able to work cooperatively.

### CEPOL Knowledge Centre on Counter-terrorism (CKC CT)

The CKC CT had two online meetings on 09 February and 28 September 2023 and one onsite meeting on 25-26 April 2023 at the CEPOL HQ. The CKC CT members came from 8 MS (CZ, EE, ES, IT, NL, PL, PT, SE) and representatives from the European Commission, the Council of the EU, Europol and Frontex. At the end of the year, the co-chair resigned and was replaced by the Spanish members.

The CKC members reviewed and revised the portfolio for 2024 as well as the curricula based on the outcomes of the EU-STNA, and they also attended the training activities held in 2023 for quality assurance purposes.

Moreover, discussions were held in what way the mandate of the CKCs could be extended in the direction of knowledge management and higher education; these discussions will be continued in 2024.

Staff members from the ICU (International Cooperation Unit) continued to attend the CKC meetings.

### CEPOL Knowledge Centre on International Law Enforcement Cooperation, Information Exchange and Interoperability (CKC INT)

The CKC INT consists of eight experts from the MS (CY, DE, EL, ES, LT, LV, NL, RO) and five from the European Commission, eu-LISA, Europol, FRA and Frontex. At the end of the year three more members were recruited from HR (specialisation SIS – SIRENE) and from IT (2x) (Specialisations Interoperability and LE Cooperation). The group is co-chaired by CEPOL and the Latvian expert.

The CKC had two online meetings on 16 February and 05 December as well as one onsite meeting on 31 May until 01 June. The CKC members reviewed and revised the portfolios for 2024 as well as the curricula based on the outcomes of the EU-STNA, and they also attended the training activities held in 2023 for quality assurance purposes.

As for the CKC CT, discussions were held in what way the mandate of the CKCs could be extended in the direction of knowledge management and higher education; these discussions will be continued in 2024.

## Expert Group on Higher Education

The second meeting of the Expert Group on Higher Education took place at the CEPOL HQ on 16-17 March 2023, with 13 nominated experts plus 2 invited ones onsite. Further to this, two online participations (from the European Training Foundation and from Frontex) allowed the experts to get acquainted with more details on micro-credentials and on SQF topics. The meeting mostly focused on objectively defining thematic priorities to start with a Higher Education product. The decision was to start with two independent modules (on Fundamental Rights and Digital skills), that would gain micro credentials, but also could work later as the basis of a Master Program. It was decided the EG HE group should stay permanent and work in parallel with the higher education products.

A third meeting took place on 26-27 October 2023. The first morning of the meeting was coincident with the participants of the workshop for the Heads of Law Enforcement Training Institutes to capitalise on the outcomes on cooperation opportunities related to national level mobility and training programmes as well as on accreditation. The Expert Group on Higher Education received a written proposal for the higher education product prior to the meeting. The Expert Group discussed the modalities of the future higher education programme and decide the particularities of the proposals in line with CEPOL's New Strategy.

## New CEPOL Building

The current Headquarters Agreement between CEPOL and the Government of Hungary, signed on 18 August 2014, provides that Hungary will put at the disposal of CEPOL, free of charge, the premises on Ó utca 27, in Budapest, for 10 years, and that the parties may enter into negotiations as to the conditions governing the further utilization of the premises, not later than 8 years after the Agreement enters into in force.

Taking into consideration that CEPOL has gone through significant development insofar as the new legal frame was adopted in 2015 entailing increase of tasks of the Agency, consequently the staff population has been growing since, and it is expected to further grow, mostly due to the inception and subsequent intensification of the new capacity building projects. Due to the increase of the Commission's externally funded projects, the growth of the number in interims and the lack of sufficient training rooms, e.g. CCA, functional training rooms and LE labs, CEPOL communicated to the Hungarian authorities that the current premises are not sufficient.

After the Hungarian authorities acknowledged CEPOL's need for more space, discussions on a new premises and a new updated Headquarters Agreement commenced.

A CEPOL Task Force on the renewal of the Headquarters Agreement and new premises, was established in March 2023, with the aim of preparing for the negotiations with the Hungarian authorities and the procurement of the future premises.

The Government Decision 1245/2023 of 23 July 2023, considering CEPOL's effective contribution to the security of Europe, supported the continuation of the Headquarters Agreement between the Government and CEPOL beyond 2024. It determined that CEPOL shall move to a new seat due to its increased staff and tasks, and therefore called on the Ministry of Finance, in consultation with the Ministry of the Interior, to arrange, through the Directorate-General for Public Procurement and Supply, the lease of office space of around 6,000 m<sup>2</sup> for CEPOL on a rental basis, taking into account CEPOL's security aspects.

The Government Decision 1562/2023 of 14 December 2023 determined the BIF Tower, situated at H-1101 Budapest, 114-116. Üllői út, under land parcel number Budapest X. district, 38315/42, as the premises which Hungary will put at CEPOL's disposal. Representatives from CEPOL, the Directorate-General for Public Procurement and Supply (Közbeszerzési és Ellátási Főigazgatóság, or 'KEF'), the BIF Tower owner and its architects involved in the project, have been engaging in regular meetings and discussions.

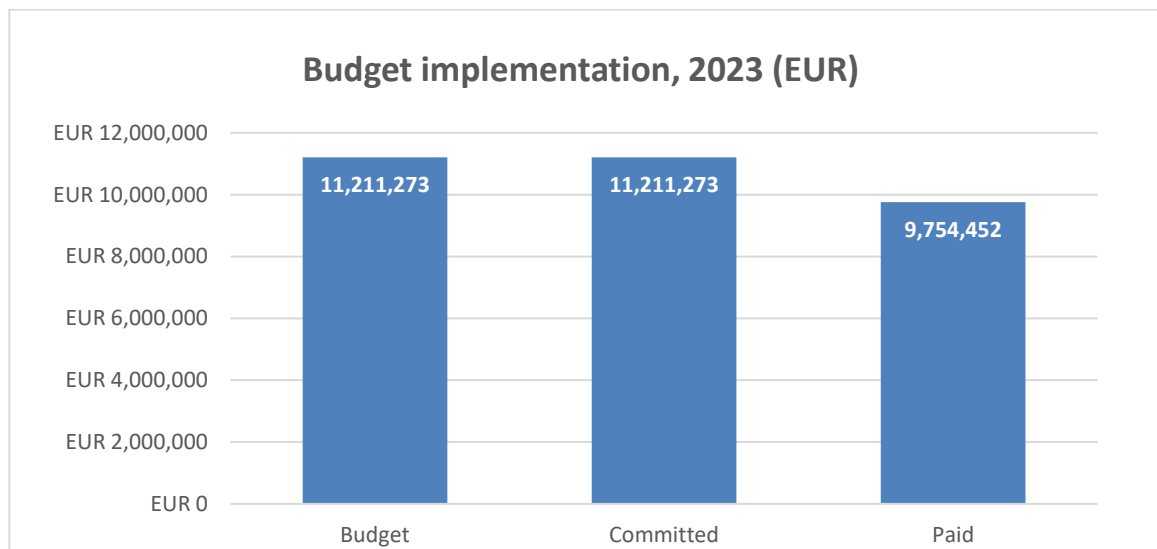
CEPOL has received an environmental analysis certifying that there is no presence of asbestos in the BIF Tower.

Additionally, CEPOL has been collaborating with the Ministry of Interior on the preparation of the text of the new Headquarters Agreement between the Government and CEPOL, which would amend the current Headquarters Agreement.

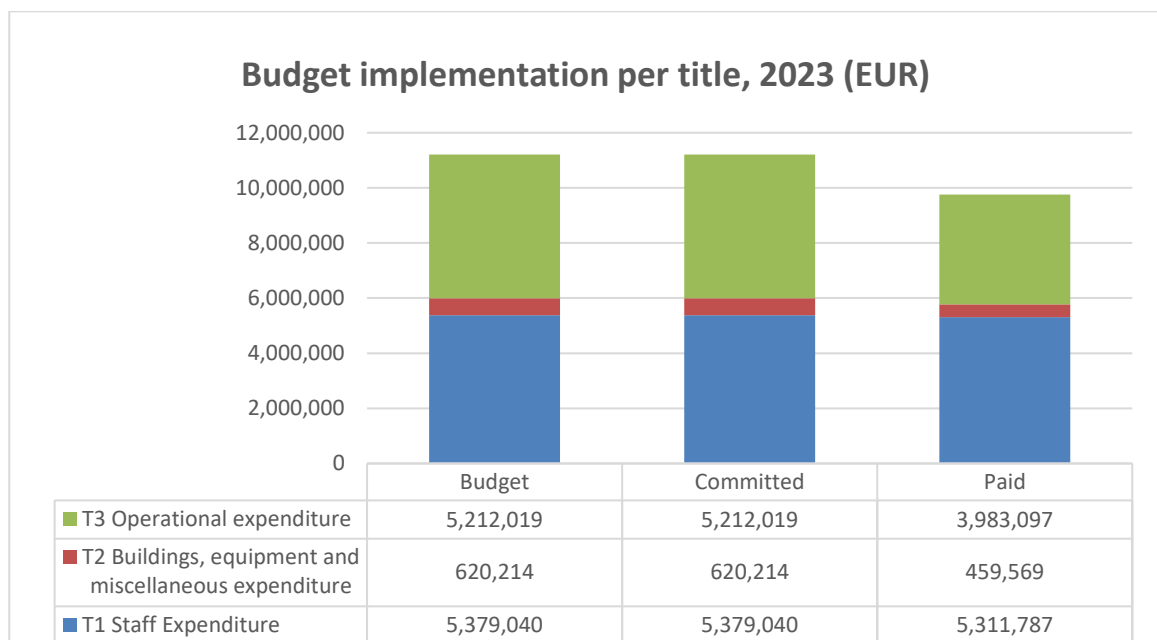
The date which is foreseen for CEPOL's relocation to the BIF Tower has not been decided yet but is foreseen for the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2024.

## 2.3 Budgetary and Financial Management

### 2.3.1 Budget 2023 execution



#### Budget 2023 – Implementation at 31.12.23 (per Titles)



CEPOL's total voted budget for 2023 amounted to € 11 211 273.

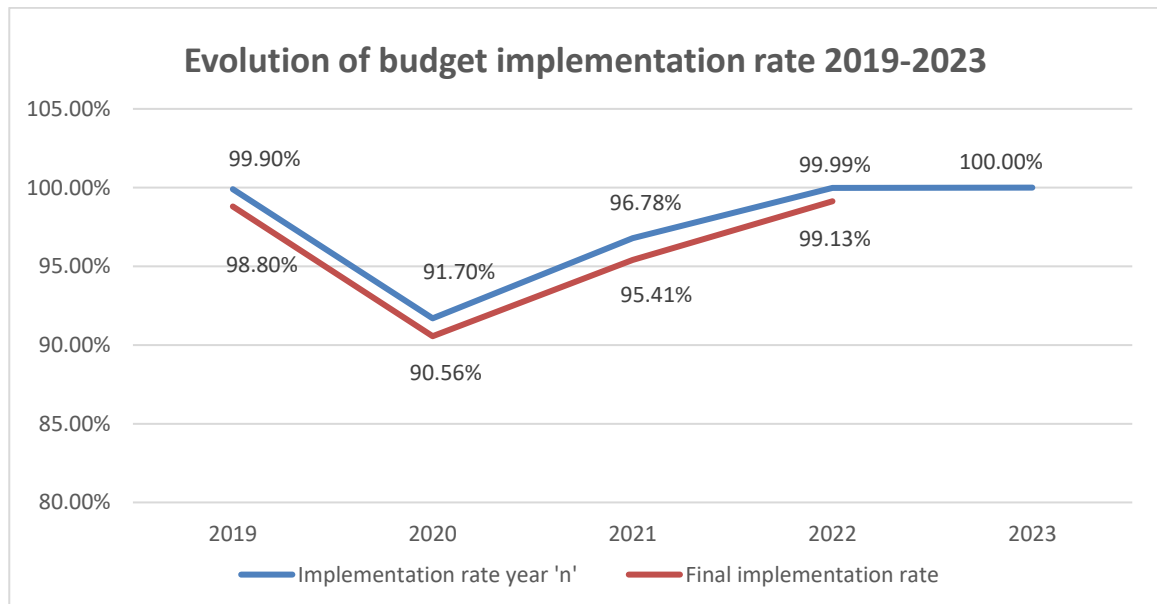
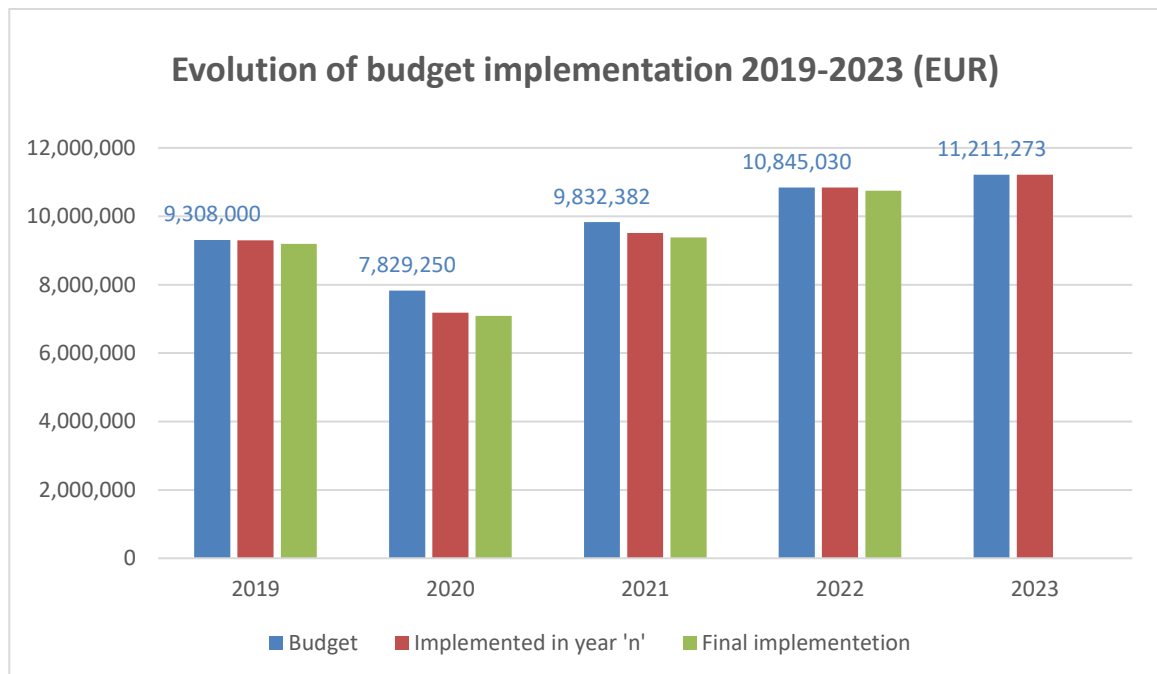
As of December 2023, 100% of the regular (C1) budget had been committed, with 87.01% of it already paid.

Breaking it down further:

- For Title 1, all available C1 credits were committed, with 99% paid.
- For Title 2, 100% of the C1 credits were committed, with 74% paid.
- For Title 3, all available C1 funds were committed, with 76% paid.

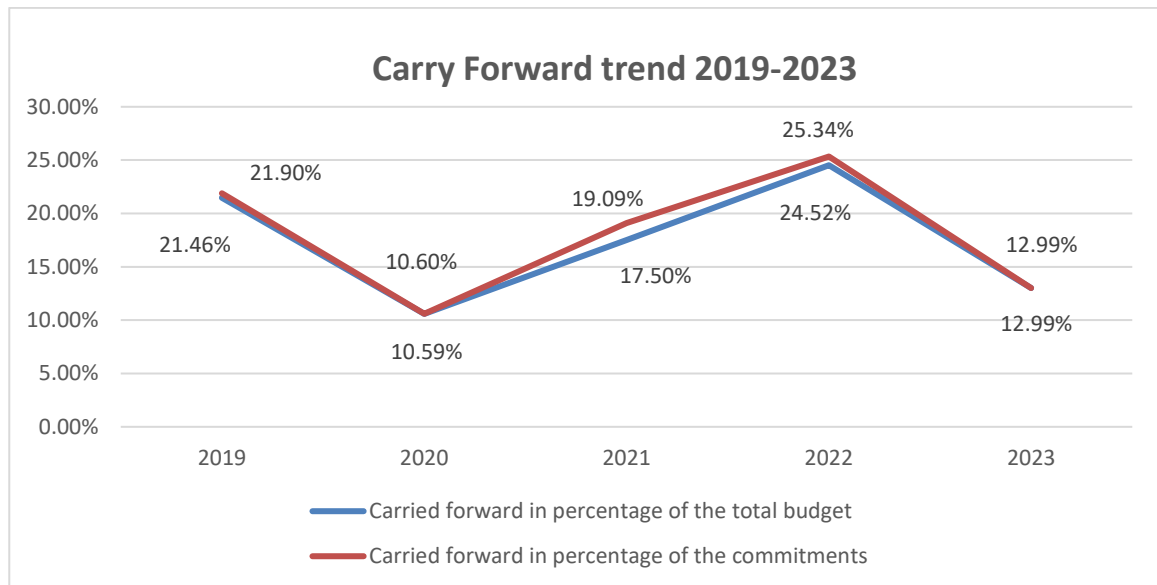
It should be noted that in 2023, the budget implementation reached 100%, marking the second consecutive year achieving this milestone. An amount of € 1 456 821 has been carried over to 2024, which represents 13% of the overall 2023 budget. The final execution, considering the consumption of these carried-over commitments, will be disclosed by the end of 2024.

Detailed overview on Budget 2023 execution, status as of 31 December 2023 is provided in Annex II Table 2.2



\*the 2023 final budget execution will be known only at the end of 2024.





## 2.3.2 Budget 2023 Implementation per Titles

### Title 1: Expenditure relating to persons working with CEPOL - C1: Regular budget 2023

	Budget implementation/ Execution Regular budget 2023 (C1)	Voted Budget ▼	Final Budget ▼	Committed ▼	Budget implementation % ▼	Paid ▼	Budget execution % ▼	Carry forward for payments in 2024 ▼
		A	B	C	C/B	D	D/B	C-D
<b>1</b>	<b>TITLE 1</b>							
11	Staff in active employment	4,400,000.00	4,510,863.58	4,510,863.58	100%	4,492,209.16	100%	18,654.42
12	Allowances and expenses on entering and leaving the service and on transfer, excluding Seconded National Experts and other experts	9,000.00	23,677.86	23,677.86	100%	12,884.81	54%	10,793.05
13	Missions and duty travel	30,000.00	15,622.58	15,622.58	100%	15,422.58	99%	200.00
14	Socio-medical infrastructure	474,000.00	572,733.57	572,733.57	0%	570,439.27	0%	2,294.30
15	Further training, language courses, retraining for staff	56,760.00	31,973.50	31,973.50	100%	30,593.00	96%	1,380.50
16	External services	205,000.00	214,308.73	214,308.73	100%	180,488.98	84%	33,819.75
17	Receptions and events	3,000.00	1,138.88	1,138.88	100%	1,027.88	90%	111.00
18	Social welfare	9,000.00	8,721.64	8,721.64	100%	8,721.64	100%	0.00
<b>1</b>	<b>TITLE 1 Staff expenditure</b>	<b>5,186,760.00</b>	<b>5,379,040.34</b>	<b>5,379,040.34</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5,311,787.32</b>	<b>98.75%</b>	<b>67,253.02</b>

By the end of December 100% of the final budget for Title 1 has been committed and 98,75% paid. The correction coefficient applied in Hungary for salaries has significantly increased in November with retroactive effect as from July.

### C8: Amounts carried over from 2022 for payment in 2023

	Budget Execution of commitments carried forward from 2022 to 2023 (C8)	Final budget 2022	Committed in 2022	Paid in 2022	Total paid (2022 and 2023)	Budget execution %	Cancellation rate
11	Staff in active employment	4 136 518.56	4 136 518.56	4 136 518.56	4 136 518.56	100%	0.00%
12	Allowances and expenses on entering and leaving the service and on transfer, excluding Seconded National Experts and other experts	14 326.30	14 099.44	6 259.14	14 099.44	98%	0.00%
13	Missions and duty travel	15 000.00	15 000.00	13 074.57	14 940.90	100%	0.39%
14	Socio-medical infrastructure	486 696.99	486 696.99	461 150.99	486 690.99	100%	0.00%
15	Further training, language courses, retraining for staff	24 754.00	24 754.00	17 536.00	24 754.00	100%	0.00%
16	External services	229 268.54	229 268.54	195 262.01	229 074.44	100%	0.08%
17	Receptions and events	1 043.47	1 043.47	1 043.47	1 043.47	100%	0.00%
18	Social welfare	7 153.60	7 153.60	7 153.60	7 153.60	100%	0.00%
<b>1</b>	<b>TITLE 1 Staff expenditure</b>	<b>4 914 761.46</b>	<b>4 914 534.60</b>	<b>4 837 998.34</b>	<b>4 914 275.40</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>0.01%</b>

The cancellation rate of carried over payment credits (C8) in Title 1 was 0,01%. These minor amounts relate mainly to the forecasted expenditure, where the real cost were slightly lower than the planned cost.

#### C4: Internally assigned revenue

Internally assigned revenue is generated where CEPOL recovers overpaid amounts. By the end of December 2023, 3 490.23 EUR C4 credits were collected and used.

#### Title 2: Buildings & equipment and miscellaneous expenditure - C1: Regular budget 2023

	Budget implementation/ Execution Regular budget 2023 (C1)	Voted Budget	Final Budget	Committed	Budget implementation %	Paid	Budget execution %	Carry forward for payments in 2024
		A	B	C	C/B	D	D/B	C-D
2	<b>TITLE 2</b>							
20	Investments in immovable property and rental	55,000.00	46,067.72	46,067.72	100%	45,655.81	287.91%	411.91
21	Information and communication technology	447,095.00	532,462.58	532,462.58	3.00	386,646.19	72.61%	145,816.39
22	Movable property and associated costs	18,320.00	9,610.51	9,610.51	100%	9,110.51	94.80%	500.00
23	Current administrative expenditure	26,000.00	28,705.35	28,705.35	100%	15,013.35	52.30%	13,692.00
24	Postal charges	6,000.00	3,367.64	3,367.64	100%	3,142.64	93.32%	225.00
2	<b>TITLE 2 Buildings, equipment and miscellaneous expenditure</b>	<b>552,415.00</b>	<b>620,213.80</b>	<b>620,213.80</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>459,568.50</b>	<b>74.10%</b>	<b>160,645.30</b>

By the end of December 100% of the available budget has been committed and 74.10% of payment credits have been used.

#### C8: Amounts carried over from 2022 for payment in 2023

	Budget Execution of commitments carried forward from 2022 to 2023 (C8)	Final budget 2022	Committed in 2022	Paid in 2022	Total paid (2022 and 2023)	Budget execution %	De-committed (excess carry forward)	Cancellation rate
		A	B	D	F(E+D)	F/C	H	H/A
2	<b>TITLE 2</b>							
20	Investments in immovable property and rental of	27,599.46	27,599.46	26,396.83	27,599.46	100%	0.00	0.00
21	Information and communication technology	380,989.99	380,989.99	349,065.39	379,568.55	100%	1,421.44	0.37%
22	Movable property and associated costs	5,966.71	5,889.52	4,843.25	5,810.99	97%	78.53	1.32%
23	Current administrative expenditure	27,839.97	27,839.97	19,989.67	27,004.59	97%	835.38	3.00%
24	Postal charges	3,944.48	3,944.48	2,737.90	3,031.22	77%	913.26	23.15%
2	<b>TITLE 2 Buildings, equipment and miscellaneous expenditure</b>	<b>446,340.61</b>	<b>446,263.42</b>	<b>403,033.04</b>	<b>443,014.81</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>3,248.61</b>	<b>0.73%</b>

The main reason for cancellations was the uncertainty on VAT. Refundable VAT has been committed in certain cases.

#### C4: Internally assigned revenue

Internally assigned revenue is generated where CEPOL recovers overpaid amounts. By the end of December 2023, 16.13 EUR C4 credits were collected and used.

#### Title 3 – Operational expenditure - C1: Regular budget 2023

	Budget implementation/ Execution Regular budget 2023 (C1)	Voted Budget	Final Budget	Committed	Budget implementation %	Paid	Budget execution %	Carry forward for payments in 2024
		A	B	C	C/B	D	D/B	C-D
3	<b>TITLE 3</b>							
30	Strategy, stakeholder relations, governance	324,166.00	301,969.62	301,969.62	100%	175,510.87	58.12%	126,458.75
31	Training, research and analysis	4,235,000.00	3,583,301.32	3,583,301.32	100%	2,960,751.08	82.63%	622,550.24
32	Operational Support	912,932.00	1,326,747.92	1,326,747.92	100%	846,834.57	63.83%	479,913.35
3	<b>TITLE 3</b>	<b>5 472 098.00</b>	<b>5 212 018.86</b>	<b>5 212 018.86</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3,983,096.52</b>	<b>76.42%</b>	<b>1,228,922.34</b>

By the end of December 100% of the available budget has been committed. Payments represents 76.42% of the available payment credits.

## C8: Amounts carried over from 2022 for payment in 2023

	Budget Execution of commitments carried forward from 2022 to 2023 (C8)	Final budget 2022	Committed in 2022	Paid in 2022	Total paid (2022 and 2023)	Budget execution %	De-committed (excess carry forward)	Cancellation rate
		A	B	D	F(E+D)	F/C	H	H/A
3	<b>TITLE 3</b>							
30	Strategy, stakeholder relations, governance	346,026.56	346,026.56	252,852.83	341,567.60	99%	4,458.96	1.29%
31	Training, research and analysis	3,978,734.66	3,978,734.66	2,995,908.16	3,906,447.54	98%	73,915.92	1.86%
32	Operational Support	1,159,166.71	1,159,166.71	691,096.44	1,145,611.74	99%	13,554.97	1.17%
3	<b>TITLE 3</b>	5 483 927.93	5 483 927.93	3,939,857.43	5,393,626.88	98%	91,929.85	1.68%

Cancellation of funds for operational activities were mainly justified by the business model (use of grants where information on real expenditure can hardly be controlled by CEPOL in time), the underperformance of service providers and delayed invoicing of the Publication Office. These factors are beyond CEPOL's control.

## C4: Internally assigned revenue

Internal assigned revenues under Title 3 amounted to EUR 82 656.54 in 2023. 43% of this amount has been committed, the remaining EUR 47 398.99 were carried over to 2024.

## Final implementation rate of 2022 budget

The final implementation of 2022 budget taking into account the C8 payments in 2023 was 99.13%.

	Budget Execution of commitments carried forward from 2022 to 2023 (C8)	Final budget 2022	Committed in 2022	Paid in 2022	Total paid (2022 and 2023)	Budget execution %	De-committed (excess carry forward)	Cancellation rate
		A	B	D	F(E+D)	F/C	H	H/A
1	<b>TITLE 1 Staff expenditure</b>	4,914,761.46	4,914,534.60	4,837,998.34	4,914,275.40	100%	259.20	0.01%
2	<b>TITLE 2 Buildings, equipment and miscellaneous expenditure</b>	446,340.61	446,263.42	403,033.04	443,014.81	99%	3,248.61	0.73%
3	<b>TITLE 3</b>	5 483 927.93	5 483 927.93	3,939,857.43	5,393,626.88	98%	91,929.85	1.68%
	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	10 845 030.00	10 844 725.95	9,180,888.81	10,750,917.09	99.13%	95,437.66	0.88%

## Internally assigned revenue (C4) summary

Overpaid credits totaling 86,162.90 EUR were recovered in 2023. These credits, which represent CEPOL's internally assigned revenues under category C4, were partially utilized during the year 2023. Out of the total amount committed in 2023 (35,774.30 EUR), 2,741.47 EUR were disbursed. The remaining uncommitted balance of 50,388.60 EUR was transferred to 2024 as C5 credits.

	Budget implementation/ Execution 2023 C4	Recovery cashed in 2023	Committed in 2023	C5 in 2024 (not committed in )	Paid	Carry forward for payments in 2024
		A	B	A-B	C	B-C
1	<b>TITLE 1</b>					
1430	Schooling and nursery	3,370.23	516.75	2,853.48	516.75	0.00
1	<b>TITLE 1 Staff expenditure</b>	3,490.23	516.75	2,973.48	516.75	0.00
2	<b>TITLE 2</b>					
2003	Cost of renting office space, parkings	16.13	0.00	16.13	0.00	0.00
2	<b>TITLE 2 Buildings, equipment and miscellaneous expenditure</b>	16.13	0.00	16.13	0.00	0.00
3	<b>TITLE 3</b>					
3100	On-site activities	78,547.39	34,988.55	43,558.84	1,955.72	33,032.83
3101	Travel for on-site activities	269.00	269.00	0.00	269.00	0.00
3103	On-line activities	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3106	Exchanges	3,474.15	0.00	3,474.15	0.00	0.00
3200	Missions	366.00	0.00	366.00	0.00	0.00
3	<b>TITLE 3</b>	82 656.54	35 257.55	47,398.99	2,224.72	33,032.83
	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	86 162.90	35 774.30	50,388.60	2,741.47	33,032.83

### 2.3.3 Other financial and budgetary topics

#### Budget transfers

In 2023, 7 internal transfers of the regular budget (C1 commitment and payment appropriations) were done in line with articles 27§1a, 27§1b, 27§3 and 28§1 of the CEPOL Financial Regulation. These transfers aimed to align the initial budget distribution to the real budget needs. None of these transfers required approval of the Management Board.

More detailed information on this is provided in Annex II Table 2.3.

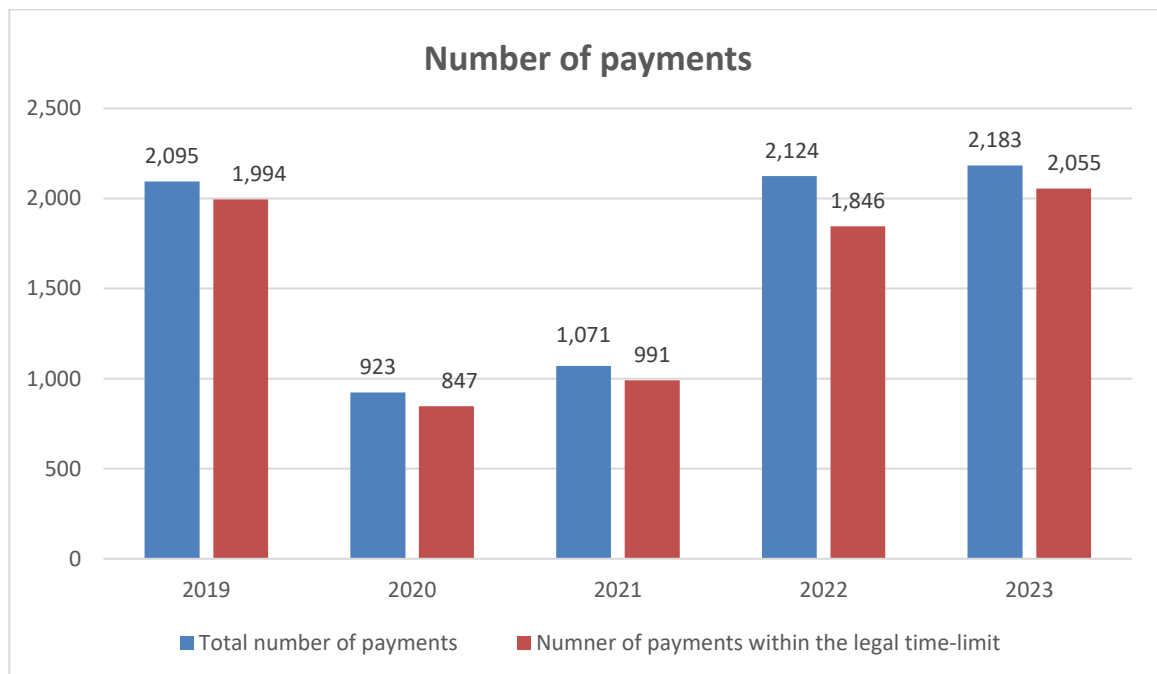
#### Recovery orders

At the end of December 2023, there were 3 recovery orders (€ 7 799.67) not cashed, where the due date is January 2024.

#### Payment statistics

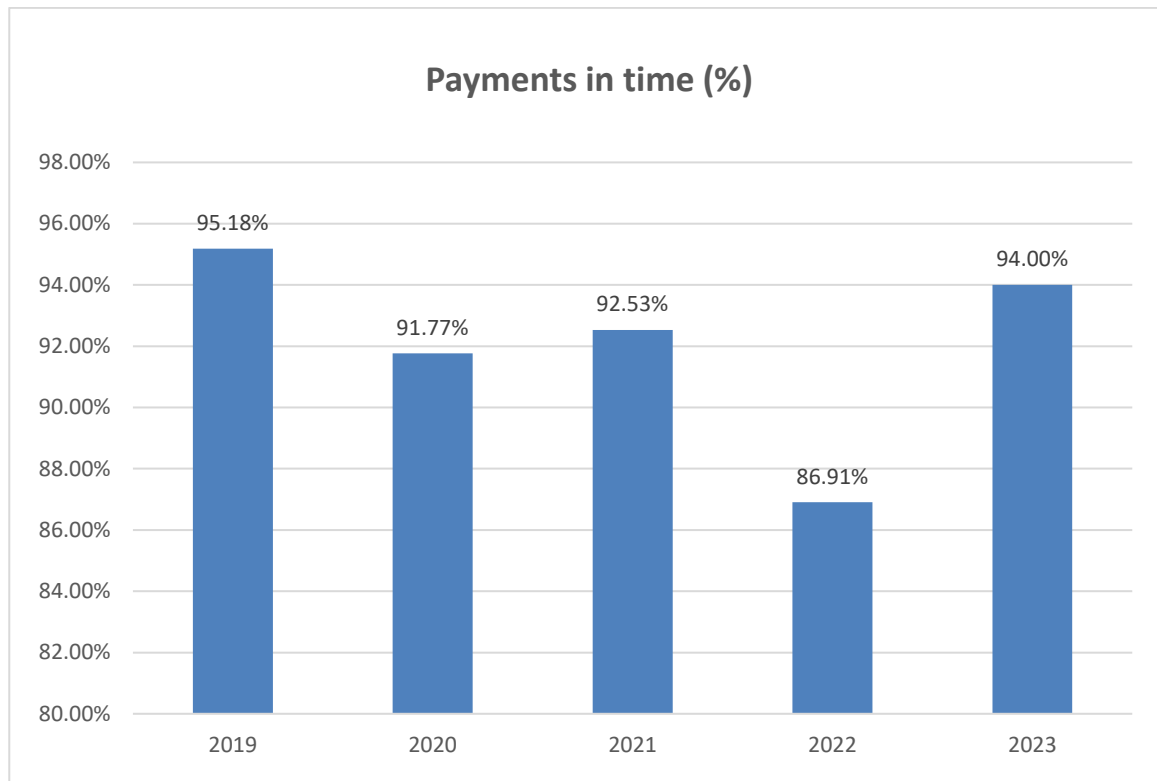
In 2023, CEPOL made a total of 2 183 payments of which 2 055 were within the legal time-limit. There was no interest paid on late payments.

More details on payment statistics is provided in Annex II Table 2.4-2.5.



Year	Total number of payments	Number of payments within the legal time-limit	Payments in time (%)
2019	2095	1994	95%
2020	923	847	92%
2021	1071	991	93%
2022	2124	1846	87%
2023	2183	2055	94%

\* In 2020 and 2021 there was a significant drop in the number of payments realised, compared to years before pandemic, which is due to the impact of the COVID-19 related measures in place throughout 2020 and 2021.



## Procurement

In 2023, a total of **418 contracts** were signed, comprising of:

- 3 framework contracts + 2 amendments of FWCs
- 5 direct contract + 2 amendments of direct contracts
- 5 purchase orders
- 280 order forms under existing framework contracts (CEPOL and inter-institutional)
- 6 specific contracts under existing framework contracts (CEPOL and inter-institutional)
- 116 contracts for short-term experts under calls for expression of interest

Number of contracts signed based on the type of procedure	2022 CEPOL & CEPOL Projects	2022 CEPOL Projects	2023 CEPOL & CEPOL Projects	2023 CEPOL Projects
Open procurement procedure	6	1	1	0
Negotiated procurement procedure with at least five candidates	6	0	0	0
Negotiated procurement procedure with at least three candidates	0	0	0	0
Negotiated procurement procedure with a single tender	12	0	8	0
Negotiated procedure without publication of a contract notice under Point 11.1.e Annex 1 FR (increase of ceiling of FWC for services)	0	0	1	0
Negotiated procedures without prior publication of a contract notice (point 11.1 (a) Annex 1 FR)	0	0	0	0
Negotiated procedures without prior publication of a contract notice (point 11.1 (h) Annex 1 FR)	0	0	0	0
Order Form/Specific contract in execution of framework contracts	282+9	85	280+6	104+4
Procedure following a call for expression of interest	128	73	116	74
<b>Total number of contracts signed</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>412</b>	<b>182</b>
<b>Total value of contracts</b> (direct contracts, framework contracts and specific contracts implementing framework contracts)	<b>€ 29,819,586.08</b>	<b>€ 1,174,343.64</b>	<b>€ 5,520,950.33</b>	<b>€ 1,442,869.07</b>

Exceptional negotiated procedures under point 11.1 (a) to (f) of Annex 1 FR: 1 exceptional negotiated procedure under point 11.1 (g) Building contract.



## 2.3.4 Information on grant, contribution and service level agreements (Annex VI)

### External assigned revenue - Title 5

#### COUNTER-TERRORISM INFLOW

The Contribution Agreement IFS/2019/410-531 was signed between CEPOL and DG DEVCO (International Cooperation and Development) on 17 December 2019. The purpose of this agreement is to provide financial contribution to finance the implementation of the Action "CT INFLOW- Enhancing Information Exchange and Criminal Justice Response to Terrorism in the Middle East and North Africa". The CEPOL CT INFLOW has a maximum budget of EUR 7 500 000 and a duration of 48 months and is financed under the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP). The first instalment of the pre-financing amounting to EUR 3 750 000 was received in December 2019. The second instalment of EUR 2 960 480 has been received in 2022, and the last instalment in 2023 for the value of EUR 789 520.

Overall Budget Implementation/Execution of the CTInflow	Maximum BUDGET of the project set in the agreement (full lifecycle)	Amended BUDGET of the project (full lifecycle)	Commitment appropriation used in 2023	Total committed since the start	still not committed	paid in 2023	Total paid	Budget execution % (vs. Budget Received)
	<b>7 497 203</b>	<b>7 500 000</b>	<b>2 534 851</b>	<b>6 476 346</b>	<b>1 023 654</b>	<b>2 388 517</b>	<b>5 229 155</b>	<b>70%</b>
CTI-2021-1 STAFF COST	3 359 808	3 359 808	770 867	2 474 142	885 666	835 891	2 471 253	74%
CTI-2021-2.1 - TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES_ Component 1	211 855	813 967	236 229	659 965	154 002	408 613	518 484	64%
CTI-2021-2.2 - TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES_ Component 2	894 440	897 237	210 881	982 293	- 85 056	353 661	928 712	104%
CTI-2021-2.3 - TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES_ Component 3	1 401 095	798 983	571 777	906 263	- 107 280	568 088	739 028	92%
CTI-2021-2.4 - TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES_ Component 4	437 045	437 045	81 941	359 751	77 294	100 596	105 211	24%
CTI-2020-3.1 - PROCUREMENT (Equipment, local Office)	585 360	585 360	68 736	484 542	100 818	113 041	442 869	76%
CTI-2020-3.2 - PROCUREMENT (Technical Supply)	550 000	550 000	548 863	548 863	1 137	0	0	0%
CTI-2020-4 COMMUNICATION	57 600	57 600	45 558	60 528	- 2 928	8 627	23 598	41%

#### EUROMED POLICE

The Contribution Agreement ENI/2020/414-940 was signed between CEPOL and DG NEAR (Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations) on 24 April 2020. The purpose of this agreement is to provide financial contribution to finance the implementation of the Action "EUROMED Police". The CEPOL EUROMED Police has a maximum budget of EUR 6 960 542 and a duration of 48 months and is financed under the European Neighbourhood Instrument. The pre-financing amounting to 100% of the budget was received in May 2020.

Overall Budget Implementation/Execution of the European Police	Total Budget of the project (full lifecycle)	Commitment appropriations used in 2023	Total committed since the start	still not committed	paid in 2023	Total paid	Budget execution %
	<b>6 960 542</b>	<b>1 693 743</b>	<b>5 428 634</b>	<b>1 531 908</b>	<b>1 796 971</b>	<b>5 007 748</b>	<b>72%</b>
EP-2022-1 - STAFF COST	3 639 792	854 134	2 763 140	876 652	847 175	2 761 831	76%
EP-2022-2 - TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES	2 455 290	754 456	2 059 551	395 739	796 118	1 690 520	69%
EP-2022-3 - PROCUREMENT (Supplies, equipment, local office)	799 860	152 681	548 304	251 556	122 168	502 637	63%
EP-2022-4 - COMMUNICATION	65 600	- 67 528	57 640	7 960	31 511	52 760	80%

#### TOPCOP

The Contribution Agreement ENI/2020/415-941 was signed between CEPOL and DG NEAR (Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations) in 2020. The purpose of this agreement is to provide financial contribution to finance the implementation of the Action "CEPOL training and operational partnership against organised crime project - TOPCOP". The CEPOL TOPCOP has a maximum budget of EUR 6 000 000 and



a duration of 48 months and is financed under the European Neighbourhood Instrument. The pre-financing amounting to 100% of the budget was received in July 2020.

Overall Budget Implementation/Execution of the TopCop	Total Budget of the project (full lifecycle)	Commitment appropriations used in 2023	Total committed since the start	still not committed	paid in 2023	Total paid	Budget execution %
	<b>6 000 000</b>	<b>1 930 964</b>	<b>5 249 209</b>	<b>750 791</b>	<b>1 722 249</b>	<b>4 636 240</b>	<b>77%</b>
TOPCOP-2020-1 - STAFF COST	2 799 840	709 254	2 282 297	517 543	690 876	2 258 232	81%
TOPCOP-2020-2 - TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES	2 736 360	1 128 387	2 505 235	231 125	900 526	1 951 395	71%
TOPCOP-2020-3 - PROCUREMENT (Supplies, equipment, local office)	409 800	55 226	409 290	510	92 750	374 225	91%
TOPCOP-2020-4 - COMMUNICATION	54 000	38 097	52 387	1 613	38 097	52 387	97%

### WB PaCT

The Contribution Agreement 2019/413-822 was signed between CEPOL and DG NEAR (Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations) on 19 October 2020. The purpose of this agreement is to provide financial contribution to finance the implementation of the Action "Partnership against Crime and Terrorism – CEPOL WB PaCT". The CEPOL WB PaCT has a maximum budget of EUR 3 000 000 and a duration of 36 months and is financed under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA). The pre-financing amounting to 100% of the budget was received in November 2020.

Overall Budget Implementation/Execution of the WBPACT	Total Budget of the project (full lifecycle)	Amended budget	Commitment appropriations used in 2023	Total committed since the start	still not committed	paid in 2023	Total paid	Budget execution %
	<b>3 000 000</b>	<b>3 000 000</b>	<b>606 087</b>	<b>2 961 565</b>	<b>138 435</b>	<b>962 941</b>	<b>2 767 836</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>headings</b>								
WBPACT-2020-1 - STAFF COST	1 259 984	1 376 644	348 531	1 388 854	87 790	370 952	1 387 360	94%
WBPACT-2020-2 - TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES	1 519 096	1 390 380	196 212	1 344 397	45 983	545 169	1 196 438	86%
WBPACT-2020-3 - PROCUREMENT (Supplies, equipment, local office)	184 920	184 920	22 162	180 503	4 417	42 993	171 582	93%
WBPACT-2020-4 - COMMUNICATION	36 000	48 056	39 182	47 812	244	3 826	12 456	26%

### EU4Security Moldova

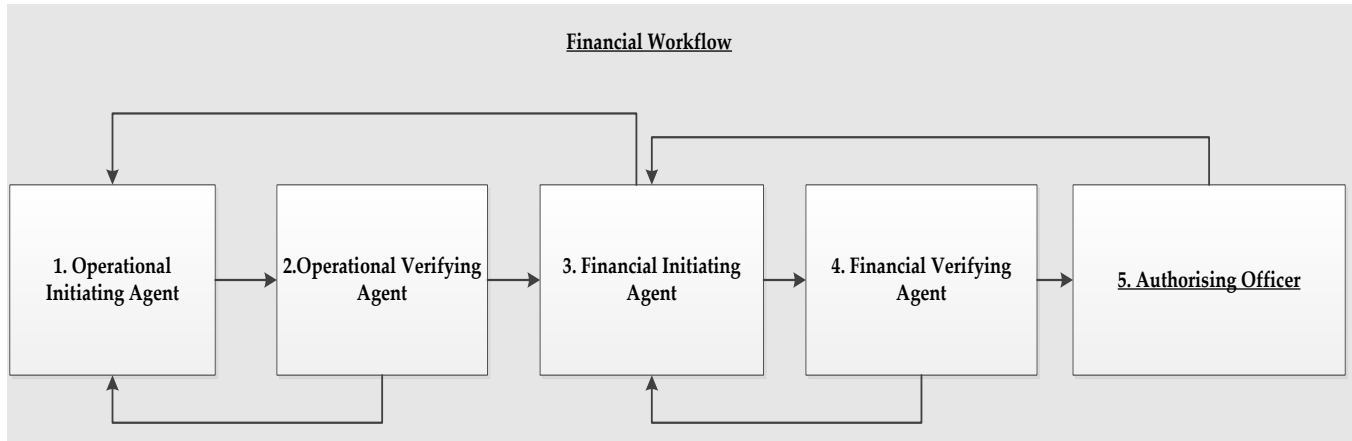
The Contribution Agreement NDICI-GEO-NEAR/2023/445-801 was signed between CEPOL and Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Moldova on 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2023. The purpose of this agreement is to provide financial contribution to finance the implementation of the Action "EU4Security Moldova". The CEPOL EU4Security Moldova project has a maximum budget of EUR 5 500 000 and a duration of 36 months and is financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI). The first pre-financing of EUR 3 000 000 was received in November 2023.

Overall Budget Implementation/Execution of the European Police	Total Budget of the project (full lifecycle)	Budget appropriations received	Commitments in 2023	still not committed	Paid in 2024	Budget execution %
	<b>5 500 000</b>	<b>3 000 000</b>	<b>42 485</b>	<b>2 957 515</b>	<b>11 863</b>	<b>0%</b>
E4MD-202x-1 - STAFF COST	1 425 600	475 200	11 305	463 895	11 305	2%
E4MD-202x-2 - TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES	3 844 271	2 448 091	8 130	2 439 961	0	0%
E4MD-202x-3 - PROCUREMENT (Supplies, equipment, local office)	200 129	66 709	23 050	43 659	558	1%
E4MD-202x-4 COMMUNICATION	30 000	10 000	0	10 000	0	0%

## 2.3.5 Control results

### Financial workflow and ex ante controls

The financial workflow implemented in CEPOL is a partially decentralised model and follows the four eyes principle. Each financial transaction needs to be verified after initiation before it is authorised, as provided in the below financial workflow chart.



The member of CEPOL staff responsible for verification of an operation (“verifier”), exercises ex-ante control of each transaction by checking its legal correctness and conformity with the principle of sound financial management.

The operational functions of the verification include: verification of its justifications, necessity, and conformity with the project documents, contracts, agreements and other relevant documents. The financial functions of the verification include: the verification of procedural and financial aspects of the transactions, their legal correctness and consistency.

CEPOL implements delegation of authority via Executive Director’s decision on financial workflow, which is amended on continual basis, whenever changes occur in the staff having a role in the financial circuit.

### Ex post controls

CEPOL implements ex post controls in accordance with Article 45 of the CEPOL Financial Regulation, stating that the Authorising Officer may put in place ex post controls to verify operations already authorised. Such controls are organised on a sample basis according to risk.

In 2023 CEPOL implemented ex post controls on internal control standards, grant agreements, ABAC access rights and one internal quality audit on ISO 9001:2015 standards. The ex post controls did not identify any critical weaknesses.

The internal control plan was not fully achieved having in view that internal control function had to be re-allocated to the planning function due to resignation of newly recruited planning officer.

### Cost and benefits of controls

The implementation of *ex-ante* controls (verifications in the financial circuits, exceptions recording) covering 100% of the Agency’s budget, remains the primary means of ensuring sound financial management and legality and regularity of transactions.

Both ex ante and ex post controls as described above are implemented via desk reviews by staff members having multiple roles in the Agency, therefore not exclusively dedicated to control activities.

## Management review of the exceptions' register for 2023

In line with principle # 10 'Processes and procedures' CEPOL implements a process for registration and authorisation of exceptions.

Every year, the exceptions registered are analysed to identify specific areas of concern and relevant improvement actions. In addition, they enable the management team to handle exceptional circumstances with a reasonable degree of flexibility and in a transparent and justified way.

The 2023 report on exceptions confirms that CEPOL's internal control system is well functioning, non-compliance events are detected and mitigated with corrective and preventive actions.

In 2023 a total of 53 exceptions were raised (vs 46 exceptions in 2022) in value of **€198 985** (vs €51,697 in 2022). There are 5 exceptions with no financial impact. In case of 28 exceptions, the financial impact is less than €1,000. In case of 22 exceptions, the financial impact is above €1,000.

There are 3 exceptions above the ceiling limit requiring approval by AO (€25,000 or higher)

- €26,183 - 51/2023 Hate Crime, 21-24 February 2023 - the FWC Partner requested exceptionally to implement their activity under the old IGN<sup>35</sup> rules, due to their procurement procedures that had been started already under the rules valid at the time of grant signature;
- €26,183 - the FWC Partner requested exceptionally to implement their activity under the new IGN rules, having in view the procurement was already initiated with one dinner only and going back to the old IGN rules would cause delays;
- €27,200 - 63/2023 JOINT INVESTIGATION TEAM - LEADERSHIP, FRANCE, 24-28 April - the FWC Partner requested exceptionally to be granted transportation cost for course participants, having in view the remote location where activity was held.

These exceptions were raised having in view that in January CEPOL has modified the IGN (03-2023-DIR/17 January 2023) allowing for only one dinner and no taxi transfer and later on in March CEPOL revisited its decision (11-2023-DIR/08 March 2023) allowing the FWC Partners to implement 2023 activities in line with previous rules, as in force at the time of signature of grant agreement.

The financial impact is referring to the value of the grant agreement, however the exceptions allowed do not affect the granted amount and do not involve any financial loss.

CEPOL's standard quantitative material threshold is set at €25,000. Deviations from this material threshold must be justified in the Consolidated Annual Activity Report. Having in view that the exceptions above the threshold were justified and did not generate any financial loss, they shall not be subject to a formal reservation in the assurance declaration of the Authorising Officer, in the context of the Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2023.

The most frequently occurring deviation from the rules in 2023 was the ex-post budgetary commitment (17 cases), due to various administrative mistakes: funds de-committed by error before arrival of invoices; miscalculations in the original commitment; commitment omitted to be raised on time.

None of the non-compliance or justified deviation events involved any significant financial loss or systematic weakness within the existing controls.

## 2.4 Delegation and sub-delegation

The Executive Director of CEPOL is the Authorising Officer. The Authorising Officers by Delegation (AOD) have been appointed via Executive Director's decision on financial workflow, defining the budget line, maximum amount, source of funds and transaction type for each of the delegate. The decision is valid until circumstances requires an amendment to be adopted by the Authorising Officer.

The controlling requirements are defined in the checklist embedded in the IT platform (Speedwell), while reporting requirements are established via internal practice taking the form of regular reports on budget implementation.

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<sup>35</sup> Integrated Guidance Note

Weaknesses identified are resolved before authorisation of transactions or formalised as non-compliances or justified deviations from the rules via exception register, which is regularly reviewed by the Authorising Officer.

In their capacity as Authorising Officers by Delegation, each Head of Department provides a Declaration of Assurance on the appropriate allocation of resources and their use for their intended purpose and in accordance with the principles of sound financial management, as well as on the adequacy of the control procedures in place; this declaration covers both the state of internal control in the department and the completeness and reliability of management reporting. These declarations serve to ground the Executive Director's Declaration of Assurance (see Part V Declaration of Assurance).

## 2.5 Human Resources (HR) Management

### Overall situation

In line with the budget as adopted by the Budgetary Authority, CEPOL's establishment plan 2023 contains 33 Temporary Agents (TA). In addition to the establishment plan, the Management Board approved 19 Contract Agents (CA) and 5<sup>36</sup> Seconded National Expert (SNE) positions (excluding capacity building projects).

By the end of 2023, out of 33 temporary agents' positions, the agency had in post 31 TAs (including ad-interim head of Unit, temporary replacing HoU from 16 July 2023) and 55 Contract agents, of which 19 CAs for regular CEPOL Activities (1 maternity replacement) and 36 for externally financed capacity building projects.

In addition, 5 SNEs were in post (4 financed from CEPOL budget and 1 CT INFLOW project).

There were 7 trainees on 31 December 2023.

Staff fluctuation in 2023 was high and did have a significant impact on the organisation. There were 9 resignations in 2023 due to new job opportunities outside CEPOL. Out of these 9, 3 staff members were on unpaid leave since 2022 and did not reinstate back to CEPOL. There were 3 more resignations where individuals got an opportunity within CEPOL, as a result of a selection procedure. Their success in a recruitment procedure led to a change in their statutory link, i.e. from CA to TA or SNE to TA.

In addition, there was 1 staff member on unpaid leave who reinstated back to CEPOL, and a few absences related to maternity/parental leave which had an impact on staffing in 2023.

Interim staff have been contracted to fill in for staff absences and to cope with peak periods. The areas covered by the interim staff are mainly those related to core business but also a few in other Units and departments, such as ICT, legal, procurement, external relations, and management support.

For expert level positions dealing with specialised training in different operational areas, CEPOL uses SNEs.

The 2023 approved budget for Staff Salaries, totalling €4,400,000, was increased by an additional €110,863 during the year. This adjustment was needed to accommodate the salary rise resulting from the shift in the country coefficient from 75.6% to 86.7%.

Regarding gender balance, the ratio between man and women employed by CEPOL (excluding interims) is 53F and 45M, thus the agency maintains a balanced gender representation. The CEPOL management team (Executive Director, Heads of Departments and Heads of Units) on 31 December 2023 consists of 3 women and 3 men (1 ad interim for maternity replacement).

More details are presented in Annex IV. Establishment Plan and additional information on HR Management.

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<sup>36</sup> In order to implement 8 EMPACT courses and the two-step Fundamental rights courses that were not covered by any grant applications, additional SNE was needed. The number of SNEs positions in 2023, approved by budgetary authorities, was increased by 1. This has been approved by MB decision 16-2022.

## Recruitment

In 2023 CEPOL published 12 new recruitment procedures including 2 calls for SNEs.

All recruitment procedure were published externally including 2 calls for SNEs, where 1 Call for SNEs was to establish reserve list for new capacity building projects, including EU4MD that was planned to start on 1 November 2023. CEPOL published vacancies attracted 489 applications and for 2 Calls, 38 nominations were received. 1 SNE recruitment procedure is still on going.

Host Member State nationals are still overrepresented in the total number of staff. At the end of 2023, there were 36 Hungarian citizens (39%) working for the agency, from a total of 91 staff (TA, CA & SNE - CEPOL establishment plan and project related staff). There are 16 other nationalities present in CEPOL, which are relatively equally distributed. As of 31 December 2023, CEPOL does not employ staff from Cyprus, Czech, Denmark, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Lithuania, Malta, Slovenia and Germany.

## Implementing Rules on the Staff Regulations

CEPOL has not adopted any Commission decisions in 2023.

## Benchmarking exercise

The outcome of the benchmarking exercise 2023 shows that only 12% of the CEPOL's posts financed from our regular budget are allocated to administrative support, all other posts are linked to operational (68%), neutral (11%) and coordination (9%) activities.

Details of the establishment plan 2023 and the results of the screening exercise compared to last year are available in Annex IV (Table 4.2-4.3).

## Human Resources allocation

An overview of the actual against the planned allocation of human resources (expressed in Full Time Equivalent (FTE)) and budget, for the activities included in the Work Programme 2023 is provided in Annex V.

The FTE and budget usage slightly differs from what has been originally planned.

There were 9 resignations in 2023, including 3 staff members, who were on unpaid leave. Additionally short-term parental leave was taken by 10 staff members which additionally decreased the total implemented FTE.

With regards to budget consumption versus planned, an amount of € 1 456 821 has been carried over to 2024, which represents 13% of the overall 2023 budget.

## Staff Training

A formal staff training plan for 2023 was not adopted. As a result, the training of staff was governed by the Implementing rules on training and development and organised and implemented based on the Annual appraisals exercise results as well as based on corporate/horizontal needs, taking into consideration availability of the budget allocation.

CEPOL has organised the following horizontal trainings in 2023

- Ethics and Integrity
- Prevention of Harassment
- Respect and Dignity
- Key performance indicators
- Selection and interviewing
- Language training

Other trainings offered to staff, to name a few:

- Procurement webinars
- ABAC- various trainings
- Sysper related trainings (for Human Resources sector)
- PPMT – public procurement tool
- Essentials of management
- BASE/SAFE – on-line learning provided by EEAS on safety during missions.
- Various Trainings available via eu-learn portal including LinkedIn.



## Data Protection

CEPOL is committed to process personal data in a responsible way by complying with the applicable data protection regulations.

In 2023, the DPO prepared the DPO Annual Report at CEPOL (for 2022), which was provided for CEPOL management and EDPS, and presented at May Management Board meeting.

CEPOL places contracts with vendors of Software as a Service (SaaS), which requires scrutiny on processing of personal data and specifically transfers to third countries. This comprises negotiations of license agreements, Data Protection Addendum and standard contractual clauses as well as scenarios related to transfer of data to a third country including international transfers. For the latter, the DPO is following further developments at the Commission and other EU agencies in addition to guidance from EDPS.

CEPOL prepared and updated privacy statements to reflect the new data processing activities or updated activities. CEPOL adopted 2 new privacy statements, updated 5 existing PSs and 2 are under preparation with the Controller. The Register of processing activities was last updated in June 2022.

In 2023, DPO established a Monitoring tool for follow-up of privacy statement with their essential information.

The DPO also reviews ED decisions and other instructions including procurement documentation from a data protection point of view.

The DPO provided in the autumn a comprehensive training on data protection to staff.

The DPO participated in two EUI DPO and two JHA DPO network meetings.

## 2.6 Strategy for efficiency gains

CEPOL is committed to continuously improve its functioning, streamline its processes, optimise the engagement of its staff, allow for the reallocation of resources to the most efficient and economic actions for the set objectives.

To this end, various efficiency measures have already been implemented, some of the most noteworthy being:

- CEPOL has advanced relatively well with its digitalisation initiatives and has already achieved a relatively high level of digitalisation through many of its processes having been converted to paperless/electronic – often in close cooperation with DG DIGIT:
  - PPMT for all the procedures available / e-Procurement submission system for open procedures and e-Tendering,
  - e-Recruitment,
  - e-HR management (SYSPER),
  - e-Invoicing,
  - electronic travel booking,
  - Exchange process.
- CEPOL has regular, substantial and close cooperation with national authorities, networks and agencies relevant to increasing efficiency:
  - Host Member State authorities (NOK-ITC): building & facility management,
  - Budapest-based EU bodies (EIT, EC & EP representation): staff matters (e.g. training), mutual usage of functional rooms with, best practice exchange on IT system implementation (e.g. Speedwell), planning towards a mutual establishment of IT backup solution with EIT, planning towards a full-scale disaster recovery solution with EIT, joint social events, other corporate and administrative matters
  - JHA Agencies Network (EASO, EIGE, EMCDDA, eu-LISA, Eurojust, Europol, FRA, Frontex & CEPOL): ensuring cooperation on EU security, justice, fundamental rights and gender equality matters, joint strategy on the role of JHA agencies, annual work programme consultation,



- EU Agencies Network (EUAN): coordination, joint procurements, joint recruitments, mutual usage of recruitment reserve lists.
- EU Commission (DG DIGIT, DG BUDGET, DG HR&Security, CERT-EU): implementation of digital EU tools and software.
- In 2023, CEPOL has duly carried out its tasks ensuring the implementation of the portfolio in the most efficient way, moreover certain adjustments had to be done due to the war in Ukraine:
  - provided support to training institutions in EU Member States via CEPOL electronic tools, upon their request.
  - LEEEd - during 2023 two new online modules were introduced, and one is on approval phase under EC, enriching the online portfolio.
  - Worked on the preparation of three learning management platforms (tenancies) under CEPOL LMS LEEEd that two of them will launch in Q1 2024, while continued discussions for the launching of training and preparation of three more tenancies.
  - Offered a dedicated tenancy for the Innovation Hub that will be a solution to continue their cooperative work and will launch during Q1 2024.
  - Continued to carry out the Moodle sessions to CEPOL and MS activity managers upskilling them in the area of development of online learning products based on the CEPOL online template but offering the use of the tools for other types of trainings (hybrid/ onsite); as well initiated the second phase of the Moodle Educators Certification programme development, training of the facilitators.
  - Took over – activities formerly planned to be implemented by framework partners via grants were no grant application was received.
  - Supporting emerging training needs, CEPOL introduced a new process within the framework of the Task force on strategic and operational training needs assessment to analyse policy developments and recommend updated of the portfolio if necessary.
  - Supported the emerging change of the training landscape due to the geopolitical developments, TRU delivered a series of webinars responding to the war in Ukraine, a dedicated ad-hoc training needs analysis; supported the Ukrainian General Prosecutor's office in the development of the OSINT training, as well offered extra seats to the UA participants in the training activities were possible.

In multi-annual perspective, the outreach of CEPOL became more than double: number of participants has grown from ca. 18,000 in 2016 to ca. 46,000 in 2023 which represents a significant increase in the last 7 years and reflects exploding demand and necessity for the training activities that the Agency delivers.

Due to insufficient resources, this demand could only be followed by increasing the online learning component, which does not entirely satisfy the need of the stakeholders. The number of tasks assigned to the Agency and its stakeholder expectations continue to grow, which CEPOL cannot satisfy due to the lack of available financial and human resources.

Taking in consideration that 68% of people working at CEPOL are assigned to operational activities, there is actually a strong need to further strengthen administrative support. CEPOL has reached a situation where support cannot be delivered as needed. This is the case in several areas, e.g. HR (3 staff members for 130 people (generally speaking 1 HR staff member is necessary for approximately 40 staff members), ICT (grading and limited number of posts are not matching with request from the organisation and obligations from regulations such as cybersecurity regulation) and LEGAL/DPO (with an increasing number of PAD request taking up a significant capacity).

## 2.7 Assessment of audit and ex-post evaluation results during the reporting year

### 2.7.1 Internal Audit Service (IAS)

In April 2023 the IAS has completed the Multi-entity audit on coordination between the Directorate-General for Home and Migratory Affairs (DG HOME) and the EU decentralised agencies, with CEPOL being one of them.

The scope of the audit covered the processes and internal controls for the coordination between the audited agencies mentioned above and DG HOME as regards: Planning, Monitoring /supervising the operations and performance of the agencies and Reporting.

The IAS concludes that taken as a whole and in line with the Common Approach and the applicable legal framework, CEPOL's processes and controls in relation to planning, monitoring, supervision, and reporting (including international cooperation activities and evaluation) are adequate to coordinate with DG HOME effectively and efficiently.

However, while the audit work did not result in the identification of any critical or very important issues, the IAS identified two operational weaknesses related to the multiannual planning and the regular coordination with DG HOME.

The action plan for implementing the 2 important recommendations is in progress, with 1 recommendation still to be addressed by end 2024.

REC.N°	PRIORITY	Status of corrective action
<b>1. MULTIANNUAL PLANNING</b> CEPOL should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Ensure that the applicable templates are fully used when preparing the SPD.</li> <li>b. Present to the Management board an overview of the changes made from the draft to the final SPD.</li> <li>c. In particular, the Management Board should be made aware of recurring comments from the EC opinions, how they will be addressed or the Agency's justifications for not addressing them.</li> </ul>	IMPORTANT	Complete, confirmed implemented.  CEPOL has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Ensured the templates are fully completed with the latest available data or estimates at the time of preparing the SPD.</li> <li>b. Ensured the Management board will be provided with an overview of the changes made from the draft to the final SPD 2024 and for the next programming documents.</li> <li>c. Shared with the Management Board the EC opinion and information on how recurring comments have been addressed or the Agency's justifications for not addressing them.</li> </ul>
<b>2. COORDINATION WITH DG HOME</b> CEPOL should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Assess the added value of holding the annual meeting with DG HOME at directors' level, as defined in the working arrangement on the cooperation on external actions. Based on this assessment, organise such meetings or revise the working arrangements.</li> <li>b. Update its financial Memorandum of Understanding with the European Commission.</li> <li>c. Timely consult DG HOME when preparing for its external relations strategy and add new strategies timely in the draft SPD.</li> <li>d. Update the communication strategy, timely consult DG HOME when preparing it and have it endorsed by the MB.</li> <li>e. Review whether the threshold of nine members for the expert group on corporate matters could be decreased to ensure a swift constitution of the MB preparatory group by adjusting the Terms of References.</li> </ul>	IMPORTANT	CEPOL will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. In cooperation with DG Home will revisit and decide on the best cooperation practice on director's level and depending on the outcome will amend or implement the Working Arrangement on external actions accordingly.</li> <li>b. Update its financial Memorandum of Understanding with the European Commission.</li> <li>c. Timely consult DG HOME when preparing for its updated external relations strategy and add new strategies timely in the draft SPD. The next updating exercise is planned to take place in the context of new CEPOL Strategy 2023-2027.</li> <li>d. Update the communication strategy, timely consult DG HOME when preparing it and have it endorsed by the MB.</li> <li>e. The recommendation no longer relevant, in the meantime the Expert Group on Corporate Matters (EGCM) has been constituted and functioning since September 2022. At the time of reviewing the functioning of the EGCM in 2024, we might also consider a possible reduction in the number of members of the group, however no specific action is planned in the context of the present action plan.</li> </ul>

## 2.7.2 European Court of Auditors (ECA)

At the time of drafting the annual report, the European Court of Auditor's opinion on legality and regularity of transactions, as well as on reliability of annual accounts for the financial year 2023 is not available.

## 2.7.3 External quality audits

CEPOL does not have an Internal Audit Capability, therefore this section shall cover external quality audits conducted in the context of ISO certification.

### ISO 9001:2015 quality audit, ISO 29993:2017 certification audit

In February 2023 CEPOL has started a new certification cycle for next 3 years.

CEPOL integrated the specialised ISO 29993:2017 standard for learning services and the ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System certification under the same contract.

The first integrated certification audit took place in February 2023 and resulted in a positive opinion regarding CEPOL compliance with ISO standards.

In 2023 CEPOL maintained its ISO certifications, demonstrating compliance with ISO standards in how we plan, implement and evaluate our training activities.

ISO 29993:2017 certification now covers the following activities:

1. Open source intelligence (OSINT) and IT solutions (Train-the-Trainers)
2. Drug crime and markets – strategic analysis
3. Child trafficking, Forced Criminality and Forced Begging
4. Document Fraud Investigations
5. Foreign Terrorist Fighters and High Risk Individuals
6. Emerging Threats in Terrorist Financing
7. Darkweb and basics of encryption in Counter-Terrorism
8. Open source intelligence (OSINT) in Counter-Terrorism
9. Schengen Evaluation – Internal Security Measures
10. EU Information Systems (Interoperability)
11. Live Data Forensics (Train-the-Trainers)
12. SIRENE I - basic
13. SIRENE II - advanced
14. Trafficking in Human Beings – Sexual Exploitation

We will continue to maintain and expand the ISO certification to new courses as this mechanism helps CEPOL to demonstrate and maintain its commitment to quality and continuous improvement.

## 2.8a Follow up of recommendations and action plans for audits and evaluations

### Internal Audit Service

In October 2021, the IAS implemented the audit concerning 'Human resources management and ethics in CEPOL'. In the final report received in March 2022, the Internal Audit Service concluded that overall, the internal controls put in place by CEPOL for its human resource management processes are adequately designed and effectively and efficiently implemented, ensuring compliance with the regulatory framework for selection and recruitment procedures.

Notwithstanding the overall positive conclusion, the IAS identified areas for improvement regarding the recruitment, appraisal and reclassification procedures which resulted in 3 important recommendations.

The action plan for implementing the 3 important recommendations in the audit report on HR management and ethics is in progress, with 2 recommendations still to be addressed by second half of 2024.

IAS AUDIT RECOMMENDATION	Status of corrective action
<p><b>AUDIT RECOMMENDATION NO 1: SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT PROCEDURE</b></p> <p>The agency should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- update its recruitment guidance and improve the conflict of interest declaration template. In particular, guidance should be developed regarding the identification of essential and advantageous selection criteria and scoring. All criteria (e.g. knowledge or competency) tested during the selection procedure should be listed in the vacancy notice. Also, all criteria listed in the vacancy notice should be tested and scored during the selection procedure.</li> <li>- Ensure consistent internal publication of posts in line with the provisions of its recruitment procedures.</li> <li>- Ensure that the underlying data supporting its KPIs are properly documented.</li> </ul>	<p>Complete, confirmed implemented.</p> <p>CEPOL has strengthened its current process related documentation and practices as following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- new template on conflict of interest declaration</li> <li>- key accountabilities in the vacancy notice linked to the selection criteria, written tests and interviews questions</li> <li>- CEPOL applies only open recruitments in accordance with existing regulatory framework; for this reason internal publication of posts is not a practice.</li> <li>- the KPI applicable to recruitment process has been complemented with calculation method to enable consistent and traceable measurement of average recruitment time.</li> </ul>
<p><b>AUDIT RECOMMENDATION NO 2: APPRAISAL EXERCISE AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <p>The agency should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- implement the appraisal exercise in a timely manner</li> <li>- stress the importance of carrying out each step (e.g. self-assessment and dialogue) of the appraisal exercise by all staff members and managers</li> <li>- continue its assessment of options for developing a competency framework for its posts taking advantage of suggestions like the EUAN competency framework regarding administrative posts and initiatives of the Commission in the frame of the roll out of the Commission's HR application "SYSPER for agencies".</li> </ul>	<p>Partially complete.</p> <p>CEPOL will strengthen its current process related documentation and practices as following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- emphasise to staff the importance of implementing the appraisal exercise in a timely manner and risk connected if failing this. Emphasize to staff the importance of carrying out each step (e.g. self-assessment and dialogue) of the appraisal exercise by all staff members and managers – action complete</li> <li>- continue its assessment of options for developing a competency framework for its posts, primarily taking advantage of initiatives of the Commission in the frame of the roll out of the Commission's HR application "SYSPER for agencies" – action in progress</li> </ul>
<p><b>AUDIT RECOMMENDATION NO 3: RECLASSIFICATION EXERCISE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Agency should improve the documentation of the reclassification process, in particular regarding the comparison of merits among staff members along the three applicable criteria and ensure the correctness of underlying data. Also, after analysing the advantages and disadvantages of scoring systems the Agency should communicate the applicable scoring procedure to staff and ensure that staff members are informed about their scores.</li> <li>- The Joint Reclassification Committee should have access to all relevant documentation and make its conclusions based on a comparative assessment of eligible staff in the grade.</li> <li>- The Agency should appoint a Joint Committee to examine the reclassification procedure and make recommendations to improve it. In the interim it should mitigate the risk connected to the absence of the Joint Committee.</li> <li>- The Agency should calculate and include in the SPD the required statistics regarding reclassifications over a period of five years to ensure compliance with the rules. These data also provide a base for eventual fine-tuning and updating of its method considering the annual budget needs and the budget finally adopted by the budgetary authorities for reclassifications.</li> </ul>	<p>Partially complete.</p> <p>CEPOL will strengthen its current process related documentation and practices as following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- complement the administrative notice on reclassification exercise to be launched in 2022 in particular with provisions regarding the comparison of merits among staff members along the three applicable criteria (performance appraisals, level of responsibility and languages) and communicate the applicable scoring procedure to staff and ensure that staff members are informed about their scores – action complete</li> <li>- complement the administrative notice on reclassification exercise to be launched in 2022 with provisions that the Joint Reclassification Committee should have access to all relevant documentation (to be listed) and make its conclusions based on a comparative assessment of eligible staff in the grade – action complete</li> <li>- set up a Joint Committee (JC) to start operate for the appraisal exercise 2022 to be launched in 2023 – the JC in place, first report to be issued in 2023</li> <li>- set up a calculation method and include in the SPD the required statistics regarding reclassifications over a period of five years, to be adjusted based on the final budget adopted by the budgetary authorities – action complete.</li> </ul>

## European Court of Auditors (ECA)

The European Court of Auditor's opinion on legality and regularity of transactions, as well as on reliability of annual accounts for the financial year 2022 was received on 26 May 2023.

The report includes a qualified opinion on the legality and regularity of payments underlying the accounts:

*'In our opinion, except for the effects of the matters explained in the 'Basis for qualified opinion on the legality and regularity of payments underlying the accounts' paragraphs, the payments underlying the accounts of CEPOL for the year ended 31 December 2022 are legal and regular in all material respects'.*

*The total amount of non-compliant expenditure is €4.6 million. This represents 14.8 % of the total payment appropriations available in 2022. This exceeds the materiality threshold set for this audit.*

The basis for qualified opinion on the legality and regularity of payments underlying the accounts is explained in the ECA comments below for which CEPOL provided its replies.

### ECA observation 1:

*We audited two framework contracts, one with a total value of €1.6 million, signed in May 2018 for accommodation, shuttle and parking services, and another, with a total value of €21.5 million, signed in January 2022 for travel services. CEPOL implemented both contracts directly through order forms (service requests) sent by emails. We found that the service requests were sent by CEPOL staff members who did not have the delegated authority to enter into legal commitments on behalf of CEPOL, or by interim employees who – because of their interim status – could not legally have such delegated authority. Therefore, the service requests did not constitute valid legal commitments, and all associated payments are irregular. In 2022 CEPOL made 425 payments under these two contracts, with a total value of €4.4 million.*

### CEPOL's reply:

Although CEPOL agrees with the finding in principle, we stress the facts that: even if there was a weakness in the formalisation of the legal commitment, the services were ordered in line with the Agency's needs and controls were applied in full to ensure the correct implementation of the payments concerned; internal controls were in place to ensure that the funds were used for the intended purpose and no actual loss was incurred.

CEPOL has introduced corrective measures by giving formal authorisation to staff to place request for services and removing the interims from the financial workflow.

Moreover, in order to regulate the process of ordering services in terms of workflow and responsibilities, to ensure consistent practice and reduce risk of administrative mistakes, CEPOL has issued Administrative Notice 2024/06/Finance.

### ECA observation 2:

*In paragraph 3.31.10 of our 2021 audit report, we identified weaknesses in procuring a framework contract of €1.1 million for editorial services. When auditing the implementation of the contract in 2022, we found that the amounts paid could not be reconciled with the services provided. Some categories of tasks did not reflect the nature of actual work performed, and for all categories, the amount of work paid for did not correspond to the amount actually done. CEPOL was unable to provide a corrected calculation of the amounts due for the services actually provided.*

*In addition, we found that the value of 14 order forms had been raised in June 2022 (in 11 cases by an identical amount of €600) at the request of the contractor, without CEPOL giving any clear identification of why the needs had increased. This increase was not accompanied by any demonstrable increase in the amount of work performed. We also note that the prices under this contract were unusually high: in some cases they were eight times higher than the prices charged by the EU Publications Office for similar editorial services, which are also available to CEPOL. Based on the above, we conclude that all payments under this framework contract, which in 2022 amounted to €152 655, are irregular.*

### CEPOL's reply:

We take note of the ECA's observation and have taken corrective action to address the issues identified. We do agree with ECA that the number of pages ordered, delivered and paid did not fully match, as due to nature



of work, namely editorial and educational content development, this was not always precisely quantifiable in advance. However, we would like to note that checks were carried out on the deliverables. Finally, the categories of tasks were based on those listed in a previous contract with the Publication Office.

The concerned FWC contract expired in August 2023 and was not renewed. The tender specifications for the next contract have been built around on-line training product development services, instead of an editorial service focused contract.

### ECA observation 3:

*The total amount of non-compliant expenditure is €4.6 million. This represents 14.8 % of the total payment appropriations available in 2022. This exceeds the materiality threshold set for this audit.*

Having in view the materiality level of the irregularities, CEPOL was invited by the EP to present the situation in the context of the procedure for the Discharge Decision 2022. As of now, both issues were addressed with corrective measures.

### **Update on ECA follow-up of previous years' observations:**

Sequence number	Year of the ECA's observation	The ECA's observation (summary)	Corrective action taken and / or other relevant developments (summary)	Status of the ECA's observation (Open / Closed)
1	2020	We observed weaknesses in CEPOL's internal control environment, in relation to the management of budgetary commitments; (a) CEPOL signed three legal commitments before the respective budgetary commitments had been approved; (b) two different specific contracts (legal commitments) were linked with the same individual budgetary commitment.	CEPOL has taken steps, including training and workshops, to increase awareness and reduce occurrence of such administrative errors. ECA found no similar cases in 2022.	Closed
2	2021	The services requested were not in the scope of the framework contract which resulted in irregular payments for these services.	The contract in question expired, and a new all-inclusive framework contract has been in place since January 2022.	Closed
3	2021	During the evaluation process of a procurement procedure CEPOL put emphasis on a criterion that was not clearly presented in the tender specifications. This created the risk of bidders being treated unequally	The concerned FWC contract expired in August 2023 and was not renewed. The tender specifications for the next contract have been built around on-line training product development services, instead of an editorial service focused contract.	Open
4	2021	Selection criteria overlapped with award criteria in one procurement procedure.	The contract expired on 31 August 2021.	Closed.
5	2021	Due to the lack of internal controls in monitoring of outstanding payments, CEPOL closed a budgetary commitment before all payments were executed.	CEPOL has taken steps, including training and workshops, to increase awareness and reduce occurrence of such administrative errors. ECA found no similar cases in 2022.	Closed.

## **2.8b Follow up of recommendations issued following investigations by OLAF<sup>37</sup>**

No OLAF investigation nor follow up of recommendations took place in 2023.

<sup>37</sup> Article 11 Regulation (EU/Euratom) 883/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning investigations conducted by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)



## 2.9 Follow up of observations from the Discharge Authority

CEPOL received the EP Discharge Decision for Financial Year 2021<sup>38</sup>. Status and detailed information on the measures taken by CEPOL in the light of observations and comments made by the European Parliament in decision of 04 May 2022 on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) for the financial year 2020 (2021/2120(DEC)) is provided below.

OBSERVATION OF THE DISCHARGE AUTHORITY	RESPONSE AND MEASURES TAKEN BY CEPOL	STATUS
<b>Performance</b> 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.	CEPOL action plan for the implementation of the recommendations in the 5 years evaluation report has been drafted and included in the Single Programming Document and Work Programme 2023-2025. Its implementation is in progress in the multi-annual perspective.	In progress
<b>Performance</b> 8. Highlights the need for the law enforcement training at Union level to reflect the threat 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.	<p>The agency has carried out number of dedicated training and learning actions on the protection of fundamental rights with particular attention on fighting against all forms of discrimination, anti-racisms, protection of vulnerable groups, ethical profiling practice.</p> <p>These online and onsite training activities are implemented typically in strong cooperation with FRA offering good practice and perspective from law enforcement, social services, NGOs, minority groups and victims. To name a couple of training activities from 2021-2023: "Hate Crime and Discrimination against Roma and Travellers"; "Hate crime racism and discrimination"; "Unlawful Profiling"; "Hate Crime - Anti-Muslim Hatred"; "Antisemitic hate crime" "Hate crime against members of the LGBTQ community" "Police and persons with Mental Health Issues" "Hate crime"; "Victim protection"; "Fundamental rights"; "Lawful and unlawful profiling - police stops and predictive policing"; "Hate crime: Encouraging reporting, improving recording and understanding bias indicators".</p> <p>The possibilities and dangers of Artificial Intelligence receive widespread attention in cybercrime activities but also on other courses such as on criminal analysis. A special workshop on the use of Artificial Intelligence regarding data minimisation, anonymization and protection was organised in March 2023.</p>	Closed
<b>Performance</b> 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 <b>fundamental rights as a cross-cutting issue to the training activities</b> offered where applicable in both Member States and third countries with particular emphasis on fundamental rights and crime prevention.	<p>Based on the Expert Group on Fundamental Rights recommendations, CEPOL has developed a number of tools to support Activity Managers to include Fundamental Rights aspects during training design, curricula development and training delivery.</p> <p>In line with the outcome of the EU-STNA, Fundamental Rights is one of the identified core competency gaps and CEPOL addresses it as a cross cutting issue. The agency stepped up its efforts in fundamental rights training during the last years and on other LE topics. A monitoring system will continue to be extended in the next years as well in line with approved new strategy. Each and every CEPOL onsite training activity contains training material on fundamental rights and data protection elements. This is also part of the New Strategy.</p>	Closed

<sup>38</sup> P9\_TA(2023)0164 Discharge 2021: European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL)

<p><b>Performance</b></p> <p>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 <b>include customs and border officials</b>; encourages the Agency to ensure that working arrangements are in place with all key bodies.</p>	<p>Though concluding working arrangement with DG Taxud would certainly help, CEPOL already provides training for customs and border officials in its onsite and online activities. In 2021, 1509 customs officers and 4419 border guards, coast guards and maritime law enforcement officer benefitted from CEPOL trainings (out of 46,340 total participants). In 2022, 2032 customs officers and 3361 border guards, coast guards and maritime law enforcement officers utilised CEPOL trainings (out of 43,838 total participants). Though due to the nature of the CEPOL portfolio, the majority of training participants will always come from police, there is already a significant portion of customs and border guard officers trained. The agency aspires to continue to provide multidisciplinary activities attracting customs and border officials as well.</p>	<p>In progress</p>
<p><b>Performance</b></p> <p>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 <b>hands-on practical training</b> (joint exercises, simulations, table-top exercises) than (virtual) theoretical classroom training.</p>	<p>Under the leadership of the new Executive Director, CEPOL has initiated development of its new strategy 2023-2027 which was adopted by the Management Board in November 2022.</p> <p>As part of the new strategy, under Activity 2.2 <i>Develop new, innovative, specialised and multi-layered learning solutions</i>, CEPOL has planned to design and implement a new learning environment and new methodologies focusing on operational, hands-on, interactive approaches, simulations, exercises, and student-centred learning. The agency implements these exercise oriented trainings already, please consider the following examples: the first virtual reality based drugs training will be organised in October 2023; document fraud training participants could observe security elements (threads, inks, fibres, planchettes) of banknotes, passports, breeder documents in national printing facilities; THB course is supporting a preparation for a joint law enforcement action.</p>	<p>In progress</p>
<p><b>Staff policy</b></p> <p>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;</p>	<p>We appreciate the comment and support of the EP in addressing the staffing issue in CEPOL.</p> <p>In order to substantiate future request for resources, the ED of CEPOL has set up a Task Force to systematically document and justify the needs for additional budgetary and human resources, in the context of the new CEPOL strategy 2023-2027.</p>	<p>In progress</p>
<p><b>Staff policy</b></p> <p>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.</p>	<p>This aspect is beyond CEPOL's control, having in view the main trigger is the low country correction coefficient and the relatively low graded positions for key support functions in the Agency.</p> <p>In 2022 the staff turnover continued to be relatively high, therefore CEPOL continued to implement staff retention and business continuity measures. The Agency used a number of interim staff and SNEs to fill in for staff absence, until recruitment of statutory staff was completed and continued reclassification of staff and functions, maintaining the social arrangement (e.g. schooling for staff's children), teleworking and flexitime arrangements.</p>	<p>Closed</p>

<p><b>Staff policy</b></p> <p>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; <b>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;</b></p>	<p>The geographical balance aspect is beyond CEPOL's control, when it comes to the nationality of applicants and the outcome of recruitment process which is strictly regulated to ensure the highest ranking candidate is appointed.</p> <p>CEPOL continues to receive a significant number of applications from Hungarian citizens. This however does not impact on the quality of applications received and the Agency's ability to recruit suitable candidates.</p> <p>At the end of 2022, there were 36 Hungarian citizens (39%) working for the agency, from a total of 93 staff (TA, CA &amp; SNEs - CEPOL establishment plan and project related staff, including one trainee). There are 17 other nationalities present in CEPOL, which are relatively equally distributed.</p> <p>As of 31 December 2022 CEPOL does not employ staff from Cyprus, Czech, Denmark, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, Slovenia and Germany.</p>	<p>Closed</p>
<p><b>Procurement</b></p> <p>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.</p>	<p>We appreciate the comment and support of the EP in addressing the staffing issue in CEPOL.</p> <p>The establishment plan for 2023 (based on the amended budget 2023, foresees the transformation of the AST-5 (recruitment grade AST-3) to AD-5. As the postholder resigned in 2023, a recruitment procedure for AD5 was launched in 2023. This recruitment has been successful, the new procurement officer took up duties in October 2023.</p>	<p>Closed</p>
<p><b>Prevention and management of conflicts of interest, and transparency</b></p> <p>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; <b>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;</b> 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.</p>	<p>Experts working for CEPOL have, generally speaking, a law enforcement background. We have assessed that, due to data protection considerations, publishing the experts' application/CVs would lead to a significant reduced number of applications for experts. This would have a negative consequence for the implementation of our Programme of Work.</p>	<p>Closed</p>
<p><b>Internal control</b></p> <p>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.</p>	<p>The observations of the Court have been considered in the assessment of the component 'monitoring activities', principle 17 'assess and communicate deficiencies' of the internal control framework. CEPOL has explicitly referenced the Court's observations in the conclusions for the assessment conducted in 2023.</p> <p>Nevertheless, at the time of drafting the consolidated annual activity report, the European Court of Auditor's opinion on legality and regularity of transactions, as well as on reliability of annual accounts for the financial year 2022 was available only in draft format and the findings were under the contradictory procedure. Having in view the report was confidential at that stage, details have been provided in the next consolidated annual activity report for 2023.</p>	<p>Closed</p>

<b>Internal control</b> 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;	The Agency has taken note of the Court's findings. CEPOL as a complement to the award criteria, indicated information to be provided with the technical offer, not with the aim to assess the capacity of tenderers, but to support the elaboration of how the works would be executed in full compliance with the relevant standards. The contract expired on 31 August 2021.  Regarding the other Court's finding, the Agency acknowledges and accepts the findings. CEPOL has taken steps, including training and workshops, to increase awareness and reduce occurrence of such administrative errors. ECA found no similar cases in 2022.	Closed
<b>Internal control</b> 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;	CEPOL has taken steps, including training and workshops, to increase awareness and reduce occurrence of such administrative errors. ECA found no similar cases in 2022.	Closed
<b>Internal control</b> 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	The action plan for implementing the 3 important recommendations in the audit report on HR management and ethics is in progress. Recommendations 1 concerning the selection and recruitment procedure has been closed after the desk review implemented by IAS in 2023. The other 2 pending recommendations are in progress to be addressed by end 2024.	In progress
<b>Internal control</b> 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.	Continuous difficulties are encountered in documenting the ICT processes due to already insufficient staff to run the daily activities. The workload situation in ICT office continued to be challenging in 2022 due to resignation of IT Officer, with only one statutory staff left in post.  Developments connected to documents management, filing and archiving are hampered by lack of a dedicated position for document management and archiving in the establishment plan. Temporary solutions like re-allocating staff or using trainee have been tried out however these do not enable sustainable progress, therefore no further steps towards implementation of ARES were made in 2022.	In progress
<b>Digitalisation and the green transition</b> 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;  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;	As mentioned under point 28, staffing situation in IT office does not enable procedural developments. CEPOL does not have in its establishment plan allocated post in order to implement the Cybersecurity Regulation. CEPOL is closely following discussions in the Agencies' Network on sharing roles such as Cybersecurity Officer, Security Authority etc. and hopes to participate in any (pilot) project on such issues.  CEPOL is working closely together with CERT-EU on several cyber related issues. One of topics discussed is a phishing exercise organised by CERT-EU aimed at CEPOL staff. Such exercise is likely to be very effective.	In progress
<b>Other comments</b> 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; <b>calls on the Agency to keep the discharge authority informed</b>	As a major step forward, the Hungarian Government made a commitment to ensure continuity and to provide CEPOL with proper facilities. Host country adopted decision to ensure new HQ (6000 sqm) in form of a rental. A removal to new premises is estimated to take place until the end of 2024, with the signature of the new Seat Agreement in first quarter 2024.	In progress



<p><b>about the developments as regards its premises and progress made in the discussions with the host Member State;</b> welcomes the creation of an internal task force to assess options on how best to make use of the existing space</p>		
<p><b>Other comments</b></p> <p>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</p>	<p>The Expert Group on Fundamental Rights provided its recommendations which are taken into account during training design, delivery and curricula development. The agency stepped up its efforts in fundamental rights training during the last years and will continue to do so in the next years as well in line with approved new strategy. Each and every CEPOL onsite training activity contains training material on fundamental rights and data protection.</p> <p>Please refer also to item 9.</p>	<p>Closed</p>
<p><b>Other comments</b></p> <p>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;</p>	<p>With the launch of its new website in 2022, CEPOL improved its public register of documents. The technical changes introduced allow citizens to search for CEPOL's official documents by category. The types of documents that are directly accessible by any web user or citizen include the annual accounts, the annual budget, the consolidated annual activity report, the evaluation reports, the management board decisions, procurement documents, strategic documents and the agency's annual work programme.</p> <p>When direct access to a document is not given through the public register of documents, web users or citizens can apply for access to a document through a web form available on the same webpage. In 2022, CEPOL received five requests for public access to documents.</p> <p>Additionally, CEPOL responds to inquiries from citizens through a dedicated contact mailbox displayed on every page of CEPOL's website. In 2022, CEPOL staff handled 920 public inquiries from citizens.</p> <p>CEPOL's new website underpins the enhanced digital communications approach introduced in 2019 to reach out to citizens more effectively. In 2022, CEPOL released more than 130 news items about the agency's work and performance, content that was subsequently channelled through social media networks in an engaging and visually appealing manner.</p>	<p>Closed</p>

## 2.10 Environment Management

Considering the responsibilities of CEPOL as a public administration body, the Agency is committed to continue undertaking efforts aimed at protecting its natural and social environment, and at proactively advancing towards sustainability.

To demonstrate this commitment and to achieve the goals set forth in Annex VI (Environment Management) of the CEPOL Single Programming Document 2023, CEPOL is currently implementing or in the process of implementation of different environment-focused initiatives.

The above-mentioned initiatives and their status of implementation can be summarized as follows:

1. **Green public procurement** > already in place.
  - "Environmental considerations" are part of the relevant calls for tenders (e.g. "Environmental and social contribution" as tender criteria) – in place;
  - Procurement is working on the details of the green public procurement;
  - CEPOL intends to apply green and socially responsible procurement (to look beyond the price of products or services and also consider how they are produced, sourced and delivered) criteria in the relevant calls in the future.
2. **Carbon footprint management of travel**> partially completed.
  - For travel arrangements the recommendation is to opt for environmentally friendlier itineraries;
  - Agreement with Estravel to compile regular reports on travel-related emissions (carbon footprint), through the Symphony and Mips applications (for staff and participants).
3. **Further reduction of paper consumption** > mostly completed.

- Core business already committed to reduce the amount of publication printouts and shift towards a more print-on-demand approach;
  - Recycled A4 paper for printing has been introduced, and orders now include mainly recycled paper;
  - Introduction of electronic workflows, replacing traditional paper files:
    - Speedwell for financial workflow – completed;
    - MiPS for travel mission claims (Speedwell) replacing paper files – completed;
    - Bluebell: budgetary planning and monitoring tool and electronic workflow (interface with ABAC) – completed;
    - ARES document management system implementation – ongoing.
- 4. Waste sorting and recycling** > already in place.
- CEPOL employees have been notified about the proper procedures for selectively placing and collecting waste.
  - *Paper & plastic/alu* containers have been placed in both CEPOL HQ & Aradi buildings.
  - Additional recycling measures include having a battery collection point in the HQ stationery room, individual collection of Nescafé capsules.
  - The main training room is now furnished with two water dispensers exclusively using paper cups, and the use of plastic water bottles has been discontinued.
  - Office supplies manufactured from recycled and eco-friendly products are being purchased.
- 5. Consumption of resources** (utilities) > set in motion.
- As of January 2021, NOK-ITC provides statistics on gas, electricity & water consumption periodically, saved in the common drive accessible to all staff. Additionally, information on consumption is annually collected for the CEPOL Aradi offices.
  - Maximum and minimum temperatures have been set for the heating/cooling systems.
- 6. Reduction of carbon footprint related to staff commuting** > mostly completed.
- To encourage the reduction of car-based commuting, reimbursement of local transportation passes for CEPOL's employees (with the support of the Staff Committee) is in place from January 2022.
  - A narrow bicycle ramp for the HQ front door staircase was installed to facilitate carrying a bike to/from the storage area.

## 2.11 Assessment by Management

CEPOL has in place measures to ensure legality and regularity of the underlying transactions, including comprehensive ex-ante verification, targeted ex-post controls and specific measures to prevent and detect fraud and conflict of interest.

At the management level, the Agency relies on a set of mechanisms that allow to monitor the Agency's performance and compliance to established procedures and plans.

CEPOL adopted and implements the following documentation and practices to continuously monitor the performance of the internal control system and achievement of objectives: regular reports (e.g. Core Business/Corporate Services Monthly Reports, Agency's Progress Reports including reporting on performance indicators and audit recommendations, weekly/monthly budget implementation reports, individual activity reports), risk register, regular review meetings (e.g. Management Coordination Meetings, Management Board meetings), exception notes and exception register report, ex ante controls on financial transactions as well as targeted ex post controls.

Besides the internal control framework, CEPOL is following the Quality Management System Standard ISO 9001:2015. The continuous improvement of processes and procedures is embedded in CEPOL's Quality Management System, which is regularly scrutinised via surveillance audits by an independent auditor.

In accordance with ISO 9001:2015 requirements, a Management Review meeting takes places once per year to review the organisation's quality management system, to ensure its continuing suitability, adequacy, effectiveness and alignment with the strategic direction of the organisation.

Considering the results indicated by the self-assessment on implementation of internal control framework, register of exceptions, ex post controls, risk assessment and audit findings (IAS, ECA), the management has reasonable assurance that, overall, suitable controls are in place and working effectively; risks are being



appropriately monitored and mitigated; and necessary improvements and reinforcements are being implemented.

By undergoing regular audits, CEPOL ensures ongoing improvement and is transparent to its stakeholders and end users. The Agency has systematically examined the observations and recommendations issued by internal auditors, the European Court of Auditors and the European Parliament. On this basis, it took actions as appropriate.

At the Management Board meetings, the Executive Director regularly reports about the Agency's achievements and the progress on the activities, results of the evaluations, outcome of the internal and external audits carried out at the Agency and the implementation of the Agency's anti-fraud strategy.

During 2023, OLAF did not initiate any cases that concern the Agency's activity.

## **Part II. (b) External Evaluations**

In December 2021, the CEPOL's 5-year evaluation – as laid down in the founding regulation – has been completed. This evaluation has been performed by the Commission via external contractor.

The evaluation recognised the overall positive contribution of the Agency to the policy needs, objectives and values of the Security Union and their valuable activity in third countries. In all five criteria evaluated, CEPOL was globally found to score well, being effective in carrying out relevant activities contributing to a European law enforcement culture, providing added value compared to the national level, utilising resources efficiently and in a coherent manner within the EU security architecture.

While acknowledging CEPOL's contribution to enhancing security through training of and building a common culture among law enforcement actors, the evaluation identified some issues deserving attention. Those concern the internal functioning of the Agency, its corporate image and culture, and the relationship with the Management Board.

The Management Board has provided its observations to the five-year CEPOL evaluation report by Decision of the Management Board 01/2022/MB.

Further on an action plan was developed by CEPOL to address the recommendations. In total there are 13 recommendations to be addressed and majority are 'in progress'.

The main area of improvement refers to increasing the outreach and effectiveness of CEPOL training programmes by:

- expanding the train-the-trainer programme
- supporting CNUs to set-up national cascading system
- further invest in cybercrime training offer to cover for relevant topics to be better addressed at the European level
- strengthening the coordination capacity for CEPOL to become "the EU hub for law enforcement training".

## **Part III. Assessment of the effectiveness of the internal control systems**

### **3.1 Effectiveness of internal control systems**

In November 2018, Management Board adopted Decision 26/2018/MB on the revised CEPOL's Internal Control Framework (ICF), which is largely based on the European Commission's ICF, with limited adjustments to CEPOL context.

In 2019 CEPOL defined the indicators to be used for assessing the implementation of the new ICF, based on the indicative list provided by the Commission. Targets are numerical (single value) or logical (e.g. "Yes/No" for compliance indicators).

As described in the EC guidelines, some of the principles relate mainly to soft controls (intangible controls like morale, integrity, leadership, competencies, openness and motivation). Therefore, they can only be assessed by means of tools such as surveys (e.g. Staff Survey) and interviews.

The latest Staff Engagement Survey (SES) was organised in November 2023 and recorded an overall 53% total favourable replies, less than target 60%. Considering the high percentage of neutral replies (24%), the gap between the target and achieved result, cannot be considered as being caused by an internal control deficiency as such.

As per the result of SES the strong points of CEPOL are represented by:

- meaningful and rewarding job, which brings people to give an extra effort in order to bring the best results
- the working environment, where the internationalism and multiculturalism, the different professional profiles of the staff members and the meaningful interactions with the external stakeholders and partners make the environment dynamic and stimulating
- the relationship with colleagues, who are described as talented, supportive and friendly, who contribute to the creation of a positive working environment
- also, line management received positive feedback, being active, approachable and encouraging.

As per the result of SES the weak points of CEPOL are represented by:

- internal communication and decision-making process, especially with regards to management of changes could be more transparent, offering increased opportunity for involvement of staff members in decisions affecting their work.
- disappointment about the flexibility in teleworking (also from abroad), being the current rules quite strict, and this penalizes staff members' work-life balance.
- the process for career development could be made more transparent and streamlined, as well as the learning opportunities offered to staff and management could be increased.

The results of SES have been analysed by the Management and action plan with recommendations for improvement will be adopted.

The IAS recommendations as well as the observations of the Court for the previous years, have been considered in the overall assessment. For financial year 2022 the ECA report included a qualified opinion on the legality and regularity of payments underlying the accounts. Detailed information regarding actions taken to address audit recommendations is included under section 2.8.

At the time of drafting the annual report, the Court's opinion for the financial year 2023, is not available, however the so far preliminary findings do not raise any material irregularities.

With regards to ethics and integrity, CEPOL adopted and implements the following key documentation: Code of Administrative Behaviour (Decision of the Director 26/2019), CEPOL's Anti-Fraud Sub-Strategy (Decision 28/2020/MB), Policy on Management of Conflict of Interest (Decision 19/2020/MB) and guidelines on whistleblowing (Decision 03/2019/MB).

The objective of CEPOL's Anti-fraud Sub-Strategy which was latest updated in 2020, is to 'Maintain a high level of ethics and fraud awareness within the Agency'. The implementation of the strategy is monitored via dedicated action plan. In this context, CEPOL schedules regular refresher training session on ethics and integrity for all staff.

In line with the policy on conflict of interest, MB members, staff members, SNEs, interims, have all signed a declaration of conflict of interest which is renewed on regular basis.

The result of the assessment of the five internal control components, indicates the following conclusion:

- Control environment, Risk Assessment and Monitoring Activities - assessed as *Category 1. The component is present and functioning well, only minor improvements needed.*
- Control Activities and Information and Communication - assessed as *Category 2. The component is present and functioning, but some improvements are needed.*

The internal control deficiencies for the two components assessed as category 2 are mainly related to lack of formalising controls over technology (ICT Backup Policy and disaster recovery plan from ICT perspective, Information System Security Policy) and procedural framework for document management.

Continuous difficulties are encountered in documenting the ICT processes due to already insufficient staff to run the daily activities. The workload situation in ICT office improved in 2023 following recruitment of new IT Officer, who took up duty in December.

Developments connected to documents management, filing and archiving are hampered by lack of a dedicated position for document management and archiving in the establishment plan. Despite this limitation further steps towards implementation of ARES were made in 2023 by adopting the filing plan, and the system is expected to be applied by end of May 2024.

## 3.2 Conclusions of assessment of internal control systems

Following detailed assessment of each principle, characteristic and component of the ICF, the conclusion is that the overall internal control system is effective, falling under *Category 1. The internal control system is present and functioning well, only minor improvements needed.*

## 3.3 Statement of the Manager in charge of risk management and internal control

CEPOL does not have a dedicated position as Manager in charge of risk management and internal control. This is a shared management responsibility, where the Executive Director is supported by both Heads of Departments (Operations and Corporate Services). At officer level, the process is assisted by the internal control and quality management function. Within the Annual Activity Report preparation process, each function shall produce a statement serving to ground the Executive Director's Declaration of Assurance (see Part V Declaration of assurance).

CEPOL implements risk assessment as part of the annual programming cycle. For each of the risks identified, mitigating action(s), action owners and deadlines for these actions are agreed and recorded on the risk register. Risks considered 'critical' from an overall CEPOL's perspective are followed-up in the Consolidated Annual Activity Report.

In the beginning of 2023, the following main risks were considered as having a high likelihood of occurrence and significant impact on the agency's activities:

- *Insufficient conference and office space in CEPOL HQ, uncertainty around a potential new HQ may negatively impact on the business continuity*

Discussions with the Hungarian Government took place for finding sufficient office space for CEPOL. Task Force was established to systematically deal with various aspects of CEPOL new HQ, with significant progress achieved at the end of 2023. The signature of the new HQ agreement with the host country and the re-location to the new building are scheduled for 2024.

- *due to structural deficit in budget and human resources, inability to perform all mandate duties and fulfil Member States' training needs*

On 25 November 2015 the new CEPOL Regulation has been adopted by the legislative authorities; as from 1 July 2016 it is applied. The new Regulation sets ambitious goals for the agency, including new tasks.

This risk has been identified since 2016 but it is considered still active, until the resources are aligned with the new mandate expectations. In the meantime, CEPOL applies prioritisation of tasks, management of stakeholder's expectations, providing for support staff (Contract Agents/interim staff) and requests additional resources from the Budgetary Authority.

- *high staff fluctuation may impact achievement of objectives; deficit of key skills and knowledge within the Agency due to inability to attract or maintain qualified staff due to low correction coefficient and other demotivating factors (e.g. overworked staff, lack of professional development opportunities)*

Staff fluctuation in 2023 was relatively high and although it had a significant impact on the organisation in terms of workload of remaining staff, did not impact on achievement of objectives. CEPOL continued to make use of interims and re-allocate tasks among existing staff until recruitment was done.

- *Unstable geo-political situation in certain countries (especially due to Ukraine war, Gaza conflict) may negatively impact on achievement of objectives; may jeopardise cooperation and implementation of project activities in third countries; it might also affect the ability/willingness of other countries to*

*cooperate (implement activities, send participants, trainers), which might affect overall implementation of the training portfolio; from budget perspective, the war in Ukraine generates inflated prices.*

Actions taken effectively addressed the potential risk which did not materialise, since CEPOL has adjusted the relevant work programme activities to respond to the urgent training needs via ad-hoc initiatives.

All the above-mentioned risks were kept under control via mitigating measures therefore none of them had a critical impact on the achievement of objectives.

## Part IV. Management Assurance

### 4.1 Review of the elements supporting assurance

The information reported in Parts II and III stems from the results of management and auditor monitoring contained in the reports listed. These reports result from a systematic analysis of the evidence available. This approach provided sufficient guarantees of the completeness and reliability of the information reported and results in a complete coverage of the budget managed by the Agency.

In conclusion:

- there were no reservations listed in the previous years' annual activity reports
- all IAS recommendations are addressed via dedicated action plan and monitored in terms of implementation as per agreed deadlines
- at the time of drafting the annual report, the European Court of Auditor's opinion on legality and regularity of transactions, as well as on reliability of annual accounts for the financial year 2023 is not available but the preliminary findings do not indicate critical irregularities
- observations from the European Parliament have been considered.

### 4.2 Reservations

Taking the above into consideration, no critical weaknesses were identified related to the financial management of appropriations inside the Agency which were not addressed, so no reservations are made in this context in the declaration below.

#### 4.2.1 Materiality Criteria

Materiality criteria define the elements for determination of significant weaknesses that should be subject to a formal reservation in the assurance declaration of the Authorising Officer in the context of the Consolidated Annual Activity Report.

The decision whether weakness is significant, remains a matter of judgement of the Authorising Officer. In this judgement the overall impact of a weakness needs to be identified and an assessment needs to be made on whether the issue is material enough to have an influence on the decisions or conclusions of the users of the assurance declaration.

In consequence judgement needs to be based on a qualitative and a quantitative assessment. In addition, reputational events may be considered. The following provides a non-exhaustive list of possible types of weaknesses to be considered in this context.

Quantitative weaknesses: significant occurrence of errors in the underlying transactions (legality and regularity).

Qualitative weaknesses: significant control system weaknesses, insufficient audit coverage and/or inadequate information from internal control systems, critical issues reported by the European Court of Auditors, the IAS, or OLAF, significant reputational events.

Qualitative criteria are linked to failure in achieving CEPOL's short-term objectives, risks to CEPOL reputation, significant deficiencies in its control systems and repetitive errors. The qualitative assessment of a weakness (deficiency) should consider if the type of deficiency falls within the scope of the assurance declaration which refers to the use of resources, sound financial management, and legality and regularity of transactions.

In considering the significance of the materiality criteria, one should include the nature and scope of the weakness, the duration of the weakness, the existence of mitigating actions reducing the impact of the weakness and the existence of corrective actions (action plans and financial corrections) which have had measurable impact.

In quantitative terms, in order to make a judgement on the significance of a weakness, it is essential to quantify the potential financial impact ("monetary value of the identified problem"/"amount considered erroneous"/"the amount considered at risk") in monetary terms.

As regards legality and regularity, the proposed standard quantitative materiality threshold must not exceed 2%. Related to CEPOL's regular budget for 2019, the 2% threshold would define an amount of about € 186 000. Considering potential cases, this amount seems too high. Thus, the (standard) quantitative threshold is set at €25 000<sup>39</sup>.

This threshold is in line with the level of materiality defined by CEPOL in case of exceptions requiring approval by the Authorising Officer, as per adopted 'Policy on Recording and Management of Exceptions' (PO.INCO.002).

Deviations from this materiality threshold must be fully justified in the Consolidated Annual Activity Report. It is however necessary to underline that some deficiencies below this threshold may be deemed significant on the basis of the qualitative assessment. In addition, it may be considered that specific reputational events on the basis of specific assessments may give rise to a reservation.

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<sup>39</sup> A deficiency is considered material if the financial impact or risk of loss is equal to or more than €25 000.



## Part V. Declaration of Assurance

I, the undersigned, Executive Director of the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL),

In my capacity as Authorising Officer,

Declare that the information contained in this report gives a true and fair view.

I state that I have reasonable assurance that the resources assigned to the activities described in this report have been used for their intended purpose and in accordance with the principles of sound financial management, and that the control procedures put in place give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions.

This reasonable assurance is based on my own judgement and on the information at my disposal, such as the results of the self-assessment, ex-post controls, the observations of the Internal Audit Service and the lessons learnt from the reports of the Court of Auditors for years prior to the year of this declaration.

For financial year 2022 the ECA report included a qualified opinion on the legality and regularity of payments underlying the accounts, details provided under section 2.8. In 2023 the issues have been addressed with corrective measures therefore no reservations are listed in the current annual report.

At the time of drafting the annual report, the European Court of Auditor's opinion on legality and regularity of transactions, as well as on reliability of annual accounts for the financial year 2023 is not available however the so far preliminary findings do not prompt any material irregularities.

Done at Budapest, on 02/05/2024

<<signature on file>>

Montserrat Marin Lopez  
CEPOL Executive Director  
Authorising Officer

## Statement of the Head of Operations

I, the undersigned,

Head of Operations within the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL),

In my capacity as Authorising Officer by Delegation for the operational budget,

I hereby certify that the information provided in Part 1 of the present Annual Activity Report and in its annexes is, to the best of my knowledge, accurate and complete.

State that I have reasonable assurance that the resources assigned to the activities described in this report have been used for their intended purpose and in accordance with the principles of sound financial management, and that the control procedures put in place give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions.

Declare that in accordance with CEPOL Internal Control Framework, I have reported my advice and recommendations on the overall state of internal control to the Executive Director.

Done at Budapest, on 02/05/2024

<<signature on file>>

Mailis Pukonen  
Head of Operations  
Authorising Officer by Delegation

## Statement of the Head of Corporate Services

I, the undersigned,

Head of Corporate Services within the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL),

In my capacity as Authorising Officer by Delegation for the administrative budget,

I hereby certify that the information provided in Part 2 of the present Annual Activity Report and in its annexes is, to the best of my knowledge, accurate and complete.

State that I have reasonable assurance that the resources assigned to the activities described in this report have been used for their intended purpose and in accordance with the principles of sound financial management, and that the control procedures put in place give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions.

Declare that in accordance with CEPOL Internal Control Framework, I have reported my advice and recommendations on the overall state of internal control to the Executive Director.

Done at Budapest, on 02/05/2024

<<signature on file>>

Roeland Woldhuis  
Head of Corporate Services  
Authorising Officer by Delegation

## Statement of the Internal Control and Quality Management Officer

I, the undersigned,

In my capacity as Internal Control and Quality Management Officer

Acting in line with the ICF, Principle # 2 'Oversight of the development and performance of internal control', I have reported my advice and recommendations to the Executive Director on the overall state of internal control system of CEPOL and that the best of my knowledge the information on management and internal control systems provided in the Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2023 is accurate and exhaustive.

Done at Budapest, on 02/05/2024

<<signature on file>>

Luminita Moldovan  
Internal Control &  
Quality Management Officer

## **ANNEXES**

## Annex I.a Performance statistics

The Agency's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) linked to the achievement of three Strategic Goals, demonstrate sustainable progress achieved in 2023 (see below table).

More details on status of Performance Indicators (PIs) versus target in Work Programme 2023 are provided throughout the report under each activity.

No.	(Key) Performance Indicators	Target	Status*	Comments
1	Number of training needs analyses/ Assessments completed (4 OTNA + 1 STNA)	4	6	Achieved. (4 OTNA plus 1 ad-hoc TNA and 1 EU-STNA Mid-term review)
2	New developments in the area of quality assurance*	1	1	Achieved (business case for further ISO 29993: 2017 certification in place, new courses certified every year)
3	Number of published articles in the European Law Enforcement Research Bulletin	15	30	Complete
4	Research & Science Conference organised biennially	1	No	n/a
5	Completion/coverage rate of EMPACT priorities	90%	100%	Achieved (69 planned versus 79 implemented activities in the area of Serious and Organised Crime)
6	Number of active capacity building projects	4	5	Achieved. A fifth project EU4Security Moldova was added in the end of 2023.
7	Level of overall satisfaction with training activities per training type	90%	96%	Achieved
8	Number of activities (implemented vs. planned, number and %)	90%	100%	Achieved (253 planned vs 255 implemented training activities financed from annual subsidy)
9	Number of participants (actual vs. planned, number and %)	90%	157%	Achieved (25 000 planned vs 40 000 implemented from annual subsidy)
10	Timely submission of the draft Single Programming Document and the Work Programme	YES	YES	Achieved
11	% of completion of the activities of the Work Programme	90%	100%	Achieved (253 planned vs 255 implemented training activities financed from annual subsidy)
12	% of audit recommendations closed in accordance with the agreed action plan	90%	30%	In progress, extended deadline by end of 2024
13	Quality Management System certified to be in line with ISO 9001:2015	YES	YES	Achieved
14	Number of critical/very important audit recommendations addressed on time	80%	n/a	No critical/very important recommendations
15	Budget (N-1) payments	95%	95%	Achieved (2022 budget payments 99%)
16	Staff engagement	60%	53%	Not achieved. Considering the high percentage of neutral replies (24%), the gap between the target and achieved result, cannot be considered as being caused by an internal control deficiency as such.

\*source of data: reporting tool



## Annex I.b Details on CEPOL Training tools

In 2023 CEPOL continued the implementation of its learning and training themes from the relevant EU policy instruments taking into account the Member States opinion on topic prioritisation and outcomes of the EU-STNA and OTNA results. All CEPOL activities were and continue to be designed to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and best practices, and to help developing a common European law enforcement culture.

Thematic portfolios are applying varied training and learning tools, often in a blended manner:

- Onsite activities
- Online activities
- CEPOL Exchange Programme

Below is a short overview of the use of these tools.

The division of participants by law enforcement sector is presented below.

LE background/sector	Participants <sup>40</sup>
Police	29 452
Border/Coast/Maritime	2 545
Customs	1 831
Prosecutor/Judiciary	832
Tax authorities	250
Other	2 132
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>37 042</b>

### Education and training activities (Onsite)

In 2023 CEPOL delivered 82 onsite activities, including one activity carried forward from WP2022. From WP 2023, two activities were carried forward to 2024. Altogether 2 397 Law Enforcement officials were trained in onsite training activities in 2023.

Status of the originally planned 81 onsite activities:

Fully implemented: 81 activities

One activity cancelled: 054/2023/ONS, Train-the-Trainers on the MID Processes and links (MB16/2023)

Two activities added: 092/2023/ONS, Train-the-Trainers SIS Recast (MB16/2023) and MB16/2023, 93/2023/ONS Workshop on the EU Security Threats Stemming from the Gaza Conflict (ED45/2023) – out of which 93/2023/ONS was carried forward to 2024.

One originally online activity 2006/2023/ONL on PNR Analysis was converted to onsite and its implementation was postponed to Q1 2024.

### Online training

Online training and learning solutions are ideal to cater for larger audiences and gives flexibility to progress at one's own pace. The online learning services were widely utilised also in 2023. LEEd welcomed 13.325 new users in 2023. Altogether there were 43.076 active users<sup>41</sup> registered on LEEd by the end of 2023.

The online training portfolio offers webinars, e-Workshops and online courses as well as various self-paced learning resources (i.e. modules, webinar series, eLessons and cyber bites, the Virtual Training Centre on Intellectual Property Rights).

<sup>40</sup> not equal to the total number participants in 2023, due to the fact that for modules, cyberbites and VTC break down of data is not available in LEEd, only totals

<sup>41</sup> Users are considered active, if they have logged in to our e-learning platform in the past 24 months to date. Those accounts that have no login activity in this period are considered abandoned and automatically suspended by the system. The process was introduced in June 2022.

The new training tools are also designed to reinforce learning, not only as standalone training resources, but specifically when blended with traditional training methods such as onsite courses.

2023 CEPOL e-Learning overview*	N users
86 Webinars	17 281
40 Online modules	11 679
18 e-Lessons	2 912
13 Online Courses	512
1 Virtual Training Centre on IPR	1 913
9 Webinar series and cyber bites	4 441
<b>Total</b>	<b>38,738</b>

\*excluding activities carried forward from 2022

Satisfaction with CEPOL online training is high in average 94.5% of satisfaction for webinars, 95.5% for online courses.

In 2023 we received 5 471 views of 321 webinars from our 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 recorded webinars catalogues.

- 1760 Views from 984 users who watched 69 Webinars from the 2023 catalogue
- 1625 views from 959 users who watched 92 webinars from the 2022 Catalogue
- 834 views from 353 users who watched 70 webinars from the 2021 Catalogue
- 1252 views from 470 users who watched 90 webinars from the 2020 Catalogue

## CEPOL Exchange Programme

The main objective of the CEPOL Exchange Programme is to enhance law enforcement cooperation on combating cross-border crime. The importance of the Exchange Programme as a training element is acknowledged more and more on a European level. Every year the Exchange Programme is further defined to better reflect requirements deriving from the EU Policy Cycle priorities as well as the results emerging from the training needs analyses (EU Strategic Training Need Assessment and Operational Training Needs Analyses). Thematic areas of the programme were better synchronised with CEPOL's overall training portfolio, which enables the Exchange Programme to complement CEPOL's other training options, contributing to the agency's multi-layered approach to learning.

In 2023, a novelty feature was launched on LEEd, the **Exchange Plugin** that supports electronic applications, self-matching and documents upload. Via this platform a total of 683 applications were received by 3<sup>rd</sup> February. 131 vs 120 exchange participants implemented the programme in all thematic areas, including EMPACT from 30 countries (EU and non-EU) by 17<sup>th</sup> November, reaching 93% satisfaction, and consuming 153,100 EUR budget in the process.

In line with the new strategy, CEPOL Exchange Programme (CEP) introduced **pre- and post-assignments** to assist exchanges in planning activities, promote CEPOL's online products and to raise the quality of the exchange programme. The CEP also launched the **Exchange-bites**, a sequence of short online sessions offering law enforcement officials the chance to learn best practices from the experience of participants in the CEPOL Exchange Programme with great success.

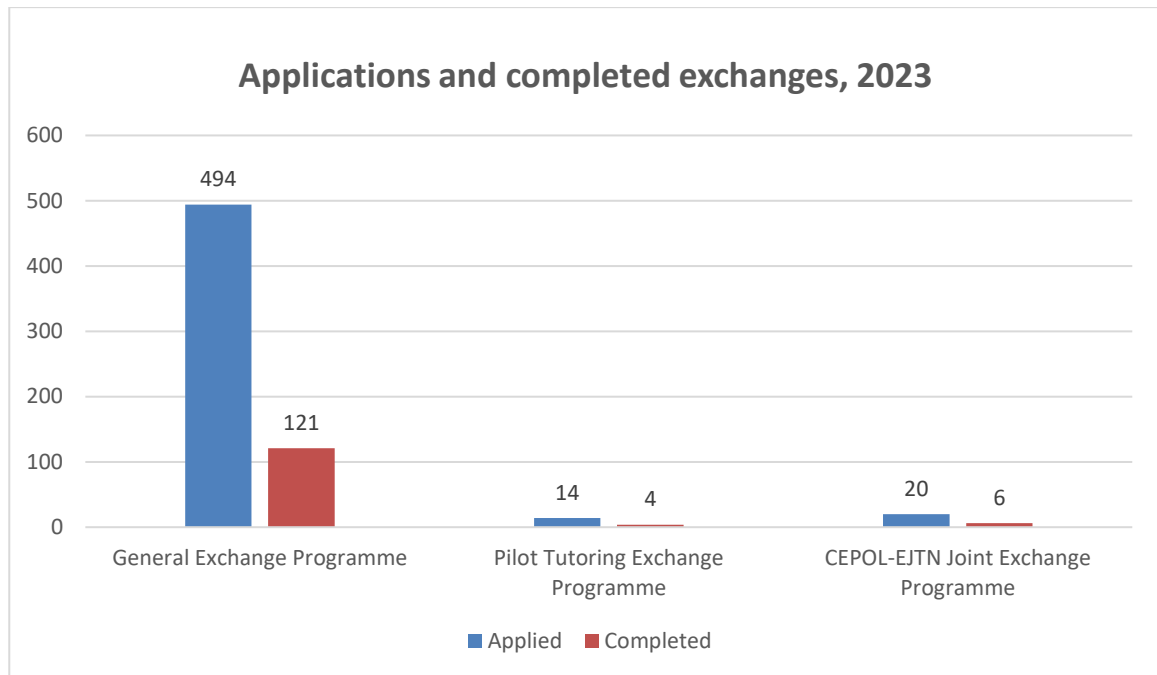
The cooperation with EJTN, the European Judicial Training Network, that encompassed exchange opportunities related to Judiciary Cooperation was further enhanced and received an increased interest in 2023. This cooperation is set to progress further in 2024.

Following the successful integration of the different Exchange Programmes offered by CEPOL International Cooperation Unit since 2019, the practice to initiate the various exchange programmes CEPOL offers in one call, further continued in 2023. This one call incorporated the General Exchange Programme, the CEPOL-EJTN Joint Programme and 3 ICU Exchange Programmes (CT INFLOW, EUROMED Police and TOPCOP Projects) and the **Pilot Tutoring Exchange Programme**, offering a wide variety of topics and collaboration opportunities between EU Members States and various non-EU / beneficiary countries.

The National Exchange Coordinators and Single Point of Contacts approved through the **LEEd Exchange Plugin** a total of **683** nominations from various law enforcement organisations covering all thematic areas, out of which 494 belonged to the General Exchange Programme, 20 to the CEPOL-EJTN Joint Exchange Programme, and 14 to the pilot Tutoring Exchange Programme. The remaining 155 applications were in the remit of CEPOL ICU managing externally funded project activities. Based on the CEPOL Work Programme

and participant interest, we established target numbers for the General Exchange Program's thematic areas. This included reaching 120 total exchanges, encompassing both the CEPOL-EJTN Joint Exchange Program and the Pilot Tutoring Exchange Program. As a final result, within the three Exchange Programmes we successfully implemented 131 exchanges, thereby achieving an implementation rate of **109%** of the planned exchanges of the originally adopted Work Programme. Out of 131 exchanges, 121 were completed within the General Exchange Programme, 4 within the pilot Tutoring Exchange Programme and 6 within the CEPOL-EJTN Joint Exchange Programme.

Figure 1: Total applications and completed exchanges, 2023



Our aspiration is to involve all EU countries and all thematic areas in the programme. In 2023 all thematic areas were included, but not all countries participated due to various reasons, such as applicant did not meet condition of participation, no available replacement or no application submitted.

The outcome is shown in the below graphs (data applies to the General, the CEPOL-EJTN Joint Exchange Programme and the pilot Tutoring Exchange Programme participants only).

Figure 2: Applications and completed exchanges by EU Members States, 2023

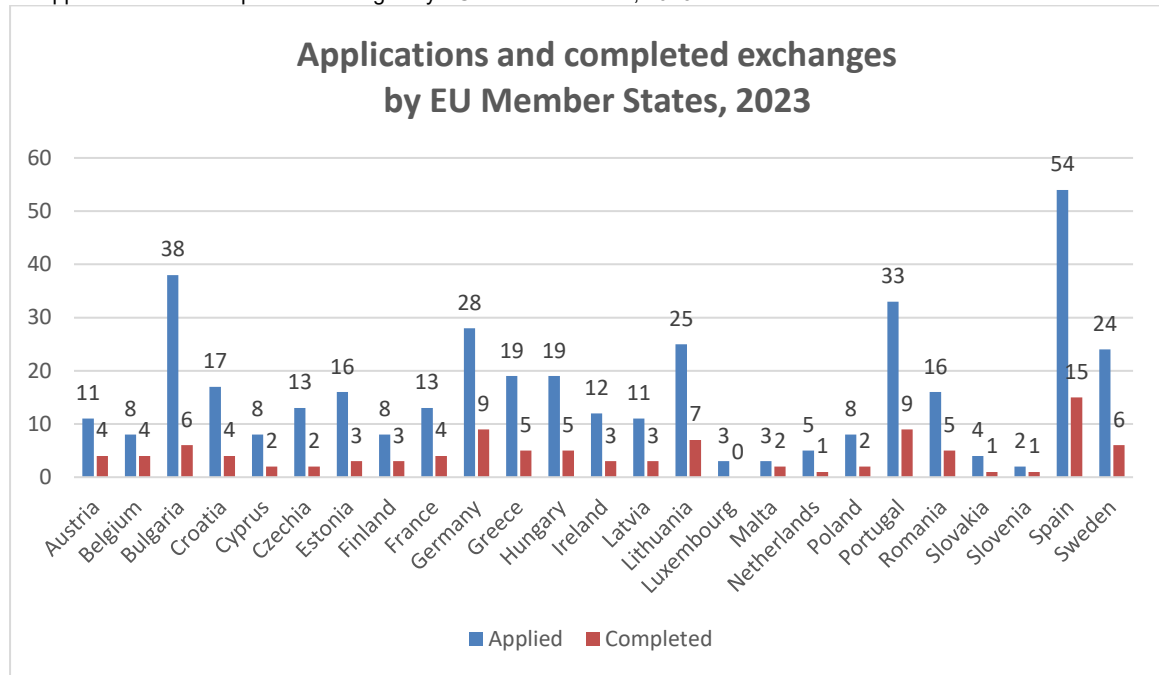
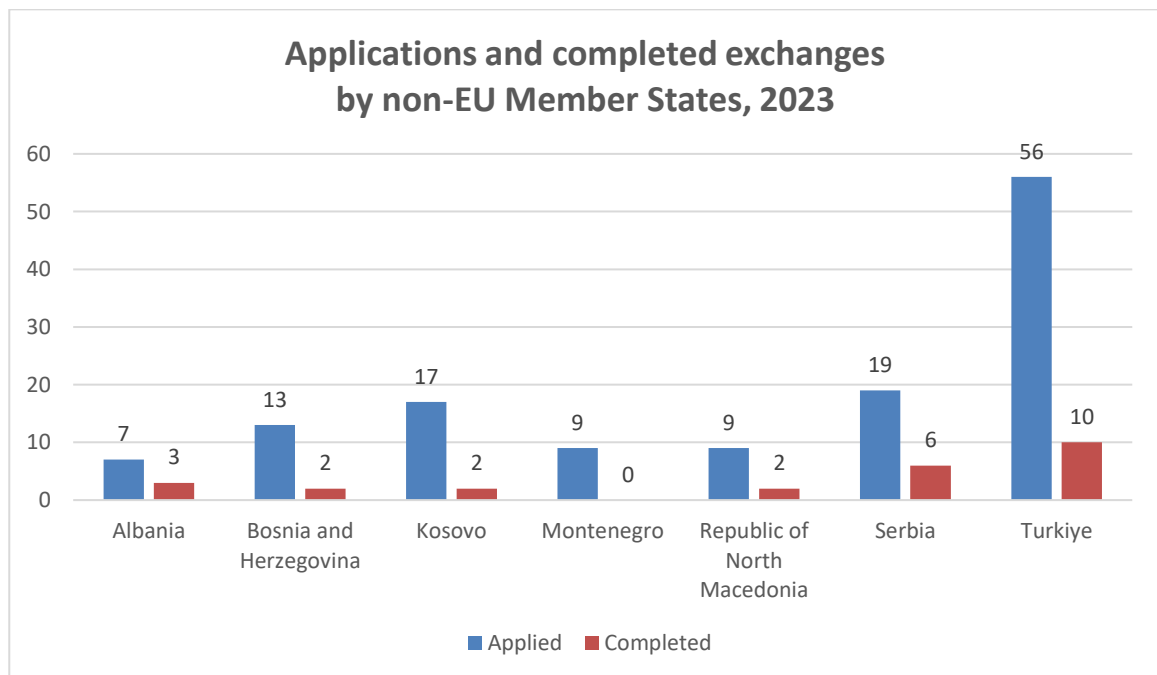
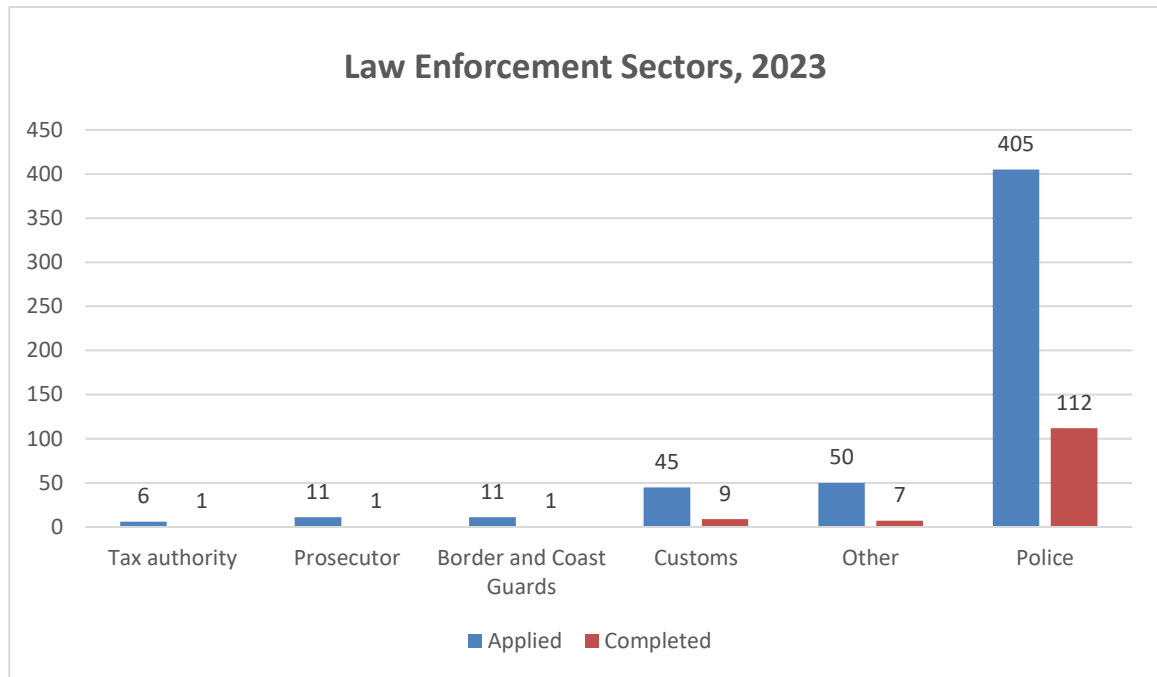


Figure 3: Applications and completed exchanges by non-EU Members States, 2023



\*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence

Figure 4: Applications and completed exchanges by law enforcement sectors, 2023 (excl. ICU exchanges)



In December 2023, CEPOL hosted the Annual National Exchange Coordinator meeting. The agenda included presenting annual results, discussing the Exchange Programme's future, and gathering feedback on:

- A pilot Mentoring Programme modelled after the successful ICU Mentoring Programme. This program aims to enhance law enforcement officer development, knowledge, skills, and best practice exchange.
- The Exchange Plugin, a tool for program management.
- Pre- and post-assignment activities for exchange participants.

The CEPOL Exchange Programme continued to follow the international ISO 9001:2015 certification standards with the aim being to achieve consistency in the agency's management, improve internal processes and fulfil legal and regulatory obligations.

## Annex II. Statistics on financial management

Table 2.1: Calculation budget outturn

Budget outturn	2021	2022	2023
Reserve from the previous years' surplus (+)	0	0	0
Revenue actually received (+)	8,460,630	14,120,616	15,186,956
Payments made (-)	-10,672,750	-15,124,348	-16,768,463
Carryover of appropriations (-)	-2,411,091	-1,663,837	-1,456,820
Cancellation of appropriations carried over (+)	88,792	134 957	95,438
Adjustment for carryover of assigned revenue	0	0	0
appropriations from previous year (+)	4,939,713	2,768,537	3,038,327
Exchange rate differences (+/-)	-96	47,183	-1,995
Adjustment for negative balance from previous year (-)	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>405,198</b>	<b>283,109</b>	<b>93,443</b>

### Descriptive information and justification on:

- **Budget outturn:** The budget outturn 2023, the amount to be paid back to the Commission as unused fund amounts to 93 443 EUR
- **Cancellation of payment appropriations for the year:** Cancellation rate was 0%. CEPOL uses non-differentiated appropriation, therefore the cancellation of payment and commitment appropriation is the same.
- **Cancellation of payment appropriations carried over:** Cancellation of the carried over payment appropriations (C8) were 5.73%. CEPOL has executed 1 665 465.94 EUR in 2023 out of the total C8 credits. The main reasons for cancellation were:
  - Partial delivery of goods and services.



**Table 2.2: Budget 2023 execution status as of 31 December 2023**

	Budget implementation/ Execution Regular budget 2023 (C1)	Voted Budget A	Final Budget B	Committed C	Budget implementation % C/B	Paid D	Budget execution % D/B	% (Compared to commitments) D/C	Carry forward for payments in 2024 C-D
<b>1</b>	<b>TITLE 1</b>								
11	Staff in active employment	4,400,000.00	4,510,863.58	4,510,863.58	100%	4,492,209.16	100%	100%	18,654.42
12	Allowances and expenses on entering and leaving the service and on transfer, excluding Seconded National Experts and other experts	9,000.00	23,677.86	23,677.86	100%	12,884.81	54%	54%	10,793.05
13	Missions and duty travel	30,000.00	15,622.58	15,622.58	100%	15,422.58	99%	99%	200.00
14	Socio-medical infrastructure	474,000.00	572,733.57	572,733.57	0%	570,439.27	0%	0%	2,294.30
15	Further training, language courses, retraining for staff	56,760.00	31,973.50	31,973.50	100%	30,593.00	96%	96%	1,380.50
16	External services	205,000.00	214,308.73	214,308.73	100%	180,488.98	84%	84%	33,819.75
17	Receptions and events	3,000.00	1,138.88	1,138.88	100%	1,027.88	90%	90%	111.00
18	Social welfare	9,000.00	8,721.64	8,721.64	100%	8,721.64	100%	100%	0.00
<b>1</b>	<b>TITLE 1 Staff expenditure</b>	<b>5,186,760.00</b>	<b>5,379,040.34</b>	<b>5,379,040.34</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5,311,787.32</b>	<b>98.75%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>67,253.02</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>TITLE 2</b>								
20	Investments in immovable property and rental	55,000.00	46,067.72	46,067.72	100%	45,655.81	287.91%	99%	411.91
21	Information and communication technology	447,095.00	532,462.58	532,462.58	3.00	386,646.19	72.61%	73%	145,816.39
22	Movable property and associated costs	18,320.00	9,610.51	9,610.51	100%	9,110.51	94.80%	95%	500.00
23	Current administrative expenditure	26,000.00	28,705.35	28,705.35	100%	15,013.35	52.30%	52%	13,692.00
24	Postal charges	6,000.00	3,367.64	3,367.64	100%	3,142.64	93.32%	93%	225.00
<b>2</b>	<b>TITLE 2 Buildings, equipment and miscellaneous expenditure</b>	<b>552,415.00</b>	<b>620,213.80</b>	<b>620,213.80</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>459,568.50</b>	<b>74.10%</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>160,645.30</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>TITLE 3</b>								
30	Strategy, stakeholder relations, governance	324,166.00	301,969.62	301,969.62	100%	175,510.87	58.12%	58%	126,458.75
31	Training, research and analysis	4,235,000.00	3,583,301.32	3,583,301.32	100%	2,960,751.08	82.63%	83%	622,550.24
32	Operational Support	912,932.00	1,326,747.92	1,326,747.92	100%	846,834.57	63.83%	64%	479,913.35
<b>3</b>	<b>TITLE 3</b>	<b>5 472 098.00</b>	<b>5 212 018.86</b>	<b>5 212 018.86</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3,983,096.52</b>	<b>76.42%</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>1,228,922.34</b>
	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>11 211 273.00</b>	<b>11 211 273.00</b>	<b>11 211 273.00</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>9,754,452.34</b>	<b>87.01%</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>1,456,820.66</b>

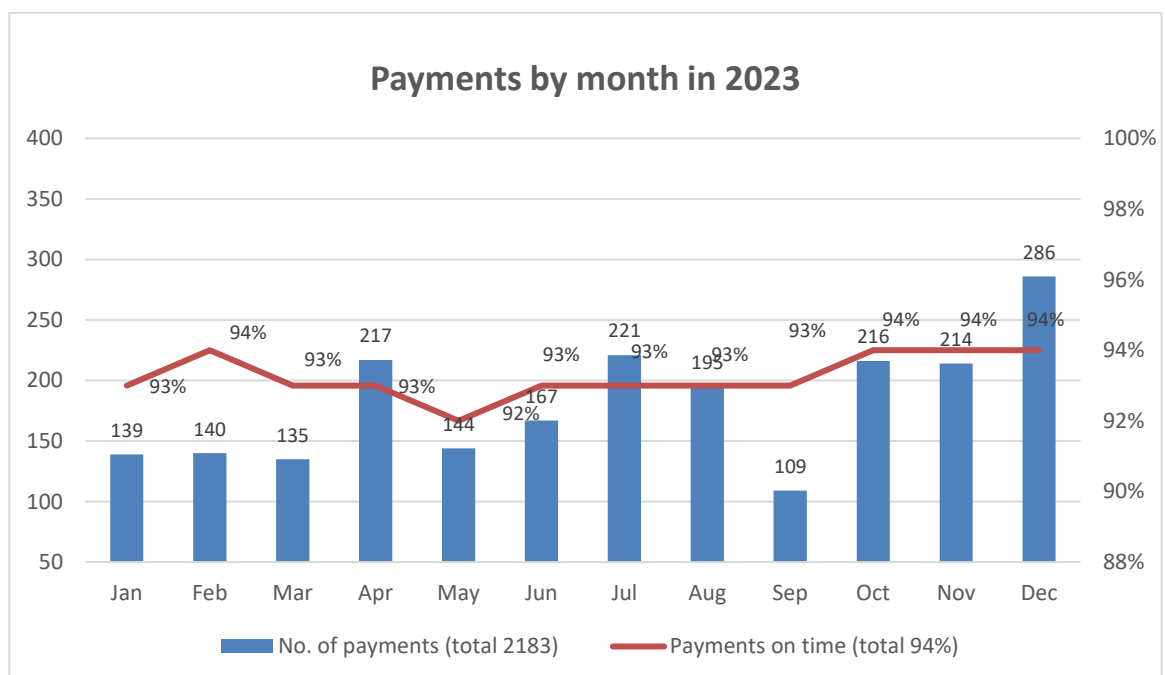
**Table 2.3: Budget Transfers**

	Budget implementation/ Execution Regular budget 2023 (C1)	Voted Budget A	Budget transfer 1 CPL10628	Budget transfer 2 CPL10648	Budget transfer 3 CPL10662	Budget transfer 4 CPL10678	Budget transfer 5 CPL10694	Budget transfer 6 CPL10699	Budget transfer 7 CPL10703	Final Budget B
<b>1</b>	<b>TITLE 1</b>									
11	Staff in active employment	4,400,000.00	0.00	-326,792.89	40,327.97	204,446.11	193,792.81	-503.27	-407.15	4,510,863.58
12	Allowances and expenses on entering and leaving the service and on transfer, excluding Seconded National Experts and other experts	9,000.00	0.00	4,920.00	0.00	11,580.00	0.00	-1,822.14	0.00	23,677.86
13	Missions and duty travel	30,000.00	0.00	0.00			-14,000.00	0.00	-377.42	15,622.58
14	Socio-medical infrastructure	474,000.00	0.00	155,023.00	0.00	-45,500.00	-10,532.88	0.00	-256.55	572,733.57
15	Further training, language courses, retraining for staff	56,760.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	-24,891.50	0.00	105.00	31,973.50
16	External services	205,000.00	-3,000.00	5,429.68		5,955.30	924.00	0.00	-0.25	214,308.73
17	Receptions and events	3,000.00	0.00	0.00		-1,500.00	0.00	-361.12	0.00	1,138.88
18	Social welfare	9,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00	-269.79	-8.57	8,721.64
<b>1</b>	<b>TITLE 1 Staff expenditure</b>	<b>5,186,760.00</b>	<b>-3,000.00</b>	<b>-161,420.21</b>	<b>40,327.97</b>	<b>174,981.41</b>	<b>145,292.41</b>	<b>-2,956.32</b>	<b>-944.94</b>	<b>5,379,040.34</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>TITLE 2</b>									
20	Investments in immovable property and rental	55,000.00	0.00	-3,000.00	-401.37	-300.00			-5,230.91	46,067.72
21	Information and communication technology	447,095.00	0.00	-7,446.01	10,000.00	7,000.00	3,598.08	9,957.48	62,258.03	532,462.58
22	Movable property and associated costs	18,320.00	0.00			-2,515.24			-6,194.23	9,610.51
23	Current administrative expenditure	26,000.00	0.00	400.00		-4,508.00	-1,910.71	1,544.20	7,179.86	28,705.35
24	Postal charges	6,000.00	0.00			-1,200.00			-1,432.36	3,367.64
<b>2</b>	<b>TITLE 2 Buildings, equipment and miscellaneous expenditure</b>	<b>552,415.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>-10,046.01</b>	<b>9,598.63</b>	<b>-1,523.24</b>	<b>1,687.37</b>	<b>11,501.68</b>	<b>56,580.37</b>	<b>620,213.80</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>TITLE 3</b>									
30	Strategy, stakeholder relations, governance	324,166.00		1,834.00			-18,072.65	-2,452.74	-3,504.99	301,969.62
31	Training, research and analysis	4,235,000.00	-70,000.00	-58,851.11	-49,926.60	-173,458.17	-276,195.95	28,863.59	-52,130.44	3,583,301.32
32	Operational Support	912,932.00	73,000.00	228,483.33	0.00	0.00	147,288.80	-34,956.21	0.00	1,326,747.92
<b>3</b>	<b>TITLE 3</b>	<b>5 472 098.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>171 466.22</b>	<b>-49 926.60</b>	<b>-173 458.17</b>	<b>-146 979.80</b>	<b>-8 545.36</b>	<b>-55 635.41</b>	<b>5 212 018.86</b>
	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>11 211 273.00</b>							<b>0.00</b>	<b>11 211 273.00</b>

**Table 2.4: Payment times per title and fund source**

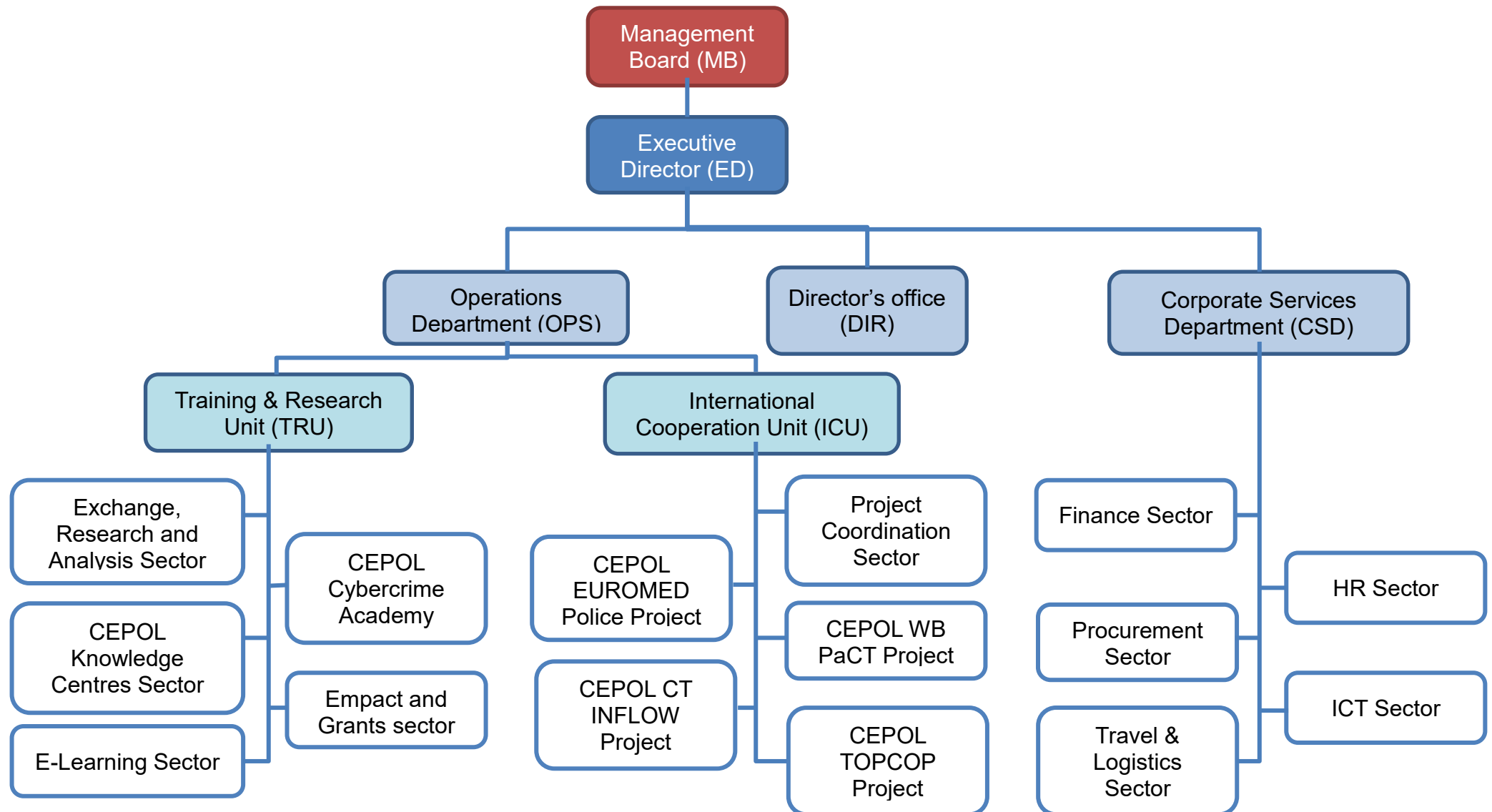
Payment time monitoring	Number of payments	Amount	Payments in time			
			Number	%	Amount	%
	A	B	C	C/A	D	D/B
<b>Title 1</b>						
C8	13	37 427	12	92%	36 970	99%
C1	216	1 190 948	215	100%	1 188 320	100%
C4	1	517	1		517	
C5	0	0	0		0	
	<b>230</b>	<b>1 228 891</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>1 225 806</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Title 2</b>						
C8	42	38 328	33	79%	36 461	95%
C1	292	483 123	272	93%	416 239	86%
C4	0	0	0		0	
C5	0	0	0			
	<b>334</b>	<b>521 451</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>452 700</b>	<b>87%</b>
<b>Title 3</b>						
C8	125	1 212 178	107	86%	1 079 216	89%
C1	503	3 367 489	479	95%	3 155 489	94%
C4	1	1 956	1	0%	1 956	0%
C5	4	90 689	4	0%	90 689	0%
R0	0	0	0	#DIV/0!	0	#DIV/0!
	<b>633</b>	<b>4 672 311</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>4 327 350</b>	<b>93%</b>
<b>Title 5</b>						
R0	943	1 420 918	890	100%	2 561 912	100%
	<b>943</b>	<b>1 420 918</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>2 561 912</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Non Budgetary payments</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>1 017 298</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>1 013 989</b>	<b>100%</b>
	<b>2 183</b>	<b>8 860 870</b>	<b>2 055</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>9 581 757</b>	<b>108%</b>

**Table 2.5: Number of payments per month in 2023**



## Annex III. Organisational chart

Last organisational chart valid by the end of the year (Decision of the Management Board 06/2023/MB)



## Annex IV. Establishment Plan and additional information on HR Management

Table 4.1: Overview of staff at 31 December 2023

Staff population CEPOL regular budget	Staff population in EU budget 2023	Staff population on 31.12.2023 <sup>42</sup>
AD		
AST		
AST/SC		
AD	26	25 <sup>43</sup>
AST	7	6 <sup>44</sup>
AST/SC	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>31</b>
CA GF IV	7	5
CA GF III	12	12
CA GF II	-	
CA GF I	-	
<b>Total CA</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19<sup>45</sup></b>
<b>SNE</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4<sup>46</sup></b>
Structural service providers	-	-
Trainees		7
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>62</b>
External staff for occasional replacement		24 <sup>47</sup>

### Staff for Projects on 31 December 2023

Staff Population, Projects	CT INFLOW	EUROMED	TOPCOP	WB PaCT	EU4MD	TOTAL ALL PROJECTS
Expected running time	2020-2024	2020-2024	2020-2024	2020-2023	2020-2023	
CA FG IV	5	5	5	2	1	<b>18</b>
CA FG III	6	7	4	2	0	<b>19</b>
CA FG II						
CA FG I						
SNE	1					<b>1</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>38</b>

<sup>42</sup> Not including vacancies, unpaid leave, and staff for externally financed project activities

<sup>43</sup> Including Ad Interim HOU

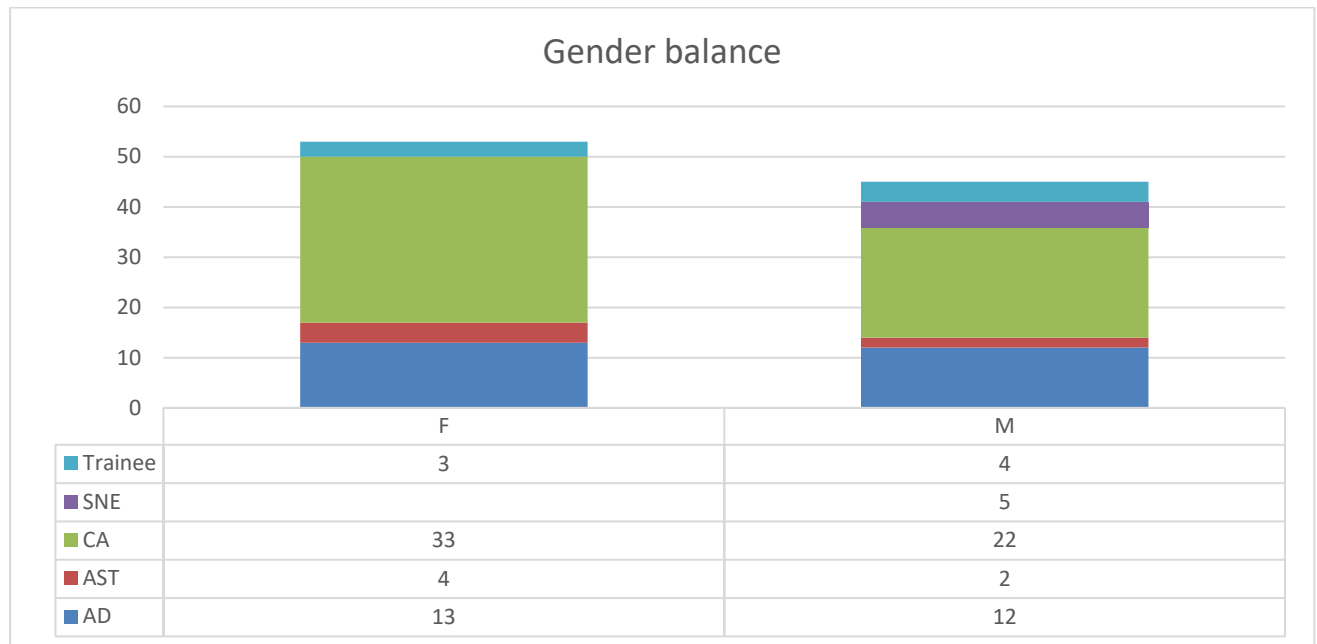
<sup>44</sup> Including 1 AST 5 that was converted to AD5 in 2023

<sup>45</sup> Including 1 maternity replacement

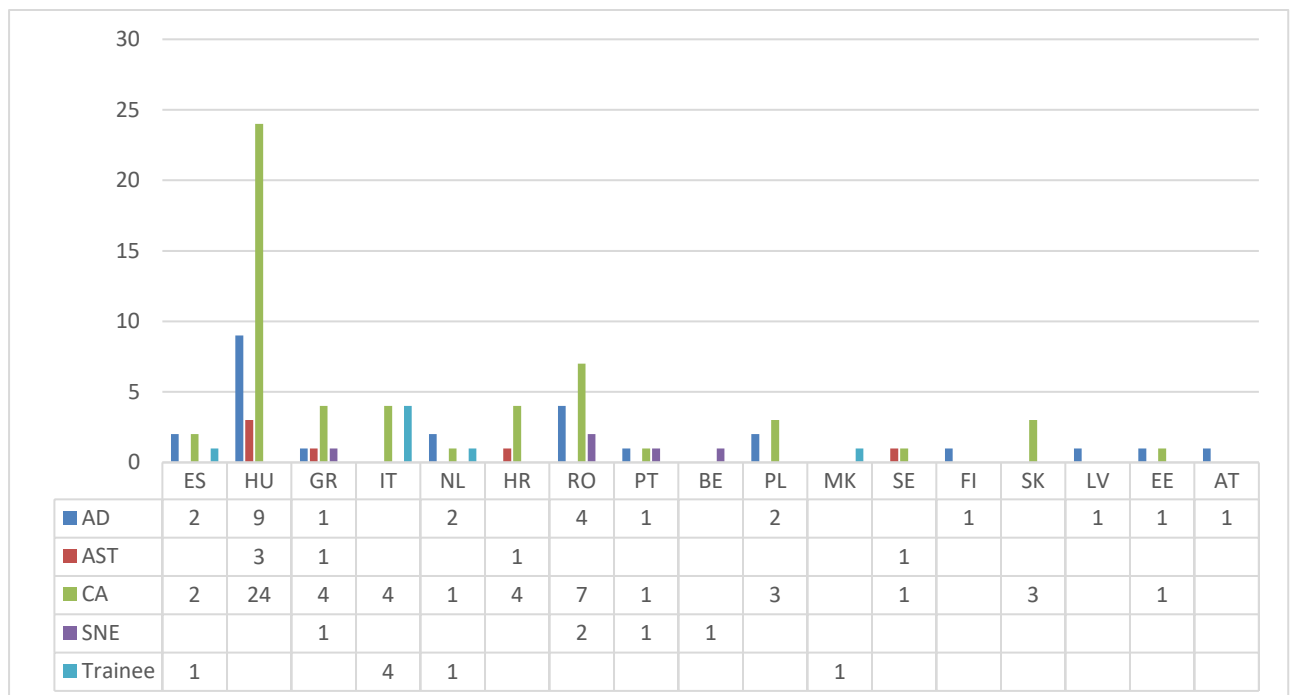
<sup>46</sup> Including 1 additional SNE for EMPACT priorities ending on 31 December 2023 (1 SNE departed on 30.09.2023)

<sup>47</sup> In post at 31 December 2023, Including 1 for EUROMED project

## Gender Balance



## Geographical balance



**Table 4.2: Information on the entry level for each type of post and indication whether the function is dedicated to administrative support or operations**

Type of post	Administrative Support	Operations	Grand Total
<b>Administrative Assistant</b>	1	3	4
AST3 - AST4		2	2
CA FGIII; 8-10	1	1	2
<b>Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director</b>		1	1
CA FGIII; 8-10		1	1
<b>Analyst</b>		2	2
AD5 - AD7		1	1
SNE		1	1
<b>Budget &amp; Finance Assistant</b>	1		1
AST3 - AST4	1		1
<b>Building &amp; Facility Assistant</b>	1		1
CA FGIII; 8-10	1		1
<b>Communications Assistant</b>		1	1
AST3 - AST4		1	1
<b>Communications Officer</b>		1	1
AD5 - AD7		1	1
<b>Cybercrime Portfolio Manager</b>		1	1
CA FGIV; 13, 14, 16		1	1
<b>Cybercrime Training Officer</b>		1	1
CA FGIV; 13, 14, 16		1	1
<b>E-learning Assistant</b>			
CA FGIV; 13, 14, 16			
<b>E-learning Officer</b>		1	1
CA FGIV; 13, 14, 16		2	2
<b>E-Learning Project Officer</b>		1	1
CA FGIII; 8-10		1	1
<b>E-learning Senior Project Officer</b>		3	3
CA FGIV; 13, 14, 16		3	3
<b>Executive Director</b>		1	1
AD14		1	1
<b>Finance &amp; Budget Officer/Deputy Head of Unit</b>	1		1
AD7 - AD8	1		1
<b>Finance and Accounting Correspondent</b>	1		1
AD5 - AD7	1		1
<b>Finance Assistant</b>	3		3
CA FGIII; 8-10	3		3
<b>Governance Support Assistant</b>		1	1
CA FGIII; 8-10		1	1
<b>Head of Department</b>	1	1	2
AD12	1	1	2
<b>Head of Unit</b>	1	2	3
AD10	1	2	3
<b>HR Assistant</b>	1		1
CA FGIII; 8-10	1		1
<b>HR Officer</b>	1		1
AST3 - AST4	1		1
<b>Human Resources Assistant</b>	1		1
CA FGIII; 8-10	1		1
<b>ICT assistant</b>	2		2
AST3 - AST4	1		1
CA FGIII; 8-10	1		1
<b>ICT Officer</b>	1		1



Type of post	Administrative Support	Operations	Grand Total
AST3 - AST4	1		1
<b>Internal Control and Quality Management Officer</b>		1	1
AD5 - AD7		1	1
<b>IT Systems Manager</b>		1	1
CA FGIV; 13, 14, 16		1	1
<b>Legal Officer / Data Protection Officer</b>	1		1
AD6 - AD7	1		1
<b>Liaison Officer</b>		1	1
CA FGIV; 13, 14, 16		1	1
<b>Planning Officer</b>		1	1
AD5 - AD7		1	1
<b>Policy Officer/ External Relations</b>		1	1
CA FGIV; 13, 14, 16		1	1
<b>Procurement Assistant</b>	2		2
CA FGIII; 8-10	2		2
<b>Procurement Officer</b>		1	1
CA FGIII; 8-10		1	1
<b>Procurement Support Officer</b>	1		1
AST3 - AST4	1		1
<b>Programme Officer</b>		4	4
AD5 - AD7		4	4
<b>Programme Officer/Deputy Head of Unit</b>		1	1
AD5 - AD7		1	1
<b>Project Officer</b>		15	15
CA FGIII; 8-10		13	13
CA FGIV; 13, 14, 16		2	2
<b>Research &amp; Knowledge Management Officer</b>		1	1
AD5 - AD7		1	1
<b>Residential Events Assistant</b>		2	2
CA FGIII; 8-10		2	2
<b>Senior Analyst / Deputy Head of Training &amp; Research Unit</b>		1	1
AD7 - AD8		1	1
<b>Senior Project Coordinator / Deputy Head of Unit</b>		1	1
AD6 - AD7		1	1
<b>Senior Project Officer</b>		15	15
CA FGIII; 8-10		2	2
CA FGIV; 13, 14, 16		12	12
SNE		2	2
<b>Senior Training Officer</b>		1	1
AD6 - AD7		1	1
<b>SNE Cybercrime Training Officer</b>		1	1
SNE		1	1
<b>SNE Training Officer</b>		3	3
SNE		3	3
<b>Training Assistant</b>		1	1
AST3 - AST4		1	1
<b>Training Assistant E-Learning</b>		1	1
AST3 - AST4		1	1
<b>Training Officer</b>		2	2
CA FGIV; 13, 14, 16			
SNE			
<b>Training Officer Cybercrime</b>		1	1
AD5 - AD7		1	1
<b>Travel &amp; Mission Assistant</b>	1	1	2
CA FGIII; 8-10	1	1	2

Type of post	Administrative Support	Operations	Grand Total
<b>Web &amp; Communications Assistant</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
CA FGIII; 8-10		1	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>95*</b>

\*breakdown of 95 allocated posts: 33 TA, 19 CA, 5 SNEs (financed from CEPOL regular budget) and 37 CA and 1 SNEs for external projects (financed from Contribution Agreements)

**Table 4.3: Benchmarking against previous year results**

Type of post	2022		2023 <sup>48</sup>	
	FTEs	Percentage	FTEs	Percentage
Operational	58.0	73%	32.3	68%
Top operational coordination	3.8	5%	4.0	8%
Programme management & Implementation	16.0	22%	12.8	27%
Evaluation & Impact assessment	1.2	2%	1.1	2%
General operational activities	32.0	44%	14.4	30%
Neutral	7.2	10%	5.1	11%
Accounting, Finance, non-operational procurement	7.2	10%	5.1	11%
Linguistics	0.0	0%	0	0
Coordination	5.6	8%	4.4	9%
Legal advice, including Data protection	1.5	2%	0.8	2%
External communication	2.6	4%	2.4	5%
General coordination	1.5	2%	1.1	2%
Administrative support	7.4	10%	5.6	12%
Human resources management	2.0	3%	2.0	4%
Information & Communication technology	1.4	2%	0.9	2%
Internal audit	1.0	1%	1.0	2%
Logistics, facilities management & security	2.0	3%	0.7	2%
Resources Director/Head of Administration/Resources	1.0	1%	0.9	2%
Document Management	0.0	0%	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>73.2</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>47.3</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 4.4: Information on interim staff employed by CEPOL in 2023\***

	Position	Group	Grade	Step	Start Date	End Date	No. of Days
1	Management Support Assistant	Group II	5	1	01/04/2023	31/12/2023	274
2	E-learning Assistant	Group III	9	1	01/04/2023	31/12/2023	274
3	Administrative Assistant/Travel	Group II	5	1	01/07/2023	31/12/2023	183
4	Administrative Assistant/RELEX	Group II	5	1	01/07/2023	31/12/2023	183
5	ICT Assistant	Group IV	14	1	01/04/2023	31/12/2023	274
6	Administrative Assistant for Exchange Program	Group II	5	1	01/04/2023	31/12/2023	274
7	ICT Assistant	Group III	9	1	01/04/2023	31/12/2023	274
8	Administrative Assistant/CKC	Group II	5	1	01/04/2023	31/12/2023	274
9	Administrative Assistant/EMPACT and Grants	Group II	5	1	01/04/2023	31/12/2023	274
10	Administrative Assistant/Cyber	Group II	5	1	01/04/2023	31/12/2023	274
11	Administrative Assistant/Travel	Group II	5	1	01/07/2023	31/12/2023	183
12	Administrative Assistant	Group II	5	1	01/04/2023	31/12/2023	274
13	Administrative Assistant/TRU	Group II	5	1	01/04/2023	31/12/2023	274
14	Legal Officer	Group IV	14	1	16/07/2023	31/12/2023	168
15	E-Learning Assistant/TRU	Group III	8	1	16/03/2023	31/12/2023	290
16	Administrative Assistant/EMPACT and Grants	Group II	5	1	01/04/2023	31/12/2023	274
17	Communication Assistant	Group III	8	1	16/06/2023	31/12/2023	198
18	Administrative Assistant/Travel	Group II	5	1	01/07/2023	31/12/2023	183

<sup>48</sup> Only TA, CA and SNEs financed from regular budget

19	Administrative Assistant /Horizontal/ICU	Group II	5	1	01/09/2023	31/12/2023	121
20	Administrative Assistant - ICU/EUROMED	Group II	5	1	01/10/2023	31/12/2023	91
21	Administrative Assistant/Data Entry Agent	Group II	5	1	16/10/2023	31/12/2023	76
22	Administrative Assistant/Planning	Group II	5	1	01/11/2023	31/12/2023	60
23	Administrative Assistant/TRU/E-learning	Group II	5	1	16/11/2023	31/12/2023	45
24	E-learning Assistant	Group II	5	1	16/12/2023	31/12/2023	15
25	Administrative Assistant	Group II	5	1	01/01/2023	30/11/2023	333
26	Administrative Assistant/PMU	Group II	5	1	01/01/2023	02/08/2023	213
27	Administrative Assistant/TRU	Group II	5	1	01/01/2023	17/09/2023	259
28	E-learning/TRU	Group III	8	1	01/01/2023	15/09/2023	257
29	Procurement Officer	Group IV	14	1	01/01/2023	30/09/2023	272
30	Administrative Assistant/Travel	Group II	5	1	01/01/2023	30/06/2023	180
31	Administrative Assistant/ICU	Group II	5	1	01/01/2023	30/06/2023	180
32	Management Support Assistant	Group II	5	1	01/01/2023	30/04/2023	119
33	Administrative Assistant/TRU	Group II	5	1	01/01/2023	04/02/2023	34
34	E-learning/TRU	Group III	8	1	01/01/2023	14/02/2023	44

\*The table indicates interims throughout the year, while 24 interims were still in post at 31.12.2023

**Table 4.5: Information on the number of leave days authorised to each grade under the flexitime**

Grade	Flexi time (in days) taken
AD8	40
AD7	38
AD6	37
AD5	2
AST6	23
AST5	12
AST4	13
FG-IV	108
FG-III	87
FG-II	-
FG-I	-
SNE	25
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>385</b>

## Annex V. Human and financial resources by activity

### Planned

Goal and Activity	TA	CA, SNE (FTE)	Budget
<b>Goal 1: Training design, quality &amp; research</b>	5.7	3.4	€ 1,762,789
1.1 Training Needs Assessment and coordination	2.1	0.3	€ 217,784
1.2 Ensure high quality training services	2.0	2.5	€ 1,305,527
1.3 Integrate research results into education and training	1.6	0.7	€ 239,479
<b>Goal 2: Training support &amp; implementation</b>	13.9	13.0+2 SNEs	€ 7,206,822
2.1 Serious and Organised Crime	3.2	3.6+2 SNEs	€ 1,860,468
2.2 Cyber-related Crime	2.5	4.1	€ 1,316,116
2.3 Counter-terrorism	0.6	1.5	€ 569,476
2.4 Fundamental Rights and Data Protection	1.2	0.4	€ 347,258
2.5 Law enforcement cooperation, information exchange and interoperability	1.8	1.0	€ 928,170
2.6 Leadership and other skills	0.6	0.7	€ 635,248
2.7 Higher Education and Research	0.1	0.2	€ 76,125
2.8 Public Order and Prevention	0.3	0.3	€ 294,031
2.9 Law Enforcement Technologies, Forensics and Other Specific Areas	0.5	0.8	€ 730,827
2.10 Union missions (CSDP)	0.6	0.3	€ 207,120
2.11 Capacity building projects in Third Countries	2.4	0.0	€ 241,982
<b>Goal 3: Efficient &amp; improving organisation</b>	13.2	5.6	€ 2,241,663
3.1 Governance, Administration and Stakeholder Relations	13.2	5.6	€ 2,241,663
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>32.8</b>	<b>22.0+2 SNEs*</b>	<b>€ 11,211,273</b>

\* plus 2 additional SNEs requested in order to implement 8 EMPACT courses and the two-step Fundamental rights courses that are not covered by any grant applications.

Implemented

Goal and Activity	TA	CA, SNE (FTE)	Budget
<b>Goal 1: Training design, quality &amp; research</b>	4.3	2.7	€ 1,701,237
1.1 Training Needs Assessment and coordination	1.4	0.2	€ 202,095
1.2 Ensure high quality training services	1.5	1.8	€ 1,251,736
1.3 Integrate research results into education and training	1.4	0.6	€ 247,406
<b>Goal 2: Training support &amp; implementation</b>	11.4	13.2	€ 5,954,392
2.1 Serious and Organised Crime	3.0	2.8	€ 1,499,717
2.2 Cyber-related Crime	1.3	3.9	€ 1,129,827
2.3 Counter-terrorism	0.8	1.9	€ 514,826
2.4 Fundamental Rights and Data Protection	1.3	0.4	€ 308,113
2.5 Law enforcement cooperation, information exchange and interoperability	1.8	2.2	€ 836,521
2.6 Leadership and other skills	0.5	0.6	€ 485,092
2.7 Higher Education and Research	0.1	0.2	€ 64,681
2.8 Public Order and Prevention	0.2	0.3	€ 222,999
2.9 Law Enforcement Technologies, Forensics and Other Specific Areas	0.5	0.7	€ 554,410
2.10 Union missions (CSDP)	0.5	0.2	€ 167,335
2.11 Capacity building projects in Third Countries	1.4	0.0	€ 170,870
<b>Goal 3: Efficient &amp; improving organisation</b>	11.2	4.6	€ 2,098,821
3.1 Governance, Administration and Stakeholder Relations	11.2	4.6	€ 2,098,821
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26.9</b>	<b>20.4</b>	<b>€ 9,754,451</b>

## Annex VI. Contribution, grant and service level agreements

General information						Use of commitment appropriations		
Contribution Agreements	Actual or expected date of signature	Total amount (EUR)	Duration	Counterpart	Short description		From the start date till end of 2022	2023
1. CT INFLOW (IFS/2019/410-531)	17-Dec-19	7,500,000	48 months, from 1 April 2020	European Commission DG DEVCO B6	Financial contribution to finance the implementation of CT INFLOW action (project)	Amount	3,941,495	2,534,851
						Nº of CAs	11	11
						Nº of SNEs	1	1
2. EUROMED Police (ENI/2020/414-940)	22-Apr-20	6,960,542	48 months, from 1 April 2020	European Commission DG NEAR R4	Financial contribution to finance the implementation of EUROMED Police action (project)	Amount	3,734,891	1,693,743
						Nº of CAs	12	12
						Nº of SNEs	0	0
3. TOPCOP (ENI/2020/415-941)	23-Jun-20	6,000,000	48 months, from 1 July 2020	European Commission DG NEAR R4	Financial contribution to finance the implementation of TOPCOP action (project)	Amount	3,318,245	1,930,964
						Nº of CAs	9	9
						Nº of SNEs	0	0
4. WB PaCT (2019/413-822)	16-Oct-20	3,000,000	36 months, from 16 Oct 2020	European Commission DG NEAR D5	Financial contribution to finance the implementation of WB PaCT action (project)	Amount	2,355,478	606,087
						Nº of CAs	4	4
						Nº of SNEs	0	0
5. EU4SECURITY MOLDOVA	01-Oct-23	5,500,000	36 months, from 1st November 2023	European Commission	Financial contribution to finance the implementation of EU4SECURITY MOLDOVA (project)	Amount	0	42,485
						Nº of CAs	0	1
						Nº of SNEs	0	0
TOTAL						Amount	13,350,109	6,808,131
						Nº of CAs	37	37
						Nº of SNEs	1	1



## **Annex VII. Environment management**

Not applicable

**BALANCE SHEET**

		EUR '000	
	Note	31.12.2023	31.12.2022
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
<i>Property, plant and equipment</i>	2.1	289	305
<i>Pre-financing</i>	2.2	0	116
<i>Exchange receivables and non-exchange recoverables</i>	2.3	101	82
		<b>390</b>	<b>502</b>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
<i>Pre-financing</i>	2.2	176	288
<i>Exchange receivables and non-exchange recoverables</i>	2.3	11 368	14 685
		<b>11 544</b>	<b>14 973</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>11 934</b>	<b>15 476</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
<i>Payables</i>	2.4	(1 932)	(4 156)
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
<i>Payables</i>	2.4	(6 995)	(7 804)
<i>Accrued charges</i>	2.5	(782)	(1 038)
		<b>(9 709)</b>	<b>(12 998)</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>(9 709)</b>	<b>(12 998)</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>2 225</b>	<b>2 478</b>
<i>Accumulated profit</i>		2 478	3 872
<i>Economic result of the year</i>		(253)	(1 394)
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>2 225</b>	<b>2 478</b>

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE**

		EUR '000	
	Note	2023	2022
<b>REVENUE</b>			
<b>Revenue from non-exchange transactions</b>	3.1		
<i>Subsidy from the Commission</i>		18 136	16 085
<i>Recovery of expenses</i>		4	3
		<b>18 140</b>	<b>16 088</b>
<b>Revenue from exchange transactions</b>	3.2		
<i>Other</i>		75	445
		<b>75</b>	<b>445</b>
		<b>18 215</b>	<b>16 533</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
<i>Operating costs</i>	3.3	(12 249)	(12 090)
<i>Staff costs</i>	3.4	(5 040)	(4 538)
<i>Other expenses</i>	3.5	(1 178)	(1 299)
		<b>(18 467)</b>	<b>(17 927)</b>
<b>ECONOMIC RESULT OF THE YEAR</b>		<b>(253)</b>	<b>(1 394)</b>

## Annex IX. Amendments to the SPD 2023-2025

The SPD 2023-2025 originally approved by MB decision 16/2022/MB on 22 November 2022 has been amended by 16/2023/MB on 05 October 2023 and by 03/2022/MB on 26 March 2022, to adjust the original plan to the dynamic developments. Additionally, there were two amendments adopted by the Executive Director having in view the changes were non substantial.

Decision	Reason for amendment
16/2023/MB	<p>Due to business developments, there was an imminent need to amend the SPD 2023-2025 to ensure the completeness and successful implementation of Work Programme 2023.</p> <p>These developments were the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cancellation of training activity 54/2023/ONS "Train-the-Trainers on the MID Processes and Links"</li> <li>2. Adding new external project EU4Security Moldova</li> <li>3. Non cost extension for the external projects EUROMED Police and WB PaCT</li> <li>4. Procurement envelope 2023</li> <li>5. Organisational chart 2023</li> </ol>
Executive Director Decision 44/2023/DIR	As per CEPOL Strategy 2023-2027 CEPOL conducts a feasibility study on sectoral qualification framework. The ED decision was adopted to accommodate this exercise in the Annual Work Programme of the Agency.
Executive Director Decision 45/2023/DIR	The Annual Work Programme of the Agency was amended to add new entries on Workshop on the threats to EU Security stemming from the Gaza Conflict and Activity Managers Workshop for CEPOL staff under Activity 2.3, 2.4 and 2.6.